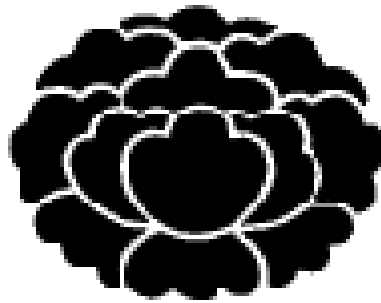


Alaya Preschool Parent Handbook



2009/2010 School Year

Welcome to Alaya Preschool! Alaya exists in order to offer young children the warmth, nurturing, and acceptance that allows them to trust and open to themselves and the challenges of the world. “Alaya is a place where children unfold. They learn about themselves, about friendships, and about their world, putting things together and taking them apart. Acknowledging that every situation holds the key to fresh insight, the potential growth never diminishes or stagnates . . . “(1990, Patricia Scott).

“Alaya” is a Sanskrit word. “The notion of Alaya is one of origin or storehouse... In the word “Himalaya”, him means “snow” and Alaya means “mountain range”; “big with snow”. Alaya means there are big things happening, primordial things taking place... and that is what we are trying to do. It’s just a basic part of existence.”

From Chogyam Trungpa, Rinpoche

Founder of Alaya Preschool at the opening talk in 1978.

ALAYA’S PHILOSOPHY

Alaya Preschool arises out of compassion and a caring for others. It is an expression of our dedication to help raise our children to be genuine to their hearts, to appreciate honesty and straightforwardness, to have delight and joy in relationships, to develop and feel good about the personal effort and discipline of accomplishments, and to gain awareness of and relax with the play of the world. Aspects of Waldorf, Montessori, Shambhala and other philosophies inform our work with children.

At Alaya, we believe that the nature and style of the learning process are as important as what is learned. Young children learn primarily by direct experience of their world through their senses and their bodies. Our emphasis is on social competency, language skills, emotional and physical growth and well-being, dramatic play, and creative self-expression. Within Alaya’s homelike and nurturing environment, children are able to observe and participate in simple basic living activities: relationships, helping, sharing, preparing food, cleaning up, caring for plants and animals, and learning through play.

RELATIONSHIP WITH NAROPA UNIVERSITY

Alaya was created in 1976 by a group of parents and teachers under the direction of the late Chogyam Trungpa, Rinpoche (1940-1987). Originally a division of the Nalanda Foundation, Alaya is now a part of the Early Childhood Education program at Naropa University, a private, non-sectarian university also founded by Chogyam Trungpa, Rinpoche. It is the only North American university whose educational philosophy is rooted in the Buddhist contemplative tradition.

As part of the Naropa University Education Department, we regularly have Early Childhood program interns involved in our classrooms (not counted in our teacher/child ratio), fulfilling practicum requirements for the Early Childhood Education degree. These students are at Alaya practicing what they have learned, under the supervision of one of our lead teachers, with regular observation by program faculty.

The Directors of Alaya are responsible to and supervised by the Naropa Contemplative Education Department.

ADMISSION

After viewing Alaya’s website or receiving Alaya’s written information, prospective parents are required to attend a Parent Information Meeting. This is a time for parents to meet the directors

and tour the school. This meeting is for adults only. Next, an application is submitted with a non-refundable application fee of \$35.00. When spaces become available, parents may arrange to visit the classroom with their child before making a decision to enroll.

Alaya considers enrolling children with special needs after meeting with families and evaluating each child individually to see if we are able accommodate and meet their needs within our program.

Continued enrollment at Alaya for any child depends on our ability to continue to meet the needs of that child and his/her family within the classroom setting.

FINANCIAL POLICY

Your child's enrollment at Alaya may be terminated if tuition is more than one month late. Note: Individual payment plans may be considered by advance special arrangement. Please see Financial Policies and Agreement for details.

WITHDRAWAL FROM PROGRAM

Notice of withdrawal from Alaya must be communicated in writing four weeks prior to the effective date of withdrawal. If notice is given any later than four weeks prior to the withdrawal, parents will be held financially responsible for the entire four week period or until the space is filled by another child.

