



Director/Teacher: Mandy Spohn, MA

mspohn@herewegrowlincoln.com

W: (402) 261-8519

C: (402) 540-8883

3600 Village Dr. Suite 130

Lincoln, NE 68516

(Just west of 40th and Old Cheney
in the Williamsburg area)

Here We Grow Handbook

Here We Grow is an early childhood program for children ages 3-5.

Here We Grow Philosophy

Here We Grow Preschool believes in providing a safe, caring environment to foster engagement, development, inquiry, and a love of school in our early childhood community.

At Here We Grow Preschool, our goals are to:

- Create and maintain a partnership with families to uphold a balanced approach in the development of young children
- Respect the learning styles of all children
- Encourage optimal social, emotional, physical, and academic development
- Maintain a small teacher-to-student ratio to ensure an ideal auditory environment and focus attention on individual and small group learning
- Invite, teach, and celebrate all children with varying strengths, needs, and abilities

Engaged Learning and Growing:

Our curriculum is designed to support the strengths and needs of all students. Thematic units are created to provide fun and structured learning while focusing on:

- Spiraled learning throughout the year
- Pre-academic skills embedded in daily routines
- Basic, intermediate, and advanced vocabulary to support and encourage functional language development
- Music, movement, and games
- Special activities and projects
- Listening and social skills

Pacing of units is designed to provide time and opportunity for students to explore, problem-solve, and add skills to their learning repertoire.

Sample Daily Schedule

Here We Grow will be in session between the months of August - May.

Note: A four-week long camp during the month of June will be considered depending on interest and parent request.

Morning Option #1: Monday/Wednesday/Friday 8:30-11:30 AM

Morning Option #2: Tuesday/Thursday 8:30-11:30 AM

8:30-8:45: Welcome and Bathroom Break

8:45-9:30: Opening Group

9:30-10:00: Snack and Bathroom Break

10:00-10:40: Centers

10:40-11:10: Small Groups

11:10-11:30: Large Group and Dismissal

Afternoon Option #3: Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday 12:30-3:30 PM

12:30-12:45: Welcome and Bathroom Break

12:45-1:30: Opening Group

1:30-2:00: Snack and Bathroom Break

2:00-2:40: Centers

2:40-3:10: Small Groups

3:10-3:30: Large Group and Dismissal

I am excited to have started Here We Grow and want to share with you some important information that pertains to the smooth running of our preschool room.

Here are a few things that your child will need to get the year started off on the right foot. Please send these items daily:

- Backpack
- Change of Clothes
- Pull-Ups/Diapers and wipes labeled with your child's name
- Hearing aid/CI batteries and any troubleshooting guides/tips that may be pertinent to your child's hearing aid(s)/cochlear implant(s).

The batteries, clothes, diapers, and wipes may be kept at school (please label them) or in your child's backpack. Let me know which you prefer.

Please leave personal toys and books at home unless these items can be shared with the class in accordance with our themes. Unnecessary toys and books can become cumbersome in backpacks and become distracting at school.

Illness:

If your child has a fever above 100 degrees, you **must** keep him/her home for **at least 24 hours after the fever has broken, with no medication.**

Please keep in mind the same for vomiting, diarrhea, sore throat, chronic

cough, etc. If you know your child will be gone from school for any reason, please contact the Here We Grow office at (402) 261-8519. If your child becomes ill while at preschool, I will take his or her temperature to determine if there is a fever. If there is, I will call you immediately to have him or her picked up. If there is not a fever, a call will be made to inform you that your son or daughter is not feeling well so a plan can be put in place.

Medication:

I am unable to dispense any medication to your child unless prescribed in writing by a physician (including over the counter drugs). Please talk to your child's physician about alternative dosing schedules as to avoid medications during the time he/she is attending preschool. If an alternate schedule is not possible, medication will be administered only in accordance with the following guidelines:

- Medication shall be in the original container, clearly labeled with the name of the child, the name of the medication and the date prescribed. The physician's name, prescription number, the amount to be administered, and the times it is to be given shall also be included on the label
- Parents must fill out a Medication Form giving the school permission to administer the medication. A note from the child's physician must also be attached explaining what the medication is, and give clear directions for administration of the Medication
- If medication is expired, it will **not** be administered
- Medication must be passed from one adult to the other so it can be passed and stored safely. **No Medications can be sent to school in your child's backpack, pocket, or hand**
- Medications will be returned to the parent when it is no longer needed

Snack and Gum:

A daily snack consisting of at least one of the four basic food groups will be offered. Daily drink choices will be 1% white milk and water, with chocolate milk and/or juice being offered as an occasional treat (perhaps for a special celebration). A snack sign up will be available for parents to provide snack each month. Special dietary restrictions will be considered.

Please help keep the kids safe by keeping gum at home under your observation. Gum may not only cause sticky situations around the classroom, but can be a danger when participating in daily gross motor activities.

Communication:

Please help Here We Grow in its endeavor to be environmentally responsible

by checking and utilizing your e-mail for efficient communication practices. In addition, the communication folder that is in your child's backpack is exactly that - a way for us to communicate! Please check it daily for notes, parent teacher conference and special event dates, important information, and your child's wonderful work to display on the refrigerator. I will check that folder each day for any notes that you may have for me. Please feel free to e-mail or call with questions, concerns, information, or celebrations that you have to share.

Weather and Clothing:

Here We Grow will follow the same inclement weather plan as LPS. **When school closings are announced for LPS, Here We Grow will not be in session.** Check your local weather sources for that information.

