

Colton Childcare Parent Handbook

706 Union Street
Colton, WA 99113
509-229-3401



The Colton Childcare center is operated and supervised by the Colton School District. The District believes that a quality childcare program will positively impact our schools and community. The District is committed to providing a quality childcare program that will help children learn, grow, and develop.

Listed below are contact numbers for administrators:

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Childcare Director
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Jody Moehrle
Superintendent
Colton School District
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The parent handbook provides you with the necessary information you should have concerning this program, goals, admission requirements, business practices, enrollment procedures, and health procedures. Please read this and agree to comply with everything contained herein. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask.

Colton Childcare's Mission Statement

As a devoted early childhood education center, Colton Childcare strives to foster growth of all children and instill in them a lifetime love of learning.

Colton Childcare's Core Purpose

Colton Childcare is committed to providing quality and consistent early care and education in the community. We partner with our families to offer consistent and loving care, while inspiring children to grow in an interactive environment that promotes children's development through discovery and exploration.

Colton Childcare's Promise

We promise to:

Respect the rights of each child as an individual, recognizing that every child has unique abilities and interests.

Prepare for a journey of learning by implementing best practices and continuing to focus on strength of program.

Implement core values that make a difference in the lives of children.

Provide children and staff the opportunity to grow each and every day.

Partnership with Parents

We know that success is dependent on a cohesive partnership between home and school. Our childcare encourages parent involvement, by utilizing our "open door policy." This policy invites parents to visit the classroom, share a meal, participate in a field trip, or just ask questions about any policy or procedure at any time.

Our parent board is located in the front of the childcare and keeps parents informed about upcoming activities and events. The parent board includes a menu and a school calendar. Every day, our infants' and toddlers' families receive a report on their day to include appetite, naps, and/or other special information pertaining to that child. We encourage parents to ask questions about their child's day to the teachers. Open communication is our most valuable tool in providing a quality and successful program for our families.

Staff and Faculty

Our teachers are chosen not only for their education and prior experiences but most importantly for their love of and devotion to children. We know that to offer a quality program from infants through elementary school is largely dependent on the relationship between teacher and child. Our staff receives on-going support training that is vital for teaching success with each child's learning process.

Hours of Operation

Monday through Friday 7:00am to 5:30pm

We are restricted to a certain number of children at one time. It is imperative that you adhere to your contracted schedule so that we can adhere to our child/adult ratio.

Health and Safety Policy

Our program believes in teaching healthy living. We encourage our students, from infants through elementary school to make safe, healthy decisions. Not only is this concept displayed in our daily routines, it is also modeled daily by our staff, management and school administrators. Hand-washing and personal hygiene are expected in every program.

Health Requirements: Certain state health forms are required for enrollment in our program. Health statements and current updated immunization records are required to be kept in each child's file. It is the parent's responsibility to update records in accordance with state law. Children who do not have up-to-date required health information on file will be denied enrollment.

Meals: We offer a morning snack, lunch and an afternoon snack. Depending upon your child's program they may not be present for all meals/snacks served. Our Center does not charge separately for meals. We are able to make food substitutions for children who have a doctor's note that prescribes the alternative foods needed. Snacks and treats that are purchased from the store may be sent for the whole class to enjoy during special occasions.

It is important that you advise us of any allergy your child may have.

Incident Reports: In the event an incident of any significance occurs at school (social or medical), a written report will be put in Brightwheel. This incident report will be specific as to what occurred and what actions were taken. The incident report will be completed by the staff member involved.

Release of Children: For security purposes, children will only be released to parents/individuals listed on enrollment records. All children are required to be signed in and out of the program daily through the Brightwheel app.

A child may not be picked up by anyone who appears to be out of control physically, mentally or smells of alcohol. Any parent who fails to follow the “release of children” guidelines will be dismissed from the program.

Water Safety: During the warmer months, we will provide water play activities within the guidelines and regulations of the law. Our program takes the responsibility of water safety very seriously.

Biting: Biting can be a frustrating problem among young children. Biting incidents will be communicated to the parents of both children involved, in an attempt to understand and prevent this behavior. In order to ensure the safety of all children, if attempts fail to stop the biting, we reserve the right to remove the biting child from our program. If a child bites more than three times in one day, we will call the parent to remove the child for the remainder of the day. In respect for each child’s confidentiality, names will not be disclosed when discussing a biting incident.

