



Wander in Wonder's Infant FAQs

Revised May 2025

Age of Children

Six weeks to ~24 months

Adults in Classroom

One adult for every four children

Number of Children in the Classroom

There may be up to 8

Agreements

We establish a positive classroom community every year during the first month of school. The teachers and children begin by creating shared agreements. We discover how we will live together in this space; how we will treat each other, our materials, and our physical environment:

- We are safe.
- We are kind.
- We are respectful.
- We are responsible.

Anti-Bias Education

Wander in Wonder is committed to Anti-Bias Education. In early childhood settings, anti-bias work involves a lot of identity exploration, being mindful about the inclusivity of the books and materials in our classrooms, and having thoughtful conversations about fairness, empathy, inclusion, activism, and social justice. We want all people in our community to feel included, safe, valued, and respected.

Our agreements for children, staff, and classrooms:

- We are safe with our bodies and our words
- We listen to each other
- We learn about and value the ways we are the same and different
- We work for equity and justice in our play, in our classroom, and our communities

Communication/Family Participation

Daily communication and strong, respectful relationships are vitally important to your child's success at school. Good communication between families and teachers can build support for and strengthen the important work happening in the classroom and at home.

There are a variety of methods that teachers and families can use to communicate effectively:

Daily Logs

Daily logs share information about eating, sleeping, diapering/toileting, and pick up and drop off times. Please complete the top portion of a daily log each morning at drop-off, and teachers will complete the bottom portion throughout the day. Daily logs will come in paper or laminated versions. Taking a picture of your child's daily log at pickup can be helpful if you need to refer back to it later.

Drop Off and Pick Up

Always check in with a classroom teacher before leaving your child. It's important to let your child's teachers know of any changes to your routine or any changes at home. We encourage "short goodbyes and long hellos" during drop-off and pick-up. It is imperative to check in with a teacher and sign your child out at the end of the day. Some good questions might be: What activities did my child participate in today? Did they have a favorite one? Were they engaged with anyone in particular? Are there any items we need to take home? We welcome you to spend time with your child in the classroom at the end of the day. Please be mindful and aware of your teacher's time. You should plan on arriving by 5:45 pm to exit the building no later than 6:00 pm.

Daily Photos/Reminder Emails

Teachers will send photos and reminders to families each day so you can see a snapshot of the learning happening in the classroom community each day.

Family/Teacher Conferences

Conferences are an excellent way for families and early childhood educators to discuss the child in depth. Conferences occur formally twice a year. Additional meetings can be arranged and are encouraged. Please contact your child's teacher/director to find out the best time to schedule those.

Direct Email

All classrooms have a Wander in Wonder email address. Families are welcome to email teachers directly with thoughts or questions. Teachers may not respond immediately but will do so as soon as time allows.

Volunteering

Families are a valuable asset to the program and are encouraged to be active participants in their child's learning by volunteering in the program. Families can regularly volunteer for projects in the classroom and for school-wide events. Sharing your expertise (i.e. are you a firefighter, an architect, a rocket scientist, etc.) expands and supports authentic project work experiences in our classrooms.

Safe Sleep Policy

Back to Sleep, Every Sleep. Infants up to twelve months old are placed for sleep in a supine position (entirely on their back) for every nap or sleep time.

Safe Sleeping Environments = Firm Mattress + Tight-Fitting Sheet + Baby + Pacifier(optional). Nothing else.

Infants are placed in safe sleep environments. This includes: a firm crib mattress covered by a tight-fitting sheet on a mat or in a crib. No monitors or positioning devices are allowed unless required by the child's primary care provider. Additionally, no other items may be in a crib occupied by an infant except for a pacifier.

- Infants must not nap or sleep in a car safety seat, bean bag chair, bouncy seat, infant seat, swing, jumping chair, playpen or play yard, highchair, chair, futon, or any other type of furniture/equipment not approved for sleep.
- If an infant arrives at the facility asleep in a car safety seat, the parent/guardian or caregiver/teacher must immediately remove the sleeping infant from this seat and place them in the supine position in a safe sleep environment (i.e., the infant's assigned cradle or mat);
- If an infant falls asleep in any place that is not a safe sleep environment, staff must immediately move the infant and place them in the supine (fully on their back) position in their cradle or on their mat.
- Only one infant per mat or crib.
- Soft or loose bedding must be kept away from sleeping infants and out of safe sleep environments. These include, but are not limited to bumper pads, pillows, quilts, comforters, sleep positioning devices, sheepskins, blankets, flat sheets, cloth diapers, bibs, etc. We never hang blankets or items from the sides of cribs. Wander in Wonder does not swaddle infants following Oregon's new Safe Sleep guidelines. We recommend one-piece sleepers (sleep sacks) that do not restrict mobility.
- Under one year of age, nothing may accompany a sleeping child on a mat or crib. At above one year of age, one small lovey from home may be brought to assist a child in creating healthy sleep patterns.
- When we place infants in their crib for sleep, we check to ensure that the temperature in the room is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult. We check children to ensure that they are comfortably dressed (not overheated or sweaty) and that we remove bibs, necklaces, and garments with ties or hoods. Clothing sacks or other clothing designed for sleep must be used instead of blankets. Blankets are not permitted at Wander in Wonder for children under one year of age.
- We observe infants by sight and sound at all times, including when they are going to sleep, are sleeping, or are in the process of waking up.
- Bedding must be changed between children. When mats are used, we sanitize them between each use, unless they are soiled or designated to a specific child. We sanitize soiled mats immediately and designated mats weekly.

