



Conmigo
EARLY EDUCATION CENTER

2023—2024
PARENT HANDBOOK



Hispanic Educational
Resources, Inc.

10/24/2023

Parent Handbook 2023-2024

Hours of Operation

Connmigo is open Monday through Friday from 6:30 am to 5:30 pm. Office hours are 8:00 am to 5:30 pm. **However, we are closed in observance of the following national holidays.**

- ❖ New Year's Day
- ❖ Martin Luther King Day
- ❖ Memorial Day (last Monday in May)
- ❖ Fourth of July
- ❖ Labor Day (First Monday in September)
- ❖ Fall Institute First Friday in October
- ❖ Thanksgiving and the day after
- ❖ Day before Christmas
- ❖ Christmas Day

Additional **closures** will be minimal and announced at least two weeks in advance **whenever possible**.

***PLEASE NOTE: WHEN DES MOINES PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE CLOSED DUE TO WEATHER RELATED CONDITIONS OR OTHER UNFORSEEN CIRCUMSTANCES, CONMIGO WILL ALSO BE CLOSED.**

Important Contact Information	
	
Connmigo Early Education Center:	242-0225
To leave a message for staff dial extension 10 or 16	
Administrative Offices:	515-242-0225
Fax:	515-282-0260
Website:	www.connmigoearlyed.org
Facebook:	www.facebook.com/connmigoearlyed

This handbook is intended to help acquaint parents with our early childhood program, policies and procedures. If and when any verbiage conflict occurs, any signed contract/form will be considered the ruling document. The rules and guidelines described in this handbook are subject to change at anytime as deemed appropriate by executive management. Every effort will be made to notify parents of these changes in a timely manner whenever possible 24 hours in advance. Parents are encouraged to contact the center director with specific questions or concerns.

Connmigo Early Education Center

Connmigo History: (formerly Xochipilli Children's Center)

The concept of a bilingual, early education center was initiated in the fall of 1994. In 1995, Hispanic Educational Resources, Inc. received funding via the Community Development Block Grant to make necessary structural modifications that would accommodate the needs of our new center. After conducting a "Community Needs Assessment", a strategic plan was constructed to make our center a reality. In October of 1995 the Children's Center was opened by utilizing grant monies from the Department of Education. Finally, in 1997 the center was officially named "Xochipilli"; a Mayan word meaning "A garden where the children flourish." The center's name was officially changed to "Connmigo Early Education Center" on July 1, 2011 as part of a business improvement grant from First Children's Finance that also provided the new signs visible on the property today.

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Our mission: We are a premier Latino early childhood learning center specializing in bilingual, culturally affirming educational programming and experiences for children and families. We position children to thrive in school, community, and life.

Our Vision: Our vision is to be leaders in and for our community by promoting success through learning and achievement.

Core Values: To maximize the success of our children, Conmigo Early Education Center will follow these core values, beliefs, and guiding principles:

- ❖ *The Child*
 - We believe in establishing learning expectations for children and securing commitment from families to ensure our children reach the highest level of achievement.
- ❖ *The Family*
 - We believe safe, stable, and healthy families provide the greatest possibility for success.
- ❖ *The Community*
 - We honor and promote the wealth of knowledge in our Latino community... past and present.
- ❖ *The Staff*
 - We believe in providing continued developmental and training opportunities for our staff. This helps empower our instructors with the latest information in early childhood development and ensures that our children are being educated by highly qualified professionals.
- ❖ *Leadership*
 - We believe our commitment to success will enhance opportunities as we continue to be a primary advocate for Latinos in our community.
- ❖ *Quality*
 - We strive to deliver high quality services and education through measured results.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Hispanic Educational Resources, Inc. (HER) and Conmigo Early Education Center do not exclude any person from receiving any services based on race, creed, color, religion, gender, disability, marital status, legal status (as related to immigration), sexual orientation, veteran status, national origin, age, or any other characteristic protected by law.

DHS and Empowerment funding families: Please refer to application guidelines for qualification requirements.

USDA Non-Discrimination Statement

The U.S. Department of Agriculture prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted for funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish).

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Iowa Nondiscrimination Statement

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It is the policy of the Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Nutrition, Health and Transportation Services not to discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, or religion in its programs, activities, or employment practices as required by the Iowa Code section 216.7 and 216.9. If you have questions or grievances related to compliance with this policy by the Iowa Department of Education, Bureau of Nutrition, Health and Transportation Services, please contact the Iowa Civil Rights Commission, Grimes State Office Building, 400 E. 14th St., Des Moines, IA 50319-1004; phone number 515-281-4121, 800-457-4416; web site: <https://icrc.iowa.gov>.

Parental Access: Parents have unlimited to their child unless there is a court order prohibiting them from contact.

Mandatory Reporting

Every employee of Hispanic Educational Resources, Inc. is trained to be a mandatory reporter of child abuse to the Department of Human Services. We are required to report any suspicions of child abuse to the State of Iowa. If any reasonable suspicion of abuse or neglect exists for an attending child of Conmigo, the authorities will be notified. This includes leaving a sibling or other child in your vehicle unattended while dropping of an attending child to/in the Conmigo center. Parents/guardians may be reported for Child Endangerment to DHS for leaving children unattended in a parked vehicle. Parents/guardians may also be reported for Child Endangerment to DHS for not having a child in the appropriate car seat/booster. Please refer to state requirements for appropriate car seat/booster.

1. Any person in the center who is not a staff member or subcontracted staff or volunteer who has had a record check and approval to be involved with childcare shall not have “unrestricted access” to the children whom that person is not the parent, guardian, or custodian, not be counted in the staff to child ratio.
2. Persons who do not have unrestricted access will be under the direct “supervision” and monitoring of a paid staff member at all times and will not be allowed to assume any childcare responsibilities. The primary responsibility of the supervision and monitoring will be assumed by the teacher, unless he/she delegates it to the teacher assistant due to conflict of interest with the person.
3. A sex offender who has been convicted of a sex offense against a minor (even if the sex offender is the parent, guardian, or custodian) who is required to register with the Iowa Sex Offender Registry (Iowa Code 692A):
 - a. Shall not operate, manage, be employed by, or act as a contractor or volunteer at the childcare center.
 - b. Shall not be on property of the childcare center without the written permission of the center director, except for the time reasonably necessary to transport the offender’s own minor child or ward to and from the center.

The center director is not obligated to provide written permission and must consult with their DHS licensing consultant first.

Curriculum/Lesson Planning/Observation

Our staff utilizes a research-based curriculum- Teaching Strategies Creative Curriculum to plan activities for children enrolled at Conmigo (HSPPS 1302.30). Creative Curriculum requires staff to write observations for each child in attendance. This is achieved by staff spending time with and watching the children interact. Teachers document the learning observed while the child is experiencing. These observations are housed within the LAPBK online system. These written observations help the staff understand the growth and development of your individual child. These records are used to plan learning experiences both for the group and for the individual child and are included on the classroom Experience (Lesson) plans. Parents may request to see this information at any time. Two times per program year, parents will be offered a “parent-teacher conference” to enhance our knowledge and yours about your child’s education and developmental progress (HSPPS 1302.34(b)(3)).

