

# AMERICAN BUTTERFLIES HOME CHILD CARE and PRESCHOOL

**Basic Parent/Guardian Handbook  
2010**

**Drawing out and Developing  
qualities vital to success,  
providing warmth and loving security  
day and night,  
for a healthy life.**

Revised May 2010

Table of Contents

Description	Page	Description	Page
❖ Welcome	3	➤ Arrival	9
❖ Introduction		➤ Departure/ Release of Children	9
➤ Philosophy	4	➤ Child Care Hours, Schedule	9
➤ Staff	4	➤ Outdoor Play	10
➤ Licensing	4	➤ Field Trips	10
➤ Mandated Reporter	4	➤ Wading Pool	10
➤ How Staff Integrates the Curriculum	4	➤ Meals and Snacks	10
		➤ Religious Acknowledgements	10
❖ Financial		➤ Toilet Training	10
➤ Registration, Tuition	5	➤ Rules of Behavior, Responsibility	11
➤ Rotating Schedules	5	➤ Discipline	11
➤ Hourly and As Needed, As Available Care	5	➤ Clothing and Items from Home	11
➤ Late Pickup	6	➤ Holidays Celebrations	12
➤ Late Payment	6		
➤ Withdrawal/Change of Schedule	6	❖ Communications	
➤ Holiday and Emergency Closings	6	➤ General Communication	13
➤ Backup Childcare	6	➤ Parent Telephone Calls	13
➤ Vacation Time	6	➤ Provider Telephone Calls	13
➤ Extended Leave	7	➤ About Your Child's Day	13
		➤ Photos and Video	13
❖ Programs		➤ Suggestions and Comments	13
➤ Programs Available	7		
▪ Day and Evening/Night	7	❖ Health and Safety	
▪ Integrated Curriculum	7	➤ Illness, Isolation, and Exclusions Guidelines	14
➤ Preschool and Assessments (Infant to PreK)	7	➤ First Aid For Minor Injuries	14
➤ Preschool Activities Include ...	7	➤ Medication	14
		➤ Screening	14
❖ Basic General Information		➤ Security Precautions	15
➤ Admission	8	➤ Release of Personal Information	15
➤ Supplies Provided by...	8	➤ Risk Management and Emergencies	15
➤ Discharge Policy	8	➤ Other Health and Safety Issues	15
➤ Children with Special Needs	8		
		❖ Parental Forms and Releases	

Throughout this handbook American Butterflies Home ChildCare and Preschool will be abbreviated ABHCP.

**Welcome to American Butterflies Home Child Care.**

We look forward to meeting you in our child care home. It is our wish to provide the best child care setting for you and your child.

Let us introduce ourselves.

Darlene Huston is the owner. She has her B.A. in Early Childhood Education and in Human Development. She is a certified and state licensed Early Childhood Teacher with an Endorsement in Special Education. She is director qualified.

Darlene started teaching young children at Joliet Junior College through classes and working at JJC's child care center. For 10 years she taught religious education to children in Preschool, Kindergarten and/or 1<sup>st</sup> grade. She worked in the Joliet school system as a substitute aide for several years while working on her B.A. at National Louis University in Wheaton, IL. Darlene has worked in Plainfield and Joliet school districts as a substitute teacher, gaining knowledge of local district preschools and primary grades, both in regular and special education. For 2 years she was the preschool Teacher at a private school in Shorewood, IL, with 3 classes of 3 and 4 year old children and co-taught some subjects with the Kindergarten Teacher. ABHCP opened in 2005. In 2009 Darlene became a licensed Kindermusik Instructor.

She has been a member of NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children), including both the Joliet and DuPage County chapters, since 2000. She is a member of the Will County Family Child Care Association. She has been a certified Life Guard and has certification in CPR, First Aid, and Sanitation. She is the main child caregiver. Classes and trainings are attended frequently to remain current in new theories, beliefs, methods, and educational ideology.

Jerry Huston is a Licensed Physical Therapist Assistant, has worked with and taught people of various ages. He has taken several early childhood and developmental classes. He is currently working in early intervention with children under 3. He is certified in CPR and First Aid. Trainings are attended often for child care and physical therapy. He is a part time assistant and substitute.

Sam, their son, has worked with young children through several volunteer positions including: the Joliet Public Library, St. Patrick Church religious education and Children's Liturgy. He is currently a student at Joliet Jr. College. He has some training through church, Boy Scouts and CCR&R. He is CPR and First Aid certified. Trainings are attended on an accepted basis for child care. He is a full time assistant.

Mrs. Betty J. is a full time assistant. She has Level 1, basic training and Special Needs training, through CCR&R as well as CPR and First Aid.

Our main substitutes are Mrs. Darlene's mother – Mrs. Darlene Bull – and her aunt - Mrs. Nancy Sossong. Mrs. D, as the children call her, has a Masters in Library Science with a Minor in teaching. She is the proud grandmother of 5 grandsons. Mrs. Nancy is a stay at home grandmother and does volunteer work at St. Francis of the Woods in Frankfort. She is the proud grandmother of 2 (one boy, one girl). Both substitutes are certified in 1<sup>st</sup> Aid and CPR.

If there is anything we can do for you or any questions we can answer, please contact us.

Thank you for your interest in American Butterflies Home Child Care.

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## **Introduction**

### **Philosophy**

Our philosophy is to create an educational environment that is caring and encourages development of the potential in each child. We enrich children, remembering that God made them naturally curious. To enhance learning, we blend qualities from varied theorists including Vygotski, Erickson, and Piaget. We believe that nature should be an integrated part of the curriculum and endorse the Reggio Emilia method. We remember that each child has their own 'best' way to learn and grow, cognitively, physically and spiritually.

Children learn, grow and develop best in a developmentally appropriate environment that is secure, friendly, challenging and encourages appropriate behaviors in a positive manner. Teaching children should include hands-on, engaging and interactive methods that encourage discovery of solutions and interest in continued investigation. Children's social, emotional, mental and physical needs must be met. Individuality is encouraged.

Every child is helped to explore, discover and learn through arts and crafts, music, science experiments, life skills, exploratory and goal oriented play, drama and the encouragement of questions. Rhymes, poetry, reading, writing, movement, math and science skills will be incorporated daily through various methods. Independence and self-confidence grow with each success, each new skill learned or improved. Good choices and social behavior are encouraged through structured rewards and natural consequences.

