

**The Children’s Learning Center of Posey County**

Parent Handbook

Updated May 2021

**Philosophy and Mission**

The Children’s Learning Center of Posey County in a not-for-profit organization dedicated to providing quality full day childcare for working families. We are able to remain in operation from many volunteers’ efforts, who realize the important and necessary service that quality childcare programs provide to a community. These volunteers strive to secure additional funding for this endeavor. It is with the volunteer funds, local businesses, individual contributions, and community-development organizations that our center was developed and able to successfully operate today.

 The Children’s Learning Center seeks to provide the best care and flourishing learning environment for young children based on research-based developmentally appropriate practices. To accomplish this, a team approach between administration, parents, community, and staff is vital. Parents are encouraged to share with the administration or staff any praises, concerns, or questions they may have concerning the facility, educational resources, or child development. Parents are encouraged to visit the center and play a positive role in their child’s care and education. Our center has been carefully designed and is well equipped with developmentally appropriate educational resources to support child growth in the areas of physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development. Our staff are educated, experienced, and trained professionals who enjoy working with young children. The ratio of children to teachers is kept low to provide a safe, stimulating and nurturing environment based on trust and security.

 The thoughtfully planned curriculum and room arrangements offer a balance between both quiet and active play periods. The Children’s Learning Center utilizes the Creative Curriculum and teachers use the FOUNDATIONS to the Indiana Academic Standards for Young Children to ensure meaningful activities. Teachers assess the individual needs and interests of children in their care to create meaningful lessons and experiences. Teachers reflect on their knowledge of child development and cultural backgrounds to guide curriculum decisions. Children are offered a rich variety of materials and social situations to interest and challenge them.

**Our Purpose**

The primary goal of the Children’s Learning Center of Posey County is to provide children between the ages of 6 weeks and 12 years of age with quality educational experiences in a safe and caring environment. We also strive to provide an environment that encourages and nourishes a child’s growth and development at a pace that is comfortable and natural. Children’s needs are often evaluated and curriculum is modified to each child’s unique pace of development. We deliver a program in which every child is respected and valued for his/her uniqueness. We offer a curriculum that addresses the physical, emotional, cognitive, and social needs of each child.

**Children’s Learning Center Programs**

 The Children’s Learning Center is licensed by the State of Indiana-Family and Social Services Administration’s Office of Early Childhood and Out of School Learning. The local licensing consultant visits the center annually to ensure compliance with all child care regulations.

 Paths to Quality is Indiana’s statewide voluntary quality rating and improvement system for early care and education. It consists of four levels, and each level builds on the foundations of the previous one. The Children’s Learning Center is currently rated at a level 3. An annual visit by a Path’s to Quality representative confirms that the standards for level 3 ratings are maintained.

**Indiana’s Early Learning Foundations:**

 The Indiana Department of Education has created a set of developmental standards for children ages birth through Kindergarten, called The Foundations. Teachers utilize this continuum of skills to develop lesson plans and track each child’s growth and development. You will find The Foundations on the weekly lesson plans throughout the building. These foundations are also aligned with our curriculum.

**Staff Qualifications**

 All of the Children’s Learning Center staff and individuals who volunteer more than 8 hours per week, are required to pass an expanded background check based on the individual’s fingerprints before hire. A drug screen, physical, and TB test are also performed on each prospective employee and volunteer. All staff receive at minimum 20 hours of specialized training in Early Childhood Education concepts. All staff are certified in pediatric and infant CPR and First Aid.

**Concern and Grievance Procedure**

 The Children’s Learning Center staff focus on teaching the children problem solving and conflict resolution steps, as part of our social-emotional curriculum. It is important that they see their parents, teachers, and center staff working together to solve problems, and come up with the solutions together. This modeling can have a huge impact on the child’s learning and have a lifetime effect on relationship skills.

 When families have concerns regarding the classroom, we encourage you to speak with your child’s teacher. The teachers are willing to assist you and your child, and can easily make accommodations to the classroom schedule, or classroom procedure to meet your child’s needs.

 In cases where the family or the teacher believes the situation needs management attention, or the situation was not resolved after speaking with the teaching staff, please speak with the Director, or Assistant Director. The Director and all administrative staff take all concerns seriously and will work as quickly and efficiently as possible to solve the issue.

