



Back-Up Care Solutions

Back-Up Child Care Parent Handbook





A Unique Benefit: A Reliable Solution

Bright Horizons® understands the challenges you face balancing competing personal and professional demands, especially when child care issues arise such as:

- Regular provider is ill or on vacation
- Stay-at-home spouse has appointments
- Nanny turnover or transition
- School vacations or regular child care center is closed
- Transition back to work from parental leave
- Business travel
- School closed due to inclement weather

Back-up care at Bright Horizons provides working parents with a safety net for those days when regular care arrangements fall through. Our centers are specially designed to help children feel safe and secure, and to ease their transition into their new environment. We welcome your child with our colorful facility, engaging opportunities for play and discovery, and devoted child care experts. Our caregivers are trained to ensure that you and your child receive individualized attention starting with a World Class Welcome in the morning and finishing with a full report at pick-up on how your child spent his or her day.

Back-Up Child Care

Bright Horizons' back-up child care supplements, rather than replaces, your regular child care arrangements. Our centers are a solution for working parents who need an alternative, often at the last minute, to their regular child care provider.

We provide comprehensive child care services for infants through school-age children. Highlights include:

- State of the art child care facilities with spaces designed specifically to match the development of each age group
- High-quality program for learning through Bright Horizons' *The World at Their Fingertips*TM curriculum
- Well-trained, experienced caregivers and educators trained in health, safety, and security procedures
- All eligible centers are accredited (or in the process of accreditation) by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

We take pride in maintaining high-quality educational programming standards. Our programs are based on a developmentally appropriate environment and curriculum that embrace the unique cultural and individual needs of each child and family. Our experienced staff encourages each child's individuality in order to promote a positive self image.

We believe that children experience learning through play. Based on this belief, we provide a wide variety of activities in all the curriculum areas where children can experience "hands on" learning. Our goal is to ensure that your child's day in back-up care is a rich and meaningful experience.

Bright Horizons welcomes all families and does not discriminate on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, marital status, political belief, disability, or any other basis that is prohibited by federal, state, or local laws in the administration of center policies or the admission of children.

Bright Horizons meets and, in many cases, exceeds all local and state licensing requirements.

Please note: Center design, equipment, staffing, ages served, and operations may vary from location to location. Some centers may provide full-time and other types of child care in addition to back-up child care services.



Who is Bright Horizons?

Founded in 1986, Bright Horizons Family Solutions is the world's leading provider of employer-sponsored child care, early education, back-up care, and work/life solutions. We manage more than 650 full-service and back-up child care centers for more than 800 clients around the world.

Bright Horizons Back-Up Solutions is focused solely on the most important areas of work-site child care: meeting emergency child care needs at the workplace and offering flexible child care arrangements, such as travel care, conference care, and stormy-day care.

In all our child care programs, we strive to:

- Nurture each child's unique qualities and potential
- Support families through strong partnerships
- Collaborate with employers to build family-friendly workplaces
- Create a work environment that encourages professionalism, growth, and diversity



Our Professional Staff

Bright Horizons staff are trained professionals who have expertise in educating and caring for young children and supporting working parents. Center directors hold a minimum of a bachelor's degree in education, and teachers have associate's or bachelor's degrees (or equivalent experience) in early childhood education. Prior to joining Bright Horizons, all staff members complete an extensive interview process including background and reference checks. Once hired, all staff members are trained in the unique characteristics of back-up child care, including the environment and curriculum. Special emphasis is placed on safety and security, hygiene, health and sanitation, first aid, CPR, and life-saving procedures. Bright Horizons provides all teachers with opportunities for ongoing professional training.

Registration

All children must be registered before reservations for back-up child care can be confirmed. To ensure the safety and well-being of your child while at the center and to meet local care licensing requirements, you must provide the following to register:

- Child Registration Information Form
- Participating and Non-Participating Parent/Guardian Forms*
- Authorization for Release and Emergency Medical Treatment Form
- Authorized Non-Parent/Guardian Form
- Medical and Insurance Information Form
- Authorization and Release Signatures
- State/City Medical Forms (including physician's report and immunization history)
- Labeled photograph of child, guardian, and authorized release individuals. (Not required by all centers. Please check with your reserved center about its policy.)

Additional registration information or materials may be needed to comply with local center or local licensing requirements.

