



**WHOLESOME GENERATION
OPERATIONAL HANDBOOK**

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NOTE: ALL OUR HANDBOOK POLICIES ARE REVIEWED AND UPDATED ANNUALLY (DECEMBER). WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO CHANGE OUR ANNUAL ENROLLMENT AGREEMENTS ACCORDING TO NEW REGULATIONS AND/OR COMMUNITY GUIDELINES AND BEST PRACTICES. (10/22-LSO).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Wholesome Generation Introduction	3-4
Mission and Goals of Wholesome Generation	5
WG Curriculum Assessments, Communication Parents	
Hours of Operation, Holidays + Closures	6
Enrollment Registration Requirements	7
Fee Structure and Payment Policy	7
Policies and Procedures	
Accidents and Injuries	7-8
Arrival	9
Birthdays and Cultural Holidays	9
Questions + Concerns, Suggestions and Evaluations	10
Guidance and Discipline Policy	10
Meals, Snacks (Outside Foods), Nutrition Practices, Breastfeeding	11-14
Medication Administration (Food-) Allergy Policy	14/27
Outdoor Learning Policy Field Days	15
Parent Involvement Volunteer Opportunities	15
Parent/ Teacher Conferences	16
Personal Items from Home Nap + Quiet/Rest Time	16
Records of Children	17
Release Supervision of Children	17
Background Checks/Employee Screening + Staff Training Orientation	17
Annual Training, Parent Education + Policies, Tuition/Fees	17-18
Sick Children Policy	19
Vision + Hearing Policy	20
Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting to the State	20-21
Withdrawal, Termination of Agreement	21-22
Weather + Emergency Procedures	22
Safety, Sanitation and Fire Guidelines	22-23
COVID-19 Policies + Procedures	23
WG's Ratio + Group Sizes	24
Parent + Community Resources	25
Gang-Free-Zones	25
WG VISITOR POLICY DURING COVID-19	25

OUR WHOLESOME GENERATION PHILOSOPHY

At Wholesome Generation, we believe we shortchange our children when we provide them with an uninspiring learning environment, as this can negatively impact learning. If children are not motivated and inspired, then they will not learn and reach their full potential. Stimulating learning environments are essential for young children's growth. Research suggests that an environment that nurtures learning provides the necessary resources and time for investigative play and experimentation. It is one in which children are free and motivated to make choices and to explore answers without feeling intimidated. Opportunities such as these provide the development of critical thinking skills.

Wholesome Generation is a progressive learning environment, specifically a project-based health education model, including a organic gardening + culinary component, and mobile "Food-For-Life" Outreach + Community-Building model, all designed to incubate health into everyday learning. [Our WG program is Nature-focused and encourages Physical Activity and so students spend a minimum of 4-5 hours outside daily \(exercising, exploring, running and learning\).](#) Connecting with nature and our surrounding communities provides opportunity for growth and development, training, cultural presentation, health education, and helps grow our local food culture.

OUR WHOLESOME ENVIRONMENT + FUNDAMENTAL REGGIO PRINCIPLES

The Reggio Emilia Philosophy to teach young children puts the natural development of children as well as the close relationships that they share with their environment at the center of its philosophy. Early years programs that have successfully adapted to this philosophy share that they are attracted to Reggio because of the way it views and respects the child.

Parents are a vital component to the Reggio Emilia philosophy. Parents are viewed as partners, collaborators and advocates for their children. They assist our Team, and communicate with love and respect and support our School values. Teachers respect parents as each child's first teacher and involve parents at various Opportunities. It is not uncommon to see parents volunteering within Reggio Emilia classrooms throughout the school.

OUR CORE VALUES

Respect for Each Child

With the Reggio Emilia philosophy children are treated with respect, meaning that they are taken very seriously. Serious in what they have to say, their needs, their interests, and their emotions. Children take the initiative in their playing and activities, which help them to study and discover the world. That way they have insights in the functioning of the world around them and the place that they can and would like to take in it. Through Reggio Emilia respect means that from the day they arrive at the day care centre they will be treated with the above-mentioned respect. When they are still very young the respect is shown by the way communication with the child takes place. When the children get older, the emphasis shifts to the manifestation that the children develop themselves to concrete their own ideas. *Our program supports families and children who may need additional accommodations, to include home language, diverse needs/differing abilities, and cultural backgrounds. Please let us know if your child needs additional accommodations.*

Children are capable of constructing their own learning

Children are driven by their interests to understand and know more. They form an understanding of themselves and their place in the world through their interactions with others.

Our Wholesome Generation programs foster a strong focus on social collaboration, working in (often times) multi-age groups, where each child is an equal participant, having their thoughts and questions valued. The adult is not the giver of knowledge. Children search out the knowledge through their own investigations.

Children are Communicators

Communication is a process, a way of discovering things, asking questions, using language as *play*. Playing with sounds, rhythm and rhyme; delighting in the process of communicating. Children are encouraged to use language to investigate and explore, to reflect on their experiences. They are listened to with respect, believing that their questions and observations are an opportunity to learn and search together. It is a process, a continual process. A collaborative process, rather than the child asking a question and the adult offering the answers. The search is undertaken together.

The environment is the third teacher

The environment in our early learning classroom is recognized for its potential to inspire children. An environment filled with open spaces free from clutter, where every material is considered for its purpose, every corner is ever-evolving to encourage children to delve deeper and deeper into their interests. The space encourages collaboration, communication and exploration. The space respects children as capable by providing them with authentic materials & tools. Also similarly to Montessori, the space is cared for by the children, and the adults. WG asks parents to help with classroom design and setting up study areas, and all ideas are welcome.

The adult is a mentor and guide

Our role as adults is to observe (our) children, listen to their questions and their stories, find what interests them and then provide them with opportunities to explore these interests further. Reggio Emilia takes a child-led project approach.

An emphasis on documenting children's thoughts

You'll notice in Reggio and Reggio-inspired settings that there is an emphasis on carefully displaying and documenting children's thoughts and progression of thinking; making their thoughts visible in many different

ways: photographs, transcripts of children's thoughts and explanations, visual representations (drawings, sculptures etc.) all designed to show the child's learning process.

The Hundred Languages of Children

Probably the most well-known aspect of the Reggio Emilia Approach. The belief that children use many different ways to show their understanding and express their thoughts and creativity. A hundred different ways of thinking, of discovering, of learning. Through drawing and sculpting, through dance and movement, through painting and pretend play, through modeling and music, and that each one of these *Hundred Languages* must be valued and nurtured. That they are all a part of the child, that learning and play are not separated. The Reggio Emilia Approach emphasizes hands-on discovery learning that allows the child to use all their senses and all their *languages* to learn.

OUR WHOLSOME GENERATION MISSION AND GOALS

The mission of Wholesome Generation is to provide high quality programs to children in an environment designed to enhance each child's development and learning. Our emphasis lays on organic nutrition, culinary education, physical exercise, and project-based outdoor learning [*with no screen time incorporated.*](#)

Our goal is to nourish the whole child by providing exceptional care in a safe, loving, nurturing environment where the children are valued and respected. WG offers an eco-friendly facility filled with materials thoughtfully chosen to enrich a child's daily experience. The Schoolhouse's primary Teachers are experienced, degreed educational specialists with the knowledge and training to support your child in each step of development and help expand their learning.

We will try our best to help meet the development needs of each child, assisting in the total development of each child socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually. This mission is accomplished by creating a prepared environment that follows the child's lead. But, we are asking parents to help co-create, by communicating solutions and taking a hand's on approach when help is needed in our classrooms.

At WG, we provide a place where children can do the work they are so highly motivated to do, developing themselves as competent, independent human beings and practicing the skills necessary to achieve their own individual goals.

Curriculum Overview: Wholesome Generation promotes a nature-immersion education, inviting the integration of literacy and mathematics into the students' discoveries in the forest. We use an emergent curriculum model pioneered by Reggio Emilia practices. Curriculum is carefully and thoughtfully planned out based on observations and assessments of the children's play, ideas, questions, and discoveries. Teachers incorporate reading, writing, mathematics, arts, and language into the daily happenings in the forest. Small teacher-child ratios allow one- on-one scaffolding to foster individual needs.

Wholesome Generation is strongly committed to providing exceptional, nurturing educational experiences for children, and their families, from every context of our community. It is our objective to promote the development of committed community leaders who are capable of positively impacting their local, national and international communities. Our students will experience hands-on learning experiences, both in the classroom and in nature, that are tailored to them and guided by highly educated teachers who are able to utilize research- based educational initiatives and service programs to promote the development of the whole child while achieving excellence in the academics and in life itself.

Assessment: Parents receive quarterly reports focused on whole-child development—how students are meeting academic learning standards, as well as social, emotional and physical development. Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled at least three times a year and as needed throughout the school year.