Developmental Screening/Assessments

The following development assessments are completed and kept on file for each child: ASQ/ASQ-SE, LAPBK, Speech, Dental, Hearing, and Vision Screenings. TS Gold assessment scores are used by your child’s teacher to determine what your child knows and can do and how that relates to important objectives for development and learning. These reports contain not only goals and objectives for the child, but also a record of the child’s progress. Parents/Guardians may request copies of these reports at any time (HSPPS 1302.33). The information gained from these screening/assessment tool(s) may be shared with our on-site partners: Visiting Nurse Services, Drake University Head Start Staff, and/or Des Moines Public School.

Self-Help Skills- Routines/Activities including Dental

Taking care of oneself is the first step toward independence. Therefore, self-help skills via routines and activities integrated throughout the day at Conmigo. Hand washing, cleaning up after using the toilet, wiping one’s own nose, tying shoes,

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buttoning shirts or blouses, zipping pants, putting on mittens and boots, brushing teeth etc. These skills will help your child grow confidence and independence as they grow. The staff will encourage and help the children learn these skills, and others as they become developmentally appropriate for your child. Parents/Guardians can also help their children master these skills by showing consistency in their expectations and encouragement at home and upon entry into the classroom.

Technology Usage

Children will have the opportunity to use electronic devices (computer, i-pad, video, etc.) as part of the educational curriculum. All programming will be age appropriate and have intentional educational purpose. Infants and toddlers do not have screen time, preschool ages and over are exposed to 15 minutes per day. Whole class instruction may also be added for additional exposure.

Rest & Naptime

Research shows most young children need time in their day to rest or sleep, allowing their body and brain time to re-fuel, grow, and develop. For these reasons, Conmigo allows time each day for children to rest. During this time, children are encouraged to rest quietly in their classroom. Your child will have his/her own cot, blanket and sheet for rest time. Non-napping children will be offered another quiet activity to support their growth while also respecting their sleeping classmates. As children wake up, quiet activities such as books, puzzles, coloring materials, fidget toys, etc. will be offered to them as their friends wake up.

Positive Guidance & Discipline Policy

Discipline and Guidance in the DMPS Early Childhood Programs, our overall goal is preparing children for kindergarten. To support this goal, we provide our students guidance and practice in developing social skills. Early Childhood teachers use the Conscious Discipline curriculum and PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) to teach developmentally appropriate social skills. When a child's behavior affects his/her ability to handle the classroom environment, a meeting with the center team and support staff will occur. The team may be made up of the following people: parent/guardian, teacher, teacher associate, nurse, social worker, and Special Education staff. This team will develop a plan to assist the child.

Here are some of the types of guidance used in our programs and examples of how they might also be used at home:

- Positive Redirection: For example, children are throwing toys. A positive redirection would be to give the children's beanbags and a basket for a beanbag toss as an appropriate alternative.
- Ignoring misbehavior when appropriate: Often the best way to discourage negative behavior like showing off or pouting is to ignore it. Instead pay attention and praise the child when he or she demonstrates positive behavior.
- Choices to control the situation and not the child: Use choices with limits. Instead of saying, "Do you want to ride in your car seat?" You might say, "Do you want to hold your book or your toy while you are in your car seat?"
- Use "First—Then statements: For example, "First put on your coat, then we will go outside."
- Use of natural and logical consequences: Natural: "You splashed water on the floor when you were washing your hands, so you need to help clean it up." Logical: "You hit a child with this toy; so, I'm going to put this toy away for today."
- Acknowledging children's feelings: By helping children recognize and name their own feelings they begin to learn that people may have different feelings about the same things, and that's ok. This also helps children begin to control the behaviors associated with strong feelings.
- **The Conmigo Early Education does not use corporal punishment of any kind**

Des Moines School Board Policy 505 The Board, administration and employees expect students to conduct themselves in a manner fitting to their age level and maturity and with respect and consideration for the rights of others. Students, teachers, employees, and visitors are expected to treat each other with respect and courtesy so that all may be safe within the school environment. Inappropriate student conduct may cause material and substantial disruption to the school environment, interfere with the rights of others, or present a threat to the health and safety of students, employees, and visitors on school premises. These behaviors will be documented in a Behavior Incident Report in Infinite Campus. This will become part of the student's permanent record. Parents/guardians will be notified when a Behavior Incident Report is written, and the report can be viewed by the parent/guardian through the Parent Portal in Infinite Campus. 2/2022 10 State of Iowa Annual Notice: Corporal Punishment, Restraint, and Physical Confinement and Detention State law forbids school employees

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from using corporal punishment against any student. Certain actions by school employees are not considered corporal punishment. Additionally, school employees may use “reasonable and necessary force, not designed or intended to cause pain” to do certain things, such as prevent harm to persons or property. State law also places limits on school employees’ abilities to restrain or confine and detain any student. The law limits why, how, where, and for how long a school employee may restrain or confine and detain a child. If a child is restrained or confined and detained, the school must maintain documentation and must provide certain types of notice to the child’s parent. If you have any questions about this state law, please contact your school. The complete text of the law and additional information is available on the Iowa Department of Education’s web site: www.iowa.gov/educate.

Biting Policy

1. An explanation of the center’s perspective on biting:

Biting is a very common behavior among children birth to three years. It is important to think response to the child’s needs not being met or coping with a challenge or stressor. If we label children as “biters,” we will harm children’s self-perceptions and intensify biting behaviors (Zero to Three, 2010).

To put it simply, young children might bite if they:

- Are not provided developmentally appropriate care and guidance
- Do not have a strong attachment with a consistent, responsive caregiver
- Have too many transitions throughout the day
- Are cared for in large groups (maximum of 8 is recommended)
- Are in large open/undefined spaces
- Lack the language skills necessary for expressing needs or strong feelings
- Are overwhelmed by the sounds, light or activity level in the setting
- Are experimenting to see what will happen
- Need more active playtime, choices, and access to materials
- Are over-tired
- Are teething
- Have a need for oral stimulation (Zero to Three, 2010)

2. A description of how the teachers/center will respond if a bite does occur:

- Caregivers should keep their feeling in check and not express frustration nor anger to the child
- Ensure all children are safe
- Caregivers should (in a firm, calm voice) address the child that bit in a simple and clear way
- Caregivers should shift their attention to the child who was bitten and show concern and support for that child
- Go back and talk with the child (if child is verbal and able to talk about the experience) and the different strategies s/he can use next time, instead of biting
- Help the children move on and not force them to play with one another, unless they want to (Zero to Three, 2010).

3. A description of how the center will assess the adequacy of caregiver supervision and the context and the environment in which the biting occurred:

Children bite to fulfill a need or cope with a challenge (Zero to Three, 2010).

Rather than focusing on the child as needing ‘discipline,’ it is the responsibility of the center to observe the child and determine the child’s needs that are not being met. This can be done through assessing (Hunter & Hemmeter, 2009):

- Quality of relationships between child and primary caregivers
 - Does the primary caregiver have a nurturing relationship with the child?
 - Does the primary caregiver know the child’s needs, interests, routines and preferences?
 - Does the primary caregiver need further professional development in order to meet the needs of the child?
- Environmental influences on the child’s behavior
 - Does the environment prevent large groups and reduce disorder?
 - Are there long waits and not enough duplicate toys?
 - Are the centers (dramatic play, quiet space, etc.) organized to minimize confusion and stress?
 - Is there a quiet place where the children can go when overwhelmed?
- Targeted social-emotional supports
 - Are the children provided safe and secure daily routines?

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- Are transitions managed effectively?
- Do caregivers routinely assist children with identifying feelings and learning to self-regulate?

