



**Early Childhood Center
Family Handbook**

Welcome to Easterseals Midwest!

Thank you for choosing Easterseals Midwest, we look forward to working with you to help you achieve your goals.

At Easterseals Midwest, we are committed to providing you with the highest quality services that are designed to help you meet your needs. The purpose of this handbook is to introduce you to all of the services we offer as well as to inform you of your rights and responsibilities.

You can help us serve you better by sharing with us your questions, comments and any concerns you may have about Easterseals Midwest and the services we provide. Please let us know if there is anything we could be doing better to assist you.

Thank you again for choosing Easterseals Midwest.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Wendy Sullivan".

Wendy Sullivan
Chief Executive Officer
Easterseals Midwest

About Easterseals Midwest

Our Purpose

To change the way the world defines and views disability by making profound, positive differences in people's lives.

Our Vision

Easterseals Midwest strives to be a leader in the field of delivering exceptional services that help build communities where all people with developmental disabilities have equal opportunities to realize their goals, dreams and aspirations

Our History

For 50 years, Easterseals Midwest has been at the forefront of helping Missourians with disabilities and their families live better lives. From early childhood education and in-depth autism training, to job training and community living support, Easterseals Midwest helps people with developmental disabilities and their families address life's challenges and achieve personal goals.

The resources available to us through Easterseals and its affiliates across the country allow us to enhance our services, generate additional funding to better support our programs, and develop new programs and/or treatment strategies. In addition, the national network gives us an advantage with the federal government to promote public policy that expands services to unserved and underserved individuals. All of this gives us the opportunity to both improve and expand our services for individuals with developmental disabilities in the communities we serve.

Expectations and Information

Easterseals Midwest Early Childhood Center Location

6600 A Royal St.

Pleasant Valley, MO 64118.

Phone Number: 816-476-4011

Fax Number: 816-476-4015.

Our Commitment to You and Your Family

Easterseals Midwest commits that well-trained, professional staff will provide the best service to you in a timely manner. We will listen to you and treat you with courtesy, respect and dignity. In a situation of potential conflict of interest, we will discuss options with you and your team.

- We provide a team of interested and knowledgeable staff and appropriate professionals who will treat individuals and their families with understanding and respect.
- We respect the rights, dignity, privacy and individuality of everyone we serve.
- We provide and adhere to a service plan based upon the individual's needs.
- We facilitate the rights of individuals and families/guardians to ask questions and appeal decisions made regarding services and support personnel.

Staff Qualifications

- Prior to employment, background screenings are run on applicants to determine employability and to ensure the protection of individuals served. Background checks include criminal history, Department of Motor Vehicles, Employee Disqualification List, Family Care Safety Registry for abuse and neglect and E-Verify for legal ability to work in the United States.
- All staff are screened annually through Family Care Safety Registry for abuse and neglect, and the Department of Motor Vehicles.
- Easterseals Midwest staff hold a variety of educational qualifications and experience and are licensed and certified where required.
- Staff participate in training to learn the core philosophy and behavioral approach strategies used by Easterseals Midwest. Staff also receive training specific to their job roles.

Discrimination

Easterseals services shall be provided to individuals without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age (unless otherwise permitted by law), veteran status, marital status, physical or mental disability or any other protected class under local, state or federal law.

Services Offered

Easterseals Midwest works to meet the concerns and priorities of each individual family. Easterseals Midwest Early Childhood Center provides the following services:

- Infant/Toddler programming for children birth to 2 years
- Preschool for children ages 3-5 years
- Parents Day Out
- Therapy Services
- Intensive Behavioral Intervention Classroom

Enrollment and Activity Costs

Enrollment costs will be provided to you in your enrollment packet. Additionally, any supplemental costs such as for activities or supplies will be disclosed to you. You will be notified in advance of any changes to these fees or costs.

Payment arrangements must be made prior to beginning services. All tuition is due on every Monday. Early Head Start/Head Start families will not be charged a fee for Early Head Start/Head Start services. The Head Start program day is from 9:00-3:00. Head Start families will be charged for wrap around services before 9:00 a.m. and after 3:00 p.m.

Eligibility Criteria

Easterseals Midwest provides quality education and intervention for children in a manner consistent with developmentally appropriate practice. In holding steadfast to the agency's commitment to promote equality, Easterseals Midwest does not discriminate nor show favoritism among children eligible for and/or those who seek our services. Children birth to kindergarten are eligible for early childhood/early intervention. The program accepts referrals of families from any public or private entity or individual.

To ensure a good match between the children's needs and the agency's services, Easterseals Midwest staff will conduct an interview with the parent(s)/guardian(s) prior to enrollment. The Director of Children's Services reserves the right to deny admission based on Easterseals Midwest's ability to provide appropriate services.

Children who are deemed medically fragile receive enrollment priority for the early childhood program. Easterseals Midwest offers enrollment to children with developmental disabilities and delays, siblings of children with developmental disabilities and delays, and then to the community at large. In addition, Easterseals Midwest provides Early Head Start/Head Start services to 24 children. Children in the Early Head Start/Head Start program must meet eligibility criteria as defined by Mid America Head Start.