OUR CORE CURRICULUM: <https://wholesomegeneration.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Wholesome-Generation-Core-Curriculum.pdf>

ABOUT DRDP (our Curriculum) + Assessments:

Pre-K:

https://www.desiredresults.us/sites/default/files/docs/forms/DRDP2015_PSE_20180813RatingRecord.pdf

Infant and Toddlers:

https://www.desiredresults.us/sites/default/files/DRDP2015_EssView_RatingRecord_IT_08012018.pdf

Religious Orientation

Wholesome Generation strives to create an atmosphere where all religions are valued and where belief is a matter of personal choice. While our program is not religiously oriented, we encourage you to share your traditions and customs with us so we can incorporate them into our program for your child.

Hours of Operation, Holidays, Hourly Care

WG is offering children ages 18 months – 12 years of age a place to flourish. The Schoolhouse is open for full-day programs, Monday-Friday from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM. Enrichment programs are woven into the children's daily learning activities. Summer Camps are facilitated every June, July, for Youth ages Kindergarten - Grade 5.

Parents are asked to drop off their child between 8:30 AM and 8:55 AM, so they can be part of our Morning Circle, starting at 9:00 AM. Pick up is between 4:00 PM and 4:30 PM for general care hours. Children who are scheduled to stay until 4:30 PM, and are still not picked up by 4:35 PM from care will be charged an additional \$1.00 for every minute of delay, which should be paid at the time of pick-up. This cost helps cover the costs paid to our teacher(s).

Schoolhouse (Holiday/Other) Closings / Staff-Planning Days

Our school will be **closed** in observance of federal holidays, breaks and Staff Development/Planning Days (as listed on our website under [WG EVENT CALENDAR](https://wholesomegeneration.org/our-community/event-calendar/), link: <https://wholesomegeneration.org/our-community/event-calendar/>). Please know that additional closures might occur for Staff Planning Days or Events such as inclement weather, etc.

WG follows AISD for academic closures (not during Covid-19, as WG was deemed an essential business and serves pre-K students and families enrolled via subsidized care program). WG is not closed during the summer (we will announce staff planning weeks at least a month prior, for changes. Our closures are all listed in the link above).

There is no reduction in tuition for any school closings as these closures were factored into the monthly fees. Should the School need to close for any other days than those listed above, Parents will be provided with an advance notice. We cannot be held responsible for closures due to events beyond our control (or rescheduled field-days re Teacher absences, location closings, Holidays falling on select trip/learning experiences, or weather events). Since WG is a private Community School, our calendar follows the best practices for student excellence, teacher retention and growth, and classroom continuity. We reserve the right to amend our calendar at any time.

WG will not be able to offer hourly care. Hourly care is designed for those who need limited care to attend to doctor visits or other intermittent appointments.

Registration | Enrollment Requirements at WG

In order to enroll a child into our WG programs, an initial interview is conducted with the parents/guardians and child to explain our philosophy and program and to determine the child's developmental needs and family passions. During the tour, the family is encouraged to schedule a trial day for the child to explore our enriching program, and for the family to learn about their child's love for our schoolhouse and community.

The parents/guardians must pay a **registration/classroom + deposit fee** for each child and submit a **copy of the child's current immunizations (or exemption)** and **completed Enrollment Package** before the child can be admitted to the program. The enrollment forms are located on our website and contain the Child Profile, the Parent/Guardian Statement of Understanding, and a notarized copy of the Medical Authorization Form, as well as our Schoolhouse Waivers, and other applicable forms.

A recent copy of the **child's physical examination** must be submitted within 7 days of registration. Our WG registration fee, as well as the supply fee, is an annual fee, and will not be refunded, regardless of full program attendance (for the entire year). All forms are updated annually. Policies will be reviewed annually, parents will be notified of any changes to policy throughout the year and provided with an updated copy of policies and procedures.

Parents are required to notify the Executive Director and Center Director immediately if there is a change in name, address, phone number or place of employment. The same applies to court orders for custody or drop-off/pick-up changes (guardian information, etc). Please also let us know when there is a change in emergency contacts. It is important that our files are kept current, so we may contact you in case of an emergency. You can reach us in person during office hours, or by email if you are unable to contact our Director in person.

WG will accept children regardless of race, color, sex, creed, disability, political persuasion, national origin, or ancestry. WG is prepared to serve children from 18 month to 12 years of age.

Fees and Payment Policy (and Withdrawal Policy)

Monthly fees are due on **the 30th the month prior** and no later than **the 1st day of the month**. Payments not made on time are subject to a late charge of \$25 after the 2nd of the month, and \$45 will be charged for any returned checks. No refunds or reductions will be made for absence due to illness, withdrawal, vacation, teacher absences, rescheduled activities or field-days, or any other circumstances. WG provides families with an opportunity to submit payment via credit card (please expect to add a small convenience fee for the privilege of doing so). Withdrawals will be processed with a 30-day written notice (to the 1st of the following month), and you can send your communication to lene@wholesomegeneration.org | communication has to be submitted in writing). WG will not issue refunds as Registration Fees and Community Fees are non-refundable, and payments are made in monthly installments (tuition), and the deposit check will cover any unpaid balances due.

Policies and Procedures

Positive Discipline Policy

At Wholesome Generation we approach challenging behavior by providing individualized interventions to individual children with challenging behavior adopted from the Pyramid Model and the Positive Behavior Support (PBS) approach.

When facing Challenging Behavior our goal is to understand and resolve the problem behavior of children that is based on empirical research done by the teacher and meaningful adults in the life of a child, and co-creating solutions together with families.

Daily Intervention:

When frustration levels start to rise, we give children the option of taking a break. Sometimes getting a drink of water or taking a short walk outside with the teacher is enough to help a young child get back into a positive mindspace. Some children also benefit from spending a few minutes drawing a picture to express their feelings.

Conflict between peers:

When there is conflict between children caused by a challenging behavior we let the children both take separate breaks where they feel encouraged to breathe and recognize their feelings. Then we encourage them to talk about the situation while we guide them to understand each other's perspective, and identify patterns and learn to solve their conflict and create strategies to utilize next time we face a similar conflict. When the teacher observes the similar behavior raising they will remind the children of the agreements and strategies that they set before and guide them to solve their conflict using these resolution strategies.

Challenges with Routine/Schedule:

If a child/children is showing challenges to follow the classroom routine we encourage Teachers to analyze their routines and schedules to determine those that may raise challenges and to find new strategies and modify their schedule to adapt to the needs of the students. Teachers can also use group and individual visual schedules and a variety of individual strategies to help children that may need extra support. Teachers inform the parents about these strategies during Parent Teacher Conferences and meetings.

Responding to students with Challenging Behavior

Teachers have utilized several strategies and resources to help a child develop strategies to face challenging behavior within daily interventions but the behavior continues to rise. With the support of the Director of Curriculum, the teachers will take an approach to develop an understanding of why the child engages in problem behavior and strategies to prevent the occurrence of problem behavior while teaching the child new skills.

This Positive behavior support offers a holistic approach that considers all factors that have an impact on a child and the child's behavior. It can be used to address problem behaviors that range from aggression, tantrums, and property destruction to social withdrawal. (see our full policy attached to this Handbook, as Amendment.

Accidents and Injuries

Our main concern and basic commitment at the Schoolhouse is the safety of your child. The children are supervised in their indoor and outdoor activities; however, accidents may occur when children play and interact with one another. In any case, parents (guardians) will be notified of any accidents and its circumstances. If the accident is minor, the center staff will report the incident when the child is picked up (verbally) and by filling out an incident report, for all our students (within 24 hours). The parent and/or staff member will decide if the child needs medical attention reach out via phone/text immediately should the child have an injury on the head (ANY head injury). When a serious accident occurs and the child needs immediate medical attention, our first action will be to obtain the needed help. The second action will be to notify the parents (via phone/text and e-mail). The Schoolhouse will refer to the child's enrollment form for emergency numbers. Please discuss any concerns you may have regarding our accident policy or accidents reports with the Executive Director and Center Care Director.

Arrival Time

When you bring your child to WG, an adult over the age of 16 must accompany your child to their classroom. We ask that you sign your child in (and out) via the attendance app (PROCARE) by our front door. Under no circumstances should a child be dropped off outside on the street or be left unattended in the front driveway. Children will not be accepted until the posted arrival time of 8:30 AM. WG assumes no responsibility of your child until the child is signed in and accompanied to their classroom (and with their Teacher).

Please ensure you make contact with either your child's teacher, or our morning check-in person, and let them know your child has arrived. It is not healthy for your child to have you sneak away. Please work with your child's teacher on appropriate "goodbye's" that will best meet the developmental stage of your child (for our early learners). WG maintains an environmentally healthy program and we ask that you please do not leave your car running while you drop off your child. *Also, dropping off after the suggested time (of course you might occasionally arrive later, but please don't drop off after 8:45am (K-Elem) or 9a (Pre-K), as this causes disruption to our morning circle, and/or class flow).*

Pick up Time

When picking up your child from WG, an adult over the age of 16 must accompany your child to the front door and we ask that you please sign your child out via the attendance app (PROCARE), given to you or

dropped by our front door (on the front table). Please ensure you make contact with your child's teacher or the morning opener, to let them know your child is being picked up.

