

EmBe



SCHOOL AGE CARE

# Parent Handbook

2023-2024

Our handbook will introduce you to EmBe’s philosophy and School Age Care (SAC) programs. It will be a quick reference guide to daily operating policies and procedures. Your familiarity with them will help make your child’s time with us the best it can be.

In Sioux Falls, all EmBe School Age Care sites are incorporated in the Community Learning Center (CLC). Please see the attached document for all information regarding CLC enrollment, billing, status changes, arrival/dismissal, inclement weather, snacks, and emergency procedures.

*EmBe reserves the right to make changes to this handbook at any time and for any reason. In the event of a change, every effort will be made to promptly provide updated information to families.*

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## WELCOME

Thank you for choosing EmBe for your childcare needs. EmBe began providing preschool and childcare in 1961 – one of the first in the state outside of homes. Since that time, EmBe’s programs have become some of the most respected in the region.

## MISSION

Empowering women and families to enrich their lives.

## VISION

We transform lives, supporting success at work, at home and in life.

## VALUES

- **Leading:** Demonstrate excellence and innovation in programs to provide experiences and respond to issues that impact our community.
- **Empowering:** Provide the tools to build and achieve personal success throughout the continuum of life. Help each person be the best they can be at each stage and age.
- **Inspiring:** Build confidence and provide opportunities, so participants realize their potential. Meet people where they are and help grow their possibilities.

## GOALS

- Each child shall be assured a safe, clean, secure environment supervised by caring adults.
- Each child shall be offered a balance of spontaneous and directed play using a variety of materials and equipment to encourage learning.
- Each child shall have a learning environment which will promote positive self-esteem, develop social skills, encourage language development and enhance physical development and perceptual motor skills.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

### LOCATIONS AND PROVIDER NUMBERS

All EmBe locations can be found by visiting [embe.org](http://embe.org). Please reach out to your Site Coordinator for the Provider Number if needed.

### LEADERSHIP STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

Please visit [EmBe.org](http://EmBe.org) for all staff contact information.

### HOURS OF OPERATION

Please visit [EmBe.org](http://EmBe.org) for hours of operation as our options vary by location.

### HOLIDAYS

EmBe is closed to observe the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Friday after Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day (close at 4:00 pm on December 24 when it falls on a weekday)

If the holiday falls on a weekend, EmBe's administration will determine the weekday which will be used to observe the holiday. Generally, if the holiday falls on a Saturday, it will be observed on Friday; if it falls on a Sunday it will be observed the following Monday. Tuition is based on equal weekly payments throughout the year, and there is no adjustment on weeks that include a holiday when EmBe is closed.

### TRAINING CLOSURES

EmBe reserves the right to close at the end of the school year/beginning of summer and the end of summer/beginning of the school year for facility maintenance and cleaning and all-staff training. This is in order to provide the highest quality care in safe and clean environments.

# BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL AND SUMMER PROGRAMS

It is important for children to have a safe and productive way to spend time before and after school, on no school days, and during the summer. Latch key kids can face many risks including anxiety, poor diet, watching too much television or neglecting their homework. Fortunately, EmBe offers great alternatives so your school age child will have a place to go where they can interact with friends, learn with hands-on activities, work on homework and relax.

School Age Care is choice based, promotes STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and math), as well as social, physical and emotional development. All of our programming will provide a variety of indoor and outdoor activities to keep kids engaged and allow them to thrive. During the summer and on no school days, we will also provide a variety of field trips (swimming, bowling, local parks, etc.) to ensure children stay active and have access to enriching experiences. This program is everything you ever wanted in a safe childcare experience and more!

Children already enrolled in our programs will automatically roll over into the next program. If your child will no longer be needing our services, please visit <https://embesf.formstack.com/forms/changeform> to complete the child change form. On-site care is based on demand and the ability to safely staff a program in accordance with state licensing requirements. There is a two-week notice required for withdrawal. EmBe is licensed by the South Dakota Department of Social Services. Children are accepted without regard to race, creed, color, religion, sex and/or national origin.

## **Before & After School Care:**

EmBe offers before and after school care when school is in session, and in partnership with the school districts.

- Before school care starts at 6:00 AM (Harrisburg only).
- EmBe will dismiss children in care directly to school when school starts.
- EmBe will receive children immediately upon school dismissal.
- After school care ends at 6:00 PM. Parents/legal guardians may pick up any time between school dismissal and 6:00 PM, any pick ups after 6:00 PM may incur a late pick up fee.

## **No School Days Care:**

EmBe offers care on days when there is a scheduled school closure (conferences, teacher in-service, Holiday breaks, etc).

- No School Days Care starts at 6:30 AM Sioux Falls (CLC).
- No School Days Care starts at 6:00 AM Harrisburg.
- No School Days Care ends at 6:00 PM.

## **Summer Care:**

Our summer program offers your family safe, conveniently located care that will work with your busy schedule.

