



— EARLY ALPINE —

Taking non-linear learning to new heights.

Parent Handbook

WELCOME!!!

Welcome to Early Alpine, an early learning center nestled in the heart of downtown Bozeman, Montana! We are delighted to have your family join our community, where we focus on fostering a nurturing, engaging, and stimulating environment for young learners.

At Early Alpine, we believe that early childhood education is a critical foundation for lifelong learning. Our dedicated team of educators is committed to providing a safe and supportive atmosphere where children can explore, discover, and grow. We offer a play-based curriculum designed to inspire curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking, allowing children to thrive at their own pace.

Our location in downtown Bozeman provides unique opportunities for enriching experiences, from local parks to community events, ensuring that our children are connected to the vibrant culture around them. We encourage families to be active participants in their child's learning journey, and we value open communication and collaboration.

Thank you for choosing Early Alpine as your partner in education. We look forward to a wonderful year filled with growth, discovery, and fun!

Phone Number: (406) 577-2554

Email Address: admin@earlyalpine.com

Physical Address: 202 S Wilson Ave Bozeman, MT 59715

PV Number: PV 108841

MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY

At Early Alpine, our mission is to provide exceptional care through a safe, responsive and nurturing environment that meets the needs of each child and family.

Our goals are:

- To provide a safe environment while fostering relationships with nurturing and responsive care
- To provide an environment and learning opportunities that meet the needs of each child
- To provide a setting that allows children to learn and grow in social/emotional, cognitive, language and physical development
- To provide learning experiences that prepare children to be lifelong learners
- To provide dependable and convenient child-care service

The Early Alpine philosophy on caring for young children starts with admiration of each individual child. We believe that every child deserves exceptional care! Our well-qualified staff will provide a comforting environment by building a trusting relationship with each child and their family. To achieve this, we'll have open communication with each family to make sure all of their child's ongoing needs are met. At Early Alpine, we understand that children are best understood in the context of their families' culture and community. We respect the dignity, worth and uniqueness of each child and family.

Curriculum is implemented to give each child the right challenge for their individual needs and development. We provide hands-on learning experiences and opportunities to participate in enriching activities designed to enhance the creative mind. Early Alpine fosters a sense of community where children, families and staff feel connected and supported.

PROGRAM GOALS

At Early Alpine we help children develop to their fullest potential while following and teaching the four core values:

- Be Kind
- Be Safe
- Be Responsible
- Be Respectful

Staff at Early Alpine will encourage each child to develop these values through daily lessons, play and spontaneous experiences. Guidance will include:

- Accepting responsibility for one's actions by understanding and experiencing the consequences for negative behavior.
- Increasing self-awareness, confidence, and feeling of self-worth.
- Showing how to respect the rights of self and others by learning to protect their own rights without violence, and to realize that others have this same right.
- Developing an acceptance of limits and routines by increasing awareness of what are and what are not acceptable behaviors.
- Showing and helping develop successful interpersonal relationships.
- Helping children reach their academic goals while instilling a sense of responsibility.
- Giving the opportunity for and encouraging participation in physical activities to improve physical skills and abilities.
- Offering opportunities to learn and practice positive health and nutrition.

Early Alpine staff will deliver the program in a positive, trustworthy, supportive, and caring environment focusing on:

- Providing a safe and happy place for everyone.
- Providing our families with a better understanding of our community, country, and world around us.
- Offering experiences that foster exposure to ethnic and cultural diversity.

COMMUNICATION

Parents and family members are the most important teachers in a child's life. We prefer to keep communication open so that together we can make sure that all of your child's needs are being met. Here are some ways we do that:

- We've adopted the app *Brightwheel* to support and streamline communication with parents. This app allows us to document your child's activities, including meals, activities, naps, and even potty times! As a parent, you can download the app and view this information in real-time. At the end of each day, we'll send a summary of your child's activities, including any photos and videos taken.
- You're welcome to drop in or call at any time! Please understand that since we're busy working with children, we likely aren't able to have lengthy conversations. If at any time you want to know how your child is doing, we encourage you to use the *Brightwheel* app.
- If you'd like to have a conference to talk, with or without your child, we're always glad to make arrangements with you!
- You can also contact us through email at admin@earlyalpine.com.

ENROLLMENT

When enrolling at Early Alpine, we kindly ask you to contact admin@earlyalpine.com (with the subject "Enrollment") stating your child's name, birthday or due date, phone number, and when you are hoping to start care. Once the director responds with a potential opening, you will be asked to schedule a tour where your family can join us at the center and see the space along with meeting teachers and asking any questions you may have about care.

We believe in non-discrimination enrollment, meaning we encourage families of all ethnicities and backgrounds to join us at Early Alpine.

Once a start date has been established, you will be sent an invitation to join our app Brightwheel where you will sign the enrollment agreement, pay associated enrollment fees and tuition, and begin to fill out all necessary licensing paperwork.

Forms for enrollment...

1. Emergency Contact Form
2. Non-Ingestible Over the Counter Forms
3. Pediatric Health Statement Form (under 2)
4. Infant Feeding Schedule (under 2)
5. Child information form (infants and toddlers) or (preschool)
6. Parent Handbook Agreement
7. Enrollment Agreement

These forms must be updated annually, through the Brightwheel app. The child is unable to attend our center until all forms have been completed per licensing regulations.

Once you have filled out all paperwork and all fees have been paid, you can then start care on your agreed upon date.

When you start at Early Alpine there are some things you should bring in on your first day. We kindly ask that all belongings are clearly labeled so nothing goes missing. With an abundance of children who attend our program it is extremely difficult to track down belongings if not labeled properly.