Children will not be permitted to leave with ANYONE except those persons **listed on the enrollment form**. Any person picking up your child besides the parent(s) will be required to show a picture ID (for copy) and we will sign your child out with our ADMIN CODE before your child will be released. The ID number will be recorded on the attendance sheet and will be kept on file for a minimum of 6 months. Any change in authorized pick-ups must be in writing.

NO SHOES INDOOR POLICY: We try to keep our center germ free and ask that you refrain from wearing your outdoor shoes inside our classroom or on the deck/patio. If you work in a clinic or hospital environment, we ask that you change before coming to the center (even if you work in an outpatient facility). This has cut down viral illnesses so much and we are grateful for your support.

Absences

WG encourages you to bring your child to school everyday. This will encourage that he/she gets the opportunity to experience all the planned activities, get a grasp of a strong routine that will support their academic and social emotional development. WG understands that children must be absent for personal or travel reasons. If a child will be absent from school, please call the school or email the teacher or our Director, to inform them about their absence. We also encourage parents to use PROCARE to report absences.

Birthdays and Holidays

Some holidays are beyond the understanding of young children. When we celebrate a holiday at WG, we design concepts and activities that give the children more experience with and understanding of the holiday (for example: Martin-Luther-King-Day). We will notify the parents of the times and formats of any special celebrations. Generally, there will be no special requirements of the parents. Events can be found on our WG website under -> COMMUNITY. ->EVENTS.

We feel it is important for young children to become familiar with the values, beliefs, and cultural traditions of different people and the ways they celebrate special occasions. From time to time we will provide such opportunities. We would appreciate knowing, if, and how, any of the parents could assist us.

The most important occasion for a child is his/her own birthday. We will honor the child at this time by doing something special, perhaps a special activity and organic healthy snack. Parents who wish to bring in a snack at this time should notify the Teacher AND our Chef Lene. Children's birthdays may be celebrated by bringing a healthy snack to serve the children during the morning snack, but all snacks need to be approved before bringing them to the Schoolhouse. This simply helps us to avoid food reactions of other children. All meals and snacks food must be prepared in a kitchen that is inspected by local health department officials or the food product must be commercially prepared.

Please do not send with your child any treats unless he/she brings enough for the whole classroom [pre-approved, prepared in a commercial kitchen]. If your child is planning a home birthday party and wishes to invite classroom children, please send the invitations to all children as children who may not get invited will feel left out and may not understand why they are not invited.

Concerns, Suggestions and Evaluations

Our goal at Wholesome Generation is to provide you and your child with a beneficial and memorable learning experience. If a parent/guardian has a question or concern regarding our WG policies, or the care provided at the Schoolhouse, the parent is requested to speak first with the child's teacher. If the issue cannot be resolved with the teacher, please speak with the ED immediately. We will do our very best to come up with a resolution for you, your child and our program. We are open to feedback; however, disrespectful communication and/or aggressive communication towards our teachers/staff may result in dismissal from the community. For any policy related questions, we ask that you approach our ED directly,

as changes come from within our core administration and teacher team or drop a note in our suggestion box in our office. We are always available via email and/or personal conference. Additionally, all our Lead Teachers are available to meet with you during our monthly community meetings or one-on-one by appointment. Surveys about community programs and annual evaluations are sent annually via email. [Our values are respect and communication with kindness and in a supportive manner, at all times.](#)

Guidance, Discipline and Conflict Resolution | Language Facilitation and Support

The goal of Wholesome Generation is to help a child become self-reliant and internalize rules of behavior. We teach in a warm and responsive style and practice “positive discipline”. Preschool and older children are encouraged to take appropriate responsibility for their own behavior and to generate ideas for solving social conflict problems (e.g., how to share a toy/tools). Any discipline will be constructive in nature and include techniques such as:

- Using limits that are fair, consistent and appropriate for the child’s developmental level.
- Providing children with reasons for limits.
- Giving positively worded directions and guiding with kindness.
- Modeling and redirecting children towards acceptable behavior.
- Helping children to constructively express their feelings and any possible frustrations to resolve conflict.
- Arranging the classroom environment in a way that promotes desirable behavior.
- Brief, supervised separation or time away from the group, when appropriate for the child’s age and development, limited to no more than one minute per year of the child’s age. During that time, the child will be exposed to positive, and patient style.

The following techniques are prohibited by Texas childcare licensing and under NO circumstances will be used on your child:

- Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment;
- Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training;
- Pinching, shaking, or biting a child;
- Hitting a child with a hand or instrument;
- Putting anything in or on a child’s mouth;
- Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child;
- Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language;
- Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed;
- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time.

Staff members who punish children in a prohibited manner, or who do not first apply proactive, rather than reactive, techniques will jeopardize their employment at Wholesome Generation. A staff member found using any of the above listed “Prohibited Punishments” will be dismissed immediately. Any infractions of this discipline policy reported by parents/guardians, or other staff members, will be investigated.

If a child does not respond to positive guidance and redirection, and is posing an emotional problem for him/her self or others, or is a physical threat to others, the following steps are taken:

1. The child receives communication that further repeating the behavior will result in his/her separation from the group. Alternatives are suggested to the child (age-appropriate).
2. If the child repeats the action, she/he is removed from the group to a private place within sight of a teacher who responds calmly and with kindness. The teacher tells the child s/he will return to discuss the situation when the child has calmed down.
3. In a few minutes (not more than one minute per age) the teacher returns the child to discuss what happened, why it was unacceptable, and what the child must do to control his/her behavior. Positive reinforcement and positive language will be used at all times.
4. The child is invited to return to the group when he/she is ready. If the child needs or wants more time alone s/he may take it. Children under the age of 4 will not be removed from the group and will stay with the teacher.
5. When the child returns to the group, the teacher welcomes him/her back into the group and tries to make the transition as smooth as possible. Positive language will be used.

Parents will be notified if any behavioral issues of concern and the staff at Wholesome Generation will work with the parent to resolve any behavior issues outside normal child development. Should the child’s

behavior cause a continued threat to him/herself and/or others, or pose a pattern to disturb the classroom dynamics repeatedly, the ED/Center Director will recommend a behavioral assessment be conducted to determine if additional intervention is needed. We ask parents to practice non-violent and gentle parenting while on our schoolhouse premises. Spanking, hitting, or yelling (by a parent) at any child are prohibited and may result in immediate dismissal from our community.

Meals and Snacks | Nutrition Practices and Culinary Classes

We are passionate about growing healthy, wholesome food. We share skills and provide educational experiences in permaculture design, pollinator conservation, rainwater harvesting, organic gardening/botany and earth friendly living in the form of workshops and courses. We offer internships, mentor minority youth and farmers, and bring skilled teachers from Austin and from around the world with expertise in creating beautiful and sustainable living systems. By empowering and teaching youth to co-create Eco-solutions and connect with sustainable farm practices, our edible and living classroom curriculum connects to foster entrepreneurial skills and valuable skills for life.

Wholesome Generation offers healthy and clean meals, and focuses on raw, vegan, and Ayurvedic principles, and a big proponent of the culinary philosophy that maintains cooking is based on the finest and freshest seasonal ingredients that are produced sustainably and locally. Our Wholesome Generation kitchen advocates for a food economy that is “nourishing, clean, and fair.” We collaborate with a community of local vendors + farmers whose dedication to sustainable agriculture assures our kitchen a weekly supply of fresh and delicious ingredients.

Our teachers engage students in an “eco-gastronomic” curriculum. By actively involving students in all aspects of the food cycle, Wholesome Generation is an education program that instills the knowledge and values needed to build a humane and sustainable future. Our School integrates organic gardening, cooking, and sharing meals and snacks into the core curriculum. We use food traditions to teach, nurture, and empower all students.

To learn more about our Food and receive Educational Tools and Recommendations of healthy portion sizes, our monthly menu, along with healthy and safe meal choices, and more, please visit: <https://wholesomegeneration.org/nutrition-program/>. More information about meal planning and healthy foods (with affordable meal prep and food substitutes can be found on our community board, by browsing our books at the schoolhouse, or visiting the website: <https://www.westonaprice.org/health-topics/childrens-health/traditional-diets-for-healthy-children/>

The following principles are used for menu planning guidelines:

- Appropriate portion sizes for each required meal component set by U.S. Department of Agriculture guidelines of the Child and Adult Care Food Program.
- Consideration of students food allergies and special needs.
- Local, seasonal, and sustainable produce.
- Collaboration with the curriculum and planning of the Wholesome Generation teaching staff and students.
- Guidelines and menu ideas from farmtopreschool.org.
- Using Alice Water’s Edible Schoolyard Project as a model.
- Recipes, experiences, and thoughts from “The Languages of Food”, by Reggio Children, “The Art of Simple Food” and ” Edible Schoolyard”, by Alice Waters.
- Ideas and recipes from local farm-to-table chefs and farmers.