Operating Hours

Easterseals Midwest Early Childhood Center operates on a full day, full year calendar. Center hours are 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Families will be provided a calendar each January for the year in regards to additional closures of the center. Families remain responsible for the full tuition costs in order to retain placement. Easterseals Midwest Early Childhood Center observes and will be closed on the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day and the day after
- Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

Easterseals Midwest Early Childhood Center will also close 4 times throughout the year for staff professional development days.

Easterseals Midwest Early Childhood Center follows North Kansas City School District for weather decision, however we reserve the right to open if it is for cold temperature only. Families are highly encouraged to sign up for the texting notification through Remind101.

Parking

Drop off and pick up parking is available in the parking area to the east of the building. Families must escort their child(ren) to the classroom.

Smoke Free Environment

Easterseals Midwest is a smoke free environment. Smoking is prohibited on Easterseals property. Employees who do smoke on their personal time must report to work free of smoke odor.

Security

Easterseals Midwest believes the safety and security of each child is of the utmost importance. Classroom staff are trained on security measures including maintaining an accurate count of children present, verifying the count whenever children move from one location to another, completing visual scans of the environment, and following Health and Safety procedures. Easterseals Midwest practices regular drills so staff are prepared in the event of an emergency. Exterior doors are kept locked and visitors must be buzzed into the center. Visitors are required to sign in/out while at the center. Video cameras monitor the parking lot and front entrance of the building.

Organizational Structure

The Center staff includes

- Director of Children's Services
- Center Manager
- Classroom Teachers
- Family Advocate
- Administrative Assistant
- Food Service Specialist

Organization Contacts

Jeanne Marshall
Executive Vice President of Services and
Chief Program Officer
314-432-6200

Vacant
Vice President,
Autism and Early Childhood Services
573-289-2194

Holly Wilmes
Director of Children's Services
816-476-4011 x 7571
holly.wilmes@esmw.org

Amy Herring
Center Manager
816-476-4011 x 7551
amy.herring@esmw.org

Valerie Archer
Family Advocate
816-476-4011 x 7552
Valerie.archer@esmw.org

Ciera Peterson
Administrative Assistant
816-476-4011 x 7550
Ciera.peterson@esmw.org

Communication

Communication between families and teachers is critical and provides a connection between home and school. We welcome the opportunity to talk with you during drop off and pick up, but we recognize that those can also be hurried times. Therefore, we provide you with daily written reports and/or email/text updates on your child's activities. If there is something that you would like included that is not typically a part of the daily note, please let us know. Feel free to ask questions or to schedule an appointment with us at anytime. We feel that communication between families and teachers is critical and because of that, we ask that families not use cell phones while in the center.

Curriculum/Assessment

Easterseals Midwest Early Childhood Center utilizes the Creative Curriculum as the primary curriculum for Center-Based programming. The curriculum is designed to enhance and promote each child's development in the areas of language, cognition, fine and gross motor, self-help, and social-emotional skills. Families are an important part of the curriculum planning and implementation process. Families give input in the selection of the curriculum, individualization activities, and their child's developmental progress by communicating regularly with classroom staff on their child's strengths, interests, learning styles, and needs during family/teacher conferences, on daily reports, and through lesson plans. Lesson plans are posted and available for families to review in each classroom

All children enrolled will be screened for developmental, sensory, and behavioral concerns. These screenings take place in partnership with the child's family within 45 calendar days of the child's enrollment into the program. The screening process identifies children who need to be referred for more formal assessments and allows the classroom teachers to create goals and to individualize services according to the child's specific developmental level. Additional assessments will be administered at regular intervals during enrollment in the program.

Daily Schedule

The daily schedule provides a framework for planning and organizing the daily routines and activities for the children. These routines may be a little different based on the age of your child. Infants follow their own developmental schedules. They are fed, changed, and nap as/when necessary. Adjustments to the schedule are made as your child gets older and his/her needs change. Each classroom posts a schedule that reflects the daily routines. Please refer to your child's daily report for more detailed

information on his/her schedule. It is important for children to be present by 9:00 a.m. each day in order to fully participate in the daily activities.

Behavior and Guidance

Easterseals Midwest Early Childhood Center recognizes the need for children to develop strong social-emotional skills including: confidence, curiosity, intentionality, self-control, relatedness, and cooperativeness. Through positive relationships and primary care giving, classroom teachers provide developmentally appropriate guidance. Easterseals Midwest utilizes Conscious Discipline as the social emotional curriculum.

If a child exhibits behaviors or habits that are undesirable, disrupt the learning environment for other children, or pose concerns regarding safety, the family will be contacted to discuss an intervention plan.

Intervention plans are created by the family, Lead Teacher, Center Manager, Director of Children's Services and anyone else deemed necessary. The plan is individualized and will ensure that all teachers working with a child approach the identified situations in a consistent manner. Intervention plans may be changed at any time and will be updated as needed.

Biting Policy

Young children bite for many reasons. They may be teething, hungry, experimenting with the feel of their mouth on an object, angry and out of control or feeling overwhelmed. When children become frustrated, angry, upset, or scared, they may resort to biting as a way to express their emotions. It is important to remember that biting is scary for both the biter and the child who was bitten.