Supplies to Bring

- Lunch (everyday)
 - We ask that parents pack a balanced meal with a variety of foods. We recommend meals that include a protein, grain, fruit, and vegetable. We suggest keeping in mind the quantity of food as children are growing and get hungry as they get older.
 - Please don't pack items high in sugar! (Examples: cookies, candy, dessert items, sugary beverages, etc.)
 - Please pack your child's lunch accordingly. (If it needs to be refrigerated, include an ice pack.)
- Water bottle that can stay at the program, except over the weekend so it can be washed. We do this throughout the week but we like to ensure it is cleaned over the weekend to stop the spread of germs.
- Blanket and fitted sheet for cots that can stay at the program (take home every Friday to wash, unless needed more often due to

illness prevention)

- At least two changes of clothing (in cases of an accident or spill this includes underwear, socks, pants, and shirts)
- Weather-appropriate attire (we'll go outside every day, unless the temperature doesn't allow us to, this includes winter and rain gear)
- Indoor shoes to be worn at all times in case of an emergency (these are different than snow boots, which must be brought in snowy/cold weather)

Extra supplies for infants and toddlers:

- Comfort items (e.g. pacifier) -that can be left on site
- Sleep sack (if sleeping in a crib) -that can be left on site
- Breast milk, formula, or whole milk -enough supply for at least the day, or enough for the week/month
- Two bottles that can stay at the center
- Diapers and wipes -enough for at least the day, or enough for the week/month
- Diaper cream (if needed)

Please leave toys and personal belongings at home or in the car. Most of the time, it's hard to share personal items. It's also sad if it gets broken or lost.

CURRICULUM AND DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENTS

At Early Alpine, we are a learning center as opposed to a typical daycare facility. Daycares typically offer basic need care for children during a set time frame. At a learning center, the teachers work hard in creating curriculum that satisfies the Montana Early Learning Standards which are the core foundation for success in kindergarten and public or private school systems. Curriculum at Early Alpine is based on the child's interests and developmental levels, which also takes careful consideration towards how the material teaches the core early learning standards.

Our teachers have extensive experience and education/training that allows them to find the best tools and ways to explain concepts that are engaging for

all developmental needs, including potential delays.

Children are active learners and learn by doing things over and over. For preschool-age children, they may be the leaders of our investigations who will in turn become teachers to you and the younger children. Allowing our children to grasp concepts and then act as a teacher or mentor to others allows children to further develop their mastery of skills and concepts.

Children also learn through modeling, materials, and people relevant to their life experiences. They will investigate through exploring and playing. Sensory play and interactive care in the younger ages in particular, allows the children to find pleasure in learning and grow a passion for interacting with others.

We believe in preparing children for kindergarten and success in the future. Engaging curriculum surrounding basic skills and knowledge such as the alphabet, numbers, shapes, how to hold a pencil, how to use scissors, and how to ask discovery questions will be supported.

Finally, children learn through their senses. Art, music, and outdoor play will be an important part of our curriculum. We will get messy!

We truly believe that we are a learning center and not just an ordinary day care program. We follow the Montana Early Learning Standards and work hard everyday and put careful consideration into the activities and content your children will learn in our program. Each month, our center focuses on a center-wide theme (such as ocean exploration, space, and fall harvest). With our center-wide monthly themes, our teachers carefully select curriculum to focus on multiple skills from counting, pattern recognition, writing/reading, language development, and social emotional skills. Our ultimate goal is to set your children up for success when they enter the public school system for kindergarten through the information and skills acquired at our early learning center .

Early Alpine also implements the use of ASQ (ages and stages questionnaires). These screening tools look at average development expectations for children based on their age. These screening tools help in detecting potential delays and help in getting early intervention as needed to help the child find success.

While these screening tools are common amongst pediatricians, recent studies have found that multiple assessments should be conducted by an array of individuals who support your child in differing learning environments. We sometimes see that children are not meeting milestones at the center, where they are completing them at home and vice versa. It can sometimes be helpful to note these developmental differences so we can find support in getting children the support they need to thrive while in our program and after. We believe in collaboration with parents, staff, community partners, and children in providing the best care possible for your children during these strong developmental years.

As mentioned above, Early Alpine is a welcoming and collaborative environment which supports community engagement and truly supports each child in finding their individual success. If a child needs to be seen for speech therapy, occupational therapy, medical or mental observations, etc, we are more than happy to welcome their therapists into our center to help aid a child and their specific needs as long as they are comfortable and able to do so. If a therapist is to join our center to help a child we kindly ask you to coordinate this with the director to make sure everything is cleared with licensing.

DROP OFFS & DAILY SCHEDULES

When your child is transitioning from one environment to another, whether it's from home into daycare, another program to ours, or between classrooms, we like to acknowledge the experience and embrace it as a positive change. If your child is new to daycare, we'll do everything we can to make their experience comfortable and positive. We'll always welcome your child with a smile and do what we can to make the morning goodbyes smooth!

When children transition from one classroom to another, it's a gradual process to ensure your child is comfortable with the move, as well as new children and staff. There are specific requirements for children to transition to the next classroom, along with age requirements as per Montana state licensing. Transitions are not guaranteed by a certain age deadline as it is also required to take into account child to staff ratios and room available in the next room up.

At the end of the summer the children who will be leaving Early Alpine and

transitioning to kindergarten will have the opportunity to participate in a graduation celebration.

Transitions can be discussed further with the lead teachers from the outgoing and incoming classrooms. Please let us know if you'd like to chat about supporting your child in this area.

Daily Schedule

7:30-8:00	Sunrise Care (extra cost to tuition plan)
8:00-8:30	Welcome to School (potties)
8:30-9:00	Morning Snack
9:00-10:00	Outside Play
10:00-11:00	Circle and Project Time (potties)
11:00-11:30	Lunch
1:30-12:30	Outside Play or Sensory Exploration (potties)
12:30-2:30	Nap/Rest Time
2:30-3:00	Wake Up (potties)
3:00-3:30	Afternoon Snack
3:30-4:00	Outside Play
4:00-6:00	Alpen Glow Care (extra cost to tuition plan)

***Schedules may differ for each classroom due to age and developmental levels along with the seasons.*

Drop off and Pickups: Children need to be dropped off by 10:00am. Please note that we have morning snack time from 8:30-9 am so if you show up after 9 am we kindly ask you give your child a snack prior so they do not get hungry before lunch time. If you have a doctor's apt, swim lessons, gymnastics, etc. where you need to have a drop off after 10am, this needs to be pre-arranged and agreed upon with your child's lead teacher.

We highly encourage parents to set up appointments or lessons in the afternoon so it does not disrupt your whole day as they can not return after 10am. We want children to be settled before big transitions such as lunch and nap time, which starts shortly after! When children arrive too late and see

they've missed morning activities, they understandably get upset and it makes it difficult for them to have a positive transition.

