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SPARK COMMUNITY ADULT CENTER HANDBOOK

Our Mission at Spark Community

At Spark Community, we are committed to taking action every day to ensure education and opportunity are accessible to everyone. Our goal is to empower individuals by nurturing an environment where all have access to the necessary tools and support for success. Through dedicated service, advocacy, and collaboration, we spark potential and pave the way for brighter futures. This is our mission!

Spark Community's Values

- **Honesty:** We prioritize transparency and truthfulness in all our actions and communications, fostering trust within our community.
- **Respect for Self and Others:** We honor the dignity of every individual, promoting a culture of kindness, inclusion, and understanding.
- **Integrity:** We maintain the highest ethical standards, taking responsibility for our actions and ensuring our work aligns with our principles.
- **Willingness:** We face every challenge with an open mind and a proactive spirit, always eager to serve, learn, and grow.

PHILOSOPHY & RULES OF CONDUCT

Spark Community: A Commitment to Inclusion

Spark Community is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to offering community-based habilitation and education programs for all developmentally disabled infants, children, and adults, regardless of their race, color, gender, religion, creed, or financial situation.

Our Team

A specialized team of staff and consultants is committed to educating and habilitating each individual to the best of their potential and capabilities.

Founded in July 1987, Spark Community operates under the guidelines and is licensed by Developmental Disabilities Services, a division of the Arkansas Department of Human Services.

School Term

The school term lasts for a **210-day period**, running from August through June each year.

Office and School Hours

- **Office Hours:**
 - 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.
- **School Hours:**
 - 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Please ensure that individuals do not arrive before 8:00 a.m. or are picked up later than 3:00 p.m. unless prior arrangements have been made.

ATTENDANCE

Spark Community embraces the belief that the instructional program is essential to our habilitation process. Therefore, it is crucial to require individuals to attend a minimum number of days for instructional purposes throughout each school term.

Individuals are expected to be present at school whenever it is in session. Absences are only permissible under specific circumstances, such as illness, family emergencies, or official school business. If an individual accumulates ten (10) consecutive unexcused absences, they may face disenrollment from the program.

FUNDING

Individuals participating in the ADDT program receive services at no cost to their families. The expenses for ADDT program services are covered by Medicaid or through PASSE coverage. Each individual's funding eligibility will be assessed during the initial enrollment application process. It's essential to report any changes in an individual's financial situation immediately, as this can directly impact funding allocation.

If Medicaid is the funding source, it will act as the payee for Spark Community services. Should the coverage be canceled or suspended, payment for the individual's services will also be canceled or suspended.

As a requirement for enrollment in ADDT, you agree to provide timely assistance in securing funding for any treatments the individual may receive. This assistance may involve:

1. Applying for Medicaid or renewing Medicaid coverage, including notifying funding sources of address changes.
2. Supplying necessary documentation as requested.
3. Providing private insurance information as needed.

Failure to assist in obtaining funding or to provide required information to funding sources may result in suspension from the program. Guardians will receive written notice and have up to five working days to reapply for funding if a funding source is denied or terminated, along with proof of reapplication. Non-compliance with these timelines may lead to suspension from the program. If more than 90 days pass without Medicaid renewal, the individual may be unable to participate until their Medicaid is active. During this period, you may need to provide additional proof that Medicaid is still pending.

SERVICES

As a licensed ADDT Provider, Spark Community offers the following services:

Adult Developmental Day Treatment

ADDT is tailored for individuals aged eighteen (18) who possess a high school diploma or a letter of completion and older. These center-based services aim to provide experience in essential life skill areas, including:

- Body
- Clothing
- Communication
- Nutrition
- Hobbies
- Relationships
- Shelters
- Natural environments
- Transportation

The services provided will be based on individual assessments and their Individual Habilitation Plan.

Lunch & Morning Snack

All participants in the ADDT program are provided with a morning snack, lunch, and an afternoon snack.

Transportation

Transportation services are available for individuals enrolled in ADDT. Fixed routes operate on scheduled service days, facilitating transportation to and from our center.

Speech, Occupational, and Physical Therapy

Therapeutic services are available for qualifying adults, provided by licensed therapists when accessible.

Work Activity

The work activity program is designed to equip enrolled adults with job training skills. This initiative teaches essential skills such as task management and productivity. All participants are compensated on a piece-rate basis for their work performed.

