



Family Handbook

Updated December 2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome and Non-Discrimination Statement2-3

Locations and Contact Information..... 4

About Nurtury 5

Directory List5-7

Nurtury Mission 8

Nurtury Philosophy 8

Hours of Operation..... 8

Enrollment..... 9

Inclusion..... 9

Child Assessment Plan9-10

Confidentiality 10

Staff Training and Qualifications 10

Staff to Child Ratios..... 10

Transitions (Center-Based only) 11

Curriculum and Learning 11-13

Family Engagement 13-15

Policies and Procedures..... (15-25)

 Payment/Fees 15-16

 Attendance and Pickup (Late Fee)..... 16-17

 Rest Period 17-18

 Child Guidance and Positive Discipline 18-19

 Avoiding Suspension/Termination..... 19

 Developmental Screening 19

 Referral Process19-20

 Emergencies, Illness, and Injuries..... (20-25)

Nurtury Early Education Family Handbook

Health/Health Plan/Medication Administration.....20-24

Emergency Preparedness24-25

Child Abuse and Neglect Policy 25

Nutrition/Approved Foods26-28

Field Trips and Transportation..... 29

Child Record 29

Clothing and Personal Items29-30

Code of Conduct 30

Appendix I (Holiday and Program Closure Schedule)..... 31

Appendix II (Curriculum Samples).....32-33

WELCOME

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to Nurtury Early Education! This handbook is designed to give you a helpful insight into the programs and services offered by Nurtury, as well as detailed information about our program activities, policies, and procedures.

At Nurtury, we strongly believe that open communication between our families and staff is essential to supporting your child and family needs. We hope the information here will be the start of building a solid partnership with your family. Center program staff and Family Child Care (FCC) providers are committed to your child’s education, and we encourage you to ask questions, share ideas, and suggestions. If you are interested in visiting your child’s program, please schedule an appointment with the Program Director or your FCC provider.

Please read this handbook carefully and keep it in a safe place for easy and quick reference during the school year. If you have any questions about the content in this book, please speak with your Program Director.

We look forward to your family being part of Nurtury!

Best Regards,

Laura Perille
CEO & President
Nurtury Early Education

NON- DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Nurtury adheres to the legal guidelines for non-discrimination. We will not discriminate because of race, religion, national origin, political beliefs, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, or disability. Our programs are multi-cultural and multi-lingual, and we value diversity and inclusion. We are an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer.

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) – Non-Discrimination Statement

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA’s TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant’s name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. Mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

2. Fax:

(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

3. Email:

program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

LOCATIONS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Center-Based Programs:	Family Child Care Offices:
<p>Nurtury Harvard Street 243 Harvard Street Cambridge, MA 02139 (617) 492-3935 Mona Sanon, Program Director msanon@nurturyboston.org Zabidah Parker, Program Coordinator zparkar@nurturyboston.org</p>	<p>Nurtury Family Child Care Regional Office - Chelsea 70 Everett Avenue, Suite 504 Chelsea, MA 02150 (857) 276-9440 Tania Perez, Regional Director tperez@nurturyboston.org</p>
<p>Nurtury Learning Lab 33 Bickford Street Jamaica Plain, MA 02130 (617) 477-3115 Finda Leno, Program Director fleno@nurturyboston.org Barbara Roberts, Assistant Program Director broberts@nurturyboston.org</p>	<p>Nurtury Family Child Care Regional Office - Boston 2201 Washington Street Roxbury, MA 02119 (857) 276-9444 Cynthia Del Orbe, Regional Director cdelorbe@nurturyboston.org</p>
<p>Nurtury Horadan Way 38 Horadan Way Roxbury, MA 02120 (857) 675-0130 Ronda Atkins-Martinez, Program Director ratkinsmartinez@nurturyboston.org Magdalena Nunez, Assistant Program Director mnunez@nurturyboston.org</p>	<p>Nurtury Family Child Care Incubator 1575 Tremont St Roxbury, MA 02120 (Opening in 2024)</p>
<p>Nurtury Early Education, Central Office 2201 Washington Street, Suite 306 Roxbury, MA 02119 (617) 695-0700</p>	

FAMILY SATISFACTION

Please let your Program Director know if you are not completely satisfied with your child/family’s participation in the program. If you have notified the Program Director and are still not satisfied, please contact Senior Director of Early Learning Centers Stephanie Johnson at sjohnson@nurturyboston.org or (617) 839-6891. For Family Child Care (FCC), please contact VP of Business Development Mayra Rosado at mrosado@nurturyboston.org or (617) 939-8550. If they are not available, be sure to leave a voice mail message, and they will return your call as soon possible.

Please visit our website at www.nurturyboston.org.

ABOUT NURTURY EARLY EDUCATION

Founded in 1878, Nurtury Early Education is New England’s first, and one of the largest, non-profit early education and care provider. Formerly known as Associated Early Care and Education, Nurtury operates three child care centers in Cambridge, Roxbury, and Jamaica Plain. We also support a large Family Child Care (FCC) network with regional offices located in Chelsea and Boston. Some programs date back to the last century while others have been recently developed.

We are a private, non-profit corporation, with a governing Board of Directors and a central office located at 2201 Washington Street in Roxbury. The Central Office is responsible for overall policy development and management functions such as human resources, nutrition, enrollment, facilities, program development, and finance.

Nurtury’s center-based and family child care programs are licensed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC). The EEC regional office is located at 100 Hancock Street, 4th floor, Quincy, MA 02169. EEC may be contacted for all of our program’s history at (617) 472-2881.

All Nurtury centers are accredited or pursuing accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Accreditation is a high mark of quality for early education centers. Nurtury centers use the results of the accreditation process to make program improvements and meet high quality standards.

The majority of our center-based educators and family child care educators have a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, an associate degree or a bachelor’s degree in early childhood education or a related field. Staff education and qualifications are very important to us. Nurtury offers continuous learning opportunities to educators, including five Professional Development days per year. We strive to recruit, screen, and hire the most professional educators in the field of early childhood education, and we support their continued professional growth while with Nurtury Early Education.

DIRECTORY LIST

Center Based Programs:	
Senior Director of Early Learning Centers.....	Stephanie Johnson sjohnson@nurturyboston.org
Senior Director of Professional Development	Sarah Montoya smontoya@nurturyboston.org
Family Support Coordinator.....	Taylor Connolly tconnolly@nurturyboston.org
Director of Enrollment.....	Michele Whalen mwhalen@nurturyboston.org

Nurtury Early Education Family Handbook

Assistant Director of Early Learning Centers.....	Kathy Lindsay klindsay@nurturyboston.org
Learning Lab	
Program Director.....	Finda Leno fleno@nurturyboston.org
Assistant Program Director.....	Barbara Roberts broberts@nurturyboston.org
Family Partner.....	Bethzaida Dones bdones@nurturyboston.org
Enrollment Coordinator.....	Maggie Morales morales@nurturyboston.org
Horadan Way	
Program Director.....	Ronda Atkins-Martinez ratkinsmartinez@nurturyboston.org
Assistant Program Director.....	Magdalena Nunez mnunez@nurturyboston.org
Family Partners.....	Alicia Martin amartin@nurturyboston.org Madison Niles mniles@nurturyboston.org
Director of Enrollment.....	Michele Whalen mwhalen@nurturyboston.org
Harvard Street	
Program Director.....	Mona Sanon msanon@nurturyboston.org
Program Coordinator.....	Zabidah Parker zparker@nurturyboston.org
Family Partner.....	Zabidah Parker zparker@nurturyboston.org
Enrollment Coordinator.....	Maggie Morales mmorales@nurturyboston.org

