

Parent Handbook

September 2007

The Children's Center of First Baptist Church

3630 Fairmount Boulevard
Shaker Heights, Ohio 44118
(216) 371-9394
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www.firstbaptistcleveland.org



We welcome you to our family at The Children's Center of First Baptist Church. The purpose of this handbook is to provide you, the parent/guardian, with as much information as possible about our daily operations and Center policies. We strive to ensure the highest quality of care for all children enrolled in our program. Our goal is to establish reciprocal communication between home and the Center, which is essential for quality childcare. While this document is lengthy, we ask you to please take the time to read it. There is a place on the registration form for your signature to confirm that you have read and understand the Parent Handbook and our policies.

If you have any questions concerning the content of the handbook please feel free to speak to the Director. Our doors are always open.

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OUR PHILOSOPHY

THE PHILOSOPHY & GOALS OF OUR CENTER

At the Center, we strongly believe in creating a positive relationship between home and the Center. Early childhood development specialists agree that personality, identity, and language are predominantly formed by the time your child reaches six years of age. A child's family is his or her primary learning source, and we see ourselves as a valuable resource for your child during these formative years. We believe our developmentally appropriate program supports imagination and a natural loving and nurturing environment for learning.

We are committed to the well being of your child's social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development. As we are committed to your children, we are also committed to the growth and development of our staff. We provide on-going training centered on many different early childhood topics and tuition assistance for staff who desire to further their education.

A beautiful stained glass window depicting St. Matthew can be found in the sanctuary of First Baptist Church. It portrays the scene from the scriptures of families bringing their children to Jesus and commending them to His care. As a ministry of First Baptist Church, The Children's Center is committed to the care and the development of young children and the support of their families. We believe children thrive best in an atmosphere built on trust, respect, and love. We base our curriculum on Christian values.

GENERAL INFORMATION

FINDING YOUR WAY AROUND THE CENTER

The Center's office is located on the first floor, near the Portico entrance. Classrooms for children 6 weeks to 30 months of age are located on the Center's first floor. Classrooms for children 30 months through 5 years old are located on the Center's second floor. The Large Muscle Room designed for preschoolers and toddlers is located in Fellowship Hall near the Portico entrance.

ORGANIZATION

The Children's Center is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing high quality center-based childcare services for families in our community. The Weekday Ministries Commission governs the Center. This Commission is composed of members and staff of First Baptist Church and determines the policies for the Center. The Center Director reports to the Senior Pastor and is responsible for the management of the Center's activities and hires the necessary staff to implement our mission.

CENTER ADDRESS, TELEPHONE & FAX NUMBER

The Children's Center of First Baptist Church

3630 Fairmount Blvd.

Shaker Heights, Ohio 44118

Center Telephone Number (216) 371-9394

Main Church Number (216) 932-7480

Fax (216) 932-8554

Website www.firstbaptistcleveland.org

SERVICES

The Children's Center provides care for children ages 6 weeks through 5 years of age. Spaces are filled on a first-come, first-serve basis. Church members receive priority for available spots. The Center operates year-round, with the exception of noted holidays and in the event of an emergency closing. Our open door policy is extended to all parents. The custodial parent/guardian of a child enrolled in the Center is provided a sensor key that allows unlimited access to the Center during the hours of operation. Please contact the Center to inform us of your visit.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The Center is open from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The Center closes promptly at 6:00 p.m. Parents arriving later than 6:00 p.m. will be charged a late fee of \$1.00 for every minute past 6:00 p.m.

HOLIDAYS

The Center will be closed on the following holidays:

New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, President's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Friday before Labor Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, The Day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve 12:00 (noon), Christmas Day and New Year's Eve 12:00 (noon).

Full tuition is applied to the weeks containing a holiday. Holidays that fall on a Sunday shall be observed on the following Monday; those that fall on a Saturday shall be observed on the preceding Friday.

CONTACTING THE CENTER

There are times when staff members are busy meeting the children's needs, and therefore are unable to answer the Center's telephones. In the event you cannot reach Center personnel by the fourth ring, the line automatically will roll over to our voice mail system. Feel free to leave a message for any of the Center's employees. In the event of an emergency, hang up and dial the main office number of First Baptist Church at (216) 932-7480. Please give your name and clearly state the nature of the emergency. Messages may also be sent by FAX to (216) 932-8554.

ENTERING & EXITING THE BUILDING

Parents may use either the Portico or Wheaton entrance to enter or exit the building.

SECURITY AT THE CENTER

Entrance is gained through the use of an electronic "key fob". An intercom is located just inside the Portico entrance for those who forget their key fob. Key fobs are not optional and require a \$15 per fob fee. Parent key fobs allow access to the Center every Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Parents who arrive later than 6:00 p.m. must use the intercom to gain access. Parents are asked to NOT permit anyone to enter the building with them when they use their fob. Parents are asked not to give their fob to another person for purposes of picking up a child. Alternate pick up persons should report to the office to be identified by a photo I.D.

