

# Welcome to Elim Children's Center (ECC)



## THINGS TO KNOW at ECC (2023)



ECC is open from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. It is important that children are picked up by 6:00 p.m. A \$5.00/minute late fee will be charged each minute after 6:01 p.m. Closed Holidays: New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, 4<sup>th</sup> of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the day after, Christmas Eve & Christmas Day plus two staff development days to be determined yearly.



Children will be provided with breakfast, lunch and healthy snacks each day. Information on food allergies/special diets should be provided by a physician. Outside treats for special occasions, e.g., birthdays, are welcome and require prior notification and must be pre-packaged per state guidelines.



### Contract and Payment

Each family will be contracted for daycare services; costs include tuition and meals. Contracts are renewed annually. An initial \$50 registration fee is due at initial enrollment; not to exceed \$100/family. Tuitions bills are due on the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month. 2-week notice is requested if enrollment is discontinued. 10% discount for families w/multiple children attending, off the tuition of the oldest child, for Elim Lutheran Church members and for active military personnel.



Illnesses: a child should stay home or will be sent home if: has a fever of 101+ (a child must be fever free for 24 hours to return), has 2+ episodes of diarrhea in a day, is vomiting, has severe coughing or upper respiratory illness, has an undiagnosed rash or skin disorder, has pink eye, strep throat or other condition requiring medication. Prescription medications may only be administered when accompanied by a signed physician order and a completed medication release form.



Each family will be provided an access door code for entry to ECC during operating hours. For child safety parents will sign each child in and out of ECC daily. Sign in/out is completed electronically. A child must be accompanied into the building and to their designated room by an adult at sign in and an adult must accompany a child out of the building at the end of the day.



### Communications

As parents you will be asked to download an app to your cell phone to allow communications or emergency updates. Weather related announcements will be sent via the app and posted on local radio & T.V. stations  
Basic ECC information:  
Elim Children's Center/302 W. Church St./Marshalltown  
Phone: 641-752-8760  
email: [director@elimchildrenscenter.org](mailto:director@elimchildrenscenter.org)

This handbook is designed to guide you through ECC's policies and procedures. ECC is a licensed center that offers care for children from infancy through the age of 5, before & after school age care and a summer school age program.

ECC is an extension of the education outreach ministry of Elim Lutheran Church.

### **Mission Statement**

Elim Children's Center provides children with a strong spiritual basis and promotes Christian values in the children through our provider's words and actions. The children receive developmentally appropriate care and education from quality providers. With a combination of structured educational activities and self-directed play, the children will establish a solid foundation in their early childhood.

### **We Believe:**

All children have the right to a safe and secure learning environment.

All children have the right, the potential, and the responsibility to learn.

All children have the right to feel good about themselves at every stage of growing.

Open communication and respect are essential among parents, staff, and children.

### ***The USDA Non-Discrimination Statement***

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

ECC is licensed for 109 children and maintains a waiting list when at full capacity. Children are grouped with like age peers in classroom settings which provide the required adult:child ratio dependent upon age. Children transition to new room settings based on age and skills, and parents are notified prior to any changes made.

Registration:

A \$50 initial registration fee is due for each child at the time of enrollment, not to exceed \$100/family. Parents will complete registration packet information specific to each child attending and a contract will then be written and signed for the child's attendance.



Registration packet information will include, but is not limited to, the ECC enrollment form with child & family specific information, parental emergency and medical consents, care information sheets for children under 24 months. Information is then updated annually.

Copies of the child's current physician completed physical examination and Immunization Certificate must be on file before a child can begin attendance at the center, and updated annually.



Full time contracts, 5-days/week, are written based on 49 weeks of care. This allows for 3 weeks of time built in for sick days or vacations. In the event parents choose to keep a child home for an extended length of time or child is gone, tuition will continue to be paid if you wish to maintain the child's spot at ECC.

All birth to 5 year-old contracts are written for full time attendance. Contracts are not available for part-time or drop-in attendance. School age contracts are written based on before and/or after school year care and a separate full time summer program.

Tuition costs are determined annually, see attached current tuition rates. A family with multiple children attending ECC will receive a 10% discount rate for the oldest child attending. In addition, 10% discounts in tuition are available to Elim Lutheran Church congregational members and to active military personnel. ECC accepts families who are approved for HHS child care assistance block grant funding.



