**Family Handbook**

**Generations**
**Early Learning**
**& Family Center**

**2901 Connelly Avenue Suite B101**

**Bellingham, Washington**

**98225**
**Phone: (360) 752-6336**
**Fax: (360) 746-8702**

***to nurture growth, education, and community for all ages***

**ENROLLMENT PROCESS**

Your child’s spot at Generations is reserved when we receive your $100 registration fee. If your family qualifies for assistance, we must have proof of approval from the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to reserve your child’s spot. At that time, you will receive our enrollment packet. This includes our registration paperwork, a classroom specific welcome packet, our Family Handbook, an age specific developmental screening tool, and a family interest survey.

* Registration packet
	+ The registration paperwork must be fully completed and include an up-to-date record of your child’s Certificate of Immunization Status, and/or a Certificate of Exemption (signed by a doctor).
* Classroom welcome packet
	+ Letter from teachers, daily classroom schedule, cubby checklist, and a menu.
* Family Handbook
	+ This is yours to keep and refer to throughout your child’s time at Generations.
* Developmental screening tool
	+ Specific to your child’s age, this developmental screening will help prepare us to support your child’s development and set goals.
	+ Please sign and date this form after completion
* Family interest survey
	+ This survey helps us determine what programs and special events to offer throughout the year.

We **require** all new families to have an orientation meeting with a member of our administration team before your child’s first day at Generations. This meeting allows us to go over registration paperwork together and to review our Family Handbook, Disaster Manual and Health Policies. We will also use the completed developmental screening tool and registration paperwork to set goals for your child and a transition plan as needed.

We ask that you take your time to read and complete the enrollment packet. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions throughout that process.

**OUR MISSION**
***to nurture growth, education, and community for all ages***

At Generations Early Learning & Family Center, we believe in providing children the opportunity, resources and guidance to expand their natural curiosity, resulting in the development of a unique learning style. We believe each child should have access to experiences, activities and interactions that support individual learning styles as well as personal developmental needs. We believe it is essential to partner with families to meet our collective goals of supporting children’s learning and development throughout their early years. We provide intergenerational interactions between children and residents of Mt. Baker Care Center and Summit Place Assisted Living that benefit the children, residents, families, and staff of our program. These daily interactions provide support for the residents and children, and encourage children's sense of self-worth through this extended family concept.

**OUR CENTER**

**History**

Generations Early Learning & Family Center is a division of The St. Francis Foundation, a non-profit corporation established in 1985. From 1985 to 2015, the Center operated as St. Francis Childcare and was located within St. Francis of Bellingham, a skilled nursing facility and rehabilitation center. In order to expand our program, we moved to partner with the Mt. Baker Care Center and Summit Place Assisted Living in early 2015.

The primary purpose of our center has always been to provide a unique childcare program within a residential care facility, which will benefit the residents, children, families, and staff members through mutual interactions and continuing relationships. Quality early childhood care and education programs allow parents to engage in work and other activities with the assurance that their children are in a safe environment that promotes health, happiness, and well-being.

**Staff**

Our employees are chosen for their experience, education, and commitment to children, as well as their personal warmth and empathy. The program is staffed by an Executive Director, Deputy Director, Administrative Assistant, Lead Teachers, and Teacher’s Assistants. They are trained in child development and the ability to relate positively and openly to children, families, and other staff members. A continuing staff-training program provides specific child care and educator skills during staff meeting. Our Center is always staffed to meet or exceed the State required child to staff ratios. All staff members have had criminal history background checks from the Department of Early Learning, are current in Blood Borne Pathogens, HIV, Infant-Child CPR, and First Aid trainings. In addition, staff members are registered with the Washington State Training & Registry System (STARS). This system requires staff to complete a specific number of clock hours in child development training each year.

We encourage our staff to share their personal passions with their classrooms. In the past, this has introduced special programs to our daily schedules, including Yoga Club, Photography, Language Clubs (Japanese, Spanish, and French) and Cooking Club.

**Board Members**

The Board of Directors of the St. Francis Foundation set the Center’s policies. The Board members include members of the community, the Center staff, and family representatives.

The following people are currently serving the St. Francis Foundation as Board Members:

Michelle Greening, President

Nick Berard, Vice President

Rachel Strachan, Treasurer

Catherine Reis-El Bara, Secretary

Heather Ouilette, Parent Representative

Jessica Baldwin, Parent Representative

 Sally Majkut

James Hall

Robin Russell

**Admission Requirements & Registration**

Children aged 12 months through six years of age (or before kindergarten entry) will be accepted. All registration forms and fees must be received and reviewed by Generations staff before your child’s care begins.

**Volunteers**
Any person that volunteers on a regular basis will be required to complete and pass a Background Check through the Department of Early Learning. This includes any family members of children or staff, and residents.

**Donations**
We appreciate donations of books, puzzles, clothing, and other useful items that are in new or good condition. Please call or email at any time to ask what we need! We are a 501-C3 Non-Profit organization and donations are tax deductible. Our Tax ID Number is 91-1301107.

**Non-Discrimination Policy**

In accordance with Federal law and policy, our Center does not exclude from admission, deny privileges, participation in programs or otherwise discriminate against any child on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or disability. We do not discriminate in the administration of education policies, admission policies, or fee structure. This policy shall be included in the Family and Staff Handbooks. It shall also be reviewed when dealing with student admission, programs, and in all advertising done for prospective students. A copy of this policy will be posted at all times in the Center.

The Non-Discrimination Policy was adopted by the St. Francis Foundation Board of Directors on June 9th, 1986.

**Commitment to Diversity**

Generations Early Learning & Family Center is committed to acknowledging and celebrating the diversity of our world. We strive to create an environment that encompasses respect, fairness, cooperation, understanding, and professionalism for our families, children, and staff. We welcome and support families, children, and staff of all ages, races, cultural backgrounds, religions, physical abilities, socioeconomic status, genders, and sexual orientations. In doing so, we hope to be an example for the kind of world we envision for our children – an interconnected, intergenerational community in which our children, families, and senior residents of all backgrounds learn and grow together to reach their full potential.

**Policy for Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect**

We are mandatory reporters as required by the Child Care Licensing Requirement: WAC 388-150-480 Reporting of Child Abuse. Any instance where the licensee or staff has reason to suspect the occurrence of physical, sexual, or emotional child abuse, child neglect or child exploitation, is required to be reported, by telephone, to Child Protective Services. Any suspicion of immediate danger to a child will also be reported to local law enforcement.

**INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAM**

Our center provides intergenerational interaction between children and the residents of Mt. Baker Care Center and Summit Place Assisted Living. These interactions benefit our children by providing “grandparents” for daily contact and support, and by encouraging the child’s sense of self-worth through this extended family concept. This intergenerational model also benefits the senior citizens in our community by giving them enhanced socialization, emotional support, and stimulated learning. Generations Early Learning & Family Center blends two types of institutional cultures to produce a marvelous result - a multigenerational living-learning environment.

Intergenerational activities ("Intergen") are planned weekly by Generations staff and the recreational therapy staff of Mt. Baker and Summit Place. Each classroom participates in two Intergen activities a week, one at Mt. Baker and one at Summit Place. Intergen activities vary week to week and may include arts and crafts projects, cooking projects, neighborhood walks, music and dance parties, yoga, story times, and animal visits. While most Intergen activities are planned, they also happen spontaneously as our children and residents form connections. If you have any ideas for Intergen, please share them with us!

**Intergen Schedule\*:**

**Mondays Tuesdays**

10:00 - Rainbow Class to Summit Place 11:00 – Garden Class to Mt. Baker

3:00 - Forest Class to Mt. Baker 2:30 – Forest Class to Summit Place

**Wednesdays Thursdays**

11:00 - Garden Class to Summit Place 10:00 - Rainbow Class to Mt. Baker

2:30 - Ocean Class to Mt. Baker 11:00 - Ocean Class to Summit Place

\**Intergen schedule subject to change if needed*

**The purposes of the Intergenerational program is to:**

* Provide an opportunity for interaction between children and residents
* Provide a method for establishing long-term relationships between residents and children that are mutually beneficial
* Provide an opportunity for children in a structured learning program to share their experiences with residents who enthusiastically support and praise the children
* Provide a “grandparent” program that offers extended family and continuing relationships between residents and children

**Children will be involved in the program in the following ways:**

* Residents will be able to visit the childcare rooms and play yard to observe and interact with the children.
* At no time will children be left alone with residents, Mt. Baker Care Center staff, or Summit Place Assisted Living staff. Our staff members will always supervise children.
* Children will participate in planned activities with the residents outside of our center, within the Mt. Baker Care Center and Summit Place Assisted Living center, and with childcare staff. This may include music and physical activities in common spaces, and books and learning activities in resident rooms. These activities will be in small or large groups of children and always with childcare staff.
* Intergen activities are always a choice opportunity for residents and children. At no time will anyone be forced to participate.
* Intergen activities may be cancelled due to contagions. If this happens, all families will be notified.

**FAMILY ENGAGEMENT**

Families are encouraged to visit the Center and are welcome in any area of the facility while children are involved in care. Families are always welcome and encouraged to attend and participate in any Intergenerational parties and activities.

Families are responsible to see that their child’s registration forms are kept up-to-date with additional or changing information, including: immunizations, physical examinations/well child exams, change in address or phone number, parent/guardian work information, addition or deletion of persons approved to pick up child, and any other emergency contact or health information.

We communicate with families in a variety of ways. Please let us know which method of communication works best for you and your family. Our administration staff is available throughout the day via telephone and e-mail. All families are welcome to call the center or e-mail us to check in on their child’s day and speak with us about any concerns or questions.

**Email**
E-mail can be a great communication tool. Your child’s registration packet asks you to include your email address – we will use this to share announcements, classroom newsletters, photos, and other information. We also invite you to e-mail us at anytime! Our Executive Director, Heidi Bugbee, can be reached at Heidi@intergenchildcare.com, our Deputy Director, Trisha Lewis, can be reached at trisha@intergenchildcare.com, and Roseve Winchell, our Administration Assistant, can be reached at Roseve@intergenchildcare.com.

**Meetings, Committees and Surveys**
Every year we have a variety of committees and opportunities to for parents to volunteer and get involved with our program.

In the fall, near the beginning of our school year program, parents will receive and be asked to complete a **Family Involvement Survey**. Additional services, events, classes, or activities may be offered based on the interests of our family group. In the past, this has included CPR/First Aid trainings for family members and special events like “The Reptile Man”.

A **Family Satisfaction Survey** will be available mid-year for families to fill out. We use the results to make positive changes to our program to better serve our families.

**Fundraising**

We have a fundraising committee. We encourage parents to get involved with fundraising. If you have an idea for a fundraiser that you would like to implement, please share it with us!
Our annual Generation Celebration is held in July and is a family friendly event featuring live music and silent auctions. We ask every enrolled family to contribute to the Generation Celebration in some way. There are many options to help and we welcome new ideas for this event!

In the spring, we work with Van Wingerden Garden Center to sell beautiful hanging flower baskets. Watch out for this announcement!
We are registered with AmazonSmile and Fred Meyer Community Rewards. You can link your account with each of these businesses to the St. Francis Foundation and every time you shop, we will receive a donation!

**Generations Corner Shop**

The Generations Corner Shop serves as a fundraising opportunity for Generations Early Learning and Family Center. It is operated by Generations with the help of our fabulous volunteers, who not only work the corner shop but have become a part of the daily lives of the residents who shop there.

The Corner Shop is located in the hallway between Summit Place Assisted Living and Mt. Baker Care Center and gives residents access to some necessities not offered by their residency, as well as some of their favorite treats and gifts for their loved ones.

**Fred Meyer Community Rewards – Link your rewards card**

* [www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards](http://www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards). You can search for us by name (St. Francis Foundation) or by our number: DB262.
* Every time you shop and use your rewards card, you are helping us earn a donation! You still earn your rewards points, fuel points, and rebates!

**AmazonSmile**

* Just go to [www.smile.amazon.com](http://www.smile.amazon.com)! You can search for us by name (St. Francis Foundation) or use the link below anytime you are shopping on Amazon.
* [**https://smile.amazon.com/ch/91-1301107**](https://smile.amazon.com/ch/91-1301107)

We love new fundraisers – please share any ideas you have with us!