**Parent Involvement**

**Home-School Communication**

 We value our relationship and communication with parents, as we serve as partners in the care for your children. We encourage you to let us know anything that might help in our work with your child. A move to a new home, developmental or medical needs, the birth of a new sibling, divorce or separation, etc. are all examples of information that can be helpful to us.

 Children in the infant, toddler, and two’s classes, will receive a “Daily Needs Sheet” at the end of each day. This sheet details you child’s activities, meals, rest periods, and diaper times.

 Teachers will share information with you about your child’s day on a regular basis. Although we want you to be aware of certain situations and behaviors your child may be exhibiting at the center, we don’t expect you to “fix it” or to discipline your child. We will handle the situations as they arise in the classroom, but always want parents to be aware of what we are doing to help in the classroom.

**Parent Visits**

 We encourage families to share their talents, family experiences or traditions with the children. Parents are welcome to visit the center at any time, but keep in mind that it may be difficult for a young child to cope with separating from a parent a second time during the day. We also find it difficult when parents enter and leave the room during naptime.

 We encourage families to become involved in our program in some of the ways listed below. We do understand that out families are busy working and/or going to school, so it is up to each individual as to how involved you would like to become with our program.

1. Serving on the board
2. Reading to the children
3. Sharing a special interest or talent
4. Helping with a special event
5. Donating items to a classroom

**Confidentiality**

 Confidentiality is a very important aspect of our program. Sometimes we encounter situation, such as a parent who expresses a concern about another child’s behavior. Although we understand your concern about the other child’s behavior, we cannot discuss detailed information about the other children or families with you. Please keep in mind that children develop at different rates and it’s not realistic to expect all children to behave the way you expect them too.

 We ask that parents refrain from posting photos or other pertinent information on their own social media sites that could break confidentiality. Lastly, negative or disparaging comments posed on various social media networks by families regarding employees, children, other families, or the Children’s Learning Center could result in immediate termination of child care services.

 Only employees that have a direct contact or care for a child will receive information that is deemed confidential. We do not share information with volunteers, college students, or visitors, unless families have signed a release of information form. Only administrative staff and your child’s teacher will have access to your child’s file.

 In the event outside parties (i.e., therapists, physicians, teachers, etc.) request assessments information, parents must first sign a release of information form. Once specific permission is received from the families, the information will be released to the intended party.

**Donations**

The Children’s Learning Center is continually accepting donations of gently used and new toys, equipment, and clothing. Our supplies are used all day, every day and experience amplified wear and tear in a short period of time. We are unable to accept donations of stuffed animals due to allergies and the inability to properly sanitize daily.

The following items are examples of acceptable donations:

* Children’s books
* Children’s CD’s
* Dress up clothes
* Cars/Trucks
* Dolls
* Art Supplies
* Bubbles
* Chalk
* Water Toys

Families should check with their child’s teacher for classroom specific items.

**What We Expect of Families**

* Read any communication that is sent home from administration or your child’s classroom teacher
* Be respectful of Learning Center staff. Staff members are much more than babysitters.
* Work together with staff members to maximize your child’s educational experience.
* Focus on your child at pickup time. Take time to greet the staff and your child.
* Pay due tuition on time. We are providing a valuable service, in order to continue to offer this service we expect prompt payments.
* Be respectful and supportive of center policies.
* Encourage your child to follow center rules.
* Dress your child in appropriate clothing.
* Keep children who are exhibiting signs of illness at home. The state mandates health regulations to prevent the spread of infectious illnesses.
* Address concerns in a respectful way and follow the appropriate chain of command.
* Communicate with your child’s teacher and issues or changes happening at home.
* Make sure your child gets a good night’s sleep.
* Pick-up children before the center closes.

**Curriculum**

**Creative Curriculum**

 The Children’s Learning Center uses the creative curriculum. This curriculum addresses and naturally progresses with skills children develop. With this program, we are able to assess and modify activities for students at various levels of development, while providing the same activities to all the students in the classroom. Play is vital to the development of all facets of the young child’s emerging self. All six aspects of children’s development- personal awareness, emotional well-being, socialization, communication, cognition, and perceptual motor skills- are important and must be considered as interactive, rather than parallel functions.