The classroom teachers closely supervise children who are going through a stage of biting. Parents are notified in person or by telephone if their child bites or is bitten. Classroom teachers will maintain confidentiality and will not disclose information to either set of families. Teachers document every occurrence, including attempted bites, and note location, time, participants, and circumstances. If necessary, an intervention plan will be developed in collaboration with the child's parents, classroom teachers, and Center Manager. The intervention plan will detail the steps the classroom teachers will take to assure the safety of all children.

Naptime/Rest Time

Infants

Our Safe Sleep Policy's purpose is to maintain a safe sleep environment that reduces the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and sudden unexpected infant deaths (SUIDS) in children less than one year of age. Missouri Law (210.223.1, RSMo.) requires all licensed child care facilities that provide care for children less than one year of age to implement and maintain a written safe sleep policy in accordance with the most recent safe sleep recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). Missouri child care licensing rules require licensed child care facilities to provide families who have infants in care a copy of the facility's safe sleep policy.

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome is the sudden death of an infant less than one year of age that cannot be explained after a thorough investigation has been conducted, including a complete autopsy, an examination of the death scene, and a review of the clinical history.

Sudden unexpected infant death is the sudden and unexpected death of an infant less than one year of age in which the manner and cause of death are not immediately obvious prior to investigation. Causes of sudden unexpected infant death include, but are not limited to, metabolic disorders, hypothermia or hyperthermia, neglect or homicide, poisoning, and accidental suffocation.

Classroom staff can maintain safer sleep environments for infants that help lower the chances of SIDS. Our goal is to take proactive steps to reduce the risk of SIDS in child care and to work with parents to keep infants safer while they sleep. To do so, this facility will practice the following safe sleep policy:

1. Infants will always be placed on their backs to sleep. When, in the opinion of the infant's licensed health care provider, an infant requires alternative sleep positions or special sleeping arrangements, we will require a written, signed statement from your child's licensed health care provider detailing the alternative sleep positions or special sleeping arrangements. Classroom staff will put the infant to sleep as specified in the written instructions.
2. When infants can easily turn from their stomachs to their backs and from their backs to their stomachs, they shall be initially placed on their backs but shall be allowed to adopt whatever sleep position they prefer. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that infants are placed on their back to sleep but when infants can easily turn over from their back to their stomach, they may adopt whatever position they prefer for sleep. We follow this recommendation by the American Academy of Pediatrics.
3. Sleeping infants shall have a supervised nap period. The classroom staff check on the infant frequently during napping or sleeping and remain in close proximity to the infant in order to hear and see them if they have difficulty during napping or when awake.
4. Steps are taken to keep infants from overheating by regulating the room temperature, avoiding excess bedding, and not over dressing or over wrapping the infant. Infants should be dressed appropriately for the environment with no more than 1 layer more than an adult would wear to be comfortable in the classroom environment.
5. All classroom staff receive in-person or online training on infant safe sleep based on AAP safe sleep recommendations. This training is completed within 30 days of employment or volunteering at the center and is also completed every 3 years.

Safe Sleep Environment

1. Room temperature is kept at no less than 68F degrees and no more than 85F degrees when measured two feet from the floor. Infants are supervised to ensure they are not overheated or chilled.
2. Infants' heads and faces are not covered during sleep. Infants' cribs do not have blankets or bedding hanging from the sides or in the beds. We use sleep clothing (sleep sacks) that are designed to keep your child warm without the possible hazard of covering the head or face during sleep/nap time.
3. No blankets, loose bedding, comforters, pillows, bumper pads, or any object that can increase the risk of entrapment, suffocation, or strangulation is used in cribs or other sleeping equipment.
4. Toys and stuffed animals are not placed in the crib. **When indicated on the Infant and Toddler Feeding and Care Plan or with written parent consent, pacifiers will be allowed in infants' cribs while they sleep. The pacifier cannot have cords or attaching mechanisms.**
5. Only an individually assigned safety approved crib or portable crib with a firm mattress and tight fitting sheet will be used for infant napping or sleeping.
6. Only one infant may occupy a crib at one time. Each infant will be assigned to a specific crib while enrolled at ESMW.
7. Sitting devices such as car seats, strollers, swings, infant carriers, slings, and other sitting devices are not used for sleep/naptime. Infants who fall asleep anywhere other than a crib or portable crib are placed in the crib they are assigned to for the remainder of their sleep or nap time.
8. No person shall smoke or otherwise use tobacco products in any area of the facility at any time.
9. Home monitors or commercial devices marketed to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome will not be used in place of supervision while children are napping or sleeping.
10. All families are informed of the facility's written Safe Sleep Policy at the time of enrollment.
11. Infants who are awake are given supervised "tummy time" to promote healthy development, exercise and play.

Toddlers and Preschoolers

The daily schedule includes naptime from approximately 1:00pm-3:00pm. If a child needs a nap earlier he/she will be allowed to sleep at that time. Teachers meet the needs of children on an individual schedule. If a child slept in the morning, and is not ready to nap again at the scheduled rest times, teachers provide quiet activities. A child is not expected to stay on his/her cot the entire nap time. If children are not asleep within 30 minutes, they will be provided with an alternative activity. If a child needs assistance calming for nap time, a teacher will pat their back.