Tuition charges cover care, meals and snacks. As a licensed center, ECC follows Iowa guidelines in preparing fresh hot homemade meals. Menus are posted weekly. If your child has food allergies, this must be documented on registration paperwork and the medical physical form and a diet modification request form be on file. We will work with families to provide adjusted menus.



If you would like to bring treats for special occasions, such as birthdays, call the center to plan. Guidelines require pre-packaged or store purchased items. Due to allergies, no peanut products are allowed in the center.



All tuition payments are due by the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the month. Tuition may be paid by personal check, cashier's check or via monthly automatic bank payments. ECC is unable to accept cash payments. A payment deposit box is located outside the ECC Director's Office for convenience. If tuition payment is more than 15 days past due, ECC reserves the right to discontinue services until the account is paid in full. This policy applies to both general tuition and HHS family fee payments. If payment history becomes chronically late, contracts may be terminated.



ECC requests that, in order for us to ensure staffing to meet adult:ratio, children have consistent attendance. If a child is not attending on a given day, please alert the center by 9:00 a.m. If a child is not in attendance and we have not heard from the family, attempts will be made to contact parents.



ECC hours of operation are 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Please respect our staff members and their schedules by picking up your child no later than 6:00 p.m. If you do not pick up your child by 6:00 p.m. we will attempt to contact you and if we cannot reach you, we will contact your emergency contact person to pick up the child immediately. ECC will charge \$5.00 per minute for each child who remains past scheduled closing time, beginning at 6:01 pm. Repeated violations will result in termination of services.



Accidents and Injury - All staff at ECC are trained in CPR and First Aid procedures and strive to maintain a safe and injury free environment for children at all times, however minor accidents with children may occur during play and movement activities. If, at any time, a child receives a minor injury while at ECC staff will immediately attend to the injury; commonly using band-aids, ice packs, calm words and hugs. An injury report will always be written and shared with parents at pick up time. If there is any injury that appears serious and in need of medical attention, parents/guardians will be notified immediately by the ECC Director or next level person in charge. Be aware that in the rare circumstance that a child is in need of immediate emergency care, 911 will be contacted and an ambulance will be called to the center, parents will be notified, a staff member will accompany the child to the nearest medical facility and remain with the child until a parent can arrive.



The Health Care Policies for ECC are guided by the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services. The purpose of these policies is to ensure the health of all attending ECC.

Illness at Home: To maintain a healthy environment in the center, we ask that you please keep your children at home when they are ill. While this may be difficult as working families; it is imperative that other children and staff at ECC not unnecessarily be exposed to illnesses. Please call the center as soon as possible to report any absences, this will help with staffing. If your child contracts a communicable disease, you are asked to notify the center immediately, the Director will take proper required steps in reporting the illness to others effected.

In working together to keep ECC healthy, staff will notify you if your child is not feeling well while in attendance and can no longer remain in childcare. We ask that parents respond promptly, the expectation within 45 minutes or less if possible, in picking up a sick child. If your child becomes ill, if available she/he will be taken to a quiet area and directly supervised and cared for until they can be picked up.

### **Illness/Exclusion & Return Policy highlights:**



**Fever:** If your child is running a fever at night, they should not attend ECC the following day. Please do not give your child medications to mask a fever. If your child older than 2 months has a fever of 101 or more for any reason, your child will be sent home. (In infants younger than 2 months 100.4) Your child cannot return to ECC until fever free, without medication, for 24 hours. Children with a fever unfairly spread germs and illnesses to other families. Please always respect the fever policy.



**Medication-** ECC will not administer any medication that is not prescribed to your child, or that is not in the original container/box. If you provide an item such as Tylenol or Diaper Cream, it must be in the box in which it was purchased. ECC will not dispense outdated medication. If your child has a fever, we will not provide medication to mask the fever, your child will be sent home. Parents must fill out a medication release form for all medication given, no exceptions. For prescription medications a physician's signature is required.