**Family Nights**
We host at least three family nights throughout the school year. We have a Back-to-School-Night in the fall, a Family Fun Night in the winter, and an End of Year and Graduation Celebration in the spring. These nights always include a meal for our families and staff to enjoy together, an activity, and lots of fun! Siblings and other family members are welcome to attend. These are great opportunities to get to know other families in our Generations community.

**Conferences**
Parent and Teacher conferences are held during the school year. We will work with you to find a time to meet to discuss your child’s development and establish goals. This also gives parents a chance to help teachers plan activities and learning experiences. You are welcome to request a conference with your child’s teacher at anytime during their care at Generations. Teachers may also request additional conferences at times.

**Newsletters**
Family communication boards are in each classroom and in the main entrance to our Center. Event calendars, notes, celebrations, and other information will be posted in these spots. Classroom specific and Center newsletters will also be published and sent out throughout the year. Please include your preferred e-mail address on your child’s registration forms so you can receive these important newsletters and announcements!

**Facebook/Website/Instagram**
Our website features in-depth information about our program, a blog, and a gallery. Our Facebook page is updated daily with classroom happenings, exciting news, announcements, and photos of our daily activities. Our Instagram (GenerationsELFC) features photos that capture the essence of our program, our children, and our families. Please check these often, and invite your family and friends to “LIKE” our Facebook page and follow us on Instagram!

A Photo Permission Form is included in your child’s registration packet – please fill it out completely. Children’s names are never attached to or included on our social networking sites.

**Birthday Book Club**

The goal of our Birthday Book Club is to expand our beautiful and beloved library. We invite families to donate a new book that they love in honor of their child’s birthday. These books are read aloud to their child’s class, and then added to the library with the child’s name and age on a book plate. This is a great way for families to share their favorite stories and to discover new ones! In the past, families have also donated books for other occasions – special holidays, from trips or vacations, or to welcome new seasons. Any book donations are appreciated!

**Family Stress**
We have created the following guidelines for our relationships with families during painful or uneven times. It is important to us that we be supportive while remaining a safe and neutral place for children.

* Adults who raise their voice or act in a “scary” or threatening way will be asked to step outside of the Center and away from children.
* If there is any evidence that someone is potentially dangerous, staff will immediately call 911.
* If a parent or guardian is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, another adult will be called to pick up the child.
* While at the Center, adults are asked to refrain from speaking of personal issues (support, custody, etc.) when children (including their own) are present.
* Unless we have legal documents stating otherwise, parental rights are respected by the Center.
* Please do not engage staff members in lengthy conversations during drop-off or pick-up times. We ask that you make a meeting time for longer conversations to allow teachers to keep their focus on the children throughout the day.

**CLASSROOM GROUPINGS**

*Children are taught at each level to be prepared for the next group.  Many factors contribute to the child’s placement in a group:  age, personality, development, amount of time spent in the Program, space availability in each classroom, and others. Please know that the ages listed for each classroom are the age ranges suggested by licensing for enrolling in each classroom, not necessarily when children will transition to the next classroom.*

We offer part-time care as well as fulltime care for children. Our students have a variety of schedules and folks are coming and going throughout the day. We may move children around to “visit” other classrooms as needed. We must always maintain appropriate adult: child ratios based on the age of the youngest child in the classroom at the time.

* **The Rainbow Room:** Children are 12 months to 18 months (or older depending on the development of the child and the availability in the classrooms). The Rainbow room serves 9 babies. We have two teachers in this room at all times. We often staff additional support staff depending on the needs of the children Weekly plans are developed depending on thedevelopment of the child and the availability in the classrooms.
* **The Garden Room:** Approximately 18-29 months (or older depending on the development of the child and the availability in the classrooms). The Garden room serves 12 children. The Garden classroom has 2 teachers (and often more support staff depending on the needs of the children).  It maintains at least a 7:1 child to adult ratio. Weekly plans are developed by the lead teachers to meet the developmental needs of the Garden room children. Potty training begins in this room when the child and family identify an interest.
* **The Forest Room:** Approximately 30-48 months. The Forest classroom serves 19 children at a time. Staff maintains at least a 10:1 child to adult ratio. Additional staff are added according to the needs of the children. Weekly plans are developed by the lead teachers to meet the developmental needs of the preschool age children. Care groups divided by development and age are designed to meet the children’s developmental needs.
* **The Ocean Room:** Approximately 49-72 months. The Ocean classroom serves 20 children at a time. Staff maintains at least a 10:1 child to adult ratio. Additional staff are added according to the needs of the children. Weekly plans are developed by the lead teachers to meet the developmental needs of the preschool age children. Care groups are divided by development and age, and are designed to meet the children’s developmental needs.

**CLASSROOM TRANSITION PLAN & POLICY**

Children transition to new classrooms an average of twice a year, in June and September. Transitions to new rooms depend on a child’s age, emotional and physical development and availability in each room. Before a child is transitioned into a new classroom, the center will communicate with parents regarding their child’s developmental readiness to move rooms. A family-teacher conference, if requested, can be set up to discuss the transition and the child’s development. We chart a five step (minimum) transitional process that each child follows. If a child does not respond well to any of these steps, the step will be repeated until successful. A log of each child’s transitional process is maintained by the lead teacher and is available for families to review at any time.

A typical transition plan will go as follows:

· 1st visit: (15 minute visit)

o Tour new classroom with familiar teacher, meet new friends

o Engage in circle time where child is introduced

· 2nd visit: (20- 40 minute visit)

o Join in snack time routine

· 3rd visit: (1 hour visit)

o Join snack

o Play

o Introduce Lunch routine

· 4th visit: (2 hour visit or longer)

o Snack

o Play

o Lunch

o Nap

· 5th visit: Parent drops child off in new classroom

**KINDERGARTEN TRANSITION PLAN & POLICY**

Our preschool teachers and administration staff provide families with necessary information regarding kindergarten readiness and registration. This information includes Whatcom County's school district's registration dates and forms and kindergarten readiness surveys. This important information is shared with families via postings in the center, e-mails, newsletters, Facebook, and paper copies attached to children's sign in sheets.

We encourage spring conferences for each kindergarten-bound family. This conference includes reviewing the child's *Yellow Book* and literacy skills, and completing a kindergarten Transition Form. This transition form is sent to the child's kindergarten school for their kindergarten teacher to review and use.

We also connect our families with their kindergarten schools through a "Kindergarten Tour Field Trip" for the children and a "Kindergarten Meeting" for parents and guardians.

