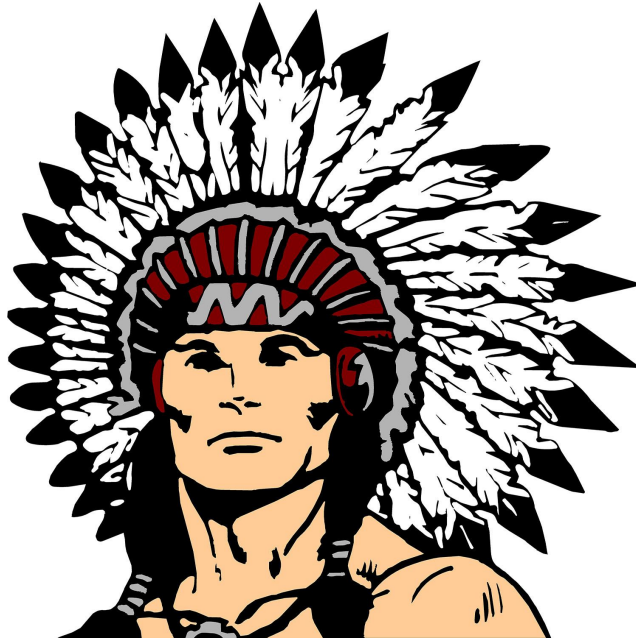


Strafford R-VI School District



Early Childhood Handbook

2023-2024

Dear Parents and Students,

On behalf of the staff at Strafford Early Childhood Center, we are happy to welcome you to the 2023-2024 school year! We are excited to learn and grow with **OUR TRIBE** as we continue our seventh year as a **LEADER IN ME** school. We are looking forward to a great partnership with you to ensure our children can achieve their highest potential. As partners, we share the responsibility for our children's success and want you to know we will do our best to carry out our responsibilities. We ask that you guide and support your child to **LEARN, LEAD and SUCCEED** by helping them with the following:

- 1) Attending school daily and arriving on time, ready for the day's learning
- 2) Reading daily to develop a love for reading and to improve literacy skills
- 3) Sharing school experiences with you so you are aware of his/her school life
- 4) Understanding that you want him/her to be successful

In this handbook, you will find a copy of our school procedures, policies and rules so that you and your child can review them together. Please refer to the district website, www.traffordschools.net, under the early childhood tab to access the handbook at any time. If you have any questions about the rules and expectations, please feel free to contact us or discuss them with your child's teacher.

Please consider being involved in the Strafford Early Childhood Booster Club, as our students can greatly benefit from your involvement and contributions to the school's program.

Our parents, staff and students are all a part of **OUR TRIBE** and we feel privileged to be a part of a school family that is focused on inspiring the leaders of tomorrow. We thank you for your support throughout the school year as we work to continue the tradition of being **#traffordstrong!**

Sincerely,



Dr. Michelle Gardner
Executive Director of Student Services

Early Childhood Handbook

The following procedures are in place to help us maintain a safe, secure, efficient atmosphere for all students. We appreciate your support of these procedures.

Early Childhood Center Office
(417)736-7000 x1100

The Early Childhood Center is located at 218 W. McCabe. Our center has the unique opportunity for children to begin in the Early Childhood Building as early as 6 weeks old and stay in the same facility until entering Kindergarten. This allows each child to build a strong educational foundation in familiar surroundings with familiar people. Our children build positive relationships with each other and the adults; this promotes a sense of well-being and belonging which in turn provides each student the positive and ongoing support that encourages his/her complete development.

Program: Title 1 Preschool

The Strafford R-VI Early Childhood Center provides quality and developmentally appropriate preschool education for children who are four years old before August 1. Each day's session will include both teacher and self-directed activities. Developmentally appropriate activities will be used to ensure an appropriate readiness program to enhance educational success.

Program: PACE

PACE (Preparing All Children Educationally) is an innovative and outstanding Early Childhood program. PACE is a transitional full day program that is designed for kindergarten eligible students who may not be quite ready to make the leap from preschool to kindergarten. The determination of a child's qualifications for PACE is based upon results of the Kindergarten Screening Assessment as well as other factors. In order to maintain the excellence and success of our PACE agenda, the student-teacher ratio remains low; this ensures being able to individually address student needs in preparation for the kindergarten experience. It offers a special opportunity for those students who need an extra boost in development before entering the kindergarten classroom. The PACE classroom will include teacher and self-directed activities. In addition, PACE incorporates a hands-on, student-centered learning style. Developmentally appropriate activities will be used to ensure an appropriate readiness program to enhance educational success.