CLASSROOM INFORMATION

At Alaya, our three classroom groups are named for Shambhala dignities: the Tiger, the Snow Lion, and the Garuda.

Tigers: This group of older toddlers has 9 children with 2 teachers in one large, spacious room organized with the children's interests and developmental capabilities in mind. Six children stay for the afternoon with 1 teacher between 1:30 & 3:30. Children entering this group in the fall need to be 2 years old by the end of September. Tiger children are awakening, beginning to reach out and form friendships with each other, but they still need the security and comfort that a small group allows.

Snow Lions: This is our younger preschool group for 3-4 year olds. There are 13 children with 2 teachers and a maximum of 10 children in the afternoon for rest. This set of rooms introduces more complex activities and materials developmentally appropriate for this age group. The Snow Lion children are in transition; they are no longer babies. The world is there for them to fully explore and discover.

Garudas: This is our older preschool group for 4-5 year olds. With several adjoining rooms to meet the needs of a group a little larger in size and numbers, this space reflects the needs of children who have many and varied interests. Garudas are old enough to go to kindergarten the following year. There are 17 children with 2 teachers with most children staying for the afternoon. Garudas are building the foundation to carry them into the world. The Garuda group is large enough for children to relate with each other in many types of situations and play, yet small enough to promote special friendships with classmates and teachers. There are two annual events in this classroom: an overnight camping trip (usually in mid-May from a Thursday to Friday), and a graduation ceremony. Families are invited to participate in the planning of both of these important events.

There is occasionally a child who spends two years in one of our classrooms, due to development, age or other considerations.

Alaya Preschool welcomes students from diverse family situations, of any race, color, religion, gender, and ethnic origin.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The school is open Monday - Friday from 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Morning Preschool (Limited morning only spaces):

8:30a.m.-12:30 p.m. (Tigers); 8:30-1:00p.m.(Snow Lions and Garudas).

Full Day Preschool: 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. (all classrooms).

Parents can choose from three schedule options: Tuesday and Thursday; Monday, Wednesday, and Friday; or Monday through Friday. Early Drop Off is available from 7:45 AM– 8:30 AM for an additional charge.

The Alaya calendar generally follows that of the Boulder Valley School District, with a few exceptions, such as closure for Shambhala Day (Tibetan New Year), and Teacher Inservice and Parent Conference days. Additionally, Alaya has Inter-session Breaks at the end of the school year and at the end of the summer session. Please consult the Alaya school calendar at the beginning of the year.

The office is regularly staffed and office hours are posted on the door. Most general business can be taken care of by any one of the office personnel. The Co-Directors are available during their scheduled office hours or by appointment.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Early Drop Off: 7:45 - 8:30 am. This service is available each morning in the Snow Lion classroom for an additional charge. Children who arrive before 8:30 a.m. must be signed in on the Early Drop Off sheet and will be taken to their regular classroom by a teacher at 8:30 a.m.

Morning Arrival: 8:30 - 9:15 am. This is the arrival period for all children. To help with the smooth start of each day, we ask that children arrive no later than 9:30 am. If, on occasion, you need to bring your child later than 9:30, please call the office and leave a message to let the teachers know that your child will be arriving late. It is also a good idea to check the monthly activity calendar to see if your child's group will be leaving the school that day for a class or field trip. Unfortunately, we cannot accommodate children who arrive late if their class has left the school.

Morning Departure: 12:15-12:30 p.m. for Tigers; 12:45-1:00 for Snow Lions and Garudas. Please arrive 10 -15 minutes before the end of the morning session to gather your child's things and to facilitate a smooth departure for everyone. It is very important for the teachers to attend to the children who will be staying for rest and prepare the classroom for afternoon activities. If you need more than brief information about your child's time at Alaya, the teachers are available for appointments or telephone conversations at a later time.

Afternoon Departure: 3:15 -3:30 p.m.