The purpose of the assessment is to identify the potential external causes for the challenging behavior, which in this case is biting, so that further incidents can be prevented. When biting occurs, the caregiver must seek “to understand the meaning of the child’s behavior” and discover together with the child “more effective means for communicating needs, wishes, and desires” (Hunter & Hemmeter, 2009).

The caregivers should:

- Have a signed permission form from each child’s family (as part of the enrollment policy) for observations. Observations of all children should complement the child’s portfolio for planning and assessment purposes.
- Observe the child and document observations, including behavior and context where, when, how, who – adults and children) both before and after biting occurs to identify functions of the behavior. It is also helpful to know when the behavior is absent.
- use the data to find patterns and potential solutions
- Respond immediately to any unsafe behaviors
- Meet with the family to collect information about the child’s behavior at home, share information. And demonstrate a commitment to working together to address the child’s needs (Hunter & Hemmeter, 2009)

4. A description of how the center will respond to the individual child or caregiver who was bitten:

When a biting incident occurs, the child who was bitten should be immediately cared for and shown concern and support. The child with the challenging behavior should be taught in a caring and firm way that the behavior is not acceptable as well as alternative behaviors. The center should also examine the needs of the child, including potential changes to the environment and routines, to prevent future incidents. If a child is provided developmentally appropriate and individualized care in a purposefully planned environment, discharging a child is needed only in rare, extreme situations. Consultants and other resources are available to support you in meeting the needs of the children in your care.

5. A description of the process of notification to parents of children involved in the incident:

Centers should provide confidential reports to parents of involved children.

In addition to notification of specific incidents, parents may benefit from general information about biting. The Zero to Three resource referenced in this document may be useful. NAEYC has a “Family-Friendly Communication” resource available for purchase (<http://www.naeyc.org/store/node/84>). This resource covers many different topics, including biting.

The Director or teacher will notify the parents of children involved in the incident by phone within 30 minutes of the incident. Parents will be notified of the Accident/Incident Report. The Director will be available to speak to parents and provide information and resources to use at home. Parents are required to sign the Accident/Injury Report within 24 hours of the incident. Parents will be provided a copy of the report.

The center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning has valuable resources on their website as well: www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel
http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/documents/biting-parenting_tool.pdf

6. A description of how the incident will be documented:

Incidents should be documented to assist the staff with identifying patterns and preventing future incidents through changing the environment and intentional teaching strategies (e.g., socio-emotional supports). A confidential copy of the incident report should be maintained in child’s file, and a confidential behavior chart would be useful if the biting is not an isolated incident. Further analysis of the environment is even more important if multiple children are exhibiting challenging behaviors.

7. A description of how confidentiality will be protected:

When informing parents that their child has been bitten or bit another child, it is important for the center staff and volunteers to maintain the confidentiality of the other child (NAEYC, 2005). The name of the other child involved will not be provided to protect this confidentiality.

8. A description of first aid procedures that the center will use in response to biting incidents:

First aid training addresses appropriate care for injuries from human bites. The description of first aid procedures will be consistent with the first aid procedures taught during First Aid CPR certification.

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Parent Input and Opportunities

Parents and families are encouraged to be active participants in their child's care and education at Connigo Early Education Center. Volunteer opportunities are welcome whether it is in the classrooms or in the center or center grounds. The Board of Directors is made up of parent board members and members of the community. Annually we seek parent input through parent surveys. The results of the surveys are used to improve systems and build better relationships. Strong relationships with parents and families are vital to the child's growth and development.

Attendance

Regular and consistent attendance is required and provides our children with the best possibility for success. Children are expected every day by **9:00 a.m.** We ask that children remain at the center until **3:30 p.m.** to complete the full day of lessons and curriculum.

Children enrolled in the Des Moines Public Schools Universal Pre-Kindergarten class (the BEARS room) are reported tardy after 9:01 am.

To provide the best opportunity to benefit from the full day of lessons and curriculum as well as health and safety requirements, our classes establish a daily schedule. Breakfast is served for the children at 8:30.

We stop serving breakfast at 9:00am so children have time to finish eating and wash their hands before starting curriculum lessons at 9:00. Please plan accordingly to provide breakfast for your child if you plan to drop them off after 9:00am. Parents are expected to stay and supervise their child for breakfast after 9:00am and secure a breakfast for the child from the Director/kitchen coordinator.

Additionally, many of our families utilize funding sources that require regular attendance. Missing more than four days per month can compromise DHS funding resulting in significant tuition costs being charged to the parent(s). Please refer to the terms and conditions of your personal funding source for complete rules. Generally, most funding sources allow only four paid absences per month. Any days absent beyond four will be charged directly to the parent at the full price for each day. It is important to remember that bad weather days and times when Connigo is closed for operational reasons count as part of the four days per month. For Example: If we are closed one day for teacher training and one day for bad weather, this limits the days your child can be out due to illness, medical appointments, etc, to two days. Again – ANY FAMILY WITH DHS FUNDING STREAM WHO HAS ABSENCES IN EXCESS OF FOUR DAYS WITHIN ONE MONTH WILL BE CHARGED TO PARENTS AT FULL PRIVATE PAY RATE FOR THE DAYS MISSED!

In order for Connigo to keep our prices affordable for our families, it is imperative that all children attend regularly.

Parents must give a two-week notice for absences other than illness (i.e., long term absence/vacation). For cases of illness, parents must call between the hours of 6:30-9:00 a.m. to notify staff of their child's tardiness or absence. If your call is not answered, and your call goes to the voicemail system, please leave a message or message your child's teacher via classroom app.

Long Term Absence

“**Long Term Absence/Termination Forms**” are available from the *Family Development Coordinator* and must be completed (with date and signature) and turned in at least two weeks before the Long-Term Absence time begins.

Long Term Absence time must be pre-paid at the time of notification.

For business purposes we do not hold spaces for children past the designated time off, unless the time is pre-paid. **ALL other extended absences must be pre-approved and pre-paid prior to the child being out.**

If there is no “**Long Term Absence/Termination Form**” on file and a child is absent for 5 business days with no contact from the Parent/Guardian, we will consider that child's slot abandoned. The slot will be made available to the next child/family on the waiting list. **It is the Parent/Guardian's responsibility to notify the center regarding a child's absence(s).**

DHS funding families: Please refer to funding guidelines for approved absences.

Enrollment Policy and Procedures

We are licensed for 140 slots for children ages 6 weeks-5 years old with slots for school aged children during the summer months. We provide a full day of planned curriculum. For this reason, we only accept children who meet this need. During the enrollment process there is specific information that parents must provide to Connigo before their child may begin. The Family Development Coordinator will schedule a New Family Orientation to go over daily procedures, assign a computer code and door code for the family, and answer any questions a new family may have. Our enrollment numbers are determined by the regulations outlined by the Department of Human Services Child Care Center Licensing division. The maximum number of children that can be enrolled in each class is listed below by class and age group.

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Baby PANDAS- Infants = 8 children and 2 teachers

PANDAS= 1-year old= 8 children and 2 teachers

ELEPHANTS CLASS- 2-year-olds = 8 children and 2 teachers

PENGUINS CLASS – 2-year-olds = 16 children and 2 teachers

MONKEYS CLASS- 3-year-olds = 16 children and 2 teachers

ZEBRAS CLASS- 3-4-year-olds = 20 children and 2 teachers

BEARS CLASS- 4–5-year-olds = 20 children and 2 teachers* DMPS/Universal Pre-K ratio applies

Below is the step-by-step procedure for enrollment.

