

Family Handbook

Shaniya Holloway

WELCOME

Dear family,

This handbook will guide you with important information about Jacob's Ladder CLC Inc., which will be given to the parents for reference throughout the year.

Philosophy of Early Childhood Education

We believe each child is unique and needs a secure, caring, and stimulating atmosphere to grow and mature emotionally, intellectually, physically, and socially. Children need the ability to learn at their own pace with the encouragement of our educators. The teacher's role is to guide, providing access to information rather than acting as the primary source of information; the teacher will assist students' search for knowledge as they learn to find answers to their questions.

Mission:

Our goal is to help our children exceed and excel into tomorrow's leaders by assisting them to learn in all academic areas and providing them with a solid foundation. Children need to be introduced to the bible to understand Christianity and how education in and of itself will do nothing to change a child's or society's heart. Our children will grow in Christ while having an understanding of their purpose.
Educating children at a young age is crucial in their development; they will be provided a great start to a meaningful, blessed, and secure life.

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me" Matthew 19:14

Thank you for choosing **Jacob's Ladder Christian Learning Center**. We look forward to providing your child with a caring and enriching environment.

Sincerely,

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Jacob's Ladder Christian Learning Center

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ABOUT US

Certification

We are a DPW-licensed facility, Better Kid Care & Keystone Stars participants.

Hours of Operation

Monday-Friday, 6 am-8 pm (depending on location), allowing each Family 10 hours of full-time and 5 hours of part-time care.

Holidays

We are closed for certain holidays:

NEW YEAR'S DAY- CLOSED
MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY- CLOSED
PRESIDENT'S DAY- CLOSED
GOOD FRIDAY-CLOSED
MEMORIAL DAY- CLOSED
JUNETEENTH- CLOSED
INDEPENDENCE DAY-CLOSED
LABOR DAY-CLOSED
COLUMBUS DAY- CLOSED
THANKSGIVING DAY, THE DAY AFTER THANKSGIVING.
CHRISTMAS DAY, THE DAY AFTER CHRISTMAS CLOSED,
(WE MAY CLOSE HALF OF THE WEEK OR THE ENTIRE WEEK FOR CHRISTMAS, DEPENDING UPON THE YEAR.)

If we are open, there will be early closings on:

CHRISTMAS EVE- AT 3 PM
NEW YEAR'S EVE- AT 3 PM

Definition of Family

In this handbook, we refer to family as a parent, legal guardian, sponsor, or anyone else who provides for the well-being, best interest, and responsibility of the child in our care.

Admission & Enrollment

Each family must complete all admission and enrollment forms, and an enrollment fee of 50.00 per child is paid before your enrollment application is processed. Please inform us of payment arrangements needed before the child's first day of attendance.

Our facility admits children from 6 weeks to 12 years of age based on availability and openings.

Our process for introducing children to our program is that each family needs to have entry interviews, which consist of the parent(s) and all enrolling children visiting the center at least 24 hours before enrollment begins. At this time, each child can meet their classmates, their teacher, and other staff throughout the center. The parent will also be able to complete any paperwork needed for the children and pay any fees due for childcare.

Children will be enrolled regardless of race, culture, sex, religion, national origin, or disability. We do not discriminate based on unique needs as long as Jacobs Ladder can provide a safe, supportive environment.

Suppose your child has an identified particular need or (IEP). In that case, we will need written notification from a doctor/ program specialist regarding the needs and what is required to provide this child with quality childcare. If any outside services are needed, we will need that information documented in the child's file.

Inclusion

Jacob's Ladder Christian Learning Center believes children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance, and belonging in child care. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program based on their capabilities and needs.

Non-Discrimination

At **Jacob's Ladder Christian Learning Center,** equal educational opportunities are available for all children, without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, parent/provider political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation or special needs, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state or local laws. Educational programs are designed to meet the varying needs of all students.

Confidentiality

Unless we receive your written consent, information regarding your child will not be released except for what our regulatory and partnering agencies require. All records concerning children in our program are confidential.

Staff Qualifications

Jacobs Ladder Teachers are hired in compliance with the state requirements and qualifications as a base minimum. Typical staff certifications are as follows:

Position Title	Education/Certification	Experience
Lead Teacher	*Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education*	*Two years*
Assistant Teacher	*Child Development Associate*	*One year*
Floater/Aide	*High school Diploma/ GED/Certification*	

All staff participate in an orientation class and ongoing training in child growth and development, healthy and safe environments, developmentally appropriate practices, guidance, family relationships, cultural and individual diversity, and professionalism.