We encourage you to schedule a tour of the center before your first visit so that both you and your child have an opportunity to become familiar with the center as well as the routines and procedures that you can expect.

**Please note: A child may be released to all parents and/or guardians unless a current court order with supporting documentation describing custody arrangements and restrictions is provided to Bright Horizons.*

Payments

Where applicable, all registration fees and per-use fees (copayments) must be paid prior to using the center. Registration fees and per-use fees are non-refundable. Contact your employer for further information about your benefit.

Cancellations

If you have a confirmed reservation and your plans for care change, please cancel your reservation promptly. Your cancellation will assist us in making every effort to accommodate other families' requests. Reservations must be cancelled **no later than 5:00 p.m. on the business day prior to the reserved day of care**. No-shows and late cancellations may be counted as a use for the purposes of utilization and the collection of copayments.



Reservations

Reservations are required every time care is needed and can be made one month in advance and up to the day care is needed. Some clients offer a larger reservation window. Please contact your HR department for information about your specific benefit.

Keep in mind that centers experience high-demand periods that are usually consistent with public and private school closings. Centers make every effort to confirm your reservation. Reservations can be considered on a "first come, first served" basis. However, some centers may reserve the right to determine reservations based on a variety of factors.

Requests for reservations will generally be returned within two business days. During high-demand times, it may take up to five business days to evaluate all incoming requests for care. Same day or next day requests will be returned as soon as possible.

Your reservation must be confirmed verbally or by e-mail before you and your child can attend the center.



What to Bring

To start your child's day off right, consider his or her specific needs and what will make your child feel comfortable in a new environment. Please follow these guidelines:

Food: If you have an infant or toddler, please bring an appropriate number of premixed bottles of formula or milk for each feeding, and enough baby food for the day. (Illinois parents should contact their reserved center about special instructions for bringing formula.) Label all bottles and containers with your child's full name. Please be prepared to share information about your child's feeding schedule, including amounts, temperature, and times for feeding. Some Bright Horizons centers provide lunch. Please contact your confirmed center to learn about the lunch program and any items that are not allowed due to food allergy policies.

Clothing: Children should wear play clothes, as they may be involved in projects that use paint, water, and other materials. For safety reasons, we strongly discourage drawstrings or dangling jewelry, particularly for younger children. We ask that a change of clothing be supplied for your child.

Toys: The center has a wide variety of toys in each classroom. Children are welcome to bring a blanket, pacifier, or special toy that may ease their adjustment to the center. Other toys from home often cause conflict, and the center cannot be responsible for their safekeeping. Please keep in mind that centers do not allow toys that may be dangerous or encourage fighting, such as weapons and action figures. Please check with center staff concerning guidelines for bringing electronic equipment such as games, music players, and cell phones.

Diapers/Bibs: Please bring enough disposable diapers and wipes for the day, and check with center staff concerning the use of cloth diapers. Please provide bibs for your child.

Identification: Please label all clothing and other belongings, such as bottles, cups, diapers, wipes, and toys, with your child's full name.

Your Child's Day in Back-Up Care

You may wonder what your child's day in back-up care will be like. Here are the answers to frequently asked questions regarding the routine of a typical day in back-up care:

Arrival

When your child arrives at the center, he or she must be accompanied by you or another authorized adult (18 years or older). You and your child will be introduced to the staff and shown where to store your child's personal belongings. Please allow sufficient time to transition your child and have a conversation with your child's teacher regarding your child's care for the day, particularly on your first visit. You are welcome to stay with your child as long as necessary to help your child adjust to the center. We recommend that you set aside at least 10 minutes for arrival, especially on your first day at the center.

Daily Information Sheet

You will be asked to fill out a daily information sheet indicating where you will be located during the day, including a current phone number where you can be reached.

Please include any pertinent information about your child with regard to current medications, allergies, or food restrictions.

Adjusting to the Center

Separation from parents and adjustment to a new environment may be challenging for children. Bright Horizons teachers are well trained to provide support during this sensitive time. If a child is having difficulty because a parent has left, the teacher will allow the child to express his or her anger or sadness, offer comfort, and try to engage the child in an activity. If the child continues to be upset and cannot be consoled within a reasonable amount of time or refuses to participate in the program, we will call you to discuss how the staff might help your child. Our goal is to help your child adjust and have a successful day.