### **Staff**

The owner, family and anyone working at our child care home are trained according to state standards. Our staff meets or exceeds the states standards for a Child Care Home. This includes substitutes. Staff members are annually certified in CPR and first aid. Families will be informed of additional staff information as needed.

### **Licensing**

We are licensed by the state of Illinois. We meet or exceed all state rules and regulations for a Child Care Home. Our License is posted in the front foyer of our home. We are currently licensed for up to 12 children from 6:00 am to 6:00 pm and 8 children from 6:00 pm to midnight Monday through Friday. Any child care given outside of licensed times is considered license-exempt and has a limit of 3 children or one family.

We are an equal opportunity provider. We accept applications for admission and employment without regard to race, religion, gender, national origin, color, creed, physical or mental disability or any other protected status. We reserve the right to change existing policies or introduce new policies pertaining to operations at any time. At no time will these changes conflict with state standards.

### **Mandated Reporter**

All staff of ABHCP is trained mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect. A mandated reporter is an individual who holds a position that requires him or her to report to the appropriate state agency cases of child abuse (physical, emotional, verbal) that he or she has reasonable cause to suspect. If any staff has reason to suspect that a child is being abused or neglected, they must report the abuse and/or neglect even if allegations cannot be proved. All staff is educated on child abuse and neglect signs and symptoms. For more information, please go to <http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/signs.cfm>

### **How Staff Integrates the Curriculum**

We use Illinois State Board of Education approved Creative Curriculum. The curriculum meets each child's individual needs by encouraging development and knowledge to be ready for continued growth and a lifetime of learning. The monthly and weekly themes are, in part, derived from the interests of the children. Themes and activities are combined with standard curriculum practices to meet or exceed the children's needs and the Illinois Early Learning Standards. The activities are flexible and can be modified or adjusted.

Readiness to learn and be prepared for further education is encouraged through varied games, songs, reading, experiments and exercises in phonetics, phonemic awareness, mathematics, science, reading, community awareness, and writing—all of which are completed in individual or small group settings at various times throughout the day. Life skills are incorporated every day through modeling, good manners, respect, and household routines, including cooking and cleaning up. Children are given aid as needed.

Physical development is addressed through large and small motor activities and good health practices. Adults in the room model examples of good behaviors and lead children to expand their experiences and thoughts to their next level of development and skill. Good behaviors are also encouraged through praise, high fives, stickers, hugs, thumbs up and similar rewards.

## **Financial**

### **Registration, Tuition**

Registration fees are annual, per one child or per family. These fees pay for all administrative costs and supplies. Children can be enrolled throughout the year. Renewal of registration occurs each May. The full registration fee is due at first registration. Rates will be prorated for second registration as needed and applicable. Registration can be extended by owner if needed. All terms of contract apply until the new registration (contract) is signed. Refunds are not given at any time. Payment in excess of the minimum required will be credited to your child care account. If payment is in cash, change cannot be made. Cash is not kept on the property. If your child is unenrolled and there has been an overpayment the amount will be considered a donation to craft supplies and activities.

Individual tuition amounts will be stated on your contract and are based on the age of the child/children and the hours and number of days of care needed. Tuition prices will be discussed before the contract is filled out. Changes may change tuition rate charged. A change of contract will be filled out, including tuition amount. Copies will be given to all signers.

Daily and Weekly tuition fees are due weekly on the first day of the week or the first day of the week which the child attends. All fees are due in advance. The rates include full pay for holidays, personal and absent days. There is no change in fees for closings. If your child attends part time and would normally attend on a day that we are closed because of a holiday or training/personal day you are expected to pay for that day as you normally would. Any financial difficulties should be discussed with Ms. Darlene Huston and will be kept strictly confidential. Fees should be handed to Ms. Darlene or placed in the Payment Drawer. Accepted methods of payment include: cash, checks, money orders, and (online only) debit. We reserve the right to refuse any future payment by check if any check is returned for any reason. Any and all bank fees and any fees related to collecting past due amounts will be added to your bill. Receipts are given in July and January at no charge. Any other receipts can be emailed free or printed for \$1 per page. Invoice and payment information is also available online through [www.childcarepay.com](http://www.childcarepay.com). This is a business and a significant part of our livelihood; we require you to pay your debts to us fully in a timely fashion. We reserve the right to exact charges or penalties for any failures to do so.

If parents have made financial arrangements that each pays a portion of child care, each MUST sign the Parent Handbook agreement, Contract, Late Policy and any and all DCFS forms requiring parental signature (excluding health form). Parents may be given separate receipts, however; each will state what amount the other parent has paid. If one parent changes their child care schedule it may affect payment amounts for the other parent, therefore; I will notify the other parent of any tuition changes within 24 hours.

Rates are guaranteed to ABHCP. Rates increase annually in May. Additional days closed or sick days may be added annually. Parents will be notified of any changes in fees or policy at least 1 month in advance. Parent Handbook is reviewed and updated annually.

### **Rotating Schedules**

Parent/guardians who work a rotating shift or want a summer/school year schedule (See *Extended Leave*) which will affect their child care needs must notify Ms. Darlene upon registration or as soon as you know your needs will be changing. If your childcare need schedule is going to change for a long period of time, you may want to consider making a request for change of contract. Remember that time slots are not guaranteed unless they are paid for. Requests for schedule changes for any reason must be in writing.

### **Hourly and As Needed, As Available Care (AN/AA)**

If you have scheduled hourly care or days for AN/AA for your child and need to cancel, you must give 24 hours notice to Ms. Darlene. If you fail to give 24 hours notice, you will be charged the full price for the allotted time. Emergencies will be considered on an individual basis. If you call for last minute or emergency care (less than 24 hours notice) and then cancel it any time after scheduling, you will be charged the greater of ½ price or the price of 1 hours' care. If you schedule your child to come, you pay for that time and space.

Payment is due before care is given for the full time space reserved. For hourly care, the hour begins when you reserved time for your child's care, even if you drop off your child late. If you find you need to drop your child off early, call to confirm that space is available and, if so, your beginning time will be adjusted accordingly. If you find you need more time than scheduled, call as soon as you realize this to check for availability. We are limited as to how many children we may care for at one time. Please see *Late Pick up Policy* for more information.

Minimum charge is 1 hour. After the first hour of care, charges can be broken into ½ hour increments. Any part of the ½ hour of care used will result in a charge for that ½ hour. No refunds will be given at any time.