We strongly discourage families from entering employment arrangements with staff (i.e., babysitting). Any arrangement between families and caregivers outside our programs and services is private, not connected to or sanctioned by **Jacob's Ladder Christian Learning Center. *If extra care is needed, please stop by the office for a discounted price.***

Child-to-Staff Ratios

Children are supervised at all times. All caregivers receive scheduled breaks, which reduce fatigue and help ensure alertness.

We maintain the following standards for child-to-staff ratios:

Age	Child to Staff	Maximum Group Size
0-12 months	4 to 1	8
1-2 year olds	6 to 1	12
3-5 year olds	10 to 1	20
6-12 year olds	12 to 1	12

Communication & Family Partnership

Daily Communications: Daily notes from center staff will inform you about your child's activities and experiences at the center. Notes will be placed in your family mailbox at the end of the day. This mainly applies to children under one unless the teacher feels it is necessary.

Bulletin Boards: Located throughout the center, bulletin boards provide center news, upcoming events, faculty changes, holiday closing dates, announcements, etc.

Newsletters: Monthly newsletters provide center news, events, announcements, etc. These newsletters are available through email only every month.

Email: We encourage you to provide an email address that you use daily so that we may send you announcements, event invitations, newsletters and general updates.

Parent Resource box: Our parent resource box provides a learning environment for parents to share opinions, ideas, and experiences and increase their understanding of learning and development.

Family Visits/Field Trips: Family participation is encouraged. Visit our classrooms, volunteer, go on a field trip, or eat a meal with your child. Signing in is required for the safety and protection of our children. Each visitor must wear a visitor's badge while on-premises and sign out upon leaving.

Family Involvement:

Jacob's Ladder CLC Inc. recognizes the paramount significance of providing an enriching early educational experience for both children and their parents. Consequently, our program is committed to fostering active parental involvement in their children's early learning experiences. We intend to establish parent association groups that will collaborate closely with our administrative team. We will work hand-in-hand with parents, encouraging them to attend parent meetings, teacher conferences, class events, accompany as chaperones on field trips, and volunteer within their child's class.

We will also strive to motivate parents to participate in our classroom activities during community and career days, and share special holiday traditions that may be unfamiliar to the children. Furthermore, our program will conduct quarterly meetings with parents to provide updates on their child's learning progress and facilitate discussions with their child's teacher regarding any issues or concerns. In between these meetings, our staff will maintain regular communication with parents through emails, phone calls, letters, and the 'My Procare' app,

ensuring they are kept informed about their child's daily progress in the classroom. Progress notes will be sent home quarterly, and we will gladly accept feedback, constructive criticism, or suggestions to help enhance the quality of our program. We also encourage you to utilize our suggestion box for any anonymous concerns or suggestions regarding our program.

Family Conferences

PURPOSE:

- To provide an opportunity for staff and caregivers to discuss each child's growth and development, and plan an individualized education program to meet the child's physical, intellectual and social/emotional strengths and needs.
- To include caregivers as the primary educators of their children in the initial planning, ongoing development and review of their child's education plan.
- To discuss and develop plans to complete required screenings or tasks related to promoting strong child and family growth.
- To provide and gather information about the child's strengths and goals for subsequent educational settings and plan activities for transition purposes.

PROCEDURE:

Conferences will occur at least 2 times per program year. A third conference may be offered as needed. Staff will use the Caregiver/Staff Conference Form to document each meeting. Caregiver/Staff Conference Forms will be completed based on documented ongoing observations of the child completed by the teaching team during the months prior to the scheduled conference.

In addition, staff may also use child work samples to support their observations and Conference writes up. For newly enrolled children the initial screening process and 1st Family conference will take place within the first 45 days of enrollment. Referrals will be made immediately for any child whose screens are of concern. All teaching staff should share any screening results of concern with the Administrative Team before meeting with the child's family. The Administrative team and the staff member who completed the screening will devise a referral plan at that time, prior to discussing the results with the family. This is also the procedure, if concerns are raised about the child's development throughout the program year.