GENERAL POLICIES

ENROLLING YOUR CHILD/ADMISSIONS

To enroll a child, parents pay a non-refundable, annual registration fee of \$50. An initial deposit equal to one week's tuition is held in a liability account and used for your child's last week of care. A two-week notice is required for a refund of the tuition deposit. An Enrollment Record, Certificate of Health and Immunization Record, and your child's Personal Record must be completed and returned upon first day of enrollment. All contracts and emergency forms must be completed in their entirety prior to admission. Parents will be given a Medical Statement to be completed by the child's doctor. Please return this within 30 days of the child's start date. **Medical Statements and enrollment forms must be updated annually.**

CHILDREN'S RECORDS/RELEASE OF RECORDS

The center will maintain enrollment, health, attendance, child history and parent teacher conference information on each child. Records are kept confidential, but are available for parent review at any time. We will only release child's records to another agency if we have written permission or a court order.

RELEASE OF CHILDREN/SUPERVISION

Children will be released **only** to those persons whose names are listed on the Enrollment Form. If siblings are picking up they must be at least 18 years of age. A photo I.D. is required. Written parental authorization is required in advance if a person not listed on the Enrollment Form is scheduled to pick up the child. In an emergency, a telephone call to the Center notifying us who will be picking up the child is acceptable. Staff members will ask that person for a photo I.D.

SUPERVISION OF INFANTS/TODDLERS/PRESCHOOLER

At no time will a child be left unattended. Staff will supervise children at all times, including nap time. If a child becomes ill, they may be isolated in a section of the room not in use, but within sight and hearing of a staff member.

CUSTODY AGREEMENT PROCEDURE

The Center respects that some families will have court ordered custody agreements. It is the responsibility of parents to be honest and mature in their efforts to maintain appropriate behavior in the presence of children. We expect parent's to comply with custody arrangements without Center assistance.

DROPPING OFF & PICKING UP YOUR CHILD/ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

Each child must be signed in and out every day. Please take your child to the appropriate room and be certain the staff member knows she/he has arrived. When picking up your child, please be certain the staff member acknowledges your arrival and the release of your child to you.

ABSENCE NOTIFICATION REQUEST

Please notify the Center if your child will be absent. If your child is ill, please let us know the nature of the illness and if the child's was diagnosed as contagious.

COMMUNICATIONS

We believe that communication between the Center and our parents is crucial. We recognize that full-time childcare is an adjustment for parents as well as for children. Parents are always welcome to visit their child's classroom and are encouraged to get to know their child's teachers. Parents are also encouraged to volunteer their time to help out with any Center activities. Please stop by the office to let us know your availability. We encourage parents to call as often as they need in order to feel secure about their child's care.

A daily report will be available to parents of infants through 2 year olds upon departure. Please note any other parent letters placed on your child's clipboard or in their cubby. Teachers of the older children send home a monthly newsletter accompanied by a monthly calendar. Upcoming important dates are highlighted and weekly themes are posted. Art projects and take home papers are placed in the children's bags or cubbies. The Center also publishes a monthly newsletter containing Center-wide events, dates and the lunch menu.

All concerns and suggestions can be made directly to the Center Administration. The goal is to encourage parents and teachers to communicate daily to resolve issues that may arise. We strongly encourage relationship building for the better of the Center.

FIELD TRIPS

The Center will not host trips to activities and events away from the Center. Our trips are planned for children 18 months of age and older as family outings, during select times in the school year.

BIRTHDAYS

We welcome the celebration of children's birthdays at school. If you care to bring a birthday snack for the celebration, please make arrangements with your child's teacher. Due to some severe allergies, all treats must be peanut/ tree nut free.

GUIDANCE (DISCIPLINE) POLICY

The guidance policy applies to all staff at the center.

Developmentally Appropriate Program

The basis of all of the child guidance at The Children's Center starts with factors that are outside the child. We meet the physical needs of children by providing nutritious meals and snacks, providing a soothing rest time, and providing outdoor play when weather permits. We have trained and caring staff members. We have plentiful equipment that is appropriate to the age of the children in each classroom. We plan age appropriate activities and programs that are stimulating and enjoyable. We are committed to enhancing self-esteem. Children learn self control when adults treat them with dignity. Teachers always attempt to "redirect activities" in order to circumvent inappropriate behavior and facilitate positive peer relationships. The following behaviors are taught early and reinforced constantly:

- Every child shall respect the body space of others.
- All children help at clean up time. Children need to clean up an activity before moving on to the next one.
- Children need to ask permission to leave the classroom. Children are always accompanied by a teacher upon leaving the classroom.
- Walking feet are required in the halls and classrooms.
- Guns or other war-like toys may not be brought to school or constructed.
- Polite words are encouraged when referring to one another. "Please" and "Thank You" are commonly used in communication.

General Guidance

When children have trouble getting along with classmates we utilize guidance strategies that help them develop pro-social behaviors. Mostly we use techniques like redirection, distraction, and ignoring. The consequences are natural and logical. For instance if a child purposely splashed water out of the sensory table, she will be directed to clean it up.