Medication: Our program will administer medication providing that all medication rules are followed:

- All Medication must have a prescription or physician’s instructions (including over the counter medications)
- Medication must be in its original container.
- Medication will only be administered at appointed times.
- Medication will not be given to conceal fevers.
- All medication must have the child’s first and last name, and the date.
- Medication authorization forms must be signed by parent, and include dosage information.
- Over-the-counter medication will be given only according to physician instructions that are in accordance with manufacturer label instructions. The designated prescribed amount for a child’s age must be followed.
- No over-the-counter medication will be administered for period longer than 10 days or as indicated on label without a doctor’s authorization.

Medical Emergencies: The staff with the help of local paramedics and physicians will handle all emergencies. 911 will be called for any life-threatening or serious medical emergency. All efforts will be made to contact parents or an authorized contact immediately. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure enrollment records are current with correct phone numbers and emergency contact information.

Permission to Perform Minor Medical Treatment: In the event of an emergency; you hereby give Colton Childcare and its employees and agents, permission to perform minor medical treatments on your child while awaiting medical help, and you hereby waive and release the Center and its employees, agents, owners, members and successors from any liability in connection with any claims arising from such treatment.

Outdoor Health and Safety: Fresh air is essential to a child's well being. All children will participate in outdoor play each day weather permitting. If your child is not able to participate in outdoor activities, he or she should remain at home. Please remember that playground play means running and climbing.

Clothing: Please remember to dress your child for physical activity as well as painting and other crafts. Clothing should be simple and comfortable. Self-help apparel is a boost to a child's independence. Please be sure to always keep an extra change of clothes at all times for those unexpected incidents. Early learners in the potty training process should have several extra items on hand at all times. It is important to clearly mark the child's name on all items brought to school, such as jackets, sweaters, hats, blankets and backpacks.

Naps: A rest period is vital for the physical well-being of active children. Colton Childcare has rest mats for the child's comfort. We will provide linens for each child and ask that you leave personal blankets at home, to avoid them getting lost or damaged.

Illness Requiring Exclusion: Should a child show signs of illness, he/she should be kept at home. Illnesses that require exclusion are:

- Illness that stops a child from participating comfortably in the program;
- Illness that requires a greater need for care than the staff can provide;
- Any rash, vomiting, diarrhea, fever (over 100.4 degrees), or reddened eyes with discharge;
- Respiratory symptoms;
- Appearance/behavior that shows severe pain;
- Lice, lice eggs or any contagious condition;
- Symptoms associated with COVID-19

All the above will require parents to pick up their child. Please come within an hour so that the spreading of illness can be kept to a minimum. If your child has been ill, he or she may not be re-admitted to the Center until he or she is free of symptoms for 24 hours or you have provided a note from your child's physician confirming that he or she is free of symptoms. The decision of the Director shall govern such re-admission. Parental assistance in maintaining a safe and healthy environment for all our students is appreciated. The school will adhere to current guidance given by state and local authorities for illness restrictions relative to COVID-19

Licensing, Insurance, Practices and General Policies

Licensing: Colton Childcare operates under the Colton School District, all policies and procedures set forth by the school district may supersede policies listed in the handbook. The program follows most DCYF (Division of Child, Youth, and Families) WAC's as well as the RCW's pertaining to school districts.

Department of Social Services: The Department of Social Services performs such duties as are authorized by state regulations. The Department has the authority to interview children or staff and to inspect and audit child care school records without prior consent. The Center shall comply with the Department and we shall make provisions for private interviews with any child (ren) or staff and the examination of all records relating to the operation of the Center. Furthermore, the Department has the authority to observe the physical conditions of the child (ren), including conditions that could indicate abuse, neglect or inappropriate placement. Colton Childcare staff is required by law to report suspected signs of child abuse or neglect to DSHS.

Personal Belongings: We request that you not bring personal items to school. The center will do its best to maintain personal belongings when they are brought in; however we are not responsible for loss or damage to clothes and/or personal belongings.

