

# Tinker Town PARENT HANDBOOK



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This handbook is intended to familiarize families with current Tinker Town policy, practices and standards. Electronic copies (PDF) of the handbook are available on our website at [tinkertowndenver.com](http://tinkertowndenver.com). Print copies are available upon request. Tinker Town reserves the right to revise its policies, practices and standards as deemed appropriate by the Director. Families will be notified of updates to the handbook.

## History

Seth was a Corpsman in the Navy which took him to San Diego where he eventually met Mandy. Together they knew they wanted to raise a family in Colorado and be close to family and friends. They decided Stapleton would be the perfect fit for their growing family due to the close neighborhood feel it provides. Mandy became a licensed Real Estate Appraiser in the state of Colorado which allowed her to be home with her children. However, with the occasional need to find childcare, it was hard with her fluctuating schedule. As parents of two small children, Mandy and Seth Tamisiea had a vision to create a business that would allow them to engage with children on a daily basis. Then the idea of Tinker Town, a drop-in preschool with a flexible schedule, came to life. Mandy and Seth have created an interactive environment that children love and parents can trust. They look forward to meeting new families and having Tinker Town be a part of the Stapleton community!

## Philosophy

We at Tinker Town, believe in providing a caring, engaging, and safe environment for children to learn through personal experiences and creative play. Through creative play, children develop intellectually, creatively, socially, emotionally, and physically. As such, we have filled our center with activities that engage children's imagination, encourage teamwork, and stimulate their natural curiosity to understand and explore the world around them. We strive to provide a high-quality environment that children love, parents trust, and employees are proud to be a part of.

- **INTELLECTUAL:** Growing ability to learn in relation to the world around him or her. Intellectual development is characterized by four stages.
- **CREATIVE:** To express themselves through art, music and creative dramatics in an open and free environment. Discover different art mediums and develop preferences for those mediums.
- **SOCIAL:** Practice interacting with children in their peer group, develop friendships, and communicate their needs to their peer group.
- **EMOTIONAL:** To develop pride, self-confidence in their abilities, develop independence, foster opportunities to practice self-control, and identify their feelings.
- **PHYSICAL:** To increase gross & fine motor skills, develop whole body coordination, practice fine motor activities to prepare for written academic skills, discover what a body in motion feels like.

## General Center Information

Owner: Mandy Tamisiea  
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## HOURS OF OPERATION

Tinker Town is open Monday through Friday from 8:00am to 5:00pm and Friday 6:00pm-10:00pm. The center is closed for the following holidays:

*President's Day (in service training)*  
*4th of July*  
*Thanksgiving (2 days)*

*Memorial Day*  
*Labor Day*  
*Christmas (2 days)*

If the need for closure should occur, it will be posted on our Facebook page.

**Per Colorado child care rules and regulations, your child(ren) may attend up to 6 hours a day, maximum 15 hours per week. Due to our structured preschool schedule, we book care in 1-hour increments (beginning of each hour) to minimize disruption of activities. We encourage a 2-hour minimum to engage children in our daily lesson plans. We offer pre-booking online at [TinkerTownDenver.com](http://TinkerTownDenver.com) or drop-in based on availability.**

## PROGRAMS

There are 2 child care programs offered at Tinker Town. They are:

- Tinker Tots 12 months to 24 months 5 children
- Preschool 24 months to 12 years 32 children

## RATIOS

At Tinker Town, we maintain the following staff-to-child ratios at all times in our classrooms:

<u>Age of Children</u>	<u>Minimum Ratio of Staff to Children</u>
12 months to 24 months	1 staff for every 5 children
2 years to 3 years	1 staff for every 8 children
3 years to 4 years	1 staff for every 10 children
4 years to 5 years	1 staff for every 12 children
5 years to 12 years	1 staff for every 15 children
Mixed age group- (2 years to 12 years)	1 staff for every 8 children

Children of different age groups may be combined if the following guidelines are followed:

Drop-in child care centers may follow a ratio of one (1) adult for every eight (8) children for children in a mixed age group of 2 years of age to 12 years. 1-2 children 1 year of age to 2 years of age may join the preschool age group of children for short periods of time for structured activities as long as the 1-year old children are safely confined in a toddler seat or high chair.

<u>Maximum Group Size for Children</u>	
<u>AGES OF CHILDREN</u>	<u>MAXIMUM GROUP SIZE</u>
6 weeks to 18 months	10 infants
12 months to 36 months	10 toddlers
24 months to 36 months	14 toddlers
2-1/2 years to 3 years	16 children
3 years to 4 years	20 children
4 years to 5 years	24 children
5 years and older	30 children
Mixed age group (2-1/2 to 6 years of age)	20 children

At nap time, the child to staff ratio may be doubled for children two and one half (2 ½) years of age and older in preschool classrooms when the following conditions have been met:

- At least half of the children are sleeping;
- Another staff member is onsite in the center and immediately available;
- Maximum group size and room capacity are not exceeded; and,
- Staff member supervising children is qualified as an early childhood teacher or assistant early childhood teacher.

**Ratios must be maintained at all times, including when emergency procedures are in effect.**

## LICENSING

Tinker Town is licensed by the Colorado Department of Early Childhood/ Department of Human Services to accept children ages 12 months to 12 years, with a total of 38 children. A copy of the licensing rules and regulations is available for review in the office and on the web <http://coloradoofficeofearlychildhood.com/>

## WEATHER-RELATED CLOSINGS

Tinker Town will remain open during most severe weather. The Director and/or Assistant Director will monitor the weather and local news stations to determine when it is appropriate to close the center early or cancel care for the following day.

In the event that Tinker Town closes early or cancels care for the following day, parents will be contacted and informed of the situation. Children should be picked up in a reasonable amount of time to ensure all parents, children, and staff can travel safely home.