### **Children with Special Needs**

Children with special needs are welcome at our facility. It is our desire to meet the needs of all children. Parent/guardian input is very important. We encourage sharing of information which would be helpful to caring for each child.

**Late Pick Up**

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO CALL IF YOU ARE DELAYED. If you are late picking up your child and are over the time stated on contract, you will be charged the late fee of \$.50 a minute according to the child care foyer clock after a 10 minute grace period. This fee is to be paid directly to the provider in charge. The child will never be blamed. If there are any questions, please see Ms. Darlene Huston or the *Late Pick-Up Policy*. If you are delayed more than a few minutes and call in, the late fee may be modified to the equivalent of no more than \$6 per hour per child, divisible in ½ hour increments only. If we have plans, your child may accompany us or be left with a substitute if one is available. The provider can modify the late fee at her discretion.

**Late Payment**

Delinquency in tuition or any part of tuition/fee, including Hourly and AN/AA, will be handled by a late charge of \$15.00 per day (Monday –Saturday) added to the tuition price starting the day after fees are due. Fees that are delinquent 1 week (7 days) will create just cause for permanent dismissal. Therefore, if your child is unable to attend for that week, we recommend that you make arrangements to drop off payment before the end of the week. If you choose to mail your payment, we are not responsible for lost mail. After dismissal or unenrollment of child/ren, any unpaid amounts will incur a late fee of \$60 per week, added to the invoice each Monday for up to 6 weeks, after which time it will be sent to a collection agency and court if required. We will not hold checks for more than 1 day without adding the late charge. No child will be readmitted until the tuition and any late fees are paid. An additional 2 weeks fee will be added to fees due for the mandatory 2 weeks notice. We are not responsible for reminding you that your payment is due. It is a regularly scheduled bill and should be paid as such.

**Withdrawal/ Change of Schedule**

You must give us two weeks notice **in writing** prior to withdrawing your child or changing your child care schedule. Notice does not start until we receive your written statement. If you wish to return after withdrawing your child, space is not guaranteed and you must pay a new registration fee and deposit applicable to new enrollees. All paperwork must be resubmitted. Once a schedule is changed, space is not guaranteed for excluded days. Please see *Sick Days, Absences; Rotating Schedules and Vacation Time*.

**Holiday and Emergency Closings**

Our home child care is closed on: New Years Day, President's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day (Observed), Independence Day (Observed), Labor Day, Columbus Day (Observed), Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. If a Legal holiday falls on a weekend, we reserve the right to close either Monday or Friday. We may take up to 5 other days as training, personal or sick days. Typically we are closed on or near April 19 and May 15. You will be notified at least 2 weeks in advance of additional closings. If your child attends full time, part time or on a rotating schedule and would normally attend on a day that we are closed because of a holiday, training, personal or sick day you are expected to pay for that day as you normally would. These are considered paid days off, they are to be paid for even if your child does not come due to illness, vacation, or any other reason during that week. If ABHCP needs to close for a full week (Monday through Friday), either expectedly or unexpectedly, you will be billed ¼ your normal weekly tuition to reserve your child's space. If we need to close a longer time period, fee amounts will be determined at that time.

**Back up Child Care**

Whenever possible, we will use a substitute instead of closing. If one is not available it is your responsibility to provide substitute care for your child. Occasionally emergencies beyond our control may occur and we may need to close according to state licensing regulations. We will notify you as soon as possible if this happens. It is your responsibility to find alternate care at any time we are closed for any reason. We are not responsible for any fees for alternate child care incurred due to closing. Our regular fees may still apply. Please see *Holiday and Emergency Closings* and *Risk Management and Emergencies*.

**Sick Days, Absences**

The home child care is allowed to handle a certain number of children daily; therefore, we cannot grant a child who is ill or absent permission to attend on another day. We may be able to allow a child to come an additional day as AN/AA, additional fees apply. Fees are not affected or changed because of a child's illness or absence on scheduled days. For Hourly and AN/AA see *Hourly and AN/AA*. If your child is very ill and will not be able to return for an extended period of time, you may be able to use vacation time, this will be determined on an individual basis. See Mrs. Darlene Huston with any questions. If you schedule your child to come, you pay for that time and space, regardless of use. For rules pertaining to hourly care see *Hourly and As Needed, As Available Care*.

**Vacation Time**

After care has begun, you may reserve your child's space during vacation time for ½ the week's normal fee per week. For vacation time, the child may only come on an AN/AA, Hourly basis. Coming for a full day reinstates the normal tuition rate for the week. We must be notified **in writing** at least 2 weeks (14 days) in advance for ½ price vacation time. If it is not in writing or 2 weeks notice is not given, normal rates apply. No more than 2 weeks of ½ price vacation time may be used in a row. Vacation fees are to be fully paid for in advance—before vacation time begins, to reserve your child's space.

**Extended Leave**

Persons wishing to temporarily remove their child/ren from a full time childcare schedule for a period of no less than 4 weeks and no more than 14 weeks, shall pay a 'hold fee' before absence begins or on a monthly basis. The hold fee is equivalent to no more than one week's tuition per 4 weeks or ¼ normal tuition. At least 1 months notice is required before leave begins. Week of expected return must be given at notice, if date changes 2 weeks notice must be given and amounts will be added or credited as needed, added fees to be paid immediately. Leave may not be able to be shortened if slot has been filled with another client. Arrangements can be made to pay hold fee on a monthly basis. Late payment can be cause for unenrollment.

Any use of childcare during absence will be considered on an as needed/as available basis, will not affect the hold, and will incur additional costs. Hold fee is holding a full or part time, weekly slot; use of a part time slot does not save a full time slot. If at any time during leave, client decides to unenroll child/ren, full 2 weeks notice and payment of those 2 weeks at normal tuition rate is required.

1 or 2 weeks absence is considered vacation time with all rules noted in the contract and current parent handbook applying. All payment is due in advance of care or absence or late fees and possible unenrollment may occur. Reenrollment requires full payment of due amounts, new registration fees and paperwork.

**Programs**

**Programs Available**

**Daycare /Evening/Night Care** – Offered to children 6 weeks through 5 years of age, not attending full day school. It is offered full time, part time, As Needed/As Available (AN/AA) and Hourly. Summer, holiday and evening care may be offered to school aged children through 12 years old, as available.

**Integrated Curriculum for Infant through Pre-K** – Offered to all children enrolled at ABHCP throughout the day and evening. See Preschool and Assessments, below.

