



**Parent Handbook
2025-2026**



Welcome to Rising Stars Early Learning Center

We welcome you to Family Promise of Gallatin Valley's, Rising Stars Early Learning, a community-based center that will provide developmentally appropriate childcare and early learning opportunities for infants, toddlers and preschoolers.

Mission:

At Rising Stars, we help families in our community achieve sustainable independence by offering a Safe, Trusting, Accepting, Respectful, and Secure, learning environment for their children, while offering family programming geared towards the unique needs of the families we serve. We accomplish this through hands on learning experiences, and individualized care. Our center is full of different backgrounds, cultures, and experiences and we desire that all children and family feel known and cared for at Rising Stars.

Curriculum:

For the entire center we will be using The Creative Curriculum. This curriculum will help shape the classroom's learning environments, which will guide learning experiences and encourage more in-depth learning for all age groups. In our 3 – 5-year-old classrooms they will also be using the Heggerty Curriculum, which is a phonological awareness curriculum which will help students develop early literacy skills. They will also be exploring our A World In Motion curriculum that is a hands- on, STEM based curriculum that gets the children exploring building, weather, living things, and more in a very fun and interactive way! Throughout the school year, we have monthly curriculum themes that set the foundations of learning and that are supported by these three curriculum programs.

Student Observations:

We are continuing implementing a more formal process around student observations. We will be using The Ages and Stages (ASQ and ASQ: SE) questionnaires to conduct student observations for the 2025-2026 school year. The Ages & Stages Questionnaires (ASQ) is a developmental screening tool used to assess children from birth to age 6. It helps identify developmental progress and potential delays in young children by examining five key areas: communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem-solving, and personal-social skills. The ASQ is typically completed by parents or caregivers, providing valuable insights into a child's development. We also have the ASQ: SE, which is essentially very similar to the ASQ, it just tracks social emotional behaviors. These will be a helpful tool for our staff to use to make sure

each child's development in each domain is on track. With this tool, we will be able to inform you all if we see areas of concern and we will be able to structure our learning environments and curriculum planning around encouraging growth in each of these areas for all children.

If you have any concerns about your child in certain areas of growth or in the classroom environment, parent meetings with their lead teacher and a member of the leadership team are available at any time.

If you would like to observe your child within the classroom setting, we have an observation hall above the preschool hallway that is available anytime throughout the day. Please just let Kate or Catherine know beforehand!

We also have great partnerships with local therapists specializing in different areas such as speech, occupational, and physical therapies. If you are interested in referral or onsite therapy, please see the leadership team.

Yearly Events

This school year, parent engagement is a top priority, offering numerous opportunities for families to connect with our community and support their child's academic journey. Starting with the Back-to-School Night, we will welcome new and returning families to meet teachers and learn about classroom expectations, setting a positive tone for the year ahead. Our calendar also features beloved traditions, such as the Annual Thanksgiving Celebration in the fall and the Spring Muffins with Mom and Donuts with Dad! By creating a wide range of activities and communication channels, we aim to build strong, collaborative partnerships that ensure every child feels supported and set up for success.

Friday August 28th : Back to School Night

Friday November 21st : Thanksgiving Celebration

Friday May 8th : Muffins with Mom

Friday June 12th : Pre-K Graduation

Friday June 19th : Donuts with Dad

Throughout the school year, we have volunteer opportunities in our kitchen, if you are ever interested, please reach out to our volunteer coordinator:

Jaclyn LeBlanc jleblanc@familypromisegv.org

Admission and Enrollment Requirements

The following required documentation will be needed before your child can attend Rising Stars ELC and are to be renewed annually, unless otherwise specified:

- Best Beginnings Scholarship Application (if applicable)
- Signed Rising Stars ELC Parent Contract
- Media Release Form
- CACFP Forms
- Emergency contact form
- Current immunization records (See Section 20 for Immunization Schedule)
- OTC form (for sunscreen, lip balm, insect repellent, diaper ointment or antibiotic ointment)
- Medication forms if medication is to be administered
- An infant pediatric health statement for infants up to 2 yrs. old
- Detailed infant feeding schedule (0 - 24 months)
- Registered on the Lillio app
- Enrollment fee of \$100.00 due on child's start date
- The annual supply fee of \$100.00 due each September
- First month's payment by the 5th of the month

Reminder: Your child cannot start until the Leadership Team receives all required documentation and you have made a parent account on our communication app Lillio.

We will not hold spots if you are offered a spot for care and wish not to take it. If you are offered a spot and need some time to decide before you can enroll, arrangements may be made between you and the Leadership Team. To secure a spot ahead of time, we ask for a \$200.00 nonrefundable check that includes the enrollment and annual supply fee made out to Rising Stars ELC.