**Child Assessment Plan**

 The assessment of each child’s development is a critical link in our ability to set goals for each child and plan appropriate activities that support the child’s natural progression of learning and development. Assessments provide valuable insights into the developmental interests and needs of each child. This information is used to determine whether children are at expected developmental levels, or if a referral needs to be made to an outside agency for additional supports. Child assessment also allows the center as a whole to evaluate and modify our curriculum.

**Supervision and Care**

**Primary Caregiving**

Primary caregiving ensures that every child has a “special” person and that every parent has a primary contact. The lead teacher and teacher assistant in the classrooms will allocate children so that every child has a primary caregiver. This person will form a caring, nurturing, responsive relationship with your child. Please keep in mind that primary does not mean exclusive. Children should not become completely dependent upon on person. The other person in the classroom and building staff will also help your child build relationships and interactions as they explore and develop.

**Transitions**

 Children in the program will typically transition into their new age group in the summer with their peers. Occasionally, we have openings that occur throughout the school year, which will allow children to transition earlier. Each child will participate in a transitioning program to allow them ample time to become familiar with new caregivers and new routines. Children who are experiencing difficulties during the transition phase may be allowed to extend their transition period. All transition program modifications will be at the approval of the Director.

**Rest Time (Excluding 5-year-olds)**

 All children are required to have a minimum of a 30-minute rest period on a cot or crib each day. We make every effort possible to provide an environment that is quiet enough for those children who need to nap, yet not too restrictive for those who do not require a nap. For children who do not nap, or nap less than the full two-hour period, quiet activities are provided to occupy their time until rest time is over. Teachers assist children in resting by reading stories, providing soothing music, and patting backs. Children are not required to sleep, but are expected to rest quietly. Infants follow their own specific napping schedule.

 The center will provide a nap cot that will be assigned specifically to your child. You will need to supply a blanket for the week. Your child’s bedding will need to go home on Friday evening to be laundered and brought back the following Monday.

**Safe Sleep for Infants**

 Our child care program has implemented policies and procedures to create a safe sleep environment for infants. We follow the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Consumer Safety Commission for safe sleep environments to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

* Infants less than 12 months of age shall be placed on their backs on a firm, tight fitting mattress that meets safety standards.
* All pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, stuffed toys, pacifier clips, Wubbanubs, and other soft products are not permitted.
* The infants head shall remain uncovered during sleep.
* Unless the child has the state required form signed by a physician specifying otherwise, infants will be placed on their back for sleeping to lower the risk of SIDS. If a physician’s note is provided, it must explain in detail how the infant shall be placed in the crib to sleep and the medical reasoning for this position. This note will be kept in the child’s file and saved in the classroom.
* When infants can easily turn over from back to front, they shall be laid down to sleep on their backs, but allowed to assume whatever position they prefer to sleep.
* Infants will be visually checked on every 15-20 minutes. The infant will be observed to verify that the infant’s skin color is normal, and the infant’s chest is rising and falling as they breathe.
* Infants shall not share a crib with other children.
* Infants will remain lightly clothed and comfortable when sleeping.
* All Children’s Learning Center staff will receive training on safe sleep practices before caring for infants and will complete annual recertification trainings.

**Center Hours of Operation and Closings**

 Our program is open from 6:00 am-5:00 pm, Monday through Friday with the exception of the following major holidays.

* Memorial Day
* Independence Day
* Labor Day
* Thanksgiving
* Day after Thanksgiving
* Christmas Day
* New Year’s Day

The center will also be closed to families for staff in-service training twice per year. In addition, the center may close due to inclement weather conditions or problems with the building such as flood, lack of heat, water, or air conditioning.

 Any closings not pertaining to holidays, will be announced via the CLC Facebook Page. For inclement weather, the Children’s Learning Center will follow the MSD of Mt. Vernon school closing for the first day of a weather event. After the first day of inclement weather closer, we will assess and determine if we are able to open, regardless if MSD remains closed. All communications for CLC closings will be on local news stations as well as our Facebook page.