In our preschool rooms, much more time is spent talking about how others feel when we say or do things that are hurtful. As a Christian program, there is no other important tenet than "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." We use classroom conflicts as "teachable moments." We encourage children to express a range of emotions, but only in ways that do not harm others. We want feelings and interactions to be genuine. To that end, children are not forced to apologize. Learning how to peacefully resolve conflicts is a skill that will serve children well their entire life.

When there is a need for correction, a child's teacher(s) may:

1. Explain and discuss the appropriate behavior done in a quiet and gentle way.
2. Give the child choices. The child chooses to either practice appropriate behavior or move to another area.
3. Remove the child to a quiet, but not isolated area, if the behavior

persists.

4. Utilize bodily restraint only if a child is in danger or is endangering another child.
5. Call for a parent-teacher conference if the behavior persists. The teacher will suggest a plan that incorporates the parent's cooperation in the behavior modification plan.

Observation

Children will be assessed within 60 days of enrollment at The Children's Center using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ). Children will be assessed twice per year using the ASQ in preparation for parent-teacher conferences. The ASQ is a broad questionnaire that covers several developmental domains.

Parent Communication/Conferences

We believe that parents are the most important adults in the lives of their children. Meaningful conversations should happen between parents and teachers regularly to discuss both positive and challenging situations. Parent conferences will be conducted twice per year, but can be scheduled at any time as requested by the parent or teacher.

Challenging Behavior and Developing Concerns

At times, children present behaviors that become concerning to staff or parents. The Children's Center is committed to helping all children participate successfully in the program. We also want to cultivate a climate where getting outside help is accepted and encouraged. While we are experts in child care, we do not have the skills and expertise to deal with every situation. Outlined below is our strategy for dealing with challenging behavior such as aggression (biting, scratching, hitting) and tantrums as well as addressing concerns that are developmental or medical.

1. Level One: When teachers are concerned about a child, they will observe the child closely. Observation will include anecdotal notes, running records and checklists. Teachers will use this information to look for patterns or clues to help the child. The teacher will make adjustments while continuing to observe. Teachers will also discuss specific concerns with a child's parents. It is expected that parents and teachers will work cooperatively in this process to find root causes of behavior and developing strategies to help a child participate successfully in the program.
2. Level Two: Some behavior and challenges require additional input. The administrators may observe a particular child when a teacher or parent has concerns about that child. Sometimes, an outside observer such as the director or a consultant brings a more objective analysis, or may see factors in the environment or in staff behavior that appear to be influencing the child's behavior. Additional strategies and insights will be shared and a plan of action developed if necessary. Parents will be informed about

- this process and contacted for a meeting to exchange observations and information.
3. Level Three: When teachers and administrators have not been successful in changing behavior, parents and center personnel will meet to develop a written plan for intervention. This plan will include an overview of the problematic behavior, the changes that are desired, an intervention plan and a timeline. For some concerns this plan may include a requirement for professional intervention.
 4. Level Four: When parents do not follow up on a written plan or when we are unable to help a child participate successfully in our program, a family may be asked to find care outside the center. Families will be asked to leave immediately if a child poses a serious threat to the well-being of other children or staff.

Biting

The Children's Center recognizes that biting is, unfortunately, not unexpected when toddlers are in group care. We are always upset when children are bitten in our program, and we recognize how upsetting it is for parents. While we feel that biting is never the right things for toddlers to do, we know that they bite for variety of reasons. Most of these reasons are not related to behavior problems. Our program, then, does not focus on punishment for biting, but on effective techniques that address the specific reason for the biting. When biting occurs, we have three main responses:

1. Care for and help the child who was bitten.
2. Help the child who bit learn other behavior.
3. Examine our program and practices to stop the biting.

Our teachers express strong disapproval of biting. They work to keep children safe and to help the child who bit learn different, more appropriate behavior. We do not and will not use any response that harms a child or is known to be ineffective.

We give immediate attention and, if necessary, first aid to children who are bitten. We offer to put ice on the bite if the child is willing. If the skin is broken, we clean the wound with soap and water.

Biting is always documented on an incident report form. When children bite, their parents are informed personally and privately the same day and we document it on an incident report. When children are bitten, their parents are informed personally that day and given an incident report. One copy is given to parents, and the other copy is kept in the child's file. We keep the name of the child who bit confidential. This is to avoid labeling and to give our teachers the opportunity to use their time and energy to work on stopping the biting.

When there are episodes of ongoing biting with a particular child, the parents and staff develop a plan of specific strategies, techniques, and timelines to address it. This plan (outlined above) may include professional intervention, suspension or temporary disenrollment (Legg, 1993; Banks and Yi, 2004).

Toddler caregivers receive training on biting. In addition we have current resources available on biting available for staff and parents. We encourage parents to bring their concerns and frustrations directly to the teachers.

INCIDENT/INJURY REPORTS

The Center staff will complete an incident/injury report when your child is injured, has an accident, or requires emergency transportation. Parents/guardians or the person picking up will be asked to sign the report and will be given a copy of the report. A copy will be kept on file in the office.

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING

All staff of the Center are required to complete a course in the recognition and reporting of child abuse. Staff will, as required by law, report any suspected abuse or neglect to the Child Abuse Hotline (216) 696-KIDS.

NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY

Admissions, the provision of services, and referrals of clients shall be made without regard to race, color, religious creed, disability (no wheelchair access), ancestry, national origin, age or sex.

SPECIAL NEEDS

Due to the number of stairways in our building, we are unable to provide care for children in wheelchairs or on crutches. We do our best to accommodate children who are hard of hearing, developmentally delayed, requiring special diets, etc. Parents need to provide detailed information authorized by a licensed physician regarding their child's special needs at the time of registration. This information can help us determine if we are able to provide quality care for him.

PARENT/STAFF/CHURCH RELATIONS

The Children's Center strongly discourages its employees from providing any private childcare services either on Center property or away from the Center. While we cannot prohibit our employees from engaging in such outside activities, First Baptist Church of Greater Cleveland will not be responsible for any acts or omissions of a First Baptist Church employee while providing such services.

CENTER TERMINATION

We consider it a privilege to attend The Children's Center. We reserve the right to terminate child care services for reasons such as, but not limited to: accounts two-weeks past due, our inability to adequately care for a child, or offensive parent behavior. The Director of the Center may give little or no notice based on the best interest for the overall well-being of the Center and other children.

FINANCIAL POLICIES

TUITION & FEES

The administrative staff, as directed by the Weekday Ministries Commission of First Baptist Church, establishes fees. Tuition rates are generally set at the beginning of the school year, but may be changed at other times. There is typically a 3-5% annual tuition increase. Statements will be rewritten to reflect the current rate set at that time. Parents are required to annually renew forms, registration fees, and update medical forms. Tuition is billed weekly. All payments must be made **in advance of services provided**. Childcare will be discontinued for non-payment of tuition. The tax identification number will be made available for income tax reporting. Checks should be made payable to FBCCC.

REGISTRATION

A \$50.00 non-refundable fee is paid at the time of registration. A \$50.00 annual re-registration fee is due at the beginning of each school year.

INITIAL DEPOSIT

One week's tuition is required prior to enrolling at the Center, to be held and credited toward the last week of service. This deposit will be returned upon withdrawal from the Center with a two week written notice.

SIBLING DISCOUNTS

When families have more than one child enrolled in the Center, a 10% sibling discount is offered towards the tuition of the oldest full-time, full-tuition sibling enrolled. A 10% discount is offered to members of First Baptist Church.

SICK WEEK CREDIT

If your child is unable to attend the Center for 5 consecutive days due to illness, a one time 50% discount will be offered for that week's tuition when you provide us with a written diagnosis from a licensed physician.

VACATION CREDIT

The Center offers a 50% discount for families taking two consecutive weeks or more during the year. Parents are responsible for their regular weekly tuition rate with the discount. Parents must notify the Center office prior to the vacation time in order to receive the discount.

Vacations that are less than two weeks must still pay the full tuition rate.

LATE FEES

Any parent who picks up a child later than 6:00 p.m. pays a fee of \$1.00 for every minute past closing to the office.

NSF CHECK FEE

A fee of \$20.00 will be charged to your account for any check returned for non-sufficient funds. After two returned checks, the Center reserves the right to require payments by cash or money order.

WITHDRAWAL NOTICE

Parents are expected to give written notice to the Director **TWO WEEKS** prior to the desired date of withdrawal. This is necessary so that the administration has adequate time to fill the vacated spot. Failure to provide notice means a forfeiture of deposits.

ARREARS

Payments for childcare services are to be paid **IN ADVANCE** of services rendered. Payments are due on the Friday prior to the next week of childcare services. Accounts in arrears will be frozen and admission to the Center will be restricted until the account is settled with the Center Bookkeeper. If a financial need should arise, please submit a letter to the Center Director, who will forward it to the Weekday Ministries Commission Board for consideration. Your request will be held in confidence.

PARENT REFERRAL PROGRAM

We believe your experience in our Center will be a positive one. As a parent, you may be asked to recommend a childcare program to others. We show our appreciation to parents for referrals to our Center. A tuition credit of \$50.00 will be posted to your child's account for every full-time child enrolled.

FOOD AND NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION

FOOD FROM HOME (12 month and up)

The Center requests that parents refrain from bringing food from home. Many children have food allergies and sensitivities that are triggered by eggs, wheat, dairy, nuts, etc.

BREAKFAST/SNACK

The Center will provide a breakfast snack for children beginning at 12 months of age. The breakfast snack is served daily at 8:30 a.m. Breakfast items may include toast, English muffin, bagel, cereal, French toast, or waffles. Juice or milk is also provided. Please feed your child at home if you plan to arrive later than 9:00 a.m.

SNACKS

Children younger than 3 years old are given a morning snack between 10:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. An afternoon snack is served after rest time (around 3:00 p.m.).

INFANT NUTRITION

Parents of children 6 weeks to 18 months of age provide all necessary formula, bottles and baby food for their children. Once children are on table food they are welcome to eat from our regular menu. Please inform the teachers and Chef Faith in writing of specific foods your child can and cannot eat. We are happy to provide you with helpful information about infant feeding and county-mandated nutritional requirements.