Family Liaison

Spark Community is committed to creating a comprehensive support network for our developmentally disabled individuals, their families, and the community. The Family Liaison helps families access support systems and resources, particularly for those facing challenges. They also serve as a point of contact for referring families to alternative service options, such as private therapy clinics/providers, Easter Seals services, or Human Development Center placements. For more information about these services, please reach out to the Family Liaison.

INDIVIDUAL/PARENT/GUARDIAN RIGHTS

All activities at Spark Community are designed to foster individual, parent, and guardian responsibility, encouraging awareness of oneself within the broader society. Evidence of the following Rights Procedures is documented in each individual's master file and will be updated annually.

Rights Overview

1. **Voluntary Participation:** Spark Community operates as a voluntary program.
2. **Intake and Assessment:** Participation in intake and assessments is voluntary and requires written consent from the family.
3. **Program Input:** Individuals, guardians, and guardians can provide input into the individual program plan and must sign the plan.

4. **Access to Information:** Individuals, guardians, and guardians will receive timely access to information that is relevant to the person served, aiding their decision-making process.
5. **Decision-Making Rights:** Legally competent adult individuals have the right to decide whether their family members participate in planning and implementing their individual service plan.
6. **Due Process:** Individuals have the right to due process.
7. **Least Restrictive Setting:** Individuals, guardians, and guardians will be informed of their right to the least restrictive setting.
8. **Informed Consent:** Individuals, guardians, and guardians have the right to informed consent, refusal, or expression of choice regarding:
 - Service delivery
 - Release of information
 - Concurrent services
 - Composition of the service delivery team
 - Participation in research projects, if applicable
9. **Refusal of Experimental Treatment:** Individuals, guardians, and guardians have the right to refuse any experimental or non-standard form of treatment when applicable.
10. **Research Ethics:** Rights regarding adherence to research guidelines and ethics will be upheld when individuals are involved, if applicable.
11. **Team Meetings:** Rights of all individuals cannot be restricted without a meeting of the interdisciplinary team that includes the individual, parent, or guardian.
12. **Service Options:** Individuals, guardians, and guardians will be informed of all possible service options, including those not currently offered by the program.
13. **Discharge Procedures:** Individuals, guardians, and guardians will be informed of the developed discharge/exit procedures.
14. **Right to Privacy:** The individual, parent, or guardian has the right to privacy.
15. **Uniform Records:** Individual service records will be compiled and organized uniformly.
16. **Confidentiality of Records:** All individual service records will be kept strictly confidential and maintained in accordance with the Privacy Act. Written permission from the individual, parent, or guardian is required for the release of any information from these records.
17. **Access to Records:** Individuals, guardians, and guardians have the right to access their own records, including details on how their funds are utilized and what services were billed on their behalf.
18. **Record Destruction Policy:** Spark Community maintains a policy regarding the destruction of records, and individuals, guardians, and guardians will be notified prior to such actions.
19. **Grievance Procedures:** If any individual, parent, or guardian has a grievance, the following steps should be taken:
 - Report the grievance to the Program Coordinator as soon as possible.
 - If unsatisfied, submit a written request to the Director to include the grievance on the Board agenda at least five (5) days before the scheduled meeting, accompanied by a statement of the grievance.
 - If still unsatisfied, the individual may request a hearing with DDS.
 - Ultimately, if unresolved, final actions can be pursued through the court system.
20. **Appeal Policy:** Spark Community has a policy for appealing decisions made by the organization and will assist individuals, guardians, and guardians in accessing external advocacy services.