Departure

Children will be released only to a parent, guardian, or other adult (18 years or older) previously authorized in writing. At pick-up time, you will receive a daily written report informing you about your child's day. Please allow sufficient time prior to the center's closing time to speak with your child's teacher about your child's day and pack up your belongings. You must pick up your child by the close of center business hours. Upon arrival at the center for pick-up, you (or another authorized adult) are responsible for your child.

Visitors

You are encouraged to visit your child at any time during the day. Others wishing to visit children are not permitted unless accompanied by the child's parent, guardian, or authorized non-parent/guardian.



Daily Activities

The World at Their Fingertips Education at Bright Horizons consists of developmentally based programs for each age group. There are also elements that emphasize content area, like *Language Works*, *Math Counts*, *Science Rocks*, *Projections*, *ArtSmart*, *Well Aware*, and *Our World*, that cross all ages.

The activities for the day will vary, based on the needs of the individual child and the importance of providing a variety of activities and quiet times in a child's day. A complete daily schedule of activities is posted in each classroom. Generally, you and your child can expect the day to include:

Snack Time

Bright Horizons provides nutritious snacks each day. Please contact your confirmed center for the daily snack menu.

Lunch Time

We invite you to eat lunch with your child at the center or take your child out to lunch when you can. Please indicate on your daily information sheet if you are taking your child out or if you would like the staff to serve the lunch you have provided or the lunch provided by the center. Bring any special foods needed due to allergies, religious customs, or health conditions. Please do not bring any candy, gum, soda, or glass bottles. Please check with your confirmed center about whether lunch is provided and if there are any restricted food items due to food allergy policies.

Quiet Time

Children rest or have quiet time after lunch. Cribs, mats, or a quiet reading space are available for children. Please check with your confirmed center about whether sheets and blankets are provided for children under 6 years. Children over the age of 6 may engage in quiet activities such as reading or games. All sleeping items are laundered and/or disinfected after each use.

Outdoor Activities

Weather permitting, the daily schedule at some centers may include taking children outside for a walk or for playing in an outdoor playground. Your authorization is required, and children should be dressed appropriately for the weather.

Special Needs

Some children with special needs may require flexible programming, additional teachers, or special teacher training. While the center is committed to assisting all families, a back-up child care center may not be an appropriate setting for all children. Eligibility will be determined based on the center's ability to provide quality care for each child.

If your child has special needs, please contact your program's reservation number to discuss your child's needs before making a reservation.

If your child has difficulty adjusting to the program, the center will contact you for assistance. If your child is disruptive to the overall program, the center will make every effort to help your child adapt to the center's environment. If these efforts are unsuccessful, the center reserves the right to ask that you find an alternative arrangement for the day.

Behavior Management

Bright Horizons is committed to providing an environment that fosters a positive experience for each child. Children are encouraged to use skills that will allow them to resolve conflicts and have their needs met without the use of aggressive or destructive behavior. When situations occur that require intervention, teachers will provide children with clear explanations as to why specific behavior is inappropriate and help them find an alternative behavior that fits within classroom guidelines. If your child is having difficulty and is unable to manage his or her behavior, the director may contact you and ask you to intervene or remove the child from the center. This will be used only as a last resort if all other means to help your child control his or her behavior have failed. The following guidelines are in place in every Bright Horizons center:

- No child shall be ridiculed or verbally abused or subject to cruel discipline.
- Physical restraint is prohibited, unless necessary to protect the health and safety of the child or other people.
- No child shall be hit, spanked, or subjected to any corporal punishment.
- No child shall be denied food as a consequence of behavior; nor will food be given as a reward for good behavior.
- No child shall be punished or criticized for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet.

Bright Horizons' complete behavior-management policies are available upon request.



Health and Safety

The following policies have been created to ensure the health and safety of all children in the center at all times.