The Kindergarten Tour Field Trip includes all of our graduated preschoolers and lead preschool teachers. We reserve the Early Learning & Family Services school bus to take us on a tour to each child's kindergarten school *(as time and distance allows).* This gives each child the chance to show their classmates where they will be going to kindergarten. If possible, we schedule this field trip on a day where school principals/kindergarten teachers may be available to greet children.

In the spring, we invite all of our kindergarten-bound families to our center for a Kindergarten Meeting. Childcare and dinner are provided as parents and guardians are able to meet and ask questions with Kristi Dominguez, the Director of Early Childhood Education for the Bellingham School District. This meeting is a wonderful opportunity for families to learn more about their kindergartener's transition and upcoming year.

**CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT**

At Generations Early Learning & Family Center, we believe in providing children the opportunity, resources and guidance to expand their natural curiosity, resulting in the development of a unique learning style. We believe each child should have access to experiences, activities and interactions that support individual learning styles as well as personal developmental needs.  We believe it is essential to partner with families to meet our collective goals of supporting children’s learning and development throughout their early years. We implement curriculums and assessment tools that allow our teachers and administration to uphold these beliefs while supporting each child’s learning and development.

**Curriculum & Daily Structure**

Our preschool classrooms use ***The Creative Curriculum****,* an award-winning and research-based curriculum that is fully aligned with the *Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework.* *The Creative Curriculum* is based on 38 learning and development objectives across 10 areas of development, including: social-emotional, language, physical, cognitive, literacy, science and technology, mathematics, social studies, the arts, and English language acquisition.This curriculum allows teachers to bring their own creativity and expertise into the classroom while ensuring they meet early learning standards every day.

Our commitment to ensuring our children develop skills needed for success is seen in our consistent structure of routines and transitions. Our daily activities include small group instruction, large group activities, 1:1 time with an adult, socialization and play time, movement opportunities, and exploration in the arts and sciences.  It is our goal that by using *The Creative Curriculum,* we are able to offer a complete, developmentally appropriate program to our families sochildren can succeed in both school and community.

Our classrooms also integrate other early education curriculums, including ***Letter People, DECA, Second Step, I am Moving I am Learning (IMIL)*** and ***Kiddikins***. We also use the ***Second Step*** curriculum, as self-regulation, emotional expression, and positive social relationships are key goals in our program. Teachers incorporate these lessons to promote optimum social and emotional development.

Our Center is a print-rich environment that promotes early literacy skills. Quality children’s literature is shared everyday between children and staff members. *The Letter People* curriculum is used to introduce letters, sounds, and reading concepts in our Rainbow and Garden classrooms.

**Assessment**

Our Rainbow and Garden classrooms use the ***Ages and Stages*** tool to assess children’s development. Goals and learning objectives that align with ***Washington State Early Learning and Development Guidelines*** are created from these assessments.  Students in the Forest and Ocean rooms are assessed using ***Teaching Strategies GOLD***. Teachers develop lesson plans for the class based on results from individual assessments, observations and input from families. We share these plans with our parents on a regularly-scheduled basis through newsletters, by always having activity and lesson plans posted in classrooms, and quarterly conferences. Parents are encouraged to visit and volunteer in their child’s room to ensure transparency between what we present and what we implement.

It is an expectation that families participate in developmental assessments for their child in order to best meet children's developmental needs at home and at school. An age-specific developmental screening tool is included in our registration packet and is required for all children enrolled. For children in the Rainbow and Garden classrooms, Ages and Stages questionnaires will also be required. If you have any questions or concerns about our assessments, please do not hesitate to contact our administration team.

**Implementation**

As early childhood educators, we believe it is our responsibility to create an atmosphere where children feel safe, emotionally secure, and have a sense of belonging. We strive to provide surroundings where children can experiment and explore according to their own interests. Our curriculums allow us to set up the environment and interact with children in meaningful ways. Our teachers facilitate children’s learning by engaging with them in play and encouraging them to develop new interests and persist with challenges.  In our living and learning space, children find specific areas to play, to learn, and to socialize. Supplies and materials are stored in easily accessible spots and children quickly learn to get out and clean up materials independently. We offer a rich variety of gender-neutral toys and materials as well as traditional games, books, manipulatives and equipment.  Children are encouraged to visit different areas of the learning room where they can develop their own awareness of what interests and attracts them as individuals.

Children become active participants in development of their own learning process. We believe children learn social values such as cooperation, respect, negotiation, and the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behavior through their play activities and interactions with others. Our curriculum empowers children to engage in creative and meaningful interactions. Learning to compromise, make decisions, and problem solve are all taught through naturally occurring interactions. In the process, children discover their own interests and strengths. By thoughtfully observing children who are playing and learning together, our teachers assess the specific needs of the those in their groups and use strategies to introduce and reinforce positive behavior. Social skills are not taught in isolation. Rather, we try to engage our children in thinking socially and encourage them to see their own behavior through the eyes of others. Through observations and upon completing the assessments offered by the *Ages and Stages* tool and *Teaching Strategies Gold*, teachers develop objectives and activities based on results, observations and input from families.

**Intergenational Inclusion**

Our center has consistently strived to provide a unique early childhood education program within a residential care facility, benefitting the residents, children, families, and staff members through mutual interactions and continuing relationships. These intergenerational interactions between children and residents support the child by providing a “grandparent” or grand-friend for daily contact and reinforcement. Encouraging a child’s sense of self-worth through our extended family concept, the Intergenerational program helps us achieve our mission of nurturing growth, furthering education, and developing a sense of community for all ages.

**Progression & Outcomes**

We track children’s progress throughout their time at Generations using a portfolio system. Your child’s portfolio will follow them as they grow and move onto the next classroom. Families are welcome to look at their child’s portfolio at any time. We ask that you review your child's portfolio at least three times a year. A review and signature log is located in the front of your child's portfolio. Please sign and date it anytime you look at your child's portfolio. Our staff will provide opportunities for portfolio review throughout the year.

By providing a curriculum that takes into account developmental milestones and individual needs, an environment open to exploration, and meaningful interactions across generations, we have built a program that offers every child the opportunity to feel valued and successful.