## UPDATING ENROLLMENT RECORDS

Each fall, Tinker Town completes an audit of enrollment records. At the conclusion of this audit, families will be notified if anything needs to be updated. Some forms must be updated every year, including the Emergency Contact and Medical Consent form. Most forms may be completed electronically; if you wish to receive a PDF version of the enrollment forms, please provide your email address to the Director.

Other records must be updated throughout the year, such as physicals and immunization records. When visiting your child's physician for a yearly "well-child" appointment, please request a copy of your child's physical and most recent immunization record. You may bring these items in yourself or have your physician email them to us.

In addition, any time a family's information changes such as address, place of employment or health insurance provider, a new Emergency Contact and Medical Consent form must be completed.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is a top priority for Tinker Town. Personal information of families and staff will not be shared for any reason without prior written consent of the individual. When discussing a child's activities and friends in the classroom, only first names will be used. In situations regarding behavior problems and/or Incident/Accident Reports, names of children involved will never be given to families.

## Curriculum

Curriculum at Tinker Town includes the child-initiated and teacher-directed activities and experiences offered to young children that support and enrich their development physically, emotionally, socially, and cognitively. Tinker Town uses the [Creative Curriculum for Toddlers](#) and the [Creative Curriculum for Preschool](#) as guides for planning the curriculum in each of its program rooms. Each classroom has weekly lesson plans, posted in the classroom. These plans contain a number of activities, designed to foster each child's development, and the development of the group as a whole. Lesson plans may be changed in order to accommodate the children's changing interests.

Each classroom is set-up in centers, which include blocks, dramatic play, books, gross motor, fine motor, and art. Self-selection or "free-play" is a daily part of the curriculum and means a child has the opportunity to choose which center or activity he/she participates in. This promotes creative expression and development of important social skills.

## DAILY SCHEDULE AND ACTIVITIES

The classroom's teachers work cooperatively to create a daily schedule and plan activities that meet each child's developmental abilities and needs. The daily schedule and activities create a balance between active and quiet times; large and small group, and individual activities; small and large muscle activities; indoor play times; as well as times for self-selection and teacher-directed activities.

Consistency from day-to-day is particularly important to the overall well-being of the children and classroom environment. Children **thrive** on consistency! Routines will be maintained whenever possible for arrivals and departures; meals and snacks; resting or nap times; personal care routines like diapering/toileting and hand washing; and transitions.

## FREE PLAY

"Free-play" (also called child-initiated activities, free choice, self-selection) activities are incorporated into the morning and afternoon schedule. During free-play, teachers actively participate with the children by asking questions about what the children are doing, participating in their pretend play, reading books when prompted, encouraging children to try new activities or play with a new toy, etc. Free-play is another opportunity for a child to grow socially and cognitively through the development of relationships.

## OUTDOOR PLAY

Outdoor play is incorporated into the daily schedule for both the morning and afternoon. There is less structure in an outdoor learning environment; however, staff members actively engage in activities when prompted by the children. Outdoor play is an opportunity for children to run, jump, and use their bodies in ways that would otherwise be unsafe in an indoor classroom.

In addition, a large amount of social interaction takes place when children play outdoors. Because they are engaged in fewer teacher-directed activities and more child-directed play, children are able to choose their friends and who to interact with.

Children will go outside year-round, including winter. Only during extreme weather conditions will the children remain indoors.

It is important for parents to send their children in appropriate clothing and outerwear for the weather conditions (e.g., coat, snow pants, boots, gloves, etc.). **Please clearly label all articles of clothing with your child's name.** Tinker Town has a few extra hats and mittens, but not enough for every child. If a child is not dressed appropriately for the weather, he or she may have to remain inside. Please ask your child's teacher if you have any questions about weather-appropriate clothing.

### **NAP/REST TIME**

The Colorado Department of Human Services requires that all children be provided a regularly scheduled nap or rest time. Children will not be forced to sleep but may be encouraged to lie quietly for a period of time. The length of time a child should have to remain resting varies by child. There is no hard and fast rule regarding the maximum amount of time a child should have to remain resting. Children should be provided alternative quiet activities if unable to rest.

Children should bring a familiar item from home to use during nap/rest time, such as a sheet, pillow, small blanket, or stuffed animal. These items will be stored in your child's cubby or on his/her cot; there is limited space for storage of such items. Please take this into consideration when deciding which items to bring. All items should be clearly labeled with your child's name. Toddlers and preschool aged children use sleeping cots.

### **MULTIMEDIA**

The use of multimedia in our program is an extension of the teaching and learning that takes place in our classrooms. Teachers may select movie, television, and computer game titles based upon weekly themes. Children are not required to view part or all of a video or television show, or to play computer games. Instead, the activity is offered as one of several centers. All multimedia must have a rating of "G" or "E" and must possess an educational theme. Children are limited to a specified amount of time per week they may use or view multimedia:

Tinker Tots (12-24 months)	<b>0 minutes/week</b>
Preschool (2-12 years)	<b>30 minutes/week</b>

For children two (2) years of age and older computer and tablet time must be limited to non-consecutive fifteen (15) minute increments not to exceed thirty (30) minutes per day.

### **WEAPONS/VIOLENT PLAY**

There is a strict policy of allowing no weapon play at Tinker Town. Children are not permitted to play with weapons of any type or size or to pretend that other items are weapons, including their fingers, hands, or blocks. Redirection should be used when a child is engaging in weapon or violent play. If a child brings a weapon to Tinker Town, the weapon should be placed out of sight and sent home the same day with a note explaining the policy about weapons.