**ECC Staff reserves the right to exclude children from care if they are experiencing any of the following conditions or symptoms. We ask that you respect the staff member making contact and respect our decision to exclude your child from care.**

- Illness that prevents the child from participating comfortably in normal activities as determined by the staff
- Illness that results in greater care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children
- Lethargy more than expected, tiredness
- Uncontrollable coughing
- Inexplicable or persistent crying
- Difficulty breathing or wheezing
- Unusual behavior for your child
- Ear Infection: There will be no exclusion from childcare for an ear infection. Fever and exclusion policy apply.
- Diarrhea: Defined by two or more watery stools, decreased form of stools that are not associated with changes of diet, and increase in frequency throughout the day. If the stools are not able to be contained by diaper or impair a child's ability to use the restroom, the child will be sent

home. If a child has 2 or more episodes, they will be sent home for the day. The child may return when stool functions are back to normal for the child.

- Vomiting: If a child vomits, not to be confused with infant spit up, they will be sent home. Children can return 24 hours after their last vomiting episode. If your child remains listless, or has a poor appetite, they will be sent back home.
- Upper Respiratory Illness: Children, who are experiencing large amounts of nasal discharge, sneezing, coughing, listlessness, or inability to keep on track with the daily functions, should remain home. Asthma symptoms are excluded from this section; however, if your child has Asthma, a control plan from your physician should be on file.
- Severe Cough (Croup): A child may return when symptoms have subsided.
- Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis): Conjunctivitis is a viral or bacterial infection. Eyes are pink with creamy or yellow discharge and the eyelids may be matted after sleep. Eyelids and around the eyes may be red and swollen, pain may also occur. Children should be taken to the doctor to confirm the diagnosis. Children may return to the center 24 hours after treatment has begun.
- Chicken Pox: Children may return after all lesions have dried and no new lesions are present.
- Impetigo is a skin sore with a yellow, colored scab. It may ooze and drain. Most sores are on the face, around the nose and mouth. Children should be seen by their doctor. Children can return to the center 24 hours after the medication has been started and blisters are covered.
- Undiagnosed Rash: If your child exhibits signs of a rash during the day, the child will be sent home. Your child may return with a doctor's note stating the rash is not contagious. If cause of a rash is known or due to an allergic reaction, please provide documentation.
- Scabies- are live mites that invade the webs of the fingers or toes and wrist region and cause rash and severe itching. A child needs to be seen by a doctor and treatment must begin before returning to the center. Children that are deemed contagious with scabies are not allowed to return without a doctor release.
- Ring Worm- A ringworm of the skin is an infection caused by a fungus. It is circular and red in color. It can be treated with OTC cream; however, you will need a doctor's note to attend childcare. All spots must be covered while the child is in attendance.
- Strep Throat or Tonsillitis are bacterial infections of throat, a doctor should confirm diagnosis. A child may develop a rash known as Scarlet Fever with the strep. Your child must have completed 24 hours of medication prior to returning. Fever criteria previously listed also apply.
- Rubella (German measles)-a child may return to center when rash is cleared up.
- Fifth Disease is a viral illness (cough and cold may accompany) with rash likely involving face (slapped face appearance) followed by a lacey rash on extremities, chest, and trunk. It is most contagious 2-4 days prior to rash appearing (not contagious after onset of rash). A doctor should confirm diagnosis. A child may attend daycare with the rash; however, fever criteria apply.
- Thrush-A yeast infection in the mouth with white patches and or a bright red rash in the diaper area. Children may return with a doctor's note and medication. Fever and Exclusion Policies apply.
- Hand Foot and Mouth Disease- is a highly contagious condition. It usually affects children under five years old, although it can occur at any age. The condition is characterized by blisters in the mouth and a rash on the hands and feet. A child may return to center when all lesions disappear (usually after 5 days).
- Head Lice: If live mites or nits (eggs) are present in hair a child will be sent home. A child may return to center 24 hours after treatment. Your child will be inspected prior to drop off the following day. A flier provided by the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services will be sent home for parent reference in treating lice.
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- Covid 19 Policy (these policies may be rapid changing and will be updated in separate notifications to families as appropriate/needed)  
 People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:  
 Fever or chills  
 Cough  
 Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing  
 Fatigue  
 Muscle or body aches  
 Headache  
 New loss of taste or smell  
 Sore throat  
 Congestion or runny nose  
 Nausea or vomiting  
 Diarrhea

In the event we have a positive case of COVID-19 within the center, the following steps will take place:

The Director will contact the HHS per their current requirements and report a positive case.

Each person affected by the positive case will be contacted with further guidance.