- Summer Care hours are 6:00 AM in Harrisburg/EmBe South and until 6:00 PM and are located at your respective site. Sites may combine due to enrollment numbers.
- Summer Care hours are 6:30 AM in Sioux Falls (CLC) and until 6:00 PM and are located at your respective site. Sites may combine due to enrollment numbers.
- Parents/legal guardians should drop off before 9:00 AM unless prior arrangements are made; please see the arrival and departure policy.
- Parents/legal guardians may pick up their child at any time throughout the day, but pick ups after 6:00 PM may incur a late pick up fee.

## TUITION AND FEES

Students attending EmBe SAC in the Sioux Falls School District, please see the CLC Enrollment Department Guide attached.

### HARRISBURG TUITION OPTION 1 OR TUITION OPTION 2

Families enrolled in EmBe's School Age Care (SAC) before and after school programs may choose from two levels of before and after school care. The level of care chosen affects the weekly tuition rate as well as the amount of service provided. Please visit our website [embe.org](http://embe.org) or reach out to our Customer Service and Billing Manager for current tuition rates and registration fees at your location.

- Option 1 is a premium plan and pays for care provided throughout the school year whenever school is closed. This option includes all planned no school days, early releases and late starts. See inclement weather policy (pg 15) for further information.
- Option 2 includes planned early releases and late starts. No care is provided on planned no school days or unscheduled school closings. If care is needed on these occasions, parents/legal guardians pre-register (for planned no school days) and pay daily fees.

EmBe establishes tuition rates by looking at the total cost of tuition for the school year and/or summer care and divides the cost evenly over the number of weeks in the program (Summer Care or School Year Care). This allows families to pay the same rate every week regardless of school closure, no school days, holidays, vacations, etc.

Tuition is collected each week for care provided that week. Parents/legal guardians must provide a payment method upon registration for a program. Payment methods include ACH transactions, debit or credit card. Credit cards include a surcharge of 2.5% of the transaction. A \$35.00 processing fee will be assessed on all payments declined (checking account and credit card declines). Enrollment may be suspended if charges accumulate after a second week. When the parent/legal guardian reaches an appropriate payment plan with the Customer Service and Billing Manager, childcare may be resumed providing there is space available. EmBe will make every effort to accommodate families with financial difficulties or unforeseen circumstances that may affect ability to pay; please see Scholarship Information below. Tuition rates will generally adjust at the beginning of the school year.

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## SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

Students attending EmBe SAC in the Sioux Falls School District, please see the CLC Enrollment Department Guide attached.

EmBe accepts state assistance for all who qualify. Scholarship guidelines can be viewed by visiting [EmBe.org](http://EmBe.org) and selecting "resources." If your income falls outside the guidelines, you are invited to continue with the application process to explain any additional circumstances. After the application is submitted, it will go to finance for review. An EmBe team member will contact you within five business days to update you on the status of your application. Please contact [childcare@embe.org](mailto:childcare@embe.org) with any questions or for assistance with an application.

## ADMISSION AND ENROLLMENT

Students attending EmBe SAC in the Sioux Falls School District, please see the CLC Enrollment Department Guide attached.

EmBe SAC is licensed by the South Dakota Department of Social Services for children ranging in age from

Kindergarten to 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Children are accepted without regard to race, color, national and/or ethnic origin or religion.

Parents/legal guardians wishing to enroll a child in a program must complete the online registration and submit a payment method via tuition express *prior to the child being accepted into the program*. Any court related documents addressing parental/legal guardian rights, such as custody and visitation rights, in regard to a child enrolled in a program must be presented to the administrators. All such documents are confidential.

The following forms must be completed at the time of admission and kept current throughout enrollment:

- Consent for Treatment of a Minor
- Pick-up Permission Authorization
- Permission for Field Trips & Photo Release
- Emergency Contact List
- Current Immunization Record or Religious or Medical Exemption
- Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Application for Free & Reduced Meals
- A valid tuition express form
- A non-refundable registration fee is required at the time of registration; \$50.00 per child

## ATTENDANCE

Students attending EmBe SAC in the Sioux Falls School District, please see the CLC Enrollment Department Guide attached.

Payment of an entire weekly fee whether or not the child attends is required. Families that remove their children from care for any length of time must pay the full-time rate to secure their child's spot. Families who disenroll over the summer will fill out a withdrawal form at the end of the school year and will need to pay the registration fee to re-enroll. If the minimum weekly fee is not received, no guarantee of that spot can be given. Please contact the SAC Manager for any special circumstances that may affect attendance or ability to pay.

## ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Students attending EmBe SAC in the Sioux Falls School District, please see the CLC Enrollment Department Guide attached. Please note, all CLC families must utilize the security badges provided by the Sioux Falls School District for access to buildings.

During the school year on typical school days, EmBe receives children directly from their school site and checks them into programming upon school dismissal. For morning care or on no school days, it is the responsibility of each parent/legal guardian to make sure a caregiver acknowledges their arrival and departure from EmBe, and school age parents/legal guardians or designees must accompany their children and personally check them into and out of the program. Attendance logs are legal documents ensuring the accuracy and safety of all children arriving and departing. Failure to sign in or out on a repeated basis will result in a meeting with the School Age Care Manager and/or removal from the program. Sign-in and out records are used to validate billing, staffing, and meal planning, and are audited on a quarterly basis.