Competitive behavior is minimized in our programs. In young children, competition often increases negative behavior and decreases acceptance of others. Bullying is not considered acceptable behavior; all efforts will be made to guide children in finding appropriate ways to interact with others.

## **Meals and Snacks**

### **NUT FREE FACILITY**

We are a nut free facility. No food containing, or processed in a facility with nut, are allowed in the center. Children are welcome to bring in special treats to celebrate a birthday or holiday.

We **DO NOT** provide meals or snacks for your child and staff can't prepare any food or drinks for your child. Please provide a lunch and/ or snacks if your child will be attending during meal and snack times. Snack times are at 9:30am and 3:00pm and lunch at 12:00pm. We will not feed a child's food to another child. Staff will sit with the children during meal and snack times to encourage (never force) them to try a variety of food and enjoy friendly conversation.

If a lunch and/or snack has not been supplied for the child during the appropriate times, the parent may bring a lunch and/or snack prior to the children eating. If the parent is unable to supply a lunch and/or snack for their child, Tinker Town will provide at an additional charge. The options for snacks and lunch will meet USDA child care food program meal pattern requirements. Examples of food provided are fruits, vegetables, cheese, yogurt, dry snacks (gold fish or graham crackers), applesauce, etc. Children that require milk during the day may do so in a labeled sippy cup, which will be refrigerated. Water is always available for children, but we encourage a labeled sippy cup or water bottle from home for children to remain hydrated, bottles are not permitted.

Please disclose all food allergies to Tinker Town staff prior to check-in every time. Tinker Town is not responsible for allergic reactions that we were not made aware of by the parents. Children with severe allergies that require an epi pen, must arrive with a double pack epi-pen in the original packaging from the pharmacy. The label on the epi-pen jr must match the doctor's order- Emergency Allergy Plan.

## Toddler Program Information

The following information is specific to the toddler program:

- Parents must supply diapers, wipes, diaper cream, extra clothing, cot sheet, blankets, sippy cup, and stuffed toys for rest time. Please label all items with child's name.
- Children may use pacifiers during rest time. To reduce the likelihood of spreading illness, pacifiers must be kept in a child's cubby or diaper bag during all other times of the day.
- We recommend that all new foods be tried at home first since a child could have an allergic reaction to foods they have not had before. Check with parents before introducing ANY new food.

## Clothing and Items From Home

### PLAY CLOTHES

Please send your child to Tinker Town in comfortable play clothes and shoes. Play is usually active and often messy; comfortable, washable clothes are important if your child is to participate fully in the program. We expect all children to be dressed appropriately for both indoor and outdoor activities.

All children occasionally get their clothes wet and have toileting accidents. Whenever this occurs, it is best to change the child into an extra set of clothing provided by the family. Your child's teacher will request that you bring a complete change of clothing, including underwear, to be kept at school and replenished as needed.

### ITEMS FROM HOME

Toys, stuffed animals, or other items from home may help your child feel more comfortable at school from time to time. However, it is often difficult for young children to share their special "treasures" with classmates. We ask that all items brought to Tinker Town from home be placed in your child's cubby shortly after arrival. Please clearly label all belongings brought from home. It is recommended that items of value, such as money, iPods or handheld gaming systems be left at home, due to the risk of damage or theft. Tinker Town is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items.

## Arrival and Departure

### ARRIVAL

Parents are required to accompany their child into the center and into their child's classroom. Parents should also speak with the teacher in the classroom, if only briefly. We encourage parents to communicate with their child's teacher, about their child's temperament that particular day, how he/she slept the night before, whether he/she has eaten that morning, etc.

Most children go through periods of difficulty with separating from their parent(s). This is common and developmentally appropriate. Try these tips for a successful drop-off:

- **Establish a regular, predictable routine.** Whether you have a kiss and a hug and go, or help your child put his things in his cubby first, do it the same way every day. What often makes separating stressful for children is the uncertainty. If your child can predict what will happen, the separation won't be as difficult.
- **Separate once.** If you come back into the classroom again and again, it will increase your child's stress. Remember the moment of separation is the worst part for your child, so doing it more than once makes it more stressful for your child.
- **Be reliable.** Return when promised. Children who are picked up later than expected may have more difficulties separating. Phrase time in terms your child will understand. For example, you will be back after snack time or before nap time.

### DEPARTURE

Tinker Town closes at 5:00pm Monday through Friday. For the safety of the children and Tinker Town staff, parents are only allowed to come in the children's play area when accompanied by a staff member. Parents may visit the center at any time during our hours of operation to observe their child and program activities without having to secure prior approval. We use a child care software called Brightwheel to check the children in / out.

Be sure to say good-bye to your child's teachers so they know you are leaving. Once you have reunited with your child and are departing, Tinker Town is no longer responsible for your child. For safety reasons, please do not let your child run ahead of you inside or outside of the building.

Any adult that is listed as an authorized pick-up for the child, will be required to provide a valid government issued photo identification before the child will be released. If at any time Tinker Town staff feels uncomfortable releasing a child to an authorized individual, the Denver Police Department will be called.

Parents must inform staff in advance, if an authorized individual, other than the parent will be picking up their child. If an unauthorized individual attempts to pick up a child, we will immediately call one or both parents to inquire as to whether the individual is authorized to pick up the child. We will only allow the individual to take the child if a parent confirms that the individual is authorized to pick up the child.

In case of emergency situations, parents are required to call Tinker Town staff. If a child is picked up past Tinker Town's normal closing times, a staff member will remain with the child and a late fee of \$1 per minute will be charged in addition to the normal child care rate. If a child is picked up late multiple times, a \$5 per minute late fee will be charged on the third offense. After three times being picked up late – parents will no longer be allowed to drop-off. After 10 minutes of closing, staff will call the child's emergency adult contact. If the staff can't get ahold of any adult that is authorized to pick up the child, and the parent has not called or shown up, Tinker Town staff will call the Department of Human Services (DHS), and the child's emergency adult contact to confirm that the child will be released to DHS.