CURRICULA & LEARNING

Learning Environment

We provide a rich learning environment with curricula that are developmentally appropriate to the specific ages in each classroom. Our flexible day routine allows children to advance at their own pace. We strongly believe that learning happens through education & play. Learning and exploring are hands-on and are facilitated through interest areas. Our program is designed to enhance children's development in the following areas: creativity, self-expression, decision-making, problem-solving, responsibility, independence, reasoning, and biblical teachings. We encourage openness to what is different from us and the ability to work and play with others. Copies of daily schedules are posted in each classroom.

Children of a different belief other than Christianity are not forced to learn about the bible; other activities will be provided*

Outings & Field Trips

Weather permitting, we conduct supervised walking trips around the neighborhood. Children are accounted for at all times. A permission statement for participation in walking trips is included in the enrollment package.

Occasionally, there will be supervised field trips, and we encourage you to join your child. *The child's family must sign Permission Slips for each trip*.

For field trips, please dress your child appropriately for the season. Walking shoes are a must. Sandals and flip-flops are inappropriate for school or walking and make it difficult for your child. In addition, sandals and flip-flops are a safety hazard when children are indoors or outdoors.

The safety of children and staff will be guarded in all activities of childcare programs. Proper restraint systems (seat belts) and their correct use are critically important during travel to/from the child care program and field trips.

Transition

Your child's transition into child care should be a positive and exciting learning adventure. We will work with you and your child to ensure a smooth transition occurs as new routines and people are introduced.

Transition from home to center: Before your child's first day, you will have an opportunity to tour the center, meet with your child's peers and teachers, and communicate any anticipated concerns. At this time, please share the best communication methods that the teacher may use to reach you.

Transition between learning programs: Children are transitioned to the next program based on age, developmental readiness, state licensing requirements, and space availability. During the transition, current and future teachers will meet with you to propose a plan to introduce your child to the new program.

Transition to elementary school: Transition activities such as a field trip to a local elementary school, creating a mural of special friends, and special times at our center will be part of your child's education. We will provide you with information on local schools, what to expect, and ideas on how to talk to your child about going to elementary school.

Television Time

Our daily routine does not include watching television. Still, occasionally, we may record a television show or provide a prerecorded DVD or CASSETTE without advertisements as a teaching aid and discussion stimulator. Television consumption will not last 1 hour, and the program will be screened before showing. Programs will consist of non-violent and high-quality educational material. Our focus is to provide your child with a positive experience with an increased understanding of Christianity & the world.

Electronic Media

Electronic Media are limited to 20 minutes or less per day per child. Internet sites and software are pre-screened to contain non-violence and high-quality educational content.

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism is vital for all children because it sets social goals and promotes respect for everyone and our environment. We utilize books, music, games, and a wide range of activities to teach our children respect for our world and the diversity of life in it.

Celebrations

Our holiday policy encourages an enhanced understanding of and respect for different cultures and beliefs of Christianity, families, staff, and community.

Rest Time

Infants sleep according to their schedule and are put to sleep on their backs.

After lunch, all children less than six years of age participate in a quiet rest time. Children are not required to sleep and may be given quiet activities.

Each child will be given a child-sized napper, which is included in your registration.

Toilet Training

The most critical factor in making the toilet learning experience successful and as low-stress as possible is a family/teacher partnership that supports the child. Research indicates that children cannot successfully learn how to use the toilet until they are physically, psychologically, and emotionally ready. Many pediatricians say that most children under 24 months of age are not physically capable of regulating bladder and bowel muscles. Most positive toilet training occurs after children show signs of physical control or awareness of their bodily functions and when they are interested. We are committed to working with you to ensure that toilet learning is carried out in a manner consistent with your child's physical and emotional abilities and your family's concerns.

GUIDANCE

General Procedure

Thoughtful direction and planning ahead are used to prevent problems and encourage appropriate behavior. Communicating consistent, clear rules and involving children in problem-solving help children develop their ability to become self-disciplined. We encourage children to respect other people and property somewhat and learn to understand the results of their actions.

Acts of Aggression and Fighting

Children are guided to treat each other and adults with self-control and kindness. When a child becomes physically aggressive, we intervene immediately to protect all of the children.

Our usual approach to helping children with challenging behaviors is to show them how to solve problems using appropriate interactions. When discipline is necessary, it is clear, consistent, and understandable to the child.