INFANT, TODDLER & PRESCHOOL NUTRITION (revised 2/01/04)

The Children's Center will provide lunch for older infants through preschool years. We are required to follow the State of Ohio nutritional guidelines for children. The Center has a fully licensed kitchen and dining area where the older toddlers (2 - 5 years) through preschool eat. The children eat in a self serve family style way. This encourages self help skills and helps children learn manners. Talk to our chef about your child's special dietary needs. We will strive to accommodate reasonable requests. (Ohio State guidelines can be requested from the Center office).

The following recommended servings will be offered daily to your child in his lunch according to the USDA standards.

1 serving of Dairy (milk is provided by the Center)

1 serving of Grain

1 serving of Protein

1 serving of Fruit, and 1 serving of Vegetable or

2 servings of a Fruit or Vegetable

The appropriate serving sizes per age group are as follows:

		Children 1-3 years	Children 4-6 years
Dairy Group	Milk *	½ cup	¾ cup
	Cheese	½ ounce	¾ ounce
Grain Group	Bread	½ slice	½ slice
	Pasta	¼ cup	¼ cup
	Crackers	2-3 small	2-3 small
	Muffin	½ regular	½ regular
	Bagel	½ regular	½ regular
Protein Group	Meats	1 ounce	1.5 ounces
	Cheese **	1 ounce	1.5 ounces
	Egg	1 medium	1 large
	Peanut Butter	2 tbsp.	3 tbsp.
	Cooked Beans	½ cup	¾ cup
	Cottage Cheese	¼ cup	½ cup

* The Center will provide milk at lunch.

** Cream cheese is not a protein

***These are state guidelines the Center must follow.** A child will **never** be forced to eat anything he does not care for, however all items must be presented on their plates.

EDUCATION PROGRAM

CURRICULUM

Since children cannot be “taught” in the traditional sense as adults are taught, our teachers allow the students the freedom to discover answers through experimenting, exploring and experiencing the world around them. Learning centers and curriculum are carefully designed to allow the children to develop at their own pace. The Children’s Center has adopted *The Creative Curriculum* for use in planning your child’s day. Learning about shapes, colors, numbers, letters, and oneself is incorporated into daily activities. As the children get older, more time is spent on readiness activities. Because preschool children learn by doing, activities focus on “hands-on involvement.” For example, rather than talking to a group of children about the concept of measurement, we might bake a cake! By reading the monthly calendars and checking out the bulletin boards and walls, parents can easily determine what their child is learning and how they can reinforce these concepts at home.

The goals we have in mind when we plan our activities include:

- Offering children positive experiences in a classroom setting; i.e., providing opportunities for learning in a group, taking turns, sharing classroom materials and following directions.
- Encouraging children in self-expression with adults and in peer groups.
- Providing children with a variety of learning experiences through art, music, language, science, and dramatic play.
- Guiding children in the discovery of their gifts and allowing them the joy of trying something new.

BIBLE STORIES & SONGS

Our Center is an extension of the ministry of First Baptist Church and Christian Education is part of our developmentally appropriate curriculum. The children are introduced to Bible stories, songs, flannel board activities, and art projects. The student body of our Center is diverse; therefore, the lessons will be presented in a non-threatening format.

GENERAL ROUTINE & DAILY SCHEDULE (PRESCHOOL)

7:00-8:45	Arrival Time, Breakfast Snack
9:00-12:00	Classroom Time, Enrichments, Gross Motor
12:00-1:00	Lunch Time
1:00-3:00	Nap/Rest Time
3:00-5:30	Snack Time, Afternoon Activity Time, Gross Motor, Playground
5:30-6:00	Free Time, Tabletop Activities, Dismissal

- Each classroom has a posted schedule of their specific daily events.
- Please make a concerted effort to have your child in his classroom by 9:00a.m. so they may fully benefit from the program.

GENERAL ROUTINE & DAILY SCHEDULE (TODDLER)

- 7:00-8:45 Arrival Time, Breakfast Snack
 - 9:00-12:00 Classroom Time, Enrichments, Gross Motor, Diaper Changes
 - 12:00-1:00 Lunch Time, Diaper Changes
 - 1:00-3:00 Nap/Rest Time
 - 3:00-5:30 Snack Time, Afternoon Activity Time, Gross Motor, Playground, Diaper Change
 - 5:30-6:00 Free Time, Tabletop Activities, Diaper Change, Dismissal
- Each classroom has a posted schedule of their specific daily events.
 - Please make a concerted effort to have your child in his classroom by 9:00a.m. so they may fully benefit from the program.

GENERAL ROUTINE & DAILY SCHEDULE (INFANT)

- 7:00-8:45 Arrival Time
- 9:00-12:00 Classroom Time, Enrichments, Gross Motor, Diaper Changes
- 12:00-1:00 Diaper Changes
- 1:00-3:00 Diaper Changes, Activities, Outdoor/Indoor Time
- 3:00-5:30 Afternoon Activity Time, Gross Motor, Playground, Diaper Change
- 5:30-6:00 Activities, Diaper Change, Dismissal

*Each child will have their own schedule based on meeting their needs for sleep, diaper changes, feeding and play. The teachers will work with parents to develop a typical schedule.