On no school days and during the summer, we ask parents/legal guardians to drop off before 9:00 AM and no later than 9:30 AM to ensure proper staffing at our sites every day. We understand that appointments or family commitments may conflict with these hours, so in the event that you would like to drop off after 9:30 we are requesting 24 hour (or more) advance notice so we know you'll be coming later and can plan for your arrival. If you have a work schedule that requires regular arrival after 9:30, please reach out to your specific



site coordinator to arrange a schedule so we can best serve your needs. We are committed to delivering the safest and highest quality programming for our children, so we are hoping that this schedule will help us ensure proper staffing and minimize disruptions to routines, activities, and instruction throughout the day. If a child arrives after 9:30 AM we may not be able to accommodate them if we do not have enough staff in the building.

Children are released only to parents/legal guardians or other authorized adults listed on the Pick-up Authorization and/or Emergency forms. ID's will be verified in cases where EmBe staff does not recognize the adult. It is the responsibility of the parent/legal guardian to keep these authorized pick-up forms complete and current. Children will not be released to any adult suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Children will not be released to anyone under the age of 16 without written parental/legal guardian consent.

Parents/legal guardians must be prompt in picking up children. Pick up time is no later than 6:00 pm. If a child is picked up after that time a late fee will be charged. If a child is not picked up by 6:00 pm *and EmBe has not been notified of any delay*, the following steps will be taken:

1. Every effort will be made to reach the parents/legal guardians at the numbers provided.
2. EmBe will send ProCare messages, text messages, and leave voicemails to parents/legal guardians to make contact with parents/legal guardians.
3. If parents/legal guardians cannot be reached, EmBe will begin contacting emergency contacts and authorized pick-ups listed on the enrollment form.
4. These efforts will continue until 6:30 pm.

In the event that no one can be reached, the School Age Care Manager will call the police/Child Protective Services by 6:30 pm. Parents/legal guardians will be notified via ProCare of next steps according to police/Child Protective Services instructions.

## CHECK IN/FAILURE TO SHOW PROCEDURE

Every child enrolled in the before and after school program must be accounted for at all times. It is extremely important that parents/legal guardians contact their child's Site Coordinator or message through ProCare before 12:00 pm if their child is going to be absent. If a student is expected and fails to arrive, the following steps will be taken and a \$10.00 no contact fee will be charged to the tuition account.

Immediately after check-in is completed, the Site Coordinator will contact the school's office to determine the child's attendance in school. If they are absent from school, no call will be made to the parent/legal guardian. If they were present, EmBe will search the school facilities while a call is made to the parent/legal guardian and/or emergency contacts to determine the child's status. EmBe will continue to search and call parent/legal guardians and/or emergency contacts for a reasonable amount of time. If we are unable to make contact with any parent/legal guardian, emergency contacts, or authorized pick ups and are still unable to locate a child, we will notify authorities for assistance.

## LATE PICK UP FEES

Students attending EmBe SAC in the Sioux Falls School District, please see the CLC Enrollment Department Guide attached.

EmBe's sites close at 6 pm. Parents/legal guardians must pick their child up by this time to avoid a late pick-up fee. A fee of \$10 will be charged for the first five (5) minutes late, and \$1.00 for each additional minute. This fee is per child and will be added to the next weekly billing. If the center has not been notified of any delay, and we cannot reach you or one of your emergency contacts by 6:30 pm, we will call the police/Child Protective Services for assistance.

## TERMINATION/WITHDRAWAL ONLINE CHANGE FORM

Students attending EmBe SAC in the Sioux Falls School District, please see the CLC Enrollment Department Guide attached.

A two-week notice must be given *prior* to withdrawing from a program by visiting <https://embesf.formstack.com/forms/changeform> to complete the online change form. Parents/legal guardians must complete this form when withdrawing from or changing to another program. This allows the child and the class time to prepare for a change and offers adequate time for the center to fill the opening. When notice is not given, the account will be charged for two weeks of service, even though the child may not be attending.

EmBe reserves the right to end care for a child for the following reasons:

- Non-payment of fees
- A child's pattern of behavior that is dangerous (or malicious) to others
- A child's pattern of behavior that requires special attention that the staff is unable to provide (or accommodate), such as 1:1 care.
- Continual lack of parental/legal guardian compliance to program policies
- Failure to provide immunization record updates and other necessary forms for enrollment
- At the discretion of the School Age Care Manager

## PROGRAM POLICIES

### PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN COMMUNICATION

Communication with parents/legal guardians is critical in providing exceptional care to children. The EmBe childcare program communicates in a variety of ways to keep parents/legal guardians, children and their teachers equally informed:

- ProCare
- Daily visits with the classroom teacher and/or the Site Coordinator
- Parent/legal guardian-teacher, parent/legal guardian-coordinator, parent/legal guardian-manager meetings as needed
- Follow us on social media for updates

EmBe's success in communicating with you is dependent upon having your most current contact information.

### SUPPLIES

All items brought to the center must be clearly labeled with the child's name. The program will provide all supplies necessary for activities.

### PERSONAL BELONGINGS

We strongly encourage personal belongings to stay at home. EmBe is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen property. EmBe will not oversee money, chargers, or any other personal valuables.