**Enrollment Procedures**

 A non-refundable registration fee of $30 is due once a spot is offered, this is in order to secure your enrolment. Fees are subject to change as needed. Registration forms should be turned in one week before your child is scheduled to start. Due to the demand of childcare, we are not able to hold spots for more than one week. Families may be asked to pay a regular weekly tuition rate to hold a spot, if the family is not ready to start their child.

**What to Bring on the First Day**

On the first day, you should bring the following items:

* Payment for the first week of care and supply fee
* Backpack (optional)
* Three complete changes of clothing (pants, shirts, underwear, socks, and an extra pair of shoes)
* Diapers in an unopened package (if applicable)
* Blanket for nap

**Tuition**

 Parents/guardians are financially responsible for their child’s reserved spot, regardless of attendance, this includes holidays.

 All rates include meals and snacks. The infants rate includes specified formula, nursery water, and baby food. Families must provide diapers and wipes as needed. All diapers and wipes must be provided in an unopened package, as required by licensing regulations.

 Tuition (which includes voucher co-payments) is due no later than Wednesday of each week by the close of business. Any account not paid by closing, will be assessed a late charge of $10 a week. If full payment- including all fees is not rendered in two weeks, services will be suspended and parents will not be permitted to leave their child at the center until all payments are made in full.

 If a holiday falls on the day that payment is due, please pay the next business day, a late fee will not be applied in this circumstance. If a child is absent due to illness, please pay the weekly tuition owed at drop off of the first day back.

 Please remember that tuition is used to keep our program operating. Without your timely payments, we are not able to offer the high-quality care that your child deserves. Failure to pay tuition, will result in termination of the child’s enrollment in our program.

**Emergency Contact Information**

 If contact information changes for you or anyone you have listed as an emergency contact, we ask that you update your form immediately. These forms are also updated yearly to ensure we have accurate information when contacting families.

**Supply Fee**

 The school year supply fee is $50.00 twice a year, on January 1st and June 1st. The center issues a supply fee to assist with the purchase of supplies such as art materials, therapeutic equipment, etc. The fee can be included with your normal tuition for that particular week or can be paid separately.

**Arrival and Departure**

 If your child will not be at the center by 9:00 a.m., it is imperative that you call the center and let us know if your child will be in attendance for lunch. We have to inform our kitchen staff by 9:30 a.m. of our lunch count for the day. All children must be dropped off no later than 9:30 a.m. For children who have appointments that do not allow them to arrive at the center by 9:30 a.m., please contact the Center prior to 9:00 a.m. and provide a note from the physician. Re-occurring late drop off attempts will result in denial of care up to and possibly the termination of care.

 Children must be accompanied by an adult into the center. Parents/guardians will be expected to sign their child in and out of the program each morning at drop off and each afternoon at pick-up. If you need to speak with your child’s teacher, arrangements can be made. Parents will be allowed access to the entire facility upon request.

 Occasionally, you may need to have someone other than you pick up your child in your absence. We ask that you add his/her name to the emergency contact/pickup form located at the front desk. This person must be on the list in order to be given access to your child. In addition, the person must present a photo ID to the front desk staff, they will then check the name with the one listed in the file. Without this identification process, we will be unable to release your child to the individual. All individuals authorized to pick up must be at least 18 years of age. Children will not be released to anyone less than 18 years of age- no exceptions.

 Individuals who arrive to pick up children with evident signs of intoxication or impairment will not be given permission to leave with their child. Every effort will be made to call parents first, then family members or friends to assist with pickup; however, if no one can be reached, the Center will have no choice but to call Child Protective Services and/or the police.

**Attendance**

 The program must maintain correct attendance for each child daily. It is important that each child is checked in and out of the program using the computer in the front lobby. Children who are not being clocked in and out will have a letter sent home, caregivers may lose drop off/pickup privileges. Reoccurring issues may result in termination of care.

**Late Pickup**

 The center closely promptly at 5:00 p.m. Please keep in mind that you must pick up your child and plan to leave the building by this time.

 A fine of $10.00 per child will be charged beginning at 5:01 to 5:15 p.m. For every additional 15 minutes, $5 will be charged until you arrive. The center reserves the right to terminate services to families when a pattern of lateness is apparent. The late fee much be paid by the end of the following business day, in order for the child to continue services at the center.