## Health and Safety Policies

### ILLNESS

Our first priority at Tinker Town is providing a healthy, safe learning environment for all children. A child will be sent home as soon as possible if any of the following is experienced: an illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities (as determined by the staff); an illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can reasonably provide without compromising the health or safety of other children in the classroom; or a child is experiencing any of the following conditions:

- **Fever** of 101 or greater, until 24 hours symptom free without fever reducing medication
- Signs/symptoms of severe illness, including: lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, inexplicable irritability or persistent crying, difficulty breathing, and/or wheezing
- **Diarrhea** (not associated with diet changes or medications; multiple loose or watery instances within an hour; or accompanied with fever and or vomiting) until diarrhea stops for 24 hours or the continued diarrhea is deemed not be infectious by a licensed health care professional.
- Blood in stools not explainable by dietary change, medication, or hard stools
- **Vomiting** (One instance) the child can return after vomiting has been resolved for 24 hours or until a health care provider determines the cause for vomiting is not contagious and the child is not in danger of dehydration
- Persistent abdominal pain (continues more than 2 hours) or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs/symptoms of illness
- Mouth sores with drooling, unless a health care provider determines the sores are not contagious
- Rash until a physician determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease
- **Pink eye** (conjunctivitis) until after treatment has been initiated for 24 hours
- **Scabies**, until after treatment has been completed
- **Tuberculosis**, until a health care provider states that the child is on appropriate therapy and can attend child care
- **Impetigo**, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated
- **Strep throat**, until 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever
- **Chicken pox**, until all sores have dried and crusted (usually 6 days)
- **Hand Foot and Mouth** sores have dried and crusted and no fever
- **Pertussis**, until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment has been completed
- **Mumps**, until 9 days after onset of symptoms
- **Hepatitis A virus**, until 1 week after onset of illness
- **Measles**, until 4 days after onset of rash
- **Rubella**, until 6 days after onset of rash
- Unspecified respiratory tract illness accompanied by another illness which requires exclusion

If a child is suspected of having a contagious condition, a parent or authorized pick-up person must arrive at the childcare center as soon as possible, but not to exceed one hour after being called. A child must be fever free and symptom free without the use of fever relieving or other medications for a period of 24 hours before they will be allowed to return to the center. If a child is diagnosed as having a contagious condition, parents should notify Tinker Town as soon as possible so we can alert other families. Confidentiality will be upheld.

## ACCIDENTS

Precautions will be made to minimize accidents and ensure the safety of the children. We cannot be responsible for injuries that are out of our control which includes, but is not limited to:

- Incidents by one child due to the actions of another child like biting, hitting, pushing, and throwing objects.
- Incidents by contact with furniture or objects.
- Incidents to fingers from doors and containers.
- Accidents while playing.

The parent will be contacted depending on the severity of the injury. Parents will need to sign an incident report for all injuries that leave a mark, no matter the severity, when the child is picked up. If an incident occurs by one child due to the actions of another child, we cannot give parents information about who injured whom for confidentiality purposes, but a report will need to be signed by both sets of parents. First-aid treatment or CPR will be administered by trained staff when needed. If a serious injury occurs, after tending to the child, emergency medical services will be contacted if needed or the child will be taken to Children's Hospital Colorado located at 13123 E 16<sup>th</sup> Ave, Aurora, CO 80045, after we have ensured the supervision of other children in the group.

## NOTICE OF EXPOSURE & REPORTING DISEASE

If your child is exposed to a communicable disease, a notice will be posted at the door to your child's classroom. Additionally, families who have provided an email address will receive email notification of the illness. If your child or anyone in your household becomes ill with a communicable disease, please notify the Director immediately. In the event a child is reported to have a communicable disease, the Director will notify the health department.

## HAND WASHING

Frequent hand washing with soap and warm, running water is the most effective way to reduce and prevent the spread of illnesses commonly found in childcares such as the flu, diarrhea, and pink eye. Parents are encouraged to assist their child in the hand washing process upon arrival. Other times your child (and staff members) will be expected to wash their hands:

- Upon arriving at the center or when changing classrooms
- After **each** diaper change or using the toilet
- Before and after meal times
- Before and after administering medication
- After handling bodily fluids (mucus, blood vomit)
- Before and after using the sensory table
- After coming indoors from the playground
- After handling pets and other animals
- After cleaning or handling garbage

Warm, running water (no colder than 60 degrees F) and soap must be used. Hands must be rubbed vigorously for at least 20 seconds, including the backs of hands, between fingers, under nails, and under any jewelry. A disposable paper towel should be used to dry hands and turn off faucet. Help reinforce the importance of hand washing by encouraging frequent hand washing at home as well.

## MEDICATIONS

Prescription and over-the-counter medications must be given to a staff member in the original container, clearly labeled with the child's full name, birth date, and dosing instructions. Tinker Town staff will not administer any medication without a signed Medication Authorization Form. Forms can be obtained from the front office.

Medications are stored in a locked box (refrigerated medications) or in a high cabinet (non-refrigerated medications) while in use at Tinker Town. The Medication Authorization Form must remain with the medication at all times. Unused medications must be immediately returned to the family and will not be stored at Tinker Town.

Medications are administered only by Lead Teachers, the Director, or Owner. When a medication is given, designated staff will document the type of medication administered, the dosage, and the time it was given.

## PHYSICALS AND IMMUNIZATION RECORDS

Each child must have a current physical and immunization record on file at Tinker Town. The physical on file must be updated at least annually; immunization records must be updated whenever a new immunization is received. Updated immunization records and physicals may be faxed to Tinker Town directly from your healthcare provider.