21. **Legal Representation:** Individuals, guardians, and guardians have the right to access or refer to legal entities for appropriate representation.
22. **Advocacy Support:** Individuals, guardians, and guardians can access self-help and advocacy support services.
23. **Input on Conduct Rules:** Individuals, guardians, and guardians have the right to participate in shaping the rules of conduct through surveys and parent meetings.
24. **Majority Rights:** Individuals, guardians, and guardians will be informed of their rights regarding majority decisions.
25. **Incident Reports:** Incident and injury reports will be completed for every incident, regardless of severity.
26. **Swimming Program Policy:** Spark Community does not provide a swimming program.
27. **Restraint Policy:** Individuals have the right to be free from inappropriate use of physical or chemical restraints, medication, or isolation as punishment, for the convenience of the provider, or in conflict with a physician's orders, except when restraints are necessary for the health and safety of the individual.
 - Physical restraints will only be used to prevent harm to oneself or others in emergency situations, until the individual is calm.
 - All instances of physical restraint must be documented, including behavior, duration, and names of involved staff.
 - Physical restraint will not be an integral part of an individual's plan and must occur under direct observation.
28. **Abuse Prevention:** Spark Community prohibits physical or verbal abuse of individuals. Individuals are protected from physical, verbal, or psychological abuse, neglect, retaliation, humiliation, and financial exploitation.
29. **Reporting Abuse:** Procedures for reporting abuse and neglect are in accordance with the Client Abuse and Neglect Act and the Adult Protective Services Act. All personnel are mandated by law to report any reasonable suspicion of abuse or neglect.
30. **AIDS and HIV Rights:** Spark Community maintains a policy protecting the rights of individuals with AIDS or HIV-related conditions, ensuring confidentiality regarding their status and preventing discrimination.
31. **Hepatitis B Rights:** Individuals with Hepatitis B or identified as carriers are also ensured confidentiality and protection from discrimination.
32. **Communication Rights:** Individuals are entitled to visit and communicate privately with family members, friends, advocates, case managers, lawyers, and medical professionals of their choice.
33. **Dignity and Respect:** The individual, parent, or guardian has the right to dignity, respect, and social interaction.
34. **Unrestricted Communication:** Individuals have the unrestricted right to communicate and associate publicly or privately with any person or group of their choosing.
35. **Citizenship Training:** Training will be provided to individuals, guardians, and guardians regarding the rights and responsibilities of citizenship for disabled individuals, covering:

- Voting
 - Social and employment activities
 - Law enforcement
 - Legal assistance
 - Consumer affairs
 - External advocacy services
36. **Decision-Making Autonomy:** Individuals can actively and meaningfully participate in decisions that affect their lives.
 37. **Religious Freedom:** Individuals have the right to practice their chosen religion.
 38. **Financial Control:** Individuals have control over their personal financial resources.
 39. **Property Rights:** Individuals are entitled to receive, purchase, hold, and use their own personal property.
 40. **Dependency Acknowledgment:** Individuals are not required to express dependency or gratitude towards the facility.
 41. **Voluntary Participation in Fundraising:** Participation in fundraising campaigns for Spark Community is entirely voluntary.
 42. **Work and Compensation:** Individuals cannot be required to work without compensation, except when residing outside of their family home for the upkeep of their living space and shared common areas, in compliance with Federal Wage and Hour regulations.
 43. **Investigation of Rights Violations:** Spark Community will investigate all alleged violations of individuals' rights and take action to address such situations. Documentation of all investigations and actions taken will be maintained, and individuals will be informed of their right to appeal according to DDS Policy 1076.
 44. **Monitoring Reports:** Spark Community will provide individuals, guardians, and guardians with a summary of any monitoring or evaluation reports prepared by and received from federal, state, or local authorities upon request.

Grievances and Appeals

Grievance Procedure for Individuals and Guardians

1. Initiating a Grievance

The individual, parent, or guardian must start the grievance process by orally presenting the issue to the Director within seven (7) days of the incident. The Director will then provide an oral decision to the concerned individual, parent, or guardian within seven (7) days. If the grievance involves a staff member, a meeting will be arranged between the Director, the staff member, and the grieved party to discuss the matter.

2. Filing an Appeal

If the individual, parent, or guardian is dissatisfied with the Director's decision, they may file a written appeal to the grievance committee (Board Members) within seven (7) calendar days. This appeal should include all relevant details. The grievance committee will hold a hearing and issue a written decision within fourteen (14) calendar days.

3. Further Escalation

If the issue remains unresolved after the grievance committee's decision, the appeal can be directed to the

Board of Developmental Disabilities Services. Guardians or guardians also have the right to appeal to the DHS Office of Fair Hearings and Appeals in accordance with DDS Policy 1076.

4. Legal Action

Should the matter still not be resolved, it may proceed to a court of law.

It is important to note that any complaints or grievances raised will not lead to retaliation or hinder access to services.

Advocacy and Assistance

Support for guardians and guardians is available through the Arkansas Disabilities Coalition, the Department of Disabilities Services, and other advocacy organizations.