Physical restraint is not used or permitted for discipline. There are rare instances when we need to ensure a child's safety or that of others, and we may restrain a child by gently holding them only for as long as necessary to control the situation.

Notification of Behavioral Issues to Families

If a child's behavior/circumstance is of concern, communication will begin with the parents as the first step to understanding the child's needs and challenges. We will work together to evaluate these needs in the context of our program.

Occasionally, a child's behavior may warrant finding a more suitable care setting. Examples of such instances for expulsion include:

- A child appears to be a danger to others.
- Continued care could be harmful to or not in the child's best interest as determined by medical, psychological, or social service personnel.
- There is an undue burden on our resources and finances for the child's accommodations for success and participation.

TUITION AND FEES

Payment

Payment is always due in advance, with no deduction for absences, holidays, or closures due to inclement weather, power outages, or other situations beyond our control. Payment is due as outlined in the *Enrollment Agreement*.

Late Pick-up Fees

Late pick-up is not a regular program option and will only be considered an exceptional occurrence. Late fees of $1.00 per minute will be assessed 5 minutes after you are late and due upon arrival. After 30 minutes, if no one has contacted the center or arrived to pick up your child, the local police department will be notified. Leaving your child anywhere after closing is considered abandonment of a child, which is a law in Pennsylvania.

Special Activity Fees

From time to time, there will be additional fees associated with particular activities or field trips. These fees are due before the event, activity, or trip.

Late Payment Charges

Late payments can pose severe problems for our programs. Therefore, we have put procedures in place to reduce their impact.

If payment is not received on Monday, Jacobs Ladder will place a late fee of $10.00 on the family's account for each day it is late. Your child may be discharged from the program if your account has not been paid in full within five business days.

If payment is more than ten business days past due, we may attempt to recover payment in small claims court, and your account may be sent to a 3rd party collections agency. You will be responsible for all expenses associated with these actions, including all court and attorney fees.

Returned Checks/Rejected Transaction Charges

All returned checks or rejected ACH (automatic debits) or credit card transactions will be charged a fee up to the maximum amount allowed by law. This charge may be collected electronically. Two or more returned checks or rejected transactions will result in your account being placed on "cash only" status.

Additional Fees Credits

- **Vacation** - to retain your child's spot during vacation, 50% of your regular tuition is due. Vacation days can be used if written notice is given in advance for the days the child will not be in attendance. Tuition must be paid before going on vacation. These fees are non-refundable if you choose not to return.
- **Withdrawals** - if a child is suddenly withdrawn from the program without a two-week written notice of withdrawal, a week's tuition fee may be applied. Families who withdraw and later re-enroll will be charged a re-enrollment fee.

Credits & No Credits

- **Credit will be given for Excused Absences** - if your child is hospitalized, absent due to a contagious disease, or absent at the request of the child's doctor, the absence is considered excused. A written doctor's note is required to receive a credit.
- **Credit will not be given for Sick Days** – there are no credits for sick days.
- **Credit will not be given for Scheduled closed days or Inclement Weather - if we do not open due to scheduled holidays or inclement weather on a day** your child is expected to attend, your account will not be credited for that day.

ATTENDANCE & WITHDRAWAL

Absence

Please call if your child will be absent or arrive after 9:00 am. Without prior approval, you will not be granted care if you arrive after 9:00 am.

Vacation

Vacation days only apply if your child is usually scheduled to attend on those days. Each child is given five vacation days each calendar year. Please inform us at least two weeks in advance.

Withdrawals

The center requires a written notice two weeks in advance when a child is being withdrawn. Failure to notify will result in additional fees.

Transfer of Records

Your child's records will be transferred internally, whether transitioning to the next program setting or to a new classroom.

If your child is transitioning to a new school, a written request from you with instructions on where the records should be sent is required.

Closing Due to Extreme Weather

Should severe weather or other conditions (i.e., snow, storms, floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, blizzards, loss of power, and loss of water) prevent us from opening on time or at all, notification to the families will be conducted through a chain of calls/text messaging/emails which the owner will do and or director of the facility. If it becomes necessary to close early, we will contact you or your emergency contacts as soon as possible. It is your responsibility to arrange your child's early pick-up.