**ACTIVITIES**

**Dramatic Play**
Children use socio-dramatic and imaginative play to role-play what they know about the world around them, based on their experiences and observations. We provide children with opportunities and materials to “try on” the lives of others and to develop a better understanding of themselves and their world. Dress up clothes, dolls, accessories, child-sized appliances, tables, and chairs are available for children to explore. Socialization and sharing are encouraged in socio-dramatic play.

**Blocks**
Block play allows children to explore spatial and structural problems of balance and enclosure, as well as pre-math concepts of size, shapes, and amounts. These explorations also provide opportunities for creative imagination and language development as children and teachers discuss the play and building processes.

**Literacy**
We are thrilled to have our own Esther Bean Children’s Library in our Center! Children and teachers are able to enjoy this cozy space throughout their day and to borrow books to read in their classrooms. An assortment of books is always accessible to children in every classroom, while others are kept separate for seasonal and thematic use. Every classroom and the common spaces in our Center are print-rich environments, to promote early literacy skills. Through the environment, along with books and stories, children learn the value of books and reading, develop skills in listening and vocabulary building, and come to an awareness of their own life by vicariously experiencing the lives of others through stories. We also encourage children to share their own stories – with Yellow Books, classroom books and Center special event books.

**Manipulative Materials**
These materials are designed to foster small muscle development, eye-hand coordination, and other aspects of perceptual-motor development, such as spatial relationships, color, size, shape, and quantity. Manipulatives are changed throughout the year, giving the children the opportunity to explore new materials and new ways of using them.

**Art**
Art activities are a daily part of our program. Activities may be teacher-led or self-directed. Children experiment with a variety of mediums, including: watercolors, non-toxic paints, crayons, markers, pencils, stencils, glue, play dough, and stickers. Materials are introduced to children in appropriate ways, and children are encouraged to explore their individual creativity while developing sensory awareness.

**Movement and Music**
Children have the opportunity to experiment with a variety of instruments, music, and equipment. Auditory awareness and creative movement are encouraged and language development is assisted as we learn new songs. Teachers are also encouraged to share their musical talents with their classes!

Physical awareness is fostered with mindful movement activities. In the past, this has included Fitness Club and Yoga. The *I am Moving, I am Learning* (IMIL) curriculum is also used to develop movement activities.

**Science**
The children are introduced to new concepts and encouraged to do problem-solving daily. A variety of material is available for explorative type activities and experiments. Our outdoor area will also be used for observations and experimentations.

**Large Motor and Outdoor Play**
Large motor activities provide exercise and the development of skills such as balance and coordination. A variety of group and individual activities are available for children to explore. These include a parachute, hoops, balls, balance boards, a trampoline, tunnel, climbing mats, and others.

We believe that exploring the natural environment is an important experience for every child, and at Generations, we go outside everyday – rain or shine! We take advantage of nice weather and stay outside for extended parts of the day during the spring and summer. On very cold, wet, or icy days, our outside time may be less, and take the form of shorter neighborhood walks or outside free play in our backyard.

**Grand-friends in the Classroom**
Residents are encouraged to participate in the children’s activities. The program activities and materials lend themselves to both self-direction and teacher-direction, and to both cooperative and individual play, all of which may be shared with the residents through observing or participating.

**YOUR CHILD’S FIRST DAY**

Orientation meetings before your child's first day ensure that the first drop off and day go smoothly. Our staff will refer to your orientation and any transition plans that were made to support you and your child through the transition to our center.

It is important that your child’s first few days of school are successful, so allow yourself plenty of time to get ready for school. Upon arrival please sign your child in and proceed to their classroom. Encourage your child to wash their hands. In the classroom, let your child stay with you to allow time for him/her to feel ready to become involved with the group. After looking around with your child, find a comfortable place to stay and remain there. Often children will use you as a “home- base” from which to explore the environment. Make sure that you meet all the teachers in your child’s classroom, and pass on any important information to them.

On your child’s first day, please bring:

•  a small blanket and one soft toy for rest/nap time

•  a full set of spare clothes (labeled with your child’s name)

•  a photo of your family

When you want to leave, let your child know you’re leaving. When you say good-bye, feel confident that the teachers will support your child with his/her feelings, offering comfort, reassurance, and acknowledgment of what she/he is feeling. Our intention is to honor the bonds between you and your child, and to make room for your child’s feelings. It may help you to make a specific plan with your child on the way to school about how the drop-off time will look, one example, not necessarily a fit for all families: “let’s read two books together, and then you can give me two hugs and three kisses, and push me out the door.”

The first few days of school can be stressful and/or fatiguing for children, and this is sometimes expressed by regressive behavior or irritability. We also understand that the first day is difficult for parents and guardians too - please let us know how we can help you. We are able to send pictures and e-mails to show how your child's day is going, and are available by phone at any time. Feel free to discuss any concerns you may have about your first day with your child’s teacher or our administration team.

**DROPPING OFF AND PICKING UP**

Families and visitors must be “buzzed in” at the entrance of the Center. Children must be signed in and out every day with a full signature and the time. Sign in/out iPads are located in the front entrance area. Please remember that children can only be released to adults that are listed on their Pick-Up Authorization and Emergency Contact list. Picture identification will be required for any adult that is not recognized by our staff members. Families may change their child’s Pick-Up Authorization list at any time.

**ABSENCES**
If your child is absent on their scheduled day for any reason, please call and notify the Center by 8:30 A.M. This allows us to adjust our meal counts and planned activities. Generations cannot guarantee make-up days for any given student under any given circumstance.

**HEALTH POLICIES**

**Medication**
Medication can be given to your child while in care under these circumstances:

* Parent/Guardian must complete and sign a “Medical Authorization Form”
* Prescription medications must come in the prescription bottle and administration must be consistent with the prescription label
* An over the counter medication can only be given with written parental consent and if the medication bottle label tells you how much medication to give based on the child's age and weight

Medications will be kept in locked boxes in the cupboard over the sink in each classroom. If needed, medications will be kept in a locked-box in the refrigerator. Staff will record all administrations of medication and include the date, time, dosage, and their name.

**First Aid**
In the event that a child has a minor injury, such as a splinter, small cut, abrasion, etc. the childcare staff will clean the wound, apply ice if necessary, and dress appropriately. If a wound is more serious, a nurse from the facility will be asked to check the injury and tend if necessary. In the event that further medical attention is required, a parent/guardian will be contacted. If immediate care is necessary, the child will be transported to St. Joseph’s Hospital Emergency Center.