### TECHNOLOGY

The use of personal technology devices (including smartwatches with cellular capability) during program hours is prohibited. Children must keep all technology in their bags or lockers unless given permission from a staff member. Staff will confiscate any personal devices in use without permission and will return to a parent/legal guardian at pick up. Any technology required for program activities will be provided by EmBe. Should a child need to communicate with a parent/legal guardian for any reason a phone will be provided. Any inappropriate use of technology will be investigated and disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the program will be pursued. EmBe does not take responsibility for any lost or stolen property.

## FIELD TRIPS

Field trips and walkabouts from your EmBe site are a regular part of the curriculum. Children enjoy the opportunity to explore and learn from the resources throughout the community. Methods of transportation include the EmBe bus or vans and walking. For all field trips, a sign-up sheet is posted in the entry area notifying parents/legal guardians of the date, time, destination and means of transportation at least three (3) days in advance. Written parental/legal guardian permission is required before your child may participate in any field trip. All field trips are approved by the School Age Care Manager and are planned to ensure a positive experience for children.

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARENTAL/LEGAL GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT

Parents/legal guardians are encouraged to participate in their child's activities, especially during class events. Please check the announcement board at your child's site and ask the site coordinator for more information. EmBe will send Parent/Legal Guardian Satisfaction Surveys annually to get feedback on all of our programs

## CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS

All records provided regarding your child, family finances, and life circumstances are confidential. We also ask that you respect this confidentiality by not asking staff to discuss your child or other children outside of the center. No personally identifying information will be released or discussed outside the program.

## MEALS AND SNACKS

Students attending EmBe SAC in the Sioux Falls School District, please see the CLC Enrollment Department Guide attached.

EmBe's before and after school programs in Harrisburg participate in the Child and Adult Nutrition Services' Child and Adult Care Feeding Program (CACFP). Menus are posted and help ensure well-balanced meals that provide variety while meeting nutrient and energy needs. Children receiving care at the Ralph Rogers Road location receive breakfast and afternoon snacks, while children participating at a school-based site will have the opportunity to have breakfast through their elementary school's breakfast feeding program. Afternoon snacks are provided daily by EmBe at no additional charge. Meals and snacks are served at designated times and only to children present.

If a meal or snack is brought in, it must be clearly labeled with the child's name. EmBe does not heat up food that is not provided through EmBe, EmBe also does not provide refrigeration for the School Age Care program for outside snacks/meals. State law does not require meal substitutions based on religious beliefs, however EmBe will provide substitutions whenever possible at parents/legal guardians request. EmBe encourages all snacks to be nut-free.

The USDA provides partial reimbursement for the meals and snacks we serve to children. Federal regulations for this program require us to collect and update income information on an annual basis for all of our enrolled children. EmBe collects this information when school begins in the fall. By completing the income information, we will be able to determine if we can claim meals served to your child (ren) at the free or reduced priced rate. This reimbursement helps us keep our tuition as low as possible, which is why ALL FAMILIES need to complete this form, even if they choose to select N/A. All information is confidential and is used for reporting purposes only. We appreciate your help!

## **Non-Discrimination Statement**

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations

and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: [How to File a Complaint](#), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

1. mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
2. fax: (202) 690-7442; or
3. email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

## ALLERGEN POLICY

For the safety of the child, parents/legal guardians are required to provide a signed copy of the “Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan” form, detailing any allergies, food or otherwise, from which their child suffers, at the time of enrollment or when the allergy is discovered. This form must be completely filled out by the child’s physician and parent/legal guardian, and must be updated every six months, or more frequently, as needed. In addition to this form, parents/legal guardians must provide a copy of any additional physician’s orders and procedural guidelines relating to the prevention and treatment of the child’s allergy condition. This form can be obtained by request from the childcare manager.

To promote a safe environment for all students, EmBe has implemented a “Nut Safe” policy because so many children have life threatening allergies. This is a strategy to educate parents/legal guardians and staff about reducing the risk of exposure to life threatening foods. It is important to note that the safety of children with severe reactions requires the cooperation of the entire community.

Please read carefully so that you fully understand the guidelines that will be in place:

1. All snacks provided by EmBe will be free of peanuts and tree nuts.
2. Children must refrain from bringing into school ANY products that contain peanuts and tree nuts. This includes all snacks as well as lunch items.
3. If a lunchbox is found to have peanuts and tree nut products, those items will be removed, and an alternative nut-free item provided.
4. We do not allow food sharing at school unless it is a special occasion (holiday parties, fruit and veggie sharing days, and other special events). We do check ingredient lists during these events to eliminate any possible reactions.
5. Any baked items brought in for celebrations should be peanut and tree nut free and store bought with the ingredient label intact.

For more information, look at <https://www.foodallergy.org/>

EmBe makes every effort to reduce the risk of exposure to allergens within our facilities, however, we are not a nut-free environment. Any child that may require medical care, including the use of an Epi-Pen, as a result of a nut or any other allergy must have the allergy documented by a physician and parents/legal guardians provide an allergy care plan. Please reach out to a manager for any allergy related questions or forms.