Some of the ways in which we involve our students in food preparation, learning, and enjoyment:

- Engage the senses: smell the aromas, notice the colors, feel, compare & contrast textures
- Discuss presentation
- Discuss seasonality
- Cultivating, planting, harvesting
- Prepare ingredients, organize components of a recipe
- Practice safe and healthy food preparation habits
- Combine ingredients together
- Add spices to taste
- Set the table together, present the dish
- Practice closure of a meal by cleaning up and practicing gratitude and reflecting on the food
- And so much more — the combination of possibilities are endless!

Our Reggio-inspired mobile culinary classroom is a place of symbolic and cultural significance, expressing care, attention to our community, and the value of differences in customs and traditions. Our kitchen is open to students, teachers, and families. Several of our parents volunteer to help the chef in preparation, clean-up, and facilitating student involvement, thus opening the rich, fragrant, and delicate dialogue between children and the kitchen to their families and home kitchens as well.

Our Farm Expansion:

Community Gardens, Educational Greenhouse and a Food Forest next to a natural creek bed, with a pollinator garden and conservation lab; added spaces will be hosting primarily year-round educational classes and weekend workshops/tours for the surrounding community and partner Organizations, supporting the program year-round. Food is the new “currency”, and our focus to educate about sustainable farming practices teaches youth and community to feed themselves, without having to rely on systems that are collapsing. Lessons emphasize hands-on activities in garden, kitchen, and outdoor settings, but also include student readings and manipulatives that deepen academic inquiry in related fields, such as science, mathematics, social studies, and language arts. By expanding all our gardens and with it our educational programs, we secure our food model and become a hub for food security and nature education.

We provide all meals (lunches) and snacks for your child, therefore, please do not send any food. NO outside foods are allowed. Exceptions can be made for special occasions **with prior approval**. All our food served is commercially prepared in a facility/kitchen inspected by health officials. We support families with take-out meals (at-risk) year-round as needed.

Offering healthy and nourishing meals play a critical role in supporting the wellness, health, and development of our children, older adults, and individuals with disabilities through the provision of nutritious foods. In particular, WG has a powerful opportunity to instill healthy habits in young children that serve as a foundation for healthy choices in life. We teach young learners about food, oral health and require vision and hearing testing.

WG follows the updated nutrition standards that went into effect on October 1, 2017 via CACFP (USDA's Nutrition Requirements). The CACFP nutrition standards for meals and snacks served in the CACFP are based on the [Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#), science-based recommendations made by the National Academy of Medicine. Under these standards, WG meals and snacks served include a greater variety of vegetables and fruit, more whole grains, and less added sugar and saturated fat. In addition, the standards encourage breastfeeding and better align the CACFP with the [Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children \(WIC\)](#) and with other child nutrition programs.

Our WG meal times are as follows: A healthy snack is provided at 9:30am, Lunch at 12p and a nourishing afternoon snack at 3pm. Wholesome Generations ensures that snacks for school age children are provided and ready to serve after the students first learning block (9:30a).

You do not need to provide a statement from your child's physician to indicate special dietary needs related to sugar/gluten/wheat intolerances, however, **we must have a note on file stating ALL food allergies.** Please communicate your needs, and we'll co-create a plan with you.

NOTE: We can not guarantee a completely nut-free zone (due to families coming on site with siblings), however, we have separate food prep areas (outside of our WG Schoolhouse) for tree-nut free meals to be prepared, and all meals/snack will be supervised to reduce exposure for children with allergies. We are currently meat-/sugar-/wheat-/gluten-free.

WG offers water (or herbal teas) throughout the students' days. We do not offer milk (allergy alert!). WG uses only hemp or oat-milk for smoothies and snacks. Due to covid-19 and new policies, WG is not currently providing meals family style, but all meals are individually plated prior to serving the students.

We do not allow tablets/TVs/screens on site and so children are NOT exposed to any media during meal-times (or any time during the school day, except for science learning in Elem classes, where we use youtube at times to connect to review documentaries and/or learning materials).

More about Food Safety and Protocols

For the safety of children, all liquids and food hotter than 110 degrees Fahrenheit are kept out of reach of children at all time. IF staff or guests have to store food in our fridge, we have the option in our commerical kitchen (away from our schoolhouse) for food storage (please speak to our Director and one of our Chef's will assist you).

A monthly menu will be posted for all our WG provided meals and snacks. Fruits and vegetables are available to children at snack time.

All WG provided meals and snacks food must be prepared in a kitchen that is inspected by local health department officials or the food product must be commercially prepared. All foods will meet USDA guidelines and are served family style (unless otherwise suggested, such as during covid-19) to help enhance the social skills of your child. Meals will include milk substitute (allergies!), fresh fruits and vegetables. Water is always available throughout the day and served as the primary drink at every meal. No juice is served.

Staff are educated and take proper precautions regarding any allergies that a child in their classroom may have as long as it is noted on the child's enrollment form. Staff are trained regarding common food allergies and common symptoms of food allergies.

Staff will not use food to reward children. Rewards will not be given to children for cleaning their plate at meal time.

About Family-style meals:

Family-style meals encourage children to discuss their day with our Educators, and to build trust and a loving relationship. Children in our Caterpillar classroom (ages 18+ months) are encouraged to feed themselves (with appropriate spoons/plates). All children receive seconds, thirds and more, until their bellies are full, however, children are advised to 'try' every item served (to learn healthy habits). Children do not have to eat all portions, however, they have to try every item served on their plate. Because we are a food-focused community, we work with sensory youth on feeding themselves, or 3rd party aides for feeding-therapy (as hired by the families). WG also encourages the children's help (age appropriate) to be a "snack" - or "lunch" helper (carrying trays, helping with cleaning their own plate, etc), when possible (not during covid-19). We ask learners to set up their table/seat, place water bottles, work to pass out napkins, etc. Each classroom Lead Teacher works with children to create a routine that fits their children's ability and supports our "family style" mealtimes. **Meal Plans are rotated every 4-6 weeks at a minimum, per recommendation with a clinical nutritionist and following our Chef seasonal menu planning.**

WG also educates families and children on oral health every semester and we collaborate with Forrest Family Dental on visits about oral health and best practices for children (and their families). More resources about appropriate oral health can be found here:

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/healthy-living/oral-health/Pages/default.aspx>

Farm to Early Care and Education (farm to ECE): is a PSE change intervention designed to increase access to healthy, local foods in ECE settings through local food purchasing and gardening; increase the quality of the ECE setting through food, nutrition, and agriculture-related experiential education; increase children's acceptance and preference for healthy foods; increase children and family knowledge about healthy foods and local food systems; and positively influence child, family, and provider health behaviors. Farm to ECE includes a set of activities and strategies that include 3 core elements of farm to school and here at WG we connect them to our program, by encouraging and connecting local vendors to our WG market, to support local food purchasing, the visit of our WG gardens, and the connect to local food, nutrition, and agriculture education – all are implemented with the goal of enhancing the quality of our WG school environment and the educational experience. Farm to ECE, as well as WG aim to advance racial and social equity by increasing access to healthy, local foods and high quality education opportunities for all children. We create this by engaging youth into weekly gardening lessons, connect families to our markets and host culinary workshops (in addition to giving free meals weekly), as well as the co-creation of all our gardens.

Breastfeeding Policy and Information:

WG acknowledges the important role of school programs in supporting breastfeeding mothers and their infants by welcoming breastfeeding mothers and making sure staff members are trained to handle breast milk and follow mothers' feeding plans.

We welcome breastfeeding mothers to feed and supply breast milk at any place of the school house and we offer a private space for a nursing mother, if preferred.

WG works with representatives from the Austin Mother's Milk Bank, who provides information to us that is displayed and shared with our community, such as: how to become a Milk Donor, Information about where to donate milk, breastfeeding resources, success stories of the milkbank.org programs and Breastfeeding Awareness Month (August).

For additional information and support you may contact:

- Mother's Milk Bank - www.milkbank.org
- La Leche League www.texasll.org
- Central Texas Breastfeeding Coalition - www.keeptaustinbreastfeeding.org
- Mom's Place Lactation Support Center- www.momsplace.org

Allergy Policy

Minimum standard rules for child care centers and homes (chapters 744, 746 & 747) identify the food allergy emergency plan as an individualized plan prepared by the child's health care professional, which must include a list of each food the child is allergic to, possible symptoms if exposed to food on the list and steps to take if the child has an allergic reaction.

WG does not allow outside foods due to children on site with food sensitivities and/or allergies. **Please see our Food Allergy Information and Policy attached as Amendment to this Handbook (Page 27).**

WG has an Allergy Safety Form that is part of the Enrollment Package, and that must be filled out upon participating in our program. Some health care professionals may have their own templates for child allergy plans and WG will be able to accept them in addition. WG posts all children's allergies in the classrooms where your child may spend time, and all areas where food might be prepared.