**Illness**
Children exhibiting signs of illness cannot be admitted to the Center.

**Keep me home if…**

* Vomiting two or more times in 24 hours
* Body rash combined with a fever or itching
* Lice or nits
* Three or more watery stools in 24 hours
* Eye infection, or thick mucus or pus draining from eye
* Sore throat with a fever or swollen glands
* Fever of 100 degrees or more
* Just not feeling good – unusually tired, pale, lack of appetite, confused, upset

*A note from a physician is required upon re-admittance after a contagious disease or scabies.*

If your child becomes ill during care, he or she will be examined and moved to an isolated care room under supervision by our staff until an authorized person is able to pick up the child.

Any outbreak of a communicable disease will be reported to the local Health Department. In the event that we are within the guidelines given by the Department as an epidemic, we would follow the procedure for closure.

If your child is ill or has a communicable disease, including influenza, please inform the Center when calling in your child’s absence, so we may inform other parents of the symptoms.

Children recovering from the flu, colds, and other illnesses will be kept as comfortable as possible. As long as symptoms (fever, vomiting, diarrhea) have not occurred for at least 24 hours, unless otherwise specified by the Health Department.

**Incident Reports**
An incident/injury report will be completed for any injury/incident that is sustained by a child. The report will describe the incident and the care that was given by staff. Parents are to read the report, sign it, and return to the center for documentation and record keeping. We ask that if your child has a visible injury that happens at home, please let us know so that we can document the incident for record keeping purposes.

**Hand Washing**
Hand washing is a very important part of our infection control procedures. **We ask that children are assisted by their parent/guardian in washing their hands when arriving at, and leaving, Generations each day**. Children wash hands before each meal, after using the toilet, and any other times that warrant. Staff washes hands after helping children with nose blowing, toileting, diapering, and other times as needed. Soap, warm water, paper towels, and proper hand washing techniques are used at every wash.

**Sanitizing**
A sanitizing solution is used on our changing tables between each use, on classroom surfaces, eating surfaces, and on toys and other materials that may be exposed to bodily fluids. The bathroom is cleaned thoroughly each day, and as needed throughout the day. We use the 1,2,3 method of cleaning as recommended by the DEL.

**Doctor Appointments and Immunization Records**
We are required to have a yearly Physical Examination/Well Child Exam date for each child. A PE date within the last year, a signed Certificate of Immunization Status, and/or a signed Exemption to Immunization Law form is required upon admission to our program, and must be updated. Anytime your child has a Physical or Well Child Exam, or receives any immunizations, it is the family’s responsibility to complete, sign, and turn in a “Health Update Form.”

**RELIGIOUS POLICY**

Generations is a non-religious institution. At Generations, we strive to affirm and celebrate each child and family in a myriad of ways. We welcome and support families from various religious and non-religious traditions alike. Our curriculum is not religious in nature.

**CELEBRATIONS, CULTURES, AND TRADITIONS**

We honor all families, their heritage, culture, and their celebrations. We have many special days that we celebrate in our Intergenerational program, as the residents love to see the children enjoying themselves and celebrating their traditions.

In September, we have Heroes Day, to honor local firefighters, police officers, military members, ambulance drivers, and other public service members. Children may dress up on Halloween to Trick-or-Treat throughout the building. We have a family style Thanksgiving meal and a Stone Soup day in November. Children will make and deliver Valentine’s Day cards to the residents in February.

While we do celebrate one traditionally religious holiday in our program, Christmas, our celebration is centered on the spirit of our community. Our Intergenerational Christmas Party is a favorite day among residents and children, and we love to watch them celebrate together. During non-care hours on the Saturday of Easter Weekend, we also a community Egg Hunt in our backyard, and all families (past and present!) are welcome to attend.

Birthdays and other special days can be recognized at our Center. Please talk to the administration team to make a plan for special events! We invite and encourage you to share your family’s celebrations, culture, and traditions with us, so we can celebrate with you!

Families and friends are always welcome to join us for our special days at Generations.

*We respect your family’s beliefs, cultures, and traditions. If you do not want your child to participate in such activities, please talk to the Director to make a plan for your child during those times*

**MEALS AND SNACKS**

We do not charge separately for meals because we participate in the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Our meals are planned by a dietician according to the USDA and CACFP guidelines. Breakfast is served from 7:00-8:15, A.M snack is at 9:30, lunch begins at 11:30, and P.M snack is between 2:30 and 3:30. We accept donations of healthy, nut-free items for our late afternoon (4:30) snack.

**Our Center has a strict NO PEANUT or TREENUT policy**. Please do not bring any food items that contain these ingredients into the Center, and be mindful if your child eats them before coming to Generations.

**Food Allergies and Preferences** can be accommodated. If your child has a special diet, please include this information in your child’s registration packet. A separate “Food Preference Form” or “Food Allergy Form” will be required. The Center provides substitutes for children with special dietary needs. At times, families may also be required to provide supplemental foods to assist with special dietary needs.

**Special occasion foods** can be brought to the Center. Please plan ahead with your child’s teacher. Health and safety regulations require that food items be store-bought. Please contact the administration team if you have any questions.

**CLOTHING**

Please send your child in clothing that is comfortable and can withstand the wear and tear of our daily routine and activities. Because our activities can be messy, we ask that children do not wear special articles of clothing to school. Hats, coats, and mittens are necessary in cold weather. We encourage families to keep a pair of rainboots at the Center, since this is the Pacific Northwest! A bathing suit may be kept at school during the summer for water play.

We ask that a complete change of clothing is kept in your child’s cubby at all times, in case of spills, toilet accidents, etc. **All clothing should be labeled with your child’s full name.**

**TOYS**

We understand the attachment children have to certain objects during various stages of development. It is acceptable to bring one stuffed animal, a doll, or another “lovey” as a comfort during nap/rest time. In the Forest and Ocean classrooms, teachers may plan a special sharing time on specific days for toys from home. Please refer to your child’s teachers for more information about share days.

We ask that weapons of any kind (swords, nerf guns, light sabers, etc.) remain at home. If play is centered on violence, or weapons are created with manipulatives, children will be positively redirected by teachers. Small objects, such as money or marbles, also need to remain at home.