**Termination of Childcare**

 If you choose to withdraw your child from our program, we must receive a written two-week notice. You will be charged for the two weeks of care whether or not your child is in attendance.

 The Children’s Learning Center reserves the right to discontinue child care if decided that the Center, child, or family is not benefitting from the arrangement. Childcare may be terminated for the following reasons:

* If a child’s behavior indicates he/she is not adjusting to the program, has needs the program cannot successfully accommodate, or is detrimental to the functioning of the class as a whole. Teachers will hold conferences with staff, parents and professionals in order to determine if the child’s needs can be met within the program.
* If a parent or guardian exhibits behavior that is detrimental to the health and well-being of the children or staff in a classroom, or negatively interferes with the normal functioning of the classroom, they will be given a one-week notice and asked to find alternative care. In an instance which a parent or guardian is deemed verbally abusive or physically hostile or abusive to center staff or children, the center reserves the right to take measures to maintain a harmonious and safe center environment, child care would be terminated immediately.
* Failure of a parent or guardian to abide by center policies and procedures may result in termination of care. This might include, but not limited to: delinquent payments; frequent late pick-ups; leaving a child unattended; refusal to provide information or seek assistance for their child; failure to comply with agreed upon plan of action relating to child’s behavior; failure to submit or update child’s medical forms.

**Health and Safety**

**Physicals and Immunizations**

Our program requires all enrolled children to have a physical exam signed by a physician and an up-to-date immunization record. These forms must be on file within 30 days of enrollment. If an annual physical or updated immunization are not on file within 30 days, care will be suspended until completed forms are received. Immunization records on file, must be updated each time a child receives additional vaccinations. The child must have an annual well-child exam and the center must have documentation of this exam. If your child has an upcoming well-child visits, please ask the front desk for the form your doctor can fill out.

**Illness:**

 Your child’s health is important to us. We ask that you do not send your child is they have been ill within the last 24 hours and/or have any of the active symptoms listed below. A child exhibiting these symptoms will be sent home from the center:

* Fever of 101 degrees or higher
* Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness (lethargy, uncontrollable coughing, persistent crying, difficulty breathing/wheezing)
* Diarrhea
* Vomiting
* Undiagnosed or contagious skin rash (with or without fever)
* Mouth sores with drooling
* Infestations such as headlice or scabies. The center maintains a “no nit” policy to protect the health and well-being of all children enrolled.
* Contagious illness, such as flu, chicken pox, conjunctivitis, strep, etc.

Please keep in mind that children should not be given a fever reducing medication, such as Tylenol or Motrin prior to drop-off in effort to disguise a fever. Children should be fever free (without fever reducing medications) for 24 hours. A fever will be defined as any temperature above 101 degrees.

 If a child becomes ill while at the center, the parent(s) will be notified immediately, the family member will then be expected to make arrangements to pick up the child from the center within 1 hour. It is imperative that contact information be accurate at all times. If a parent cannot be reached, we will contact another individual on your emergency contact list. We will sometimes give a courtesy call to parents to notify of a low-grade fever or other symptoms that are out of the norm for the child.

 We appreciate a phone call no later than 9:00 a.m. when your child will be absent from the program, so that we can better plan for the day (activities and meal counts). If your child is absent due to a communicable illness, we need to know ASAP so that we can inform other families by posting informational sheets about the illness on the classroom doors, and consult the Posey County Health Department per state regulation. Children are required to have a doctor’s note releasing them back to child care when they have been diagnosed with a communicable or contagious illness.

**Head Lice Policy**

 Head lice is spread through close head-to-head contact with someone who has head lice. They can also be transferred onto clothes, combs, brushes, or other personal items such as pillows, nap blankets, or stuffed animals.