Drop-off and Pick-up

General Procedure

Our staff is scheduled based on the children currently enrolled in the center. Please do not drop off your child before your scheduled drop-off time or without previously discussing it with the director. Parents are expected to accompany their children and sign them in and out each day.

Authorized & Unauthorized Pick-up

Your child will only be released to you or those persons you have listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. If you want a person not identified as an Emergency and Release contact to pick up your child, you must notify us in advance, in writing. Your child will not be released without prior written authorization. The person picking up your child must show a picture ID as verification. Please notify your pick-up person of our policy.

If a child has not been picked up after closing and we have not heard from you, attempts will be made to contact you and the contacts listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. Provisions will be made for someone to stay with your child as long as possible, ***but if after 1 hour we have not been able to reach you or a person listed as an Emergency and Release contact, we will call the local child protective services agency.***

Right to Refuse Child Release

We may refuse to release children if we have reasonable cause to suspect that any person picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way that may endanger the child. To protect your child, we may request that another adult listed as an Emergency and Release Contact pick up the child, or we may call the

police to prevent potential harm to your child. Reoccurring situations may result in the release of your child from the program.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

What to Bring

- **Infants**: 1 child-size blanket, 2 clean bottles to remain at the center, a pack of diapers & wipes per day, and at least two changes of clothes.
- **Toddlers**: 2 clean Sippy cups, a pack of pullups or diapers & wipes, and changes of clothes.
- **Older toddlers:** weather-appropriate changes of clothes, a pack of pullups, and wipes if they are still going through the toilet training program.
- **Preschoolers:** weather-appropriate change of clothes.
- **Kindergarteners:** nothing unless there is a particular need. (change of clothes is rare; use your discretion).
- **After School Care Children:** books for homework and anything else for a particular need.

Please label all items brought from home with your child's name (i.e., clothes, bottles, diapers, pacifiers, crib sheets, blankets, etc.) to prevent items from becoming misplaced or lost.

We are not responsible for lost or damaged items.

Cubbies

Upon enrollment, each child will be assigned a "cubby." Cubbies are labeled with your child's name or photo. Please check your child's cubby daily for items that must be taken home.

Lost & Found

You can look for lost items and bring found items to the Lost-and-found Box at the center's entrance. Please note that we are not responsible for lost personal property.

Toys from Home

We request that you not allow your child to bring toys from home into the center unless they are part of a show-and-tell activity.

NUTRITION

Foods Brought from Home

[A] We request that you do not bring food from home into our center.

[B] Food brought from home is permitted under the following conditions:

- Perishable food to be shared with other children must be store-bought and in its original package.
- Baked goods may be made at home if they are fully cooked, do not require refrigeration, and are made with freshly purchased ingredients. A list of ingredients is needed, and there must be enough food for all children.
- Foods should be labeled with the child's name, date, and type of food.
- Children will not be allowed to share food provided by the child's family unless the food is intended for sharing with all of the children.

- Leftover food will be discarded except for foods that do not require refrigeration or come in a commercially wrapped package that was never opened.

Good Lunch Box Suggestions for a Balanced, Nutritional Lunch.	
½ turkey sandwich Celery sticks Raisins Milk/water	Chicken strips Roll Orange wedges Broccoli Milk/water
Peanut butter on graham crackers Apple slices Carrot sticks Milk/water	Yogurt Crackers Sugar snap peas 100% juice

Food Prepared for or at the Center

Food prepared for or at the center will be adequately planned, prepared, and portioned according to the Child and Adult Care Food Program and the state requirements for food service. **After two weeks of enrollment, the center provides infant formula.** We offer milk-based and Soy formula.

Food Allergies

If your child has a food allergy, you must notify us in writing so we can make appropriate substitutions. The written notification should list appropriate food substitutions and must be updated at least annually.

Food allergies can be life-threatening, and each child with a food allergy should have an action plan for emergency care completed by the family physician.

Meal Time

At mealtime, the table is set with real plates and flatware, and the food is placed in small bowls from which the children can help themselves. The dishes are served pre-plated by staff. Children are encouraged to serve themselves. Good table manners are modeled and encouraged. Monthly menus are posted for parents/caregivers to view.

A caregiver trained in first-aid for choking is present at all meals.

Infant Feedings

Infant feedings follow these procedures:

- Bottle-fed infants are fed while being held or sitting up.
- Infants are fed "on demand" to the extent possible (at least every 4 hours and usually not more than hourly).