Mandatory Forms:

1. Enrollment Form – The Enrollment Form must be on file before the child can start at Connigo. This form must include **3 emergency contacts** that are authorized to pick up the child in the event that the parent can not be reached during an emergency. Emergency contacts must be 18 or older and must have a valid ID. No child will be able to leave with anyone who is a minor or not listed on the child’s Emergency Contact Form. According to DHS Licensing Standards, and for your child’s safety, it is vital for us to have the most current contact information on file for emergency purposes.

Information provided to Connigo, such as home/cell/work numbers, address, and all information regarding the individuals who are authorized to pick up/drop off your child must remain current at all times. Failure to notify your child’s teacher, the Director, or On-Site Supervisor of changes can result in termination from our program.

Parental Access: Parents have unlimited access to their child unless there is a court order prohibiting them from contact. A copy of this court order is required for the child’s file while they are enrolled at Connigo.

2. Certificate of Immunization – A licensed physician must complete this form, in its entirety, including their signature and date. The Vaccination Record must be on file before the child can start at Connigo. Every year the state authorities conduct an audit to verify that all children are up to date with immunization. Families of children who are not current on their vaccinations will be issued a 2 week notice to bring the immunizations up to date or forfeit the child’s slot. Consideration for a child’s return will be based on available open spaces in the center and the child’s placement on the waiting list. Parents who choose NOT to vaccinate their child must complete the required form listing their Religious Objection and have in NOTORIZED before submitting it to Connigo.
3. Physical Exam form – Due to state licensing requirements, this form must be completed annually by a licensed physician. The Physical Exam must be on file before the child can start at Connigo. Failure to comply and maintain the Physical Exam current will result in termination from Connigo. Consideration for a child’s return will be based on available open spaces in the center and the child’s placement on the waiting list.
4. CACFP Enrollment forms – Connigo proudly participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program through the USDA and require this form on file for each child. The form for meal price qualification/CACFP Enrollment form must be completed in full and on file prior to the child’s first day. Qualification in the meal program does NOT affect tuition cost. CACFP Enrollment forms must be completed in full/updated each year according to CACFP regulations. Failure to comply will result in termination from Connigo.
5. Signed Parent Payment Contract – The Signed Parent Payment Contract must be on file before the child can start at Connigo. All payments for services are due in full, on **Monday, the first day of the week**, regardless of funding source or status.
6. Emergency Medical and Dental Form – The Emergency Medical and Dental form must be on file before the child can start at Connigo. Each form must be filled out completed in its entirety. Missing information jeopardizes the ability of our staff to provide proper care in case of an emergency and is a risk to your child’s well-being.

We encourage parents to schedule an appointment to discuss their child’s placement, to complete the enrollment application packet and complete the PARENT ORIENTATION 2 weeks before the child starts attending. Parents interested in applying for Department of Human Services Child Care Assistance must schedule an appointment. Child Care Assistance applications can take up to 30 days to be processed by the Iowa Department of Human Services and Renewals can take 14 – 45 days so parents are encouraged to plan ahead.

Please call 515-242-0225 to schedule an appointment with the Family Development Coordinator.

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Pricing and Fees

Enrollment Fee: \$35.00 registration for all classrooms except UPK program.

Private Pay Rate – below is our chart for Private Pay Rate per child according to age.

<i>Ages</i>	Weekly Rate
6 weeks old to 12 months old	\$306.13
12 months old to 24 months old	\$306.13
2 years old	\$258.21
3 years old	\$248.90
4 years old	\$242.24
Pre-K program	\$193.00
Summer program	\$181.00

**There are no daily or hourly rates except for overage charges.
For the Pre-K (UPK) program, 10 hours per week are free.**

According to DHS guidelines, a day consists of minimum of 5 hrs to a maximum of 10 hrs. Children staying longer than 10 hrs will be charged an additional fee. Parents will be charged the equivalent of one additional unit if child is in care longer than 10 hours. Families qualifying for DHS assistance have a schedule set by DHS for approved care. Children staying longer than their schedule set by DHS will be charged an additional fee. Parents will be charged for the overage at Private Pay Rate.

DHS and PS Empowerment funding families: Please refer to application guidelines for qualification requirements.

If your child is absent during the school week, you will still be responsible for the full price of the entire weekly tuition. Weekly tuition reserves your child a guaranteed slot for the entire week. **THERE ARE NO DAILY OR HOURLY RATES** except for overage charges. Any changes in fees or prices will be announced via written notice.

If a child is absent for 5 business days with no contact from the Parent/Guardian, we will consider that child's slot abandoned. The slot will be made available to the next child/family on the waiting list. **It is the Parent/Guardian's responsibility to notify the center regarding a child's absence(s).**

A \$35.00 fee will be assessed on all returned checks and an alternate form of payment must be submitted immediately. Alternate forms of payment include money orders and cashier's checks. Failure to do so will result in the immediate termination from the Connigo Early Education Center.

A fee of \$300.00 will be assessed to parents who fail to give the required two week notice which is required per our withdrawal policy.

A fee of \$1.00 will be charged for each occurrence when a child is not signed in/out properly. See sign in/out procedure for clarification.

Any child not picked up from the center by 5:30 p.m. will be charged a fee of \$1.00 per minute until the child is signed out.

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Past Due Payments: once an account is past due by 2 weeks the parents/guardians will receive a notice to bring their account current within 3 business days or their child will be terminated from Connigo. The center will proceed with the following measures to recover payment:

Failure to pay the balance or fees on a child's account after withdrawal from Connigo will result in:

1. Report to DHS of delinquent account- this could affect the family's ability to receive Child Care Assistance in the future.
2. If the balance remains unpaid, Hispanic Educational Resources, Inc. reserves the right to pursue payment to the fullest extent based on applicable law. This includes, but is not limited to, the pursuit of payment through a third-party collection agency, government resources, and lien of property.
3. Children may not return for enrollment at Connigo until their unpaid balance is paid in full.
4. Families with an unpaid balance may not enroll a new child at Connigo until their unpaid balance is paid in full.

Tuition Funding Options

There are two options for payment in relation to tuition:

1. Apply for State of Iowa Child Care Assistance through the Department of Human Services at 2309 Euclid Ave, Des Moines. This assistance is dependent upon household income, hours you work or attend school, and number of dependents living in the home. **The Department of Human Services, not Hispanic Educational Resources/Connigo Early Education Center, determines eligibility and co-payment amounts.**

A review of each family's income will be conducted by DHS every year. The required documents must be completed and sent to DHS according to their rules and regulations. Failure to do this in a timely manner may result in the immediate termination of your childcare assistance.

PLEASE NOTE: If a lapse in coverage occurs, all tuition amounts due will become the sole responsibility of the parent(s) for the duration of the lapse period. During the lapse period, Private Pay rates will be applied to the days/weeks that DHS funding is expired. Parents will be charged FULL Private Pay rates for the duration of the lapse period.

Parents requiring help with completing the application for DHS Child Care Assistance funding can make an appointment with the Family Development Coordinator.

2. Private Pay Rate: if the family's income exceeds the maximum allowed for third-party tuition assistance, the parent(s) must pay the full weekly amount.