Diapering/Toileting

Infants and children in diapers will be checked and/or changed at regular (at a minimum every hour) intervals throughout the day. When a child demonstrates he/she is developmentally ready for potty training, the classroom teachers will collaborate with the family to set up a plan for toilet training.

Outdoor Play

Missouri DHSS requires programs to promote children's physical development by providing adequate outdoor space, equipment, materials and adult guidance. DHSS Regulations require that children spend a minimum of 1 hour per day in outdoor play when weather permits. Fresh air and exercise is important to the total health of your child. Families will be asked to make sure their children have suitable clothing for the weather conditions. When going outside on cold days, teachers will make sure that children are dressed appropriately. When children go out on hot days, teachers shall be mindful of the effect of the heat on children by providing opportunities for shade, allowing children access to water, and limiting the amount of time the children are outdoors. Parents will be asked to sign the Sunscreen Permission form allowing classroom teachers to apply sunscreen on a daily basis.

What to Bring

Clothing/Seasonal Items

Active and messy play is going to be a part of your child's day. It is recommended that children wear comfortable, washable play clothes that are easy to move around in and okay if something spills on it. Parents are asked to provide 2 complete change of clothing including socks, onesies, shirts, pants, shorts, etc. to be left at school. It is also a good idea to keep a sweater or sweatshirt in your child's cubby. During the summer, parents may also provide a hat and sunglasses. In addition, each family is asked to provide items for their child(ren)'s Emergency Preparedness Kit.

Bottles and Pacifiers

Parents of infants are asked to bring 5 bottles to leave at the center. The classroom staff will label the bottles with your child's name. If you are breastfeeding and plan to provide breast milk, the classroom staff will provide additional information about the center's storage and handling of breast milk. If your child uses a pacifier, parents are asked to provide a labeled pacifier.

Other items

Some children may have a special toy or stuffed animal that provides comfort and support during stressful situations. Please label your child's special toy with his/her name. Each family will be asked to put together an emergency kit with an extra change of clothing, a small toy or book, and emergency contact information.

Items Supplied by Early Childhood Center

Easterseals Midwest Early Childhood Center will supply the following items:

- Infant formula
- Selection of baby foods and baby cereals
- Breakfast, lunch, and snacks based on CACFP guidelines including whole milk to children 1-2 years of age and 1% milk to children 2 and above.
- Sheets and blankets for cribs and cots
- Diapers and wipes for EHS and HS children

Guidelines for visiting/observing classrooms

Parents are welcome and encouraged to visit the center anytime during the day. Parents are encouraged to spend as much time in the classroom as their schedule allows. It is never an inconvenience to have families call. Please keep in mind that classroom teachers are busy with the children throughout the day. Phone calls will be returned during teacher planning time. Parents are welcome to talk to the Center Manager or Family Advocate if there is a concern about their child or classroom.

Emergency Communication and Contacts

Parents are expected to provide the center with any and all contact numbers we might need in order to reach you. Please be aware that the center staff is authorized to call your emergency contacts to pick up your child if we are unable to reach you in a reasonable amount of time.

In the event of a need to evacuate the center, the evacuation location will be Hearthside Homes (across the street) or Palmer Electric (behind the building)

Arrival and Departure

The arrival and departure of children are extremely important events. Families and children should expect to be greeted upon arrival and acknowledged at departure. Families will be asked to designate all adults who may pick up their child from the center. If an unfamiliar adult comes to pick up a child, the teacher will check the listing of authorized adults and if their name is listed, check their photo identification. Easterseals Midwest requires that you do not leave any children unattended in your vehicle for any reason. If you need assistance during drop off or pick up, please contact a staff member. Please be aware that it is illegal to leave a child unattended in a vehicle.

Sign In

Parents and other adults who transport their children to the center sign in on the computer system to document the time of arrival each day. Please be advised that to assure the health and safety of all children, the official exchange of custody occurs when a staff member acknowledges and accepts your child into care.

Sign Out

The parent or adult listed on the release form should pick up the child from the classroom. The classroom teacher is responsible for verifying an adult's identity if the adult is unfamiliar to the teacher. The adult who picks up the child signs the child out on the computer system to document the time of departure. The teacher completes the Day Note and gives the parent or other approved adult their copy of the paperwork.

Emergency Pick Up

In rare circumstances, a parent may need to send someone not listed on approved adults list. In those situations, the family must contact the center. The front desk staff will be responsible for notifying the classroom staff. The classroom teacher will verify the person's name and identity before releasing the child. Authorized adults must provide photo identification before the child will be released. When a child is released to a person other than the parents or guardian, the center will maintain a record of to whom the child was released, the date, and the time the child was released.

Joint Custody

Easterseals Midwest Early Childhood Center will only release children to authorized individuals. In the event of a change in custodial parents, the custodial parent must provide a court order documenting the change. This court order will be kept on file at the center.

Attendance

Once enrolled, your child must attend the child care center on a regular basis. Parents are asked to contact Easterseals Midwest Early Childhood Center if their child will be absent. Please notify the office by 9:00 a.m. if your child is unable to attend. You will receive a courtesy call from the Easterseals Midwest Administrative Assistant if you do not notify Easterseals Midwest of your child(ren)'s absence. You will be held responsible for payment for the time your child(ren) does (do) not attend.