**NAP AND REST TIME**

(WAC 170-295-2050) Supervised rest periods will be provided to all children in our program. Our daily schedule includes a designated rest time; a resting area will be available to children showing a need for rest at other times. Children that do not need sleep will be provided with quiet activities during the rest time.

Children may bring one blanket and one stuffed animal, doll, or other “lovey” for rest time. Please label your child’s items and take home weekly to wash.

**BOTTLES**

If your child has a bottle during naptime or at a different time throughout their day at Generations, it must be kept labeled with your child’s full name and the date. Families are responsible for providing and labeling bottles.

**DIAPERING AND POTTY TRAINING**

Families must provide all diapering supplies; this includes wipes, diapers, and diaper cream. If you would like diaper cream applied during changes, please fill out the “Diaper Cream Authorization Form”. All diapering supplies must be labeled with your child’s name. Your child’s teacher will notify you, via daily communication sheets and/or notes on your sign in/out sheet, when your child’s diaper supply is running low. If your child runs out of diapers, any extra diapers used will be replaced with the same number from a new supply provided by the family.

We check diapers regularly throughout the day and change as the need arises. Diaper changes will be kept track of on your child’s daily communication sheet. Toilet training is available when the child is ready. Children in potty training are taken to the bathroom consistently. A staff member stays with the child and assists with hygiene. We work with parents as a team to ensure success. Please share any special techniques, words, or phrases used by your family with your child’s teachers.

**FIELD TRIPS**

Field Trip notices will be posted on the classroom and Center’s information boards, sent via e-mail, and will be included in newsletters. Please pay close attention to these messages so you can plan ahead! Permission slips will need to be signed for each field trip, and children will need to be dressed for the weather and the specific activity. Children participate in walking field trips around the facility and neighborhood, and ride the city bus to explore our community. Occasionally, the Forest and Ocean classrooms may ride on the Early Learning and Family Services (ELAFS) bus for community field trips. Children’s emergency contact information and consent for treatment forms are taken on every outing, and our staff supervises all outings. Volunteers may attend field trips as needed, and parents are welcome to join as well. Attending field trips is a privilege. If staff feels that a child’s safety is in jeopardy, a child may be asked to stay at the Center.

**SUMMER**

The summer months allow us to explore our community and environment through field trips, outdoor activities and our Intergenerational garden.

 The Forest and Ocean classrooms may go on two to three field trips a week during our summer program. These may be on the city bus, ELAFS bus, or be a walking field trip. In the past, we have explored Whatcom Falls Park, Mallard Ice Cream, Fairhaven Park, Trader Joe’s, and Great Harvest Bread Co. These adventures are fun, educational, and expose the children to our larger community. Please share any field trip ideas with us!

Children, residents, and staff work together in our Intergenerational Garden in the spring and summer. We plant, grow, harvest, and eat the delicious fruits, vegetables, and herbs that we grow! In past summers, we have grown carrots, cucumbers, strawberries, mint, rosemary, artichokes, broccoli, and more! Parent volunteers are always needed to help us with our garden projects. Talk to our administration team if you are interested in helping our gardens grow.

**SUNSCREEN**

A “Sunscreen Authorization Form” is included in your child’s registration packet and required to be completed for every child. This provides us with permission to apply sunscreen and any additional information regarding sensitive skin or sunscreen preferences. We use a variety of sunscreen brands, but can only use cream/lotion sunscreens. We ask that you do not bring in spray sunscreens for your child or for the center’s use. If you prefer that your child uses a specific brand of sunscreen, please bring it to the Center labeled with your child’s full name. Staff will apply it only to your child.

Sunscreen is applied in the morning and afternoon on sunny days. During the summer, please apply sunscreen to your child before their arrival at Generations, or during your drop-off. Staff will reapply in the afternoon.

**EMERGENCY EVACUATION SITE**

In the event of an earthquake or other disaster, we want our families to know that our emergency evacuation site is Hillcrest Chapel, located at 1400 Larabee, Bellingham, WA, 98225. For more information regarding our plans in case of an emergency, please refer to the Disaster Manual located at the front entrance.

**PEST CONTROL PLAN**

We contract with Paratex for Pest Management. Paratex completes a monthly inspection and treats areas as needed, and areas that have been identified by staff as needing treatment. Families will be notified 48 hours before pesticide applications. A list of chemicals and products used by Paratex in our facility will be provided as treatments occur. No treatment will occur during regular childcare hours or when children are present.

**PETS AND ANIMALS**

To ensure children’s health and safety, we follow state childcare licensing guidelines regarding pets and animals. At times, Generations may have a pet that lives in the center. If so, pets at Generations will be kept in well-managed, clean cages and containers. Any fish tanks or other cages will be maintained by staff members as part of daily and weekly routines to ensure that pets are well cared for and that the space is kept clean and free of germs. On the rare occasion that children touch animals, they are asked to wash their hands with soap and water immediately afterwards.

We also have visiting animals that may interact with the children and staff on regular occasions. All dogs and visiting pets are required to show proof of vaccinations before entering our center.

When activities involve animals, the following procedures will be followed:

* Shot records of dogs and cats are maintained at the front desk
* Pet areas are routinely cleaned by staff members
* Staff will sanitize surfaces after animals have been in the Center
* All children and staff will wash hands after touching animals
* Staff will supervise children at all times when participating in programs involving animals

Please be aware that there are potential risks that accompany spending time with animals. Dogs and cats release an allergen, which is a risk factor for the development of sensitization and allergic disease when exposed early in life. Cats can pass microsporum, ringworm toxoplasmosis, diarrhea wing, and chryptosporisium parvum. Psittacosis is a disease transmitted by birds. Reptiles, cats, and dogs can carry salmonellosis. No loose pets are allowed in the Center without an adult present. Animals are not allowed in areas where children eat or sleep, where food is prepared, or in the restrooms.

A “Pet Permission Form” is included in your child’s registration packet. It must be completed and signed for every child.

**PROBATIONARY PERIOD & EXPULSION POLICY**

Our Intergenerational Program is very unique, special, and extraordinary. It is so different from the traditional concept of childcare that we are constantly learning as our program grows. Our years of experience have given us knowledge and concepts that are necessary to function cohesively.

We have found that, from time to time, we have a child who does not adjust well to our program for a variety of reasons. When this occurs, our procedure is as follows:

* Identify the behaviors that are interfering with the child’s integration and/or group routine
* Teachers and Directors will work with the family to try and identify the problem and to develop appropriate techniques to help the child change the behavior
* May arrange for an outside observer to come in, observe, evaluate, and report to the Directors and family at parental expense.