Payment Policy

- ❖ Payments are due on the Monday of each week prior to services provided.
 - Payments should be secured in an envelope and placed in the payment box provided at the main entrance.
 - Please make checks payable to: HISPANIC EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
 - Please write your child's name on the front of the envelope.
 - Personal checks, cashier's checks, and money orders are accepted forms of payment.
 - Payments can be made online with a credit card through myprocare.com
 - ***Cash payments are no longer accepted and Hispanic Educational Resources, in association with Connigo Early Education Center. Hispanic Educational Resources and Connigo Early Education Center assume no responsibility for lost or stolen payments.*** All payments are applied to accounts as they are received. A receipt will be issued to parents for all payments.
- ❖ The Payment Receipt Will Include: the amount paid, and the form of payment received. For balance inquiries, please contact the Director of Connigo. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure their child's tuition/account balance is paid in full based on the above mentioned pay schedule
- ❖ **Past Due Balances:** Written notice will be given to the parent indicating a date that the balance must be paid in full. If the balance is not paid, or if the parent is unable to pay their balance by the indicated date, the parent must speak with Director of Connigo to make arrangements for payment before the due date

Failure to pay the balance or fees on a child's account after withdrawal from Connigo will result in:

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1. Report to DHS of delinquent account- this could affect the family's ability to receive Child Care Assistance from either source in the future.
2. If the balance remains unpaid, Hispanic Educational Resources, Inc. reserves the right to pursue payment to the fullest extent based on applicable law. This includes, but is not limited to, the pursuit of payment through a third-party collection agency, government resources, and lien of property.

- ❖ Parents who have tuition assistance via a third-party agency, such as DHS or must adhere to the rules and regulations set forth by that agency including but not limited to:
 - Children with DHS and funding are not allowed to be absent more than four days (8 units) per month. Being absent beyond the allotted four days will be charged to the parent at Private Pay rate depending on classroom.
 - Parents are required to make their weekly co-payment as determined by DHS or Contract.
 - ***Hispanic Educational Resources is required to report an unpaid balance to the Department of Human Services (DHS) or for any parent receiving tuition assistance via this funding source. DHS Administration reserves the right to terminate assistance based on reported unpaid balances.***
 - Please refer to your signed contract with DHS for a complete explanation of benefits, rules, and regulations.
- ❖ If a child leaves Connigo with a balance due on their account, a billing statement will be mailed to the most recent address on file. If the balance remains unpaid, Hispanic Educational Resources, Inc. reserves the right to pursue payment to the fullest extent based on applicable law. This includes, but is not limited to, the pursuit of payment through a third-party collection agency, government resources, and lien of property. ***Hispanic Educational Resources is required to report an unpaid balance to the Department of Human Services (DHS) for any parent receiving tuition assistance via this funding source. DHS Administration reserves the right to terminate assistance based on reported unpaid balances.***

Failure to pay the balance or fees on a child's account after withdrawal from Connigo will result in:

1. Report to DHS of delinquent account- this could affect the family's ability to receive childcare assistance in the future.
2. If the balance remains unpaid, Hispanic Educational Resources, Inc. reserves the right to pursue payment to the fullest extent based on applicable law. This includes, but is not limited to, the pursuit of payment through a third-party collection agency, government resources, and lien of property.

Daily Procedures

Entry Into the building:

Each family will be given an entry code that must be used to unlock the front door during business hours for the parent and/or those designated to drop off/pick up the child. The entry code is valid only during hours of operation on open school days (Monday through Friday 6:30 am – 5:30 pm).

****For the security of our children, this code should never be shared with anyone other than a person authorized to drop off/pick up your child. In the event that your code is lost, stolen or you suspect is being utilized by an unauthorized person, you must notify the Director immediately. Your old code will be deactivated, and a new code will be issued.***

****For the security of our children, please do not hold the door open for persons to enter.***

Sign in/out Procedures on computer:

Parents/adults must sign-in each child upon arrival and sign-out upon departure at the computer located at the entryway of Connigo. Each child will be assigned an ID number that must be entered into the computer upon arrival and departure each day.

****Failure to sign-in a child or sign- out on the computer will result in a \$1.00 fee per occurrence per child, which will be added to the parent's account.***

Sign in/out sheets in the classroom:

According to State of Iowa Licensing Standards, in addition to signing-in/signing-out on the computer daily, children must be walked to their classroom and signed in/out on the paper provided. **THIS PROCESS IS MANDATORY.** In the event of a natural disaster, fire or other unforeseen tragedy, our staff will utilize these forms to verify all children present in the center.

****Failure to sign the child in and/or out of the classroom will result in a \$1.00 fee per occurrence, per child, which will be added to the parent's account.***

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Safety Phone Call:

If arriving more than 60 minutes past your scheduled arrival time and you have not notified the center, the program will attempt to contact to ensure the child's well-being.

Children may not be dropped off earlier than 6:30 am under any circumstances!

Wash hands:

To ensure the health and safety of all children, please escort your child to the bathroom to wash his/her hands before entering the classroom. According to State of Iowa Licensing Standards, only authorized adults cleared with a State of Iowa Background Check and National Record Check may enter the student bathrooms during hours of operation (Monday through Friday 6:30 am – 5:00 pm).

Please do not bring into the center:

Outside food, candy, or toys. Please be aware that some of our children have severe food allergies, some candy present choking hazards, and some toys from home do not meet state or national regulations for safety and appropriate items for preschool care.

Pick up time:

- Enrollment Form/Emergency Cards must include ALL the names of the persons you authorize to pick up your child. If the person is picking up your child is NOT listed on the Emergency Card, they will not be allowed to remove the child from Connigo.
- All adults listed on the Emergency Card will be asked to show some form of identification. Acceptable forms of identification include:

*Driver's License

*Consular Identification (with photo)

*Passport

*Immigration/Residency Card

*Voter Registration (with photo)

- For each person authorized to pick up your child: please list their name as it appears on their identification card.
- No minors will be allowed to pick up children. (No one under the age of 18.)
- Please be sure to present your current contact information to your child's teacher so that we may reach you easily in an emergency or if inclement weather requires us to reach you.
- Parents must notify Connigo if a different person is picking up their child at least 2 hours in advance. Parents must supply the name of the person sent to pick up their child at the time of the phone call.
- The person sent to pick up the child must comply with daily Sign in/out procedures on the computer AND on the Sign out sheet unless prior arrangements are made.

In addition, all children picked up later than 5:00 pm will be charged \$1.00 per minute, per child, for late pick-up fees. This charge must be paid in the same week it is incurred. If a parent does not pick up their child within thirty minutes of the center closing, and they do not contact the center, the police will be called, and a child abandonment report will be filed according to DHS Licensing Standards.

Center staff will approach anyone who is on the property of the center without their knowledge to ask their purpose. If staff is unsure about the reason, they will contact the Site Manager or another management staff to get approval for the person to be on site. If the situation becomes dangerous, staff will follow the "intruder in the center" procedure.

NO Cell Phone Use in the Center

We ask parents to refrain from using their cell phones during drop off and pick up time. This is a very important time of the day when our teachers can share progress information about your child. Parents talking on cell phones can also be disruptive to the classroom.

Health & Illness Policy

To provide a safe and healthy environment for each child we have established the following health guidelines. Please remember these guidelines are in the child's best interest.

- ❖ If a contagious illness is in the center, a letter will be posted throughout common areas in the center indicating the date and illness.
- ❖ If emergency care is required, the on-site supervisor, teacher, or designated replacement will make every effort to contact the parent. If it is impossible to reach the parent, and emergency treatment is needed, the on-site supervisor or teacher will call EMS (911).