Response to the classroom setting where the positive case occurred will be immediately determined by current CDC guidelines.

It is recommended that on day 10 of quarantine or before, if your child is displaying symptoms, you have them tested.

If at any time your child tests positive, you will need to notify the center immediately.



ECC's infant room follows the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics and Consumer Product Safety Commission standards of maintaining a safe sleep environment. Staff are trained in these policies. Guidelines are posted, information provided at registration and copies available for parents upon request.



ECC outlines a diaper changing policy and schedule for infants/toddlers and staff is trained in the proper diaper changing procedures. Daily logs are kept for infants up to age 2 years. Parents are asked to provide diapers and wipes for their child.



**Behavior Guidelines**-Because social growth is so crucial during early childhood years, ECC focuses on helping children to learn appropriate behavior. Behavioral guidelines will be established with the goal of maintaining the physical and emotional well-being of each child, as well as, teaching self-discipline, judgment, and manners. Positive disciplinary methods may include, but are not limited to, redirection and behavior management programs. It is important to treat each child as an individual and in a manner appropriate to the child's development level, degree of activity, and general well-being. The following policies outline our approach toward behavior management with children:

1. Positive behavior will be reinforced to shape and distinguish inappropriate behavior.
2. All children need limits which are consistent.
3. Each child is an important person and needs to be helped to feel good about him/herself.
4. Children need opportunities to learn how to make appropriate choices.
5. Children need opportunities to learn to be responsible for the consequences of their actions.
6. Children need opportunities to resolve their own conflicts.
7. It is most effective to positively redirect a child's behavior.
8. No disciplinary action will be used regarding rest, food, or toileting.
9. Physical punishment (spanking, etc.) or humiliation will not be tolerated.



ECC has posted plans for emergency situations such as fire, tornado, or disaster. Children will be moved to safe areas. To ensure the safety of the children at ECC, staff are trained to handle multiple types of disaster situations.

In the event there is a major disaster, we ask that you please follow the following guidelines:

In the event of a Tornado, all children will be taken to the storm safety area. Staff will not be allowed to contact parents individually, as their priority is your children. In the event of a major storm, staff will be out of reach of a phone, so please refrain from calling the center. All parents will be contacted after it has been declared safe for us to move the children back to the center or other safe area.

In the event an emergency requires off site evacuation, all children will be evacuated and moved to St. Francis of Assisi Saint Mary's site church basement, 11 W. Linn St. Parents will then be contacted and pick up arrangements will be made at that time. Again, staff will not be allowed to contact parents until all children are taken to safety and accounted for.

Shelter in Place procedures are in place if, for any reason, the center becomes unsafe due to an intruder or an outside emergency and our staff has trained with MPD. Children will be placed in an undisclosed location. For the safety of all the children and staff, we do not share this location as the intruder may be someone we know or that has access to the center daily. If you have any questions, please call the center Director.



## ★ Parent's/Guardian's Responsibilities

- Sign my child in and out each day and accompany your child to their classroom area., report his/her arrival to a staff person.
- Respect the 6:00 AM opening and 6:00 PM closing times.
- Notify the staff of absences and family situations that may affect my child's care experience.
- Notify in writing any changes on my child's enrollment or emergency forms (phone numbers, persons permitted or not permitted to pick up the child).
- Check my child's cubby daily and read all notes and newsletters so I can help my child be prepared for planned activities and respond to written notes if necessary.
- Make all payments on time.
- Respect the staff that care for my child.
- Communicate with the Director any concerns that I have pertaining to my child's care.
- Have a backup childcare for my child if ECC is not available or my child is ill and cannot attend.

If families need assistance in understanding our policies or links to other services, ECC staff will work to find resources to help the family. Examples of local agencies who can serve to be a possible resource include: Child Abuse Preventions Services (CAPS), Mid-Iowa Community Action (MICA), Marshall County ISU Extension, UnityPoint Health-Marshalltown Hospital, Marshalltown Community School District, MCC & IVCC (colleges). ECC works cooperatively with Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) and the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and has consultants from each agency assigned to our area.

2023

I/We acknowledge that I/We have read and understand the policies listed in the ECC Parent Handbook.

Parent/Guardian Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature\_\_\_\_\_

ECC Director Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

*Please return this form to ECC office for your child's file.*