Inclement Weather Policy: Our childcare program is open every week, all year long, with the exception of Federal holidays and some In-Service Days. In the event of inclement weather or an emergency non-weather related issue, the district will evaluate each situation and make the decision whether to close or alter our normal operating hours. If the decision is made to close our childcare program, we will attempt to notify local television and/or radio stations, post the information on the Facebook page, and notify families by phone. There will be no reduction or refund of tuition for any such early or full day closings.

In the event of an early closing, parents are expected to make arrangements to pick up their child promptly when called by the childcare program. If we experience severe weather during the day that requires us to close early, we will email and call parents, and attempt to make announcements as quickly as possible. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that we have their correct email addresses as well as phone numbers.

We will make every effort to remain open, but the safety of our families and staff is always our priority.

Compliance -- School Policies and Provision of Authorizations and Information:

You agree (a) that you and your child will comply with all policies of the School, Childcare facility, and the School District, as those policies may be amended from time to time, and (b) that you will deliver promptly to the Center all signed authorizations and any and all other documents and information, including without limitation, authorizations and information related to the emergency medical care of your child, as may be required by the Center from time to time.

Discipline and Guidance Policy

Discipline and guidance requires a positive approach. Conflicts among peers and testing rules and limits are a natural part of growing up. Rather than try to eliminate mistakes a child may make, we encourage the child to learn from his/her mistakes. Children are made aware of the logical consequences of their behavior. The following guidelines are used in our program.

Guidance must be:

- Individualized and consistent for each child;
- Appropriate to child's level of understanding;
- Encouraging of self-control and self-direction;
- Praising and encouraging of positive behavior;
- Offering of redirection as a positive choice;
- Taking a break or time out, when appropriate.

Suspension: If, in the judgment of the Childcare Director or designee, your child's behavior interferes with the staff providing a safe and nurturing program, the Center will contact you to remove your child for the remainder of the school day. The Center requires that the child be picked up within 1 hour of being notified. You will be responsible for your tuition for that day. Re-admission of your child to the program will be discussed at the time of the suspension.

Program Description

Infants/Toddlers Program: Our infant/toddler program is designated for infants as young as six weeks and as old as three years. Our infant/toddler environments have been carefully planned to ensure safety. Parents must provide bottles, formula/breastmilk, and special food until infants are developmentally ready for table food. All bottles and infant food brought from home must be labeled with the child's full name and date. Parents are also required to supply diapers on an as needed basis. Parents are required to update their infant's records as changes occur. Infants are held while being fed until they can hold their own bottle without difficulties. Cribs are used only for sleeping. Due to the recommendations of the National SIDS Organizations (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome), our crib policy is as follows:

- No comforters, heavy blankets, stuffed animals, pillows, lambs' cloths or bumper pads are allowed in infant cribs;
- Infants will always be placed on their backs to sleep;
- Only tight-fitting sheets will be used on infant cribs;
- Parents are required to provide a sleep sack for their child to sleep in.

Early Preschool – Two through Four Years Old: We believe every child will be a successful learner when offered a "Learning by Doing" philosophy. Our program's activities are designed to take advantage of the natural curiosity to experiment, a trait that exists in every child. We believe in enriching each child's learning experiences through phonics, pre-math concepts, science, music, art and discovery.

School Age Program: This program is designed exclusively for children who are transitional kindergarten age through twelve years old. It offers an option for parents needing before and after school care, school vacation breaks, and summer vacation. Field trips are a part of this program.

Extra Curricular and Field Trip Activities: Each program differs in additional activities offered. Field trips are considered to be a very important part of our program especially in our summer camp program. We encourage exploration, learning and fun through internal and external field trips. Field trips are always listed in advance. Please note that most enrichment activities require an additional fee ranging in price from \$5-\$10. All laws regarding the safety of children are strictly adhered to when leaving the facility. If a child does not follow field trip rules, they will be restricted from future field trip activities until parents and staff feels the child will comply.

Potty Training

Potty training should begin only when the child expresses interest in toileting. When the time comes and the child and parents would like to start the training process, our staff will be completely supportive. When training begins, we request that you pack multiple changes of clothes that are easy for your child to have success with pulling on and off.

Program Fees

Tuition Fees/Method of Payment: Monthly Tuition payments are due in full on the first of each month. Tuition is late and is subject to a \$25 late fee on the 10th of the month if payment was not made by close of business. An additional \$5 per day late fee will be added if tuition has not been paid. Upon the 15th of the month, Child Care services may be suspended until balance is paid in full. We accept checks, cash, and money orders. Please see your Tuition Rate Schedule for details. The School will not be responsible for any payment lost, stolen or mislaid before delivery to the Childcare Director.