All parents are required to fill out the Emergency Medical and Dental Release form upon enrollment. This form will be presented to EMS. Conmigo is not responsible for any medical related charges including but not limited to clinical, medical testing, physician, ambulance, or EMS fees or charges.

If a child does not require professional medical treatment, first aid will be administered at the center. An incident report will be completed and provided to the parent for signature. A copy will be placed in the child's file. All staff are trained and certified in First Aid and CPR. If the incident is a head trauma, a Head Trauma form will be included with the incident report. First Aid kits are kept in each classroom, worn on a teacher when outside of the classroom and all are inventoried monthly.

If a child is absent for 5 business days with no contact from the Parent/Guardian, we will consider that child's slot abandoned. The slot will be made available to the next child/family on the waiting list. **It is the Parent/Guardian's responsibility to notify the center regarding a child's absence(s).**

Cleaning and Sanitation Practices

To ensure the classroom is properly cleaned and sanitized, all classrooms use the Monthly Cleaning and Sanitizing Frequency Table. Staff will complete each item on the Monthly Cleaning Checklist; initialing and dating as completed daily. The current month's Cleaning Checklist may be posted in an area accessible to staff, and placed in the Classroom Monitoring Binder upon completion, at the end of each month. Completed Monthly Cleaning Checklists will be filed in the Classroom Monitoring Binder for one program year. To promote indoor air quality, aerosol, spray or other air fresheners, sanitizers or perfumes cannot be used in child occupied/used areas. Chemical air fresheners and sanitizers may cause nausea and an allergic response in some children. Odors should be controlled by ventilation and appropriate cleaning and disinfection. Conmigo is a fragrance/scent safe environment. All staff are certified in Universal Precautions to protect against the spread of potentially infectious body fluids. Please contact the center staff for detailed information.

CONDITIONS REQUIRING EARLY PICK UP OF CHILD

There are specific symptoms that are indicative of a contagious illness and require the child to be picked up from the center. Children who display these symptoms will be removed from the classroom and held in an isolation/nursing station for sick children in the Family Development Coordinator's office.

Children who display these symptoms must be picked up within 30 minutes from the time our staff notifies the parent(s) or authorized person(s). Failure to do so will be grounds for immediate and permanent discharge from the center. Department of Human Services may be notified for Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect if this procedure is not followed. For this reason, we ask all our families to always keep their Emergency Contact information current.

Parents are responsible for making alternate arrangements to have their child picked up if they are unable to personally take care of this responsibility.

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Parents will be asked to pick up their child when/if their child presents with any of the following symptoms:

- ❖ **Fever:** If a child has a temperature of **99.5** degrees or higher *and is not able to participate in normal activities*, they may not remain in attendance at the center. Children are permitted to return to the center after their fever has ended AND they have not required the use of fever reducing medication for a minimum of 24 hours. Connmigo reserves the right to require a physician's statement indicating the child is no longer contagious or poses a risk to other children or staff.
- ❖ **Severe Coughing:** If a child becomes red or blue in the face, making a high-pitched croup or whooping sound after coughing, having difficulty breathing or has rapid breathing, the child will not be allowed to return to the center until these symptoms have subsided or significantly improved. Connmigo reserves the right to require a physician's statement indicating the child is no longer contagious or poses a risk to other children or staff.
- ❖ **Vomiting:** If a child is vomiting for any other reason than a temporary cough or choking episode will not be allowed to remain in the center. Children with this ailment will not be permitted to return to the center until their symptoms have subsided for a minimum of 24 hours AND they are able to consume soft foods without episode. Frequent vomiting should be evaluated to determine possible food intolerance or allergies. Connmigo reserves the right to require a physician's statement indicating the child is no longer contagious or poses a risk to other children or staff.
- ❖ **Diarrhea:** Indicated by the excretion of more than one abnormally loose stool; the parent will be contacted if the child has had 3 contained (in the toilet) episodes or 1 accident in their clothes. The child may return to the center 24 hours after their final episode. Connmigo reserves the right to require a physician's statement indicating the child is no longer contagious or poses a risk to other children or staff.
- ❖ **Yellowish Skin or Eyes:** This may indicate a serious illness such as Meningitis. The child may return to the center only after a licensed physician provides a written statement of release indicating that the child does not have a contagious or communicable disease. Connmigo reserves the right to require a physician's statement indicating the child is no longer contagious or poses a risk to other children or staff.
- ❖ **Pinkeye (Conjunctivitis):** This results in tears, redness of the eye/eyelid/lining, and irritation, followed by swelling and thick or yellow discharge. The child may return to the center 24 hours after medication has been administered. Parents will be required to provide evidence of prescription medication. Connmigo reserves the right to require a physician's statement indicating the child is no longer contagious or poses a risk to other children or staff.
- ❖ **Chicken Pox:** If a child is suspected of having chicken pox, indicated by multiple lesions on the skin, they will be required to leave the center. Children with a confirmed diagnosis are required to stay home for seven days from the onset of the lesions and until all lesions are healed. A physician's statement of release will be required prior to the child being allowed to return to the center.
- ❖ **Other Infectious Diseases:** Parents will be called to pick up their child and ask to keep them home until the infection is treated or subsides. If symptoms persist for a prolonged period of time, the child should be seen by a physician. A physician's statement of release will be required prior to the child being allowed to return to the center.
- ❖ **Families who need assistance in accessing medical care for their child are encouraged to contact the Family Development Coordinator for referral to a free or reduced cost provider.**

Absence and Tardiness Procedures Due to Illness

Payment is not excused for illness. All services are pre-paid as stated in our payment policy.

If the illness requires more than 3 consecutive days out of the center, parents must provide a doctor's note. **Connmigo Early Education Center reserves the right, per our discretion, to require additional medical documentation from a licensed physician prior to allowing a child to return to the center. Please remember that we are responsible for preserving the best interest of all children who attend our center and that making any exception for one is not optional.**

We genuinely appreciate our parents' courteous efforts of calling when their child is going to be tardy or absent. It is our intention to provide parents with a reasonable means to accomplish this task. While we would like to be able to answer all phone calls immediately, our priority is to care for the children who are present during the morning transition period. We respectfully request that parent's make every effort to call in between the hours of 6:30 – 9:00 a.m. to notify staff of your child's tardiness or absence. Please understand that between 8:00 and 10:00 a.m. calls may not be answered. The attention

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of our staff is required for the direction of children who are already in attendance and are busy transitioning, taking children for bathroom breaks, and preparing for breakfast. For these reasons, if parents call prior to 8:15 a.m., it may not be possible for an employee to answer the phone. If this occurs, the calling party will be transferred to our voice mail system. Under these circumstances, we ask that callers extend us the professional courtesy of leaving a message for our staff. These messages will be checked no later than 9:30 a.m. **Remember: You must pay your full weekly tuition/co-pay even if your child is absent due to illness.**

If a child is absent for 5 business days with no contact from the Parent/Guardian, we will consider that child's slot abandoned. The slot will be made available to the next child/family on the waiting list. **It is the Parent/Guardian's responsibility to notify the center regarding a child's absence(s).**

Medication Policy

We cannot administer any medication (over the counter or prescription) without a written consent and dosage instruction from a licensed physician. Prescription and over the counter medicine must be in the original, unaltered container with the following information clearly visible: child's name, dosage, current date, and dispensing physician's name. Medicine dosage that reads twice a day must be given by parents before and after child attends the center. All medicine **MUST** go home with the parent(s) each night. Medicine may not be stored at the center unless administration is required as part of a child's daily routine and must be administered 3 or more times per day or there is an Allergic Reaction Plan for the child. Parents must provide the accompanying Patient Information handout provided by the pharmacy. Parent/Guardians must sign the medication sheet for each child prior to documentation and for each medication monthly. Non-emergency medications will be stored in a double locked container or, if required, in a locked box in the refrigerator, up and out of reach of children. **Emergency medication will be stored in an unlocked container within the classroom, up and out of the reach of children and will include a copy of the Allergic Reaction Plan.** Sunscreen and diaper rash ointment are considered over the counter medicines and must include a licensed physician's consent for use by the staff according to regulations.