Late Fees: If you arrive later than the scheduled 12:30,1:00 or 3:30 pick-up time, a late fee of \$5.00 will be charged at 12:31, 1:01, or 3:31 (and for each additional 5 minutes thereafter).

It is essential for pick up time to be prompt. Please arrive early enough to allow gathering of belongings, brief feedback about your child's day, and departure by 12:30 or 3:30 p.m. Late parent arrival creates anxiety for your child and significant problems in the rhythm of our daily routine. Our teachers have classroom clean up, meetings, or other obligations after the school day. If there is an emergency, please call Alaya so that we inform the teachers and let your child know when you will be there.

Drop In Time: It is possible to schedule, in advance, extra time for your child, on a space available basis. *Any time added to your regular schedule must be arranged in advance through*

the office. All schedule changes must be arranged through the office and are subject to our Financial Policies.

Communication Folders: Each child has a folder located near the sign in/out area of his/her classroom. You will find daily classroom communication, art work, calendars, notices, newsletters, and your monthly tuition bill in this folder. Please check your child's folder **daily** to stay updated about school activities. In families where parents do not live together, we are happy to provide 2 copies of everything in two separate folders upon your request. Also, regularly browse classroom bulletin boards, as notices are posted there as well.

Lost and Found:

Each classroom has a lost and found box. If your child is missing something, please check there first. Labeling all clothing and other items from home with permanent marker makes it easier to return items to the cubbies. Twice each year, the lost and found boxes are emptied, and contents are either added to our spare clothing supply or are donated to a charitable organization. We will do our best to locate and return lost items.

Toys in the Classroom:

We ask that children not bring toy weapons, action figures or other commercial toys to school. It is our opinion that these types of toys limit creativity and imaginative play. Soft, stuffed toys, a special baby, a book, or nature items are welcome. Toys from home are expected to be shared; if that becomes difficult, they will be sent home or put away by a teacher until departure time.

Children's Cubbies: Clothing and Personal Belongings

Each child has a cubby in her/his classroom in which to store their belongings. Please provide a complete change of clothing, suitable to the season and labeled with her/his name to have on hand at all times. Large, plastic zip-lock storage bags or cloth bags are provided to store clothing your child's clothing. Sometimes children get their clothing wet due to weather conditions, messy projects, or because they are young and are still mastering how to keep dry. If their extra clothes are used, please launder and return them to school promptly. In addition there are hooks in each classroom for children to hang their jackets and coats. Blankets, pillows and stuffed animals for nap time will be stored in a separate area of each classroom, labeled with each child's name. During the winter months, we try to take the children outside every day unless conditions are too cold or harsh. Children should have outdoor gear every day they come to school:

- warm overcoats
- snow pants
- snow boots (for mud too!)
- warm mittens or gloves
- hats or hoods

Children who stay for the afternoon will have a rest period. Please provide a SMALL pillow (no larger than 12"x12") and a SMALL blanket, and clearly label both. Please take these home frequently to be washed and return them promptly on the next school day.

If your child is still using diapers, these and all other changing supplies are provided by the parents. Please be sure to send a generous supply of diapers, bottom wipes, plastic pants and plastic bags (for cloth diapers and/or soiled clothing). We welcome cloth diapers. However, for sanitary reasons, teachers do not rinse soiled diapers at school.

SUPERVISION

The children are supervised at all times. All regular staff members who have contact with the children receive ongoing and regular guidance and training in good supervision practices. This includes interns and support staff. The administrative team regularly observes the classroom situations.

DISCIPLINE

At Alaya, it is our belief that all children are basically good. There are however behaviors and safety factors that require discipline. Talking with children and investigating the root of whatever problem the children are having is our preferred way of handling situations. Limited communication skills may make this approach difficult with the youngest children in the school. The younger children may be redirected into a different activity removing them from the scene of conflict when necessary. As they gain communication skills, the teachers help them learn how to recognize their options and navigate through situations involving conflict with their peers.

A certain amount of conflict arises in any group situation and we view this as an opportunity to initiate and model negotiation and social skills between children. We take behaviors of an aggressive or sexual nature seriously and they are always addressed.