Nurtury Early Education Family Handbook

Family Child Care	
Vice President of Business Development.....	Mayra Rosado mrosado@nurturyboston.org
Family Support Coordinator.....	Taylor Connolly tconnolly@nurturyboston.org
Family Child Care, Boston	
Regional Director.....	Cynthia Del Orbe cdelorbe@nurturyboston.org
Enrollment Coordinators.....	Leslie Mateo, lmateo@nurturyboston.org Kiaralix Ramos, kramos@nurturyboston.org
Family Partner.....	Victoria Espailat vespaillat@nurturyboston.org
Family Child Care, Chelsea	
Regional Director.....	Tania Perez tperez@nurturyboston.org
Enrollment Coordinators.....	Arelis Rodriguez, arodriguez@nurturyboston.org Carmen Chicas, cchicas@nurturyboston.org
Family Partner.....	Mayelin Baez mbaez@nurturyboston.org
Who to Contact	
Enrollment and Billing.....	Michele Whalen mwhalen@nurturyboston.org
Family Support.....	Taylor Connolly tconnolly@nurturyboston.org
Children’s Absences.....	Family Partners (center-based programs) Providers (Family Child Care)
Program and Community Events.....	Taylor Connolly tconnolly@nurturyboston.org

NURTURY'S MISSION

Nurtury Early Education provides high-quality child care to give Greater Boston's youngest children in need, birth to age five, the opportunity to reach their full potential by investing in school readiness, promoting healthy development, and supporting families.

NURTURY'S PHILOSOPHY

Nurtury provides high-quality education and care for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers in a safe friendly environment. All Nurtury centers are accredited or pursuing accreditation through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Our programs provide a nurturing, child-focused environment that is designed to meet the needs of each individual child according to their developmental needs.

Our programs promote children's development in social, emotional, physical, and cognitive areas through hands-on learning and play-based exploration. Emphasis is placed on establishing each child's sense of security and self-esteem which we believe is vital to the development of curiosity about the world around them, persistence in the face of adversity, resilience, independence, and the development of meaningful social relationships with other children and educators.

Nurtury Early Education serves families from varied cultures and linguistic backgrounds. We have multilingual educators who speak a variety of languages including Haitian/Creole, Spanish, and Mandarin. We utilize an assessment-based curriculum that is designed to meet the group and individual needs of all children. We believe that helping children develop social-emotional skills is one of the most important parts of our program. An equally important part is supporting families as they raise their children. We view our positive relationships with families as vital to this support. We encourage family support and engagement in all aspects of our services.

Nurtury believes in a strong partnership between families and educators. Families are the most important people in a child's life and are the main source of security and identity for them. Nurtury supports families as their child's first teacher and advocate. At Nurtury, we strive to have regular communication with families and to always be responsive to your questions and concerns.

HOURS OF OPERATION

We offer 9-10 hours of care each day from Monday through Friday. Our Center-Based care programs open at 7:30 AM and close either at 4:30 PM, 5 PM, or 5:30 PM (hours vary by center). The operation hours of our Family Child Care programs are based on the individual programs. For the most updated hours of operation, please visit our website.

Families receive the Nurtury holiday and program closure schedule annually. Please see attached closure schedule for 2023-2024 (page 31). Nurtury programs may close due to inclement weather or emergencies; notification will be provided. Families may also visit our website at www.NurturyBoston.org and/or Nurtury's Facebook page for closure information.

ENROLLMENT

We have a diverse community, delivering care whether you can pay full tuition or are receiving financial assistance, such as vouchers or subsidies. To enroll your child, please call (617) 695-0700 ext. 233. An Enrollment Coordinator will assess your child's eligibility for existing vacancies. For FCC-specific enrollment, please contact one of our FCC regional offices. Nurtury enrolls infants, toddlers, and preschoolers and children eligible for Head Start, Early Head Start, and Boston Public Schools K1 classrooms. We provide subsidized slots, from the Mass 211 waitlist, on a sliding fee scale based on your income. We accept vouchers from local Child Care Resource and Referral agencies as well and welcome all that choose to pay or choose BPS-only hours/days for their child eligible for a UPK seat.

Enrollment and Subsidy (if needed) paperwork will be sent through DocuSign for families to fill out. Families must provide a copy of your child's birth certificate, parent/guardian's photo ID, and a copy of your child's most recent physical and record of immunizations prior to enrolling.

If more than one child is enrolled in the program from a family, each child enrolled must have individual completed enrollment documents. Families enrolled in our UPK classrooms have the option to choose BPS-only hours/days (6.5 hours for 180 days).

Once a program has been identified for your child, your Enrollment Coordinator will provide you with the Program Director's name and contact information. After all required paperwork has been received, enrollment will be complete and a start date will be determined. Programs schedule pre-enrollment welcome appointments with families to complete other required paperwork, answer questions, or to tour the program. Virtual meetings with the primary educator or FCC Educator can also be scheduled.

INCLUSION

We believe that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance, and belonging in our programs. We make every reasonable accommodation to encourage the full participation of all children in our programs based on their capabilities and needs.

CHILD ASSESSMENT PLAN

The purpose of completing assessments is to ensure that we are meeting the needs of the child determining their strengths and setting goals for their continued learning. In addition, child assessments inform overall program improvements, activities, or lesson plans that meet the needs and interests of the children. Educators use assessments to complement and adjust their teaching strategies based on information gained from child assessments. We continue to provide consistent training for our staff on assessment procedures and the development of an individualized curriculum to meet children's needs.

Our Educators continuously assess children both informally and formally and will prepare a written assessment based on observation and documentation through Teaching Strategies Gold

Nurtury Early Education Family Handbook

(TSG). TSG is an online early childhood assessment tool, used in conjunction with the curriculum to track a child's developmental progress and compare the child's knowledge, skills, and behaviors to those of children of the same age. This assessment tool is organized into the areas of social/emotional/physical, language, cognitive, literacy, and mathematics.

Child assessments are completed for toddler/preschool, and infants in November, February, and May. Infants/diverse learners also have an assessment completed in August. An assessment report will be provided to each family after the assessment is complete and a family conference will be scheduled to discuss the child's development and participation in the program.

Conferences are held in December, March, and June. These conferences provide an opportunity for open dialogue between you and your child's educator to share insights about your child's development, progress, and share any questions or concerns you may have.

CONFIDENTIALITY

We respect our families and their rights. In accordance with EEC licensing regulations, information about children and their families is privileged and confidential. No licensee or educator may distribute or release information about a child or their family to any unauthorized person or discuss with any unauthorized person information about a child or their family without the written consent of the child's family. If you need access to your child's records, please reach out to your Program Director.

CUSTODIAL ORDERS

Copies of any custodial orders and/or restraining orders must be kept on file and up to date so that Nurtury may honor them.

STAFF TRAINING AND QUALIFICATIONS

Our educators either meet or exceed the Department of Early Education and Care requirements and professional qualifications. All our educators participate in orientation and ongoing training in the areas of child growth and development, health and safety, environments, developmentally appropriate practices, guidance and behavior management, family relationships, cultural and individual diversity, and professionalism in the work environment.

CHILD TO STAFF RATIOS

The safety of the children in our care is extremely important to us. We require children to be supervised at all times. All educators receive scheduled breaks which reduces fatigue and contributes to their alertness. We maintain or exceed compliance with the State requirements for staff-to-child ratios.

TRANSITIONS

Transition to the program

When you bring your child to the program, tell them that you are leaving and will return later. We find it works best if you reassure your child that they will be fine. We welcome you to contact the family partner or educator to check on your child or schedule a time to talk on the phone with your child's primary educator about how the child is doing.

All new families complete the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ). This is a developmental and social emotional screening tool which helps educators to identify any immediate needs and insight to any resources that could be offered. Family Partners will share the results and work in partnership with you to identify strategies/resources to support your child's development. Once enrolled, Nurtury families complete the ASQ annually.