Spark Community conducts an annual review of all formal complaints filed. This review will include a comprehensive analysis of complaints to identify trends, areas for performance improvement, and necessary action plans to enhance service quality and minimize complaints.

Additionally, Spark Community will document the effectiveness of any action plans or changes made, adjusting them as necessary to ensure the delivery of quality services.

VISITORS

All visitors are required to adhere to center policies and must not disrupt the daily activities at the center.

In line with standard health care facility regulations, no weapons or drugs are permitted on Spark Community's premises. Additionally, we kindly request that you refrain from bringing other items into our facility. This includes prescription medications (unless intended for a student), cigarettes, lighters, and food or drinks. We appreciate your cooperation in keeping our school safe by leaving these items in your vehicle.

School Health Guidelines

To minimize the spread of infection within our center, it is essential to keep potentially infectious adults separated from others. This involves isolating individuals as soon as symptoms appear until a parent can be contacted to take them home. Additionally, they must be excluded from school until they are no longer capable of spreading the infection. **More stringent guidelines may be enforced in response to pandemics or increased cases of RSV or flu.**

Please remember that if an individual is unwell, they should not be sent to school, as this is our policy. It also makes it challenging for our teachers and therapists to effectively work with the individual.

Adults should be excluded from school under the following conditions:

1. The illness hinders the adult from comfortably participating in program activities.
2. The illness necessitates a level of care greater than what staff can provide without jeopardizing the health and safety of other clients.
3. The illness is known to be contagious among clients, and exclusion may help reduce its spread.
4. The adult lives with someone exhibiting symptoms of illness or who has tested positive for flu, RSV, or COVID-19.

Any client, or employee displaying symptoms of COVID, RSV, or flu, or who has received a positive diagnosis for these illnesses, must remain out of the Spark Community facility for a minimum of three days. They may return to school after this period, provided they have been symptom-free for 24 hours. If fever or severe coughing persists, they will not be allowed to stay on campus.

The following outlines minimum exclusion guidelines, which may be exceeded in special circumstances at the discretion of the school nurse or executive director.

The Spark Community nurse or designated staff will temporarily exclude individuals if the following illnesses are present. More rigorous guidelines may be enforced in response to pandemics or rising cases of RSV or flu. Guardians will be contacted, and children or adults must be picked up:

1. **Fever:** A temperature of 100.4°F or higher will result in exclusion for a minimum of 48 hours and until the individual is fever-free and symptom-free for 24 hours without medication.
2. **Vomiting:** Vomiting two or more times within a 24-hour period that is not related to a medical condition, medication, or car sickness will result in exclusion until symptom-free for 24 hours.
3. **Abdominal Pain:** Lasting more than two hours.
4. **Uncontrolled Diarrhea:** Defined as watery stools that exceed two or more stools above normal for that individual and are *not related to a change in diet or medication*. Exclusion is necessary if diarrhea cannot be contained or causes soiled clothing in toilet-trained clients. Excluded from school until symptom-free for 24 hours.
5. **Blood or Mucus in Stools** (unless due to hard stools).
6. **Rash:** Body rashes accompanied by fever or changes in behavior. Excluded until assessed by a doctor and provided with a release to return.
7. **Sore Throat:** If associated with fever or swollen glands in the neck. Excluded for 72 hours if fever is present.
8. **Severe Coughing:** Coughing episodes that may lead to gagging, vomiting, or difficulty breathing. Excluded from school for a minimum of 72 hours or until the cough is controlled.
9. **Strep Throat:** Excluded from school for 72 hours after starting antibiotics and being free of symptoms.

10. **RSV:** Excluded from school for a minimum of 72 hours. May return when symptom-free for 24 hours.
11. **Flu:** Excluded from school for a minimum of 72 hours. May return when symptom-free for 24 hours.
12. **COVID-19:** Excluded from school for a minimum of 72 hours. May return when symptom-free for 24 hours.

Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease: Excluded until lesions are crusted over and no longer wet or oozing, as verified by nursing staff or with a doctor's release. May return when fever-free for 24 hours.