Philosophy/Goals/Curricular Objectives:

We believe the foundation for learning includes the total development of the child. Our goal is to provide developmentally appropriate activities, which meet the social, emotional, physical and intellectual needs of the individual child. Believing that children learn through play, we plan our curriculum within a caring and creative environment. The curriculum is designed to enlarge the child's repertoire of knowledge and skill, to increase self-confidence and to promote social skills. Weekly objectives cover the following areas: social and emotional development, self-help skills, fine and gross motor skills, language development, pre-reading and pre-math skills, as well as other kindergarten readiness objectives. Children are encouraged to express themselves through creative art, dramatic play, storytelling, singing, and other hands-on activities.

Hours:

The Strafford R-VI Preschool Program is a five-day a week program. There is one half day session which is from 7:40-11:00 and three full day sessions which are from 7:40-2:50. All children must be picked up promptly. The Strafford Early Childhood Center follows the same calendar as the district, including inclement weather policies.

Enrollment:

Enrollment is open to children who are four years old before August 1. Eligibility may be determined through the screening process. If classes are full, students will be placed on a waiting list.

Arrival and Dismissal:

School bus services are not available for preschool students; therefore parents will be responsible for providing transportation to and from school each day.

School bus services are available for all PACE students.

Arrival: We provide Drop & Roll every morning from 7:40 a.m. - 8:00 a.m. This is a service we are proud to provide our students. Teachers will be available at curbside to help students out of the vehicle and will ensure they get into the building safely. If arriving between 7:40 a.m. and 8:00 a.m., students should report to the gymnasium. **If you arrive after 8:00 a.m. and supervised drop off personnel are not outside, please bring your child inside the ECC.** Parents will need to stop at the office and sign-in their child. The child will receive a tardy pass which will allow them to go to class. **NOTE: Students are not allowed to be dropped off prior to 7:40 a.m.**

Dismissal: Our Pick Up & Go service will be provided from 10:50 a.m. – 11:00 a.m (half day preschool) and 2:35-2:50 (full day preschool). Families will be given a car tag at Open House. This will need to be hung from your rear view mirror when entering the PU & Go car line. Teachers will load students into cars at curbside, while students are waiting safely inside the building.

If a student's after school schedule should change, please notify the teacher by sending a note to the teacher or calling the ECC office. If the school does not receive a note or a call, we will follow the regular schedule.

NOTE: On the first day of school, parents should park cars and escort students to their classrooms. This will help to ensure familiarity with the teacher and building. **Curbside drop off and pick up will start the second day of school.**

Picking up early:

When picking up your child early, families must sign the student out in the ECC building and the secretary will call for him/her to come to the office.

After School PowWow:

Our mission is to provide students with a safe and nurturing environment. We will offer age appropriate tutoring, large motor activities, and recreational time. We will promote the importance of education and make it exciting for the children to expand their knowledge on many topics.

Our hours of operation will be Monday through Friday from 2:35-6:00 p.m. We will not be in session when the district is closed or on snow days. **If school is dismissed early due to inclement weather, we will close early also.** Failure to pick up your child by 6:00 p.m. will result in a late fee of \$1.00 per minute. If late pick up becomes repetitious, services may be discontinued. All late fees must be paid before the child can return.

Cafeteria/Child Nutrition Program:

A nutritious breakfast and a hot lunch program are provided for those students who desire this service. All students who qualify for free meals qualify for both free breakfast and free lunch. A family may fill out an application for free or reduced-price lunches on our website. The determining official must approve any free or reduced-price lunch applications. The school uses a computerized meal system where an account is set-up for each student and is updated daily as they purchase lunch or breakfast. Meal pre-payment envelopes are available from the teacher, the early childhood office or you may pay online through the parent portal. You are encouraged to pre-pay weekly or monthly. Notices will be sent out regarding charges and also when the account obtains a zero balance. Please return a payment envelope with a check or cash enclosed to your child's teacher. Don't forget to include all the appropriate information on the outside of the envelope. Breakfast is served beginning at 7:40 A.M. each day of school for students attending preschool and PACE; please make every effort to have your child at school by 7:45 to allow time for breakfast.