Transition to a New Classroom within a Center

When your child is ready to transition to a new classroom or kindergarten, you will be informed in writing of the change and asked for your written permission for the educators to collaborate and share relevant information. The procedures for transitioning children from one classroom to another within the center will include teachers and their families. This process may take longer for some children than others and we will individualize the transition for your child.

Moving-On Day

As children leave the program throughout the year and we have notice of their departure, educators will plan a "Moving-On Day" celebration to recognize children's accomplishments and let them say goodbye to friends and educators. At the end of the summer, center-based educators plan a moving-on event by classroom, which is typically held in August to celebrate all the children's accomplishments. We encourage families to attend these events and join us in celebrating your child's milestone.

CURRICULUM AND LEARNING

Nurtury provides a learning environment with a curriculum that is developmentally appropriate to the specific ages of children in each group. Our daily routines are flexible, which allows children to develop at their own pace. Learning experiences are designed to enhance children's development in the following areas: creativity, self-expression, decision-making, problem-solving, responsibility, independence, self-help skills, and reasoning. We currently use Creative Curriculum, Focus Curriculum for Infants/toddlers, and BPS Focus 1, Building Blocks, Math, and Heggerty Phonics for our UPK classrooms. We offer a broad range of learning activities such as music, cooking, science, play (indoor and outdoor), reading, math, art, language, games, gardening, Hatch Ignite (computer software), and science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) activities. We also partner with Jumpstart, Arts for Learning (formerly Young Audiences), Raising a Reader, and Read Boston to enhance learning experiences for children and curriculum integration. (See appendix #2 on pages 32-33 for sample curriculums)

Nurtury Early Education Family Handbook

Daily Schedule:

A predictable schedule provides comfort and feelings of safety for children. Educators plan intentional activities that challenge and promote learning through play. Schedules may differ between classrooms and the UPK schedule starts at 9:00 AM. Here is an *example* of a schedule for a preschool classroom:

7:30 AM	Welcome/Handwashing/Check-In
7:30 – 8:30 AM	Child Choice Activities
8:30 – 9:30 AM	Handwashing/Family Style Breakfast/Tooth brushing
9:30 – 9:45 AM	Community Meeting/Intro to Centers
9:45 – 10:45 AM	Center Time (child directed & teacher directed)
10:45 – 11:45 AM	Outdoor Play
11:45 AM – 12:00 PM	Handwashing/Read Aloud
12:00 – 1:00 PM	Transition to Lunch/Handwashing/Family-Style Lunch/Transition to Rest Time
1:00 – 3:00 PM	Rest Time/Quiet Activities
3:00 – 3:30 PM	Handwashing/Snack Time
3:30 – 5:00 PM	Child Directed Activities

Toileting occurs throughout the day based on the individual needs of the children.

Here is an *example* of a schedule from one of our Family Child Care programs:

7:00 – 9:30 AM	Free play/arrival and breakfast/clean-up/toileting
9:30 – 11:45 AM	Group and individual activities, outdoor time, field trips
11:45 AM – 12:00 PM	Story Time, toileting, and prepare for lunch
12:00 – 1:00 PM	Lunch/clean-up/toileting
1:00 – 3:00 PM	Rest and Quiet time
3:00 – 3:30 PM	Snack/toileting
3:30 – 5:00 PM	Group and individual activities, outdoor time/pick up time

Schedules for younger children are more flexible and activities are focused on routines and individualized care since their needs vary. Daily schedules and weekly curriculum plans are posted for each group and are shared with families. Sixty minutes of physical activity is provided daily. Transitions between activities in the daily schedule are completed in a safe, timely, predictable, and unhurried manner. Visual, verbal, and auditory cues are used to support children's transitions.

Young children are learning all the time and are naturally curious about the world around them. At Nurtury, children:

- learn to get along with others and be important members of the classroom community.
- learn about themselves and how to self-regulate.
- learn to take turns.
- learn to understand, enjoy, and use language.
- develop fine and whole-body coordination.
- gather information and use it to solve problems so they will become lifelong learners.

- learn about letters and numbers by using a variety of activities.

Children enjoy water, sand, paint, and play dough. These materials are educational because:

- they are open-ended so there are no right or wrong ways to use them.
- they promote the fine motor control needed for writing.
- they encourage free exploration, imagination, and creativity.
- children can use these materials to learn to measure, count, and compare.

Art Exploration

Art activities are offered as an exploratory process rather than product-focused activities.

Children are provided with a variety of materials to explore, use their imagination, and creative expression.

Supporting Children's Learning

Educators support children's learning by assessing each child's development and progress; providing stimulating materials and environments; interacting with children; asking questions, deepening understanding, and lengthening exploration of topics children are curious about; and nurturing children through supportive and encouraging relationships.

Language and Literacy

Language plays a key role in your child's literacy development. Young children learn to read and write through a progression of successful experiences. Some language and literacy experiences include:

- learning the sounds that letters make and what words start with those letters
- language play like rhyming, singing, poetry, and joke-telling
- reading books daily
- oral storytelling, finger plays, and puppetry
- making up stories, illustrating their ideas, and writing stories
- playing with letters and numbers
- writing center with paper, envelopes, cards, stamps, pens, pencils, and markers available
- seeing adults enjoying reading and writing daily

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

At Nurtury, we believe in building a collaborative strength-based approach when working with our families. We value the role that families play in their child's life and education. You are the one who knows your child's likes and dislikes, who can interpret each happy, silly, sad, or frustrated non-verbal expression on their face. As we learn and grow as a community, these meaningful conversations are essential to meeting the needs of each child. Families are encouraged to share any family changes that may affect how their child(ren) may interact with educators and their peers.

Families are encouraged to check their child's cubby, program bulletin boards, or emails from our Family Partners regularly for information on parent trainings, meetings, and family events. Policies and procedures are shared with families verbally and in writing. Information is also shared via email and text. Written communication is provided in English and Spanish, and translators are used to communicate in other languages as needed. Families are always welcome to visit the program any time their child is in attendance.

Family Support

Family Partners are located in each center-based program and our family child care system. Family Partners support both our center-based programs and Family Child Care sites and work closely with families to provide support and resources. If you have questions or need assistance navigating various support systems, please contact your Family Partner for help. Family Partners are available to assist your family in various ways including finding and accessing community resources, connecting with special educational services, financial, housing/shelter, food, clothing, therapeutic referrals, and more. At times your child may go through periods where it may be difficult for them to separate from you. We encourage you to discuss your child's feelings with your child's educator or the family partner. You are always welcome to call the program to check on your child or schedule a time to talk with the educator on the phone.

Family Partners also coordinate engagement opportunities and activities for families such as family cafés, open house, and seasonal outdoor events throughout the year. Monthly team meetings are scheduled with teaching teams and Family Partners to share/discuss all the children in their care. These meetings typically focus on children's learning in all developmental areas, new skill development, and strategies to support each child's needs. Concerns or questions that may arise during the meeting are brought to the attention of the parent/guardian. If needed, a conference is scheduled to discuss concerns and to create a support plan with action steps and timelines. The purpose of the support plan is to ensure that appropriate services are provided for the child and family.

Periodically workshops are offered for parents/guardians on a variety of topics such as child behaviors that are challenging or family nutrition. Program staff and/or community organizations may conduct these workshops. We will notify you of dates and times and also provide child care and dinner.

Specialized services for children are welcomed and integrated in the child's natural environment. These supports may be provided by the public school system as outlined in a child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or by Early Intervention Specialists outlined in a child's Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). Referrals for behavioral supports and/or a mental health screening from state-designated mental health contractors are also available.

Family Activities

We value our families as partners in the growth and development of their children. We encourage parents/guardians and other family members to be involved in the program, visit your child's classroom, volunteer and share your talent/skill, participate in events, and provide

feedback about you and your child's experiences in the program. We look forward to your participation, input, and suggestions.