Each family enrolled full time and paying full tuition will be awarded 1 week free tuition per child annually (child cannot be in attendance this week) This needs to be used consecutively and at least 2 weeks' notice is required. If your child(ren) will not be attending Easterseals Midwest for an extended period of time, families will remain responsible for full payment during the absence in order to guarantee placement for their child(ren) upon return.

If your child is sick, please describe the illness so classroom staff can be made aware of the potential illness. In the event of more than 3 absent days in any given month, except in the event of illness or bereavement, parents will be contacted to discuss the absences. If necessary, the Family Advocate and the parents will develop a plan to address the absences. If attendance continues to be problematic, the Center Manager will notify the family before services are discontinued.

Emergency Policy in Case of Failure to Pick Up a Child

In the event a child is not picked up by 5:30 p.m., classroom teachers will notify the Center Manager /Family Advocate. Families will be charged a late pick up fee of \$1.00 per child per minute for each minute late.

Staff will attempt to call the parent. If Easterseals Midwest Early Childhood Center staff are unable to reach the parent, they will attempt to call the emergency contact numbers. If the child is released to an emergency contact individual, a message will be left on the family's answering machine or voice mail.

If the child has not been picked up by 6:30 p.m. and all attempts to reach parents and emergency contact numbers have been unsuccessful, the staff in consultation with the Director of Children's Services will call Child Protective Services.

1st incident

Parents will be given a written notice with a copy of the late pick up policy.

2nd incident

Parents will be asked to schedule a meeting with the Center Manager to develop a plan to address the issues.

3rd incident

Your child may no longer be eligible for services.

Incapacitated Parent

If at any time the Easterseals Midwest staff suspect that a parent's physical condition or behavior could place a child in an unsafe circumstance, the staff will:

- Avoid releasing the child to the parent. Telephone the emergency contact person(s).
- If an emergency contact person cannot be reached, the staff will assist the family in finding alternate transportation.

- If the parent refuses to cooperate with this procedure, staff will contact the appropriate authorities.

Withdrawal and Termination

Parents are asked to notify the Center Manager if they wish to withdraw their child from the program. Families are asked to give written notice to the agency 10 business days prior to termination. In the event families are unable to provide the notices, families will be financially responsible for payment of the 10 business days from the date notice was given.

Easterseals Midwest may terminate an individual's enrollment under the following conditions:

- Easterseals Midwest proves unable to provide the most appropriate environment for the child
- Failure to comply with policies and procedures.
- Failure to comply with payment policies.
- Failure to submit regulated health information in a timely manner.

Should Easterseals Midwest determine the agency unable to provide supports to meet the needs of a child or family in a satisfactory manner, services may be terminated. In such cases, the Vice President of Autism and Children's Services will be notified and 30 days' notice will be provided. If there are extenuating circumstances that would put the child, other children, or associates of the agency at risk, an exception to the 30 day rule may be made.

Recommendations for suspension will come from the program management team after reviewing all available data and information. The Director of Children's Services reserves the right to suspend services to any individual who proves unable to benefit from the services provided. During the suspension period, the interdisciplinary team (which must include the teacher, family and Center Manager and may also include therapists or other administrative staff) will convene to evaluate the circumstances and discuss concerns, priorities, and resources and to develop a plan that would most benefit the child and family.

Emergency Procedures

In the case of an injury or illness, you will be contacted immediately. Classroom staff will administer emergency treatment. If the injury is minor, classroom staff will provide first aid and complete an Incident Report. If the injury is serious and your child needs to be seen by a doctor, classroom staff will follow First Aid protocol by administering immediate aid. The center will call 911 and center staff will accompany your child to the nearest hospital. Fire, tornado, and other drills will occur regularly. Each classroom will post a list of emergency phone numbers (911, Poison Control, Area Hospitals).

Health

Medical and Immunization Requirements

Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services requires a pre-entrance health assessment for all children. Parents will be required to complete the enrollment paperwork prior to the child's first day of attendance. Families will be asked to provide updated Well Child Visit (EPSDT) information.

Immunizations

Documentation of immunization status is required before the child's first day of attendance. Families will be asked to provide updated immunization information. Termination from the center may occur if immunizations are not up to date and proper documentation is not obtained. In situations where there is a medical or religious preference regarding immunizations, families will be asked to provide written documentation provided by the child's health care provider. Families may request to be notified when there are children currently enrolled or attending the facility for whom an exemption has been filed.

Communicable Diseases

You will receive a notice when your child has been exposed to a communicable disease. Please inform us if your child has symptoms or has contracted a communicable disease.

Exclusion Policy

Children may be temporarily excluded when a short term injury or illness poses a significant risk to the health or safety of the child or anyone in contact with the child. Easterseals Midwest Early Childhood Center follows the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services Exclusion Guidelines that state a child will be excluded from care when the illness or injury prevents the child from participating comfortably in center activities and/or the illness or injury results in a greater care need than the classroom staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children. Classroom staff will consult with the Center Manager before excluding a child from care. Also, please note that some illnesses/treatment will require that your child be excluded from the center for more than 24 hours.