## INJURIES

Parents/legal guardians will be notified of injuries that happen during care at EmBe through an Accident Report. A parent/legal guardian will be contacted immediately if a serious or questionable injury occurs.

## PHOTOGRAPHS AND MEDIA

EmBe staff may use cameras to document children's activities. These photos are primarily used to document your child's progress and may be hung up for view in EmBe locations. You will receive a release form during the registration process, granting or declining permission to EmBe and all staff to use still, motion, video or audio recording of your child's image for use in conjunction with the production of visual bulletin boards, social media or other educational purposes.

The use of recording devices without prior written consent is not allowed. EmBe prohibits recording (video and/or audio) of employees, managers, children, participants, parents/legal guardians, Board or other third parties on and off EmBe property.

## TRANSPORTATION

Parents/legal guardians are responsible for transporting children to and from designated EmBe program locations. While at EmBe, children may be transported in agency vehicles for off-site programs. Parents/legal guardians will be given advance notice of such travels and children will be instructed on safety procedures. A child passenger restraint system is used when transporting children for children under 40 pounds, or at the written request of a parent/legal guardian. Children less than 40 pounds are required to ride in a five-point harness car seat provided by their parents/legal guardians for van usage and provided by EmBe when riding the bus.

## VISITOR POLICY

All visitors to our programs (including parents/legal guardians if staying for an extended period of time) will need to report in at the front desk upon arrival in the building. A driver's license or Passport will be scanned and a visitor pass will be given out. The Drivers License or Passport will be kept in the office until the visitor leaves the building. The visitor pass needs to be visible while in the building.

## RIGHT TO IMMEDIATE ACCESS

Parents/legal guardians of a child in our care are entitled to immediate access, without prior notice, to their child whenever they are in care at EmBe Childcare & Preschool, as provided by law. However, access may be denied if it is determined that the parent/legal guardian is driving under the influence and intends to take their child.

## CUSTODY

In most cases, when parents/legal guardians are divorced or separated, both continue to have equal rights where their children are concerned. If you have a court order that limits the rights of one parent/legal guardian in matters such as custody or visitation, please bring a copy to the front desk at either EmBe

location. Unless your court order is on file with us, we must provide equal rights to both parents/legal guardians (this includes equal access to pick up, right to authorize alternate people to pick up, emergency contacts, and to enroll/disenroll). Any conflict related to custody agreements should be directed to the School Age Care Manager for further determination. All information regarding custody will be kept confidential.

## SOLICITATION

Parents/legal guardians who have interests in events and organizations outside EmBe may not solicit or distribute literature concerning these activities through EmBe. Employees, parents/legal guardians or any other people not employed by EmBe may not solicit or distribute literature or communication (birthday invites, outside events, etc) in the workplace to children, parents/legal guardians or program attendees at any time for any purpose without express approval by the manager of a site. All communication going to children, parents/legal guardians or attendees requires express approval by the site coordinator.

## CONFLICT RESOLUTION

When misunderstandings or disputes arise in our community, it is important that they be resolved before serious problems develop. Staff, site coordinators, EmBe leadership, and parents/legal guardians in our community should always try to resolve their difficulties among themselves first. Informal consultation with the School Age Care Manager or other leadership is encouraged if efforts among parties involved are not fruitful. To ensure accountability and clear communication, conflicts may be first directed to a site coordinator, then the School Age Care Manager, then the Director of Curriculum and Licensing, Executive Director of Childcare, or the CEO. If preferred, communication can also be submitted to [myvoice@embe.org](mailto:myvoice@embe.org), which is reviewed by EmBe's executive leadership team. If these efforts are not sufficient to resolve an issue, they may choose to file an informal or formal complaint. A formal complaint is defined as any violation of a state law. All other complaints are considered informal. They may request an informal or formal complaint form from the Director of Curriculum and Licensing. The Director of Curriculum and Licensing will then investigate and take appropriate action. Out of respect for all parties involved and to protect the integrity of our policies, we ask that complaints remain confidential while under investigation. All complaints will be addressed in a timely manner.

## BEHAVIORAL MANAGEMENT POLICY

Praise and positive reinforcement are effective methods of behavior management of children. When children receive positive, nonviolent, and understanding interactions from adults and others, they develop good self-concepts, problem solving abilities and self-discipline. Based on this belief, EmBe uses a positive approach to discipline and practices the following discipline and behavior management policy in order to protect the safety of all children and staff persons. Children enrolled at EmBe are expected to behave in a way that promotes community and allows for positive and constructive experiences for all children. EmBe is committed to providing an environment where children feel safe, comfortable and have fun.

### WE DO

- Communicate to children using positive statements.
- Communicate with children on their level.
- Talk with children in a calm, quiet manner.
- Explain unacceptable behavior to children.
- Give attention to children for positive behavior.
- Praise and encourage the children.
- Set limits for the children.
- Apply rules consistently.
- Model appropriate behavior.
- Set-up the classroom environment to prevent problems.

- Provide alternatives and redirect children to acceptable activity.
- Give children opportunities to make choices and solve problems.
- Help children talk out problems and think of solutions.
- Listen to children and respect the childrens' needs, desires, and feelings.
- Provide appropriate words to help solve conflicts.
- Use storybooks and discussion to work through common conflicts.

