



Early Intervention Day Treatment Program

Parent Handbook 2023

Boone County Preschool

Heart of the Ozarks Developmental Center

Director: Kim Sullivan

Phone: 870-741-3709

707 E. Rush Avenue

Harrison, AR 72601

PATHFINDER, INC.

Mission Statement

Pathfinder, Inc. is dedicated to the development and implementation of individually designed strategies that enable people with developmental disabilities to pursue total access to community life.

Philosophy

A basic concept of Pathfinder, Inc. is that all people, regardless of individual differences and intellectual abilities, have an inalienable right to programs and services, which are consistent with their needs, and helps them to achieve their maximum potential.

Pathfinder, Inc. seeks to provide the best possible programs and services for individuals we serve with developmental disabilities to expand their growth opportunities. Pathfinder, Inc.'s focus always remains on helping to enrich the quality of life for the people we serve.

Underlying these concepts are the beliefs that: all human beings have intrinsic worth regardless of intellectual ability; that all human beings have potential for development; and that, with few exceptions, every human being has both the ability and the duty to contribute something of value to his fellow man.

Service Goals

The service goals developed in light of this philosophy are:

- To help the individual with developmental disabilities become or remain self-sufficient by seeking to develop personal, social, academic and problem solving skills necessary to function independently in society.
- To protect children and adults who cannot protect themselves from abuse, neglect and exploitation and to help families stay together by providing an array of services for the individual with developmental disabilities and/or behavioral health needs.
- To arrange for appropriate placement and services that provide the least restrictive environment and which is in the individual's best interest.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

NAME	OFFICE	ELECTION DATE	TERMS
Robert Ferguson 2228 Cottdale Lane, Suite 200, Little Rock, AR 72202 Phone: 501-221-3800	Chair	December 2023	3 years
Jan Baker 127 Wellington Plantation Lane, Little Rock, AR 72211 Phone: 703-677-6287	Vice-Chair	November 2025	3 years
Lisa Bamburg (Consumer Representative) 180 Maplewood Dr. Cabot, AR 72023 Phone: 501-658-5613	Secretary	November 2025	3 years
Rev. Wendall Dorman 218 Grandview Drive, Hot Springs, AR 71913 Phone: 501-519-0672	Member	December 2024	3 years
Randy Lann (Consumer Representative) 37 Greenview Circle, Sherwood, AR 72023 Phone: 501-835-8829	Member	December 2025	3 years
Baxter Drennon 500 President Clinton Ave, Suite RL20, Little Rock, AR 72201 Phone: 501-265-9927	Member	December 2023	3 years
John Burkhalter 26 Collins Industrial Place, North Little Rock, AR 72113 Phone: 501-539-3003 Office: 501-753-6400	Member	December 2023	3 years
Barbara McCreight 4020 Elizabeth Court, Benton, AR 72019 Phone: 501-944-0398	Member	November 2025	3 years

Pathfinder, Inc.

Purpose

Heart of the Ozarks Child Development Center is an approved provider of Early Intervention Day Treatment (EIDT). Heart of the Ozarks Child Development Center serves children ages six (6) weeks to five (5) years of age who demonstrate developmental delays. The Preschool Program is designed to meet the needs of each child and provide instruction that is developmentally and individually appropriate.

Philosophy

All people, regardless of individual differences and intellectual abilities, have an inalienable right to an education which is consistent with their needs and helps them to achieve their maximum potential.

Educational Philosophy

We believe that children have the right to a nurturing, safe environment where they can feel comfortable and secure. We believe that children have a right to develop to their maximum abilities and that teachers have the responsibility to provide opportunities for this development to occur.

We recognize that each child is an individual and that each child must be allowed to develop at his or her own pace. We accept and respect differences between children including developmental, physical, racial, and ethnic differences. Every child, regardless of sex, race, religion, or ethnic origin must have the same opportunities and advantages as every other child.

We believe that each child has the right to a positive self image to feel good about whom they are. We hope that in treating each child with love and respect that they in turn will learn to treat others with the same love and respect.

Finally, children learn best through active participation with their environment and the teacher's job is to provide a variety of opportunities and experiences to promote growth in all areas. We will strive to thoughtfully plan activities that meet the needs of every child which follow early childhood developmental principals.

Funding Sources

Heart of the Ozarks Child Development Center receives funding from the following sources: SSI, TEFRA, MEDICAID, PASSE, TITLE 19, and EIDT.

Population Served

Heart of the Ozarks Child Development Center serves children ages 6 weeks to 5 years of age who demonstrate developmental delays. This program is designed to meet the needs of each child and provide instruction that is developmentally and individually appropriate.

Educational Goals

Personal and Social Skills

- Provide opportunities for children to grow as individuals and experience feelings of self worth.
- Promote a healthy self concept by encouraging the development of trust and security.
- Encourage the development of independence and self help skills.
- Encourage the development of social skills such as cooperation and respect for others.
- Encourage the interaction of children with other children and adults in small and large group settings.

Language

- Encourage children to develop the verbal skills necessary to communicate feelings, thoughts, and needs.
- Expose children to an accepting environment rich in language opportunities during the development of listening skills.

Physical Growth

- Provide a safe, secure environment in which children can explore the space around them and learn to use their bodies with control.
- Provide children with a variety of opportunities to practice fine and gross motor skills according to each child's developmental needs and abilities.

Active Learning

- Offer children a variety of activities that aid in their intellectual and cognitive growth.
- Allow children to actively explore the attributes and functions of materials with all their senses.
- Encourage the discovery of relations through direct experiences.
- Provide opportunities for predicting problems and devising ways to solve them.
- Encourage the development of creativity and imagination.

Admission and Discharge

Eligibility

- Children will be determined eligible for day habilitation services by demonstrating a significant delay in two areas of development.
- Children 0 to 2 years of age must demonstrate a 25% delay in two domains on the developmental assessment and qualify for at least one therapy service.
- Children 3 to 5 years of age must demonstrate a -2.00 standard deviation delay in two domains on the developmental assessment and qualify for at least one therapy.
- In addition to the testing results, a child's medical and behavioral needs will be considered to ensure that day habilitation services are most appropriate for the child.

Application

Before a child can be admitted and enrolled, an active Medicaid/TEFRA number and a “*Medicaid Referral Form*”, completed and signed by the child’s Primary Care Physician, must be submitted. It is necessary that the following items be completed and/or submitted for review also:

- Patient Intake Form
- Child’s Records Form
- Birth Certificate
- Emergency Information Form
- Consent to Treat Form
- Social Security Card
- Consent for Release of Information Form
- Third Party Coverage Record
- Updated Immunization Records
- Current EPSDT or health check (physical)
- Official legal court documents addressing custodial rights
- Other pertinent information not listed may/can be requested
- The admission/enrollment process is non-discriminative with regard to race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or religion
- Certified custody orders must be provided during the enrollment process. Any changes in custody orders throughout the year should be submitted to the Preschool immediately. Pathfinder, Inc. cannot deny parent(s)/guardian(s) the right to pick up a child unless there is a court order on file at the center. It is important this information remains updated.