Examples of ACCEPTABLE types of sleep sacks

Arms and legs freely move



These types of sleep sacks are NOT allowed

Restricts/potentially restricts arm movement and/or contains Velcro enclosure



Weighted on the chest



May be a contributor to overheating* and hazard when a baby can roll



Clothes with a hood



*Infants are vulnerable to overheating when they are overdressed and cannot regulate their body temperatures well according to the National Institute of Health. Studies have shown that heavy clothing increases SIDS risk.

Infant/Toddler Feeding

Wander in Wonder collaborates with families to meet their children's nutritional and emotional needs. We are always willing to work with families to accommodate special needs, within our industry guidelines, for health, safety, and best practice.

General Infant and Toddler Feeding Guidelines

- We do not use feeding in lieu of other forms of comfort.
- Feeding is family-style at Wander in Wonder. According to their ability, children are allowed and encouraged to serve themselves from community serving bowls at every eating opportunity.
- Adults sit with children at tables during feeding times.

Bottle Handling and Feeding Guidelines

- Wander in Wonder infant caregiving practices align with the principles of primary caregiving. Designated primary caregivers feed infant bottles whenever possible.
- We require visual and verbal verification before feeding every bottle to ensure that infants and toddlers are being given the correct bottle.
 - Teachers preparing to feed a bottle show a colleague the name label on the bottle and verbally confirm: "This is the bottle for (first and last name), I have (first and last name) in my arms".
 - Colleague verifying looks at the label on the bottle and looks at the baby and verifies that the bottle is the right bottle for the baby.
 - If a colleague is not readily available to verify a bottle, initial the child's daily log near the section for entering feeding amount/ duration before initiating feeding to verify the bottle.
- Wander in Wonder follows a "one-touch bottle" feeding procedure.
 - The person who begins feeding is the only person who feeds for the

- duration of feeding whenever possible.
- When a teacher lunch break falls within ten minutes of a scheduled or anticipated feeding, another person may need to initiate the feeding.
- Teachers consider feeding schedules and plan accordingly to follow one-touch feeding practices and manage break and lunch schedules.
- Every bottle must come from home labeled with the child's first and last name.
- Families take bottles home at the end of each day.
- Infants younger than six months are always held for individualized bottle feeding.
- We do not prop bottles. The child or adult always holds the bottle. Propped bottles include using blankets, boppy pillows, or additional items to hold the infant's bottle.
- Infants unable to sit are held for bottle feeding. All others sit or are held to be fed.
- Infants and toddlers may not have bottles while in a crib or on a cot.
- Bottle feedings do not contain solid foods unless the child's health care provider supplies written instructions and a medical reason for this practice.
- Teaching staff who are familiar with the infant feed them whenever the infant seems hungry (on demand).
- After one hour any formula or human milk that is served but not completely consumed is discarded. Empty bottles can be returned to the fridge.
- If a family has requested to save their milk please place in the cooler that is provided by the family.
- When formula, human milk, and any solid foods are warmed, water for warming must be no more than 120 degrees Fahrenheit and milk/food must be warmed for no more than five minutes.
- Fluids are always warmed in crockpots and bottle warmers. Fluids are never warmed in a microwave.
- Children do not carry bottles, sippy cups, or regular cups with them while crawling or walking.