## DOCUMENTATION OF ACCIDENTS/INCIDENTS

Staff members shall document accidents and incidents that occur at Tinker Town using an Accident/Incident Report. All biting incidents will be documented as accidents. If a biter breaks the skin of another child, an accident/incident report will be completed for the biter as well as the child who was bitten. If the injury is serious, a parent will be contacted before pick-up. The parent shall sign the report the same day as the incident. A copy may be given to the parent. All Accident/Incident Reports must be given to the Director and/or Assistant Director to be placed in the child's permanent file.

## DOCUMENTATION OF HEALTH INCIDENTS

Each time a parent is contacted regarding an ill child or symptoms of illness, a Health Incident Form will be completed. A copy of the form will be given to the parent and the original will be placed in the child's permanent file. All parents will be notified of any communicable illnesses present in the center via a sign posted on the main entrance to the center explaining the illness. In addition, parents with children in the classroom of the infected child will receive an email regarding the illness.

## DOCUMENTATION OF ALLERGIES

A child with allergies must have an Allergy Action Plan posted in a visible location in the classroom. If the allergy is food-related, an Allergy Action Plan must also be posted. All staff working in the classroom of child with allergies must review the Allergy Action Plan to ensure understanding of emergency procedures should the child have an allergic reaction. All allergic reactions must be documented with a Health Incident Form.

## DOCUMENTATION OF SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

An Emergency Care Plan will be on file for any child with special health care needs (seizures, etc). A copy of the Emergency Care Plan must be kept in the classroom emergency binder. All staff working in the classroom must familiarize themselves with this plan, should an emergency arise. If necessary, staff will receive training regarding a child's specific health care needs.

## EMERGENCY MEDICAL/DENTAL PROCEDURE

It is important that parents complete and update, as needed, an Emergency Contact and Parental Consent Form. This form contains contact information for both the parents as well as the individuals authorized to pick up the child in the event of illness or emergency. In addition, the form allows Tinker Town staff members to seek emergency medical or dental care from authorized care providers in the event of serious injury. **It is the responsibility of the parent to complete this form and to make corrections to this information when necessary.**

- If a child becomes ill or injured after arriving at the center, the Lead Teacher will attempt to contact the parent(s) at all available telephone numbers. If a parent cannot be reached, the individuals listed as emergency contacts/authorized pick up persons on the Emergency Contact & Parental Consent form will be called.
- Children who are ill or seriously injured will be sent to the office and remain under the supervision of the Director and/or Assistant Director until a parent arrives.

### **If the child requires immediate medical attention:**

- The staff member who witnessed the emergency situation will remain with the injured child and instruct someone else to call 911. If no one is available, first ensure the child is stable and if possible, bring the child with you to call 911.
- A staff member who witnessed the emergency situation will accompany the child to the hospital, bringing the child's physical exam, immunization records, and Emergency Contact & Parental Consent Form.
- The Director or Assistant Director will contact the parent(s).

## SUNSCREEN & INSECT REPELLANT

Between the months of March and October, all families will be required to supply sunscreen for their child/ren for outdoor activities. A permission slip must be on file before sunscreen will be applied to a child. Sunscreen must be SPF 15 or above and will be applied by classroom teachers regularly throughout the day. Parents are encouraged to apply insect repellent to their child before arriving at Tinker Town for the day, as Tinker Town staff are not permitted to apply insect repellent.

## DIAPERING/ TOILET TRAINING

Tinker Town changes disposable diapers regularly while the children are in our care. Parents must provide sufficient diapers/changing supplies and a change of clothing for their child. Tinker Town staff will document diaper changes that take place.

Parents should let Tinker Town staff know when their child is potty training, so we can assist by taking the child to the restroom hourly. Staff will not be able to take your child more than once per hour. We ask parents of children who are potty training to bring extra clothes and materials (bottoms, underwear, waterproof shoes for accidents, plastic bag for soiled cloths, etc). For health / safety regulations and for sanitary purposes, underwear is required for potty training while at Tinker Town. Per health regulations, staff is not allowed to rinse, scoop or shake off poop from clothes or underwear. If a poop accident occurs, the staff will bag the soiled clothes/underwear in a plastic bag and place in child's backpack to go home. An accident will be noted on your child's timeline on Brightwheel, so you can expect to find a soiled bag of clothes in your child's backpack. For the safety of the children and Tinker Town staff, children are not forced to have help if they don't want it. Staff will offer to help a child to get on & off the potty, gather toilet paper, button pants. Teachers ARE NOT allowed to wipe the children. If the child says "No" to have assistance, staff can't help. In the case of a poop accident in underwear, the child will be offered help to clean up & change into clean clothes. The child will not be changed on the diaper table if they don't want to. If your child has more than 3 accidents in a day, they will be placed in a "pull-up".

## CLOTH DIAPERS

Only commercially available disposable diapers or pull-ups may be used at Tinker Town, unless the child has a documented medical reason that does not permit their use. Documentation from the child's physician must be provided to the Director before cloth diapers will be used while the child is at the center. Families must provide a container for storage of soiled cloth diapers while at the center.

## MANDATORY CHILD ABUSE REPORTERS

As childcare professionals who interact with children on a daily basis, each staff member of Tinker Town is a mandatory child abuse and neglect reporter and must contact the Colorado Department of Human Services whenever abuse or neglect is suspected.

## DRUGS/ TOBACCO

Marijuana, drugs, cigarettes and smokeless tobacco products are prohibited on Tinker Town premises, including parking lots and outdoor play areas.