Enrollment of one child does not guarantee the enrollment of the other. If you would like to enroll another child, you are required to go through the admission and enrollment process again. Please fill out a new parent interest form online.

Hours of Operation

Our normal hours of operation will be:

Monday – Friday 7:30 am to 4:30 pm

After Hours Program will be:

Monday – Friday 4:30 pm to 5:30 pm

Rising Stars ELC is closed on federal holidays as stated below:

New Year's Day

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Presidents' Day

Memorial Day

Independence Day

Labor Day

Thanksgiving Day
Day after Thanksgiving
Christmas Eve
Christmas Day
New Year's Eve

Rising Stars ELC is also closed for monthly professional development days. These days will be available via the communication app, email, and the annually released calendars. We try to coordinate pd days with the Bozeman school district calendar.

We have a few early release days throughout the year that has our school closed at 4 pm. Please make sure you are on time picking up your child. A late fee of \$50.00 will be billed to your Lillio account.

Open Door Policy

At Rising Stars ELC we have chosen to use a lock and have provided the local state licenser access to the facility with a key fob to allow unannounced access. At Rising Stars, we maintain an Open Door Policy. Our open-door policy means parents are free to drop in and visit their children and observe the class at any time. They are also welcome to use our observation hall. Our doors are locked between 9:00 am and 3:30 pm and open from 7:30 to 9 am and again from 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm. To maintain safety during those locked hours, parents are instructed to use the doorbell to the left of the door. This doorbell sends a signal to the office where camera footage allows our Leadership Team to monitor who is at the door. If they are a known person, they are immediately buzzed in. If the Leadership Team is not in their office, a signal is also sent to their cell phones, where they still can see who is trying to access the building and then let in through a lock release. However, all efforts are made to ensure an extra staff person sits at the desk to monitor access. If a parent requests that they want further accessibility, a key fob can be provided for a \$25 fee.

Cameras

We do have cameras installed within our facility, they are there to ensure the safety of our children and staff. Only the Rising Stars leadership team has access and there is no audio, only a widespread shot of the classrooms and hallways. If you have any additional questions, please reach out to the leadership team.

Probationary Period

The first month of care will serve as a probationary period. If during the first month the child's parents or the staff/administration at Rising Stars feels this is not the best placement for the child, care will be discontinued. If we are experiencing consistent behavioral issues with your child, we will request a parent/teacher conference. If behaviors persist, an additional probationary period may be put in place. If after all of the above steps, we continue to have behavioral issues, care will be terminated.

Parent Conferences

Parent/teacher conferences are optional at our center. Our center does not have set ones throughout the school year. If you would like to request a meeting with your child's teacher, please notify them through the Lillio app.

Tuition and Fees

Standard Hours of Operation (7:30 am to 4:30 pm)

Infants (4 weeks old) through 2 years of age: \$65/ day; \$1300/Month

2 years through 3 years of age: \$60/day; \$1200/Month

4 years through 5 years of age: \$55/day; \$1100/Month

After Hours Care Program

Rising Stars ELC is offering after hours care Monday through Friday from 4:30 pm to 5:30 pm. If you would like to enroll your child in this program, please see the front office to fill out a contract, that way we can notify closing staff and make sure you are enrolled in the correct tuition plan.

Enrollment runs on a seasonal basis:

Fall: September- December

Winter/Spring: January- April

Summer: May- August

Rates for After Hours care:

Infants (4 weeks old) through 2 years of age: \$75/day: \$1,500/month

2 years through 3 years of age: \$70/day: \$1,400/month

4 years through 5 years of age: \$65/day: \$1,300/month

Once signed up for the season, it cannot be cancelled or be a month-to-month basis.

Billing and Payments Policy

Our monthly tuition is based on 4 weeks per month, for a total of 48 weeks per year: (4 weeks X 12 months = 48 weeks). This means that parents are not paying for 4 weeks each year (52 weeks/year – 48 weeks paid tuition = 4 weeks unpaid). These four weeks include regular national holidays and staff training days, to be determined by Rising Stars ELC.

Tuition rates are not subject to pro-ration for illness, holidays, or vacation absences. All services will be pre-paid.

Payments will be billed monthly and are due by close of business on the 5th business day of each month. Payments not received by the 5th of each month will be subject to a late fee of \$40.00. If your account becomes past due, including any unpaid late fees, more than 10 days, care will be suspended until paid. If your tuition payment is not received by the end of the month, you are at risk of losing your child's spot. Rising Stars reserves the right to terminate care if tuition or fees become past due more than three times. If you have any questions or concerns about your ability to make your monthly tuition payments, please contact Catherine. Tuition Plans are available!

All payments may be made online through our software program (Lillio). Please be advised credit cards fees, check, or money order only if not using Lillio's bank transfer system.

Our Billing and Payments Policy applies to our after-hours care program and all subsidized programs.