Children will be excluded when he/she has any of the following symptoms:

- Temperature—Oral temperature 100 degrees or greater
- Diarrhea—more than 1 abnormally loose stool. If a child has one loose stool, s/he shall be observed for additional loose stools or other symptoms.
- Severe coughing—if child becomes red or blue in the face or makes high-pitched croupy or whooping sounds after coughing
- Difficult or rapid breathing (especially important in infants under six months)
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Tears, redness of eyelid lining, irritation, followed by swelling or discharge of pus
- Unusual spots or rashes
- Sore throat or trouble swallowing
- An infected skin patch—crusty, bright yellow, dry or gummy areas of the skin
- Unusually dark, tea-colored urine
- Grey or white stool
- Headache or stiff neck
- Vomiting more than once
- Severe itching of the body or scalp, or scratching of the scalp. These may be symptoms of lice or scabies.
- Known contagious diseases i.e. chicken pox, strep throat

In order to limit the exposure to the rest of the group, ill children will be isolated from the other children until the parent(s)/guardian(s) or designee arrives. A caregiver shall be in close proximity to the individual until the parent(s)/guardian(s) or caregiver arrives. Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be notified when any contagious diseases occurs in the facility. A visibly placed notice will be posted in the front vestibule.

Medication

Easterseals Midwest Early Childhood Center follows Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services Child Care Licensing regulations on medication administration. The following outlines the medication administration procedures.

- Easterseals Midwest will only administer those medications accompanied by a medication form signed by parent/guardian.
- All medication must be in the original container and labeled with the child's name and dosage instructions.
- Families are required to administer any new medication the first time at home to monitor for any adverse reactions.
- All staff are required to be trained in medication administration prior to administering any medication.

Parents must complete the Medication Administration form.

All prescribed medication will be labeled by a pharmacist in the original, child resistant container. The label will include the following information:

- child's first and last name
- name of medication
- date the prescription was filled
- prescribing health care provider medication's expiration date
- possible side effects
- administration, storage, and disposal instructions

Over the counter medication (i.e. Tylenol, teething medication, and diaper ointment) can be administered with a signed Medication Administration Form and doctor's orders and must be in the original container.

Medications administered as PRN (as needed) must have specific instructions for administration including minimum time between doses, maximum number of doses, and criteria for administration.

Nutrition

Easterseals Midwest Early Childhood Center is a part of the United States Department of Agriculture Child and Adult Care Food Program. All meals and snacks are prepared on site.

Nutrition and Food Service

Easterseals Midwest Early Childhood Center will offer each child breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack(s). Children who have not received breakfast at the time they arrive will be offered a breakfast. Older toddlers and Preschoolers will follow the regularly scheduled meal times. Infants will be fed based on their individual schedules. CACFP guidelines are followed for all meal service. A copy of the monthly menu is posted in the classroom.

Allergies and food restrictions

Families will be asked to provide nutrition information during the enrollment process. Families will be asked to request a doctor's statement if the child's diet is related to medical concerns. If the request is based on religious or personal preferences, families will be asked to indicate their request on the Nutritional Assessment during the enrollment process. Kitchen staff will have knowledge of any special diet or food concerns. Kitchen staff will assure adherence to CACFP guidelines when alternative meals are provided.

Parent/Teacher Conference

Parents will be encouraged to participate in staff-parent conferences and home visits to discuss their child's development and education. Parents will also be asked to participate in regularly scheduled parent/teacher conferences and home visits throughout the program year. These conferences are designed to assure the family and the teaching staff work together to identify ways to support the child's learning. In addition, Parent/Teacher Conferences provide parents and teachers the opportunity for an in-depth discussion of each child and his/her development and adjustment to the program.

Parents will be asked to complete a New Enrollment Satisfaction Survey with each newly enrolled child 4 weeks after start date.

Therapy Service

Early intervention services help young children with disabilities achieve their goals in cognitive, social/emotional, communicative, ABA, adaptive and physical development. Services may include occupational therapy to help an infant learn to hold her bottle, physical therapy to help her learn to roll over, or speech therapy to help her learn to eat. Most early intervention services take place in the home or, in the case of working parents, at their childcare setting.

Easter Seals Midwest offers all of the following services; speech and language pathology, occupational therapy, ABA, physical therapy and special instruction. Therapy services are primarily provided through the Missouri First Steps program for children birth to three years. Therapy services may also be provided through Insurance, or private pay.

Children who have a developmental delay or a diagnosed condition are referred through Missouri First Steps, which is a state funded program for early intervention services.