**ABC Music and Me, created by Kindermusik** – ABC Music and Me is a 30-45 minute program offered for children 2-5 years old. There is an additional fee for attending only this class.

**Kindermusik Classes** – various Kindermusik classes may be offered throughout the year either during childcare hours or outside of them. Clients are given a discounted rate.

**Half-day Preschool** - Half day, morning preschool is offered for 1-5 days per week. It is available for 3, 4 or 5 year olds. ABC Music and Me, created by Kindermusik is available for an additional fee.

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 We accept children for hourly, daily, weekly and AN/AA care. Ratios of ages are available and follow state standards. Children will normally be in a mixed age group. We have an open door policy. ABHCP is an equal opportunity childcare provider.

**ABHCP Preschool and Assessments (Infant to PreK)**

Preschool activities are offered here throughout the year and are integrated in the curriculum throughout the entire day. All children who are ready are allowed and encouraged to participate in all preschool and pre-K activities, regardless of age. All children are encouraged in age appropriate activities throughout the day.

Mrs. Darlene Huston or other qualified personnel brought in by Ms. Darlene Huston perform assessments or screenings on children at least once per year. Assessments/Screenings may include, but are not limited to: Vision, Hearing, Motor, Social/Emotional, Developmental, Ages & Stages, ASQ: SE, Temperaments and Atypical Behavior Scale (TABS) and Infant-Toddler and Family Instrument (ITFI). Most include parental input or family survey. You may be required to sign additional permission forms from other agencies for specific assessments.

If an assessment recommends further action you will be notified, in writing, within 30 days. We may refer children to the local CFC or Preschool districts as needed or we may request that you contact them.

**Preschool Activities Include...**

Language Arts	Science	Mathematics	Physical Development and Health
Social Science	Foreign Language	Fine Arts	Social/Emotional Development

Letter recognition, Name recognition and spelling, signs and labels in the environment, rhyming activities, sound matching, letter/sound matching, counting, number recognition, one-to-one correspondence, simple addition and subtraction, simple mathematical problems, comparison quantities, science investigations-indoors and out, comparisons and experiments, life cycles, nature, roles of leaders and community workers, voting, simple health and safety rules, communication and conflict resolution skills, creative arts exposure, descriptions and participation, vocabulary and communication enhancement, simple sign language and Spanish, independence enhancement, transitions, etc.

## Basic General Information

### Admission

**All paperwork required for registration and payment of fees must be completed before a child can stay at the home child care. Birth Certificates must be on file within 4 weeks of starting care (Infants without one are granted extended circumstances). A photograph of those who may pick up the child is appreciated.** Records must be original, not copies, and will be kept on record for each child enrolled in the program. We keep all records for at least 5 years after your child is unenrolled in accordance with state and federal law. We do not return records. Please be sure all information is updated for contact information, emergency contacts, and immunization records. Any time your child sees the doctor for shots or well child physicals ask for a new preschool health form to be filled out. Health forms must be updated at least annually and within 4 weeks of the child's birthday. Check that it has been signed (front and back) and dated. Some forms may not be listed. Forms must be original.

#### Required forms include:

Application/Record of Child Information	Late Pick-Up Policy
DHS Certificate of Child Health Examination	Summary of Licensing Standards (last page)
Consents to Day Care Providers	Birth Certificate
Emergency Medical Care; Administer Prescription Medicine;	Handbook Acknowledgement Form
Administer Patent Medicine; Child PickUp; Trips,	Screening, Assessment and Observation Release
Excursions and Public Park Facilities; Swimming	Photography Agreement and General Release
Pool Consent Form	Sunscreen, Insect Repellent and Diaper Rash Lotion Release
Basic General Permission	Contract
Medical Permission	Food Program Form

Parent/guardians of all children must provide specific items required for the care of your child. Items which can be required are listed below. If you wish your child to take a bath at the home child care, instructions as to bathing preferences must be in writing. No child under 5 years old may be left alone while bathing. Infants may be bathed as needed.

### Supplies Provided By...

#### Parents Provide (as applicable):

- Extra Change of Clothes and appropriate outdoor shoes
- Seasonal Items (snow pants, boots, hats, scarf, gloves/mittens, rain wear, swimsuit, etc)
- Diapers/ Training Pants \*
- Diaper Rash Cream\*
- Baby Wipes\*
- Formula or Breast Milk
- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste
- Sunscreen (if specific brand needed)
- Insect Repellent
- Any special diet foods (for allergies)
- Any Medication (including droppers or measuring instruments)
- Medical Supplies
- Blanket for nap (sent home for washing weekly)
- Outdoor 'Wet' shoes for sprinkler use.

\*Repeated failure to supply needed toileting or diapering items will incur an extra charge of the price of item (full package) plus a \$10.00 supply fee.

#### Child Care Provides:

- Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, Snacks as applicable
- Dishware needed
- Baby food (IFCereal, jarred or homemade baby food, finger food, etc)
- Teething gel or tablet (generic or homeopathic)
- Changing Pad
- Smocks for messy projects
- Children's Sunscreen
- Laundry Detergent and Dryer Sheets (for bedding, washcloths, etc. We do not wash children's clothing here.)
- Curriculum
- Art and activity supplies
- Bedding (for cots, pack n plays, sheets)
- Hand and dishwashing soap
- Many other items as needed, including Hugs!

### Discharge Policy

Any child with or without special needs who, after all reasonable attempts have been made to meet the needs of the child, demonstrates:

the inability to benefit from the type of care offered by our facility, the inability to adjust to our home child care or if there is a serious enough difference of opinion or lack of understanding regarding the school's philosophy vs. that of the child's parent/guardian

shall be discharged from the facility. A meeting will be held prior to discharge and a letter placed in the child's file. We reserve the right to terminate enrollment if we decide that it is in the best interest of the child. In the even that a child is unenrolled from our facility, we will attempt to give parent/guardians referrals to other agencies or facilities. At our discretion, child may be dismissed with or without notice. Delinquency of fees for 1 week will create just cause for permanent dismissal. Lack of cooperation or repeated violence, biting, and other harmful behaviors (to child or others) may result in unenrollment with or without notice.