Late Pick-Up Fee

Normal operating hours of Rising Stars ELC are 7:30 am to 4:30 pm. If you have enrolled your child in the after-hours program, your child can continue care from 4:30 pm -5:30 pm. Rising Stars ELC closes promptly at 5:30 pm, Families that come through the doors after they have been locked at closing will result in a late fee. Families that are not enrolled in the afterhours program and pick up past 4:30 pm will receive a late fee charge on their Lillio account. All late fee charges are \$25.00 flat rate. We do have a five-minute buffer period and if we receive communication about being late, late fees could be waived in discretion of a member of the leadership team. If a child is not picked up by closing and we have not received communication emergency contacts will be called. If emergency contacts do not answer or are not available to pick the child up LAW Enforcement will be called.

We reserve the right to terminate care if late pick-ups become a regular occurrence.

As a courtesy to our staff, please message us on Lillio about being late.

Child Care Scholarships

If you find you are in need of more financial assistance, you can apply for the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship through Childcare Resources.

If qualified for a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship, you will be asked to work with Catherine (our family support manager) to ensure families have knowledge of their required amount of the monthly co-payment that the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship does not cover. You may also

be responsible for paying other charges or fees that are not covered by the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship. If you receive a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship, it is also your responsibility to renew your contract on a timely basis or you may lose this scholarship. You will be responsible for all childcare costs if your scholarship is not renewed. You must provide us with verification that you have received a scholarship for the ongoing continuity of coverage.

We do have a scholarship program that is available to all families here at Rising Stars. If you would like more information about the requirements or the scholarship process, please reach out to Catherine and she can help walk you through that process. This scholarship can help cover additional fees such as our aftercare program.

Changes in Childcare Schedules /Termination

Termination of childcare requires a 30-day notice to Rising Stars ELC Leadership Team. If Rising Stars ELC Leadership Team determines that the care is not working out, we will provide you with a month's notice to find alternate care for your child. Rising Stars ELC, however, reserves the right to immediately terminate care for your child if Rising Stars ELC determines it is in the best interest of all parties.

If your child is scheduled to attend and does not arrive or we do not receive a phone call by 10:00am we will assume the child is not attending that day and will adjust our staffing accordingly – as such, we may not be able to accommodate your child (i.e. we may not have enough staff onsite) for late arrivals without a notification. We do not allow drop-offs during the hours of nap/rest time 12:30-3:00.

Arrivals & Departures

Only authorized individuals will be allowed to pick up your children. If we do not recognize them, they must be able to provide ID. Authorized people must be listed on your contact information sheet; anyone not listed on your sheet will not be allowed to leave with your child without prior arrangement or verbal confirmation.

Our naps and quiet time range from 12:00 to 3:00(based on each classroom) each day. Each classroom will have their own schedule, please check with your child's teacher as to when their naptime will be. While parents are welcome to visit any time, we do request that you try to limit disturbances during your child's quiet time. Children are not to be dropped off during nap time.

Please limit your drop-off time to no more than 10 mins. As per Montana State licensing, adults who are not on our facility license, including parents, are not authorized to be in a classroom for more than 15 minutes.

Maintaining Safe Adult-to-Child Ratios

Your child's safety is our number one priority, that is why we ask parents to kindly comply with our ratio compliant guidelines to make sure Rising Stars ELC is following all Montana licensing regulations. The following guidelines have been adapted by Rising Stars ELC from the licensing regulations established by the state to help prioritize the health and safety of our students and staff.

(1) The child-to-staff ratio and maximum group size for a child care center are: (a) 4:1 for children newborn through 12 months (b) 6:1 for children 12 months through 23 months with a maximum group size of 12; (c) 8:1 for children two years through three years with a maximum group size of 16; (d) 10:1 for children four years with a maximum group size of 24; and (e) 14:1 for five years and over with a maximum group size of 32.

(2) When children of different ages are mixed, the ratio and group size for the youngest child in the group must be maintained.

(3) Only the director, early childhood lead teachers, assistant teachers, trainees, and substitute teachers may be counted as staff when determining the staff ratio.

(4) Group sizes must be maintained except for mealtimes, outdoor play, rest periods, or during large group activities, such as educational assemblies.

Standard drop off time from 7:30-9:00 am can be a busy time for everyone, if necessary due to limited staffing, Rising Stars has the right to pause drop offs until the leadership staff have made the appropriate staff adjustments that comply with state licensing ratios. We ask that you hold on to your child until it is all clear to do so. The opening leadership staff will guide parents through this process, if this incident was to occur for a particular classroom. We do understand and regret the inconvenience this may cause for working parents. We appreciate your understanding and assistance in adhering to these policies.