- Breastfeeding is supported by providing a place for nursing mothers to feed their babies. If frozen or kept cold during transit, exposed breast milk may be brought from home. Fresh breast milk must be used within 48 hours. Previously frozen, thawed breast milk must be used within 24 hours. Bottles must be labeled with the child's name and the date the milk was expressed. Frozen breast milk must be dated and may be kept in the freezer for up to 3 months.
- The formula must be brought to the premises in a factory-sealed container with ready-to-feed strength, powder, or concentrate. The formula will be diluted at the childcare site according to the instructions provided by the manufacturer or the child's health provider, using water from a source approved by the local health department. Formula brought from home must be labeled with the child's name.
- Solid foods will only be introduced after the appropriate age range and or when developmentally appropriate.

Toddler Feedings

- Children are encouraged to self-feed to the extent that they have the skills. Children are encouraged but not forced to eat a variety of foods.
- Round, firm foods that pose a choking hazard for children less than 4 years of age are sliced thinly. These foods include hot dogs, whole grapes, peanuts, popcorn, thickly spread peanut butter, and hard candy.

HEALTH

Immunizations

Immunizations are required according to the current schedule recommended by the U.S. Public Health Services and the American Academy of Pediatrics. Every January, we check with the Public Health Department or the American Academy of Pediatrics for updates on the recommended immunization schedule. Our state regulations regarding the attendance of children who are not immunized due to religious or medical reasons are followed. Unimmunized children are excluded during outbreaks of vaccine-preventable illness as directed by the state health department.

Physicals

Routine physicals are required according to the current recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics. A copy of your child's physical should be received before but no later than 6 weeks after your child begins the program. Families are responsible for assuring that their child's physicals are kept up-to-date and that a copy of the results of the child's health assessment is given to the program.

Illness

We understand it is difficult for a family member to leave or miss work, but you may not bring a sick child to the center to protect other children. The center has the right to refuse a child who appears ill. You will be called and asked to retrieve your child if your child exhibits any of the following symptoms. This is not an all-inclusive list. We will try to keep your child comfortable, but they will be excluded from all activities until you arrive.

- Illness that prevents your child from participating in activities.
- Illness that results in a greater need for care than we can provide.

- Fever (above 100°F under the arm, above 101°F in the mouth, above 102°F in the ear) accompanied by other symptoms.
- Diarrhea – stools with blood or mucus or uncontrolled, unformed stools that cannot be contained in a diaper/underwear or toilet.
- Vomiting – green or bloody, or 2 or more times during the previous 24 hours.
- Mouth sores caused by drooling.
- Rash with fever unless a physician has determined it is not contagious.
- Pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge until on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Impetigo & Strep Throat until 24 hours after treatment.
- Head lice until treatment and all nits are removed.
- Scabies, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Chickenpox until all lesions have dried and crusted.
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough) until 5 days of antibiotics.
- Hepatitis A virus, until one week after immune globulin has been administered.

Children who have been ill may return when:

- They are free of fever, vomiting, and diarrhea for 24 hours.
- They have been treated with an antibiotic for 24 hours.
- They can participate comfortably in all usual activities.

- They are free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling (not related to teething) unless:
    - The child's physician signs a note stating that the child's condition is not contagious and;
    - A bandage can cover the involved areas without seepage or drainage through the bandage.
- If a child has a reportable infectious disease, a physician's note stating that the child is no longer contagious and may return to our care is required.

Allergy Prevention

Families are expected to notify us regarding children's food and environmental allergies. Families of children with diagnosed allergies must provide us with a letter detailing the child's symptoms, reactions, treatments, and care. A list of the children's allergies will be posted in the central area and kitchen. We are trained to familiarize ourselves and consult the list to avoid the potential of exposing children to substances to which they have known allergies.

Medications

All medications should be handed to a staff member with specific instructions for administration. Medications should never be left in the child's cubby or with the child to administer independently. Our staff will ensure that the medication is recorded along with the directions and proceed to dispense the medication as directed.

- **Prescription medications** require a note signed by the family and a written order from the child's physician. The label on the medication meets this requirement. The medication must include your child's name, dosage, current date, frequency, and the name and phone number of the physician. All medications must be in the original container (you may request pharmacies to fill your prescription in two labeled bottles). Please specify the dosage and time(s) to be administered for each medication.