## WE DO NOT

- Inflict corporal punishment in any manner upon a child. (Corporal punishment is defined as the use of physical force to the body as a discipline measure. Physical force to the body includes, but is not limited to, arm pulling, spanking, hitting, shaking, biting, pinching, pushing, pulling, or slapping.)
- Use any strategy that hurts, shames or belittles a child.
- Use any strategy that threatens, intimidates or forces a child.
- Use food as a form of reward or punishment.
- Use or withhold physical activity as a punishment.
- Shame or punish a child if a bathroom accident occurs.
- Embarrass any child in front of others.
- Compare children.
- Place children in a locked and/or dark room.
- Leave any child alone, unattended or without supervision.
- Allow discipline of a child by other children.
- Criticize, make fun of, or otherwise belittle a child's parents/legal guardians, families, or ethnic groups

Staff shall ensure that each child is provided with a positive model of acceptable behavior. Children are encouraged to practice skills that will allow them to resolve conflicts and have their needs met without the use of aggressive or destructive behaviors. This is seen as a means of preventing behavioral difficulties between children and lessens the need for disciplinary action on the part of staff. When situations occur which require intervention, teachers should provide children with clear explanations as to why specific behavior is inappropriate and help them to find an alternative behavior that fits within classroom guidelines. These guidelines revolve around concerns for the safety of all children and for the materials within the site, and also to promote an environment where all children can flourish. Classroom rules shall be tailored to the developmental level of the children in attendance, be short and simple, be stated in a positive way and be used consistently. School age children should be encouraged to set rules together.

NOTE: If a child is consistently exhibiting unsafe, repeatedly defiant, and/or hurtful behavior, parents/legal guardians will be consulted, and outside resources may be contacted to provide assistance. If the behavior does not improve and endangers the safety of other children and their teacher, the child may be removed from the program.

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Keeping with our mission and values at EmBe, we keep dignity and respect at the core of our relationships. EmBe is committed to a safe and civil environment for all children, employees, parents/legal guardians, clients, volunteers and community members free from harassment, intimidation or bullying. Harassment and other inappropriate conduct that relates to or is directed toward someone because of race, color, creed, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, disability, military status, age, or any other status protected by applicable law, where such conduct may have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment not conducive to our culture, is against EmBe policy and will not be tolerated.

According to [stopbullying.gov](http://stopbullying.gov) (a federal government website managed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services), bullying is defined as aggressive behavior, including an imbalance of power and repetition.

Power imbalances can evolve and may be real or imagined. Bullying can include physical or mental violence, social intimidation or exclusion, or making repeated threats. Bullying can happen in person or online.

In the event that a teacher or staff witnesses bullying or a report of bullying is made by a child or family, EmBe will investigate the allegations immediately. EmBe will speak with all involved parties and determine if there is a power imbalance. If allegations are substantiated, EmBe will then work with all parties to determine appropriate steps following behavioral and disciplinary policies to ensure that all children are safe while in care. All disciplinary action taken as a result of a report made will be kept confidential out of respect for the privacy of all involved.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

As EmBe cares for your child, either you as a parent/legal guardian, or we as caregivers and educators may become concerned about your child's behavior or development. In these cases, EmBe partners with Little Navigators (The Compass Center) and Sanford Children's CHILd services to provide additional support with parent/legal guardian consent. These resources are available to parents/legal guardians at no additional cost; if a parent/legal guardian wishes to pursue further options or recommendations, they may do so at their own expense. EmBe will collaborate with parents/legal guardians to provide as much information and support as possible. EmBe respects the decisions of parents/legal guardians as first educators and will work to accommodate parent/legal guardian needs as much as possible. All participation in additional services is confidential.

## CHILD ABUSE

EmBe employees are mandatory reporters. South Dakota Law 26-10-10 requires child care personnel having reasonable cause to suspect that a child under the age of 18 years has been starved, neglected (as defined in 26-8- 6), has had physical injury or injuries inflicted upon him by abuse or intentional neglect other than by accidental means, or has been subjected to circumstances or conditions which would reasonably result in abuse or neglect, by any person including a parent/legal guardian or other person responsible for his care, shall report or cause reports to be made to the Department of Social Services, county sheriff, city police or state's attorney.

Anyone participating in good faith in making a report shall have immunity from any liability, civil or imposed, and shall have the same immunity with respect to participation in any judicial proceeding resulting from such a report.

If such a report of abuse/neglect involves an EmBe staff person, there will be a full investigation and evaluation by EmBe. EmBe's SD licensing agent will determine the next course of action. The staff will be removed from work with children and placed on administrative leave or reassignment while the incident is under investigation. Parents and/or legal guardians will only be notified if their child was involved in an incident. The continued employment of the staff person will be evaluated by the Department of Social Services Licensing Specialist, School Age Care Manager and/or the Executive Director of Childcare upon completion of the investigation.

## PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN CODE OF CONDUCT

EmBe requires the parents/legal guardians of enrolled children at all times, to behave in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy and respect. One of the goals of EmBe is to provide the most appropriate environment in which a child can grow, learn and develop. Achieving this ideal environment is not only the responsibility of the employees of EmBe, but is the responsibility of each and every parent/legal guardian or adult who enters the center. Parents/legal guardians are required to behave in a manner that fosters this ideal environment. Parents/legal guardians who violate the Parent/Legal Guardian Code of Conduct may not be permitted on agency property at the discretion of the School Age Care Manager or designee. If a parent/legal guardian or designee has an urgent issue that needs to be



addressed immediately, please see page 4 for alternate contact information.

- No parent/legal guardian or adult is permitted to curse or use other inappropriate language (including gestures) on EmBe property at any time, in texts, or on a phone call, whether in the presence of a child or not. At no time shall inappropriate language be directed toward members of the staff or children, or that person will be asked to leave the building immediately.
- Threats of any kind will not be tolerated. Parents/legal guardians must be responsible for, and in control of their behavior at all times. If a parent/legal guardian exhibits out of control behavior, the parent/legal guardian will be asked to leave the building immediately, an investigation will be conducted, and a temporary or permanent building ban may be implemented.
- All threats will be reported to law enforcement.

## SAFE ENVIRONMENT

### TOBACCO AND VAPE FREE POLICY

EmBe is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace and to promoting the health and well-being of employees, customers, and visitors. Tobacco and vaping products are prohibited throughout the EmBe facility and on EmBe property, and in the presence of and for the duration of any offsite EmBe programming (field trips).

### WEAPONS

To ensure that EmBe maintains a safe environment that is free of violence for all children, employees, families and other stakeholders, EmBe prohibits the possession or use of weapons. This includes all firearms, knives, pepper spray, and any toy that may resemble a weapon of any kind. EmBe will ask any person with weapons (listed above) on their person to return them to their vehicle or off EmBe property. The only exception to this policy is for uniformed law enforcement or law enforcement who have their badge clearly visible at all times while on EmBe property. Any person who does not comply with the weapons policy may be asked to wait off campus for their child. Repeated violations of the policy may result in a permanent ban from EmBe property and/or a police report.

### EMERGENCY EVACUATION

Emergency drills are conducted on a regular basis according to licensing regulations with evacuation routes posted in each room. In the event of an actual fire, children are evacuated to neighboring sites. Each site is equipped with emergency plan procedures. In the case of a real emergency, parents/legal guardians will be contacted via ProCare as soon as possible.

### INCLEMENT WEATHER

Students attending EmBe SAC in the Sioux Falls School District, please see the CLC Enrollment Department Guide attached.

Weather conditions may force EmBe to close or alter service on occasion. Please keep the following Weather Emergency Policy in mind as you prepare for unusual situations which would warrant closing or limited service. School Age Care offsites follow the direction of local school districts which may make decisions differently than the operations of the organization. The decision to close EmBe due to inclement weather will be made as early as possible and will be communicated through local closing announcements on media channels, EmBe's website and Facebook page and via ProCare. When the City of Sioux Falls declares a state of emergency or on rare occasions when the organization deems it unsafe to travel because of inclement weather, EmBe may have a late start, early release, or close. In the event of a change in programming, parents/legal guardians will be notified via Procare. Parents/legal guardians are urged to make alternative childcare arrangements prior to the snow season for these unique circumstances. There is no change to tuition rates in the event of a closure due to inclement weather.

## **Harrisburg School District Inclement weather closures or modified hours:**

Harrisburg Elementary Locations (Horizon, Endeavor, Liberty, Freedom):

EmBe's School Age Care program will be closed when Harrisburg School District facilities are closed due to inclement weather. For all late start school days due to inclement weather, EmBe will not offer morning care, but will offer after school care. On early dismissal or no school days due to inclement weather, EmBe will follow the Harrisburg School District policy and will not provide care.

## **HEALTH/HEALTH OUTBREAKS**

Health regulations are determined by the South Dakota Department of Social Services (DSS) and Department of Health (DOH). Current immunization records are required at the time of admission. EmBe is mandated by the State of South Dakota to report cases of contagious disease to the Health Department and to parents/legal guardians as soon as they are identified. EmBe's SAC sites will comply with directives of the DOH and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the case of a contagious health outbreak.

Illness prevents a child from comfortably participating in program activities, and it compromises the health and safety of other children in the program. If a child has any of the following symptoms, they should be kept home in order to guard against the spreading of contagious illnesses:

- The child has a fever of 100.4 degrees or higher;
- The child has had diarrhea for the second time in one hour;
- The child has vomited;
- The child has a rash caused by a contagious illness or condition;
- The child has a bacterial infection or impetigo before 24 hours of treatment with antibiotics.

This list is not all-inclusive. EmBe reserves the right to make judgment as to whether or not a child is too ill to participate. Children who become ill will be sheltered from other children. Parents/legal guardians will be contacted and must respond in a timely manner, preferably within 30-minutes. Arrangements then need to be made on picking the ill child up, preferably within an hour of notice. The child should be symptom-free without the use of medication for at least 24 hours prior to returning. After a child has visited the doctor due to a serious illness, the parent/legal guardian must provide the site with a signed statement from the physician indicating that the child is healthy enough to be in the site. Permission is granted at the discretion of the site coordinator if all policies for return have been met.