Cold Weather Policy

We strive to provide the best possible services to our families here at Rising Stars ELC. When there is severe cold weather predicted, please read the following procedures that we have put in place:

- Advanced notification of any alterations to the normally scheduled operating hours for Rising Stars ELC will be given to families and staff as soon as possible
- Families of Rising Stars, ELC will be notified via Lillio communication
- Families and staff are expected to keep in communication with the Rising Stars Leadership Team

Cold Temperature Pre-Cautionary Measures (taking windchill into consideration as well):

-30 degrees F ~ Operations will remain normal, taking into consideration that families and staff may be late due to the cold.

-40 degrees F ~ Operations will run on a 2-hour delay to ensure the safety of everyone in our community.

Meals

Rising Stars ELC follows the CACFP (Child and Adult Food Care Program), a Federal Nutrition Meal Program providing a balanced and healthy eating plan. Using the proper nutrition guidelines for children, the menu will be posted weekly outside of the main office and on Lillio. Meals provided include breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack. If your child arrives after mealtimes, please ensure they've been fed.

If your child has an allergy/intolerance to a certain food that we serve regularly, such as milk, we ask that you bring in a substitute for them and make sure a food allergy information sheet has been filled out. Whether it is an allergy or food preference, these things need to be specific enough for our nutrition coordinator and staff to understand. No outside food is authorized to be brought into the childcare facility unless it is the substitute for a food allergy.

Our meals times are as followed:

Breakfast 8:30-9:00

Lunch

Infants 11:30-12:00

Toddlers 11:45-12:15

Pre-school 12:00- 12:30

Snack 3:30- 4:00

If you would like your child to attend mealtimes, they need to arrive no later than 10 minutes after the meals are served. If your child arrives as meals are ending, all food has been served and replacement will not be made.

Outdoor Policy

We spend time outdoors every day except in the most extreme weather. We take in multiple factors to determine outside time such as temperature and even air quality during fire season. This time is important for your child's health, growth and development. Every day, please make sure your child has the appropriate clothing to play outdoors—including shoes, coat, hat, mittens, snow pants and boots. Also, be sure to label all items of your child's clothes with his or her name or initials. We cannot make accommodations to keep one child inside while the rest enjoy outside time. If your child is too ill to go outside, she or he is too ill to be in childcare.

During the summer, make sure your child has appropriate sun gear and sunblock that is labeled with their first and last name.

We have water days every Friday in the months of June-August.

If we are not able to go outside, we have alternative spaces within our facility that children can utilize for some gross motor fun!

Clothing & Personal Belongings

Please always dress your child(ren) appropriately for the weather. We ask that your child(ren) have proper outside attire available at school, including coat, hat, gloves, snow pants and boots in the winter. We also require that each child has an extra pair of weather appropriate clothes, including underwear and socks available at school always. Label your child's full name on each piece of clothing. If their name is not written on the piece of clothing, we are not responsible for the lost item. We have a lost and found section in our front entry way, at the end of the month if things are left, they will be donated. *If you are unable to provide the required outdoor clothing, please contact your child's teacher or the Leadership Team and we will do our best to provide what your child needs.

Comfort items such as a favorite stuffed toy or doll may accompany a child to school for use at nap or quiet time only. Families need to provide a small blanket at school. The blanket must be small enough to fit in the child's individual cubby. For our infant rooms, children may have a sleep sack that is within state guidelines, provided by the family.

Toy Policy and Items from Home

Please leave personal toys and belongings at home or in your vehicle. Most of the time it is hard to share personal items. Children are also upset if their items get lost or broken.

Health & Illness Policy (STRICTLY ENFORCED)

Our facility is required to follow the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services Sick Children Policy. Children who are ill with the symptoms listed on the policy below will not be permitted to attend until they are symptom free, without medication (such as Tylenol or ibuprofen), for at least 24 hours or have been on antibiotics for at least 24 hours.

The following guidelines have been adapted by Rising Stars ELC from the licensing regulations established by the state to help prevent the spread of illness; if you notice your child has one or more of the following symptoms, please keep your child at home to monitor his or her health for a full 24 hours. If a child develops any of these symptoms during hours of care, we will notify the parent immediately and ask that they arrange for pickup of the child within a half an hour of the phone call. If you are unable to do so, we will contact emergency contacts to pick up your child. This is to help ensure other children in our care do not get sick. If your child is taken home before 12:30pm, your child can only attend the next day after 12:30pm If their symptoms have been gone for 24 hours. If you are called to pick up your child after 12:30pm, your child cannot attend the following day. We do understand and regret the inconvenience this may cause for working parents. However, we do need to limit exposure of illness between children as much as possible. We appreciate your understanding and assistance in adhering to these policies.

1. Children must be without fever of 101°F or greater, with NO MEDICATION for 24 hours before they return to the day care facility, except those children with immunization-related fevers need not be excluded if they can participate in the routine of the day care facility.