For children with food allergies, asthma, or other conditions requiring emergency medication the following policy will apply:

Parents must complete a Food Allergy/Allergy Action Plan which must be signed by a physician. This plan also consists of an Allergic Reaction Plan that will be kept in the classroom Emergency Backpack and a copy in the child's file.

Only staff trained in medication administration will administer any medication to children. **Siblings/relatives may not share medication. Each child must have their own prescription and medical supplies in their name as prescribed by a doctor or medical professional. NO EXCEPTIONS**

Nutrition Policy

Connmigo participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) through the Department of Education. We provide breakfast at 8:30 a.m., lunch at 11:30 a.m., and snack at 2:30 p.m. Menus are planned to meet nutritional daily requirements for children ages 2-5 years. We eat family style, which is used to improve the children's coordination skills by having them use utensils and pass and serve various kinds of food. Teachers eat with the children to participate in mealtime conversation, which stimulates the development of the children's language and social skills. Teachers encourage, but never force children to try all new foods.

FOOD ALLERGY AND ALLERGIC REACTIONS ACTION PLAN

Food Allergy and Special Diets:

Parents are responsible for notifying the center if a child has dietary restrictions or allergies to any food. All children will be served the same food items unless we receive a physician's statement specifying a special diet for the child. Parents must complete a Food Allergy Action Plan which must be signed by a physician. This plan also consists of an Allergic Reaction Plan that will be kept in the classroom's Emergency Backpack and a copy in the child's file. Please refer to Medication Policy regarding medications to be administered at the center. In the case of a doctor documented special diet, Connmigo will make every reasonable attempt to meet the special needs as permitted by DHS Licensing and within the limitations of our facility. Parents may need to provide portions of their child's meals to assist in meeting special dietary needs. Exceptions will be made at the parent's request to honor the family's religious beliefs. All dietary requests and requirements must remain in compliance with the guidelines set forth by the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Under these circumstances, parents will be required to sign a formal contract agreeing to serve their child food that is in compliance with the guidelines of the CACFP program and that adequately provides for the child's dietary needs. If the

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allergy indicates a reaction, an Allergic Reaction Plan must be completed by your child's physician. The Allergic Reaction Plan will be kept in the classroom and the allergy posted in the classroom confidentially.

Birthday or Other Special Treats:

Birthday treats must be purchases from a store; not homemade. Also no treats that contain peanuts or tree nuts are allowed in the building.

Toys, Candy, Food:

Please do not bring outside food, candy, or toys into the center. Please be aware that some of our children have severe food allergies, some candy present choking hazards, and some toys from home do not meet state or national regulations for safety and appropriate items for preschool care.

Other Miscellaneous Policies

Bedding: For Early Head Start Classrooms the sheets on the bed or crib will be washed weekly and the crib or cot disinfected. If an accident occurs or any other event that soils the sheet, it will be cleaned, replaced, and the cot/crib will be disinfected before next use.

Parents must provide blankets for their child's naptime. Bedding will be sent home every Friday for washing and must be returned the following school day.

A child will be sent home if no sheets are provided for them. Sheets are mandatory per DHS Licensing Standards and will not be provided by the Connigo center. Plastic bags are not permitted so please bring blankets in a backpack or a bag made of material. Plastic bags are considered a choking hazard.

The child's bedding must not touch any other child's bedding when napping cots are stored. Oversized bedding promotes the spread of illness and lice. To ensure the health and safety of all children we ask parents to adhere to the following measurements for their child's bedding:

1- Crib Sheet not to exceed 20 inches x 40 inches (for 2-year-olds) and 20 inches x 48 inches for others

1- Blanket not to exceed 36 inches X 54 inches

No "Pillow Pets" as they exceed the size limit.

Lice:

To ensure the health and safety of all children parents will be contacted by phone the same day and the following policy will apply:

- We will exclude children with lice or their eggs at the end of the day.
- Parents must provide evidence of having administered treatment.
- Children will be allowed to return when they are examined by the classroom teacher and found to be free of lice or their eggs. Connigo reserves the right to require evidence of prescription medication if necessary.

Clothing:

We are **NOT** responsible for lost or stolen items and do not provide clothing for your child in cases of accidents or emergencies. Young children can sometimes have an unforeseen accident where they may find themselves in need of a change of clothes. For this reason, we ask parents to provide a change of clothes including undergarments and shoes for each child. For children in our 2-year-old room we ask for **2 changes** of clothes for the children.

For your child's protection, we require your child (ren) to always wear tennis shoes or other hard soled shoes.

Flip flops and open-toed sandals are not allowed, as they pose a danger to running children and limit a child's mobility.

Sweater or shirts with draw strings are not allowed unless draw strings are removed by parent. Parents should dress their child appropriately and according to current weather conditions and temperature.

Jewelry:

For your child's safety and protection, please do not send a child to Connigo wearing jewelry as they may become caught in playground equipment or clothing potentially causing injury to your child or another child. Prohibited jewelry includes:

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- Long, dangle-type earrings or hoops
- Bracelets
- Necklaces

Please be aware that beads used for hair adornment may fall out and also pose a choking hazard for children less than 3 years of age. We are **NOT** responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged jewelry items. Therefore, please keep these valuables safely at home reserved for special occasions.

Swimming:

Swimming is part of our summer program activities. If parents do not want their child to participate in this activity, they must provide a doctor's note. Connigo will provide alternate care for children not participating in swimming, but parents are required to notify the Center Director to make appropriate arrangements at least 2 days in advance of the swimming session.

Parents must provide the child's swimsuit, towel, and closed toed walking shoes. For your child's protection, we require your child to wear tennis shoes or other hard soled shoes at all times. **Flip flops and open-toed sandals are not allowed, as they pose a danger to running children and limit a child's mobility.** Parents must provide sunblock and insect repellent for their own child. Parents must submit a signed doctor's note for the application of sunblock and insect repellent if they would like Connigo teachers to apply it. We will gladly accept these documents by fax from your physician.

Activity Restriction:

If your child's activities are to be restricted from the normal routine of the center curriculum (indoor activities, field trips, physical activity etc.) a medical release from the child's doctor is required.

Field trips:

- » Field trips are a part of the program. Trips will be limited to Des Moines and the surrounding areas. Field trips which require transportation are not applicable to children ages 0-2.

Parents will be notified at least one week prior to the trip and must provide written permission for their child. If you fail to return a signed consent form for your child, they will not be able to go on the field trip.

The center will coordinate the transportation to and from the destination. Some trips may require a fee to be paid by the parent before the child is allowed to participate. Parents are welcome to accompany their child on these field trips but must provide their own transportation. Child care will be provided at the center for any child who will not participate. It is the responsibility of the parent to notify the Director at least 2 days prior to the trip if their child will not be participating.