Student Security:

If someone other than a custodial parent is picking up a preschool child, the teacher must be informed. Any person other than the parents picking up a preschool child should be reminded the teacher or office personnel will ask for identification to insure the child's safety. If there are any restrictions on the rights of a child's non-custodial parent which pertain to his/her normal parent activities in the school, we must have court ordered documentation on file.

The Early Childhood building will be locked from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Entrance into the building during these times will require the use of our intercom/camera and buzz-in system. The first set of doors to the early childhood will be open, however the second set of doors will remain locked. To be admitted into the building, please push the silver "doorbell" button located on the intercom unit and speak to the attendant. The intercom/camera unit is located in the corridor of the early childhood between the second set of double doors. Once the silver button has been pushed, we can hear you and see you. After announcing yourself, the attendant will release the door lock which will allow you to enter the building. Please stop by the office to check-in after being admitted into the building.

Attendance:

Regular attendance benefits both the children and our program. Please call the Early Childhood Office by 8:30am if your child will be absent. For your child's safety, if we do not receive a call, the school will call home to verify the absence.

NOTE: Due to our long waiting list to enroll in the Preschool program, students who have repeated unexcused absences will be dropped.

Open House:

Making a smooth transition into the preschool program is an important task for the preschool student and his/her family. Prior to the school year beginning, parents/guardians will be invited to attend an Open House. This will allow the students and parents to meet the teacher, see the classroom and discuss the schedule, curriculum and procedures. It also gives the students an opportunity to become familiar with their new surroundings.

Supplies:

There is a \$35 supply fee for all Early Childhood students. This fee covers your child's school supplies for the year. The supply fee should be paid the night of Open House (cash or checks will be accepted; checks should be made payable to: Strafford Schools).

Also, all Early Childhood children should have **one full size backpack (with name)** for transporting teacher/parent communication and student work to and from school. Please remember to check your child's backpack for messages and work each day.

Donation items are always welcome and include: Clorox wipes, baby wipes, boxes of tissues, small plates, plastic forks, plastic spoons, small cups, glue sticks, Crayola broad tip markers, crayons, etc.

Food:

Parent participation will be requested in bringing snacks on a rotation basis. The teacher will provide a monthly snack calendar. On your child's snack day, you will need to provide enough snacks and drinks for all children in your child's class. The school encourages healthy snacks and drinks should be 100% real juice or milk. All snacks must be store bought and in the original packaging.

Clothing:

On the first day of attendance, parents should bring a complete change of clothing (including socks) in a Ziploc bag to be kept in the students' backpack throughout the year. Spills and accidents do happen and a change of clothes can come in handy. Dirty clothes will be sent home in a plastic bag to be washed. If your child has to change clothes for any reason during the day please be sure to send a new set of extra clothing to school the next day.

Children should be dressed in play clothes. They will be playing and working on the floor, outside, and with some art materials that may stain. Children will be much more comfortable in clothing that allows freedom of movement and something they do not have to worry about getting dirty. Children should be dressed for the weather, as there will be outdoor play when possible. Children should also have shoes they can run, climb, and play in without worrying about slipping and falling.

Parent Involvement:

Our primary goal is to provide your child with the best available Early Childhood experience. In order to achieve that goal, your involvement as a parent will be actively encouraged. We recognize and appreciate the trust and confidence you have placed in us and offer you the opportunity to share in the joys of learning to play and work in the school setting. Laughter, hugs, sharing, and discovery are what "being a child" is all about. Your participation as a partner in your child's learning will be a positive experience for us all. A strong partnership between the Strafford Early Childhood Center and parents is of primary importance to the healthy development of the children. A key factor in this partnership is communication. Teachers will provide communication to parents through notes, newsletters, phone calls, emails and parent/teacher conferences. We encourage parents to allow time to visit with teachers on a regular basis. Parent involvement will serve to strengthen our program. Another way to keep a strong partnership is participation in our **Parents As Teachers program**. We require all parents to be involved in this organization. Parents as Teachers promotes the optimal early development, learning and health of children by supporting and engaging their parents and caregivers. We invite every parent to find meaningful opportunities to participate. If parents have a question or concern about their child or the program, we encourage them to go to the teacher and/or principal to express their concerns so they can be addressed.