Any incident is handled through supporting dialogue between the children involved, giving them the words and boundaries, as necessary and appropriate. We may also separate the children and/or redirect them. Not all aggressive interactions are severe enough to be reported to parents. We do notify and conference with parents of children involved in or exhibiting sexual behaviors.

Occasionally a child will bite or pinch, or otherwise cause an injury to another child. We attend to the hurt child or children immediately, with appropriate First Aid as necessary. The biter/pincher is separated from the group when necessary and/ or is closely supervised. We will inform you if your child has been involved in such an incident. In fairness to the children and families involved we discuss these issues without identifying the children by name. We increase our supervision of those involved, assess the incident, what precipitated it and how prevent recurrences.

If a child's behavior raises concerns or seems to be a repeating pattern, we communicate with the family and ask for information and cooperation in addressing the behavior. We heighten our supervision and observation of the child(ren) involved, increase awareness of and assess the environment, the group dynamics and activities for ways in which to address the issues. This information is also communicated to the administrative team for additional support, resourcing and possible referrals. We may consider disenrolling a child either temporarily or permanently in situations where we cannot meet the child's needs, provide staff for additional supervision and/or insure the continued safety of all children in the classroom. We depend on families for important feedback regarding their child's experiences at Alaya.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parent initiative was a vital element in the creation of the school in 1976 and continues to play a key role in successfully maintaining a healthy, affordable preschool and childcare center.

Parent Environment Day - In the fall, we hold a work day on a Saturday when parents, teachers, and staff contribute 3 hours of their time to work on improving and maintaining the school grounds and facilities. In lieu of participation, parents may choose to pay a maintenance fee of \$60.00 for Environment day.

Fundraising is a way of life at Alaya. Each year we must raise money to supplement our tuition income. Tuition charges cover only our basic operational costs. Money from fundraising goes toward necessary building improvements, other designated projects, professional development, tuition and scholarship support. Our goal is to keep tuition affordable for a diverse range of

families and to fairly compensate and provide basic benefits for our professional teaching staff. Our fundraising events continue to be very important in supporting the development of community among our families.

We have several small, ongoing fundraising projects and at least one big event each year. One of the easiest and most profitable ways to participate in fundraising is to buy grocery certificates on a regular basis from the office. The certificates are purchased by the school at a discount and sold at face value. It is a contribution to Alaya at no additional cost to the purchaser. Some of the other small fundraising projects include: t-shirt sales, book club orders, Grandrabbits and Playfair certificates (these stores return a percentage of your purchase price in gift coupons to us when you mention Alaya), and other events. Donations to Alaya are always welcome and greatly appreciated. Many donations are tax deductible.

Service Hours –

In addition to the required Fall Environment day hours each family is required to fulfill 10 Service Hours toward fundraising and/or miscellaneous work at Alaya. At the end of the school year families will be billed \$20 for every Service Hour not completed. These hours may be fulfilled through all or any of the following:

- Fundraising events – details and sign up sheets will be distributed or posted.
- Miscellaneous handy work or grounds work – an ongoing list will be available.
- Purchasing of grocery coupons – coupons for many local stores are available in the office. Each accumulation of \$250 purchased is worth one Service Hour.

Classroom - Parents are encouraged to participate in their child's classroom with a special activity, supporting a classroom activity or field trip, or just connecting with their child's day. Spending time in the classroom gives you firsthand experience of the school and allows your child to share a part of his/her school life with you. The children are proud of what they do at Alaya and are proud of what their parents have to offer. When parents spend some time at school, there is more continuity between the child's home and school worlds. We have found this to be of great benefit to the children.

Room Parents - Each classroom at Alaya may have one or two room parents. Some of the ways in which room parents can be of great assistance are: helping with class projects, field trips, class meetings, holiday celebrations, communication, organizing environment day, and social gatherings.