- Children are referred to MO First Steps by parents or the early childhood team
- MO First Steps (SPOE) will contact the family or guardian to make arrangements for an assessment
- After the initial assessment the family/guardian will meet with the Services Coordinator to determine if the child qualifies for services. If not the services coordinator will provide you with suggestions or ESMW Advocate can be contacted for further services or recommendations.
- The next step is to help build a team to help support you in IFSP (Individual Family Service Plan). You and your family know your child the best and play an important part on the IFSP. Individuals who know your child can help provide important daily information to help create goals and outcomes. (People to consider: mom, dad, grandparents, Aunts, uncles, caregivers, teachers, friends, church members, etc) Your primary responsibility is to provide concerns and priorities. Together your team will put a plan together determining services/therapy and the duration and frequency of services.
- If ESMW therapy team is chosen the first action is to meet with the team and create an individual care plan and review the IFSP and the services that will be provided.
- Transferring early childhood services to Easter Seals Midwest. If your child is attending the early childhood center and they are receiving MO First Steps you do have an option to have your therapy provided in the center or continue with your current team. However if you chose to continue with your current team and they are not employees of ESMW your services will need to be in your home or another community place. If you chose ESMW for services then you will need to make contact with your service coordinator and ask them to transfer you to the ESMW team.
- Exception to the policy : If a service is not provided or available through ESMW then another provider will be allowed to provide services in the center(dietary/nutritionist, Visual impairment, etc)

Easterseals Midwest Policies and Procedures

Conflict of Interest

Employees of Easterseals Midwest shall not engage in any personal activity, investment, interest or association, which would interfere, or appear to interfere, with the independent exercise of his or her judgment in situations where personal interest might conflict with the best interest of Easterseals.

Conflicts of interest can arise in many situations. The following are procedures to follow:

- **Financial Interest in Vendors, Individuals and Competitors** - Employees should not have a direct or indirect financial interest in any company or business entity, which is a vendor to Easterseals (other than minor investments in the stock of publicly traded companies).
- **Acceptance of Gifts and Favors** - Employees or members of his/her immediate family are not to give or receive any loans, cash or gifts from vendors, individuals or families.
- **Family Ties** - Employees are not to engage in any business transaction on behalf of Easterseals with a relative of their immediate family, a company or other business entity of which any such relative is an officer, director, or principal, without first disclosing such relationship and obtaining the approval of Easterseals management.
- **Legal Matters** – Employees are not to become involved in any type of family legal matter such as child custody or witnessing of documents. Employees cannot write letters of support or reports for the court. Employees will comply where legally required to do so such as with a subpoena and the organization must be reimbursed for staff time.
- **Outside Employment** - Employees are required to report to their supervisor and Human Resources, any outside full or part-time employment. Outside employment must not conflict with the employee's ability to perform their duties and must not create a conflict of interest for the employee or for Easterseals. All employees must disclose any full- or part-time positions held outside Easterseals.

HIPAA

Easterseals will remain compliant with the Federal and State Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and subsequent privacy-related regulations. Protected Health Information (PHI) is generally defined as information that:

- Identifies the individual, or is reasonably believed capable of identifying the individual, including information such as name, date of birth, social security number, photo or other image, address, etc.
- Identifies the individual as a recipient of services when the nature of those services might reveal protected information about the individual (e.g., a staff member who is accompanying an individual introduces themselves as an 'autism training specialist')
- Is created or received by a health care provider, health plan or employer
- Relates to the past, present or future physical or mental condition of an individual, the provision of healthcare to an individual or the past, present or future payment for the provision of healthcare to an individual
- Is maintained in any form, including paper, electronic records, etc.
- Is transmitted by any common means of communications including conversation, mail, email, fax, phone, etc.

Records

We are committed to ensuring confidentiality of individual records which includes collection, securing and use of individual information in accordance with Federal and State HIPAA privacy laws. Record confidentiality procedures:

- Only individual information that has been created by Easterseals can be released to other agencies, professionals, etc. in accordance to Easterseals Personal Health Information Policy and

only when the individual has signed an Individual Authorization for Release form. (Exception: Information will be reported to agencies that are funding services for an individual as permitted by law.)

- Designated employees will have access to electronic individual records contained within the individual records database. A security level will be issued to each designated employee for the database.
- Practicum students and volunteers may have access to records only with the permission of the respective Director and after they have received HIPAA training and signed an acknowledgement form.
- Families have the right to view their record. Information in the family's record is available during regular office hours. The family may choose to review and/or make copies of their records at the Easterseals offices. Supervision by agency staff is required during any individual and/or guardian review of records.
- E-mails that contain individual information must conform to Easterseals privacy policies.
- All employees will adhere to Easterseals Privacy Policies.

Rights

Easterseals Midwest seeks to provide the highest quality of service. It is our responsibility to inform participants of their rights and work to protect them. Participants have the right:

- To receive, or not receive, services and to discontinue services at any time.
- To develop their own goals with the help of the people they choose, and review it quarterly to check their progress.
- To make choices about the services they receive and who provides them.
- To receive quality services. If they aren't satisfied with a service or feel they have not been treated fairly, they have the right to make a complaint. Please follow the Grievance Procedure.
- To be treated with respect and to be free of humiliation at all times.
- To an investigation and a timely resolution of any alleged infringement of their rights.
- To review or make copies of their Easterseals file in accordance with HIPAA standards.
- To receive information in a timely manner.
- To the confidentiality of information pertaining to them. Easterseals complies with all federal, state, and local regulations regarding HIPAA.
- To know who pays for the services they receive and how much it costs.
- To receive concurrent services within the funding guidelines.
- To exercise their rights without fear of harm or retaliation.