### Arrival

Students can arrive or depart at any time of the day or night we are open; therefore, all arrivals and departures should be accomplished quickly and quietly to minimize disruption, especially at nap time. The children are our priority; please keep conversation minimal. If you tell us information we cannot guarantee to remember it, therefore; **NOTES are appreciated, strongly encouraged and sometimes required.**

Parents, please understand Preschool and ABC Music and Me are a regularly scheduled period of time during which educational opportunities necessary for your child's preparation to enter Kindergarten at a performance level which will ensure success are offered. If your child is not present during the class time, we will be unable to repeat the material presented. It is, therefore, in your child's best interest that they arrive on time for class. Please do not drop your child off late.

It is the parent's responsibility to wash their child's hands upon arrival.

Each child must be signed in every day on the sign in sheet in the foyer hallway by the accompanying adult.

### Departure/ Rules Governing Release of Children

It does not matter who brings your child, DO NOT assume that because you sent your child with someone that, at the end of the day, that same person is automatically authorized to pick the child up.

Other than the child's own authorized parent/guardians, children will only be released to persons who are authorized on the registration form. A hand written note of permission must be written and signed each time a person who is not on the form pick's a child up or your child will not be released to that person. You will be called to pick up your child if needed. **\*\*THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTION TO THIS POLICY. \*\*** This is for your child's safety. Persons who do not pick up the child on a regular basis will be asked for photo identification.

PLEASE CALL AND INFORM US IF YOU WILL BE LATE. Please see Late Policy Sheet and *Late Pickup Fees*.

State standards mandate that a child is only allowed to stay in the home child care for 12 hours within a 24 hour time period.

### Child Care Hours/ Schedule

We are open Monday through Friday and some Saturdays. We are closed some holidays. If you need extended hours, please contact Ms. Darlene at least 24 hours in advance. We cannot guarantee availability of extra hours.

Please see the regular schedule. The scheduled times may be varied due to the weather (more outside time for good weather, less for poor) and needs of the children in our care. Meal and snack times are regulated by the state and must be kept close to stated times. Naps and rest times for children are required. Efforts will be made to follow the child's normal routine for infants and toddlers.

Common activities include:

Outdoors – Weather permitting: sandboxes, climbers, slides, sea-saws, balls, bats, scooters, bowling, sprinklers, wading pool, gardening, walks to local ponds or playgrounds, running, rolling down hills, sledding, wagon rides, cars, tricycles, riders, push toys, connecting track, nature observations, train and traffic observations, etc.

Indoors - Toys for various age groups including but not limited to: puzzles, dramatic play kitchen, workbench, dolls, various accessories, beads, art easel, art supplies, books for all age groups, educational toys, cars, trucks, people, blocks (several types), puppets, riding toys, climber, play doh, musical instruments, games, binoculars, sensory table, stringing/lacing, and connecting track. Cooking occurs on a regular basis.

### Outdoor Play

We will go outside to play as often as possible, weather permitting. All children go outside, biased on weather conditions. If there is active precipitation or it is less than 30 F, no children will be outside. If it is below 40F, infants and toddlers may or may not go outside. The temperature used will be on the gauge on the outside of the childcare, attached to the home. We do our best to ensure children remain healthy and this includes taking children outside to play. DCFS rules stipulate taking children outside daily, weather permitting. In very cold or very hot weather, our outside time is shorter. In warm weather, our outside time is longer. Participants and duration of activities are biased in part on current local weather conditions. Expect your child to get dirty while outside.

It is your responsibility to bring clothing/shoes, marked with their name, appropriate to the weather for the day for your child. Please remember that weather changes throughout the day. Children are not left inside because of inappropriate clothing. We are not responsible to provide appropriate clothing for outside activities.

Parents are encouraged to bring shoes, footie's or extra socks for non walking infants for extra warmth. Infants do go outside throughout the year.

### **Field Trips**

*Parents are always welcome to accompany us on field trips. Any charges for parents are the parent's responsibility.*

Field trips are offered during the year. We will often take walking field trips to a local park or nearby pond or store. Most walking field trips are taken in the morning and we are back by 11:30AM. Other field trips are local (Pilcher Park Nature Center, Greenhouse, or Inwood Park District Pool) and there is no charge incurred for children under 3 years of age. You will be notified of the possibility of local driving field trips and any charges for children 3 or older as soon as possible.

Notice will be given in advance of any charges pertaining to field trip with charges. Charges must be paid in advance of field trip. General permission for local trips is included in entry permission forms. Permission forms for other trips and extra fees or charges will be due as stated on the permission form. If you do not grant your child permission to attend any field trip, you will be responsible to find child care for the time we are on the field trip.

When going on a driving field trip, all children under the age of 6 or requiring a booster or car seat for any reason, who are in the provider's vehicle will use an appropriate car seat or restraint system. Any person in the provider's vehicle will wear a seatbelt or use an approved child restraint system.

### **Wading Pool/Sprinkler**

During warm months a wading pool/sprinkler may be used. Swim suits or shorts, 'wet' shoes and a t shirt are required for pool and sprinkler water activities. Wading pools will be no deeper than 1 ft. Permission slip must be completed for use of wading pool. We may occasionally go to the local park district pool. Ratio will be no more than 3 children per 1 adult for the swimming pool. At the pool there are lifeguards. If a child does not have separate 'wet' shoes, they will wear the shoes they wore to ABHCP.

### **Meals and Snacks**

All meals and snacks are healthy foods, prepared on the premises. Menus are scheduled on a rotating basis and can be found on the website or in the childcare kitchen. Any children with special food requirements, due to medical reasons or religious beliefs will be given an alternate food choice. Please help in providing alternate foods. Substitute foods will not be offered because of dislike. Notification of the need for a special diet must be given to the provider at the time of registration, or when the diet goes into effect. All special dietary needs will be on file, and posted in the food preparation area. Children should not arrive eating food. If a child arrives eating food, it may be taken away from them.

Meals are served Family Style as much as possible. Adults will help serve items as needed; however, children are encouraged to be as independent as possible. Assistance will be given as needed. As children grow and become used to our routine, they will naturally become more independent. Tableware is appropriately sized for young children, encouraging independence.

Any food provided by parent/guardians must be labeled with the child's name, date and content. Food must be in original packaging.

### **Religious Acknowledgement**

We say a short prayer before meals and bedtime. We may also say a simple prayer at different times during the day with the children. Prayers will be age appropriate and will encourage talking to God. The Christian view will be reflected.