Parent-Teacher Conference:

The administration and faculty are available to meet with parents for a conference whenever the parent or school staff member feels it would be beneficial. Early Childhood teachers will schedule conferences twice during the calendar year (October & April) and additionally on an as-needed basis.

Special Class:

Each day, students will have a 50-minute special class time. (Half Day Preschool has 30 minutes) During this time, students will participate in the following activities: library, art, STEM and physical movement. On library day students will check out a library book to be taken home. Each week the library book needs to be returned before another book can be checked out.

NOTE: Lost books will need to be paid for OR be replaced with an equivalent valued book.

Discipline:

When children are engaged in developmentally appropriate activities few discipline problems occur. However, if a child makes a bad choice or behaves inappropriately the staff will intervene with constructive solutions. Primary methods of discipline include intervention and redirection. Praise and positive reinforcement of good behavior is consistently used with all children as methods to build the child's self-esteem and encourage self-control. Conflict resolution will be used with all of the children when necessary. Parents will be notified on a regular basis concerning their child's behavior and social development.

Please note:

Children shall not be permitted to intimidate or harm others, harm themselves or destroy property. This is grounds for dismissal from the program.

The Early Childhood Administrator has the right to remove any child from the school for repeated behavior problems.

Health and Emergencies:

A copy of the child's immunization record must be on file before the first day of school or prior to beginning the program.

In accordance with Section 210.003.7, RSMo., the parent or guardian of a child enrolled in or attending the Cogdill Early Childhood Center may request notice of whether there are any children enrolled at our

facility with an immunization exemption on file. If you would like to request this information, please contact the school nurse and the information will be provided to you. Please note, the name or names of individual children are confidential and will not be released. Our response will be limited to whether or not there are children enrolled at our facility with an immunization exemption on file.

A nurse will be available to assist with your child's health needs. If a child becomes ill or injured after arriving at the preschool, the parent will be notified. If a child needs immediate medical attention, the parent and the child's physician will be called. The teacher will notify the parents of all known minor injuries or possible symptoms of illness.

Children will be observed for signs of contagious disease or illness, not only upon arrival, but throughout the day. Children who are suspected of being ill will not be able to attend preschool that day and the parent/guardian will be called.

1. If children exhibit any of the following symptoms, they must be sent home:
 - Diarrhea - more than one abnormally loose stool. **(See #2)**
 - Severe coughing - if a child gets red or blue in the face or makes high-pitched croup or whooping sounds after coughing.
 - Headache and stiff neck.
 - Difficulty breathing or rapid breathing.
 - Yellow skin or eyes.
 - Pinkeye - tears, redness of eyelid lining, irritation followed by swelling, discharge or pus. **(See #2)**
 - Unusual spots or rashes.
 - Sore throat or difficulty swallowing.
 - An infected skin patch - crusty, bright yellow, dry, or gummy areas of the skin.
 - Fever of 100.4 degrees (taken orally) or above. Fever reducing medications will not be administered so a child can remain at school while ill.
 - Vomiting **(See #2)**
 - Severe itching of the body or scalp, or scratching of the scalp. These may be symptoms of head lice or scabies. If a child is sent home due to the presence of head lice, the child must be nit free and see the nurse to be readmitted.
 - See Student Handbook for additional information about school policies regarding health and illnesses.
2. In order to return to the preschool program after an illness, a **child must be symptom free for 24 hours without the aid of Tylenol or Ibuprofen**. If questionable symptoms are present, a note must be obtained from a licensed physician stating that the child is free of contagion and able to participate in school activities.
3. Any medication to be given should be given to the Early Childhood office in the **original** container. A medication form must be completed by the parent and given to the office or school nurse.
4. Parents must notify the center if their child has any allergies, especially food allergies.
5. If the child is well enough to come to preschool, we will assume the child is well enough to participate in all regular activities, both inside and outside.
6. Parents must notify the center when their child has been exposed to any communicable disease so other parents may be informed to observe their child for symptoms.

Safety:

Periodic drills are conducted at school to teach children what to do in the event of a fire, tornado, or crisis situation. Teachers and students practice proper procedures regularly to ensure preparation in the case of an emergency.