Medication Administration

Wholesome Generation does **NOT** administer medication sites, with the exception of first aid care or epi pens for food allergies/allergic reactions as specified in the child's medical note. [All teachers are trained for the use of epi pens.](#)

Outdoor Policy + Weather Appropriate Clothing

Outdoor play is important to all developmental domains of development, particularly physical gross motor development. Children will be provided with at least one to two+ hours a day of outdoor time, weather permitting. Please dress your child appropriately for outdoor play during the warm + cold weather seasons. Should the weather prevent us from taking the children outdoors, we will provide alternate indoor movement activities in our multi-purpose movement room. Outdoor play restrictions for a child must be in writing and accompanied by a doctor's medical statement noting the reason for the restriction.

Field Days / Farm Days

We are soon starting to offer more regular scheduled Field-Days away from our School, and we ask families to sign the "Field Day Form" so we can take school-age children (Kindergarten/1st Grade) to designated locations (with parent support). Children younger than three (3) will never be chaperoned by other members of our community and their own parents/families will transport.

Parent / Community Involvement

Creating Community: Wholesome Generation fosters collaboration among children, teachers, parents, and community. The parent is viewed as an essential resource to the child's learning. The exchange of ideas between parents and teachers is vital in creating a more positive and productive learning environment. Wholesome Generation embraces the Reggio Emilia vision of an "education based on relationships." We aim to have a family centered program in which families feel welcomed and involved at Wauhatchie in order to support children's reciprocal relationships with other children, family, teachers, society, and the environment. Wholesome Generation holds several events throughout the school year for parents and family members to attend including seasonal family events and parent visitation days. We also welcome parent volunteers to assist in the classroom, upkeep, fundraising, and other items throughout the school year.

We require that all families volunteer a minimum of **20 hours** per school year. This volunteer assignment could be helping with our Garden, assisting with special projects at the Schoolhouse, or working on special projects at home. We will not generally ask our parents to volunteer in the classroom but if parents have a certain skill, we will definitely welcome this. A annual Volunteer skill survey form will be provided and must be used when documenting volunteer hours. Additional activities not listed can be discussed with the Executive Director.

WG offers a Parent Potluck at least once per month. At those events we encourage families to attend, having the opportunity to meet with the teachers to discuss their child's progress and passions and see improvements and changes at the Schoolhouse. Some volunteers or interns may work only in the middle of the day, and so you'll have the opportunity to meet and get to know each other.

We also encourage parents to join their child for a snack or lunch, when the time is convenient for them. We ask that you limit those visits (as classroom visits) to once/month and coordinate with your child's Teacher (24 hr notice, notice must be confirmed, for us to have enough food to share and to insure that it's not on a day where we start a new student in that classroom). Other possibilities for involvement may include sharing a cultural background and/or language, reading a story or singing with the children, or simply spending time during free play. Please contact your Child's Lead Teacher if any of these activities are of interest to you. Parents are permitted to access our Wholesome Generation Schoolhouse at any time when the child is in attendance (with prior notice during covid-19, and the necessary health screenings). However, be considerate about our classroom dynamics, so our sensory children do benefit as well.

WG offers Parent Education (Orientation) meetings at the beginning of the new (academic) school year, and at the time when new parents on-board our community.

Parent Teacher Meetings

The Lead Teachers at Wholesome Generation offer parents an opportunity to attend a parent/teacher conference with their child every Quarter (October, February, May). Teachers will email a sign up sheet with times available, and the teachers will verbally ask the parents what would be a convenient time for them. In addition, Conferences notices are also sent via email. If the parents are unable to schedule a time, the teacher will send home a packet of materials that she and the child have worked on throughout the year (or until this day). This documentation will be kept in each child's file.

It is also important to note that a parent may schedule a meeting at any time with their child's Lead Teacher. Likewise, a teacher may schedule a meeting with parents if she has concerns about a child. The staff strives to keep open communication with all parents.

Personal Items from Home | Toys from Home | Nap + Rest Time Spaces

Your child will be provided with a place to keep personal belongings. Due to the nature of our programs (physical exercise, gardening, culinary), we ask that parents provide at all times:

Three complete changes of clothing labeled with his/her name and placed in a reusable bag or backpack. Clothing should be comfortable and suitable for indoor and outdoor activities. Active play is messy play for children, so please do not send clothing you wish to keep clean, such as white pants or shirts. Tennis shoes make climbing easier and safer. No boots or open-toed sandals, and NO crocs please, as they do not allow for a safe play on our playgrounds. All clothing and personal items must be labeled with the child's name for identification. This includes bags, coats, sweaters, etc. For the summer, and our gardening activities, we ask that parents bring organic (deet-free, chemical free) sun lotion (NO sprays!) + bug repellent. We also need a water bottle (insulated). **For nap/rest time**, WG requires the following: Your child must have a rolling nap/rest mat (no full bedding, or larger blankets with pillows can be stored at the schoolhouse; please bring a rolling (labeled) nap/rest mat and 1 stuffed animal only). WG will store these mats in a large ziplock and will send them home at the end of the week for washing. All children will have a quiet space with a floor mat (blue/red) available, that is protected from interference of other children, supervised by a caregiver at all times. Our rest/quiet time can be indoor/outdoor.

In order to help each child develop self-identify and self-esteem, families are asked to provide a family photo(s). We will use the photo(s) on your child's cubby, and/or decorate the room at your child's eye level and to identify his/her personal space.

Please do **NOT** allow your child to bring any of the following:

- Small toys (legos); jewelry of any kind; candy or gum; drinks (except water in water bottle), any snacks containing peanuts/tree-nuts.
- Personal electronic games or devices (Kindle/Tablet/even "fake" phones). No phones please! WG encourages very minimum screen time exposure.

Please watch for any small articles, which may your child bring home in his/her pocket. For example, small cubes, cylinders, beads, etc., accidentally placed in their pockets. We strive in providing high quality materials for your child and these items may be difficult to replace.

Records of Children + Important Communication [illness, incident reports, etc.]

Records of Children

All Children's records are accessible to caregivers during hours of operation for use in an emergency. Parents have the right to access their own child's record during a parent conference with the caregiver or child-care center Director. All records will be updated annually and kept in a locked cabinet. Parents have access to their child's records and our minimum standards at all times (during Covid with a scheduled appointment, as we can't have any parents entering the school building).

Communication at Wholesome Generation

Our Classrooms will list important information for families on our communications board, and we will update (immediately) about outbreak of illness, incident/accident report(s), or other issues that may occur, via email

format. We will communicate any important changes of policies via email as soon as we have this information available. Our Office and Community Board has important information posted, and we advise you to view the board when walking by. Change of address or family information: Families are encouraged to update any new information regarding their address, in Procure directly. Parents can communicate with teachers and admin using the Procure app. Instructions to download app will be provided prior to the school year. Enrolled families will be added via email to the appropriate class.

Communication between Teachers and Parents.

Our Lead Teachers all communicate with families daily (check in at pick-up, if possible), and parents will receive a weekly newsletter with communication about their child's weekly activity, schedule, news, and photos (via separate link). Families are connected to our community events and connect with families quarterly during Parent-Teacher Conference days. Additionally, we communicate via Procure (our WG app where parents can sign-in/out, via our tablet by the front door) and leave messages via communications tabs. Additionally, WG will send monthly newsletters about schoolhouse news, and any other relevant information. During Covid, we are only holding our quarterly events and no longer larger gatherings.

Release of Children

Our utmost concern is the safety of your child. Therefore, if you are unable to pick up your child, we will only release your child to those for which you have authorized on your enrollment form. Any person picking up your child besides the parent(s) will be required to show a picture ID (for copy) and sign your child out before your child will be released. The ID number will be recorded on the attendance sheet and will be kept on file for a minimum of 6 months. Children will not be permitted to leave with ANYONE except those persons listed on the enrollment form. Any change in authorized pick-ups must be in writing.

Supervision of Children when dropping off | picking up Children

Our main concern and basic commitment at the center is the safety of each child. We ask that parents (and Teachers) VERY closely supervise the children in the Schoolhouse, and on the street (when parking). It is recommended that children exit from cars have to be offered a hand to hold by a parent. When departing from the school, please resist having the children run to the car while the parent still signs them out, or run after their friends/other staff. Staff and Teachers can safely park across the Street. We require that all parents drop off and pick up their child from their child's classroom.

Background Checks and Screening of Employees + Volunteers

Wholesome Generation requires a Background check (and Fingerprint Check) upon hire from all staff and volunteers who provide care for children at the School. Background Checks are updated every two years, and all relevant documentation will be filed and updated electronically. Staff will receive an email one month prior to the new filing (renewal) of their Background check from the ED or Center Director.