### **Toilet Training**

Toilet training usually begins when the parents feel that they and their child are ready to start, often around 1 ½ - 2 ½ years old. Toilet training is a cooperative effort. During training, please communicate with us what works at home and we will share what works in child care. Do not expect us to train your child if you are not following through at home; it will only confuse your child. Toilet training must be a joint effort. Children who are toilet training should be in clothing that it is easy for them to remove and either pull ups or underwear used with plastic pants. All soiled clothing goes home for washing. Several changes of clothing may be needed. We take children to the bathroom several times throughout the day. They are given books to read while they are sitting on the toilet or potty seat. We give incentives (verbal praise, hugs, stickers, hand stamps) for various types of success.

Tuition reflects level of potty training; therefore, your child must be FULLY potty trained for the reduced tuition to be in effect. The new fully trained child must have no more than 1 accident per week for a minimum of 2 consecutive weeks at child care and be going to the bathroom without reminders. This does include nap time. If a child reverts after training is completed and has several accidents for 2-3 weeks, the tuition will reflect the reversed potty training status. You will be notified of the new tuition amount.

### **Rules of Behavior, Responsibility**

We understand that the younger the child, the simpler the rules need to be. Therefore, our basic rules are:

Respect for Others

Good Manners

All children are given reasonable opportunity to resolve their own conflicts. Guidance and redirection is given as needed. Staff in the room is responsible for discipline. Staff is expected to be immediate, consistent and use logical consequences for negative behavior. Any incidents, calls and notes or letters will be included in the child's file.

You will be responsible for any loss, damage or destruction by your child of any property of the child care and for any damages for which the child care becomes liable or chargeable because of your child's actions. Cost for item/s will not exceed replacement cost of item. You may replace item with similar item only if approved by Mrs. Darlene Huston.

Behavior management plans developed by the parent/guardian and a professional clinician to meet needs of specific students will be implemented by staff working with the child. The plan must be documented in the child's file.

### **Discipline**

At ABHCP, the child is guided gradually to develop a personal sense of inner self-discipline based on his or her own interior positive motivations. Positive reinforcement, redirection, behavior modification, 1,2,3 Magic, hand over hand, and the use of time to reflect are used to help each child grow in self-discipline. Disruptions are handled immediately. Use of correct behaviors will always be encouraged. Children younger than 2 years of age are not given time outs. They will be removed from a situation where they are having repeated difficulty behaving in an appropriate manner. This may include an opportunity be away from other children and stimulation. Parents are always informed and involved in discipline needed for extreme, repetitive or violent behaviors.

A child may be asked to sit out from a game or activity if needed. Parents will be informed of inappropriate behaviors and disciplines used. We appreciate your help in discussing this issue with your child to attempt to solve it. If unacceptable behaviors continue the parent/guardian may be called and asked to remove the child. A note may be sent home to inform the parent/guardian that a problem occurred and how it was resolved. We make every effort to understand why the child is misbehaving. Your help is appreciated. Cooperation between parent/guardians and staff is expected at all times. Questions should be addressed to Ms. Darlene Huston.

The use of physical punishment, loss of food, profane language, humiliation, or abuse is NEVER ALLOWED. Food is not used as a reward or punishment. Children are not disciplined for toilet accidents.

### **Clothing and Items from Home**

All children should be in play clothes. Clothes should be comfortable, simple, and washable. Violent scenes should not be depicted. Children who are toilet training should be in clothing that it is easy for them to remove. Clothing may become dirty from outdoor play or painting. We do all we can to prevent painted clothing. Paint is always the washable type. Clothing should be of a type that makes it easy for them to use the bathroom facilities. We do not wash children's clothing here.

Shoes should be comfortable, safe and easy for the child to put on by themselves. Tennis type shoes are strongly advised. Sandals, open toes shoes and shoes with any type of heel are not allowed because of the danger they pose to children. **We are not responsible for injury due to shoe choice.** A lack of suitable shoes can and will lead to exclusion from activities for the safety of the child. All children who have started walking, including wall or finger walking, should arrive with shoes.

All clothing should be labeled with the child's last name and first initial to prevent loss or confusion. This includes coats, shoes and boots. All children must be provided with a complete change of clothing that is appropriate for the season. An appropriate 1 piece bathing suit, or shorts and t shirt, will also be needed. We do not always know what clothes the children arrive in. ABHCP is not responsible for unmarked clothing/shoes which go home with the incorrect child.

Please do not let your child bring toys, money, jewelry, gum, stuffed animals, candy or other items from home. We cannot be responsible for lost or broken items. Items from home will be kept in the foyer or sent home upon entry. If it stays here, other children will be allowed to play with it. The only exceptions are infant items (pacifiers, etc) and nap items. Items needing refrigeration will be marked with the child's name, the date, and stored. We do not wash personal Sippy cups from home. It is the parent's responsibility to request item at the end of the day to take it home. Provider will attempt to remember it, but there are many other primary responsibilities which have a higher claim on the providers focus. Items which have been unclaimed after a week will go into Lost and Found. At the end of each month, Lost and Found will be emptied and the items donated.

**NO COMPUTER GAMES FROM HOME ARE ALLOWED.** We are not responsible for lost or broken computer games or equipment. No weapons or toy weapons are ever allowed. No fighting toys are allowed. No toys may be used in dramatic play to depict weapons or perform violent behaviors. Our child care is a 'safe zone'.

## **Holiday Celebrations**

### **Food for Special Days**

Treats are welcome as long as they are nutritious and follow Health Department rules. Treats need to be store bought and sent in the original, sealed package. Extra food will be sent home. There should be enough treats for all children, including your own. Be sure to send extra or call for an amount. They will be returned to you, none handed out, if there are not enough for every child attending that day.

### **Halloween**

Costumes of friendly story, nursery rhyme, fairy tale, or movie characters or Saints are welcome. NO witches, devils, ghosts, scary costumes or weapons of any sort are allowed. Masks are not allowed as they limit children vision and may cause accidents. Face paint should be minimal. Children have chosen wonderful costumes such as: clouds, community workers, M&M's, trees, and other similar items. We will not go out trick or treating.

### **Christmas/Easter**

We will have Christmas or Easter games.

### **Valentines Day**

Valentine cards should not be addressed. If your child wants to practice printing, a list of first names can be supplies on request. A card should be sent for each child. Red and pink are the colors of the day.

### **St. Patrick's Day**

Green is the color of the day. Please send your child to school wearing at least one green item.