At drop off it is required that you check your children into our program through our app *Brightwheel*. This is a licensing requirement to account for your children and that they were safely dropped off.

When parents or authorized pick up individuals arrive at the center to pick up children, it is required that you check your child out of our program through the *Brightwheel* app.

Early Explorers (Infant) Schedules: Infants will put us on a schedule. We offer an on-demand approach to your child's needs. We'd like to stay consistent with you and your child, and we'll constantly be communicating about your infants changing needs as they grow and develop. We'll diaper every two hours or after bowel movements.

When babies are introducing new foods, we need you to try the food at home for a couple days to ensure there are no allergies. We can not introduce new foods here at the center due to safety concerns.

SAFE SLEEP AND SHAKEN BABY POLICIES

Safe Sleep Policies

- Infants are always laid to rest on their back
- Infants under 3 months can be swaddled with doctor permission, infants over 3 may not be swaddled
- Blankets are not allowable in cribs with sleeping infants. Each infant should have a sleeper blanket
- Nothing is allowed in the crib except a sheet covering the mattress pad. No bumpers, cozies, stuffies, blankets, et.
- Pacifiers are allowed
- Infants are only allowed to sleep in their assigned crib. Infants are not allowed to sleep in car seats, rockers, swings, et.
- Tummy time is important so infants can learn how to hold their head up, roll over, etc. large muscle movement and to round out their head

- Routine sleep checks must be completed during each child's napping period and logged on Brightwheel
 - Children under 6 months must be checked every 15 minutes
 - Children 6 months to 18 months must be checked every 30 minutes

Sleep Position

- Infants need to be placed on their back when laid down to sleep until the age of 1
 - If an infant is able to roll over on their own from back to side and side to back, they can sleep in the position they choose after they are laid down on their back
- Sleep Environment
 - The sleep area (crib) needs to be clear of anything soft or loose. Only a crib sheet is allowed in the crib.
 - Infants need a firm surface to sleep on (no sheep skin, soft mattress pads, et.)

Supervision of a sleeping infant

- Infants should be checked in on visually to see that they are sleeping and a soft touch to the belly every 15 minutes
- Infants need to be checked on if they crying, infants should not cry no more than 10 minutes before they are checked in on (rocking, checking their physical needs, and/or gently touch or pats to soothe them)

Team member training

- All team members working with infants need to take infant essentials training.
- All team must follow safe sleep practices while working with infants

Infant Crying

Crying is a way for infants to communicate their needs. After you have communicated with the infant's family and have had some time to get to know the infant, you will have a better understanding of what the infant is communicating to you. As you get to know the infant, you can ask yourself when the infant cries,

Is the child:

- in need a diaper change
- hungry
- too hot
- too cold
- twisted or pinched in their clothing
- overstimulated

- sleepy
- wanting your attention

If you have checked all the basics and the child is still crying, try to be creative in your attempts to soothe them.

What we do when we have exhausted all options...

- Go for a walk/stroller ride with the child outside in fresh air
- Try singing to or listening to music with the child
- Try different holding positions — side or belly may help with digestion issues
- Try a baby swing (remember, the child should not be left in a swing for long, or allowed to fall asleep in a swing)
- Try rocking in a rocking chair
- Call someone for help
- Have the child listen to and watch running water
- Lay the child, tummy down, across your lap and gently pat their back
- "Shush" the baby by making rhythmic sounds that mimic the womb sounds
- Give the child something new to look at or hold
- Offer the baby a pacifier, as sucking soothes some babies
- Play some soothing nature sounds like a heartbeat, ocean waves, brook, rain... ○ Call the parent to get some ideas from them of what works to soothe their baby
- It's OK to let a child cry, but it's NEVER OK to shake a baby.

If we have exhausted all options and the child is still crying, we will kindly ask parents to come pick up their child if the crying time has extended two hours.

Shaken Baby Policy

It is important to provide infants with a safe place to grow and learn. This policy is to prevent, recognize, respond to and report shaken baby syndrome and abusive head trauma (SBS/AHT), as well as implement safe sleep practices.

Shaken Baby Syndrome/Abusive Head Trauma (SBS/AHT)

Procedure

Recognizing SBS/AHT:

- Children will be observed for signs of abusive head trauma including irritability and/or high pitched crying, difficulty staying awake, loss of consciousness, difficulty breathing, inability to lift the head, seizures, lack of appetite, vomiting, bruising, poor feeding or sucking, no smiling or vocalizing, inability of eyes to track and/or decreased muscle tone.

Responding to SBS/AHT:

- If SBS/AHT is suspected, the provider and/or assistant will:
 - Call 911 immediately upon suspecting SBS/AHT
 - Call the parents or guardians
 - If the child has stopped breathing, a trained staff will begin pediatric CPR

Reporting SBS/AHT:

- Instances of suspected maltreatment of a child are reported to Montana Child Protective Services by calling (866) 820-5437 or calling the toll-free number of the Child Abuse and Neglect hotline at 1 (800)522-7096.

Prevention strategies for caregivers to cope with crying child

- Check the child to determine if they are hungry, tired, sick, or need a diaper change
- Rock the child, hold the child close or walk with the child
- Sing or talk to the child in a soothing voice
- Rub the child's back, chest, or tummy gently
- Provide the child with a pacifier, rattle, or toy.
- Take the child for a ride in the stroller.
- Play soft music.

In addition, the provider will:

- *Allow caregivers who feel they may lose control to have a short break away from the children.*
- Provide support when parents/guardians are trying to calm a crying child and encourage parents to take a calming break if needed.

FEEDING

Meals

Early Alpine will provide nutritious snacks in the morning (usually a fresh fruit and grain) and afternoon (usually a fresh vegetable and protein or dairy). If your child has any food allergies, notify staff immediately. Families are responsible for providing a balanced lunch each day your child is enrolled. Lunch from home should be nutritious and include fruits, vegetables, whole grains and water to drink. We teach children about nutrition and the five food groups, and encourage children to try new foods. We ask there be no candy, soda, and foods high in sugar. We ask you to bring in enough food to support your child until snack times. Snacks for the week will be listed on the fridge in the kitchen. If you would like to bring in birthday treats for your child, please communicate with your child's lead teacher to assess how many children are

in the class and what allergies your child's class may have prior to bringing them into the center.