Parent/Guardian Input

Family surveys are sent out annually so that you can provide feedback and information about the program and services provided. Families also have an opportunity to provide information about their own needs through a needs assessment survey. Your input helps us to improve our services to better meet the needs of the children and families we serve. The Program Director is always available to discuss concerns, hear your suggestions, or mediate grievances of any sort.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

I. PAYMENTS, FEES, & REFUNDS

Payment Schedule

Nurtury's parent fees are charged every Friday for the upcoming week. Families are responsible for paying a one-week initial deposit as well as the first week of child care prior to child's start date and every week after that.

**Families receiving State Financial Assistance (CCFA subsidies) are waived from paying the initial deposit.*

Payment Options

1. **Automatic Bank Withdrawals** - We highly recommend setting up weekly automatic withdrawals via Tuition Express. If a family is interested in this option, they can reach out to their Enrollment Coordinator or Family Partner for assistance.
2. **Online Payments** - Online payments can be made using www.myprocare.com.
3. **Credit/Debit Card Payments** - can be made in person directly at the Center-Based Program or FCC Administrative Office
4. **Checks and Money Orders Mail Ins** – Checks and Money Orders are to be made out to Nurtury and can be mailed in using the postage-paid mailing envelope to 2201 Washington Street Roxbury, MA 02119. Please see your Program Director to obtain prepaid envelopes.

***Please note, that we do not accept cash for tuition.**

Responsibility of Payment

- **Attendance** – Families remain responsible for their child care fees regardless of absences, for any reason.
- **Holiday & Closure Calendar** - Families remain responsible for their child care fees regardless of Holidays or Professional Development Days on Nurtury's approved closure calendar. The exception is the three additional days of our December closure week, families will not be charged for these days.

**Families receiving State Financial Assistance (CCFA subsidies) are waived from paying for these approved calendar closures.*

- **Two Week Notice** - If a family would like to terminate their child care with one of our programs, they must provide a two-week written notice to their Center or FCC Educator and will be responsible for payment for the remaining two weeks.

Refunds

If a family is due a refund on fees, they should contact their Enrollment Coordinator and one should be issued within three weeks. In the event that the program must close (early closure or a full day) due to weather or unforeseen emergencies, family's account will be provided with a partial or full day credit. Nurtury will credit account for days we have to close due to lack of staffing.

NSF's and Late Payments

If a family's payment (check or auto-pay) is declined for non-sufficient funds (NSF) up to three times within a six-month period, they must pay with a money order or a credit card swipe in person. Please be advised that there is a \$20.00 fee that must be paid for each NSF charge at the time of re-payment.

Once a family becomes more than one week behind on their payment, they will receive a Non-Payment of Family Fees Warning Notice. Failure to pay the outstanding balance by the date specified on the notice will result in the termination of child care. If a family has questions or concerns about their ability to pay in a timely manner, they should contact their Enrollment Coordinator or Family Partner in order to get on a payment plan.

II. ATTENDANCE & PICKUP

To fully benefit from the program, your child should arrive no later than 9:30 AM. We require all children attending the UPK classrooms to arrive by 9:00 AM to participate in the morning meeting and hear about the learning center activities for the day. Family Child Care programs each have their own cut-off time – you will be notified of this time at enrollment. Regular attendance is important to your child's adjustment at the program. Please notify the program if your child is going to be absent or has an appointment and will be arriving late (after 9:30 AM).

Children are reassured by the predictability of daily routines followed in the classroom, such as breakfast, morning meetings, special activities, and outdoor time.

Family Partners support families by monitoring children's attendance/arrival times and work with families to ensure good attendance and punctuality. When a child is not present and the family has not notified the program, the Family Partner will call to check in with you about the reason why. These conversations are included in the case notes.

Children cannot be dropped off to educators while the classroom is outside at the playground. Parents/guardians must accompany their child into their classroom. When the class is outside, staff will ask parents/guardians to wait in a designated area with their child until the class returns. Before going outdoors, children are counted twice to ensure that we have the correct number of children present and teacher-to-child ratios. Having children join their classroom once they have already been counted and have left the building/premises creates confusion. Please

check with your child's teachers for the time they go outside each day. (On warm days, the groups usually go out earlier: around 9:30 – 10 AM.)

Late Child Pick-up Policy for Centers and Family Child Care

- **All** families are required to pay a late fee should you pick up your child(ren) after closing hours. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to know the closing time as program schedules may vary.
- You must call the program/provider at least 30 minutes prior to program closing, or as soon as possible if you are going to be late. Families will be charged a late fee of **\$3.00 per minute**, per family, for every minute your child remains at the program beyond closing time. Late fee payment or arrangements to pay assessed late fees must be made before your child(ren) can return to the program or provider. Late fee payments must be made in cash.
- Program staff and educators are mandated reporters and may call the Department of Children and Families (DCF) to file a 51A if we are unable to contact you or any other party authorized for pick-up after the program closes.

Authorization of Release

Your child's safety is our priority, we will only release your child to an individual who is authorized with your written permission. We will require positive photo identification from any person authorized to pick up your child. If photo identification is not available, we reserve the right to refuse the release of your child to that person.

To ensure safety, children must be received by program staff at morning drop-off. At the end of the day, we require an authorized individual for pick-up. Nurtury requires authorized pick-ups to be at least 15 years or older. Parents must sign in their children at drop-off and sign them out when they are picked up. Please sign your name and relationship to the child. The program's supervision of the child begins and ends once the family/guardian or other authorized individual has signed the child in or out.

III. REST PERIOD

Children have a scheduled rest time after lunch. Educators prepare the environment with natural lighting, soft music, and minimal distractions. Each child will have an individual mat and be encouraged to lay on their mat and rest (we recommend that each child have their own individual small blanket). Quiet activities are offered for those children who may have difficulty resting or awakening before the majority of the group.

Educators position themselves so that all children are within their hearing and vision, especially sleeping infants and toddlers. All children that fall asleep will awaken naturally. If the majority of the group is awake, an educator may gently wake children by turning on the lights, gently rubbing a child's back, or increasing the volume of sound in the room.

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Policy

The American Academy of Pediatrics has determined that placing a baby on their back to sleep reduces the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). SIDS is the sudden and unexplained death of a baby under one year of age. If your child does not usually sleep on their back, please contact your physician immediately to discuss the best sleeping position for your baby. At Nurtury, all infants are placed to sleep on their backs, unless there is a written physician's order that specifies otherwise. Our educators follow the "safe sleep practices for infants," with no blankets or objects in the crib. Infants can rest at any time during the day based on their individual needs.

IV. CHILD BEHAVIOR AND DEVELOPMENT

Child Guidance and Positive Discipline

Nurtury educators guide children in developing appropriate behaviors through positive discipline within a supportive environment. Nurtury programs provide well-defined play areas with a variety of interesting activity choices and simple clear rules. Educators create an atmosphere where age-appropriate expectations are met through gentle reminders, encouragement, and redirection. Educators guide children to learn to take responsibility for their relationships with other children by talking with the children about their interactions. Educators recognize that children are always in the process of learning. Our goal is for children to develop self-control and problem-solving skills that will allow them to work/play cooperatively.

Educators guide children in positive and consistent ways based on the child's development by:

- recognizing and encouraging positive behavior.
- setting clear and consistent limits and expectations.
- redirecting children to other activities.
- using environmental and activity modifications as needed.
- intervening quickly if situations arise and helping children to develop positive strategies for resolving conflicts.
- Educators help a child regain self-control in the least restrictive way. If a child is unable to regain self-control, educators may assist the child to move to a soft and quiet space within the classroom and remain with the child until they are calm and ready to rejoin the group or activity.