School Closing:

In case of inclement weather or other school emergency situations, school closing announcements will be made on local media stations. You will also receive a call/text via our school messenger system.

Grievance Procedures:

School Board Policy JFH states: Alleged acts of unfairness or decision made by school personnel, except as otherwise provided for under student suspension and expulsion, which students and/or parents/guardians believe to be unjust or in violation of pertinent policies of the Board or individual school rules, may be appealed to the school principal or a designated representative.

The following guidelines are established for the presentation of student complaints and grievances.

- The principals shall schedule a conference with a student and any staff members involved to attempt to resolve the problem. Parents/Guardians may be involved in the conference, or a later conference for parents/guardians may be scheduled at the discretion of the principal.
- If the problem is not resolved to the satisfaction of the student and/or parents/guardians, a request may be submitted for a conference with the superintendent of schools. The superintendent shall arrange a conference to consider the problem and to inform participants of the action that will be taken.
- If the student and/or parents/guardians are not satisfied with the action of the superintendent, they may submit a written request to appear before the Board of Education. Unless required by law, a hearing will be at the discretion of the Board. The decision of the Board shall be final.

All persons are assured that they may utilize this procedure without reprisal.

Title IX/Non-Discrimination Public Notice:

The Strafford R-VI School District is committed to maintaining an educational and workplace environment that is free from discrimination, harassment, and retaliation in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs, services, activities and facilities. The District is committed to providing equal opportunity in all areas of education, recruiting, hiring, retention, promotion and contracted service.

In its programs and activities, the District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, disability, age, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by law and as required as required by Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. In addition, the District provides equal access to the Boy Scouts of America and other designated youth groups. Further, no person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subject to discrimination based on the above listed characteristics under a school nutrition program for which the District receives federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA Food and Nutrition Service).

The following person is designated and authorized as the District's Non-Discrimination and Title IX Coordinator to coordinate compliance with the laws identified above, including to handle inquiries or complaints regarding the District's non-discrimination policies:

Dr. Michelle Gardner Title IX Coordinator
218 West McCabe Street, Strafford, Missouri. 65757
417-736-7000. Ext. 1102
michelleg@straffordschools.net

For information regarding how to report or file a claim of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, see Board of Education Regulation ACA. Policy and Regulation ACA shall govern the grievance procedures, process, and response for complaints and concerns by parents, patrons, employees, or students of the

District related to discrimination, harassment, or retaliation on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, disability, age, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by law.

Inquiries or concerns regarding civil rights compliance by school districts should be directed to the local school district's Non-Discrimination and Title IX Coordinator. Inquiries and complaints may also be directed to the Kansas City Office, Office for Civil Rights, US Department of Education, 8930 Ward Parkway, Suite 2037, Kansas City, MO 64114; (816) 268-0550; TDD (877) 521-2172.

Snack ideas for Holiday Parties and Birthday Recognition

Childhood obesity is increasing rapidly in the United States, affecting children of all races, ethnicities and income levels. Since 1980, the percentage of overweight children aged 6-11 has more than doubled and the percentage of overweight adolescents aged 12-19 has tripled. Reversing the obesity epidemic will require a long-term, well-coordinated approach to reach kids where they live, learn and play. At Strafford Elementary we would like to promote student health, reduce student overweight/obesity, facilitate student learning of lifelong healthy habits and increase student achievement. We encourage parents and teachers to limit soda and candy to no more than 50% of the foods offered at special holiday parties and birthday recognitions. The remaining 50% of party food offered should meet at least two of the following recommended standards:

1. provide 3 grams or more fiber
2. provide 35% or less calories from fat or less than 10% calories from saturated fat
3. provide less than 16 grams sugar per serving
4. make a significant nutrition contribution as defined by: providing 20% daily value of one or more of calcium, vitamin A, vitamin C or iron OR 5 grams or more of protein