2. Children must be without vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours before they return to the day care facility. Vomiting includes 1 or more episodes in the previous 24 hours. Diarrhea is defined as an increased number of stools, increased water in the stool, and/or decreased form to the stool or clothing that cannot be contained by a diaper. Children will be sent home if they have at least 2 or more diarrhea episodes.

3. Children with any of the bacterial infections listed below must be treated with antibiotics for 24 hours before they return to the day care center: a. Strep throat b. Scarlet fever c. Impetigo d. Bacterial conjunctivitis (pinkeye) e. Skin infections such as draining burn or infected wounds or hangnails.

4. Generalized rashes, including those covering multiple parts of the body, must be evaluated by a health care provider to determine their cause before the child can return to the day care facility.

5. Children with any of the parasitic infections listed below must be excluded from childcare until treatment is complete: a. Lice b. Scabies c. Pinworms.

6. Children with any of the viral infections listed below must be excluded from childcare:

Chickenpox- Children with chickenpox may not be admitted to the day care facility until their sores dry up, which usually takes 5 to 7 days. Day care providers must not purposefully expose susceptible children to chickenpox, even with the permission of the susceptible child's parents. b. Shingles c. Roseola d. Cold sores/fever blisters

7. Children who are jaundiced must be excluded until a health care provider evaluates the cause and authorizes the child to return to the day care facility.

8. Children with symptoms of severe illness, such as uncontrolled coughing, breathing difficulty or wheezing, stiff neck, irritability, poor food or fluid intake, or a seizure, must be evaluated by a health care provider before they may return to the day care facility.

9. Children with a communicable disease which is reportable by law under the Administrative Rules of Montana.

10. A child lacking up to date immunizations as required for their age in accordance with the Administrative Rules of Montana.

11. A child who is persistently crying, irritable, has behavior which is not typical for that child and/or requires more care than staff can provide without potentially risking the health and safety of the other children may be excluded from childcare at our discretion.

12. A child need not be excluded for a discharge from the nose which is not accompanied by a fever.

13. Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease- The virus may be shed for several weeks, and children usually cannot be isolated that entire time. Because of this, Rising Stars will follow an exclusion criterion for a childcare facility, which is symptom based. If a child has contracted HFMD they may not return to childcare until:

- They have been fever free for 24 hours (with no fever reducing medication)
- No mouth sores
- Child is not drooling uncontrollable

- No open sores on any part of the body
- Feels well enough to participate in classroom activities

The above list does not include all illnesses and/or cases in which a child may be excluded from childcare. Rising Stars ELC has the discretion to determine under what other circumstances the child cannot come to the daycare. The center may not, under state licensing guidelines, readmit a child excluded for illness until, in its discretion:

1. The child shows no symptoms of illness.
2. The child has been free of fever, a temperature below 100.4 degrees without the aid of fever reducing medicine, for at least 24 hours.
3. The child has not had any vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours.
4. The child has been on antibiotics for at least 24 hours for bacterial infections

These guidelines are mandated as part of our state licensing agreement. Violation of these policies would put the legal operation of our entire school at risk.

Medication Policy

At Rising Stars ELC, we believe that children should be given medication, when needed, in the safest possible way for the child, parents, and providers. Administering medication is based on parent consent and the child's health care provider recommendations. We will only give medication that must be given at times when the parent's work schedule prevents them from giving it. Additionally, we cannot administer medication without the completion of the Medicine Administration Form.

The staff of Rising Stars ELC who have taken formal training on medication administration will administer medications to children under the following guidelines, in a manner that protects children and staff:

Prescription Medicine:

- The medication is in original container with and states the child's full name and date of the prescription
- The medication has been prescribed by the child's physician
- The medication is in the original container and details the expiration date of the prescription
- The medication is in a child-proof container
- An authorization for staff to administer medication must be completed and signed by the parent. This form will only be valid for the week it is filled out and signed by the parent. A new form must be completed if the child requires the medication beyond that date. If a certain medication is required for recurring problem, emergency, or chronic condition, a Specialized Health Care Form must be completed and signed by the child's physician.

Over-the-counter Medication:

- Medication is in original container which contains specific directions for child's age and/or weight and the expiration date of the medication; if directions are not included for that child's age, we will require a note from the child's physician indicating their recommendation for the child to take that medication and the correct dosage amount.
- Medication is labeled with child's full name
- Medication must be in a child-proof container

- An authorization for staff to administer medication must be completed and signed by the parent. No medication will be given without a signed medication release form. This form will only be valid for the week it is filled out and signed by the parent. A new form must be completed if the child requires the medication beyond that date. If a certain medication is required for recurring problem, emergency, or chronic condition, a Specialized Health Care Form must be completed and signed by the child's physician. A Medication Log will be kept each time a medication is given. This will become part of the child's file. Parents will be informed if their child suffers any reactions and a medication error/incident report will be provided to the parent, if necessary.