Family Responsibilities

It is reasonable to expect and encourage families to assume responsibilities as participants in Easterseals Midwest services. It is a family's responsibility to:

- Be involved in developing and reviewing their child's individualized service plan.
- Participate in their individualized service plan goals once they have developed them.
- Talk to their staff and others on their planning team about their needs, preferences and goals.
- Keep all appointments or meetings with staff. If an appointment cannot be kept, 24 hours' notice should be given. If the cancelation is due to an emergency, a call should be made as soon as possible.
- Follow any additional agreements required by their specific program area where applicable.
- Let us know when they have a suggestion, comment or complaint so we can help find an answer to the problem.
- Treat staff and other families with respect and consideration.
- Respect the confidentiality and privacy of other Easterseals Midwest individuals.

- Remain free from the influence of drugs or alcohol during participation of Easterseals Midwest programs.
- Refrain from possessing weapons of any kind during participation of Easterseals Midwest programs.
- Refrain from doing anything that could harm or endanger oneself, others or property.

Abuse and Neglect

All employees are considered to be mandated reporters and are obligated to immediately report any known or suspected incident of abuse, neglect, or misuse of funds or property involving any agency individual, as well as a child, or any other vulnerable person.

Child Abuse & Neglect Prevention and Reporting

Easterseals Midwest is committed to enhancing the health and development of all children, nurturing family relationships, and obeying local, state and federal laws. Easterseals Midwest staff will report any suspected incidents of child abuse and neglect to the Missouri Hotline. Missouri law mandates that Easterseals Midwest staff members make reports if there is reason to believe that a child has been injured or is at risk of injury due to child abuse or neglect. There are no acceptable options, exceptions, or circumstantial reasons for delaying mandated reporting.

Grievance Procedure

- **Step One** - The individual will discuss the problem/issue with the person who supports them regularly. If however, a discussion with the aforementioned employee is not appropriate, the individual will proceed directly to step two. The employee will respond to any complaint or concern expressed by an individual, or on behalf of them, within one (1) business day. Should this response not be satisfactory, it is the responsibility of the employee to assist the individual in pursuing the grievance procedure to resolution.
- **Step Two** - The individual will discuss the problem/issue with their Manager. The Manager will provide a response within two (2) business days. Should this response not be satisfactory, proceed to step three.
- **Step Three** - The individual will discuss the problem/issue with their Program Director. The Program Director will provide a written and verbal response within three (3) business days. If this response is not satisfactory, proceed to step four.
- **Step Four** - The individual will discuss the problem/issue with Vice President of Adult Services or Autism Services. The appropriate Vice President will provide a written and verbal response within three (3) business days. The decision of the Vice President may be appealed to the Easterseals Midwest Dues Process Committee by contacting the Chair of the Due Process Committee.

All individuals are provided with the names and phone numbers of the above named staff. Any individual, guardian or family member may contact an Easterseals Midwest Quality Analyst at any step of the grievance process. The Grievance Procedure is reviewed with the individual upon the start of services and annually thereafter. Easterseals Midwest prohibits retaliation or barriers to services for utilizing the grievance procedure.

Easterseals Midwest employees will make any accommodations (e.g., transportation, communication, etc.) necessary for the individual to express their complaint and the individual will be encouraged to choose their own advocate for the process. Easterseals Midwest will make advocates available to the individual to assist in this process if requested. If an individual is not content with the final decision, they will be referred to their funding source for external review.

**Easterseals Midwest
Greater Kansas City Area Offices**

Adult Services

1508 NW Vivion Road
Kansas City, MO 64118
Phone: 816-781-0177
Fax: 816-326-6808

Autism and Early Childhood Services

6600A Royal Street
Pleasant Valley, MO 64068
Phone: 816-476-4011
Fax: 816-476-4015 (Early Childhood)
Fax: 816-781-9271 (Home Visiting)



Grievance Procedure

Individual Name: _____

Employee Name: _____ Program: _____

If you are not satisfied with your services from Easterseals, you may follow the steps listed below.

- 1. First talk with the person who supports you regularly. You will receive an answer within 1 business day.**

Program Employee Name

Phone # and Ext.

- 2. If you are still not satisfied talk to your Program Manager. You will receive an answer within 2 business days.**

Amy Herring

Program Manager Name

816-476-4011

Phone # and Ext.

- 3. If you are still not satisfied talk to your Program Director. The Program Director will provide a written and verbal response to you within 3 business days.**

Holly Wilmes

Program Director Name

816-476-4011 Ext. 7571

Phone # and Ext.

- 4. If you are not satisfied with the Program Director decision, contact the Vice President of Programs. You will receive a written and verbal response within 3 business days.**

Staci Bowlen

Vice President of Programs

573-289-2194

Phone # and Ext.

The decision of the Vice President of Programs may be appealed to the Easterseals Chairperson of the Human Rights Committee at 314-567-7705.

Family may contact a Quality Analyst at any step in the process at 314-567-7705.

I understand the above information as it was explained and I further understand my right not be retaliated against nor experience a barrier to services for making a complaint.

Individual Signature

Date

Easterseals Employee Signature

Date

Grievance expires one year from date of individual signature.

cc: Copy to individual
Original to individual records



Handbook Acknowledgement

I have received a copy of the Family Handbook for Easterseals Midwest's Early Childhood Center. I understand that I will be held responsible for adhering to these policies and procedures in order to provide a quality experience for my family. I understand that lack of compliance with the policies and procedures may result in the loss of center based services.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Staff Signature

Date