1. **Viral Infection:** Excluded from school until free of fever and symptoms for 48 hours.
2. **Chicken Pox:** Excluded from school for six days after the onset of the rash, and all sores must be dry and crusted.
3. **Mumps:** Excluded from school until swelling has subsided, generally nine days after onset.
4. **Measles:** Excluded from school until sores have healed, generally six days after the onset of the rash.
5. **Ringworm:** May return after treatment has commenced, provided lesions are covered with a band-aid until fully healed.
6. **Impetigo:** Excluded from school 24 hours after treatment begins.
7. **Pink Eye:** With white, yellow, or green eye discharge and red ("bloodshot") eyes, excluded if the client has fever, eye pain, redness, and/or swelling of the skin around the eyes, or if multiple clients in our program exhibit symptoms.
8. **Scabies:** Excluded from school until a doctor's statement confirms that the individual is no longer contagious.
9. **Active Tuberculosis:** Excluded until a healthcare provider or health official states that the client is on appropriate therapy and can attend the program.
10. **Rubella:** Excluded until six days after the onset of rash.
11. **Pertussis (Whooping Cough):** Excluded until five days of antibiotic treatment have been completed.
12. **Hepatitis A:** Excluded until one week after the onset of illness or as directed by the health department.
13. **Head Lice/Nits:** Excluded from school until appropriately treated; must be free of lice and checked by the school nurse or designee for re-admission.
14. **Symptoms of Possible Severe Illness:** Sudden changes in behavior, such as unusual lethargy, lack of responsiveness, unexplained irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, or a rapidly spreading rash will prompt parental contact.
15. **Multiple Sores Inside Mouth with Drooling:** Excluded unless a healthcare provider determines the condition is non-infectious.
16. **Uncontained or Exposed Body Fluids:** Due to the Infection Control Policy, clients or staff will be excluded from school if excessive body fluids due to illness cannot be contained (e.g., mucus, feces, urine, blood, or saliva).

Parental Notification

The client/client's guardian will be informed if he/she has been exposed to any of the following illnesses: COVID-19, RSV, flu, meningitis (meningococcal), chickenpox, pertussis (whooping cough), strep infections including scarlet fever, lice, scabies, giardia or other intestinal infections, hepatitis A, Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib), campylobacter, salmonella, or shigella.

Medication Policy

1. Spark Community staff will only administer medications that need to be given every 4-6 hours, with meals, as needed," or based on other specific instructions from a physician. Staff will not be responsible for administering medications that are required only 1-3 times a day (unless specified otherwise by a physician). These medications should be given at home before and/or after school and must not be sent to school with the client. Special arrangements can be made with nursing staff for families with unique needs.
2. For Spark Community's staff to administer any medications, both over-the-counter and prescription—the following conditions **MUST** be met:
 - a. Medications must be in their original container, labeled with the client's name, have a client-resistant cap, and not be expired.
 - b. They must be accompanied by written permission, if applicable, which includes
 - i. Name of the medication
 - ii. Dosage to be administered, which **DOES NOT** exceed the recommended dosage on the packaging (any dosage exceeding this must have written permission from a doctor).
 - iii. Time and dosage of the last administration at home
 - iv. Specific instructions for administration times during school hours
 - v. Duration for which the medication will be given
 - vi. Purpose of the medication
 - vii. If the medication is to be administered **AS NEEDED**, specific instructions indicating the conditions under which it should be given (e.g., if the client is coughing excessively)
 - viii. Parent's signature, if applicable
 - ix. Date
3. Any medications sent to school that do not meet these requirements will **NOT** be administered and will be returned home with your adult at the end of the school day.
4. Prescription and non-prescription medications will be administered by nursing staff, under the periodic review of a Licensed Registered Nurse.
5. Whenever possible, please use the Request for Medication form provided by Spark Community when sending medications to school. If this form is unavailable, a written permission note containing all the specified information will also be accepted.

HEALTH-RELATED DOCUMENTATION

In accordance with state licensing regulations, all adults receiving ADDT services at Spark Community must provide proof of a current physical examination. These physical exams must be completed prior to the adult attending school and should be updated on an annual basis.

WEATHER POLICY

Spark Community will announce all school closures via Little Rock KATV (Channel 7) and KARK (Channel 4). Additionally, school closures will be posted on the Spark Facebook Page. Typically, Spark will close before public schools since we prioritize the safety of our precious cargo while traveling many miles on county roads. If public schools in your area are closed, we will not operate the bus in that region. In cases where weather conditions worsen during the school day, we will dismiss students early to ensure their safety due to long bus routes. Therefore, it is crucial that we have emergency contact numbers and a street address for someone who can be reached or can take your client in case guardians are unavailable. If adverse weather occurs before all students can be safely returned home, they will remain at school until it is safe for departure or until someone can come to pick them up. The school will not take risks when it comes to transporting clients home, so we appreciate your patience as we ensure their safety.