Initial Screening

All children referred for day habilitation services at Heart of the Ozarks Child Development Center will initially be given a developmental screening by a third party assessor that evaluates the child in the five main areas of development: personal social skills, adaptive behavior, language, motor (gross and fine), and cognition. The results of the screening will determine whether a child should be referred for further testing and/or day habilitation. A written prescription for specialized testing and day habilitation services must be sent to the child’s primary care physician (PCP) and received back by the center. After testing is completed, the child’s PCP must review the plan of care and write a prescription for the recommended/accepted therapy and services.

Intake

If it is determined that a child is eligible and a referral to receive day habilitation has been received by the PCP, the child is assigned to a classroom. Additionally, a referral/programming conference is held in order to coordinate and plan the services and provide the parent(s)/guardian(s) with pertinent information. If any therapies are necessary for the child, referrals will be made. If therapies are required, an amendment to the child’s plan will be made in a timely manner to include the appropriate therapy plans.

Discharge

- Students will be discharged for the following:
- Failure to meet DDS/CHMS eligibility criteria for disability funding
- Failure to maintain funding
- Failure to maintain medical information
- Absence for more than 10 consecutive days without giving proper notice (i.e., vacation or doctor's note)
- Doctor's orders due to a health condition
- Reaching public school age
- Determination by the team that Pathfinder, Inc. EIDT Program cannot provide the necessary services to promote a child's learning or medical needs
- Behaviors of such an alarming nature after behavior modifications and interventions have been exhausted
- Behaviors have become a danger to himself/herself or others
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) request
- Team Request
- Ineligible for services
- Ineligibility

If a child receives a yearly evaluation that demonstrates that he/she is no longer qualified for the EIDT Program, a letter is sent home to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the child informing them. The letter details why the child no longer qualifies, the date the services will end, and a date for the discharge conference. If a parent/guardian does not attend the discharge conference, the child's discharge date remains the same and the original letter sent to the parent(s)/guardian(s) serves as the team decision. Parent(s)/guardian(s) have the right to appeal the decision under the appeal process stated in Community Program and Certified Providers Complaint/Resolution Review and Process Policy 1010 and Developmental Disability Services Appeal Process Policy 1076.

Attendance and Absences

Hours of Operation

Preschool children will not be allowed in the building before 7:45 A.M. and all children should be removed from the building by closing time at 3:00 P.M.

Days of Operation

The Preschool operates year round, Monday through Friday, with the exception of the following holidays: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the following Friday, and Christmas Day. When additional holidays are observed and the Preschool is closed, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing and given advanced notice of the closing.

Authorized Pick Up/Drop Off

The Preschool requires that every child be escorted into and outside of the building by a parent/guardian of at least 18 years of age. The individual picking up the child must be listed on the "Authorized Pick Up List" in order to drop off or pick up a child. In a situation where special circumstances arise, a parent/guardian must notify the Director in writing stating that someone not included on the "*Authorized Pick Up List*" will be picking or dropping off the child. Photo Identification will be required in order to verify that the person picking up the child is either on the "*Authorized Pick Up List*" or has special written permission to ride home with the individual from a parent/guardian.

Arrival

Children may arrive at the Preschool from 7:45 A.M. to 8:30 A.M. Because of the daily schedules and routines of each classroom, it is mandatory that each student arrive to the Preschool by 8:30. Instructional time will begin at this point and late entries can be distracting and disruptive to other students.

Tardiness

Children who arrive after 8:30 A.M. will not be permitted to attend school that day. Exceptions will be permitted in the instance of an appointment with accompanying documentation and/or emergencies. If a child is going to be late due to an appointment or an emergency, a parent/guardian should call the office ahead of time to make the staff aware of the late arrival.

Sign In/Out

It is mandatory that each day a child is signed "in" upon arrival to the center and signed "out" when departing from the center. On the "*Sign In/Sign Out Form*", the following information should be completed: arrival time, departure time, signature of person bringing or departing with child. Only those who are authorized to pick up will be able to sign a child out.

Departure

Children should be picked up from the Preschool by 3:00 P.M.. When a child remains at the Preschool after this time, the parent/guardian is charged \$1.00 per minute that the child remains at the center in the care of the Preschool staff. This late fee must be paid upon arrival the day of occurrence or the following day. If the fee is not paid within this time frame, the child will be temporarily discharged from the program until the balance of the late fee has been paid. Although the Preschool understands that unforeseen circumstances may occur, a late fee will be issued in all circumstances. If a child remains at the Preschool one hour past closing time and attempts to contact a parent/guardian have failed, the police will be contacted and a report will be made to Child Protective Services to report the child as "abandoned". Excessive abuse of this policy can result in a child's discharge from the center. Violations are subject to termination.

Attendance

Each child must attend every day after enrollment into the Preschool program. Each child's attendance is closely monitored to ensure that they are attending daily. Regular attendance in the Preschool Program is

important in order to accustom children to a regular and consistent schedule. In order to provide services to families with the greatest need, services to families may be discontinued based upon non-compliance with the attendance policy.

Absences

If a child is not going to be present, the parent/guardian should call the school prior to 8:00 A.M. the day of the absence. The parent/guardian must call the school and speak to a Preschool staff member or leave a message containing the following information: child's first and last name, date of absence, and reason for absence. If an absence is not reported by 8:00 A.M., the absence will be recorded as unexcused.

Excused Absences

An absence due to the one of the following reasons, and with the required supporting written documentation, is considered excused:

- The child was ill or the child's attendance could jeopardize the health of other students. (Requires written documentation supporting absence in order to be excused.)
- The child's immediate family member died or was seriously ill.
- The child was observing recognized holiday's observed by their faith. (Requires prior approval from Director.)
- The child was attending an appointment with a government agency.
- The child was attending a medical or dental appointment. (Requires written documentation supporting absence in order to be excused.)
- Exceptional circumstances prohibited the child from attending. (Requires prior approval and written documentation supporting the absence in order to be excused.)

Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absences are absences that are not defined in the above "Excused Absences" section or do not have the accompanying documentation that is required.

- A child with an illness that lasts more than 10 days without verification by a medical doctor.
- The child did not want to go to school.
- The parent/guardian overslept.
- The child was absent without a specific reason/explanation given.

Ten days of unexcused absences in a fiscal year will subject a family to termination of their child/children's services.

Safety

The safety of children in the EIDT Program is priority. After children have arrived for the day, all entrance and exit doors to the facility are locked and remained locked throughout the day.

Inclement Weather

During inclement weather, the Preschool will contact KY3-TV, KOLR 10, and KHOZ Radio to announce closings. On the television screen, the EIDT Program will be represented by the title “Heart of the Ozarks.” This message will cover EIDT program and transportation to/from the center.

When school is in session and inclement weather is pending or present, our normal procedure is to consider the decisions of local school systems within the area before making a decision to close. However, Heart of the Ozarks Child Development Center reserves the right to remain open and continue day services when conditions warrant, regardless of the decisions of local schools. The EIDT Program will make every effort to open on time and remain open during inclement weather. However, in the case of extreme road conditions, it may be necessary to delay opening or close early in order to ensure the safety of families and staff.