Tuition Rates/Changes in Tuition: Tuition rates are subject to increase. We will provide a 30-day written notice prior to tuition adjustment. You agree to pay the revised rate after the school provides you with a 30-day notice. Please see Tuition Rate Schedule for all tuition rates. If an annual rate change is implemented, the Center will adopt the new fee schedule beginning September 1 of each calendar year. The district reserves the right to revisit tuition rates and make adjustments at other times throughout the year in response to market forces, etc

Sibling Discounts: For families with more than one full time child enrolled, you are entitled to a 10% sibling discount which is off the regular tuition of the oldest child enrolled. Please see our fee schedule for these rates.

Late Pick-Up Fee after 5:30pm: All children will be required to be picked up from the program at the end of the program hours. If for some reason the parent will be delayed, the parent is required to call the program to inform them. Any child who is picked up after the end of the scheduled program hours will be charged a late fee of \$20.00 for the first 10-minute period or portion thereof, and \$5.00 for each additional minute thereafter. If your child is picked up more than 30 minutes after the scheduled closing time 2 or more times in any 30-day period, we reserve the right to terminate your child's enrollment.

Hiring Staff to Baby-Sit

Occasionally, parents ask our staff to baby-sit. Colton Childcare does not authorize or take responsibility for any services rendered outside of our premises and this is considered a conflict of interest.

NSF Fees: All returned checks may be referred to a third party collection agency. All returned checks will be charged a \$25.00 fee payable to the school. Any parent who has had two NSF checks will be required to pay by money order.

Refund Policy: Refunds will be issued if the parent has complied with the termination policy and an overpayment of tuition has been made on the account. Refunds will be granted only after bank documentation shows funds have cleared the customer's account. There are no refunds on registration, activity or supply fees. No refunds are provided other than describe under this policy.

Termination of Care Policy

Termination of Care by the Program: The program reserves the right to dismiss any child from care for the following (but not limited to) reasons:

- Failure of parents to adhere to policies such as payment of tuition, signing children in and out, supplying the necessary records or not adhering to our policy on sick children.
- Behavior by child or a parent that is a disruption or is offensive to the program.
- Special needs that are unable to be met in a group care setting.

Termination of care from the program, by the program, may be effective immediately or could be issued with notice; the policy is dependent on each individual situation. If enrollment is terminated as a result of the occurrence of any of these events, any prepaid tuition and deposit shall be forfeited.

Immediate Termination: The program may terminate your child's enrollment, effective immediately, if in the judgment of the School Director or Designee, the child's behavior or your behavior interferes with the program staff providing a safe and nurturing environment. If enrollment is terminated for this reason, any prepaid tuition and deposit shall be forfeited.

Five Days' Notice: The childcare program may terminate your child's enrollment with 5 days notice to you, if any of the following events occur:

- (i) Tuition, including late fees, is not paid before Wednesday at noon of the subject week. Or per policy for any other payment options; including monthly payment schedules.
- (ii) Your child is picked up later than the scheduled closing time 2 or more times in a 30-day period.
- (iii) Your child is ill when brought to the program more than 3 times within a 30-day period, or you fail to pick up your sick child within 2 hours after being notified of the sickness, more than 2 times during any 6-month period.
- (iv) You or your child display disrespect or disregard for any program staff.

If enrollment is terminated as a result of the occurrence of any of these events, any prepaid tuition and deposit shall be forfeited.

Two Weeks' Notice: The childcare program may terminate your child's enrollment upon 2 weeks' notice to you, if any of the following events occur:

- (i) In the judgment of the School Director, (a) the program does not meet the developmental or special needs of your child, or (b) it is not in the best interest of the program or other enrolled children to have your child continue in attendance; or
- (ii) You fail to comply with any of the terms of this Agreement or any of the rules or policies of the program, as may be amended from time to time.

If enrollment is terminated as a result of the occurrence of any of these events, any prepaid tuition and deposit shall be forfeited.