 If a child at the Children’s Learning Center is found to have head lice, the family will be given treatment information (including a treatment check list) from the Posey County Health Department and the following procedure will be followed:

* If head lice (live or nits) are found while the child is home, the parent must inform the center immediately. The parent must then treat the child with an over-the-counter medication, or one of the treatment options suggested by the Posey County Health Department.
* If head lice (live or nits) are found while the child is at the center, the child will immediately be removed from the classroom and the child’s parents will be called. The parent will remove the child from the center and follow the medication procedures outlined above.
* Once the child has been treated, and no live lice, nymphs, or nits are found, the child may return to the center. An administrative team member will check the child’s head for lice and/or nits before the child is allowed to enter the classroom. If live lice or any nits are present, the child will be sent home immediately.
* If head lice or nits are found, a notice will be posted informing all families that headlice are present in the classroom. The child’s identity will not be released at any time.
* Children who have confirmed cases of head lice, will receive daily head checks (before entering the classroom) by an administrative team member, until they have been nit free for three consecutive days. In addition, classroom head checks will be done once a week for one month in each room with a confirmed case of head lice.
* During an outbreak, watch for signs of lice, such as frequent head scratching. Nits do not cause visible symptoms like scratching, but they can be seen on the hair shaft. Nits are yellow-white and oval shaped. We all should teacher and remind children to not share combs, brushes, scarves, hair ribbons, helmets, headphones, hats, etc.

**Medication**

 Parents should administer medication to their child at home when possible. Should your child require medication while at the center, it must be in the original prescription container. Please remember we cannot administer any over-the-counter medication without written consent from a physician.

 All medications brought to the center will be kept in a locked medicine box in the classroom (unless it requires refrigeration). Please hand all medication directly to the classroom teacher, so that it may be immediately locked in the proper area. Medication is not allowed to be lift in diaper bags, children’s cubbies, etc. If the medication needs to be taken home at the end of the day, please see the child’s teacher for retrieval.

 If you would like for your child to have diaper rash cream, please make sure to have a doctor’s note stating the exact brand of diaper cream so we are able to apply as needed for your child.

 All medication forms must be signed by a physician and updated annually. The center is not allowed to store or administer expired medication. Medication checks will be performed monthly and any expired medication will be sent home.

**Injuries and Injury Reports**

 All staff are certified in first aid and CPR biannually. In the case of a serious accidental injury, we will make an immediate attempt to contact a parent/guardian. If necessary, we will call 911 and an ambulance will take your child to the hospital. Due to this, it is essential for parents to keep an accurate and up to date contact information sheet on file with the center. If injuries are not of a serious nature, we will apply first aid and notify parents/guardians. You will receive an accident report for any accident that occurs. We ask that you sign this report and leave it with your child’s teacher. A copy can be provided upon request.

**Meals and Snacks**

 Well balanced meals and snacks that meet USDA meal requirements, are served daily. Breakfast is served at 9:00 a.m., lunch between 11:00 and 12:00 (depending on age) and snack between 2:30 and 3:30 (depending on age). We are not able to save meals for your child, unless they arrive during the actual meal or snack.

 Baby food and Gerber Good Start formula will be provided to infants less than 12 months of age. Infants who are developmentally ready, may receive table food at designated meal times upon parent request. Nursing mothers may feed their infant as schedule allows, or supply breast milk in disposable, sterile storage bags/bottles. All breast milk must be labeled with the child’s name and the date it was expressed. If your family prefers a formula other than what is provided by the center, you are welcome to bring your preferred brand in the original, unopened container with your child’s name on it. Powdered formula requires a signed doctor’s statement allowing them to use the powdered formula in our care. You may also bring prepared bottles with your child’s name, date and time prepared.

 State regulations require that any food items, such as birthday or party treats, be brought into the center in the original, unopened, prepackaged container. The center cannot accept any food prepared from home. All foods must meet the dietary needs of all children in the classroom. For instance, if a child has a food intolerance for milk, items containing milk cannot be brought in for class treats.

**The center has asked that no food with peanut products be brought to share with the children. As this has proven to be one of the most common, life-threatening allergies.**

In the event your child has a special diet, due to food allergies or religious preferences, the center will provide the appropriate food substitution. All substitutions will meet the USDA Dietary requirements. A plan will be developed with the parents, administration, teachers, kitchen staff, and physician to ensure that all safety measures are implemented. Any food brought from home must be stored in sealed containers. Any changes to food restrictions should be noted immediately.

**Diapers/Wipes**

Families will provide diapers and wipes in unopened packages. State regulations require that both items be unopened. Once children begin potty training, parents may choose to send pull-up disposable diapers.