Employee + Volunteer Orientation + Staff Training

Wholesome Generation provides Training to all Employees and Volunteers [hours vary depending on Position and Responsibilities of Staff]. ALL Staff must attend our semester Orientations (if Camp Duties are provided) or at a minimum our annual training [all training will be tracked + updated electronically]. WG will provide the required pre-service training (if needed) to new Employees. [Our School Orientation will be held in a group setting [with Mentors and Specialists present, if needed], at the School-site. Orientation may be a combination of online training (via workforce or other sites), or in person (CPR/Culinary/etc.). **All NEW** Employees will receive additional training on the following: Food Allergy Policy (Staff are educated on food allergies and take precaution; additionally, staff is attending annual training on allergy symptoms, and how to administer an EpiPen; also Evacuation/Emergencies; Culinary/Gardening if applicable; Neglect and Abuse (prevention, recognition, and reporting); Child Health and Wellness; Safety; Cultural Diversity; Planning developmentally appropriate learning activities; Edible/Upper Grade Curriculum, and Reggio Emilia Inspired Training. Monthly Training will include a fire-drill and locating (and operating) our Fire Extinguisher(s). Caregivers' trainings and information of completion of all training modules will be filed electronically and updated by the Executive Director. A monthly e-reminder will be sent to all staff to keep

current on upcoming training. Information is located in each Employee file and can be reviewed by Employees and our Team of Directors.

Professional Development

- **Orientation to Wholesome Generation**

In order to acquaint staff with the basic center policies, employees will be provided with an orientation to WG that will include the following at minimum:

- (1) An overview of the minimum standards of Child Care Licensing;
- (2) Operational policies found in this handbook, including but not limited to child guidance and discipline, and the release of children;
- (3) An overview of symptoms of child abuse, neglect, and sexual abuse and the responsibility for reporting these;
- (4) The procedures to follow in handling emergencies, including, but not limited to, fire, explosion, tornado, toxic fumes, volatile persons, and severe injury or illness of a child or adult; and
- (5) The use and location of fire extinguishers and first-aid equipment.

- **Pre-Service Training**

Prior to being counted in ratio with the children, you will need to attend pre-service training with a minimum of 8 clock hours of training in the following areas:

- (1) Developmental stages of children;
- (2) Age-appropriate activities for children;
- (3) Positive guidance and discipline of children;
- (4) Fostering children's self-esteem;
- (5) Supervision and safety practices in the care of children;
- (6) Positive interaction with children; and
- (7) one hour in the following topic:
 - (1) Understanding early childhood brain development.

- **Annual Training**

Continued professional development is important to our employees' work with children. WG believes that the more staff learns, the better prepared they are to provide a high quality learning experience for children. WG will provide training on-site to attend. However, it is each staff members responsibility to search local community trainings to help fulfill your annual training requirements. WG will pay regular hourly rates to attend up to 16 clock hours of training. The 16 clock hours of annual training are exclusive of orientation, pre-service training requirements, CPR and first aid, and high school child-care work-study classes. Training must adhere to the following guidelines:

(a) At least six clock hours of annual training must be in one or more of the following topics:

- (1) Child growth and development;
- (2) Guidance and discipline;
- (3) Age-appropriate curriculum; and
- (4) Teacher-child interaction.

(b) The remaining clock hours of annual training must be in one or more of the following topics:

- (1) Care of children with sensory needs;
- (2) Adult and child health;
- (3) Safety;
- (4) Risk management;
- (5) Identification and care of ill children;
- (6) Cultural diversity for children and families;
- (7) Professional development (for example, effective communication, time and stress management);
- (8) Preventing the spread of communicable diseases;
- (9) Topics relevant to the particular age group the caregiver is assigned;
- (10) Planning developmentally appropriate learning activities; and
- (11) Minimum standards and how they apply to the caregiver.

Any training over 16 clock hours must be approved by the Center Director. A two-week notice to attend training must be given. Payment for any training over the 16 annual hours will be at the Center Director's discretion and subject to available funding.

Additional Covid-19 related training will be provided as required by Regulations and HHS.

Sick Children | Physical Health and Well-Being

Under no circumstances may a parent bring a sick child to the Schoolhouse, if the child shows any signs of illness (see SYMPTOMS REQUIRING REMOVAL OF CHILD FROM CARE BELOW), or is unable to participate in the normal routine and regular Schoolhouse program. Sick children will expose all children and staff members who they come in contact with. These people can in turn expose the other children. Sick children want care from their parents in the comfort of their own homes. If other children become ill due to exposure to your sick child, either because he/she was returned to the Schoolhouse before full recovery or because he/she was not picked up promptly upon notice of becoming ill, other parents will be unnecessarily inconvenienced. Because this is disruptive to other children and their families, your cooperation on this issue is extremely important. Every effort is taken to reduce the spread of illness by encouraging hand washing and other sanitary practices.

If a child is unable to participate in the normal activities of the Schoolhouse (including being able to play outside due to respiratory distress following outdoor time), then the child MUST stay at home. Wholesome Generation will spend at least one to two hours outdoors daily.

Children will be visually screened when they arrive in the morning at the Schoolhouse. In the event a child becomes ill and needs to be picked up, the parent(s) will be called and are expected to come pick the child up within one hour (60 minutes). If the parent(s) cannot be reached, or have not arrived within an hour, the emergency contact person will be called and asked to pick-up the child.

For the benefit of our staff and other children in our care, a sick child will not be permitted to return to care for 24 hours after condition has returned to normal. The child may return 24 - 48 hours (depending upon the illness) after they have received the first dose of an antibiotic. Please mention if your child has received any type of medication over the last 24 hours.

If you aren't sure about whether or not to bring your child to the Schoolhouse, please call your on Center Director to discuss. Allergy related symptoms, and non-communicable illnesses do not require exclusion IF you have a note from your doctor.

Symptoms requiring removal of child from the Schoolhouse:

- Fever: Fever is defined as having a temperature of 100°F or higher taken under the arm, 101°F taken orally, or 102°F taken rectally. For children 4 months or younger, the lower rectal temperature of 101°F is considered a fever threshold; (a child needs to be fever free for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to the Schoolhouse, that means the child is fever free without the aid of fever reducing substance.)
- Fever AND/OR sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, earache, irritability, or confusion. This includes if a child tells us that their throat hurts, and although we always examine, we are unable to do a full medical screen due to qualifications, and have to ask you to pick up your child if the child is not willing to participate due to fatigue/symptoms (this includes complaining of pain, if verbal). We just don't have a designated "sick care" space or additional staff to supervise your child while the other children are unsupervised and not cared for. [Note: we will always discuss this on the phone prior to parents having to pick-up.]
- Diarrhea: runny, watery, bloody stools, or 2 or more loose stools within last 4 hours
- Vomiting: 2 or more times in a 24 hour period. [Note: please do not bring your child if they have vomited in the night.]
- Breathing trouble, sore throat, swollen glands, loss of voice, rattling in chest (respiratory distress such as labored breathing), hacking or continuous coughing.
- Runny nose (other than clear), draining eyes or ears.

- Frequent scratching of body or scalp, lice, rash, or any other spots that resemble childhood diseases, including ringworm.
- Child is irritable, continuously crying, or requires more attention than we can provide without hurting the health, safety or well-being of the other children in our care.
- Pink-Eye: Pink eye (conjunctivitis) generally remains contagious as long as your child is experiencing tearing and matted eyes. Signs and symptoms of pink eye usually improve within three to seven days. Bacterial conjunctivitis generally is not contagious after the child receives the eye drops, however, because the child still has crusted/red or teary eyes and a runny nose, we require for your child to stay at home until the eye is fully cleared up. When redness, tearing and matted eyes are no longer present, it's appropriate for a child to return to the Schoolhouse.

Just a note: Many times our Schoolhouse may get blamed for the illness of a child, meaning that we have "allowed" sick children to come here. Parents may not stop to think that when sick children are brought to our Schoolhouse, our entire staff is also at risk of exposure. How would you feel if another parent brought their sick child and exposed your child? We STRESS this at WG to support all our students and staff -- if you are not sure whether or not it is okay to bring your child, please call ahead to ask us. We may require a doctor's decision as to whether or not the child is contagious. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

Vision and Hearing Policy

The Vision and Hearing Screening Program, Texas Health and Safety Code requires that all children enrolled for the first time in any public, private, parochial, or denominational school or in a Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) licensed child-care center and licensed child care home in Texas, or who meet certain grade criteria (specified below), must be screened or have a professional examination for possible vision and hearing problems.

The requirements for **VISION AND HEARING SCREENING** apply each year for children enrolled in any licensed child-care center and licensed child care home or school program at the ages or grades listed below:

WHO MUST BE SCREENED	WHEN SCREENING MUST BE DONE
4-years-old by September 1st Kindergartners Any other first-time entrants (4 years* through 12th grade)	Within 120 days of admission
1st-, 3rd-, 5th-and 7th graders	Anytime within the school year (preferably within first semester)

Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect

Texas law mandates that if a staff member has cause to believe that a child has been abused or neglected or may be abused or neglected, that person must report the abuse no later than the 48th hour after the hour the professional first suspects that the child has been or may be abused or neglected to law enforcement officials. For this reason, please notify staff when you drop off your child of any accidents or injuries that occurred at home.