Parent-Teacher Communication - At Alaya, we believe that frequent, informal communication between parents and teachers is very important in creating a world which is supportive for the young child. Our teachers try to talk briefly with each parent at arrival and departure times, especially to note particular circumstances which might affect your child. Remember, however, that the teachers have children to supervise and other families to greet. It is important to communicate to the teachers any important changes or special circumstances in your child's home situation. Knowing such information often explains why a child is behaving in a certain manner and aids the teachers in understanding how to help your child deal with his/her day. If you need to talk with the teacher at length or about sensitive matters, please arrange a time to meet with or talk on the telephone with the teacher.

Parent-Teacher Conferences - We conduct parent/teacher conferences twice each year, in the fall and spring. School is closed for conference days and parents are expected to make every effort to schedule an appointment with your child's teachers. Childcare is provided *only* while parents are attending the conference. A written report is provided at the spring conference with observations

about each child's individual qualities and development over the school year. Copies of these reports are kept in your child's permanent file.

Parent Community Night - Alaya holds meetings for parents of each group two times a year, first in the early part of the Fall session and again in Spring. The intention of these meetings is to

foster a strong family/teacher community. It is a chance to find out what is happening in the classroom, to communicate ideas, discuss programs, classroom activities, field trips and special events. It is also an opportunity for families and teachers to share what they or their children are experiencing at home and in the classroom. We provide **limited** child care and encourage all parents to make every effort to attend.

All-School Meetings and Socials – From time to time Alaya has all school events. Aside from being fun (usually potluck picnics), these events serve as a way of including siblings, grandparents, and other family members in your child's preschool world.

INCLEMENT WEATHER:

Alaya Preschool follows the Boulder Valley School District Schedule. In weather not permitting safe travel, the school district will cancel school. This is announced by television stations in Denver as well as KOA (850AM) radio station. Alaya will close if BVSD has closed for weather related reasons, and will leave a recorded message on our answering machine whenever possible.

In excessively hot weather, children are encouraged to drink water frequently. We may keep children indoors, in the shady areas of the yard or limit activity, as necessary.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:

Fire Drills: Fire drills are to be held regularly during the year. There is a designated fire exit plan which all teachers are familiar with and is posted in each classroom. The fire department will be notified when the alarms are set for drill purposes.

Flood: Should the Flash Flood Warning siren sound while school is in session, we will carefully evacuate the children to a location 10 feet above ground level, Alaya's rooftop.

Tornados: On hearing the public tornado warning sirens, all children will be moved to the central hall area of the school building until danger has passed and the all-clear message is heard.

Lost Children: Should a child become lost while attending Alaya we will immediately notify parents and call police to assist in a search for the missing child.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

Sick Child Policy: It is our policy at Alaya that children come to school healthy and feeling well enough to fully participate in an active school day. We cannot provide care to children who are even mildly ill. Even if you are sure your child is not contagious, if your child is tired, listless, or achy, s/he should not come to school. In a group situation, it is not possible for our teachers to care for a child who needs to be held and comforted a great deal because s/he doesn't feel well. If your child needs to be medicated in order to feel comfortable, please keep them home. Other more measurable criteria for exclusion include: vomiting (even a little), diarrhea (very contagious), fever, sore throat, chronic coughing, runny nose (not associated with allergies and interferes with play) or body rash. Children may return after being symptom free for 24 hours without the use of pain or fever reducing medications, with a doctor's permission, and/or when the child is no longer contagious. The child should also feel ready to play and fully participate with the group. Children who are ill never have a good day at school and will recover faster if allowed to rest at home.

Medication

If your child is taking a prescription or non-prescription medication, it can only be administered at school if it is in the original container, labeled with the child's name, date, name of medication, dosage, and administering instructions **with a prescribing (doctor, etc.) authority's signature, as well as signed parent permission.** We have Medication Administration forms available in the office. Only designated teachers who have received medication administration training are allowed to dispense medications. Please do not put medication in your child's lunch box to be taken at lunch. State law is very specific about this procedure. The State laws also require that children taking a prescription antibiotic for a contagious illness must have taken it for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

Accident and Illness: In the event of an accident or illness, we will make every effort to notify parents first. If you cannot be reached, we will call the emergency contact people listed on the child's emergency card. Children who are ill will be kept in the office or the staff area until someone arrives. We expect children to be picked up within 1 hour after parents have been notified. If medical attention is warranted, we will first attempt to locate parents and then contact the child's physician. Emergency medical services will be called if the injury or illness is determined to be serious. See the Enrollment Agreement for complete procedure. Any possible exposures to contagious illnesses will be posted in the classrooms. Certain illnesses and injuries will be reported to the state as required by the licensing rules and regulations.