These special days are a part of the American Child's culture which we respect and enjoy at school. Learning to relax and enjoy a festive occasion is as much a part of early childhood education as is learning to count, read, listen or share. Learning to laugh, love and be loved is a part of every day at school, but it receives the spotlight on special days.

## Communications

### General Communications

The children are our greatest concern; therefore, we request that communications from parent/guardians regarding information about their child be put in writing. If you would like a conference, talk to Ms. Darlene for an appointment. If you have special instructions to be followed on a specific day the information must be written down. We are not responsible for remembering verbal communications. We ask that parents of infants please fill out their part of the infant daily communication sheet, including when your child woke up, last ate and was last changed.

We supply forms for medication, vacation time, change of schedule and required registration forms. They can be found in the foyer or you may ask for them. Pens are also available. We will make copies of completed forms at your request. Most can be copied immediately, however; we reserve the right to request up to 24 hours to complete your request. There is no charge for a first request. A second request will incur a charge of \$.50 per page. Forms can be faxed or emailed at no charge.

### Separated Parents

We provide a safe, nurturing and educational environment for your child. Please do not attempt to involve us in domestic issues. It is our policy to remain neutral in the best interest of the child. Please inform us of any court orders in place for your child's safety. We will need to make a copy of any such court order from the original for your child's file.

Parents sharing custody and childcare arrangements or payments will each need to sign contract, late payment policy and other forms as stated in *Registration, Tuition*. Information will be shared with both parents to an equal extent as much as possible. Requests for required supplies which are needed will be addressed to both parents until requested items are supplied.

### Parent Telephone Calls

Telephone calls to the school should be limited to emergencies. We understand your concern when a child is new to ABHCC and will make exceptions. **Please use a note to the Provider when at all possible.** Please keep in mind that our first and main responsibility is the care of your child. If you have concerns that you wish to discuss, an appointment will need to be made.

### Provider Telephone Calls

We realize that you are often at work and may not be able to receive calls unless there is an emergency. We will limit out phone calls to information that we need to properly care for your child or for informing you of possible health or other concerns about your child. If your child had a rough transition to child care we may also call you to let you know how your child is currently feeling.

### About Your Child's Day

Parents with infants or toddlers will receive a daily communication sheet including when your child was fed and changed. Parents of 2 year olds will receive communication sheets from 1-5 days per week depending on the level of your child's communication ability and potty training. As your child approaches 3 years old, sheets will be less frequent. Parents of Preschoolers will receive verbal information daily about their child's activities. Notes may be written weekly, depending on activities, attendance and other variables.

All artwork will be sent home at various times throughout the week. Parents/guardians are responsible to make sure art and other items sent home do not remain at ABHCP, such items can be thrown out if left behind for 1 week.

### Photos and Video

Throughout the week we may take photos or video of childcare activities. Parents may be shown or given, through CD, DVD, email or other media, photos or video taken during childcare hours. Since these will be taken during activities, there may be more than one child included. Children's faces will be on photos emailed or otherwise given to parents. I understand that ABHCP has no control over photos after they are given out.

Children's pictures, portraits, likeness and/or testimonials, may be used with whatever visuals, copy or other elements chosen by ABHCP for advertising or other purposes. Children's full front facial view will not be published on the child care website for up to 5 years after dismissal from ABHCP.

### Suggestions and Comments

Your suggestions and comments are most welcome at any time. We care about your children and the job we are doing with and for them. You can help us to help them by letting us know what you like as well as what you feel we may be able to improve. We always wish to improve our service to you and your child.

## Health and Safety

### Illness, Isolations, and Exclusions Guidelines

Any child who is ill should remain at home. If a child is too sick to go outside, they should remain home. Children may not return to childcare until they have been symptom free for 24 hours.

If a child exhibits any of the following symptoms, we will notify the parent/guardians to pick up the child and place the child in our designated sick area under supervision.

Fever of 101 degrees oral temperature or more.

Diarrhea, vomiting, rash, conjunctivitis (Pink Eye), convulsions.

Any infectious, contagious, or communicable illness, including but not limited to: Parasitic Infestations (lice, scabies, worms, etc), and Chicken Pox (child may not return until all blisters have dried and formed scabs)

In the event of infections, contagious or communicable illness, the child must be treated and cleared by a doctor's note before returning to child care. All families will be notified of any exposure to contagious illness, disease or infection in the program within 24 hours of when we become aware of it. In an emergency, if the child's parent/guardians cannot be reached, Emergency Medical Services and Personnel will be called.

The best form of prevention is washing the hands. All children and staff will wash their hands upon arrival, before and after meals, after bathroom use, and after sneezing. **Parents are responsible for washing their children's hands upon arrival.**

### First Aid Treatment for Minor Injuries

Injuries will be treated by washing, bandaging and recommended first aid treatment, as well as hugs and sympathy.

Parent/guardians will be informed how the injury occurred at the time of pick up. We are not responsible for minor injuries to children engaged in normal activities. Minor injuries, cuts and bruises are a part of childhood. While we provide excellent supervision and adequate safety, the creative minds and active bodies of children, on occasion, cause minor accidents. The continued treatment for injuries is the responsibility of the parent/guardians.

### Medication

All medicines will be given to Ms. Darlene with the Medication Form. This form must be signed by the child's parent/guardian. Medicine must be in original container with the child's name on it. No medication can be kept on the property without a current form. Forms remain effective for no more than 1 week (7 days) from date of signing. If medication needs to be given for a longer period, a new form will need to be filled out. You must specify when you last gave medication to your child on the form.

### Screenings

Screenings may be done annually or as needed at the providers and/or parents discretion. Screenings can be performed prior to each school year, in the late spring or early summer on all children. Screenings are done by one or more of the following:

#### Caregiver Connections – Child Care Resource & Referral (815) 741-1163 ext. 266

Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants for Will, Grundy, Kendall, & Kankakee Counties

#### Child and Family Connections 1-800-323-4769

CFC is the entry point for Early Intervention services for children ages 0-3 in Illinois.

#### Early Intervention – Illinois Department of Human Services 1800-323-GROW

Illinois' Early Intervention program's mission is to assure that families who have infants and toddlers, birth to three, which diagnosed disabilities, developmental delays or substantial risk of significant delays receive resource and supports that assist them in maximizing their child's development, while respecting the diversity of families and communities.

#### Mrs. Darlene Huston and/or Mr. Jerry Huston

Both are qualified through the state of Illinois to administer various screenings and assessments to Infants through Preschoolers. They remain current through periodic trainings.