During the rainy season, many roads and driveways can become flooded or difficult for our buses to navigate. If you live on one of these roads or have a driveway that may cause our buses to get stuck, we will inform you that on certain days we may not be able to pick up your individual. Please call the bus service to notify us if your road or driveway is problematic, as this can prevent our buses from getting stuck and needing assistance. Additionally, if your driveway is in poor condition, we encourage you to have it repaired to help our buses last longer and avoid costly repairs. Remember, tree limbs hanging over the driveway can be just as damaging to our buses as potholes.

ENVIRONMENTAL EMERGENCIES

Fire

In the event of a fire, all staff members will evacuate adults from the building to the parking lot. Staff will assist in ensuring that all adult individuals are safely evacuated. Designated office personnel will check the building, including restrooms and staff areas. Teachers will take a headcount of individuals and classroom staff once outside the building. The director or designated staff member will then confirm that all individuals and staff are accounted for.

If there is a real fire and adult individuals cannot return to the building, they will be relocated to an alternate location. Guardians and caregivers will be contacted to inform them of the situation and

request that they pick up the adult individuals. School will then be dismissed, and bus routes will commence.

Fire drills will occur monthly, with a log maintained to record the date, time of the drill, evacuation duration, noted issues, and follow-up actions.

Emergency Procedures

Tornado

In the event of a tornado warning or threat, office personnel will monitor a National Weather Service station or scanner.

- **Tornado Watch:** Indicates that conditions are favorable for a tornado, although one has not been sighted.

Normal activities will continue, but office staff will monitor the situation and alert classrooms.

- **Tornado Warning:** Means a tornado has been sighted or detected by radar. When a warning sounds:
 - Staff will promptly guide everyone to predetermined safe areas.
 - Staff will instruct individuals to take cover and protect their heads.

Staff will also take cover and assist adults in protecting their heads, avoiding windows, doors, and outside walls.

If outdoors during a tornado warning, adults should be taken to the nearest shelter. If no shelter is available, staff will lie flat in a nearby ditch, if possible, and help individuals shield their heads with their arms.

After a tornado, staff will check for injuries, take necessary emergency measures, and administer first aid as required.

If a natural disaster or fire renders the building unsafe, both staff and clients will relocate to an alternate location.

Earthquake

Most injuries or fatalities occur during an earthquake due to falling objects and debris. In the event of an earthquake, staff will:

- Secure themselves and all individuals under a table, desk, or in a corner away from windows, or stand in a sturdy doorway.

Once the initial shock has passed and it is safe to do so, staff will assess for injuries and inspect the surroundings for hazards (such as wires or sharp objects) and follow emergency medical procedures.

If a natural disaster or fire makes the building unsafe, staff and clients will move to an alternate location.

Missing Adult

If an adult is reported missing, all available staff will immediately search the building, outdoor areas, and buses. The Director or office personnel will be notified right away. If the adult is not located within five minutes, the local police department and the guardians/caregivers will be contacted promptly. All available staff will continue the search.

Bus Safety Policy

It is the policy of Spark Community that bus drivers perform a visual inspection to ensure that all passengers have exited the bus immediately after completing their route. Under no circumstances will bus passengers be left unattended on the bus.

Special Nutrition Program

Spark Community participates in the USDA Client and Adult Food Care Program through the Arkansas Department of Human Services. This allows us to provide a balanced morning snack and lunch to our students at no cost.

- A lunch participation form must be completed for each student upon admission and updated
- annually.

Monthly school menus for snacks and lunch will be posted, subject to change.

Individuals with allergies or requiring special menus will receive accommodations based on their Primary Care Physician's recommendations. It is crucial that any food or liquid allergies are noted on the Physical Exam Form completed by the individual's PCP. Food allergies and special dietary needs will be displayed in the lunchroom and kitchen.

Security Camera Policy

Security cameras are installed in classrooms, hallways, therapy rooms, lunchrooms, outdoor play areas, and parking lots. Cameras are not located in private areas such as bathrooms, changing rooms, or shower areas.