Individualized Plan of Care

Evaluation

Depending upon the child’s needs, specialized testing may include a developmental evaluation, a formal hearing screening, a speech language therapy evaluation, an occupational therapy evaluation, a physical therapy evaluation. The following professionals may assess the child: An Early Childhood Developmental Specialist (ECDS), an Audiologist, an Occupational Therapist, a Speech Language Pathologist, and a Physical Therapist. A child’s functionality in vision and hearing must be considered as a part of the assessment process. Additionally, the child will be assessed in their native language. The professionals will use a combination of standardized, norm referenced testing and criterion referenced testing as well as parent/guardian interview and observation to determine eligibility. All tests used will be reliable measures given by the appropriate professionals and accepted instruments as outlined in the EIDT, and Medicaid manuals.

Professionals who conduct formalized testing will complete an evaluation report containing the following information: date(s) of evaluation, assessments given, medical/social history, clinical observations, strengths and needs of the child, evaluation scores, recommendations for services (nature, type, frequency), and eligibility determination.

Individual Treatment Plan

The child’s individual treatment plan will be created by the child’s team members, including (but not limited to), the child’s parent(s)/guardian(s), early childhood developmental specialist, and therapy providers. Other professionals/stakeholders may be needed or be a part of the child’s conference. The individualized plan of care must be reviewed quarterly and re-written at an annual review after updated testing is completed. A child’s progress will be closely monitored by the professionals involved in the plan of care through data collection, observations, and progress notes.

Reassessments

Children must be re-assessed at least annually and eligibility must be re-established each year.

Services

Therapy

Therapy is an important aspect of the program. It is one of the unique components of the Preschool and has greatly contributed to the overall success of the program.

Therapy services are provided for children who qualify for day habilitation services and meet eligibility requirements for therapy. Services available include occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech therapy provided by licensed professionals.

Therapists work together in teams, along with classroom staff, to develop and carry out programming activities individualized for each child's specific needs. Our goal is to help each child learn to function as independently as possible before they leave for kindergarten

Therapy is delivered using the following models:

- Individual therapy that is integrated into classroom activities
- Pull out individual therapy that is used based upon students needs and limited time duration

Occupational Therapy

The objective of the Occupational Therapy Department is to help our students learn to perform activities of daily living as independently and safely as possible. Our therapists work to improve the development of fine motor and visual skills necessary for playing, writing, dressing, and other self-help skills. Areas targeted include sensory integration upper extremity strength, range of motion, and coordination, visual motor and visual perceptual skills, organizational skills, and handwriting.

Physical Therapy

The goal of the Physical Therapy Department is to encourage the development of our students' gross motor skills to enable them to become as independently mobile as possible. Areas targeted include gross motor strength and range of motion, balance and coordination, and posture and gait. Splinting, casting, orthotics, and specialized seating and positioning may be utilized.

Speech/Language Therapy

The Speech/Language Department works to develop and enhance our students' communication skills. Areas targeted include receptive language, expressive language, articulation, pragmatics or social language, oral motor/feeding skills, and the development of augmentative/alternative communication systems for those who cannot rely on speech alone.

Medication Monitoring and Administration

The Preschool Program will administer medications to children with written authorization from the parent/guardian on a "Request to Administer Medications Form" and the written order from a primary care physician (PCP). All prescribed medications must be in the original container in which it was prepared by the pharmacy with an unaltered label that states: the name of the medication, date, consumer name,

prescribing physician and contact number, dispensing pharmacy and number, instructions for use, and dosage including strength and frequency. Any changes in medication, medication schedule, and/or dosing must be submitted in writing from the health care provider or in the form of a new prescription. This information can be faxed to (501)-533-6324. The Preschool will not accept verbal orders from a parent/guardian to change medications. A copy of all side effects and drug interactions will be kept in the consumer file. All medications will be checked in, secured, and locked to ensure the safety of all consumers. Medications requiring refrigeration and/or protection from light will be secured and stored appropriately. A parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up remaining prescriptions for disposal. Heart of the Ozarks Child Development Center will not dispose of medications at the facility.

Food Services

Breakfast, lunch, and snacks are served every day to each child during a designated time of the day.

It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to feed the child breakfast in circumstances when the child will be arriving to the Preschool after the designated time for breakfast/snack. Unfortunately, staff are not available to assist in this situation due to the start of classroom instruction and compliance with child to staff ratios.

Special diets need to be discussed with the Early Childhood Development Specialist before and throughout the enrollment period of the child. Any food allergies need to be noted by written documentation from the child's physician or allergist. These allergies will be posted in the classroom and in the kitchen. The Preschool is not allowed to serve food to a child that is prepared from someone's home. Store bought products for special occasions are acceptable and are addressed in further detail in the "Special Occasions" section.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) of infants may supply formula and/or food for their child. Please label such items with the infant's full name. Any changes to a child's diet need to be at age appropriate intervals or ordered by the child's PCP with written documentation supporting the diet change.

If a child requires thickened liquids, written documentation from the child's health care provider will be required. If a swallow study has been performed, the Preschool should be given a copy of the results. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are responsible for providing thickening products.

Transportation

Transportation is available upon request. Some restrictions apply based on the distance or medical needs of a child. When a van placement is approved, a parent/guardian will receive an approximate time of van arrival/departure to/from the home of the child. Alternate destinations can be arranged with five (5) days notice. Upon arrival to destination for "pick-up" of the child, the van will make its presence known and wait no more than three (3) minutes for the child to load the van. This is to help the vans stay on schedule to pick up other children who are assigned to the van route.

- Each child is signed on and off the vans by someone over the age of 16.
- All changes in information should be placed in writing for both Transportation and the Preschool and submitted to both locations.

- All children should be ready for the van at the arranged time by Southeastrans.
- If a child is unable to attend, a parent/guardian is to contact the van driver at Southeastrans.
- If your child is absent for 3 or more consecutive days, a parent/guardian will need to contact the Preschool to resume services.
- All children's belongings must be labeled with the child's full name.
- If a child is not riding the van in the afternoon, the Preschool must be contacted no later than 2:45 P.M.
- Food and drinks on vans must be approved the Transportation Director.
- Current contact information must be on file with the Transportation Department at all times.
- It is the responsibility of a parent/guardian to ensure that someone over 16 is at the destination to receive the child when delivered. The Preschool Late Fee Policy will apply if no one is at the destination to receive the child.

All transportation inquiries are coordinated through Southeastrans. The contact number is 1-888-833-4136.

Programming

Classroom

Each classroom is set up with regard to what is most conducive for optimal early childhood development for children with special needs. The Preschool classrooms are operated by Early Childhood Development Specialists and managed by teaching assistants.

Learning Through Play

The Preschool understands that children learn through play. Therefore, children are encouraged to choose freely from a wide range of play and learning experiences. In doing so, this approach affords the children the opportunity to recognize, understand and express their own emotions as well as sympathize with the emotions of others. The variety of experiences may include the development of self-discipline/control, positive self-image, intellectual and physical skills, small and large group activities as well as social and adaptive skills.