Administering Medications

We strongly recommend that you administer all medications, whether prescription or non-prescription. You may make specific arrangements with the center to administer your child's medication if you are unable to do so. These arrangements must be made in advance, as they require specific written directions from the prescribing health care provider. All medications will be stored in a locked box labeled "medications" in either the director's office or in the refrigerator. Prescription medications must have a pharmacist label, showing the name of the prescribing health care provider, the child's full name, date of prescription and expiration date, and instructions of administration. All over-the-counter medications must be in their original container labeled with the child's full name. Please do not leave any medication, whether prescription or non-prescription, anywhere in the center (including diaper bags and backpacks). Unused medication will be sent home with the parent, guardian, or other previously authorized person at the end of the day. No medication may be disposed of in the center.

Center staff cannot administer acetaminophen or other fever-reducing medicines so that a child can remain at the center. With written authorization from you or your child's physician, the center can administer fever-reducing medicines to your child while he or she awaits your arrival. Your child may be readmitted to the center after he or she is fever free for at least 24 hours and has no other symptoms.

Please note: State or local licensing regulations regarding the administration of medication in child care centers may supplement or supersede these policies. Please consult center staff for assistance.

Minor Injury

Bright Horizons staff members are trained in first aid and CPR. In case of minor injury, the staff will administer basic first aid and will notify you as soon as possible.

Injuries Requiring Medical Attention

For injuries that require medical attention, the staff will call you as soon as possible. If you cannot be reached, the staff will call the emergency medical contact person specified on your child's Authorization for Release and Emergency

Medical Treatment Form. Staff will also continue to try to contact you. If you are not immediately reachable and the staff feels that medical attention is imperative, they will contact your child's physician, and the center director or a teacher will accompany your child to a local hospital. An ambulance will be called to transport your child. The cost of any emergency medical treatment and related transportation for the child will be your responsibility.

Illness

The health and safety of each child is of paramount importance to Bright Horizons. In consideration of other families, we do not permit sick children to use the center. We will contact you if your child becomes ill and will keep your child comfortable in a quiet area until you can arrive to take your child home. Children may occasionally seem ill without any clear cause. Please do not bring your child to a Bright Horizons center if your child seems "under the weather."

Children with the following symptoms may not use the center:

- **Temperature:** An axillary temperature of 100 degrees or more. Please be sure that your child is fever free for at least 24 hours before returning to the center.
- **Respiratory Infections/Severe Colds:** Respiratory infections, such as colds and bronchitis, are usually caused by viruses. A persistent "loose" cough and/or a runny nose is considered a severe cold. Please do not bring your child to the center until he or she is symptom free.
- **Vomiting or Diarrhea:** Please do not bring your child to the center until at least 24 hours after vomiting or diarrhea has stopped.

- **Other Contagious Diseases:** Your child must be symptom free or have verification from a health provider that he or she is no longer contagious. Communicable diseases include, but are not limited to: chicken pox, Coxsackie's virus, German measles, haemophilus influenza, measles, meningococcus, mumps, strep throat, conjunctivitis, impetigo, tuberculosis, whooping cough, giardia lambilia, hepatitis A, salmonella, shigella, lice, and scabies. Bright Horizons reserves the right to require verification from a doctor that your child is not contagious before allowing him or her to return to the center. If your child has recently visited Bright Horizons and becomes ill with a contagious disease, please inform the Bright Horizons staff so that we can notify other parents whose children may have been exposed. Bright Horizons staff will provide information regarding the type of communicable disease, symptoms, and precautionary measures that may be taken in addition to information about when an infected child may return to care. Please notify Bright Horizons of your child's condition as soon as possible.

Security

Your child's safety, as well as the safety of our teachers, is a top priority. Each Bright Horizons center is a secured facility, and admittance is granted to the following individuals only:

- Bright Horizons staff
- Parents or guardians of children using the facility
- Authorized non-parent/guardian
- Visitors with pre-approved authorization to enter
- Licensing officials and others at the discretion of the center director

Please note: Certain areas of a center may be monitored and videotaped for observation and security purposes.

Please note: The policies and procedures described in this parent handbook are subject to change without notification. Any changes to policies and procedures will be posted and available at the center. Policies and procedures may vary from center to center.



We look forward to seeing you and your child at a Bright Horizons center soon.



Bright Horizons Family Solutions is the world's leading provider of employer-sponsored child care, early education, and work/life consulting services, managing more than 650 early care and education centers in the United States, the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Canada. Bright Horizons serves more than 800 clients, including more than 120 FORTUNE 500 companies and over 80 of the "100 Best Companies" as recognized by *Working Mother* magazine.

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