Breastfeeding

At Early Alpine we encourage breastfeeding. We want parents to feel welcome to come in whenever their schedule allows them to nurse their infant. We strive to help mothers comfortably nurse, either in the infant room or in the family area. We'll do whatever we can to accommodate mothers while they are breastfeeding- just ask!

NAP & REST TIME

During your child's day at Early Alpine, they're very active in classroom activities and play. This makes for a long and tiring day! Nap and/or rest time is a licensing requirement and our staff cannot prevent children from falling asleep during this time. If children don't sleep during this time, our staff will provide books or a quiet activity for children to do.

Each classroom has a nap/rest time based on the classroom's specific schedule. We'd like each child to bring their own blanket (small in size to fit in their cubby). This blanket will be used during the week and sent home every Friday to be washed.

HOLIDAYS & CLOSURES

People have different values and beliefs. We aim to make everyone feel comfortable and welcome. As such, we strive to incorporate all beliefs and traditions. This is a really great opportunity for you to become involved! You're more than welcome to come in and share information about your family at any time. Talk with us- we'd love to plan to have you visit.

Days throughout the year; in which Early Alpine will be closed:

- New Years (Jan 1st)
- Center Deep Cleaning Day (1/2 day closing at noon- second Friday in February)
- Memorial Day (May 26th)
- Independence Day (July 4th)

- Center Deep Cleaning Day (½ day closing at noon-third Friday in August)
- Labor Day (September 1st)
- Thanksgiving (November 20 & 21st)
- Week of Christmas

If any holidays fall on a Saturday, we'll observe it on the preceding Friday. If it falls on a Sunday, we'll observe it on the following Monday.

Our standard hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 8am to 4 pm with Alpen Glow care hours going from 4 to 6pm and First Light care from 7:30-8am.

EMERGENCY CLOSURES

In Case Of Severe Weather

If it is deemed to be dangerous for families and staff members to get to and from school, the center reserves the right to shut down for the day to ensure the safety of all parties involved. This may include, but not be limited to, extreme weather conditions where cars are unable to start and the building is unable to stay temperature regulated and excessive amounts of snow or water that impact the safety of care being provided and transportation going to and from school. If the weather is occurring before school starts, a message will be sent out to parents through Brightwheel in messages. If the weather event happens during school hours, parents may be asked to pick up children early or if weather is extreme enough we will follow extreme weather protocols and go into a safety lockdown at the center. We have a center supply of food and water for emergency situations, which may require an overnight stay at the center due to weather conditions.

In Case Of Power Outage:

- Remain calm.
- If the weather is nice, evacuate the building if rooms are too dark to use.
- If the weather is hot go outdoors in a cool, shady spot, if possible.
- Utilize available emergency supplies to keep children comfortable.
- If power is out without a remedy (and there is severe weather or the

inability to function due to visibility, temperature, air quality, etc), parents will be notified to come pick up their children within the hour and the center will shut down for the remainder of the day.

In Case of Loss of Water or Heat:

- The person in charge will notify the responsible parties.
- Early Alpine must meet minimum requirements regarding temperatures, hot water, flushing of toilets, running water, etc. in order to operate. After the problem is evaluated, the person in charge will make a decision whether or not Early Alpine should close.
- Parents or guardians will be notified to pick up their child if deemed necessary.

RATES, PAYMENTS, & FEES

Please refer to our enrollment options and associated tuition rates, located on our website earlyalpine.com under the family resources tab or send a message to admin@earlyalpine.com.

- Once enrolled into our program, we do not offer prorated monthly tuition.
- *Early Alpine Enrollment Agreement* must be signed and the full first month's tuition and enrollment fee must be paid in order to hold a spot and secure enrollment for a child.
 - If the fees are not paid and the agreement is not signed, the spot will not be held and the next family on the waitlist will be contacted.
 - If care is no longer needed, the director must be notified appropriately, preferably through email or written notice, a minimum of a month in advance to receive a refund of the month's tuition. The enrollment fee is non-refundable.
- Drop-in Care:
 - XYPN/AP discounts apply to drop-in care

Late fees are implemented if not picked up and exited the building within the timeline for care listed below...

- Half day drop in

- Noon
- Full day drop in
 - 4pm
- Alpen Glow care
 - 5pm (if enrolled in 5pm care)
 - 6pm (if enrolled in 6pm care)

An early drop off fee will be implemented if dropped off prior to 8am and not signed up for the sunrise program (which is 7:30-8am), there will be a \$10 fee (same as a Sunrise drop in fee) applied to your Brightwheel account.

- Date Night Care (6 to 8 pm):
 - XYPN/AP discounts do not apply to date night care
 - General late fee will be implemented for any child not picked up by 8pm on date nights, please refer below for more information.
- Alpen Glow care (4-5pm or 4-6pm):
 - Only available to those who have an enrollment plan with Early Alpine and it only covers the days you are enrolled
 - If you plan on utilizing drop in Alpen Glow care, you must have an enrollment plan with the center during normal operating hours and you must give at least three days notice to ensure we have the staff to cover ratios
 - With this, drop in extended care is not always guaranteed so please plan accordingly and let us know ASAP if you plan on utilizing this drop in service
- Drop-in care and date night care is only available if space is available (space is based on room capacity and licensing ratios)
- XYPN and AdvicePay team members:
 - Please inquire with your employer's Benefits representative to learn more about employer contributions towards your tuition rates.
 - Full tuition will be due on the 1st of the month (reimbursements for childcare will be included in your semi-monthly paycheck)
 - Additionally, please refer to the Early Alpine Enrollment Agreement for information regarding holding a spot and the requirements therein, between you and Early Alpine, the business.
- You'll be charged for the days that you reserve, whether or not your child attends all of his/her time.

- Early Alpine requires a full month's paid notice to withdraw your child from our program, with the understanding that we can not prorate tuition if given ½ way through a given month. With this, please provide notice by the 1st of your last month.
- If you wish to change your current child's schedule, you must give a 30 day notice so we can update billing.
- In cases of parental leave, summer break, or extended leave from your job, payment for childcare is still required the entire time of your absence to reserve your child's spot.