Curriculum

Each classroom is equipped with a comprehensive curriculum from the Arkansas Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education: Adventures for Toddlers, Infant, and Toddler Family Connection, and Adventures in Learning. The curriculum provides foundations that allow the Preschool staff to build on each child's individual need. The core components of the program work intensively on language development using a multi-sensory, hands-on approach. Structures lesson plans involve activities that are developed around children's literature. The activities are taught to assist children with motor, play, social, problem solving, memory, and vocabulary skills.

Outside Play

Outdoor gross motor play is an important extension of the classroom. Outdoor play is scheduled every day, if conditions permit. Every child is expected to participate. Daily active outdoor play is essential for the health and well-being of young children and is a requirement of child care licensing. As a central part of the program, all children will go outside when the weather, air quality, and environmental safety conditions do not pose a health risk as determined by local weather advisories. Teachers and directors consider the temperature, humidity, precipitation, and wind chill factors when determining the suitability of outdoor play on a given day. Children who are too ill to participate in outdoor play should remain at home for the day. In order for a child to be excused from outside play, a doctor's note must be provided. All children should be dressed appropriately for the weather.

Rest Time

Rest time is scheduled daily. The requirements set forth by licensing are scheduled within the child's day. Toddlers are scheduled for rest according to regulations following their lunch schedules. Heart of the Ozarks Child Development Center provides cribs for children birth to 11 months and cots or mats for children 12 months to 3 years for the children to rest on.

Toilet Training

Most children show signs of readiness to begin toilet training between 18 months and 3 years of age. Signs to look for in a child who is ready to toilet train include staying dry for at least two hours at a time, regular bowel movements, being able to verbalize the need to toilet, being uncomfortable with wet/soiled diapers, and following simple instructions. Toilet training with preschool children should be a collaborative effort between home and school. A parent/guardian should inform the Preschool when they are ready to begin the training process so that the Preschool staff can begin working with the child. Toilet training will be done in a relaxed manner with the cooperation of the family. The child must be kept in pull-ups or 5-ply training pants at all times. Children should not be sent to the Preschool in underwear until he/she has fully mastered staying dry during naptime/bedtime routine. When the Preschool notices that a child might be prepared to begin toilet training, staff will speak with a parent/guardian about beginning the process.

It is important to realize that there is no rush to begin toilet training. Toilet training a child before he/she is ready can prolong the process.

During toilet training, it is essential that parent(s)/guardian(s) provide the Preschool with the following: three changes of clothing per day, an adequate supply of pull-ups per day, and clothing that can be easily pulled up and down by the child to learn the skill and work on gaining independence in the toileting process.

Special Occasions

The Director or Director's designee must first approve any celebrations or special occasions that take the children away from the daily curriculum. These celebrations will be planned after lunch to allow the children to eat their breakfast and lunch. Only food items/products that are prepared in the cafeteria or

bought at the store will be served to children during these special occasions. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are always welcome to attend any special occasions that are coordinated by the Preschool.

Supplies

Parent(s)/guardian(s) are asked to provide at least one complete extra set of clothing for their child. Clothing should be clearly marked with the child's name and updated to match the season/temperature. For infants and children in diapers, parent(s)/guardian(s) must provide disposable diapers and wipes. Children should be dressed in clothing that is manageable and will not be a hindrance in play activities. The Preschool encourages exploration, discovery, and sensory play that can be messy; therefore, it is requested that parent(s)/guardian(s) dress children in easily washed items. Children do wear paint smocks during art/sensory activities; however, there are times when clothing can still get dirty. For health and safety, children should wear comfortable, yet sturdy, shoes. Flip-flops are not considered appropriate, safe footwear.

- *Infants:* Feeding supplies, disposable diapers, wipes, extra set of clothing
- *Toddlers:* Disposable diapers (if needed), wipes (if needed), extra set of clothing
- *Preschoolers:* Disposable diapers (if needed), wipes (if needed), extra set of clothing.

A supply list noting additional supplies will be given to a parent/guardian of each child. All items including backpacks and diaper bags should be labeled with the child's name. The Preschool cannot be responsible for any lost article of clothing or personal belongings.

Personal belongings

To avoid personal belongings from getting lost or broken, the Preschool asks that children not bring toys from home except for special projects or activities. Any belongings brought from home should be clearly marked with the child's name.

Releases

Media Release and Photo/Video Release Policy

Each child's parent/guardian will be asked to sign a "*Media Release Form*" and a "*Photo/Video Release Form*". As a member of the United Way and the outstanding care provided in child development for children, outside media such as United Way, television stations, and newspapers may call on Pathfinder, Inc. from time to time when they need pictures or information about Pathfinder, Inc. The "*Media Release Form*" states that the parent/guardian consents for the child to be photographed or videotaped and used in a project that has been approved by the Director of the Preschool. The "*Photo/Video Release Form*" is for the internal use of Pathfinder, Inc.; it gives consent to the Preschool to photograph and videotape a child for educational purposes.

Sunscreen

Pathfinder Preschool must obtain permission from a parent/guardian in order to apply sunscreen to children during outside activities. In accordance with Minimum Licensing Requirements 1101.16, children shall be protected from overexposure to the sun. Sunscreen shall be used if needed, as directed by the

parent/guardian. Suntan lotions and/or sunscreens used for infants, toddlers, and preschool children shall be kept out of the children's reach and administered only with written parent/guardian permission.

Walking Field Trips

A parent/guardian is required to give written permission for children attending the Preschool to participate in walking field trips with Heart of the Ozarks Child Development Center staff throughout the year. The walking field trips will be conducted on Heart of the Ozarks Child Development Center property and supervised at all times by Preschool staff.

Water Activities

Heart of the Ozarks Child Development Center has many activities throughout the year involving water. These include, but are not limited to, the following: water sensory tables, water bottles, sprinklers, etc.

Health and Medical Policies and Procedures

Importance of Health

A healthy child learns faster and shows consistent developmental growth. Learning and growth is affected when the child is not able to function in the classroom setting due to illness.

Hand Washing

Hand washing is the single most effective way to prevent the spread of disease. In accordance with Arkansas' Environmental Health Regulations for Child Care Facilities, the following hand washing procedures and guidelines will be followed. All children and adults will wash their hands upon entering the classroom in the morning. Staff will monitor and enforce hand washing as needed.

Proper hand washing procedures:

- Hands will be washed using soap and warm running water. (Children use child-sized sinks which are equipped with tempered warm water.)
- Hands should be vigorously rubbed together using soap and warm water for fifteen (15) seconds—the time it takes to sing the ABC's.
- All surfaces of the hands including: backs of hands, palms, wrists, under fingernails, and between fingers should be washed.
- Hands should be rinsed for ten (10) seconds and then dried with a paper towel.
- The faucet should be turned off with a paper towel.

Pathfinder, Inc. staff and volunteers will wash their hands:

- Upon reporting to work in the classroom
- Before and after handling food
- Before and after feeding infants or children
- Before handling clean utensils or equipment
- After toileting

- After handling of bodily fluids (saliva, nasal secretions, vomit, feces, urine, blood, etc.)
- After diaper changing or assisting in toilet training
- After handling soiled items such as garbage, mops, cloths, and clothing
- After removing disposable gloves
- Upon reentering the classroom from outside

Pathfinder, Inc. staff will assist children in hand washing:

- Upon arrival in the classroom
- After each diaper change or toilet visit
- Before eating meals or snacks
- Before and after water activity play
- Upon reentering the classroom from outside
- After blowing his or her nose

Daily Health Check

A daily health check will be conducted by each child's teacher upon their arrival. The teacher will check for symptoms of illness, communicable disease, child abuse and maltreatment. Information will be documented in the Daily Health Check File. All cuts, bruises, and behavior changes (whether suspected abuse or not) must be documented.