The following practices are strictly **prohibited** at Nurtury:

- spanking, hitting, shaking, slapping, jerking, squeezing, kicking, biting, pinching, excessive tickling, pulling of the arms, ears, or hair, or other corporal punishment.
- depriving children of outdoor time, meals or snacks, force-feeding or otherwise making them eat against their will, or in any way using food as a consequence.
- disciplining a child for soiling, wetting, or using any unusual or excessive practices for toileting.
- seclusion, confining a child to a swing, highchair, crib, playpen, or any other equipment for an extended period in lieu of supervision.

The following practices are strictly **prohibited** at Nurtury (continued):

- subjecting children to cruel or severe punishment such as humiliation, sarcasm, name-calling, ridiculing or any verbal or physical abuse, neglect, or abusive treatment including any physical hitting inflicted in any manner upon the body, shaking, threats, or derogatory remarks.
- excessive time-out. Time out may not exceed one minute for each year of the child's age and must take place within the educator's view.

Procedures for Avoiding Suspension and Termination from the Program

If your child's behavior becomes challenging in the program, the educator(s), Family Partner, and/or the Program Director will meet with you to discuss the behavior and look for solutions to assist your child. The health and safety of all children in our care is paramount. An incident report is used to record what occurred (before the behavior and afterward) and the next steps including referrals for additional services. Our policy states that if there are three or more related incidents in a short period of time, a meeting will be scheduled between the classroom teacher, family, and Program Director to discuss the next steps which may include a Child Support Plan.

The family has an important role in the implementation of these actions outlined and agreed to in the plan. Nurtury makes every effort to avoid termination for behavioral issues by working with you and making referrals to outside agencies, such as the public school system or early intervention services, to provide additional support for your child as needed. However, if the child's support plan is not followed and the child's behavior does not improve and poses a health and safety risk to themselves or others, Nurtury administrators will support the family in seeking an alternative education setting.

Developmental Screening

Families are asked to complete an Ages and Stages (ASQ) questionnaire about their child's development. The ASQ is a screening for children's development. This screening will assist our educators in assessing the developmental needs of children in the areas of communication, gross motor skills, fine motor skills, problem solving, and personal-social skills. The ASQ helps families identify their child (ren's) strengths and/or areas where they may need additional support or resources. Please let us know if your child is currently receiving services with specialist. We will work in partnership with you, the service providers, and will welcome them into our programs to support your child with scheduled appointments.

Referral Process

Educators and administrators meet at least monthly to discuss any concerns about individual children in a Team Meeting. Educators come to team meetings prepared with written observations of the child that highlight these concerns. From this process, the program staff (Program Director or Family Partner) may refer a child and family for social, mental health, education, and medical services (dental and hearing, or vision screenings).

- If a referral needs to be made, a meeting will be held with the child's parent/guardian to explain the reason for the referral, a summary of the staff observations, and efforts of the

staff and program made to accommodate the child's needs before the referral. This information will be provided in writing as well.

- The plan will include referral resources and contact names and numbers as needed.
- If a child enrolls in our program with an existing Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Early Intervention services, the director will contact the local school district and Early Intervention coordinators, with parent authorization, to inform them that we are servicing a child that has been identified or needs service intervention.
- A list of Referral Resources will be kept at the center and provided to any family upon request or as part of the referral process.
- Children over the age of three with documented developmental concerns in our preschool classrooms, including the UPK classrooms, should follow the procedure above of having documented observations and steps to accommodate and individualize services.
- For those children in our UPK classrooms, there may be input from the BPS coach with team meetings with families and/or referral to BPS for further evaluations.
- If a referral is required for further assessment by BPS or another public school system, then the Nurtury staff will support the family through this process. Children also needing behavioral support in the classroom and/or in the home may be referred to state-funded mental health contractors for observation and supports to classroom staff and family.
- Every child care center or FCC provider will have access to resources to share with families.

V. EMERGENCIES, ILLNESS, AND INJURIES

Health

Each child must have an annual physical examination including up-to-date immunizations, allergies, and lead screening. We will supply you with the necessary forms/documentation needed to support the physical examination and immunization record. During admission, the parent/guardian is asked to share any known allergies their child may have. For each allergy, specific written information regarding the symptoms and management of the allergy must be provided to the educator. This information will be included in Nurtury's substitute educator information package. Warnings regarding specific children's food allergies is posted in the kitchen and in the group where the child is enrolled.

Oral Health

Educators assist children **older than 1 year** in brushing their teeth daily to remove food and plaque. Children use individual, labeled toothbrushes that are stored in a safe and sanitary manner open to the air without touching each other.

An **infant's** teeth and gums are wiped with a disposable cloth (or a clean, soft cloth used only for one child and laundered daily) after each feeding to remove liquid that coats the teeth and gums.

The Health Care Policy is posted at each program location and is available upon request.

Individual Health Plan

Children with a chronic medical condition that has been diagnosed by a licensed health care practitioner must have an individual health care plan (IHCP) on file. The plan describes the chronic condition, its symptoms, any medical treatment that may be necessary while the child is in care, side effects of that treatment, and potential consequences to the child's health if the treatment is not administered. This form must be signed by both the parent and the medical authority.

Educators may administer routine, scheduled medication, or treatment to a child with a chronic medical condition in accordance with written family consent and licensed health care practitioner authorization. Educators are trained by the child's health care practitioner or written consent given by the child's parent/guardian, or the program's health consultant that specifically addresses the child's medical condition, medication, and other treatment needs. Educators document all medication or treatment administration, whether scheduled or unanticipated, in the child's medication and treatment log.

Health Screenings

Nurtury is proactive in providing free screenings to children in our centers whenever possible. These services may include:

- Dental screenings by Boston University Dental School
- Hearing screenings by Northeastern University Speech, Language and Hearing Center
- Mental health or behavioral services by The Home for Little Wanderers or other state-designated mental health providers
- Vision screenings by New England School of Optometry
- Nutrition supports by Nurtury's Director of Nutrition and Food Service

When children with disabilities are enrolled in the program, the Program Director will ensure that each child's specific health requirements are met. Consultation with the Health Care Consultant will be made and documented for all other health care needs.

Child Illness

Upon arrival, if obvious signs of illness are observed (i.e., a rash over a major portion of the body, fever, signs of a cold or sore throat, inflammation of the eyes, diarrhea, vomiting, or extreme tiredness), the child will be sent home immediately. Children must remain home until they are free of fever, diarrhea, vomiting, etc. for 24 hours.

Children who appear mildly ill but do not exhibit the symptoms above and do not have a fever over 100 degrees will be closely and frequently monitored and may be sent home.

Parent/guardian will be consulted as soon as it is noted their child is ill. Children will be monitored frequently. Educators will give your child options for quieter activities, more frequent drinks, and the option to nap in a quiet supervised area, if they choose.

When questions arise as to whether the illness is worsening or may be contagious, children will be isolated, and the parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up their child immediately. A doctor's note may be required in order for your child to return to the program.

Nurtury's program Health Care Policy is posted at each program and is available upon request.

It is very important that you let us know immediately if your contact information or the emergency contact information has changed.

In the event of a serious accident or illness, you will be notified immediately by phone, and all accidents will be reported to you in writing. In case of extreme emergency, we will call 911 and contact you immediately after that. A staff member will accompany your child to the emergency room.

Medication Administration Procedures (as defined by EEC regulations for Center-Based and Family Child Care Programs)

These procedures refer to the administration of prescriptions and non-prescription medications, as well as the administration of medications ordered by your child's health care practitioner.