Program Hours, Holiday Closing and Vacation Policy

Hours and Holiday Closings:

The childcare will be closed on the following holidays: New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Veteran's Day, Martin Luther King Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Friday after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Please check with your Director for any "In Service Days", teacher training days that the childcare may be closed in addition to the above

days. When a holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday the childcare will be closed on the Friday before the holiday or the following Monday after the holiday. Tuition is due in full for all closure and early release days as the cost is considered with the closures in mind and therefore, is not reduced.

Vacation Policy:

You will receive 10 Vacation / Credit Days per year if your child attends a 5 day schedule and 6 Vacation / Credit Days per year if your child attends a 3 day schedule. Families with children who attend drop in schedules do not receive Vacation/Credit days. Vacation / Credit days are available September 1st – August 31st. During the use of vacation / credit days, you will not be required to pay tuition in order to maintain your enrollment. Vacation / Credit days are not cumulative. In order to qualify for Vacation / Credit days, you agree to notify the School **in writing at minimum two weeks before** your vacation / credit days occur. Vacation/Credit days are available on a first come, first serve basis and are limited to two families at a time using their credits on any given week. The school will apply the vacation / credit days within the Monday-Friday calendar week in which they occur. Asking for a vacation / credit day after the Monday – Friday calendar week in which it occurs will result in denial of the use of vacation / credit day(s). Except for the Vacation / Credit days allotted, you are responsible for paying full tuition for your child until you terminate the enrollment, even if your child is absent due to illness, vacation, school holidays, or other causes. Your child may not attend the childcare when using the Vacation / Credit days.

Absence/Illness Policy:

You will receive 10 Absence/Illness Credit Days per year if your child attends a 5 day schedule and 6 Absence /Illness Credit Days per year if your child attends a 3 day schedule. Families with children who attend drop in schedules do not receive Absence/Illness Credit days. Absence/Illness Credit days are available September 1st – August 31st. During the use of Absence/Illness credit days, you will not be required to pay tuition in order to maintain your enrollment. Absence/Illness Credit days are not cumulative. In order to qualify to use Absence/Illness Credit days, you agree to notify the School **in writing within the week that the absence/illness** credit days occur. The school will apply the absence/illness credit days within the Monday-Friday calendar week in which they occur. Asking to use an absence/illness credit day after the Monday – Friday calendar week in which it occurs will result in denial of the use of absence/illness credit day(s). You are responsible for paying full tuition for your child until you terminate the enrollment, even if your child is absent due to illness, vacation, school holidays, or other causes. Your child may not attend the childcare when using the Absence/Illness Credit days.

Schedule Changes:

When you enroll with us, you can pick the schedule that meets your family's needs. It is expected that you follow the scheduled times/days within your block rate and enrollment agreement in order for our center to maintain proper child to staff ratios. If you need to submit a change of schedule that will decrease or increase your time/days, you must give the school director two weeks' notice. Keep in mind that due to a limited number of spaces, your request to decrease/increase your enrollment may be denied. By changing your schedule, this could also affect the number of vacation/credit days allotted throughout the year and could result in a portion of the vacation/credit days to be removed from your accounting ledger and leave a balance owed back to the childcare. In addition, by changing your schedule, you are not guaranteed to have the same space that you initially enrolled with us at. (Example: Changing from a 5 day to a 3 day program, and then needing to change back to a 5 day program. The 5 day option may have already been given to someone else and not available for you).

Late pick up (exceeding scheduled day):

Upon enrollment you provide the childcare program with the time of day that you need our services. If you exceed your scheduled block of time, the program will bill you for the additional time used at the rate of \$8.00/hr. (Example: If you enrolled for a 8 hour block from 9am - 5pm and attend from 9am - 5:15pm daily, you would be billed an additional \$8.00 per day)

Drop In policy:

When you schedule drop in before the day you need it, you must call 24hours minimum in advance to cancel in order to not be charged for your scheduled drop in. When you schedule drop in the day of and no show or cancel that same day, you are still charged for the drop in scheduled.

Extended leave policy:

Families may need to apply for an extended leave of absence from time to time. After a family has exhausted their Absent/Illness/Vacation credit allotment for the calendar year, a family may be eligible to take a leave for their child. The leave must exceed one month and the family will be required to pay 50% of the regular tuition billed in order to hold their space in the childcare program. Families must give at minimum a two week notice before requesting a leave of absence.