All medication will be locked in the nurses station at all times.

Medication leftover at the end of the month, will be discarded appropriately if parents don't retrieve medication.

First-Aid Policy

Our staff is certified in Adult, Child and Infant CPR and First-Aid. While we do our best to ensure constant safety of your child(ren), accidents may happen. We will handle minor injuries with band-aids, ice packs, and TLC. We will inform you of any injury when you pick up your child, as well as sending a message and picture through Lillio. If we feel that the injury is more serious, we will call you and inform you of the situation to let you decide which action should be taken. If child poisoning is suspected poison control will be called at 1-800-222-1222 and then the parents will be contacted.

If your child is seriously injured, we will call 911 and administer first-aid until emergency personnel arrive. We will call you and inform you of the situation. We will accompany the child if he or she must go to the hospital.

Immunization Policy

This policy follows Montana law regarding immunization of children (ARM 37.95.140) within childcare facilities. It is essential that children who are too young to receive immunizations or have medical contraindications are protected. Our policy is to receive children's immunization records upon attending and after each new round of immunizations, assess records, inform parents of non-compliance, and maintain 90% or higher up-to-date immunization records to receive a "Certificate of Excellence" award from the Montana State Immunization Program. You are required to bring in your child's immunization record each time they receive new immunizations (influenza and Covid vaccines are not required). We require your child's immunizations to remain up-to-date always. If the records we have are not up-to-date you will receive a verbal warning and be asked to supply the updated records within 2 days, if we do not receive the up-to-date records within the first 2 days you will receive a written warning and an additional 2 days to comply. Failure to comply with the written warning will result in discontinuation of care until we receive the child's record that your child is up-to-date on his/her immunizations.

Below is the state mandated immunization schedule:

<u>Under 2Mon</u>	<u>By 3Mon</u>	<u>By 5Mon</u>	<u>By 7Mon</u>	<u>By 16Mon</u>	<u>By 19Mon</u>	<u>By 6Yr</u>
No Vac required	1 dose of polio vaccine	2 doses of polio vaccine	2 doses of polio vaccine	2 doses of polio vaccine	1 dose of MMR vaccine	2 doses of MMR vaccine
	1 dose of DTP vaccine	2 doses of DTP vaccine	3 doses of DTP vaccine	3 doses of DTP vaccine	3 doses of polio vaccine	3 doses of polio vaccine, one given after the 4th birthday
	1 dose of Hib vaccine	2 doses of Hib vaccine	*2 or 3 doses of Hib vaccine	1 dose of varicella vaccine	4 doses of DTP vaccine	4 doses of DTP vaccine, one given after 4th birthday
	1 dose of Hep B vaccine	2 doses of Hep B vaccine	2 doses of Hep B vaccine	*3 or 4 doses of Hib vaccine	1 dose of varicella vaccine	2 doses of varicella vaccine
	1 dose of PCV vaccine	2 doses of PCV vaccine	3 doses of PCV vaccine	2 doses of Hep B vaccine	*3 or 4 doses of Hib vaccine	3 doses of Hep B vaccine
				*4 doses of PCV vaccine	3 doses of Hep B vaccine	
					*4 doses of PCV vaccine	

(*) varies depending on vaccine type used or the ACIP catch-up schedule.

This schedule must be followed before a child may attend Rising Stars ELC. In the case a child is not up to date on immunizations per ARM 37.95.140, the parent/guardian must provide one or some of the following:

- a. Completed HES-103A "Conditional Attendance" form
- b. HES-101 Section IV "Medical Exemption" form
- c. HES-114 "Religious Exemptions for Haemophilus Influenza Type B" form
- d. DPHHS-115 "History of Varicella" form

The Rising Stars ELC Leadership Team will assess immunization records using the Montana State Immunization Status Report from every 6 months to ensure every child attending has an up-to-date immunization record.

Medical and Dental Emergency Procedures

Emergency information is kept on file at the facility. In case of illness or injury this information will be used to notify you, or the person designated by you, of your child's status. If your child is injured while at the daycare, first aid will be administered. If treatment by a doctor is necessary, we will make every effort to contact you or the doctor you have chosen to treat your child. In all cases, an injury report is completed, and a copy is given to the parents if requested. Authorization for emergency treatment must be signed at the time of enrollment to ensure that in the event of an emergency, we can make sure your child receives the necessary emergency treatment he or she needs. It is very important that all emergency contact information is kept up to date and correct. Please inform us immediately of any changes to keep your information current via email or in writing. Parents are responsible for all costs involved in emergency medical treatment, including emergency transportation if required.