Classroom schedules vary on time spent on activities according to the developmental needs of the age group, but all morning schedules include each of the following:

CHILD INITIATED PLAY: Allows each child opportunities to choose his favorite activity and his own playgroup in clearly marked Centers. Centers include dramatic play, blocks, art, manipulative, sensory play, quiet reading, science and listening.

GROUP TIME OR CIRCLE TIME: Includes story time, show and tell, morning greetings, and calendar and weather charting. Children also are introduced to songs and finger plays, which are fundamental for language and social development.

ACTIVE PLAY TIME: Provides as many opportunities for active play as possible. The Large Muscle Room is the designated area where the children enjoy both free choice and structured gross motor activities. Children delight in daily outside time unless inclement weather prohibits them from venturing there. **State licensing requires us to take the children outside daily, unless weather is inclement.** Classrooms schedule frequent neighborhood walks. Parents are required to sign a

Routine Walking Permission Slip annually, which grants us permission for such adventures. Water play with sprinklers is part of summer activities.

ENRICHMENTS: Children explore their artistic, spiritual, and creative sides. Enrichments include Spanish, Chapel, Music, and Art. The Center values these special opportune times and incorporates them into the children's weekly schedule as part of our offered curriculum. Music is provided for all children. Art enrichment begins in the 12 month old classroom. Chapel is for children 2 and up and Spanish is for children 2 ½ years and older.

POTTY TRAINING

It is the Center's goal to ensure that each toddler successfully masters this developmental milestone. Teachers work with the parents and individualize this process to suit the child's needs. There are certain developmental signs that may help you determine whether or not your child is ready to begin the potty training process.

- The child should be able to communicate his needs and follow a one-two direction.
- The child should be able to pull up and pull down his clothing.
- The child openly expresses his interest in the potty.
- Age is a variant factor; however it is the Center's policy to introduce potty training at the age of 24 months as children begin to sense urination.

When you are ready to begin this process, please speak with your child's teachers in order to ensure consistency between home and school.

EVALUATIONS & PARENT CONFERENCES

Teachers keep in close communication with parents to let them know how their child is adapting to his classroom and our Center. The teachers complete an Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) in preparation for conferences. All parents receive a written report of their child's progress. Teachers schedule an annual fall conference to discuss your child's progress. Parents are welcome to request a conference at anytime.

TRANSITIONING/ADJUSTING TO A NEW ENVIRONMENT

New experiences can sometimes be very tiring or over-stimulating. Each child is unique in adjusting to new situations. The following are some pointers that may help you during this time. This is helpful also when children transition from classroom to classroom

- Transition time allows your child the opportunity to adjust to his new surroundings. Plan to spend some time in the classroom with your child before the first day of attendance.
- Talk with your child positively about the Center and things he will be doing here.
- If you anticipate a problem in separation, discuss this with the staff and

decide on a procedure to follow in advance. We suggest that after the necessary signing in and exchange of greetings, say to your child, "Goodbye -- I will pick you up later. I know you will have a good day," and then leave the building.

- If new experiences have upset your child in the past, please discuss this with your child's teachers. We can help ease his fears through play, art, and sympathetic conversation. Your child's overall well being is paramount to us.
- Please make sure that you read the transition notice for classroom changes. Please sign and return this form to the Center Office.

HEALTH RELATED POLICIES

Keeping children and staff healthy is a primary goal of the Center. Staff are trained in First Aid, Communicable Disease and CPR and are prepared to deal with non-emergencies. In the event of an emergency, the Shaker Heights Police Department, 9-1-1, will be called for ambulance service. When emergency care is needed for a child, the parents or the emergency contact person will be contacted as soon as possible. A staff member will accompany the child to the site of emergency care and will remain with the child until a parent and/or their designee assumes responsibility for the child's care. Parents are responsible for payment of all emergency transportation.

ANNUAL PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS & IMMUNIZATIONS

When a child is registered at a state-licensed agency such as ours, the parent must obtain a current health appraisal from their child's doctor within 30 days of admission to the Center. A complete listing of all immunizations must be listed on this form. It is the parent's responsibility to update the health forms annually. **IN ORDER TO REMAIN IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE STATE LAW, ALL CHILDREN MUST HAVE ACURRENT MEDICAL RECORD.**

MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

In order to minimize transmission of illness, the following policies have been developed by the state as a way to protect the health of all children enrolled. Although unfortunate, a child may become ill at the Center. We encourage parents to develop alternate sick care arrangements as a back up plan. If your child becomes ill and shows symptoms of fever, vomiting, listlessness, excess coughing, etc., you will be contacted to pick up your child within the hour. A communicable disease chart designed by the Department of Health is posted in the first floor hallway. These guidelines allow minimal interpretation by staff. If your child exhibits any of the specific symptoms listed in these guidelines, we are required by law to contact you immediately and request that you make arrangements to pick up your child within the hour. The following precautions shall be taken for children suspected of having a communicable disease.