Sick Child Policy

Heart of the Ozarks Child Development Center shall not deny admission or send home a child because of illness unless one or more of the following conditions exists:

- The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities.
- The illness results in the need for greater care than what the Preschool staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children.

Symptoms that Warrant Sending Child Home

The following symptoms exclude children from attending the EIDT Programs.

Temperature: Fever over 101 degrees oral or 100 degrees auxiliary (or equivalent method) require that the child be excluded from the Preschool until he/she has been fever free for twenty-four (24) hours.

Infants under 2 months of age with increased temperature shall get urgent medical attention within an hour. Infants younger than 6 months with increased temperature shall be medically evaluated.

Diarrhea: Diarrhea is defined as watery or runny stools with a frequency of two or more stools above normal for that child without relation to changes in diet or medication. If diarrhea is causing soiled clothing in toilet trained children or cannot be contained in the diaper, it is required that the child be excluded from school.

Vomiting: Children who have two or more incidents of vomiting within 24 hours will be excluded from the school until they are well.

Rashes: Body rashes that are obviously not associated with diapering, heat, or allergic reactions to medications require that a child be excluded from school until a health care provider determines that the symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease.

Sore Throat: Children will be excluded from school if they have a sore throat associated with fever or swollen glands in the neck.

Severe Coughing: Children with episodes of coughing that lead to repeated gagging, vomiting, or difficulty breathing will be excluded from school.

Purulent Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye): Conjunctivitis or pink eye with white, yellow, or green discharge and red “bloodshot” eyes, excludes a child only if he/she has: fever, eye pain, redness and/or swelling around the eye, or if more than one child in the program has symptoms. Children may return 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has been initiated.

Scabies, Head lice, Infestation: In order for the child to return the facility, the nursing staff will meet face-to-face with a parent/guardian. The child may not return until 24 hours after initial treatment and all nits have been removed.

Mouth Sores/Thrush: The child may not return unless a health care provider determines the condition is not infectious and provides written recommendation.

Ringworm: Ringworm is a fungal infection of the scalp or skin. The child may not return until 24 hours after initial treatment and with written proof of evaluation from a health care provider.

Impetigo: The child may not return until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.

Chicken Pox: The child may not return until all lesions have crusted (usually 6 days after the rash appears).

Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease: The child may not return until lesions are no longer visible.

Hepatitis A Virus: The child may not return until 7 days after onset of illness or as directed by the health department.

Herpetic Gingivostomatitis: A child that has herpes simplex with uncontrollable secretions may not return until symptoms subside or until written recommendation of the health care provider.

Measles: The child may not return until 6 days after onset of rash.

Mumps: The child may not return until 9 days after the onset of the parotid gland swelling.

Pertussis: The child may not return until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment has been completed.

Shingles: The child may not return unless the lesions can be adequately covered by clothing or a dressing or until the written recommendation of the health care provider.

Strep Throat/Streptococcal Infection: The child may not return until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment and fever free.

Tuberculosis: The child will be sent home and not allowed to return until a health care provider clears the child to return with a written release.

Unspecified Respiratory Illness: Children with common cold, croup, bronchitis, pneumonia, and Otis media whose symptoms require special attention will not be allowed to return until symptoms subside.

Picking Up Sick Children

The parent/guardian or authorized person will be notified immediately when a child exhibits any signs or symptoms requiring the child to be sent home from the preschool. The child must be picked up within one hour of notification. The child must be removed from the Preschool as soon as possible to help protect other children and staff from being infected. Heart of the Ozarks Child Development Center will require documentation from the child's health care provider before the child can return to the Preschool.

Parent/Guardian Notification Responsibilities

It is the parent(s)/guardian(s) responsibility to notify the Preschool in regards to the following health issues:

- The child will be absent due to illness.
- The child has contracted a communicable disease. (The Preschool must be notified immediately. A medical release from the health care provider will be required to return to school.)
- The child is hospitalized. (A medical release from the health care provider will be required to return to school.)

Common Reportable Diseases

The following are more common reportable diseases which occur with moderate frequency in Arkansas: Gonorrhea, Salmonellosis (including Typhoid), Hepatitis (A, B, Non-A, Non-B, Unspecified and results of serologies), Shigellosis, Syphilis, Tuberculosis, Meningitis, Mumps, Rash Illnesses (including Measles and Rubella), Pertussis (Whooping Cough).

Less Common Reportable Diseases

The following are less common reportable diseases that occur with low frequency in Arkansas: AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome), Leptospirosis, Anthrax, Malaria, Haemophilus, Brucellosis, Mumps, Cholera, Poliomyelitis, Diphtheria, Rabies, Giardiasis, Rheumatic Fever, Guillain-Barre Syndrome, Tetanus, Trichinosis, Legionellosis, Amebiasis, Lymphogranuloma Venereum, Blastomycosis, Botulism, Meningococcal Infection, Chancroid, Plague, Congenital Rubella Syndrome, Q Fever, Food Poisoning (all types), Reyes Syndrome, Granuloma Inguinale, Small Pox, HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus), Toxoplasmosis, Kawasaki Disease, Typhus Fever, Leprosy, Lyme Disease, Aseptic Meningitis, Meningitis, Influenza Type B, Campylobacter Enteritis, Pesticide Poisoning, Coccidiomycosis, Psittacosis (Ornithosis), Encephalitis (all types), Relapsing Fever, Gonococcal Ophthalmia, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, Histoplasmosis, Toxic Shock Syndrome, Influenza, Tularemia, Yellow Fever.

Reported Data

Reported data shall include:

- Name and location of reporting person
- Disease or suspected disease and date of onset
- Name, age, sex, address, and phone number of patient
- Name of patient's physician.

For further assistance, the local county health unit should be contacted.

Incident/Injuries

A parent/guardian will be notified immediately of any serious accident or injury to a child in the care of the Preschool. If a child is seriously injured, Heart of the Ozarks Child Development Center notifies Childcare Licensure, DDS, Child Protective Services, Local Law Office Agencies, and any other required parties.

Injury Reports

Minor accidents and injuries are documented on injury reports, regardless of severity. Reports are completed by a staff member who witnessed injury or was responsible for the child at the time of injury. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are provided with a copy of the report. Due to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Policies, names of other parties involved in the accident/injury are not released.

Communication

Purpose

Communication between the child's home and the Preschool is extremely important in order to ensure the success of the child. Heart of the Ozarks Child Development Center provides many opportunities for parent(s)/guardian(s) to receive information on the progress of their child and any activities or upcoming events at the Preschool. The following are types of communication between parent(s)/guardian(s) and the Preschool.