Note: In case of a serious accident or sudden illness requiring immediate medical attention, the following procedures will be followed.

1. A phone call to 911 is made.
2. Child's parents (or emergency contacts) are called.
3. Child is separated from the other children and appropriately cared for.
4. Parent, provider, or ambulance takes the child and health records to the doctor or hospital.

Screen Policy

Screen time will never be a required activity and will never substitute a planned physical activity, such as outside time. Alternatives will always be available to all children. When screen time is used, the content will be strictly monitored before and during viewing to ensure that children are only exposed to educational, non-violent and age-appropriate programs. The educational content of programs viewed will be utilized to facilitate group discussions for further learning. Screen time, will not be permitted during mealtime or prior to nap-time. Screen time will also not be permitted to children under 2.

Guidance and Discipline

We believe in positive reinforcement and redirection as methods of addressing disagreements and child behavior issues. We strive to offer children methods of guidance and discipline that will help them learn to take care of themselves, be sensitive to other people, and become aware of the world around them. Yelling or harsh talking to the children will not be tolerated by teachers and staff at our facility. Instead, natural consequences and choices will be given; and conflict resolution will be taught and encouraged. Disputes and disagreements between children will be solved when possible. Children can take a break away from the classroom, in a safe space with a staff member. If you witness any discipline or staff behavior that makes you uncomfortable, please notify the Rising Stars Leadership Team immediately. If you feel there is an issue with the team at our facility, please contact Family Promise Senior Director of Programs Carrie Gilbertson at 406-312-9802 or Teri Whitsitt with the Montana Licensing Dept. 406-522-2271.

Classroom Transitions

At Rising Stars ELC we do have classroom transitions, where children based on age and development will move up to different classrooms. Big transitions can happen twice a year September and January with a possibility of a smaller spring transition, where parents will be notified via Lillio from their current lead teacher. Parents and staff will be notified about two transition days and all the information they will need for the next class. If you have any questions or concerns about transitions, please see Catherine.

September is our biggest transition and open enrollment period for Rising Stars. There will be a center roster posted a month before in our main entrance and everything will be communicated via Lillio.

Biting Policy

Biting is unfortunately not an unexpected behavior for infants and toddlers, it can be a way they communicate. However, at Rising Stars ELC to ensure the safety of all our children we will do our best to work with families case by case. When a child is bitten, the necessary steps will be taken:

- A bite report will be filled out with parent signatures of both parties (biter/bitten)
- It will also be documented on Lillio and parents will be notified at pick up
- Children's names will be kept confidential
- If your child continues to bite 3 times in a day or breaks the skin at least once, your child will be asked to stay home for 24 hours

If the biting behavior becomes a consistent pattern, meaning if your child is sent home 3 times a parent conference will be requested, as well as the possibility of discontinuing care which will be determined at the discretion of the Rising Stars Leadership Team.

Potty Training Policy:

Learning to use the toilet is a big event in your child's life and Rising Stars staff are excited to help support you and your child during this process! When you feel your child is ready for toilet training, We ask parents to review the Potty Training Readiness Checklist and fill out a Potty Training Policy Agreement. As well as starting training at least one week prior at home successfully before starting at school. Our staff will follow through and encourage your child appropriately while they are in our care. We also ask for parent communication with your child's teacher throughout the potty-training process via Lillio. Any questions or concerns can be directed towards the Rising Stars Leadership Team.

Please have your child dressed in appropriate clothes during the potty training policy with them having the ability to pull up and down their own pants.

All pull-ups will be provided by parents, teacher will reach out via Lillio for a restock on supplies.

Safe Sleep Policy

Babies will always sleep on their backs. We require a physician's note for non-back sleepers that explains why the baby should not use a back-sleeping position, how the child should be placed to sleep, and a time frame that the instructions are to be followed. Cribs will be kept free of toys, stuffed animals, and extra bedding. Infants will not be permitted to use blankets. Sleep sacks may be used in place of blankets if the arms are unrestricted. We encourage you to provide a sleep sack or wearable blanket for your child. Infants may not be swaddled. Wedges will not be used. There will be supervised "tummy time" for babies who are awake. This will help babies strengthen their muscles and develop normally. Babies will not be put in their cribs with a bottle or sippy cup. Infants need to be checked frequently while sleeping or awake and the temperature of the room will be kept at a level that is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult.

Staff will be required to complete the Safe Sleep training as required by the state and to keep current on our policy.

For Parents:

Each infant classroom has a designated nap room/space with a crib specific for each child.

Rising Stars provides crib sheets that are washed twice a week, we do have extra sleep sacks if needed.

Infants are not allowed to sleep more than 15 minutes in a swing or left in a car seat or in any upright position.

If your child sleeps with a pacifier, the lanyard will be detached.

If you have any more questions about infant sleep safety or sleep training, please reach out to a member from the leadership team.