Treatment of Minor Cuts and Abrasions: The State mandated treatment of minor cuts and abrasions is to wash thoroughly with soap and water and apply a bandage. No antiseptic or first aid cream can be applied by us. We are only permitted to remove splinters with non-invasive methods, that is if it shows above the skin and we can pull out manually.

Physical Exam Forms: All children attending Alaya must submit a physical form signed by an approved health care professional. We must also have a record of all immunizations, upon the first day of attendance. Alaya accepts partially or un-immunized children. If a parent wishes an exemption from the required immunizations, s/he **must still sign** and return the immunization card with the reason for the exemption. In the case of an outbreak of a serious disease, the un-immunized child may not be permitted to attend school until the danger of contracting the disease has passed. **Physical exam forms must be updated yearly.**

CHILD TRACKING

Sign-In and Pick-Up Policies: **Colorado State Law requires that all children be signed in and out each day with a full signature.** This assists us in identifying who is in attendance each day and that children are safe and accounted for in the case of an emergency. Children must be walked to their rooms and signed into their classes. If a child attends the Early Drop Off program, the classroom teacher will be responsible for signing a child into or out of that program. If you arrive at school and your child is not in his/her classroom, please check on the classroom bulletin board or at the office to see if the group is away on a field trip. The sign in/sign out sheets are checked at the end of each day to assure that all children have been picked up.

Please notify the teacher or the office when someone other than yourself will be picking up your child. Children will be released only to parents and persons authorized on the child's emergency card. If you want someone other than those listed on the emergency card to pick up your child, you must send a written note with the date and your signature, or call with your verbal approval. We will ask for identification from the persons who are unfamiliar to our staff. This is done to protect your child, and to protect the school against liability. Your cooperation in observing these guidelines is greatly appreciated.

If a child has not been picked up within 10 minutes of the end of their session and we have not been notified of a delay, we will first attempt to call the family home, work, and emergency contact numbers listed on the child's emergency card. It is very important that we be kept current on any changes in your emergency contact information. If we are unable to reach you or your emergency contact persons, we will call the police for assistance.

FIELD TRIPS AND SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

Field Trips: Parents are notified in advance of field trips. Children need to be at the school thirty minutes in advance of departure. There are no arrangements for care of your child if you do not arrive before the class departs on a field trip. Please assist us with a smooth field trip departure by buckling your child's safety seat securely in place in the assigned vehicle. See the Enrollment Agreement for specifics of vehicle transportation.

Television and Video Viewing: Alaya does not have a television or videos available for viewing by the children.

Special Activities: Any special activities taking place away from Alaya (e.g. gymnastics, swimming) will be conducted and supervised by qualified staff or personnel in accordance with our licensing agency requirements.

DAILY ROUTINES

Each group follows a predictable but flexible daily routine which is age appropriate and posted on the classroom bulletin board. In each group, children will have scheduled snack and lunch times. Children will be allowed to form their own patterns of sleeping and waking during rest times. Please do not ask teachers to keep tired children awake during rest time. It is our policy to allow children who fall asleep to nap at least one hour.

Snacks: Alaya supplies a substantial, nutritious, vegetarian snack in the morning and in the afternoon. Some days your child's class will do a cooking project for snack. **Please provide the teachers with complete information concerning food allergies and dietary restrictions. In certain cases, it may be necessary for parents to provide snack foods for their child.**

Lunch: Children bring their own lunches, prepared at home, and eat together before the morning session ends. Alaya provides water and necessary silverware. We suggest that lunches be simple and with no more than 3-4 items which can be easily handled by the child. Too much food can be overwhelming to young children and we try to promote self-sufficiency and the importance of not wasting food. If necessary, we are able to reheat food in our microwave. Heating up children's lunch items requires our teachers to leave the classroom, so we ask that you please limit items that need heating. If you forget your child's lunch, there will be a \$3.00 charge for the school to provide a lunch. Please rely on this only as a back up situation. We do not have the staff or the food available to prepare lunches on a regular basis.