Please note that we accept online payments only through our Brightwheel platform.

If you pay with ACH payments you will not be charged the processing fee, however, if you choose to pay via credit card, you will claim responsibility for the credit card fee.

A \$50 late fee will also be applied if your tuition is overdue for more than two days, after two days the child will not be able to attend our program until the child's balance is cleared.

Every January Early Alpine has a 3% increase to tuition to maintain relevant cost of living increases.

Late Fees and Procedures:

The center closes promptly at 4pm for standard enrollment and 5pm or 6pm for extended care (depending on which plan you are enrolled in). If a child is not enrolled in the extended care program or has previously made arrangements to drop in for extended care that day, the late fee will begin occurring at 4pm. There will be a \$30 flat rate fee PLUS \$1.00 fee per minute if your child is picked up late. The late fee is charged at the time the child physically leaves the center, if the child is checked out of Brightwheel but still in the building a fee will still be administered to cover closing staff fees. If you have multiple children, the fee will be charged per child. This fee is also applied to families who drop off prior to 8am, if not signed up for early morning care. The first time a child is picked up late we'll also provide verbal warning and fee.

The second time will result in a written warning and fee. The third will result in termination from the program and fee. If the parents or emergency contacts are unavailable or unable to be contacted for 30 minutes, law enforcement will be contacted, per state licensing protocols.

DROP-IN CARE

Drop-in child-care is available by reservation only. All intake forms and vaccination records will need to be turned in to the director before a child can be in care at Early Alpine. To inquire about drop-in child care, please visit our website and submit a drop-in child care spot request.

EMERGENCIES, ACCIDENTS, AND ILLNESS

Emergency Contact

Accidents and emergencies sometimes happen. It's essential that we are able to get a hold of someone on your child's emergency contact list at all times. If you know that you can't be reached at the number given, please make arrangements to be accessible at another number. It is a licensing requirement that the emergency contact listed is not a parent or legal guardian. If we're unable to reach you, we may be required to get immediate medical attention and will proceed to do so.

Early Alpine records all accidents in an accident report log. If your child gets an injury, we'll record it and notify you at pick up time. If it's severe and requires potential immediate medical attention, we'll contact you immediately.

In an emergency, it is required that the child and baby first aid steps be followed which are outlined by the American Red Cross. The following steps must be taken if a child or infant is experiencing an emergency. It is extremely important that care is provided and to seek help as quickly as possible. Children's bodies are still developing and much more fragile than adults so it is important to follow the child and baby first aid guidelines listed below. The information provided is from the American Red Cross and can be found specifically using the link (<https://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/first-aid/performing-first-aid/child-baby-first-aid>).

1. Before Giving Child or Baby Aid
 - a. Check the scene for safety, form an initial impression, obtain consent from the parent or guardian, and use personal protective equipment.
2. Giving First Aid
 - a. If the child or baby appears unresponsive, check the child or baby for responsiveness (shout-tap-shout)
 - i. For a child, shout to get the child's attention, using the child's name if you know it. If the child does not respond, tap the child's shoulder and shout again while checking for breathing, life-threatening bleeding or another obvious life-threatening condition.
 - ii. For a baby, shout to get the baby's attention, using the baby's name if you know it. If the baby does not respond, tap the bottom of the baby's foot and shout again while checking for breathing, life-threatening bleeding or another obvious life-threatening condition
 - iii. CHECK for no more than 10 seconds
 - b. If the child or baby does not respond, responds but is not fully awake, is not breathing or is only gasping, or has life-threatening bleeding or another obvious life-threatening condition, immediately call 9-1-1 and give care based on the condition found and your level of training
 - i. If the child or baby does not respond and is not breathing or only gasping, immediately begin CPR, starting with compressions. Continue giving sets of 30 chest compressions and 2 breaths until:
 1. You notice an obvious sign of life,
 2. An AED is ready to use
 3. Another trained responder is available to take over compressions
 4. You are alone and too tired to continue
 5. The scene becomes unsafe
 6. You have performed approximately 2 minutes of CPR (5 sets of 30:2), you are alone and caring for baby, and you need to call 9-1-1
 - c. If the child or baby is responsive or responds to stimulation and is fully awake and does not appear to have a life-threatening condition:
 - i. Interview the child, parent, or guardian
 - ii. Do a focused check based on what the child, parent, or guardian told you, how the child or baby is acting and what you see

- iii. Call 9-1-1 if needed, and give care based on the condition found and you level of training

When a child becomes sick or an accident occurs, determine the severity of the situation and contact the parent/authorized person or arrange for transportation to the hospital. Call for an ambulance if the accident is severe enough that the child needs immediate medical attention. One team member (Director, or assistant director if absent) should accompany the child to the hospital and take the child's emergency contact/health information. Remain with the child until the parent or alternative pick-up arrives. If a parent cannot be reached, contact the designated person on the child's permission form.

It is important to note that each classroom is equipped with a first aid kit and each classroom has an emergency backpack for field trips and time outside of the classroom, which includes all emergency contact information for each child, a first aid kit, and a cell phone to contact individuals as needed.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Immunizations are a state requirement for your child to be in a registered or licensed facility. Early Alpine must keep your child's immunizations on file. Any time your child receives a new vaccine of any sort, please bring an updated copy of records to the Director.

- Exemptions (medical or religious) are not accepted by Early Alpine. We follow the Montana vaccination schedule, which is located on our website (earlyalpine.com) under the family resources tab. All vaccinations need to be up to date to attend Early Alpine.

If your child receives a vaccination, please keep them home the remainder of the day to watch for potential adverse reactions. If your child has received at least two doses of a vaccination, with no reactions, a doctor's note can clear the child to return to school that day.

A health check for children under two is also required by the state.

IN-DEPTH ILLNESS POLICY

These policies were created following the Montana state childcare licensing regulations, CDC guidelines, and to protect all children and staff members while attending Early Alpine.