Nap Mat Policy

Children over 12 months will be required to have written permission to use the nap mats provided by Rising Stars ELC. The mats are 2" thick, provide a firm surface for sleeping, and meet the FDA standards for the U.S. Consumer Safety Commission.

Nap and Rest Time

During your child's day at Rising Stars ELC, they are very active in the classroom and at outdoor play. This makes for a long and tiring day. Nap/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.

Children moving into the preschool hallway starting in the Trailblazers classroom will be using nap mats full time.

After every rest period, nap mats are properly sanitized using a bleach/water solution.

If you need a time limit on your child's nap, please let their teacher know directly.

Support for Nursing Mothers

We support and encourage the breastfeeding mother's decision to continue to breastfeed her child. Our program will provide a welcoming atmosphere that encourages mothers to initiate and continue breastfeeding after returning to work or school. We will train staff on the benefits of breastfeeding and how to safely store, handle and freeze breast milk. Breast milk will be stored in a designated space within the refrigerator or freezer, labelled with each infant's name and date the milk was expressed. Breast milk will be warmed gently with a bottle warmer or warm pot of water and temperature tested before feeding. Thawed breast milk will be used that day, and any extras will be disposed of after the last feeding of the day. We will also provide a private area for mothers to nurse, which will have comfortable seating and washing facilities, as well as provide space in the infant classroom. We ask that all breast milk be labeled with the infant's full name (first and last) and the date it was expressed. Please communicate all daily feedings with infant lead teacher.

Support for Bottle Feeding

Rising Stars ELC wants to be able to help parents make infant feeding decisions that promote healthy growth, whether you choose to breast feed, bottle feed, or both. If your infant isn't bottle trained before attending, there are no restrictions, but we do ask for flexibility and open communication. You will be required to write out an established feeding plan with designated times you can come breastfeed. Bottle training should be a collaborative effort that translates from the home environment to the school environment. Please reach out to your child's teacher or Leadership Team for any questions or concerns

Mandatory Reporting

Rising Stars ELC takes the safety of your children and our responsibility for their care very seriously. One of our responsibilities is the immediate reporting of any suspected case of child abuse or neglect. As required by law, any suspected case of child abuse or neglect will be reported to the Child and Family Services, including transportation from our facility without a proper child safety seat and improper care and feeding of a child. If you suspect neglect or abuse, please call Centralized Intake at 1-866-820-5437.

Evacuation Procedures

Rising Stars ELC has written policies and procedures for dealing with emergencies and natural disasters. Evacuation plans are posted in each classroom. In the unlikely event the children will be evacuated to an emergency location; you will be notified as soon as possible. A mass message will be sent via Lillio, as well as any updates or changes to the situation. Child Care staff will notify the police/fire department of their evacuation location. Evacuation procedures are detailed in the Staff Handbook and listed in the Emergency Response booklet in the Emergency Contact binders in each room. Montana State Licensing requires us to conduct ten emergency drills per year. Two of these drills are to be unannounced to staff members. During these drills classes are to exit the building

and meet across the parking lot, on the sidewalks next to the apartments. In case of an emergency (non-drill) the children will be taken to Perennial Apartments.

Media Release

Rising Stars ELC focuses on fostering community. To grow and promote the center, we utilize multiple means of media. You will be given a media release to sign allowing Rising Stars ELC and Family Promise to use photos or videos of your child for media purposes. See attached media release form.

This form is renewed annually.

Communication

The following lists Rising Star ELC's contact information:

Direct Line: 406-312-9804

Leadership Team's contact information:

Catherine Purcell, email: cpurcell@familypromisegv.org (Family Support Manager)

Kate Reedy, email: kreedy@familypromisegv.org (Curriculum and Classroom Manager)

EMPLOYEES ARE NOT TO BE TEXTED/CALLED ON THEIR PERSONAL DEVICES TO DISCUSS ANY RISING STARS ELC RELATED MATTERS.

Parents are also expected to communicate in an appropriate manner. Parents whose behavior is threatening or inappropriate will be asked to leave the premises and this may result in termination of care. If there is a complaint regarding our services or concern of an employee breaching our policies, Please contact the Rising Stars Leadership Team within 48 hours to file a complaint. This will be handled at the team's discretion.

Rising Stars ELC Parent Handbook Acknowledgement

Families not able to follow the policies outlined in the Parent Handbook will be provided with a two-week notice of termination. Rising Stars ELC may terminate the enrollment of a child if, in the Leadership Team's opinion, it is in the best interest of the child, the other children at Rising Stars ELC, and the overall operation of the center. Every effort will be made to correct problematic situations before a final decision is made.

Parent/Guardian Signature	Date
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Parent/Guardian Signature	Date
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Child's Name	Child's Name	Child's Name
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