## ACCESS POLICY

All individuals who are visiting the center (i.e., someone who is not a parent or authorized pick-up person; or staff member) is required to sign in at the office before entering the center. The visitor is then required to sign out before leaving the building.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

Each classroom will follow a “clipboard attendance policy”. Along with keeping attendance electronically, lead teachers will also keep attendance on their clipboards throughout the day. The clipboard will identify which children are currently present and what time they arrived. When the children leave, the teacher is required to record their departure time. Each teacher is required to know how many students are present throughout the day.

## AFFIDAVIT POLICY

At times families may be dealing with difficult situations at home. When legal matters are present in the home, families may need to collect affidavits for their legal team. Due to the nature of the relationship between caregiver and child, families may choose to ask a Tinker Town staff member to provide such a statement. Our program’s priority is providing the best possible care when children are away from home and our focus will remain on the child, making sure all their needs are met during what could be a difficult time at home. Tinker Town staff members will not provide written statements or affidavits of a professional nature to families.

## Guidance Strategies

Every adult who cares for children has a responsibility to guide, correct and socialize children toward appropriate behaviors. These adult actions often are called child guidance and discipline. Positive guidance and discipline are crucial because they promote children's self-control, teach children responsibility and help children make thoughtful choices. The more effective caregivers are at encouraging appropriate child behavior, the less time and effort adults will spend correcting children's misbehavior.

Effective guidance and discipline focus on the development of the child. They also preserve the child's self-esteem and dignity. Actions that insult or belittle are likely to cause children to view their caregivers negatively, which can inhibit learning and can teach the child to be unkind to others. However, actions that acknowledges the child’s efforts and progress, no matter how slow or small, is likely to encourage healthy development. Teaching children self-discipline is a demanding task. It requires patience, thoughtful attention, cooperation and a good understanding of the child. Tinker Town staff will use **only** positive guidance techniques.

When interacting with young children, staff should ask themselves the following questions:

**“Am I…”**

- Validating feelings?
- Asking open ended questions?
- Encouraging problem solving?
- Respecting children’s choices?
- Using praise and positive reinforcement?
- Talking with children – not at them?
- Circulating throughout the classroom?
- At the child’s eye level?

### REASONS FOR MISBEHAVIOR

If caregivers understand why children misbehave, they can be more successful at reducing behavior problems. Listed here are some of the possible reasons why children misbehave.

- Children want to test whether caregivers will enforce rules.
- They experience different sets of expectations between school and home.
- A child does not understand the rules or are held to expectations that are beyond their developmental levels.
- They want to assert themselves and their independence.
- They feel ill, bored, hungry or sleepy.
- They lack accurate information and prior experience.
- They have been previously "rewarded" for their misbehavior with adult attention.

### PREVENTING MISBEHAVIOR

Child misbehavior is impossible to prevent completely. Children, usually curious and endlessly creative, are likely to do things parents and other caregivers have not expected. However, there are many positive steps caregivers can take to help prevent misbehavior.

- Set clear, consistent rules. (*e.g., walking feet; gentle touches*)
- Make certain the environment is safe and worry-free.
- Show interest in the child's activities. (*e.g., participating in activities with the children so they stay interested for longer periods*)
- Encourage self-control and independence by providing meaningful choices. (*e.g., “You may pick up the blocks or art center.”*)
- Focus on the desired behavior, rather than the one to be avoided. (*e.g., “Ashley, please use gentle touches with your friends.”*)
- Build children's images of themselves as trustworthy, responsible and cooperative.
- Give clear directions, one at a time.
- Say "Yes" whenever possible.
- Notice and pay attention to children when they do things right. (*e.g., “Joey is playing so nicely. I like it when you keep the blocks on the table.”*)
- Encourage children often and generously.
- Set a good example. (*e.g., using a quiet voice when children should be quiet*)
- Help children see how their actions affect others.

## RESPONDING TO MISBEHAVIOR

Below are strategies Tinker Town staff will use to respond to child misbehavior. Remember, however, that it's always a good idea if rules are explained fully and clearly understood before misbehavior occurs. Whenever possible, involve children in making the rules for the classroom.

- **Redirection**  
This strategy should be used most frequently when working with young children. If a child is not following the rules or being uncooperative, quickly get the child's attention and introduce another activity. For example, "Marin, please help me water the flowers now. You've been riding the bike for a long time and it's now Aiden's turn."
- **Logical consequences**  
These are structured consequences that follow specific misbehaviors. The child should be able to see how the behavior and the consequence are directly related. For example, Durham is standing on his chair at lunch. His teacher should remind him that if he stands on his chair, he could fall and get hurt; this will make him sad.
- **Participate in the solution**  
If a child damages something, he/she needs to help in fixing it or in cleaning up. If a child causes someone distress, he/she should help in relieving that. For example, "It made Grayson very sad when you told him he wasn't your friend anymore. Please come apologize and help me make him feel better."
- **Natural consequences**  
Allowing children to experience the consequences of their behavior is also called learning the hard way. For example, Isa does not put her books back in her school bag after she finishes reading. One day she loses a book, and therefore must find a way to replace it. Only use natural consequences when they will not endanger the child's health or safety.
- **"Take a break" or "Calm down chair"**  
In some instances, a child may need to be removed from a particular situation in which he/she has become overwhelmed or violent. The child should be directed to "take a break" or sit in the "calm down chair." This strategy gives the child a chance to calm down, regain control, and reflect quietly on her or his behavior away from others. Once the child has calmed down, staff should talk with the child about the actions that led up to and resulted in needing a break or being sent to the calm down chair. For example, "Annie, we have talked often about how hitting is not acceptable. But because you hit Brynn, please leave the blocks center and go to the calm down chair. I will talk to you when you are ready."