Daily Reports

A daily report will be prepared if requested by the parent/guardian. This will provide the parent/guardian with an overview of the child's performance throughout the day. Information on meals, toileting, sleep, and child's overall mood will be included on the form.

Quarterly Progress

Quarterly progress notes are completed on each child that qualifies for day habilitation. Children will receive progress notes in March, June, September, and December. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be issued a copy of the progress notes at each quarter. The copy is for the parent/guardian to keep as part of their

personal records and coversheet must be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to the school. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are encouraged to make comments coversheet as they deem such necessary.

Conferences

Each conference convened will include parent(s)/guardian(s) and the child's interdisciplinary team which may include, but is not limited to ECDS, therapists, and specialists. The Preschool recognizes the parent(s)/guardian(s) as an integral component of a child's learning and development; therefore, it is mandatory that parent(s)/guardian(s) attend the conference and sign off on their child's treatment plan. Failure to attend conferences can result in the child's temporary discharge. The time frames of these conferences are mandated by EIDT, and the Preschool is required to adhere to these timeframes to maintain compliance.

Annual Conferences

Conferences for children are held once annually unless the team deems it necessary or a conference is called at the request of the family. The conference will summarize each child's progress in our program. Conferences are scheduled according to each child's individual start date.

Transition

Pathfinder, Inc. provides services aimed at improving a child's transition from one program to the next.

Early Intervention Program

At the age of three, children transition from the Early Intervention Program to the Early Childhood Program. The following steps are followed:

- A letter will be sent prior to a child's third birthday
- A transition planning conference is conducted a shortly after your child's third birthday.
- By the age of 35 months, an Individualized Treatment Plan (ITP) conference must be conducted. If the child is eligible for the Early Childhood Program, the conference will be held with your area Coop to change paperwork. If a child is not eligible for the Early Childhood Program, the family will be provided options of alternate placement for the child.

Public School

At approximately five years of age, children transition from the Early Childhood Program to public schools. The following steps are followed:

- A referral is made to the public schools approximately 6 months before August discharge (typically around February).
- A referral conference is held with the public school, Pathfinder, Inc. Preschool, and the child's parent(s)/guardian(s) in the months of April and May. Each member of the team will provide input.
- Before the end of the school year, parent(s)/guardian(s) are encouraged to visit the placement school that the child will be attending in the fall.

- Signed releases will be necessary in order to ensure a smooth transition between Pathfinder, Inc. and the new school.
- Discharge report(s) and copies are sent home to the family for their personal records.

Discharge Criteria

Students will be discharged for the following:

- Failure to meet EIDT eligibility criteria for disability funding
- Failure to maintain funding
- Failure to maintain medical information
- Absence for more than 10 days in a month without giving proper notice (i.e., vacation or doctor's note)
- Doctor's orders due to a health condition
- Reaching public school age
- Determination by the team that Heart of the Ozarks Child Development Center cannot provide the necessary services to promote a child's learning or medical needs
- Behaviors of such an alarming nature after behavior modifications and interventions have been exhausted
- Behaviors have become a danger to himself/herself or others
- Parent(s)/guardian(s) request
- Team Request
- Ineligible for services

Discharge Conference

If a child receives a yearly evaluation that demonstrates that he/she is no longer qualified for the Preschool Program, a letter is sent home to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the child informing them. The letter details why the child no longer qualifies, the date the services will end, and a date for the discharge conference. If a parent/guardian does not attend the discharge conference, the child's discharge date remains the same and the original letter sent to the parent(s)/guardian(s) serves as the team decision. Parent(s)/guardian(s) have the right to appeal the decision under the appeal process stated in Community Program and Certified Providers Complaint/Resolution Review and Process Policy 1010 and Developmental Disability Services Appeal Process Policy 1076.

Written Communication

Information about upcoming events and activities are posted in the lobby and classrooms and sent home with children. Please check your child's book bag each day for written correspondence from the Preschool.

Parent/Guardian Surveys

Parent/guardian input into the Preschool Program is very valuable. Input is gathered through annual surveys.

Questions or Concerns

During the hours of operation of the Preschool, teachers and staff are responsible for the direct supervision of the children in their care. Because of this, these individuals providing direct services may not be available to speak on the phone during instructional or treatment hours. Individuals will be asked to leave a message and the call will be returned as soon as possible. In addition, the parent/guardian may arrange to have a telephone conference or meeting scheduled. If a parent/guardian wishes to have questions or concerns addressed immediately, he/she may ask to speak to the Director or Director's Designee.

Guests and Visitors

On Site Guests

The Preschool Program adheres to a strict policy concerning on site guests. All guests' must be approved by the Director or Director's Designee. Guests' presentations must be educationally based and enrich the child's learning. The Preschool Program will maintain normal staff to child ratios during the presentation. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in advance with the Preschool will have special guests. Occasionally, fees are required for a child to attend a presentation. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are always welcome to attend any presentations that are coordinated by the Preschool.

Visitors Policy

Visits to our Preschool are welcomed. All visitors must enter at the front entrance to our building and sign in with our front office staff. We hold an Open Door Policy, meaning prospective Heart of the Ozarks Child Development Center parent(s)/guardian(s), residents of the community, and interested educators are welcomed. We want to extend an open door policy; however, it is important to consider the disturbance visits might cause for children. Many of the children who attend the Preschool are very distractible and exhibit atypical behaviors during visitor's presence.

In order to protect the educational programs from undue disturbance, the Preschool requires that people wishing to visit make appointments. All visitors must initially report to the front office and sign in on the Visitor's Log documenting: name, time of arrival, time of departure, date, and reason for visit. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are responsible for informing their family members and other potential visitors about this policy. All visitors are required to display their visitor's badge.

A parent/guardian may observe class or therapy; however, we cannot accommodate several guests on a given day. Making an appointment ensures that multiple visitors are not scheduled for the same day.

Rules of Conduct of Parents/Guardians/Visitors

- Any behavior that disrupts or hinders classroom or office productivity is prohibited on the Preschool property. This includes, but is not limited to, loud or boisterous behavior, profanity, verbal or physical harassment, and drunkenness. Consumption of alcoholic beverages, fighting, and loud music are not permitted on the property, inside or outside of the building.
- Smoking, e-cig, or chewing tobacco is not permitted.

- Latex balloons are not permitted at any time because of their potential to cause severe reactions in some people.
- Selling products or services or soliciting donations is not permitted except as part of a Preschool-sponsored program.
- Taking surveys, circulating petitions, distributing leaflets, and other similar activities are permitted only when authorized by Pathfinder, Inc. Administration.
- Animals, except those to aid persons with disabilities, are not permitted in the Preschool facility, except as part of a Preschool-sponsored program. Animals may not be left unattended on the property.
- Parents or other legal guardians are responsible for the behavior of their minor children in the Preschool Program.
- The violation of federal or state laws or local ordinances will not be permitted on the property. Theft, vandalism, and mutilation of library property are criminal offenses and may be prosecuted. We reserve the right to inspect all bags, briefcases, backpacks, and other such items when the staff has reason to believe such rules, laws, or ordinances have been violated. Pathfinder Preschool is not responsible for personal belongings left unattended or lost on Pathfinder Preschool property.

Failure to comply with these rules may result in the restriction of access to the program or discharge of children from the program.