- All medication administered to a child, including but not limited to oral and topical medications of any kind, either prescription or non-prescription, are provided by the child's parent/guardian.
- All medications are kept in containers in which they are originally dispensed and with their original labels attached. Over-the-counter medications must be in the original manufacturer's packaging.
- Educators must administer medication according to the directions on the original container, unless so authorized in writing by the child's licensed health care practitioner. Any medications without clear instructions on the container must be administered by a written physician or pharmacist's descriptive order.
- Unless otherwise specified in a child's individual health care plan, the educator must store all medications out of the reach of children and under proper conditions for sanitation, preservation, security, and safety during the time the children are in care and during the transportation of children. Medications are kept in a secured, locked place at all times when not being accessed by authorized staff. Prescription medications requiring refrigeration are stored in a way that is inaccessible to children in a refrigerator maintained at temperatures between 38°F and 42°F. **Emergency medications, such as epinephrine auto-injectors, must be immediately available for use as needed.**
- Educators will not administer the first dose of any medication to a child except under extraordinary circumstances and with parent/guardian's written consent.
- Each time a medication is administered, the educator must document in the child's record the name of the medication, the dosage, the time of administration, the method of administration, and who administered the medication.
- Educators will notify the child's parent/guardian at the end of each day whenever a topical medication is applied to a diaper rash.

Nurtury Early Education Family Handbook

- The educator or the Program Director will attempt to contact you if an unscheduled dosage of medication, such as Tylenol, will be given to your child. This will also be documented on the medication log form.

All Medications must be administered by the consent and documentation requirements as specified:

Type of Medication	Written Family Consent Required	Health Care Practitioner Authorization Required	Logging Required
All Prescription	Yes	Yes, must be in original container with the original label containing the name of the child affixed.	Yes, name of child, dosage, date, time, staff signature; missed doses must also be noted along with the reason why the dose was missed.
Oral Non-prescription	Yes, renewed weekly with dosage, times, days, and purpose.	No in FCC. Yes in centers. Must be in original container with original label containing the name of the child affixed.	Yes, name of child, dosage, date, time, staff signature; missed doses must also be noted along with the reason why the dose was missed.
Unanticipated Non-Prescription for mild symptoms (e.g. acetaminophen, ibuprofen, antihistamines)	Yes, renewed annually.	No in FCC. Yes in centers. Must be in original container with original label containing the name of the child affixed.	Yes, name of child, dosage, date, time, and staff signature.
Topical, non-Prescription (when applied to open wounds or broken skin)	Yes, renewed annually.	Yes, must be in original container with original label containing the name of the child attached.	Yes, name of child, dosage, date, time, and staff signature.
Topical, non-Prescription (not applied to open wounds or broken skin)	Yes, renewed annually.	No. Items not applied to open wounds or broken skin may be supplied by the program with notification to parent/guardian or the family may send in preferred brands of such items for their own child(ren)'s use.	No for items used solely for prevention such as sunscreen, insect repellent and chap stick.

Medication Documentation and Disposal

All unused, discontinued, or outdated prescription medications will be returned to the family/guardian and documented in the child's file. If this is not possible, the medication will be destroyed, and the destruction will be recorded in the child's file by the supervising Program Director or Assistant Director in accordance with our program's policy and the Department of Public Health Drug Control Program. The Program Director or Assistant Director will communicate medication disposal to the Senior Director(s) and record the disposal.

Children's Injuries and Accidents

Whenever a child is hurt, no matter how minor the injury, families are notified, and a written Accident Report Form is completed. The parent/guardian signs the form indicating they have read and received the accident report.

Emergency Preparedness

- Program staff manage all emergencies in an appropriate manner including communicating basic emergency information to emergency personnel, such as the police or EMT.
- Exit signs are clearly posted.
- Program Director, or designee, will contact local authorities to determine whether to evacuate or go to a shelter in the event of a natural disaster.
- All staff must follow the directions of the local emergency management authorities.
- Program staff will contact the police in the event of a missing child.
- Children will be evacuated from the program in the event of a fire, natural disaster, loss of power, heat or hot water, or another emergency. Parents/guardians will be notified.
- Emergency evacuation drills are held monthly at different times of the program day and include the use of alternate exists. The emergency evacuation drills will be recorded including the date, time, exit route used, the number of children evacuated, and the effectiveness of the drill. Evacuation cribs are checked to ensure safety. All staff is informed of the location to meet after an evacuation.
- Daily attendance is kept on each classroom clipboard. The classroom teacher is responsible for keeping the daily attendance current, including documenting children who may leave the center and return later in the same day.
- Cribs are identified and labeled for emergency purposes and located near exists for evacuation of infants and toddlers. Educators bring non-walking children out of the building using emergency cribs.

The plan for evacuating the premises in case of fire or another emergency is as follows:

- When the alarm sounds, EVERYONE must leave the building immediately. Lead educators or designees must bring the clipboards with the attendance sheets and lead the children outdoors. Educators check the classrooms/bathrooms for children who may have been left behind, turn off lights, and close the doors.

- Everyone will meet at the designated meeting area. Educators will take a head count. If it is a real fire, the Fire Department will inspect the building before re-entry and will shut off the alarm. No one can return to the building until the fire department has checked that it is safe. In the case of a fire drill, the Program Director or the Program Assistant will check the building and turn off the alarm.

VI. CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT POLICY

Staff Responsibilities Regarding Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect:

All incidents of suspected or alleged abuse and/or neglect shall be reported immediately to the Program Director, Assistant Program Director, or designee.

- If the alleged abuse and/or neglect occurred while the child was in Nurtury's care the staff member(s) or FCC provider(s) suspected shall be immediately removed from working directly with children pending completion of a DEEC and DCF investigation.
- The Program Director, Assistant Program Director, or designee, upon receiving a report of suspected institutional abuse, must immediately notify the department Senior Director or designee. This notification shall be followed within 24 to 36 hours by a written report of the situation to include date(s), time(s), name(s) of all parties (adults and children), place(s), and description(s) of the incident(s).
- The Program Director, Assistant Program Director, or designee, with support from the department Sr. Director, must file a 51A report, notify parent(s) involved and the EEC licenser that a 51A has been filed alleging abuse or neglect of a child while in the care of the program.
- Within 24 to 36 hours the Program Director, Assistant Program Director, or designee shall collect written statements of the incident from all parties involved.

When the alleged abuse or neglect did **not** occur while the child was in Nurtury's care the Program Director, Assistant Program Director, or designee is responsible for filing a 51A to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) area office via telephone and following up with a written report within 48 hours.

- The department Senior Director or designee must always be notified when a report of abuse/neglect comes to the Program Director.
- When appropriate, every attempt must be taken to notify the parent when a 51A report of abuse and neglect is filed with DCF.
- In the event of extreme concern, the reporter may request an emergency (24 hours) response from DCF. Otherwise, DCF is required to make an investigation of the report within ten (10) days.
- In an emergency situation where concerns exist for sending a child home that afternoon, the Program Director or designees shall notify the department Senior Director or designee and notify DCF and proceed upon their instructions.

There shall be no corporal punishment (bodily, physical, to include slapping, shoving, etc.) to children of any nature. No child will be subjected to cruel or severe punishment, humiliation, or verbal abuse or denial of any parts of the program including outside play and food.

NUTRITION

Nurtury serves breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snacks which meets a significant percentage of a child's daily nutritional requirements. The Director of Nutrition develops menus that focus on variety, nutritional requirements, and current USDA guidelines. We also follow recommended portion sizes appropriate for the age groups we serve in order to promote the healthy development of our children. Meals are prepared on-site at each center and are served in a family-style setting, providing children with the opportunity to engage in conversation in a relaxed atmosphere. Meals are modified according to the current season with heartier soups, stews, and casseroles prepared in the winter, and lighter in the summer with a concentration on seasonal fruits and vegetables. Menus are posted at all centers so parents/guardians will know what is being served that day. Meals/snacks are served at established times each day, at intervals around 3 hours apart.

Peanut-Free Zone

All Nurtury programs are peanut-free to provide a safe environment for all children with peanut allergies. To further keep our children safe, we ask that all parents/guardians dropping off or picking up children refrain from eating peanut products immediately before arriving to the program. Please do not send any foods containing peanuts or peanut products into the program. If your child has a food allergy, a medical statement must be available in your child's file and completed by your child's pediatric team.