Ideas for Holiday Parties and Birthday Recognition

*Fresh Fruit	*Oreo 100 cal. Snack pk.	*LaChoy Fortune Cookies
*Fresh Vegetables-carrots, *Celery, etc.	*Kellogg Grahams-several flavors	*Salsa Cup
*Raisins	*Trix Cereal Bar	*Dill Pickles
*Frozen Fruits	*Cheerios Cereal Bar	*Gatorade
*Scooby Doo Bones Grahams	*Munchies Kid Mix	*Applesauce
*Fruit Popsicles	*Chips Ahoy 100 cal.	*Austin Zoo Crackers
*Yogurt	*Granola Bars	*Nestea
*100% Fruit Juices	*NutriGrain Yogurt Bars	*Powerade
*Shape-ups	*Cheese Nips 100 cal.	*Lipton Tea
*Beef Jerky	*Quaker Quakes	*Red Diamond with Splenda
*Doritos-Reduced Fat	*Snapple 100% juice drinks	*Sugar free Jello
*Lay's Baked Potato Chips	*Scooby Doo Snacks	*Keebler-Elf Grahams
*Sun chips	*Fruit Roll Up	*Crystal Light
*Pretzels	*JJ Pretzels with fillers	*Baked Cheez-its
*Bosco Mozz Stix	*Gogurt	*Otis Low Fat Muffins
*Kellogg Rice Krispie Treats	*Special K cereal bars	
	*Otis Spunkmeyer-Reduced Fat Cookies	

Strafford R-VI School District Charging Policy

The Board of Education will allow students to charge up to \$-5.00. Once a student reaches \$-5.00 they will be offered an alternative meal. Please make regular deposits into your student's account to maintain a positive balance and to prevent them from receiving an alternative meal.

The alternative meal consists of a peanut butter and jelly sandwich and student's choice of milk.

- The alternative meal is offered up to five consecutive days
- The alternative meal is offered only at lunch time. It is received at the point of service.
- Payment Options: 1). In person- You may bring your student's deposit to the office of any building or send it in with your child. 2.) Pay Online: Going through your parent portal and using credit card. (\$2 transaction fee) 3.) Pay by mail: send to 201 W. McCabe, Strafford, Mo. 65757
- Balance on account is checked prior to a student purchasing anything "extra" in order to keep charges at the limit.
- Households are notified the same day their student's account reaches the charging limit via automated messenger and/or by email notification.
- Reminder envelopes are sent home weekly. Notices begin at \$5 and down.
- Students' balance and meal purchases can be viewed at any time on your Parent Portal.
- In May, approximately one week prior to the last meal served, no charging will be allowed. This helps ensure that there are no outstanding negative balances at the end of the school year. During this time the alternative meal is offered and provided for students with any negative balance.
- The afternoon milk offered daily at snack time, cost \$0.40. This cost is the same for all students whether free, reduced or full-pay. This milk is not a part of the National School Breakfast Program or the National Lunch Program. Charging policies apply to this afternoon milk.
- Regarding delinquent debt- All fines are to be paid by the end of each school year. Account balances must be below the charging limit to attend Field Trips.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

THE 7 HABITS OF HAPPY KIDS



Habit 1- Be Proactive: I'm in charge!

- I am responsible for myself.
- I take initiative and have a "can-do" attitude.
- I chose how to act, how I feel and what I do.
- I do what is right without being asked, even when no one is looking.



Habit 2- Begin with the End in Mind: I have a plan!

- I set goals for myself.
- I have a plan for how I will accomplish my goals.
- I think about what I want to be when I grow up and how I will get there.



Habit 3- Put First Things First: I will do my work first, then play!

- I do my work before I play.
- I know what my responsibilities are, and I do them based on what is most important.
- I practice self control.



Habit 4- Think Win-Win: I believe we can all win!

- I want everyone to be a success.
- I don't have to put others down to get what I want.
- When there is a conflict, I look for solutions that will make everyone feel good.



Habit 5- Seek First to Understand, Then to be Understood:

I will listen to others before I talk!

- I am a good listener.
- I try to understand other people's points of view especially when their opinion is different than mine.
- I am comfortable sharing my opinions and ideas.

Habit 6- Synergize: I know that together is better!



- I know that everyone is good at something.
- Everyone needs to get better at something.
- I believe that we can all learn something from each other.
- I know that working in groups helps to create better ideas than what one person can do alone.



Habit 7- Sharpen the Saw: I have balance in my life!

- I keep my body healthy when I exercise, eat healthy foods and get enough sleep.
- I enjoy learning new things.
- I know that it is important to spend time with people that I care about.