### **Security Precautions**

In order to serve you better, we have chosen to take several types of child protection precautions.

- We have an open door policy. You may stop by at any time to observe or visit.
- Please notify the emergency contact that they will be requested to furnish a photo ID when picking up your child. Photos of parents/guardians and/or families are posted in the child care area. Parents are welcome to furnish photos of any family members or those who would be picking up your child.
- The play room area, except the bathroom, is equipped with security cameras. The home child care entrance/exit is also monitored. Security video/DVD will be used for security and safety.
- Front or full facial views of children enrolled in ABHCP are not published on the website and will not be for at least 5 years after unenrollment.
- Staff has background checks and are fingerprinted through the agency/ies required by DCFS.

### **Release of Personal Information**

Each child has their own file, which is kept in a locked file cabinet. Only custodial parent/guardian(s) and the Department of Children and Family Services will be permitted access to these files. File information shall not be released to any other source unless written release is signed by the custodial parent/guardian(s) or mandated by a court order. Any photographs or materials made by the children will not be released for publication without prior written consent of custodial parent/guardian(s)-included in this handbook.

### **Risk Management and Emergencies**

In the event of an emergency the procedures are stated below:

**Fire** – Everyone in the child care is evacuated to the trees outside the fence next to the driveway gate. Phone calls are made to local fire department, EMS, and the families or emergency contacts after leaving the house.

**Severe Storms/natural disasters**—Everyone is sheltered in the ground floor bathroom. Flashlight, first aid kit, books and other items are available to wait out the storm.

**Power Outage** – Com Ed will be notified and we have a backup generator on the premises which will be utilized. Bottled water is also kept on the premises for use. Flashlights and emergency lighting will be used.

**Accident** -- In case of severe accident in the child care, on a field trip or by vehicle, 911 is called for emergency care, parents/families are called and notified where to pick up children as needed. If accident is not severe, parents are called and allowed to determine if they wish to pick up their child to take the child to their doctor.

**Hazmat Spills** – Hazmat Spills requiring evacuation of the property will be dealt with on an individual basis under the supervision of the government designated emergency personnel. Parents/families will be called with information regarding child pick up.

To maintain the safety of people, property, equipment and materials, universal precautions are taken to ensure the property is clean and free of hazards. Cleaning is completed daily and weekly as needed. Items are sanitized as required and needed.

### **Other Health and Safety Issues**

- No one living at our home smokes and we do not drink alcoholic beverages before or during child care hours.
- State law prohibits smoking on our property during child care hours. Our home is a smoke-free environment.
- We have 2 cats on the property. They are kept up to date on all vaccinations and are given medication to prevent parasites.
- We utilize air purifiers, a steam cleaner, bleach water and other similar methods to insure cleanliness. All toys are washed on a regular basis, in addition to items we see being mouthed.
- There is no usable large pool on our property available to the children. We do use a 6” wading pool and sprinklers during the summertime.
- Provider may, at her discretion, trim fingernails and/or toenails of children in child care to reduce possible injury.

**Please return to ABHCP**  
**Release Forms**

I/We \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/guardians of \_\_\_\_\_

1) Hereby certify that I/We have received a Parent/guardian Handbook Dated \_\_\_\_\_ and have read and understand all of ABHCP policies. Initial each

_____ Welcome	page 3	_____ Basic General Information	pages 8 - 12
_____ Introduction	page 4	_____ Communications	page 13
_____ Financial	pages 5 - 7	_____ Health and Safety	page 14 - 15
_____ Programs	page 7		

I/We agree to cooperate with all such policies, procedures, terms and conditions listed, including discipline, security video/DVD and financial obligations of my child. \_\_\_\_\_ Initial \_\_\_\_\_ Initial

2) I give my permission for my child/ren to utilize the child care home’s wading pool and sprinklers. (over 6 months)  
Children will be under close adult supervision at all times.  
YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ Initial Choice

3) I give my permission for my child/ren to be driven on local field trips. I understand that required safety seats/devices will be used.  
YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

4) I give my permission for my child/ren to use a public pool with lifeguards, as stated in the handbook. Child must be over 6 months old.  
YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

5) I give my permission for provider to trim my children finger/toe nails as needed for the safety of all children and adults in the child care. YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ Initial Choice

6) I wish my child to be allowed to join the others in expressing a general belief and love of God as his or her Creator and Heavenly Father. I understand my child will hear other children engaging in these activities. They may include:

- Short prayers to God
- Songs to God
- Simple explanations of the meaning of Christmas and Easter as the Birth and Resurrection of Jesus

Initial

Yes, I my child may participate \_\_\_\_\_

No, I my child may not participate \_\_\_\_\_ I under stand my child will hear other children engaging in these activities.

I have read all of the above and have initialed my choices. By signing this you acknowledge that you have read the policies, procedures, terms and conditions in the complete Parent Handbook dated \_\_\_\_\_ and agree to follow them. Amending policies may be done at any time by giving you, the client, a new copy at least 2 weeks before they go into effect.

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Signature of Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Form 1 of 3 from Handbook  
American Butterflies Home ChildCare and Preschool is an equal opportunity provider.

**Screening, Assessment and Observation Release**

I/We \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/guardians of \_\_\_\_\_

1) I have read, understand and agree that my child may be given assessments and/or screenings throughout the year while in ABHCP. Assessments/Screenings include those listed in the handbook as well as those determined necessary by observations or previous assessments and may be performed by Mrs. Darlene Huston, Mr. Jerry Huston or others from agencies as listed in the \_\_\_\_\_ handbook YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

2) I give my permission for Mrs. Darlene Huston DBA American Butterflies Home Child Care, to refer my child/children to Child Family Connections, my local school district, or other agencies for further screenings/assessments. I know that I will be notified of any referrals.  
YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_, I prefer to notify them myself.

3) I give my permission for Mrs. Darlene Huston DBA American Butterflies Home Child Care, to request observations and allow observations of the child care home and/or my child/children at any time. I further understand that the person performing observations may be associated with CCR&R, SELF or other agencies not named. I will be notified as soon as possible that someone will or may be coming to observe.  
YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_, I will make other arrangements for child care during that time. There is no reduction in tuition.

I have read all of the above and have initialed my choices. Agencies may request signing of a release form specific to them.

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Signature of Parent/Guardian Date

Form 2 of 3 from handbook