Birthday Celebrations: Each classroom acknowledges birthdays in very special ways including the telling of a simple story about the child's birth and subsequent years (with information provided by parents), attendance by parents, and/or special treats at snack time. Please make arrangements with your child's classroom teacher(s) if you would like to bring something special for your child's birthday.

Diapering & Toilet Training: During the toddler (Tiger) year, many children enter Alaya in diapers. Potty training occurs as children are ready and families wish us to support their efforts in this area. Alaya has a diaper changing table & diaper cubbies to contain the child's diapers brought from home. Small child size toilets exist in these classrooms in order to encourage the children's use of the toilet. During scheduled times of the day, the teachers will check all children's diapers for changing as well as when it appears necessary during the day.

VISITORS

Alaya has a strict policy on visitors to the center. Arrangements must be made in advance with the office to visit our classrooms. The reason for this is to protect the child-centered environment we have created. Our pupil-teacher ratio is very low in our classrooms and too many adults may compromise the child oriented environment. All visitors must sign in at the office before entering the classrooms.

LICENSING

Alaya is licensed by the Colorado Department of Human Services, Child Care Division. The license indicates that the program has met the required standards for the operation of a child care facility. Child care services play an important role in supporting families, and strong families are the basis of a thriving community. Your child's educational, physical, emotional, and social development are nurtured in a well-planned and run program. You are welcome to observe the program regularly, especially with regard to children's health and safety, equipment and play

materials, and staff. Formal observations are scheduled in advance through the office. For additional information regarding licensing, or if you have concern about the child care facility, consult the Colorado Office of Child Care Services at 303-866-5958.

QUALISTAR

Alaya was the first Boulder county early education program to receive a 4 out of 4 star rating from Qualistar. Qualistar is a state rating program developed by 150 early childhood experts, measuring quality in licensed early learning programs birth to kindergarten. This 4-star rating system (with four being the highest) outlines the strengths and weaknesses of the program and provides a detailed plan for continuous quality improvement. Parents are able to access each programs overall rating score, as well as the details of each of the five quality component areas by visiting www.qualistar.org, and clicking on *Find Early Learning Reports*.

PACE

Alaya is a PACE-certified business (*Partners for a Clean Environment*). The County Health Department evaluated 8 specific areas in our school for our certification determination: lead, radon, carbon monoxide, asbestos, mold, energy use and recycling.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Alaya makes every effort to provide a safe and healthy environment for children. However, if you believe that your child has been abused, you should seek immediate assistance from your county department of Social Services. The telephone number to report child abuse for the Boulder County Department of Social Services in Boulder is 303-441-1240. All staff having contact with children, including substitutes, are subject to a Central Registry and CBI fingerprint check as a condition of employment. Colorado law requires that child care providers report all known or suspected cases of child abuse or neglect directly to Social Services. By law, we are not permitted to call parents before calling Social Services.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

This Parent Handbook is a general guide to Alaya Preschool and does not replace any of the materials in the annual enrollment packet. Please refer to the enrollment packet (distributed at the beginning of Summer or Fall sessions) for detailed information. Financial, enrollment, and parent participation agreements, policy overviews, and medical forms are all crucial for you to complete as part of your child's enrollment. The state requires that school records be up to date, complete and accurate for each child. Completed forms **must** be submitted to the office **upon enrollment, with the exception of the child's physical exam, to be submitted within 3 weeks**. Alaya's license may be revoked if a child's school folder is not complete or is out-dated. These folders are secured in the office and remain confidential, but must be made available to the State Department of Social Services for periodic and unannounced inspection.