If these actions do not help in reducing or changing behavior the following will take place:

1. Staff will report behavior and what strategies have been attempted to the Director and/or Assistant Director.
2. The Director and Assistant Director will observe the child and meet with the Lead Teacher to develop a behavior management plan.
3. The behavior management plan will be discussed with the parent and then put into practice.
4. The Director and/or Assistant Director, Lead Teacher and Assistant Teachers, and parents will evaluate the behavior management plan. If needed, adjustments will be made.

*\*\* If a child's behavior becomes threatening to themselves, other children, staff or teachers, the child will be removed from the classroom and possibly the program for a period of time.*

## USEFUL PHRASES

The following phrases are useful when problem-solving with children.

<b>Instead of Say</b>	"No" or "Don't" "Please stop", "I don't like that", "That's not OK", or "That is not a choice"
<b>Instead of Say</b>	"That's not nice" "That's not OK", "Please use gentle touches", or "That hurts Brianna"
<b>Instead of Say</b>	"No running" "I need you to use your walking feet" or "You may run when we go outside"
<b>Instead of Say</b>	"Stop crying" "I need you to use your words to tell me what is wrong"
<b>Instead of Say</b>	"Can you put away your toys?" (If it is not a choice, do not pose it as a question) "You may help me pick up the blocks, or help Avery pick up the puzzles"
<b>Instead of Say</b>	"I said yes" (when a child tells you "no") "No is not a choice, I need you to..."

## Biting Policy

Biting is a behavior that usually appears between the ages of one and three years. While biting is an age-appropriate behavior, it is important to remember it is also an unacceptable behavior in a childcare environment. Children bite for a variety of reasons: teething, sensory exploration, cause and effect, imitation, crowding, seeking attention, frustration and stress. Biting is not something to blame on children, their parents or their teachers. There are a variety of strategies we implement at Tinker Town to prevent and stop biting. This is the process followed when a child bites:

- The biting child is stopped and told, “Stop biting. Biting hurts” in a firm voice. Teachers should remain calm, being careful not to show anger or frustration towards the child.
- The biting child is removed from the situation. Depending upon the observed motive for the bite, the separation may include re-direction or meeting the child’s needs. As little attention as possible will be placed on the biting child, to avoid reinforcing the behavior.
- Appropriate first aid will be provided to the child who was bitten. Bite will be washed with soap and water; cold compress will be applied to reduce pain and swelling. A bandage will be applied if necessary.

It is important to explore the reasons for biting when it occurs. Teachers need to work with parents to gather information about the child’s behavior and begin observations to determine the reasons for biting. Examples of triggers would be: communication deficits, transitions, hunger, lack of sleep, need for oral stimulation or teething pain. Once triggers are identified, staff can work on prevention strategies and start teaching replacement skills. Below are the steps the teacher will take to identify triggers and replace the behavior:

1. The teacher will examine the context in which the biting is occurring and look for patterns. The following questions should be asked:
  - Was the space too crowded?
  - Were there too few toys?
  - Was there too little to do or too much waiting?
  - Was the child who bit getting the attention and care he/she deserved at other times?
2. The teacher will change the environment, routines or activities if necessary.
3. The teacher will work with the child who is biting to resolve conflicts and frustrations in more appropriate ways
4. The teacher will observe the child, to get an idea of why and when they are likely to bite.
5. The teacher will identify children likely to be bitten and make special efforts to reduce their chance of being bitten.
6. The teacher, parent and Director and/or Assistant Director will meet regularly to regulate an action plan and measure outcomes.
7. If biting continues the teacher will observe the group more closely and work with the parents to seek out additional resources as necessary to shadow the child who is biting.

All information is confidential and names of the children involved in the incident are not shared between parents. In addition, biting is always documented on an Incident/Accident Report which is completed and signed by a teacher and parent. A copy is provided to the parent and the original kept in the child’s enrollment file in the office.

## Home and School Partnership

### NEW FAMILY ORIENTATION

Each family is strongly encouraged to schedule a time with the Director to complete a “New Family Orientation.” This orientation is a great time for parents to drop-off routine care items (diapers, bottles, etc.) as well as an opportunity to participate in a portion of classroom activities with their child, familiarizing themselves with their child’s routines at Tinker Town. Important policies and procedures are also reviewed with the Director at this time, as well as the paperwork required for enrollment completed. Typically, “New Family Orientation” is scheduled prior to the start date.

### CONFERENCES/PROGRESS REPORTS

At Tinker Town we do not require quarterly conferences or progress reports. However, upon parent request, we can meet and discuss your child’s developmental progression. If teachers are observing a developmental praise or concern in the classroom, they may meet with the family to discuss and work together to create the next developmental steps.

### QUESTIONS/CONCERNS

If you have a question or concern, do not hesitate to bring it to the attention of the teacher most directly involved. If the concern is not resolved, contact management.

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Colorado Department of Social or Human Services,  
Division of Early Care And Learning  
1575 Sherman St, Denver, CO 80203  
(800)799-5876

## Fees

### STANDARD RATES AND FEES

Due to our structured preschool schedule, we book care in 1-hour increments (beginning of each hour) to minimize disruption of activities. We encourage a 2-hour minimum to engage children in our daily lesson plans. We offer pre-booking online at [TinkerTownDenver.com](http://TinkerTownDenver.com) or drop-in based on availability.

- \$40 application fee per child
- \$15 / per hour for first child
- \$10 / per hour for sibling(s)
- \$6 per meal / \$2 per snack
- \$1.50 per diaper if Tinker Town's diapers are used
- \$10 fee for drop-ins during nap/rest time

### MONTHLY PACKAGES

Tinker Town offers monthly packages at a discounted rate. Per Colorado child care rules and regulations, your child(ren) may attend up to **6 hours a day, maximum 15 hours per week**. The discount is as follows:

<u>First Child</u>	<u>Sibling(s)</u>
\$825 per month	\$550 per month
<i>(Approx. \$75 in savings!)</i>	<i>(Approx. \$50 in savings!)</i>

Families enrolled in a monthly package plan have priority for scheduled events and activities.