Breast Milk and Formula

Nurtury supports breastfeeding by accepting, storing, and serving expressed breast milk for feedings. Breast milk must be provided in clean, ready-to-feed bottles, labeled with your infant's name and the date. Breast milk will be stored in a refrigerator for no more than 72 hours or in a freezer at 0°F or below for no longer than 3-6 months. Breast milk may be served to an enrolled infant for as long as the parent/guardian chooses.

Parents/guardians who feed their infant formula will choose whether to provide their own formula/baby foods or accept the options offered by the center, as indicated on the infant's food program enrollment form. Prepared formula from a powder will be used within 24 hours after mixing, or from ready-to-feed containers within 48 hours. All bottles will be warmed using warm tap water.

As indicated by EEC licensing regulations programs, caring for infants must not use a crock pot, (slow cooker), bottle-warming appliance, or microwave oven to warm infant bottles. Formula, breast milk, and/or baby foods will be discarded if they have been at room temperature for more than 2 hours, or 1 hour if the breast milk/formula was heated. Any formula, breast milk, or baby food from a particular feeding that is not finished will be discarded.

Formula-fed infants will be transitioned to whole milk by their first birthday, unless directed otherwise by a signed medical statement. On the child's second birthday, they will start receiving 1% milk, according to USDA's guidance for promoting proper growth and development. 100%

juice is served on a limited basis to children over the age of one, due to its sugar content, but water is always available throughout the day.

Choking Prevention

To prevent choking and to align with MA state licensing and USDA recommendations, the following foods are **prohibited** from being served to **children under the age of four**:

- hot dogs, sausages, sausage links, or similar processed food items
- fish or meat with bones
- grapes, cherries, melon balls, cherry, and grape tomatoes
- Specific berries – kiwi berries, raspberries, blackberries, goji berries
- Peanuts, nuts, and seeds (for example, sunflower or pumpkin seeds)
- Peanut butter and nut/seed butter
- Dried fruit such as raisins or cranberries*
- Shelf stable, dried and semi-dried meat, poultry, seafood snacks (such as beef jerky or summer sausage)
- Popcorn

***Dried fruits are allowed when baked into items such as muffins or breads.**

Other foods that pose a high risk for choking are those that are “round, tube-shaped, small, hard, thick and sticky, smooth, slippery, or easily molded to the airway,” and as such, will be altered to manageable bite sizes (no larger than a nickel) for preschool, toddler, and infant age groups.

Nurtury serves delicious, nutritious meals which promote the safe and healthy development of children. We work with families to accommodate children with food allergies or dietary restrictions, or physical disabilities whenever possible, to ensure that foods brought from home meet the USDA’s CACFP food guidelines. For children who require a modified diet for one of these reasons, a detailed medical statement signed by a member of the child’s pediatric team is required, providing an individualized care plan for the program to reasonably accommodate the child’s specific situation.

In rare situations, when the program is unable to reasonably meet a child’s specific needs, families may be allowed to provide part or all the child’s meals/snacks when the proper medical documentation is provided. All foods and beverages brought from home should be labeled with the child’s name and the date. Educators make sure that food requiring refrigeration stays cold until served. Updated allergy lists are posted in areas where food is prepared.

Guidelines When Approved to Bring Food from Home in Centers

When there are mitigating circumstances requiring meals to be brought in from home, the expectation is that those meals will meet the same nutrition standards as the meals prepared at the centers. Please follow these guidelines:

- All centers are **nut-free**, therefore no food brought in may contain any type of nut or have been prepared in a facility that also prepares food with nuts.

Nurtury Early Education Family Handbook

- Whenever possible, meals brought in should be as similar to the meal being served as possible, since the children eat together.
- Meals brought in should follow the same meal pattern and contain the same meal components whenever possible. This is the CACFP meal pattern for 3- to 5-year-olds for meals served at the centers:

BREAKFAST		LUNCH		SNACK (Choose Two)	
Milk	¾ cup	Meat or Alternative	1½ oz.	Meat/Alternate	½ oz.
Fruit/Vegetables or both	½ cup	Vegetables	¼ cup	Vegetables	½ cup
Grains	½ oz. eq.	Fruits	¼ cup	Fruits	½ cup
Meat/Alternate in place of grain 3x/week		Grains	½ oz. eq.	Grains	½ oz. eq.
		Milk	¾ cup	Milk	½ cup

- Foods brought in from home should be homemade whenever possible to mirror the types of food prepared at the center.
- Meal components should reflect healthy choices and be low in sodium, sugar, and fat, and high in nutrients required to promote healthy growth.
- Food size appropriate for the child’s age should be considered to avoid a potential for choking. Please refer to the list of foods above that are **not permitted** for any child **under the age of 4** in our centers (page 27).
- Fried foods are never served in our centers and should not be brought in from home.

In order to promote a safer environment and to assure that food served in the centers is healthy, **our policy is that food brought from home to be shared with other children is not allowed.** While we understand a family’s desire to celebrate birthdays, holidays, and special occasions with various items like cakes, cupcakes, balloons, etc., it is our responsibility to maintain a safe environment for all children enrolled in our programs, and therefore these items are not allowed. Feel free to check with your child’s educator to find out how your child’s birthday will be acknowledged.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are planned in the neighborhood, around the city, or outside the city. Our field trips are guided by the curriculum about subjects that children are learning about in their classrooms. All children are required to wear program identification bracelets, t-shirts, or reflective vests to ensure safety. You will receive advance notice of major trips. In family child care, permission can be given for family child care educators to take children on field trips in the educator's vehicle.

TRANSPORTATION

Parents/guardians will be provided with written parental consent for each child's transportation plan during the enrollment process. The plan will include how the child is transported to and from the program and who provides appropriate supervision when children arrive by car, public transportation, or by contracted transportation (bus or van service). Children will be transported to a medical facility if needed, either by a family member or an ambulance. The program will provide information to families/guardians regarding transportation arrangements for field trips. We do not provide bus transportation for children except on field trips. Whenever this occurs, programs will follow EEC regulations for transporting children.

CHILD RECORD

Your child's records are available to you upon request. Information contained in your child's record is privileged and confidential. These records will not be released to any other individual or agency without your written consent. You have a right to request that missing information be added, or incorrect information is removed. The Department of Children and Families (DCF), Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), and the Department of Public Health (DPH) may review records for compliance with regulations.

CLOTHING AND PERSONAL ITEMS

Children's work/play is often messy. Planned activities include projects like painting, water, and sand play. Weather permitting, children play outside daily. Please dress your child in comfortable, washable play clothing that they can move in freely. Please do not send your child to the program with drawstring hoodies or necklaces because they are safety hazards on the playground. Children should wear sneakers and closed-toed shoes – flip-flops or Crocs are not safe for children when playing outside. In the winter months, be sure your child is warmly dressed to play outdoors. Please dress your child in layers for warmth in cold weather. If a child does not have their appropriate seasonal clothing, we encourage families to talk to the Program Director or Family Partner about resources.

Please leave one set of extra clothes marked with your child's name at the program at all times in case of accidents. In addition, please bring a small blanket, pillow, or stuffed animal for your child to use during rest time, (excluding infants, infants cannot sleep with these items). If your child has a special item for comfort, please coordinate with your child's educator to develop guidelines for its use in the program. Label all clothing and other items that belong to your child

including but not limited to extra clothes, bottles, pacifiers, diapers, wipes, etc. Potty chairs are not allowed at the program.

Children are not allowed to bring any toys, jewelry, or money to the program. They are often lost and can cause conflict with other children. We are not responsible for lost or stolen items. Please do not allow your child to come into the program eating food or with food to eat. Some children and/or staff could have allergies. (Nurtury provides breakfast, lunch, and snacks.)