When the child, or other children or adults in the center, cannot be kept safe within our setting even after above interventions, or if the child continues to be disruptive to the point of interfering with other children receiving the care and attention they deserve, we reserve the right to notify the family of discontinued service to the child. All efforts will be made to support the family to make other care plans, and to forward all documentation, observations, and behavior plans. If the family refuses to cooperate with these efforts, we may be forced to expel if mutual cooperation is not an option.

We reserve the right to discontinue service when a family member becomes physically or verbally abusive to any staff member or child in our care.

**FINANCIAL POLICY**

Families must sign our Financial Agreement upon admission to our program, and annually. We have a registration fee of $100 that must be received with your child’s registration packet. A yearly program enhancement fee of $90 is also required at the beginning of our school year program for all children.

Tuition is due on the 1st of the month for the month of service. A late fee of $5.00/per day will be charged if payment is not received by the 7th of the month.

Parents will be billed for all scheduled days, according to their child’s regular schedule. We do charge for the days we are closed. Our holiday closure days are announced at the beginning of each school year and include most major national holidays.

Make-up days due to holiday/work day closures, illness, or other absences are not guaranteed.

We close at 6:00 P.M. If a child is picked up after 6:00, a fee of $1.00 per minute after 6:00 will be charged.

**EMERGENCY CLOSURE POLICY**

Generations recognizes that families depend on the consistency of its operations and schedule. Generations therefore makes every effort to stay open without disruption. However, circumstances occasionally arise that force an unscheduled closure in order to ensure the safety of our students or staff, or to comply with legal operating requirements. Possible reasons for closure include extreme weather, outbreaks of illness, security/safety issues, disruptions in necessary utilities, and damage or vandalism to our facility. Weather-related closures will only occur in extraordinary circumstances, and typically follow Western Washington University rather than the Bellingham School District.

In the event a closure or reduction in operating hours is necessary, we will use multiple means of communication to contact parents (phone, email, social media). For days where Generations will operate on a reduced schedule, operating hours will be posted on the Generations website and also recorded on Generations’ phone system. We will resume normal operations at the earliest opportunity consistent with the safety of our students and staff.

Normal “snow hours” are 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., but are subject to change depending on circumstances.

Emergency closures involve serious situations where safety is an issue. Generations therefore requires families to promptly pick up students following notice of a closure. The Generations late pickup policy will apply to students who are not picked up in a timely manner.

Generations does not refund tuition as a result of emergency closures. If possible, however, where a student attends less than full time and misses a day due to an emergency closure, we may offer a “make-up” session on a day the student does not normally attend. Generations cannot guarantee make-up days for any given student under any given circumstance. Following an emergency closure, staff will evaluate the specific situation and attempt to offer make-up days consistent with a student’s schedule, and staff and space availability.

**PARTNERSHIPS**

We currently partner with several community agencies to help us provide quality services to our families and children.

**Early Learning And Family Services –** Our partnership with this branch of the Opportunity Council allows us to provide additional services to eligible families within our program, through the Early Childhood Education Assistance Program (ECEAP) or Head Start. To receive these services, children must be age eligible and families must be income eligible. To find out more about our ELAFS partnership, or find out if your family is eligible, please contact our Deputy Director, Trisha Lewis at trisha@intergenchildcare.com.

Additional staff, resources, curriculum, and support are provided to our classroom by ELAFS. This benefits all children in our program, whether they are enrolled in ECEAP/Head Start or not.

**Connections Speech and Language**
Connections provides a Speech Language Pathologist that visits our Center on a weekly basis. They screen all children for speech and language and provide assessments for families. Children that qualify will receive speech and language therapy services through this partnership. Connections takes most medical insurance plans.

**Unity Care Northwest Mobile Dental Clinic**
The Unity Care Northwest Mobile Dental Clinic comes to our Center every three months. They provide dental exams, teeth cleaning, and fluoride treatments. Parents must fill out a registration form for their child to be seen (one registration per school year). These services are available to all children, regardless of insurance coverage.

**DISCIPLINE POLICY (WAC: 170-295-2040)**

**Purpose**
Children are learning to express their emotions and to acquire the complex skills necessary to reach their full potential. Understandably, children try a variety of behaviors as they approach this difficult task, and as they struggle to achieve a balance between their personal needs, their autonomy, and the rights and safety of others. We see discipline as a learning process designed to encourage children to recognize the choices available in order to select behaviors that are effective, appropriate, and acceptable.

**Policy**
We believe that discipline should not humiliate or shame a child in any way, or damage his/her self-esteem. We believe that unacceptable behavior should be stopped, not because the child is bad, but because he or she has made an inappropriate choice.

In accordance with the DCYF’s requirements, our discipline practices “guide the child’s behavior based on an understanding of the individual child’s needs and stage of development” and “promote the child's developmentally appropriate social behavior, self-control, and respect for the rights of others”. Our staff will only use “behavior management and guidance practices that are fair, reasonable, consistent, and related to the child’s behavior”.

We think of discipline as guidance and not as a punishment. We are helping children understand what is expected from them. In order to accomplish this, we will follow these procedures:

* Set reasonable and consistent limits which are clearly defined in words that children understand
* Encourage children to solve their own problems by assisting them to verbalize their needs while helping them find an appropriate solution
* State directions in a positive, rather than a negative form, whenever possible
* Respect children’s rights to “negative” emotions, such as anger, jealousy, or fear, and endeavor to understand his or her feelings
* Select consequences for misbehavior which are immediate, of short duration, and if appropriate, bear some relation to the act
* Meet with parents to develop a behavioral plan that entire staff is aware of and contributes to the execution of the plan

Our Center will also “Prevent and prohibit any person on the premises from using cruel, unusual, hazardous, frightening, or humiliating discipline, including, but not limited to: Corporal punishment including biting, jerking, shaking, spanking, slapping, hitting, striking, kicking, pinching, flicking or any other means of inflicting physical pain or causing bodily harm to the child; and Verbal abuse such as yelling, shouting, name calling, shaming, making derogatory remarks about a child or the child's family, or using language that threatens, humiliates or frightens a child.”

*Revised: December 2018*