**\*Restrictions apply. One-month cancellation notice required. Unused child care time does not roll into the following month. If max allotted child care time is not used, no refunds are provided.**

### AUTOMATIC PAYMENTS

Monthly child care payments made electronically require a checking or savings account. A Direct Debit Authorization form must be completed through Brightwheel. Special arrangements may be discussed and arranged with the Director if unable to make electronic payments.

### LATE PICK-UP FEE

If a child is picked up past Tinker Town's normal closing times, a staff member will remain with the child and a late fee of \$1 per minute will be charged in addition to the normal child care rate. If a child is picked up late multiple times, a \$5 per minute late fee will be charged on the third offense. After three times being picked up late – parents will no longer be allowed to drop-off.

## Emergency Procedures

### EMERGENCY MEDICAL/DENTAL PROCEDURE

It is important that parents complete and update, as needed, an Emergency Contact and Parental Consent Form. This form contains contact information for both the parents as well as the individuals authorized to pick up the child in the event of illness or emergency. In addition, the form allows Tinker Town staff members to seek emergency medical or dental care from authorized care providers in the event of serious injury. **It is the responsibility of the parent to complete this form and to make corrections to this information when necessary.**

- If a child becomes ill or injured after arriving at the center, the Lead Teacher will attempt to contact the parent(s) at all available telephone numbers. If a parent cannot be reached, the individuals listed as emergency contacts/authorized pick up persons on the Emergency Contact & Parental Consent form will be called.
- Children who are ill or seriously injured will be sent to the office and remain under the supervision of the Director and/or Assistant Director until a parent arrives.

#### **If the child requires immediate medical attention:**

- The staff member who witnessed the emergency situation will remain with the injured child and instruct someone else to call 911. If no one is available, first ensure the child is stable and if possible, bring the child with you to call 911.
- A staff member who witnessed the emergency situation will accompany the child to the hospital, bringing the child's physical exam, immunization records, and Emergency Contact & Parental Consent Form.

### FIRE, TORNADO, BOMB OR OTHER EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Tinker Town staff will conduct monthly fire, tornado, and precautionary drills; all children present are required to participate. Fire regulations and tornado warning procedures are posted near the exits in each classroom.

In the case of a fire, staff will organize children into a straight line, count the number of children in their group, and will lead the children out of the north door to the far side of the parking lot in an orderly manner. Staff will remain calm and will ensure that the children are safely exiting the building. Once all children are gathered, a line will be formed and a name to face count will occur. Staff will confirm "all clear" to management once every child is accounted for. Management will then conduct a name to face count for all children.

If a situation occurs where protection is required (tornado or active shooter warning), children will be taken to the bathroom with the door closed and locked behind them. Staff will ensure that the children are in the safest part of our space and are low to the ground. The staff will quietly check that all the children in their care are safely & quietly waiting in the bathroom until the emergency situation has resolved. We will call 911 & emergency alert families via Brightwheel about the situation. When it is safe, families can collect their children for the day.

If a need arises and we must evacuate the center, staff will gather the children and walk to King Soopers located at 10406 E Martin Luther King Blvd, Denver, CO 80238. We will then contact each parent according to the Emergency number provided on the contacts sheet.

### BLIZZARD/SEVERE WINTER WEATHER

The Director and/or Assistant Director will monitor the weather and local news stations throughout the day to determine when it is appropriate to close the center early or cancel care for the following day. Lead Teachers are responsible for contacting parents to inform them of the situation. Routine classroom activities will continue until parents arrive.

### MISSING OR ABDUCTED CHILD

In the event of a *missing* child, the Lead Teacher will search for the child in the immediate area, while another staff member calls the Director and/or Assistant Director to help with the search.

- If the child cannot be located in a reasonable amount of time, the Director and/or Assistant Director will notify the **Denver Police Department – 911 or (720)913-2000** and the child's parents.
- In the event of an *abducted* child, the Lead Teacher must **immediately** contact the Director and/or Assistant Director, the Denver Police Department, and the child's parents.

## WITHDRAWN CHILD CARE SERVICES

At Tinker Town, we reserve the right to disenroll any child in our program. This can be the result of the problematic behavior of either the child or the parents. While this happens in very rare cases, it's important that we preserve and protect the rest of our children and families should we not be able to resolve these behaviors. As Early Childhood Educators, it is Tinker Town staff's goal to promote prosocial behaviors and avoid any child to be involuntarily disenrolled.

If children are exhibiting consistent poor behavior such as bullying, shoving, hitting, biting or any physical/emotional harm, a behavior plan will be put in place to continue care at Tinker Town. After implementing this behavior plan for an agreed upon time, and the child improves their behavior, the behavior plan may be concluded. If the child's behavior does not improve, the child will be disenrolled from our program. If a child is physically harming other children, and another child is in mortal, physical, or emotional danger, the child can be immediately disenrolled. In needed, parents will be contacted to pick up their child and a written report of the incident will be provided within 24 hours.

## **Policies and Procedures for Tinker Town 2019-2020**

From time to time, Tinker Town may choose to update the Policies and Procedures Handbook. The most recent version will be available at [www.tinkertowndenver.com](http://www.tinkertowndenver.com) to view or download, as well as available upon request.

I have been furnished with a copy of Tinker Town's policy and procedures. By signing below, I signify receipt of these procedures. I understand I will be held accountable to the procedures listed in the handbook.

Parent(s) Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s) Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Child(ren) Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_