EmBe School Age Care reserves the right to close programs at any time with or without notice due to any circumstance that can jeopardize the health, safety, and welfare of children and/or staff. This could include but is not limited to specific classroom closures, site closures, or a change in hours of operation. EmBe School Age Care is determined to be a safe and reliable option for school age care. With that in mind, EmBe will make every effort to remain open without compromising the standard of care for our students and staff.

## **MEDICATION**

When medication is to be administered, a note must include instructions from the physician. A permission form for administering any medication must be completed by the parent/legal guardian and stored on site. EmBe staff are required to sign and document what medication is given, when, and in what dose. EmBe does not administer fever reducing medication. Medication needing refrigeration is stored in a refrigerator.

Any allergies that require medicine and/or an Epi-Pen must be documented and have a plan of action on file. Forms are available upon enrollment and are required for all children with documented allergies.

Disposal of Bio-contaminates- Universal standard precautions are guidelines issued to prevent disease transmission. All EmBe staff members are required to follow the universal standards and precautions

recommended by the Center for Disease and Control (CDC) in handling any fluid that might contain blood or any other bodily fluids. Barriers will be used between any potentially infectious substance and the worker's skin, eyes, nose and mouth.



# RECOMMENDATIONS for Temporary Exclusion from a CHILD CARE SETTING

Children should be excluded from a child care setting for the following conditions:

- Illness that **prevents the child from participating** comfortably in program activities.
- Illness that results in a **greater need for care** than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children.
- **Fever, lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficult breathing** and/or other manifestations of possible severe illness.
- **Persistent abdominal pain** (continuous for more than two hours) or intermittent abdominal pain associated with fever, dehydration, or other systemic signs or symptoms.
- **Chicken pox (Varicella)**: exclude until all lesions have dried and crusted or, in immunized children without crusts, until no new lesions appear within a 24-hour period.
- **COVID-19**: exclude based on current CDC and SD Department of Health guidance, see website [doh.sd.gov](http://doh.sd.gov).
- **Diarrhea**: exclude if
  - \* stool not contained in diaper
  - \* fecal accidents occur in a child normally continent
  - \* stool frequency exceeds two or more stools above normal for that child
  - \* stool contains blood or mucus
- **E. coli, shiga toxin-producing (STEC)**: exclude until diarrhea resolves and two stool cultures are negative.
- **Haemophilus influenzae type B, invasive (Hib)**: exclude until after the child has been cleared by a physician.
- **Head lice (Pediculosis Capitis)**: refer for treatment at end of program day and readmit once completion of treatment recommended by a physician.
- **Hepatitis A**: exclude until one week after onset of illness.
- **Impetigo (Streptococcal infection of the skin)**: exclude until after 12 hours of antibiotic treatment.
- **Influenza and Influenza-like illness**: exclude until fever has been absent for 24 hours in an unmedicated state. Additional exclusions may be necessary for documented novel strain or pandemic influenza based on SD Department of Health and CDC guidance.
- **Measles**: exclude until 4 days after onset of rash.
- **Meningococcal disease (Neisseria meningitidis)**: exclude until after 24 hours of antibiotic treatment.
- **Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA)**: generally no exclusion; considerations may exist if confirmed MRSA is present from a wound in which drainage is occurring and cannot be covered and contained.
- **Mouth sores**: exclude if associated with drooling, unless a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease.
- **Mumps**: exclude until 5 days after the onset of parotid gland swelling.
- **Pertussis (Whooping cough)**: exclude until completion of 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment. If appropriate antibiotic treatment is not received, exclude until 21 days after onset of cough.
- **Rash (with fever or behavior change)**: exclude until a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease.
- **Rubella**: exclude until 7 days after onset of rash.
- **Scabies**: exclude until after treatment has started.
- **Shigella**: exclude until treatment is complete and one stool culture is negative.
- **Strep throat (Streptococcal pharyngitis)**: exclude until after 12 hours of antibiotic treatment.
- **Tuberculosis**: exclude until a physician, concurring with the SD Department of Health, states the child is not infectious.
- **Vomiting**: exclude if vomiting occurs two or more times in 24 hours, unless the vomiting is determined to be caused by a non-communicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration.

*2018 Red Book, American Academy of Pediatrics, 31st Edition; 2020 Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools, A Quick Reference Guide, American Academy of Pediatrics, 5th Edition; 2015 Control of Communicable Diseases Manual, American Public Health Association, 20th Edition.*



If you have questions about infectious diseases or immunizations,  
contact the Department of Health or your physician.

South Dakota Department of Health, Office of Disease Prevention Services: 605-773-3737 or 800-592-1861

Local Disease Intervention Specialist: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Local DSS Child Care Licensing Office: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

See also SD Department of Health disease fact sheet website: <https://doh.sd.gov/diseases/infectious/diseasefacts/>

August 2020



EmBe strives each day to be a place of empowerment where women excel, where children and youth thrive, where families succeed, and where the community is enriched by our work.