Behavior Management

Behavior Management

Preschoolers will be encouraged to learn problem solving skills and the ability to self-correct. They will be given the opportunity to choose alternative that will enable them to participate in a socially acceptable manner without reinforcing negative behavior. For example, if a child is having difficulty sitting quietly during a story, he/she will be asked to do a puzzle or draw a picture until he/she feels ready to rejoin the group. Teachers will assist in pointing out logical consequences to both positive and negative behavior.

Staff members will use positive enforcement while supervising children, encouraging them to cooperate and continue using appropriate behaviors. Children will be redirected to an alternate activity if their behavior continues to be inappropriate. This redirection will occur in instances where a child is a danger to their own safety or others safety or when it is destroying property. Individual behavior plans will be implemented if a child's behavior becomes unmanageable. If this becomes necessary, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be consulted in order to help develop and implement a behavior plan.

Behavior Guidance

Behavior guidance shall be: individual and consistent for each child, appropriate to the child's level of understanding, and directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self control.

Physical punishment shall not be administered to children. The length of time a child is placed in time out shall not exceed one minute per year of the child's age.

Acceptable behavior guidance techniques include:

- Look for appropriate behavior and reinforce the child with praise and encouragement when they are behaving well.
- Remind the child on a daily basis of the rules by using clear, positive statements regarding how they are expected to behave rather than what they are not supposed to do.
- Attempt to ignore any minor inappropriate behavior and concentrate on what the child is doing properly.
- Use brief supervised separation from the group only when the child does not respond to a verbal command which instructs the child as to how he or she is supposed to behave.
- When a misbehaving child begins to behave appropriately, encourage and praise small steps rather than waiting until the child has behaved for a long period of time.
- Attend to the children who are behaving appropriately and other children will follow their example in order to obtain attention.

The following activities or threats of such activities are unacceptable as behavior guidance measures and shall not be used for children. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Restraints (Restraining a child briefly by holding the child is allowed when the child's action place the child or others at risk of injury.)
- Washing mouth with soap
- Taping or obstructing a child's mouth
- Placing unpleasant or painful tasting substances in mouths, on lips, etc.
- Profane or abusive language
- Isolation without supervision
- Placing child in a dark area
- Inflicting physical pain, hitting, punching, pulling hair, slapping, kicking, twisting arms, biting or biting back, spitting, swatting, etc.
- Yelling (This does not include a raised voice level to gain a child's attention to protect the child from risk of harm.)
- Forcing physical activity such as running laps, doing push-ups, etc. (This does not include planned group physical education activities that are not punitive in nature.)
- Associating punishment with rest, toilet training, or illness.
- Denying food (lunch or snack) as punishment or punishing children for not eating. Children should not be forced or bribed to eat.
- Shaming, humiliating, frightening, labeling, and physically or mentally harming children.
- Covering the faces of children with blankets or similar items.

Behavior guidance practices used by the center shall be discussed with each child's parent(s)/guardian(s) and provided to them in writing at the time of enrollment with a copy signed by a parent/guardian maintained in the child's record.

Infant and Toddler Behavior Guidance

Time out shall not be used for children under two years of age.

The child may be placed in a supervised area away from the group or in a crib or playpen while staff attends to the situation. Brief separation from the group is acceptable when the child's behavior places the child or others at risk of harm. (Example: A child who has bitten another child will be removed from the group, briefly, while staff attends to the bitten child.)

Rights

Individual/Parent/Guardian Rights

Parent rights include, but are not limited to the following:

- Client/parent/guardian have input into the program plan, and sign the plan.
- Client/parent/guardian are aware that the program is voluntary.
- Client/parent/guardian participation in campaigns for publicity efforts to raise funds for the organization is on a voluntary basis.
- Client/parent/guardian have input into the rules of conduct utilized by the facility including a grievances procedure.
- Client/parent/guardian is informed of the rights of majority.
- Client/parent/guardian have the right to refuse any experimental or non-standard form of treatment.
- Client/parent/guardian is informed of the confidential nature of all client information and the right to approve or deny the release of identifiable information.
- Client/parent/guardian have the opportunity to observe the organization and discuss needs before enrollments.
- The organization shall provide upon request a summary of any monitoring or evaluation reports of their facility prepared by or received from federal, state or local authorities.

United States Constitutional Rights

- The right of freedom of speech and expression
- The right of freedom to religion
- The right to association
- The right to marry, procreate, and raise children
- The right to vote
- The right to meaningful and fair access to courts, including legal representation
- The right to contract and the right to own and dispose of property
- The right to privacy
- The right to be free from cruel and unusual punishment
- The right to equal protection and due process of law
- The right to fair and equal treatment by public agencies
- The right to an equal educational opportunity

- The right to have residential and educational services provided in a humane and least restrictive environment
- The right to meet civil and legal responsibilities

Rights of Individuals with AIDS, HIV, or Hepatitis B

Individuals with AIDS or an HIV related condition (or those who may be perceived as having AIDS or AIDS related condition) are not discriminated against in accordance with 29 U.S.C. 706(8), 784(b); U.S.C. 121010 et. Seq. Each individual/parent/guardian shall be provided a copy of this procedure.

Pathfinder, Inc. will protect the confidentiality of records or computer data which is maintained related to Hepatitis B, HIV, or Aids.

Confidentiality of Individual Records

Policy

Pathfinder, Inc. recognizes the confidentiality of all individual records and information and will implement safeguards possible to maintain confidentiality.

Procedure

- All records will be maintained in a secure location for protection against unauthorized use and stored under lock with protection against fire, water, and other hazards.
- Information in records will not be released, duplicated, or disseminated without proper authorization.
- *"Release of Information"* must be signed by the individual or by the guardian of an incompetent or minor individual.
- In conformance with common procedures as maintained in public and private agencies, requests from doctors, hospitals, social agencies, and institutions concerned with the care of a specific individual, may be honored by completing *"Consent to Release Information Form"*.
- Any information released to the press, radio, television or other news agencies, which could result in invasion of the resident or individual's right to privacy, must be approved by the individual, his/her guardian, and the Director and/or Designee.
- The Director and Supervisors are authorized to review master files. The Director may designate other employees who may be authorized to review master files; however, the Director must authorize, in writing, those designated individuals.
- The individual or guardian has a right to review the contents of the record but only at a scheduled time and with an employee present.
- Confidential information must be respected at all times by all employees. Cases should not be discussed in the presence of other individuals and inappropriate staff.
- An access sheet will be located in the front of each file to maintain confidentiality, according to the Privacy Act of 1974.
- The individual has the right to be informed of the confidential nature of all individual information and has the right to approve or deny the release of identifiable information.

Release of Individual Information

Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish safeguards to preserve the privacy and confidentiality of consumer information. Pathfinder, Inc. will follow the combined requirements of the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and other regulatory agencies standards in order to release information from consumer's records.