Abnormal Behavioral Changes and Excessive Fussiness

When to send home: When the child is uncontrollable crying and inconsolable for over two hours, if the child is unwilling to participate in activities due to being extremely lethargic and upset

When to return: As soon as they're feeling better and able to participate in daily activities

Cough

When to send home: When the child has a bark like cough and/or is coughing excessively throughout the day which causes concern for teachers, also includes if they're coughing so hard they're gagging themselves

When they can return: When the cough is cleared by doctors to be non contagious and safe for the children to run and play at school

Bronchitis: 5 days after initial symptoms appear the child can return

Croup: Three days after fever breaks

Whooping cough: Antibiotics used for at least five days before return to center

Breathing Issues

When to send home: When the child is struggling to breathe or wheezing

When they can return: When the child has been cleared by a doctor to return

Asthma: We ask you bring in a doctor's note and an inhaler we can use at school if this is a recurring issue (Please make sure to fill out a medication administration form)

RSV: We require children with RSV to stay home for 8 days as the CDC claims this is when individuals are contagious

Pneumonia: Child can return when they have been on antibiotics and fever has been broken for two days

Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)

When to send home: When the eye of a child is draining pus like substances from the eye and the white of the child's eye is red or pink

When they can return: 24 hours after beginning treatment (eye drops) and with doctor's note saying they are no longer contagious

COVID-19

When to send home: When exhibiting any COVID-19 symptoms such as fever, continuous cough, breathing issues,

When they can return: Must stay home for 5 days after receiving a positive COVID-19 test result. After the 5 days, as long as the child is fever free for 24 hours without medications AND symptoms have resolved, the child can return with a mask on for 5 days. If the child is too young or unable to wear a mask for their duration of time at school they must continue to quarantine for 5 additional days, totalling 10 days. The child is contagious for 10 days from symptoms onset OR positive test. If the child is still exhibiting symptoms beyond 10 days, must quarantine until 24 hours symptom free without medication.

If a child is experiencing multiple symptoms associated with a communicable disease such as COVID-19 or Influenza, the school has the right to require quarantine for 10 days but return earlier with a doctor administered test proving the child is negative for COVID-19 and Influenza.

Diarrhea

When to send home: When child has two diarrhea (completely liquid, soaked into underwear, diaper, or no solid in toilet) episodes at school within the day

When they can return: No diarrhea for 24 hours without medication, or cleared by doctor with note to prove it is not caused by an illness

Ear Infection

When to send home: When the child is abnormally fussy and pulling at a given ear, when temperature is taken one ear is 2 degrees hotter than the other

When they can return: 24 hours after beginning antibiotics (prescribed ear drops)

Fever 100.4 or above

When to send home: If fever reaches 100.4 or higher (temperatures are taken by both the child's teacher and double checked by management to confirm fever)

When they can return: When fever has been cleared for 24 without the assistance of tylenol, ibuprofen, or other fever reducing medications

Flu (Influenza) (All strains)

When to send home: When child is experiencing fever, cough, or abnormally lethargic behaviors

When they can return: Per CDC recommendations we ask you keep children home for 24 hrs after fever and accompanied symptoms subsides without the use of medication (such as fever/pain reducing medications)

Lice/ Bed Bugs

When to send home: When nits or eggs are detected in a child

When they can return: When all nits and eggs are completely gone and treatment has been completed

Rash

When to send home: When rash appears on body that is increasing in size or concerning (not diaper rash, eczema, known skin irritation)

When they can return: Doctors note mentioning that they are cleared and not contagious to teacher or other children

Other rashes that require extra attention:

Hand Foot Mouth: We do not allow a return to center until all sores are completely healed with a minimum of a 7 day quarantine period

Chicken Pox: We do not allow a return to center until all sores are completely healed

Shots of Vaccinations

Keep your child home after receiving shots or vaccines, looking for fevers and adverse reactions, if you have an appointment before school or pick up your child from school to receive a vaccine/shot we ask you keep them home for the remainder of the day, if they receive the shot after school, monitor for reactions, but can return the following day as usual. If the child has received *two doses* of a vaccine prior with no adverse reactions, a doctor's note will clear the child to return the day of vaccinations.

Strep

When to send home: When child is complaining of severe pain in their throat, fever is detected, or see white spots on back of throat

When to return: 24 hours after beginning antibiotics and with a doctor's note

Vomiting

When to send home: Vomit once at school or at home

When they can return: No vomiting for 24 hours, without medication to aid in nausea or vomiting.

*Doctor's notes are only valid for 30 days.

*If a child has a chronic, severe illness which involves a doctor's note and care plan, such as asthma, diabetes, etc. a special needs care plan must be filled out.

*If your child has a medical or dental procedure done that requires numbing and medication, we ask you keep your child home to watch for adverse reactions. Usually with procedures that require numbing and medication, the child will be out of sorts and can be in pain, depending on the procedure, so we kindly ask you to keep them home.

*We can not accept a doctor's note to clear a child with a fever to return due to illness symptoms due to teething.

If your child has a contagious illness, please notify us immediately.

If a communicable illness has been exposed at the center, the director will send out a center-wide "health alert" and notify the health department. This is so all parents are able to watch for symptoms and can make the choice to bring their child to Early Alpine or keep them home. Any child deemed to have a contagious illness will not be allowed to attend to protect all children and staff attending Early Alpine. If there is a withhold of a positive test result, Early Alpine reserves the right to terminate care to protect the children and staff that attend.

We will need you to pick up your child within an hour of notification if s/he is sick.

MEDICATION POLICY

By law, we need written consent to give your child any kind of prescription or over-the-counter medication. The medication must be in its original container and include the: name, child's name, date, dosage information, expiration date, doctor or practitioner's name, and the pharmacy's name and telephone number.

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION PROCEDURES

The intent of this policy is to ensure that the proper steps are followed for administering medication to the children in our care. We would prefer not to provide medications; however, we understand under some circumstances this will better meet the child's needs.