Parents are required to provide the necessary booster chair or car-seat for their child. For your child's protection, we require your child(ren) to wear tennis shoes or other hard soled shoes at all times.

Flip flops and open-toed sandals are not allowed, as they pose a danger to running children and limit a child's mobility.

Children with Special Needs/ Services:

If a child is diagnosed as special needs and/or receiving any special services such as speech therapy or OT/PT, a copy of their treatment/action plan for each service is required.

Children of Divorced Parents:

In the instance that family dynamics include parents who are separated or divorced, the center staff is obligated to let the child go with either parent unless a copy of a court order stating otherwise has been provided to the center. Information regarding the child's health, behavior or academic progress will be provided to either parent unless a copy of a court order stating otherwise has been provided to the center. Per DHS Licensing Standards, this information will not be available to anyone else regardless of family dynamics. Parents/Guardians may authorize another individual/relative to receive confidential information by provide written authorization in a letter to the Director.

Confidentiality:

Information regarding the child's health, behavior or academic progress will be provided to either parent or legal guardian(s) unless a copy of a court order stating otherwise has been provided to the center. **Per DHS Licensing Standards, this information will not be available to anyone else** regardless of family dynamics. Parents/Guardians may authorize another individual/relative to receive confidential information by provide written authorization in a letter to the Director.

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Intoxicated/Drugged/Mentally Altered Parents:

Connmigo reserves the right, as mandatory reporters, to refuse the release of any child, without regard for legally established custody or parental permission if a parent or authorized person appears to be mentally altered for any reason, including, but not limited to alcohol or drug intoxication. The child will be placed in the care of a staff member in an area secured away from the intoxicated party and the police will be notified immediately.

Gun Law Policy:

ABSOLUTELY NO WEAPONS OF ANY KIND (INCLUDING FIREARMS) ARE PERMITTED ON HISPANIC EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES/CONNMIGO EARLY EDUCATION CENTER PROPERTY.

Potty Training:

Upon being enrolled in the center, and prior to the child's first day. Parents must bring an additional set of labeled clothing for their child in case he/she has an accident. If a spare change of clothing is not provided, we will contact the parent(s) to bring the child a clean, dry change of clothing immediately.

Toilet Training

- Children who are not potty trained can attend preschool. The goal of us of our toilet training policy is to promote developmentally appropriate self-help skills and independence.
- If your child is not toilet trained teachers will ask for your help in developing a toilet training plan for your child that is appropriate to his/her needs. This plan will include full involvement from you as the parent/guardian.
- Expectations for families may include frequent toileting of the child while at home, establishing a consistent routine, providing extra clothing/diapers/pull-ups/wipes for use at school if needed. Pull Ups are preferred to help encourage the child's independence.
- All families are encouraged to keep a change of clothing for their child at school, in case of toileting accidents, or spills.
- Please contact the school nurse for more information or to see the complete Toilet Training Policy.

Weather and Emergency Guidelines

Our severe weather policy correlates with that of Des Moines Public School's policy. During the school year, if the Des Moines Public Schools close for bad weather, Connmigo will be closed as well. Please listen or watch major television and radio stations for announcements regarding closures. The Connmigo Facebook page will also post the announcement <https://www.facebook.com/pages/connmigoearlyed>. If we must close early due to severe weather, we will call parents to come pick up their child from the center. In the event of severe thunderstorms or tornado, please do not attempt to come and pick up your child from the center as the driving conditions may be dangerous. We will call parents to come pick up their child when the severe weather has passed, and it is safe to travel.

Severe weather causing state of emergency may include, but is not limited to:

1. **Blizzard-** children and staff will stay in the building until parents arrive to pick up their children. At least two staff members will stay until every child is gone. **When Des Moines Public Schools close due to inclement weather Connmigo also closes. Parents have one hour to pick up their child.** However, when Des Moines Public Schools announce a 2-hour delay, Connmigo opens at 6:30 (NORMAL Hours of Operation). **You may pick up your child at any time but assume all responsibility for the safety of your child, your property and yourself.**
2. **Tornado-** if tornado sirens or weather alarms indicate to a tornado in our area, all staff and children are required by Iowa Licensing Standards to proceed to the basement until the tornado warning expires. Maps to the basement are located in every classroom. The basement is located on the east side of the building. **You may pick up your child when the tornado sirens are going but assume all responsibility for the safety of your child, your property and yourself.**
3. **Severe weather -** includes snowstorms, freezing rain, ice on roads, or any other conditions that may have adverse effects on our ability to remain open. **You may pick up your child at any time but assume all responsibility for the safety of your child, your property and yourself.**

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Emergencies

Every teacher and director are trained to handle emergency situations. Monthly Emergency Drills are conducted to prepare students. Listed below are other emergencies that are not related to weather:

1. **Fire-** Fire and smoke detectors are located in each room of our building that is being utilized by students. Every classroom has an assigned route and procedures for building evacuation. All classes meet at the church across the street (Church of Guadalupe) either outside on the driveway or inside the actual sanctuary.
 2. **Power Failure-** staff and children will remain in the classrooms and attempt to continue with normal operations. In the event that the center is unable to continue daily operations, we will notify the parents immediately to pick up their children. We may proceed outside to the playground if weather permits.
 3. **Chemical Spill-** center will be evacuated according to fire procedures. All classes meet at the church across the street (Church of Guadalupe) either outside on the driveway or inside the actual sanctuary.
 4. **Bomb Threat-** the building will be evacuated immediately according to fire procedures and the police will be notified. No one will be allowed to return to the building until the proper government authorities have declared the building safe. All classes meet at the church across the street (Church of Guadalupe) either outside on the driveway or inside the actual sanctuary.
 5. **Lost or abducted child-** one teacher will remain with the class while another teacher will call for assistance in searching for the lost child. If the child cannot be found, then the parents/guardian and police will be contacted immediately.
 6. **Unforeseen tragedies and Miscellaneous Circumstances** – include but is not limited to acts of nature, accidental and cataclysmic incident, fire, flood, earthquakes, structural disaster, toxic exposure or spill, structural damage, terrorism, acts of war and compromised breaches of national security that may have direct adverse affects on the center's operational abilities.
- ❖ *Hispanic Educational Resources, Inc. reserves the right to declare center closures at any time and based on the sole discretionary judgment of executive management.*



Parent Handbook 2023-2024

**Hispanic Educational Resources/Connmigo Early Education Center
Parent Handbook Acknowledgement**

I, _____, parent of an enrolled child(ren) at Connmigo Early Education Center,
(Please print your name) agree that I have received, read and will adhere to the policies and procedures set forth in the Parent Handbook and additional addendums.

I understand that Hispanic Educational Resources, Inc./Connmigo Early Education Center, retains the right to amend and enforce alternate procedures and policies at any time with appropriate written notice.

I understand that failure to comply with the policies and procedures set forth in the Parent Handbook can be considered grounds for immediate termination of my child(ren) from the Connmigo Early Education Center and that Hispanic Educational Resources, Inc./ Connmigo Early Education Center is not required to communicate with me prior to this action.

Name of child or children enrolled at Connmigo:

Parent Signature

Date

Parent's E-mail address:

HER Representative

Date

Original will be placed in the child/children's file(s).
A copy for the parent is provided upon request.