We know that here in Nebraska, the weather is unpredictable. Make sure your child is dressed appropriately for inclement weather. Hats, boots, mittens, and heavy coats are appreciated during our winter months. We love the opportunity to go outside during our large group time, and if everyone has the proper dress, we will do so throughout our changing seasons. **Please send a change of shoes in your child's backpack if the weather causes messy conditions.** Avoid sending your child to school in shoes or sandals without straps. Shoes without straps or that are ill-fitting can cause safety challenges when navigating a variety of play areas.

Birthday Celebrations:

We will celebrate birthdays with a song, a visit from "Party Pig", and a special gift so each and every student's birthday will be recognized with fun and excitement! If you would like to send birthday treats with your son or daughter, you are welcome to do so. Please avoid sending cupcakes, as young children tend to lick the frosting off and the cake goes to waste. Hard candy is also not recommended.

Party invitations may **not** be distributed at school. However, I believe that it is fun and important for your child to get together with his or her friends outside of school. I will provide a class list to our preschool families so that you may mail invitations or connect for play dates. **If you would like your child to be on the class list, please fill out the form attached and return it in your child's backpack.**

Discipline and Behavior:

Discipline is an important part of every classroom. Techniques such as positive reinforcement, modeling classroom expectations, and redirection are frequently used techniques that I implement to get students back to

engaged learning. If unruly behavior persists, I will ask the student whose behavior is in question if they can "be ok" and stay with his/her peers. If not, they will be asked to go to a specified seat in our classroom so they can get ready to "be ok" and rejoin the group.

Everyone has the right to feel safe and welcome at Here We Grow. Should a child's/parent's behavior escalate to cause fear or harm to other children, volunteers, and/or staff the following plan will be followed:

- Written documentation of each incident will be shared with you and kept in your child's file at Here We Grow
- After 3 incidents, a meeting will be held with the child's parents/guardians and Here We Grow staff to discuss accommodations to help build behavioral success for the student, and an agreed upon trial period
- Should inappropriate behavior continue beyond the trial period, parents/guardians may be asked to find an alternative placement for their student
- If the incident(s) is severe enough, the staff at Here We Grow is within their rights to request that the student be removed from the program for a trial period or indefinitely.

Ways to Volunteer:

We are always happy to have helping hands in our classroom! I will send a sign up sheet home for you to indicate your availability to volunteer if you wish to do so. If busy schedules do not allow you to volunteer your time, but you would like to help, please check with me to see if there are any snacks, materials, supplies, or other necessities we may be short on to assist with the smooth running of our program. We fill volunteer spots with Parents/Guardians first, and will consider additional family members if there are available openings.

Volunteer Expectations:

In order to volunteer at Here We Grow, you will be provided with some state required forms that you must fill out. The "Consent and Authorization for Release of Information" and the "Report of Law Enforcement Contact " forms must be filled out completely and returned. All volunteers are required to have this paperwork filled out and approved by the state of Nebraska annually before being considered for a volunteer role. In addition, background checks on the Nebraska State Patrol Sex Offender Registry will be conducted. You must also read and sign that you have received and understand an orientation packet that will be provided once you express interest in volunteering.

Volunteers are asked to maintain a high degree of professionalism when

working in the presence of the young children at Here We Grow Preschool. Respect for student and staff abilities, use of appropriate language, and confidentiality must be maintained as a volunteer in our program.

Disaster Preparedness Plan

In the unlikely event that it becomes necessary to evacuate the immediate area, due to a natural or man-made disaster (i.e. fire, tornado, flood, etc.) the following plan will be carried out:

Staff will safely escort students to the Williamsburg Hy-Vee (6001 Village Dr. Lincoln, NE 68516), by way of Union Drive (See Map)

You will be notified via phone call or text, and should plan to come **directly** to the parking lot on the southeast side of Hy-Vee to retrieve your student.

You will be asked to sign a form indicating that you have picked your child up from this location.



Lockdown Procedures:

In the unlikely event that law enforcement officers alert the staff at Here We Grow Preschool of a situation that necessitates a lockdown, the following plan will be carried out:

Students will be taken into the Here We Grow office. You will be notified via phone call or text, and should avoid the area until the proper authorities confirm that is safe to retrieve your child.

Once the authorities have confirmed that it is safe, a follow up call/text will be made to you indicating that you may come to the preschool to pick your student up.

Tuition Costs:

One-time registration fee: \$50.00

Tuesday/Thursday 8:30-11:30 AM: \$165/month

Monday/Wednesday/Friday 8:30-11:30 AM: \$190/month

Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday 12:30-3:30 PM: \$225/month

The registration fee is non-refundable.

Electronic forms of payment are required for tuition/fee payments. A Debit Authorization Form will be provided for you to complete. A voided check will also be required to permit Here We Grow to withdraw monthly, automatic tuition payments from your account.

Tuition will be debited from your bank account on 1st of each month, or the next business day (if the 1st lands on a weekend or holiday). If changes have been applied to your bank account (i.e. non-sufficient funds, stop payment, closed account, changed account, etc...) that make it impossible for Here We Grow to receive payment, a \$30 fee per instance will be applied to your account. Should tuition go unpaid for 30 days, parents/guardians may be asked to find an alternative placement for their student.

Tuition will not be prorated for inclement weather, holidays, vacations, early withdrawal/dismissal, or absences. You may pay tuition on monthly basis.

Should you decide to withdraw your child for any reason, please provide a written notice 30 days in advance. Tuition will be charged for that month.

Receipt of Handbook

___ Yes, I have received, read and understand the Here We Grow Handbook, and will honor the services, policies and procedures outlined in its contents.

Parent Signature

Date

(Please detach and return to school in your child's backpack)

Class Contact List

___ Yes, I would like the below information included on a class list sent to other families in my child's class.

Child's Name _____

Parent/Family Contact Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email Address _____

(Please detach and return to school in your child's backpack)