CODE OF CONDUCT

In a caring, cooperative community, human dignity is respected, and positive relationships are developed and sustained. Nurtury has a responsibility to staff and families to establish and maintain settings and relationships that support productive relationships. The same ideals that apply to children also apply as we interact with adults in the community.

Nurtury's positive environment for young children and their families depends on respect for one another and our community. Adults are expected to model respect and basic courtesy at all times. **There is no tolerance for threatening or abusive language or behavior.** It's important for families and educators to work together cooperatively to benefit each child.

- Families are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful manner when interacting with teachers, staff, or one another.
- Families must conduct themselves in a respectful manner when interacting with each other in the classroom.
- Disagreements that cannot first be settled by the adults involved should be brought to the attention of the Program Director outside the classroom and away from the children.

Thank you!

Thank you for choosing Nurtury Early Education! We look forward to working in partnership with you and your family. Please contact your Program Director or Family Partner, or your Family Child Care educator, if you have any questions.

Appendix I

CENTER-BASED PROGRAM CLOSURE SCHEDULE
FOR 2023/2024

Effective July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

Nurtury Center-Based programs will be closed on:

Independence Day	July 4, 2023 (Tuesday)
Labor Day	September 4, 2023 (Monday)
Professional Development Day	September 15, 2023 (Friday)
Indigenous Peoples' Day	October 9, 2023 (Monday)
Professional Development Day	November 10, 2023 (Friday)
Thanksgiving Day	November 23, 2023 (Thursday)
Day After Thanksgiving	November 24, 2023 (Friday)
Christmas Day	December 25, 2023 (Monday)
Day After Christmas	December 26, 2023 (Tuesday)
Nurtury's Winter Break (3 days)	December 27, through December 29
New Year's Day	January 1, 2024 (Monday)
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	January 15, 2024 (Monday)
Professional Development Day	February 2, 2024 (Friday)
President's Day	February 19, 2024 (Monday)
Professional Development Day	March 15, 2024 (Friday)
Patriot's Day	April 15, 2024 (Monday)
Memorial Day	May 27, 2024 (Monday)
Professional Development Day	June 7, 2024 (Friday)
Juneteenth	June 19, 2024 (Wednesday)

- Nurtury may have to close all or one of its programs or offices due to inclement weather or emergencies.
- Parents and employees are encouraged to visit our website at www.NurturyBoston.org and/or Nurtury's Facebook Page for closure information.

FCC PROGRAM CLOSURE SCHEDULE FOR 2023-2024
Effective July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

Nurtury Family Child Care programs will be closed on:

Independence Day	July 4, 2023 (Tuesday)
Labor Day	September 4, 2023 (Monday)
Professional Development Day	September 22, 2023 (Friday)
Indigenous Peoples' Day	October 9, 2023 (Monday)
Professional Development Day	November 10, 2023 (Friday)
Thanksgiving Day	November 23, 2023 (Thursday)
Day After Thanksgiving	November 24 2023 (Friday)
Christmas Day	December 25, 2023 (Monday)
Day After Christmas	December 26, 2023 (Tuesday)
Winter Break	December 27 through December 29
New Year's Day	January 1, 2024 (Monday)
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	January 15, 2024 (Monday)
Professional Development Day	February 16, 2024 (Friday)
President's Day	February 19, 2024 (Monday)
Professional Development Day	April 12, 2024 (Friday)
Patriot's Day	April 15, 2024 (Monday)
Memorial Day	May 27, 2024 (Monday)
Professional Development Day	June 7, 2024 (Friday)
Juneteenth	June 19, 2024 (Wednesday)

- Nurtury may have to close all or one of its programs or offices due to inclement weather or emergencies.
- Families and employees are encouraged to visit our website at www.NurturyBoston.org and/or Nurtury's Facebook Page for closure information.

Appendix II

Curriculum Samples – Individual Days

I. Toddler Curriculum

Tue 25

THE COLOR BLUE -

Indoor Group Experiences

BLUE FINGER PAINTING

Children can paint with different shades of blue paint to create their own art.

Outdoor Group Experiences

OUTDOORS (WEATHER PERMITTING)

Outdoors, exploring our environment, neighborhood walk, and/or backyard, playing with toys, walking, crawling, climbing, and interacting with Peers and teachers.

Read-Aloud

Highlights "Hello" books

Reading various stories from Highlights Hello.

Family Partnerships

FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS

Teachers will communicate with parents through daily reports, email, monthly newsletters, and parent conferences.

GROUP CIRCLE TIME

GROUP CIRCLE TIME

Group circle, singing, reading, musical instruments, and looking at picture flashcards.

Mighty Minutes®

[Mighty Minutes 52. "Row, Row, Row Your Boat"](#)

II. Preschool Curriculum

Wed 28

Wheels - Investigation 1 - Day 4

Preparation

Collect materials and prepare for the day.

Question of the Day

What do you use this for? (Display a kitchen utensil that uses a wheel, such as a pizza cutter, rotary cheese grater, can opener, or rolling pin.)

Mighty Minutes®

[Mighty Minutes 282. "Rolling Compliments"](#)

Game Children take turns rolling a ball to someone and giving them a compliment.

Large Group

Wheels for Cooking Children interview a visitor to learn about how they use wheels for cooking.

Choice Time

Dramatic Play Children incorporate items with wheels (such as a plastic pizza cutter or rolling pin) into their play.

Read-Aloud

Gathering the Sun

Small Group

[Intentional Teaching Experience M47. "My Shadow and Me"](#)

: Children use their bodies to make different shape shadows.

Outdoors

[Intentional Teaching Experience P43. "Box Dribble"](#)

: Children practice dribbling a box with their feet.

III. UPK Classroom

Unit 6: Things that Grow Week 1 -

Preparation

Greet children as they arrive, cubbies, handwashing, direct then to open center activities, gather stories for story acting, breakfast, book browsing.

As children arrive, they are greeted by the teachers, go to the cubbies to put their belongings away, wash their hands, and engage in open centers activities.

Question of the Day

How are you feeling today?

Children will have the opportunity to express how they feel by choosing or placing their names in the emotion they are feeling.

Custom

Intro to center/props

Introduce centers to children by showing some selected objects form 1-2 centers and briefly demonstrate activities to help them make a first choice.

Choice Time

Centers/Free Choice: Art studio: Above/below garden soil. Discovery: Sorting beans, Dramatization: Garden center. Math: Dinosaur shop, pizza game 2, Adding: Board game. X-ray vision 2. Puzzles/manipulative: Beans. Writing/drawing: Garden signs. Blocks: Building a garden. Library/listening: Researching city gardens. Easel: Painting a garden.

After intro to centers children will have the opportunity to choose the center of their choice.

Custom

LFOAI: What does a seed need?

Materials:

- The Ugly Vegetables
- Zinnia's Flower Garden
- vegetable/flower seed packets
- images of seeds (see Resources)

Literacy: Seed experiment, planting seeds, book browsing. Math: Dinosaurs shop (Make it right). Pizza game 2.

, Show illustrations from Zinnia's Flower Garden and The Ugly Vegetables. Discuss how Zinnia, the girl, and her mother planted seeds in their gardens. Tell children they will conduct an experiment with lima bean seeds. Show materials for experiment. Model/provide visual for setting up experiment.

Custom

SWPL/BB Whole group

See clipboard for directions

Custom

Thinking/Feedback

Children will engage in conversation to ask the present of the day questions about their work such as three-dimensional art work, structures, writing and drawing.

Outdoors

Gym. Playground. Garden. Walks weather permitted

Read-Aloud

Zinnia's Flower Garden 1st read

Children will:

- listen to a story read aloud
- demonstrate increasing levels of sustained and focused engagement
- show a steady increase in the number of words in listening vocabulary
- develop understanding of main events

Family Partnerships

Send home Week 1 Newsletter/activities, Raising Readers Bag, Classroom newsletter.