The following procedures must be followed for the administration of medication at Early Alpine:

1. Medication may be administered with written parental permission by trained staff.
2. Staff designated to administer medication must complete policy and procedure training prior to administration of medications.
3. All prescription medications provided by parents or legal guardians must:
 - Be in a child-resistant container that has the original pharmacy label.
 - Be prescribed by a licensed health professional. The name of the health professional who ordered the medication must be on the container.
 - Have the date the prescription was filled
 - Have the expiration date.
 - Have specific instructions for giving- and storing the medication.
4. Staff will not administer over-the-counter medication without a documented recommendation by the child's health care provider or signed OTC form.
5. Staff will apply topical non-steroid medication (sunscreen, diaper ointment, and lotion) only with a signed OTC form from the parents or guardians. A record of administration does not need to be kept for topical non-steroid medication.
6. Instructions for the dose, frequency, route and duration of treatment for prescribed and over-the-counter medication will be provided to the staff through the medication authorization form. Medication can not be given

without the signed licensing document.

7. Prescribed and over-the-counter medications will be kept in a locked storage box at the recommended temperature as prescribed on the label.

8. We require that all medications be given at home whenever possible. Under certain circumstances it may be necessary for medications to be administered to a child during the day. When a child requires medication to be administered at Early Alpine, a parent must make arrangements to give the first dose at home so that the child may be observed for any reactions to the medication. The parent will also be encouraged to come and give the medication during lunch and breaks. If that's not possible, designated staff will administer medication to children for whom the Medication Administration Procedures have been followed and the Consent & Log has been completed.

9. Staff designated to administer medications must triple check the five essential safety "rights" prior to giving a medication to any child.

a). THE RIGHT CHILD – The child's identity must be confirmed.

b). THE RIGHT MEDICATION – The authorization form must be compared to the medication log and the pharmacy label.

c). THE RIGHT DOSAGE – The exact amount of the medication specified by a health care provider must be given as ordered.

d). THE RIGHT TIME – The medication log must be checked to determine the time of the administration of the last dose. The label on the medication should be checked to confirm the correct interval between doses.

e). THE RIGHT ROUTE – The pharmacy label must be checked for the exact route for the medication to be given, e.g., by mouth, ear, etc.

10. Medication will not be used beyond the expiration date on the container or beyond any expiration instructions provided on the label. The child's health care provider will annually review all medications with an "as needed" designation.

11. A medication log will be maintained by staff to record the instructions for giving the medication, consent obtained from the parent or legal guardian, amount, the time of administration, and the person who administered each dose of the medication. Spills, reactions, and refusal to take medication will be noted on the log.

12. Designated staff will administer medications required for emergency treatment *only* if authorized by a local Poison Control Center or physician.

13. If a child is mistakenly given another child's medication, or an incorrect

dosage, the poison control center must be called immediately. The parents and physician of the child who mistakenly received the medication must then be notified. Staff must complete the Medication Error/Incident Report form within 24 hours of the incident and return the form to the Director.

POTTY TRAINING

At Early Alpine we understand that we can spend the majority of your child's wake time with us, which means when the time comes to potty train, we will be working alongside you as a family to assist your child in their potty training goals. When your family starts on this adventure, we kindly ask you to reach out to your child's lead teacher to receive our potty training policy handout. This handout includes information on what we need to know about your child going into potty training and what our center expectations are to remain sanitary and supportive. We understand that consistency is key, so we kindly ask you to introduce potty training at home for a week prior to starting at school so your child is familiar with the potty and what this process looks like. Introducing this at school can be uncomfortable with kids and we always strive to make this as positive as possible. Once the journey has started, we kindly ask you to keep your child in pull ups until they have been accident free for 1.5 hour increments for a week to ensure they are ready to move to underwear, reducing the risk of accidents at school. *We can not start potty training until your child has reached the age of 18 months.*

CHILD GUIDANCE

At Early Alpine we set realistic expectations based on children's developmental levels. We want your child to learn how to make healthy, kind, and safe choices! Our staff uses positive redirection in place of discipline. We talk children through situations and give options to make better choices. We like children to feel that they are part of a community, and that they have responsibilities to both themselves and the people around them.

We will work with your child to help promote self-regulation and problem solving. Our staff does this by:

- Creating a positive environment with age-appropriate materials, routines, and activities which influence behavior.
- Implementing center wide guidelines that are designed for the

protection, growth, and safety of every child and are enforced in a positive manner- simple and clear.

- Modeling proper behaviors and communication to children throughout the day.

Teachers are trained and use a variety of strategies to encourage your child to develop self-worth, independence and social skills. These may include:

- Redirecting the child to another activity
- Positive reinforcement if appropriate behavior
- Natural and logical consequences that are age and developmentally appropriate
- Age-appropriate choices and help with expression of feelings
- Help with using words to talk to another child rather than using physical contact
- Activities that encourage cooperation
- Focus on inclusion, when a child is acting out, sometimes they need to be redirected to another activity, with this, we never want a child to be singled out or punished for behaviors so teachers will always guide a different activity and participate with the child to encourage positive redirection.

If there continues to be issues with behaviors that are causing harm to others, the Director and lead teacher will meet with the child's parents/guardians to determine the next steps and best solutions.

Bitting

After biting another child, the child who is hurt will be assessed and taken care of prior to the teacher talking with the child who caused physical harm by biting. While we understand biting is a developmentally appropriate behavior, we always strive to create a safe environment for all children. A child will be sent home after 2 daily biting occurrences. If the biting happens to the extent of being sent home more than twice in a given week, the lead teacher and director will set up a meeting with parents to discuss what is happening and problem solve to help end the behavior. If the biting continues and is causing harm to other children consistently, care may be terminated for the safety of all children after a month of intervention practices.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

All staff at Early Alpine are a mandatory reporters of child abuse and neglect. Additionally, if a parent or guardian shows up intoxicated, we will notify the contacts on the emergency contact form, while the parent waits in the office with the child until a safe form of transportation arrives. We are required to report it to local law enforcement if the parent or guardian proceeds to leave with the child while still intoxicated and no others come to help in pick up/ safe transportation home.

If someone picks up without a car seat, it is expected that the parent/legal pick-up person stays in the office or leaves the center to come back to pick up until a car seat is available. Late fees will be applied if staying after designated pick up times.

SUPERVISION POLICY

Purpose

Early Alpine is dedicated to ensuring the safety and well-being of all children in our care. This Supervision Policy outlines our commitment to maintaining a safe environment through vigilant supervision practices.

All children will be supervised at all times while in the care of Early Alpine. Our staff is trained to monitor children's activities closely and respond promptly to any situation that may arise.