How to report Abuse and Neglect | Contact Licensing

You may call the Texas Abuse Hotline at 1-800-252-5400 to report abuse or neglect. The hotline is answered by DFPS Intake Specialists (who are all degreed professionals) 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. You will be asked to provide your name and contact information. You will be asked to explain your concerns. The Intake Specialist might ask additional questions to determine if the situation that you describe meets the Texas Family Code's definitions of abuse or neglect. You may report your allegations to the Texas Abuse Hotline through the Internet at:

This secure website provides a way to explain your concerns in writing. You must provide your name and a valid e-mail address. Your identity remains confidential and will not be provided directly to the accused person by any DFPS employee. Once an Intake Specialist processes your report, you will receive a confirmation e-mail with a Call Identification Number. The e-mail will also tell you whether or not your report was forwarded to a local DFPS office for further investigation.

You may contact DFPS Licensing via this website or number:

https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Contact_Us/

Phone Contacts LICENSING OFFICE

State Office	512-834-3426
Report abuse or neglect <i>External Link</i>	1-800-252-5400 <i>from across the United States</i>

Texas Youth Hotline	1-800-989-6884
Texas Adoption Resource Exchange (TARE)	1-800-233-3405
Foster Care or Adoption	1-800-233-3405
Office of Consumer Affairs	1-800-720-7777 <i>submit questions or complaints</i>

Address

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

701 W. 51st Street
Austin, Texas 78751 [[map](#)]
P.O. Box 149030
Austin, Texas 78714-9030

Withdrawal or Termination of Services

WG enrolls with a year-round enrollment agreement. To withdraw, please send a written notice (30-days to the 1st of the next month) in writing to lene@whoelsomegeneration.org. It is important that you send the information in writing. The full program cost is due if there is a written agreement and you leave mid-year.

WG enrolls via CCS Voucher (subsidized care program via Workforce Solutions) should there be a financial concern (and WG has capacity for additional CCMS enrollment). More information for Parents can be found here: <http://www.wfscapitalarea.com/ChildCareServices/ForParents>

Termination of Services.

Termination of a child will only be made with staff recommendation, in writing (email), and/or outside consultation (if applicable), which would result in action to be in the best interest of the child. Wholesome Generation may terminate enrollment for the following reasons:

- The parent/guardian fails to follow correct admission requirements especially as they relate to submission of required forms and departure procedures.
- Retention of the child would be detrimental to the health and safety of our teachers, administration, or other children in the Schoolhouse, the Schoolhouse staff, or to the child him/herself (due to exceptional needs for special treatment). It is noted here that the staff at Wholesome Generation is able to termination a contract at any time, due to parent actions, if deemed unsafe by WG.
- Damage of property, unwillingness to participate in class/lessons, or disrespect to our Teachers/Director. This also includes harassment of WG clients, board, directors, or volunteers.

- The parent/guardian fails to pay fees according to policy or disrespects our ED, Director Team or Staff/other Students and Parents.
- Parent habitually brings a sick child to the Schoolhouse.
- Parent continuously drops off child(ren) late to school.
- Failure to receive parental support and help when a child is suspected of having a learning or behavior problem. This includes failure to attend parent conferences and to follow through with medical and/or educational specialists, or releasing information for sensory youth in need of OT/therapy services. IF WG determines that a specialized instructor/aide is needed for 1:1 support, parents are responsible for payment of the professional (either via insurance or direct compensation), as WG is a small non-profit and not specialized (special needs) learning center.
- Annual fees such as classroom fees or deposit fees and registration fees are non-refundable regardless of participation in our program. This applies to families enrolling, and then leaving for reasons of moving, etc.

In the case of a Schoolhouse termination, a written, dated notice will be given to the parent/guardian (this could be in email format). All outstanding tuition must be made according to contract until the ending date (end of school-year). Our tuition reimbursement policy does not apply if termination is due to non-payment, abuse to the Schoolhouse policies on illness, and/or continual late payments, or failure to communicate in kindness and effectively, including harassment of teachers, staff, WG clients, or volunteers.

Weather and Emergency Procedures

Wholesome Generation follows the Austin Independent School District (AISD) decisions regarding bad weather and emergency closures, as well as the Leander Independent School District (LISD) closures and other sources. In cases of bad weather and emergency closures, WG will follow guidance of AISD / LISD regarding closures and delayed openings, however, we will call closures by **6pm the day prior** to a potential weather related closure day, to avoid parents driving to and from school in unsafe conditions. We have set up a phone-tree and you will be notified via text and email by our Director/Staff.

If the children must be re-located due to an emergency situation, or local emergency personnel require shelter-in-place, we will attempt telephonic notification to parents, as well as text and email. An emergency notification will be sent via text (VIA ProCare) and email.

Safety, Sanitation and Fire Guidelines

Our WG Schoolhouse will have annual sanitation inspections. After an initial health inspection, WG must renew our sanitation inspection every 12 months (by a qualified local sanitation official). Our schoolhouse premises will be cleaned daily or weekly (as appropriate) by a contractor and all cleaning/sanitation will be monitored online and tracked by our Center Director, who signs off on all sanitation inspections, cleaning schedules, and training.

Our WG staff, or volunteers will be trained during Orientation and will help us keep our spaces beautiful and clean. Reports of our daily, weekly or monthly/annual cleanings will be tracked via check-list and updated by our Center Director.

Cleanings manuals are included in each of our Classrooms, as part of the Staff training manual and include duties such as cleaning, repairing, and maintaining our equipment and materials, to protect the health of our children (included but not limited to hand washing, sanitation solutions, etc.). Quality inspections will be facilitated daily, weekly, or monthly.

Pest Control, Playground Equipment and other outdoor facilities and grounds will be maintained by our Contractors, and the checklist to monitor if each task has been completed, will be logged by our Center Director. Routine Playground and ALL Grounds inspections are scheduled daily by our Center Director and logged electronically (to monitor equipment quality and grounds maintenance).

COVID-19 GUIDELINES FOR SANITATION + MASK WEARING ON CAMPUS

WG is a non-masking community, and because our classes are facilitated outdoors for majority of the day, WG does not enforce mask-wearing among children (or staff/teachers). In all of 2020-2021, we have not had a case of covid and we heavily focus on prevention of any illness, by working with holistic healing modalities, offering sunshine, healthy gluten-free/plant-based meals, and small scale outdoor learning. We also offer holistic healing to all our staff (massage, energy scans, yoga, sound healing, ...and more) to keep everyone's energy positive and immune system strong.

WG is following all of the required standards for Child Care Licensing and Regulations, and health protocols for all child care centers, and additional protocols consistent with our specific needs and circumstances to help protect the health and safety of all employees and children will be published frequently (and when there is a need).

Several of our team members are **UNABLE** to wear a mask due to various health reasons. If this makes you feel uncomfortable, please share with our Administration, so we can be sure to schedule any meetings via facetime and have materials available for pick-up by the front door at the end of the day, when your child is released from school. WG does not regulate the front parking/street areas.

NOTE: WG is not currently allowing parents to come inside the school building due to on-going safety protocols, and parents are advised to schedule their meetings with the Lead-Teacher in advance so there is a space outdoors. Unless absolutely necessary (for medical emergency reasons), we will be scheduling meetings outdoors.

Important Schoolhouse Guidelines

We hope that all can enjoy our beautiful Schoolhouse spaces for years to come. Here some rules that will help keep all our indoor and outdoor spaces beautiful and healthy:

- NO climbing on Trees (any).
- Please ask children to not leave their classroom spaces (unless attended by staff/parent).
- NO Shoes inside policy: We have a no-shoe policy at the Schoolhouse, however, many students wear socks outside in the garden and then leave them on when stepping inside the classrooms. We advise to send 'indoor shoes' to School.
- NO outside foods ~ We provide all lunches please do not bring lunch or snacks from home. Exceptions can be made for special occasions, food must be commercially prepared or in a Kitchen inspected by health officials and coordinated in advance with our chefs.
- Please show your love and respect for our space(s). We work hard to deliver beautiful and enriching spaces and hope guests and families will help us keep our grounds free of trash and our spaces clean.

Failure to comply with our Schoolhouse rules may result in parents having to reimburse us for any damage, or contaminated food, and/or may result in other actions.

ABOUT OUR FEE STRUCTURE

Wholesome Generation offers year-round community education programs for youth and families. Here our fee structure:

Caterpillar Class: \$1195/month (Mo-Fri care, 8:30a-4:30p) ~ all foods included.

Butterfly + Dragonfly Class: \$995/month (Mo-Fri care, 8:30a-4:30p) ~ all foods and extra curricular activities included.

Owls + Foxes + Wolves Classes: \$995/month (Mo-Fri, 8:30a-4:30p) ~ all foods and extra curricular activities included.

WG offers in-kind, barter- and scholarship offerings. We also happily accept WFS (CCS-Subsidized Care Vouchers). Barter agreements are filled annually (March, ahead of the August start of the new school year).