Procedure

- Any requests for information must not be responded to by an employee of Pathfinder, Inc. except as permitted in accordance with regulatory agencies standards.
- Employees need to consult with the Director of Quality Assurance concerning release of information of a legal nature.
- Original records shall not be taken outside of program except upon receipt of a subpoena duces tecum, court order, or statute. When consumer's records have been subpoenaed, every effort will be made to have the court accept a certified copy of the record. Where the judge orders that the original records be held, a receipt must be procured from the Clerk of the Court and filed in the folder until return of the records.
- Consumers, parent(s)/guardian(s) have a right to request the restriction of the use and disclosure of information. Such restrictions must be submitted on the "*Release of Information Form*" and do not affect disclosures that have already taken place in good faith. The form will be filed in the consumer's records.
- Written authorization must be obtained for the release of consumer's records.

Guidelines

- Any release of confidential information must include the following:
- The release of information has been authorized by the person served and/or his or her legal representative using a "*Release of Information Form*".
- The "*Release of Information*" conforms to applicable laws and regulations and indicates what specific information can be released, to whom, how the information will be shared, and the purpose of requesting the information.

Individual Record Control

Policy

The control, access, and use of all individual records (master file) are a very serious matter and will be strictly adhered to as set out herein.

Procedure

Each time a Master File is removed from the filing drawer, the individual who is reviewing the records completes the Records Review Log located in each Master File, noting the individual name and title, date of review, and specific purpose of review (name, title, date, purpose).

- Only appropriate personnel will retrieve master files from the filing drawer.
- Those individuals who have access to the individual's records are listed below and will be updated as needed. This list will be kept posted in the Records Room. Records access is allowed to those individuals on the Access List as follows: appropriate directors, vocational counselors, individual service coordinator, placement procurement officers, instructors, case managers, individual/parent/guardian, and appropriate representatives of funding sources.

Solving Consumer Issues

Supervisors, administrators and employees at all levels shall receive, and act promptly and fairly, upon consumer issues. Pathfinder, Inc. recognizes the importance of bringing to light and resolving grievances and/or complaints promptly. If you need further assistance at any time with bringing an issue, grievance, and/or complaint please contact the administrative office at (501)982-0528, an employee will be designated to assist you in any way possible with your issue, including information on external options.

Individual/Parent/Guardian Grievance Procedures

The following procedure is hereby established to handle individual/parent/guardian grievances:

- A. Any individual/parent/guardian expressing a grievance of any nature shall first present the grievance in writing to the program director of the facility within five (5) business days of knowledge of the incident. The consumer and/or the guardian/custodial parent, may present his/her grievance in good faith, without fear of any reprisal, retaliation or barrier to services.
- B. Within 5 business days of the filing, the individual shall meet with the program director. Written notification and actions taken as a result of this meeting will be provided within 5 business days of said meeting to the consumer or his/her representative.
- C. If the individual is not satisfied with the results of the meeting listed in B, they may contact the Director of Quality Assurance within 5 business days.
- D. The Director of Quality Assurance will review all pertinent grievance information submitted and investigate the situation. The Director of Quality Assurance will arrange a meeting with all parties involved within 5 business days of the appeal and render a final decision within 5 business days of the meeting. The decision will include appropriate resource information for an external appeal and assistance.

An annual written report of all formal complaints and grievances will be conducted to determine trends, performance improvement and appropriate actions to be taken.

NOTE: Dismissal and Grievance Procedures are to be outlined in the Individual Policies and Procedures Manual. Preschool: If the individual is not satisfied with the decision from an IFSP or IPP conference, they

may continue their case to the DDS Office of Appeals and Hearing under DDS Policy 1010 and 1076. This information can be obtained from the Preschool Service Coordinator or Director.

Individual Oriented Concerns Procedures

Policy

Pathfinder, Inc. provides an administrative procedure to assure that individuals, who believe that the rights of the program's individuals are not protected or observed, may file a formal grievance against the program or individual employees of the program. The administrative procedure shall assure a fair and thorough hearing for both the accuser(s) and the accused, with the right of legal representation and/or counsel, at one's own expense, throughout the process and shall be directed toward arriving at administrative actions that properly address the complaint. Utilization of the administrative procedure shall not result in any adverse management action against individuals filing complaints but shall be viewed by management as an amicable and constructive method for identifying and solving problems.

Nothing herein prohibits an individual's right to seek guidance and/or assistance from:

Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities 1515 W. 7th Street, Suite 320-330 Little Rock, AR 72201 Phone: 501-682-2897 ddcstaff@dfa.arkansas.gov www.gcdd.arkansas.gov	OR	Adult Protective Services Hotline 1-800-482-8049 Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-482-5964
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Procedure

Concerned individuals shall report directly to the supervisor in charge of the program. Initial report may be verbal, but must be followed with a written, signed report within one working day. Individual/resident statements may be taped in lieu of written report, or written report witnessed by third party component.

Investigation

A preliminary investigation is immediately initiated by the Director of Quality Assurance resulting in a written report of findings to the director. The investigation should be completed within 5 working days unless extenuating circumstances exist that require additional time. If, at the end of the preliminary investigation, the Director of Quality Assurance determines the allegation is unfounded, the process is ended unless the charging party desires appeal. The findings of the investigation will be documented and maintained in the Administration Office. The entire process must be completed within 10 working days unless extenuating circumstances exist that require additional time. Notify and forward documentation to the appropriate overseeing authority.

Mandated Maltreatment Reporters

Arkansas requires that all educational care workers report a condition that might be considered child abuse as referred to in Arkansas Code 12-18-103 (i.e. maltreatment, abuse, exploitation, abandonment, neglect, etc.). The Preschool will report such activity or suspicion immediately to the Department of Human

Services (DHS), Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-482-5964. A written report to the local DHS and Developmental Disability Services (DDS) Offices will follow and kept in a confidential file accessible by the director. The reports will not be placed in the student’s personal life. Neither the Preschool, nor the employees of Pathfinder, Inc. determine child abuse. After the report is made, DHS is responsible for investigation and follow-up.

The Department of Human Services (DHS) requests you be notified that your child may be subject to interview at any time by the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), Special Investigations, and Law Enforcement for investigative purposes and/or for determining compliance with licensing regulations.

Helpful Phone Numbers

Helpful Phone Numbers

Arkansas Advocacy Services	501-371-9678
Arkansas Autism Speaks	888-288-4762
Arkansas Department of Special Education	501-682-4221
Arkansas Governor’s Developmental Disability Council	501-682-2897
Division of Services for the Blind	501-682-5463
Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline	800-482-5964
Child Care and Early Childhood	501-682-8590
Children and Adults with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder	866-200-8098
Deaf ACCESS	501-686-9693
Developmental Disabilities Provider Association (DDPA)	501-801-3653
Disability Rights Center	501-296-1775
Arkansas Down Syndrome Association	501-223-3696
Early Intervention https://dhs.arkansas.gov/dds/firstconnectionsweb/#fc-home	501-682-8699
Parent to Parent The Arc	501-375-7770
Parent Training and Information	501-614-7020
Heart of the Ozarks Child Development Center	870-741-3709
Southeastrans	888-833-4136
Pathfinder, Inc. Quality Assurance Director	501-982-0528
United Cerebral Palsy of Central Arkansas	501-224-6067

Independent Evaluators

James L. Dennis Developmental Center	501-364-1830
Easter Seals Arkansas	501-227-3600