1. The Center shall immediately notify the parent of the child's condition when a child has been observed with signs and symptoms of illness.
2. A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness shall be immediately isolated in the Center office and discharged to his parent or guardian:
 - Diarrhea (abnormally loose stool), two or more times.
 - Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or a whooping sound.
 - Vomiting
 - Difficult or rapid breathing.
 - Yellowish skin or eyes.
 - Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye).
 - Temperature of 100 degrees F. taken by the auxiliary or ear method, along with a combination of the other symptoms listed.
 - Untreated infected skin patch(s).
 - Unusually dark urine and/or white-gray stool.
 - Stiff neck.

Any child sent home from the Center with any of the above symptoms may not return until:

- The child has been seen by a physician and has been diagnosed and treated as required by Ohio law; or
- The child is symptom free for 24 hours; or
- The child has been seen by a physician, who has determined that the child's illness is not contagious and has verified this in writing for the Center's records; and
- The child is able to fully participate in regularly scheduled activities, such as defined in this handbook.

If there is an outbreak of illness or communicable disease in a classroom, i.e. Pink Eye, Strep Throat, Chicken Pox, an EXPOSURE NOTICE will be posted on the door of the specific room. If two or more outbreaks are reported, EXPOSURE NOTICES will be posted on the door of each entry level.

A child experiencing minor cold symptoms will be allowed to stay in the Center provided he is not exhibiting any of the above symptoms. The moderately ill child will be monitored for worsening conditions throughout the day.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

Prescription and over-the-counter medication (with the exception of topical ointments and lotions) shall be administered by a person trained in medication administration. These medications are to be stored in the Center office. Our strong preference is to have medications administered at home and not at the Center. If it is necessary for the Center to administer medication we prefer that this be done at noon. The following criteria must also be met per state licensing, 5101:2-12-31:

1. **Prescription Medication, Food Supplements and Modified Diets:** The Center shall secure and follow written instructions of a licensed physician, an advanced practice nurse certified to prescribe medication, or a licensed dentist that are detailed on a medical form. The Center shall also secure written instructions from the parent or guardian on the form.
2. A prescription label also serves as written instructions for medications and food supplements as long as the following are met:
 - a. The label contains the child's full name, a current date (within the last 12 months), the exact dosage to be given and the means of administration;
 - b. The prescription label is attached to the original container.
3. **Non-Prescription Medication:** Only fever reducing medications that do not contain aspirin or cough or cold medications that do not contain codeine may be administered by the Center without written instructions from a licensed physician, if the following are met:
 - a. The Center secures and follows written instructions from the parent or guardian on the prescribed form provided by the Center. These instructions do not exceed manufacturer's dosages.
 - b. Medication is in the original container with the original label attached. The label must specify appropriate dosages based on the child's age or weight.
 - c. The full name of the child, who is to receive medication, is printed on the container.
 - d. The Center administers the medication for no more than three consecutive days at one time.
 - e. When directions indicate "Ask your doctor" for your child's age or weight, a physician's authorization is required.
4. **Non-Prescription Topical Products or Lotions:** The Center may apply non-prescription topical products or lotions if the following are met:
 - a. The Center shall secure written instructions from the parent or guardian on the prescribed form provided by the Center. The form shall be valid for no longer than twelve months.
 - b. The Center shall follow manufacturer's guidelines regarding application.
 - c. When used for skin irritations, such as diaper rash, the topical product shall be applied by the Center for no longer than fourteen consecutive days.

SAFETY RELATED TOPICS

GENERAL

- No child will be left alone unsupervised.
- Medical, dental, fire and weather emergency plans are posted in each classroom.
- Telephones are available on each floor and provide direct access to the office via an intercom system.
- Monthly fire drills are scheduled and executed.
- Staff members who are trained in First Aid, Communicable Disease and CPR are available at all times.
- No aerosol sprays are used in the presence of children.
- All building doors are locked from the outside. All interior doors require security key access.

WATER SAFETY

- State required staff/ child ratios will be maintained at all times.
- Children will be supervised at all times.
- Wading pools will be drained and cleaned daily.
- Parent permission slip required in order for children to participate

OUTDOOR SAFETY

- State required staff/ child ratios will be maintained at all times.
- Children will be supervised at all times.
- Children will only be released to appropriate persons

EMERGENCY CONTACT & PICK-UP

We **MUST** be able to reach a responsible adult who is available to pick up your child at anytime. This person(s) must live in the Cleveland area within 45 miles of the Center. If a non-acute emergency occurs, we will contact you immediately and your child will need to be picked up within an hour. Emergency contact and pick up information must be updated annually. If your personal data changes beforehand, please notify the office.

PARENT ROSTER

A parent roster is developed as required by state law and is available for your child's classroom by request only from the Center office. If you do not wish to have your name on the list, you may sign the waiver on the Enrollment Form.

EMERGENCY EVACUATIONS

In order to ensure the children and staff can exit the building quickly, we schedule practice fire drills once a month at various times. Evacuation routes are posted in each classroom. ***Please read General Emergency or Severe Emergency section for further details.**

Letter to the Parents

This statement comes in response to the armed conflict in Iraq and how the ensuring apprehension and anxiety around this situation can affect the Center and surrounding communities. Although this Center has had no information regarding threats, we are addressing any possibilities which may occur. The teachers have been provided information they need to make good personal decisions about safety and security. This addition to the Parent Handbook will address some emergency preparedness for parents and teachers.