Information gathered through video monitoring will be used solely for safety and security purposes. Recorded images are securely stored and can only be accessed by authorized personnel. Arkansas State Licensing staff may also view the footage when necessary.

To respect the privacy of all clients, guardians, and staff, our video surveillance footage is for internal use only, with the exception of Arkansas State personnel. To ensure the privacy of all individuals and comply with HIPAA regulations, video footage is not available for guardians to view.

NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

As mandated by the Privacy Regulations established under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability

Act of 1966 (HIPAA)

THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION AS A CLIENT OF THIS ORGANIZATION MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED, AND HOW YOU CAN ACCESS YOUR INDIVIDUALLY IDENTIFIABLE HEALTH INFORMATION.

PLEASE REVIEW THIS NOTICE CAREFULLY.

A: OUR COMMITMENT TO YOUR PRIVACY

We are committed to protecting your individually identifiable health information in accordance with the law, including HIPAA. While conducting our business, we will generate records about you and the treatment and services we provide. We are legally obligated to maintain the confidentiality of your health information. Additionally, we must provide you with this notice detailing our legal duties and the privacy practices we uphold regarding your Protected Health Information (PHI). By federal and state law, we are required to adhere to the terms of this privacy notice that is in effect at the time.

We understand that these regulations can be complex, but we must share the following crucial information:

- How we may use and disclose your PHI
- Your privacy rights concerning your PHI
- Our responsibilities regarding the usage and disclosure of your PHI

The terms of this notice apply to all records containing your PHI that our organization creates or maintains. We reserve the right to modify this Notice of Privacy Practices. Any changes will apply to all your records that we have created or maintained in the past, as well as any new records we may create or maintain in the future. Our organization will display a copy of our current Notice in our offices at all times, and you may request a copy of the most current Notice at any time.

B. IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS NOTICE, PLEASE CONTACT:

Privacy Officer: Michelle Edwards, 74 Cleburne Park Road, Heber Springs, AR 72543
501-362-0943

C. WE MAY USE AND DISCLOSE YOUR PROTECTED HEALTH INFORMATION (PHI) IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

The following categories outline the various ways we may use and disclose your PHI:

1. **Treatment.** We may use your PHI to provide you with treatment. For instance, we may request tests (such as hearing, vision, or psychological evaluations) and use the results to develop suitable services. Various members of our team, including Certified Teachers, Service Coordinators, and Therapists, may utilize or share your PHI with others involved in your care, such as your guardians. Additionally, we may disclose your PHI to other health care providers for treatment-related purposes.
2. **Payment.** Your PHI may be used and disclosed to bill and collect payment for services and items you receive from us. For example, we may contact your health insurer to verify your eligibility for benefits and provide them with details regarding your treatment to determine coverage. We may also disclose your PHI to third parties responsible for covering these costs, as well as to other health care providers for their billing and collection efforts.
3. **Health Care Operations.** Your PHI may be utilized for our operational purposes. This includes evaluating the quality of care you received or conducting cost-management and business planning activities. We may also disclose your PHI to other health care providers and entities to support their operations.
4. **Appointment Reminders.** We may contact you using your PHI to remind you of upcoming appointments.
5. **Treatment Options.** Your PHI may be used to inform you about potential treatment options or alternatives.
6. **Health-Related Benefits and Services.** We may disclose your PHI to inform you about health-related benefits or services that may interest you.
7. **Fundraising.** We may reach out to you for fundraising efforts on behalf of our organization.
8. **Release of Information to Family/Friends.** Your PHI may be shared with a signed release with friends or family members involved in your care or assisting in your care.

9. Disclosures Required by Law. We will use and disclose your PHI when mandated by Federal, State, or Local Law.

D. USE AND DISCLOSURE OF YOUR PHI IN CERTAIN SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

The following categories describe unique situations in which we may use or disclose your identifiable health information:

- 1. Public Health Risks.** We may disclose your PHI to public health authorities authorized by law for purposes such as maintaining vital records, reporting client abuse, preventing disease, and notifying individuals about potential exposure to communicable diseases.
- 2. Health Oversight Activities.** Your PHI may be disclosed to health oversight agencies for activities authorized by law, such as investigations, audits, and compliance monitoring.
- 3. Lawsuits and Similar Proceedings.** We may disclose your PHI in response to a court or administrative order if you are involved in legal proceedings.
- 4. Law Enforcement.** We may release your PHI to law enforcement officials under certain circumstances, including situations involving crime victims or criminal conduct at our facilities.
- 5. Deceased Patients.** We may disclose PHI to a medical examiner or coroner to identify a deceased individual or determine the cause of death.
- 6. Serious Threats to Health or Safety.** Your PHI may be disclosed when necessary to prevent or reduce a serious threat to your health or safety, or that of another individual or the public.
- 7. National Security.** We may disclose your PHI to federal officials for authorized intelligence and national security activities.
- 8. Inmates.** If you are incarcerated, we may disclose your PHI to correctional institutions or law enforcement officials.
- 9. Workers' Compensation.** We may release your PHI for workers' compensation and similar programs.

E. YOUR RIGHTS REGARDING YOUR PHI

You have the following rights concerning your PHI that we maintain:

1. **Confidential Communications.** You may request restrictions on our use or disclosure of your PHI for treatment, payment, or health care operations. While we are not obligated to agree to your request, if we do not agree, we remain bound by our decision unless legally required otherwise.
2. **Inspection and Copies.** You have the right to inspect and obtain a copy of your PHI used for decision-making, excluding psychotherapy notes. Requests must be made in writing to the Privacy Officer, and fees may apply for copying and mailing.
3. **Amendment.** You may request amendments to your health information if you believe it is inaccurate or incomplete. Requests must be made in writing to the Privacy Officer and include a reason for the amendment.
4. **Accounting of Disclosures.** You have the right to request an "accounting of disclosures," which is a list of certain non-routine disclosures of your PHI. Requests must be made in writing and specify a time period not exceeding six years.
5. **Right to a Paper Copy of this Notice.** You are entitled to a paper copy of our Notice of Privacy Practices. You may request one at any time from the Privacy Officer.
6. **Right to File a Complaint.** If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a complaint with our practice or the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. Complaints must be made in writing, and you will not be penalized for filing.
7. **Right to Provide Authorization for Other Uses and Disclosures.** We will obtain your written authorization for uses and disclosures not covered by this notice. You may revoke your authorization in writing at any time.

If you have any questions about this notice regarding our health information privacy policies, please contact the Privacy Officer, Michelle Edwards, at 501-362-0943.

Current Board of Directors

- Stephanie Thompson - **Board President**
- Steve Choate - **Vice President**
- Sherry Niehaus - **Secretary**
- Brett Graham - **Treasurer**
- Carol Johnson - **Board Member**
- Debbie Robus - **Board Member**
- Mike Wood - **Board Member**

Spark Community Administration

Executive Director- Michelle Edwards

Director of Finance- Chad Hashisaki

Communications Director- Amy Strackbein

Director of Program Development & ECDS- Dawn Dill

Director of Education & ECDS- Kelly Newcom

Director of Development & ECDS- Katie Heirigs

Technology Champion- Stephen Spears

Adult Developmental Day Treatment Director, Family Liaison, & ECDS- Shannon Collins

Adult Developmental Day Treatment Assistant Director- Jerri Sneed

Behavior Specialist- Brittany Stephens

Waiver Supervisor- Jennifer McElroy

Preschool Supervisors- Susan Gale & Crystal Miller

RECEIPT OF NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICE WRITTEN ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

I, _____, have received a copy of Spark Community Inc.'s Notice of Privacy Practices.

Signature _____

Date _____

I hereby acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Spark Community's Adult Center handbook and have been informed about the following topics. I have also been provided with the opportunity to ask questions regarding:

1. The grievance procedure
2. Intake and admission procedures
3. A list of the Board of Directors
4. The mission and philosophy statement
5. The rules of conduct
6. Funding sources of Spark Community
7. The policy concerning AIDS/HIV/HBV
8. My right to provide input into rules
9. Individual/Parent/Guardian rights and responsibilities
10. School health guidelines & medication policy
11. The Notice of Privacy Practices
12. All possible service options, including those not presently provided by the program
13. The appeal procedure for decisions made by the organization
14. Solicitation guidelines
15. External advocacy services
16. My right to appeal any service decision to DDS, under DDS Policy 1076
17. Name and phone number of the DDS Service Specialist for my area
18. All other information covered in the Project Independence Handbook

Parent/guardian/individual _____

Date _____

Witness _____

Date _____