Introducing, Preparing, and Feeding Solid Foods

- In collaboration with kitchen staff, teaching staff ensure that foods are prepared for eating safely and appropriately according to each child's chewing and swallowing capability. Teaching staff may need to cut food before offering it to children
- Monthly school menus will be available for your review. Please indicate (a highlighter works well) which menu items your child has been exposed to and return that menu to the classroom. This information guides teaching staff in introducing school foods to your child when they are ready for solids.
 - Solid foods fed to infants shall be selected from specific food groups including bread and grains, fluid milk, meat, fish, poultry, fruits, and vegetables, or meat alternatives
 - Solid foods are not fed to infants less than six months of age without parental consent
 - Solid foods are not served directly from the container.
 - Leftovers in serving containers are discarded after feeding
 - Solid foods, with the exception of finger foods, are fed with a spoon.
 - Honey or foods containing honey are never served to children under 12

months of age.

- Children who cannot feed themselves are held or, if able to sit alone, fed in an upright position.
- Infants no longer being held for feeding shall be fed in a manner that provides safety and comfort.

Bottle Weaning

- Wander in Wonder practices align with American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommendations for beginning to wean children from bottles around one year of age, and weaning children from bottles entirely by 18 months of age.
- Around six months of age begin offering children fluids from a cup
- At one year of age begin substituting a cup for a bottle (with the exception of breast milk – breast milk must always be in a bottle or cup with a leak-proof lid)
- The program does not feed cow's milk to infants younger than 12 months, and it serves only whole milk to children over the age of 12 months (unless the family provides a signed exception note from their pediatrician)
- Staff do not offer children younger than three years these foods: hot dogs, whole or sliced into rounds; whole grapes; popcorn; raw peas and hard pretzels; or chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole.
- The program prepares written menus, posts them where families can see them, and has copies available for families.

Wander in Wonder supports breast/chestfeeding by

- Accepting, storing, and serving expressed human milk for feedings
- Accepting human milk in ready to feed sanitary containers labeled with the infant's first and last name
- Storing it in a refrigerator for one day of attendance only
- Storing breast milk in a freezer at 0 degrees Fahrenheit or below for no longer than three months. Families would need to come in to prepare the bottle from the frozen milk
- Ensuring that staff gently mix, not shake, the milk before feeding to preserve special infection fighting and nutritional components in human milk;
- Providing a comfortable place for breast/chestfeeding and coordinating feedings with the infant's family

Biting Behavior

Biting behavior is quite common with infants and young toddlers, as they are exploring the world around them through their senses and are on the brink of mastering verbal communication. A child might bite to:

- Relieve pain from teething.
- Explore cause and effect ("*What happens when I bite?*").
- Experience the sensation of biting.
- Satisfy a need for oral-motor stimulation.

- Imitate other children and adults.
- Feel strong and in control.
- Get connection.
- Act in self-defense.
- Communicate needs and desires, such as hunger or fatigue.
- Communicate or express difficult feelings, such as frustration, anger, confusion, or fear ("There are too many people here and I feel cramped"). (From NAEYC for Families)

1. Comfort the child who was bitten-- hugs if desired, first aid if necessary, always wash with soap and water. *"I am sorry that I wasn't available when you were hurt.. I'm going to try to help you feel better..."*

2. Calmly talk to the child who used biting behavior (if we escalate the situation, rather than remaining neutral, it is more likely to become a pattern). *"Ouch, that hurt _____. Next time you can (varies depending on the situation). Would you like to check in with him/her?"* At this point, the child who used biting behavior may approach (with a teacher) the child who was bitten to see if they want help washing the bite or if they would like to accept comfort from the child who bit them. The teacher will continue to support through this interaction.

When a child is regularly using biting behavior, we track the biting using a Behavior Incident Report (BIR) to better understand the timing and motivation patterns. We also shadow children, which means that we remain within one foot of the child at all times to help prevent the behavior from happening (coaching them through conflicts, and physically blocking any biting behavior attempts.) Additionally, for those who are experiencing a need for oral stimulation or who are teething, we offer materials the children can chew safely on.

Curriculum/Philosophy

We are inspired by RIE (Resources for Infant Educators), which means that respectful relationships are our priority when working with young children. We communicate authentically, allow children to develop their cognitive and motor skills naturally, provide time for uninterrupted play and exploration, and include children in their caregiving routines. More information about RIE can be found here:

<https://www.rie.org/educaring/ries-basic-principles/>

<http://www.janetlansbury.com/2013/12/rie-parenting-basics-9-ways-to-put-respect-into-action/>

Curriculum unfolds naturally from teachers closely observing and listening to the students play. Curriculum can also arise from a child or family member sharing their recent experiences.

Teachers support this inquiry by offering provocations and proposals related to interests through carefully chosen materials. At Wander in Wonder we have a strong image of children as **protagonists** of their learning, as **collaborators** in search of relationships, and as **communicators** who use a multitude of languages to discover and express what they know, understand, wonder, feel, and imagine.