Emergency Procedures (revised 1/04)

The Center has devised several procedures to follow in the event that an emergency would occur while a child is in the Center's care. Please familiarize yourself with the following procedures in the event that any of the following should occur.

EMERGENCY CLOSING

The Center will be closed in the event of extreme weather or emergency situations such as loss of water or heat. Local television stations regularly list all school closings during their early morning news broadcasts. It is the parent's responsibility to find alternative childcare in the event of non-scheduled emergency closings. Because the Center must continue to pay its staff, no tuition credit will be given for emergency closings.

Evacuation

In the event that the Center has to be evacuated, a sign will be posted on both door locations (**Portico and Wheaton**), it will show the location and time that we were evacuated. The Center has secured the **Canterbury School** and **Beaumont High school** as our location.

Weather Emergency

In the event of **Water or Flood**; the Center will secure vital information on each child and shut off all electrical equipment. We will wait for instructions from the Department of Public Services. All children will be moved to the second floor and await immediate help from the DPS or until safe to leave the building.

In the event of a **Tornado**, the Center will evacuate all classrooms (if time allows) and relocate to the downstairs Muscle Room. If time will not allow for evacuation, classrooms will secure a place in the Center hallways with cover. All vital information will be secured on each child.

In the event of an **Earthquake**, classrooms will seek shelter under equipment in their classroom (infants under flipped cribs and toddlers and preschoolers under tables). The following items will be kept with us: Flashlight, Radio, Cellular telephone, and First Aid Kit.

Extreme Situations

In the event of **civil disturbance** (this may include riots, demonstrations, threatening individuals, or assemblies that have become disruptive) the Center will call 9-1-1. Each classroom is also equipped with an intercom if unable to use telephone services. This intercom can be used to notify the Center office of a problem. Classrooms will lock their doors. The Center Office will secure all vital information and files. We will continue activities and routines as normal as possible. If disturbance is outside, teachers and children will stay away from doors and windows. Parents will be notified as soon as safe to do so.

In the event of **Suspicious Package/Object**, which is defined as foreign mail, air mail, and special deliveries, excessive postage, handwritten or poorly typed addresses, misspellings or common words, oily stains or discolorations, excessive weight, lopsided envelopes, wires protruding, excessive tape, no return address, or visual distractions the Center will not touch, tamper, or move the device. We will immediately call 9-1-1, and keep children in their classrooms away from the device. The area where the package or device is located will be evacuated for safety.

In the event of a **Bomb Threat** the Center will immediately contact 9-1-1 and take necessary steps from the authorities to ensure safety of children and teachers. We will evacuate and relocate to the above mentioned places (Canterbury or Beaumont).

Electrical or Environmental Situations

In the event of a **Power Outage**, the Center will notify local maintenance for minor problems. For major power outage the Utilities department will be contacted. The children will be kept calm and remain in individual classrooms. Flashlights and batteries are kept on the premises children will remain in classrooms until safe to evacuate building.

In the event of a **Fire** all employees and children will evacuate the building. Each classroom will have vital information about the children in their classrooms. Maps are posted in the classroom for proper evacuation procedures. Children and employees will remain outside of the building until clearance from the proper authorities. If unable to reenter the building Center will leave premises to assigned location, and begin immediate action to contact parents and emergency news and radio broadcasts.

In the event of a **Radioactive Spill, Chemical Spill, or Biological Spills**, the Center will alert all persons of the immediate danger. We will call 9-1-1 and request assistance as soon as possible. Evacuate children from any areas that have been affected by either spill. Children and teachers will return to normal activity after clearance from proper authorities. In the case of evacuation, parents will be notified about the evacuation through Phone Tree services, and assigned location will be posted on Center doors (Wheaton and Portico).

GENERAL EMERGENCY INCIDENT REPORTS

In the event of a general emergency, the Center will prepare an incident report detailing the incident or injury. The Center will notify parents depending on the severity of the incident or injury. If the incident/injury is not severe the parent/guardian will receive a written incident report the day of the incident. This form will require the signature of the teacher, administrator, parent/guardian, or person picking up the child.

In the event that there is a serious incident/injury an incident/injury report will be prepared for the parent/guardian. The signatures required are the teachers, administrator, and parent/guardian. If required the EMS will be summoned and child along with administrator will be transported to the nearest hospital. The other case would be to call parents and await their arrival at the Center. The Center will notify licensing of the incident/injury along with the incident/injury report.

STATE MANDATED GROUP SIZE & TEACHER/ CHILD RATIOS

AGE	MINIMUM RATIO	MAXIMUM SIZE
Birth – 12 months	1:5, 2:12	Group 12
12 – 18 months	1:6, 2:12	Group 12
18 – 30 months	1:7	Group 14
30 – 36 months	1:8	Group 16
3 years	1:12	Group 24
4 years	1:14	Group 28
5 years	1:14	Group 28
K/School Age	1:18	Group 36