**Potty Training**

Potty training is a big event in a young child’s life. Toilet training can be a complex process and there are many aspects caregivers and families should consider before and during the process of toilet training. We will work with families on the best approach so this can be a pleasant, successful experience for everyone.

**Clothing**

Clothing that children wear to the center should be comfortable and easy to take on and off. Please send your child in play clothes. The center offers many art activities and sensory play that can become messy. Children should wear clothing that makes it easy for them to move freely in and not be afraid to get dirty. Teachers cannot be responsible for keeping children’s clothes clean throughout a busy day.

As the weather changes, please make sure your child is dressed appropriately. Children will be going outside daily, so make sure they have appropriate clothing for the weather that day. For cooler weather, please make sure your child has a coat, hat and gloves. For warmer weather, please make sure your children are wearing shorts and a short-sleeved shirt. All shoes must have a back on them to prevent accidents.

Every child needs to have an extra set of clothing in the classroom. Please check periodically to make sure the extra clothing items are appropriate for the season and the correct size. Teachers will be sending notes home when accidents happen and your child needs to bring a new change of clothes.

**Items borrowed from the center should be washed and returned as soon as possible.**

**Outdoor Play**

 All children will be taken outdoors for play on a daily basis. The only exceptions are rainy days, summer days when the heat index is over 95 and winter days when the wind chill is below 26 degrees. Parents may not request for their child to stay indoors while the rest of the classroom goes outside, unless they have a note from the child’s physician.

**Items brought from Home**

 Our center maintains a generous supply of materials for the classrooms to use. Therefore, children are asked to keep toys and other personal belongings at home. This helps to avoid hurt feelings if an item is lost or broken. Teachers cannot be responsible for personal possessions that children might choose to bring to school.

 Please do not bring food, gum, candy, or money into the center. These items will either be thrown away or placed in your child’s cubby.

**Guidance and Discipline**

 Guidance techniques are designed and carried out in such a way as to help the individual child develop self-control and to assume responsibility for their actions. Staff will use redirection along with explanation as a first step to dealing with behavioral challenges.

 No child will be punished by corporal punishment or verbal abuse. Please keep in mind, this policy applies to families while in the building. Children may not be yelled at or spanked while at the Children’s Learning Center. The following behaviors are prohibited by all persons in the center:

* Corporal punishment, including hitting, spanking, swatting, shaking, pinching, and other measures intended to induce physical pain or fear.
* Threatened or actual withdrawal of food, rest, or use of the restroom
* Abusive or profane language
* Any form of public or private humiliation, including threats of physical punishment.
* Any form of emotional abuse including shaming, rejecting, terrorizing, or isolating a child.

It is our policy that we will handle all discipline situations that may arise with the children while they are at the center. If a parent has concerns regarding another child’s behavior, we ask that you discuss the concerns with administrative staff. Under no circumstances will parents be allowed to approach another child or his/her parent in an effort to deal with a situation. We consider this method inappropriate and could result in termination of child care services.

 We will make every attempt to work with a child; however, if there are continual discipline problems with disruptive behavior or aggressive behavior, the family will be called in for a conference with teachers and/or administrators. During this conference a plan of action will be developed so that everyone is able to off consistency for the child. Our goal is to work together to make every child successful. We may suggest that families seek additional service for assistance. If a parent is not supportive or cooperative with the efforts of the center, we maintain the right to terminate childcare.

**Child Abuse and Neglect**

 All staff are trained in the prevention, detection, and reporting of child abuse and neglect as required by state licensing. All staff are required by law to immediately report child abuse and neglect. Please be aware that we do report suspicious/unexplained marks that we see on children and/or any suspicious information relayed by the child. Once a report is made, Child Protective Services (CPS) is responsible for determining if the report is unfounded or indicated.

**Emergency Drills**

 The center conducts monthly drills to prepare children in the event of a true emergency. Drills are conducted for fire, severe weather and earthquake. Staff members are trained on lockdown procedures that have been developed by administration and local law enforcement officials.

 In the event of a true emergency, families will be notified by phone. Children can only be released to individuals on the emergency contact list.

**Full Non-discrimination Statement**

 In accordance with federal civil rights law and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, it’s agencies, offices and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expressions), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

 Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA’s Target Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

 To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.