Supervision Practices

1. Adult-to-Child Ratios
 - o We maintain appropriate adult-to-child ratios in accordance with state licensing regulations and best practices to ensure adequate supervision.
 - o Staff will be assigned specific groups of children to supervise throughout the day.
2. Visual Supervision

- Children will always be within sight and hearing of a staff member. This applies to both indoor and outdoor activities.
 - Play areas will be arranged to allow staff to easily observe all children.
3. **Designated Areas**
- Children will only be allowed in designated areas of the facility. Access to areas outside of these designated zones will be restricted.
 - Outdoor play will be conducted in secure, fenced areas with staff present at all times.
4. **Transition Times**
- During transitions (e.g., moving between activities, going outside), staff will ensure that all children are accounted for.
 - A headcount will be conducted regularly, especially when moving between locations.
5. **Staff Training**
- All staff members receive training in supervision techniques, child safety, and emergency procedures.
 - Staff will participate in ongoing professional development to stay updated on best practices in supervision.
6. **Emergency Procedures**
- In the event of an emergency, staff are trained to follow established protocols to ensure the safety of all children.
 - Regular drills (fire, lockdown, etc.) will be conducted to prepare children and staff for potential emergencies.
7. **Parent Drop-off and Pick-up**
- Parents are required to sign children in and out daily. Only authorized individuals will be permitted to pick up children.
 - Staff will ensure that children are safely handed off to authorized adults at the end of the day.

Reporting Concerns

Parents are encouraged to communicate any concerns regarding supervision or safety to the Center Director. All concerns will be taken seriously and addressed promptly.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

Early Alpine is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all children during transportation to and from activities, including walking field trips. This policy outlines our practices to maintain a safe environment for children during these outings.

While the Early Learning Center does not provide vehicle transportation, we organize walking field trips to nearby locations and understand in emergency situations we may need to move, which these guidelines will be followed. All staff members will ensure the safety of children during these excursions.

Guidelines

1. **Adult-to-Child Ratios**
 - We will maintain appropriate adult-to-child ratios during all walking field trips, adhering to state licensing regulations.
 - Staff will be assigned specific groups of children to supervise, ensuring that every child is accounted for.
2. **Safety Procedures**
 - Before each field trip or leave of the center, staff will conduct a safety briefing with children, reviewing rules for walking and staying together.
 - Staff will carry first aid supplies and emergency contact information for each child.
3. **Traffic Safety**
 - Children will be instructed to walk on sidewalks and cross streets only at designated crosswalks.
 - Staff will position themselves strategically to manage the group, ensuring that children are safe when crossing streets.
4. **Headcounts**
 - Frequent headcounts will be conducted throughout the trip to ensure all children are present and accounted for, especially before and after crossing streets.
5. **Emergency Preparedness**
 - In the event of an emergency, staff will follow established protocols to ensure the safety of all children.
 - Staff will have a communication device (e.g., cell phone) to contact emergency services if needed.

Communication with Parents

- Parents will be informed of upcoming walking field trips via newsletters, email, or notices. Details will include dates, destinations, and any items children should bring (e.g., water bottles, snacks).

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

All information collected by the Early Learning Center is confidential and will be used solely for the purpose of providing quality care and education. We respect the privacy of our families and staff, and we take our responsibility to protect personal information seriously.

Information Collected

We may collect the following types of information:

- Child's personal information (name, age, medical history, etc.)
- Family contact details
- Financial information for billing purposes
- Staff and volunteer records

Confidentiality Practices

1. **Access Control:** Only authorized personnel will have access to confidential information. Staff members are trained on the importance of confidentiality and are required to adhere to this policy.
2. **Secure Storage:** All records containing personal information will be stored securely, either in locked files or password-protected digital formats.
3. **Information Sharing:**
 - Information will only be shared with individuals who have a legitimate need to know, such as:
 - Emergency responders
 - Child welfare agencies (when required by law)
 - Other caregivers with parental consent
 - Families will be informed before their child's information is shared, unless otherwise required by law.
4. **Data Disposal:** When information is no longer needed, it will be disposed of securely, ensuring that no personal details are accessible.
5. **Parental Access:** Parents have the right to access their child's records. Requests for access should be made in writing.

PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Early Alpine believes in everyone acting professionally and supportive of each other. Our main goal in child care is to make sure all children are supported to the best of our abilities and receive the best possible care while under our supervision. In order for the center to accomplish this goal we have established a parent code of conduct for both staff and parents.

Early Alpine reserves the right to terminate a parent contract if the parent or guardian is behaving inappropriately at the center. This can include but is not limited to :

- Yelling at Early Alpine staff members or other children at the center
- Inappropriate behavior and discussions that makes our staff feel uncomfortable or unsafe
- Not adhering to our policies lined out in the handbook
- Becoming physical with other staff members or children at the center
- Belittling or taunting our staff members

TERMINATIONS

Early Alpine reserves the right to terminate a parent contract if the parent or guardian is negligent in any of the areas described in this policy. If a family is terminated for breach in the contract above, the termination notice will still hold true with tuition charges.

Parents or guardians must provide at least a full calendar month advance notice of withdrawal before termination. Please give your notice by the 1st. If you decide to leave before the month minimum, we will charge you for the month period. With this, tuition will not be prorated if leaving in the middle of a month.

Parent/Guardian Handbook and Signature Page

Child's name: _____

Days in care: (mark with an "X" all that apply)

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday

I have read and agree with the policies set forth in the Early Alpine Handbook.

Parent/guardian signature

Date

I give permission for my child's photo to be taken and used for classroom purposes within Early Alpine (this includes taking photos with friends on Brightwheel).

Parent/guardian signature

Date

I give permission for my contact information to be shared in the Brightwheel app (this allows contact for playdates, birthday parties, etc).

Parent/guardian signature

Date

An authorized administrator (director, assistant director, or lead teacher) may sign in/out your child(ren) with the correct information in the electronic management system in the event it does not happen at drop off/pick up time.

Parent/guardian signature

Date

I have read and understand the parent code of conduct.

Parent/guardian signature

Date

This contract may be revised in the future-if it does, you'll be notified of any changes.