Siblings will receive a discount (5%) and have priority for spots available.

Tuition is due on every 1st of the month, but no later than the 3rd of the month. Parents can pay via cash, check or credit card (a valid credit card authorization is needed from each family for incidentals, such as late pick up, or market days, etc.) and will be provided with our Admissions documentation.

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We hope that this handbook has answered all your questions. Should you need any other information, or feel we failed to mention something important in our Handbook, please bring it to the attention of the Executive Director immediately. We will update our handbook annually and provide every staff member and family with a new copy at this time. Thank you for choosing and supporting Wholesome Generation, and let's make this an amazing learning experience for everyone!

**About WG's Group Sizes (Student-to-Teacher Ratios):**

The following staff-to-child ratios are suggested by NAEYC as best practice. Staff-to-child ratios at Wholesome Generation are much lower than at public or other private schools to ensure that students have the opportunity to co-create with the teacher and to ensure safety in all that we do.

| Age Category      | Ratio | Maximum Class Size*                                                                |
|-------------------|-------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Toddler/Two's     | 1:7   | 12 (State Licensing allows up to 18, however, WG caps at 10 for 2 Teachers)        |
| Pre-School   Elem | 1:10  | 20 (State licensing allows up to 35, however, WG caps at 20/2 teachers)            |
| Kindergarten      | 1:12  | 24 (State licensing allows up to 35, however, WG caps at 20:2 Teachers)            |
| School-Age        | 1:15  | Our largest Class size will be 14 (State licensing allows up to 35, WG caps at 14) |

**New Requirements Regarding Gang-Free Zones**

**For Child Care Centers**

As a result of House Bill 2086 that passed during the 81st Legislature, Regular Session, Chapter 42 of the Human Resource Code includes section 42.064, effective September 1, 2009. This new statute requires that information about gang-free zones be distributed to parents and guardians of children in care at licensed child care centers. The following is a tip sheet to assist in complying with the new law. This information may be posted at your child care operation or copies may be provided to parents.

**What is a gang-free zone?**

A gang-free zone is a designated area around a specific location where prohibited gang related activity is subject to increased penalty under Texas law. The specific locations include day care centers. The gang-

fee zone is within 1000 feet of your child care center. For more information about what constitutes a gang-free zone, please consult sections 71.028 and 71.029 of the Texas Penal Code.

How do parents know where the gang-free zone ends?

The area that falls within a gang-free zone can vary depending on the type of location. The local municipal or county engineer may produce and update maps for the purposes of prosecution. Parents may contact their local municipality or court house for information about obtaining a copy of a map if they choose to do so.

What is the purpose of gang-free zones?

Similar to the motivation behind establishing drug-free zones, the purpose of gang-free zones is to deter certain types of criminal activity in areas where children gather by enforcing tougher penalties.

What does this mean for my day care center?

A child care center must inform parents or guardians of children attending the center about the new gang-free zone designation. This means parents or guardians need to be informed that certain gang-related criminal activity or engaging in organized criminal activity within 1000 feet of your center is a violation of this law and is therefore subject to increased penalty under state law.

When do I have to comply with the new requirements?

The law is already in effect, so providers should begin sharing information regarding gang-free zones immediately. Licensing staff will offer technical assistance to facilitate compliance until rules are proposed and adopted. In the meantime, providers should update their operational policies and procedures to include providing the information mandated by this law to the parents or guardians of the children in care.

#### COVID-19 VISITOR POLICY:

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**NOTE: WG is not currently allowing parents to come inside the school building until absolutely needed, due to safety protocols and precautions, and parents are advised to schedule their meetings with the Lead-Teacher in advance so we have space available outdoors. Tours and Visits are scheduled by appointment only (with the exception of annual or other inspections and health or regulations representatives) at this time.**

WHOLESOME GENERATION | OPERATIONAL + PARENT HANDBOOK

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

I have received and read the *WHOLESOME GENERATION* Operational and Parent Handbook Procedures. I agree to follow these policies and understand that the Handbook may be modified, amended, or eliminated to be replaced by a new manual and Handbook. Parents will receive a notice in writing (e-mail) and updated Handbook to sign, at least annually.

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Parent or Guardian Signature Date

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Parent or Guardian Signature Date

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Employee Signature Date

## AMENDMENT 1 | FOOD ALLERGY AND FACTS + NO OUTSIDE FOOD ON CAMPUS POLICY .

### Food Allergy Facts and Figures | What to know about Food Allergies in Children

A food allergy occurs when the body's immune system sees a certain food as harmful and reacts by causing symptoms. This is an allergic reaction. Foods that cause allergic reactions are called [allergens](#).

Allergic reactions can involve the skin, mouth, eyes, lungs, heart, gut and brain. Mild and severe symptoms can lead to a serious allergic reaction called [anaphylaxis](#). This reaction usually involves more than one part of the body and can worsen quickly. Anaphylaxis must be treated right away to provide the best chance for improvement and prevent serious, potentially life-threatening complications.

#### How Common Are Food Allergies?

- About 32 million people have food allergies in the U.S.<sup>1,2</sup>
  - About 26 million (10.8%) U.S. adults have food allergies.<sup>1</sup>
  - About 5.6 million (7.6%) U.S. children have food allergies.<sup>2</sup>
- In 2018, 4.8 million (6.5%) children under 18 years of age had food allergies over the previous 12 months.<sup>3</sup>
- In 2018, 6% of Black and Hispanic children had food allergies over the previous 12 months, compared to 6.6% of white children.<sup>3</sup>
  - Food allergy has increased among U.S. children over the past 20 years, with the greatest increase in Black children.<sup>4</sup>
- Milk, egg, wheat and soy allergies are often outgrown. Most people do not outgrow peanut, tree nut, fish and shellfish allergies.<sup>5</sup>
- Children with food allergies are two to four times more likely to have asthma or other allergic disease.<sup>6</sup>

#### What Are the Most Frequent Food Allergens?

- Eight foods cause 90 percent of most food allergy reactions<sup>7</sup>:
  - Milk
  - Egg
  - Peanut
  - Tree nut (e.g., almonds, walnut, pecans, cashews, pistachios)
  - Wheat
  - Soy
  - Fish (e.g., bass, flounder, cod)
  - Shellfish (e.g., crab, shrimp, scallop, clams)
- Sesame is also a rising food allergy. It affects an estimated 1 million people in the United States.

Allergies to peanuts, tree nuts, fish and shellfish tend to persist lifelong. Allergies to milk, egg, wheat and soy often disappear with age, but not always.<sup>5</sup>

#### What Is Anaphylaxis?

Anaphylaxis is a life-threatening allergic reaction. Not all allergic reactions are anaphylactic.<sup>7</sup>

- Anaphylaxis can cause:
  - Tightening of the airways
  - Swelling of the throat
  - Severely low blood pressure
  - Shock<sup>7</sup>
- Symptoms of a severe allergic reaction can include:
  - Skin: hives (often very itchy), flushed skin or rash
  - Mouth: swelling of the lips, tongue and throat; tingling or itchy feeling in the mouth
  - Lungs: shortness of breath, trouble breathing, coughing or wheezing

- Heart: dizziness, lightheadedness
- Stomach: vomiting, diarrhea<sup>7</sup>
- Each year in the U.S., it is estimated that severe reactions to food cause:
  - 30,000 emergency room visits
  - 2,000 hospitalizations
  - 150 deaths<sup>8</sup>

#### How Are Food Allergies Managed and Treated?

- Although new treatments are being developed, there is currently no cure for food allergies.<sup>7</sup>
- Avoiding the allergen is the most important way to prevent a reaction.<sup>7</sup>
- Those with food allergies should carefully read food labels and always ask about ingredients before eating the food.<sup>7</sup>
- Epinephrine is the first line of treatment for anaphylaxis.<sup>7</sup>
- Those with food allergies should always have epinephrine on hand.<sup>7</sup>
- If a person is having anaphylaxis, they should:
  - Follow their Anaphylaxis Action Plan
  - Use their epinephrine
  - Call 911<sup>9</sup>

### WHOLESOME GENERATION SCHOOLHOUSE POLICIES + PRECAUTIONS

Our schoolhouse is free of peanuts, and all our teachers are trained to administer epinephrine ~ we work with the office of Austin Allergy (Dr Lieberman) for training and resources, and provide parent education during all tours and during student trial days.

NO outside food is allowed on our campus that includes gluten, refined sugar, tree-nuts (peanuts), sesame, eggs, or dairy products. We use plant-based ingredients to replace any major food allergens that could cause harm to any of our students. All lunches are made in a tree nut free commercial inspected kitchen (our mobile food trailer), inspected by the health department and regulations frequently.

Information about Food Allergies are posted in each classroom, on our community board, in our kitchen and lunch area. This information includes: Recognizing and Responding to food allergies; Cross contamination (and how to recognize potential allergens); Resources and Facts about the most common allergens and how to respond to an emergency (see attached).