- **Delivery:** Every time a child needs medication, the parent will fill out a form before the medication can be given. Please stop by the office to complete the necessary information.
- **Non-prescription medications** require a note signed by the family or physician. Non-prescription medication should not be administered for more than a 3-day unless a physician's written order is received.
- **Non-prescription topical ointments** (e.g., diaper cream) require a note signed by the family or physician specifying the frequency and dosage to be administered.
- **Sunscreen needs to be purchased once the summer comes in; it will be applied to each child whenever we decide to go outdoors, on trips or just enjoying the summer weather for long periods**.
- **Insect repellent:** Each child will be asked to supply insect repellent if we plan to take a trip that requires camping or being outside at sunset.

Communicable Diseases

When an enrolled child or an employee of the center has a (suspected) reportable disease, we must notify the local Board of Health or the Department of Public Health. We will inform families about exposure so children can receive preventive treatments. Included among the reportable illnesses are the following:

- Bacterial Meningitis
- Botulism
- Chicken Pox
- Diphtheria
- Haemophilus Influenza (invasive)
- Measles (including suspect)
- Meningoccocal Infection (invasive)
- Poliomyelitis (including suspect)
- Rabies (human only)
- Rubella Congenital and Non-congenital (including suspect)
- Tetanus (including suspect)
- H1N1 Virus
- Any cluster/outbreak of illness

SAFETY

Clothing

Please dress your child in practical clothing that allows for freedom of movement and is appropriate for the weather. Your child will participate in various activities, including painting, outdoor play, sand, weather, and other sensory activities. Our playground extends the center, and daily programs are conducted outside whenever weather permits.

One particular aspect of concern is the risk associated with children's clothing that may become entangled with climbing or sliding equipment, which could lead to choking or other serious harm. All drawstrings from children's clothes should be removed as a precaution. **Sandals and flip-flops are inappropriate for center play and make it difficult for your child to participate in some activities.**

Extreme Weather and Outdoor Play

Outdoor play will not occur if the outside temperature is more significant than 90°F or less than 40°F degrees. Additionally, outdoor play will be canceled if the air quality rating is 50 or below.

Communal Water-Play

Communal, unsupervised water play is prohibited. Supervised children are permitted to engage in water play. Precautions are taken to ensure that communal water-play does not spread contagious infectious diseases.

Injuries

Safety is a significant concern in child care, so daily safety inspections are completed inside and outside the center area to prevent injuries. First aid will be administered by a trained

caregiver if your child sustains a minor injury (e.g., scraped knee). You will receive an incident report outlining the incident and the course of action taken. You will be contacted immediately if the injury produces any type of swelling or needs medical attention. Each classroom is equipped with a first aid kit that meets state regulations.

In a severe medical emergency, the child will be taken to the hospital immediately by ambulance, and we will try to contact you or an emergency contact.

Biting

Biting is a normal stage of development that is common among infants and toddlers – and sometimes even among preschoolers. It is something that most young children will try at least once.

When biting happens, our response will be to care for and help the child who was bitten and help the biter learn a more appropriate behavior. Our focus will not be on punishment for biting but on effective behaviors that address the specific reason for biting.

Notes will be written to the bitten child and the biter's family. We will work with each of the families to keep them informed and develop strategies for change.

Respectful Behavior

All children and families will be treated with respect and dignity. In return, we expect the same from all of our families. We will not tolerate hostile or aggressive behavior. If this occurs, we reserve the right to ask you to control your behavior or to remove your children from our care.

Cell Phone Usage

The time you spend in the center dropping off and picking up your child are the primary windows of time we have to communicate with one another about your child. To make the best use of these opportunities and to be attentive to your child, other children and adults who may wish to communicate with you, we ask that you NOT use your cell phone at any time while visiting the center.

Smoking

The poisons in secondhand smoke are especially harmful to infants and young children's developing bodies. Therefore, the indoor and outdoor center environments and vehicles used by the center are always non-smoking. Tobacco use in any form is prohibited on the center's premises.

Prohibited Substances

The use of alcohol or illegal drugs is prohibited on the center's premises. Possession of illegal substances or unauthorized potentially toxic substances is not permitted.

Any adult who appears to be inebriated, intoxicated, or otherwise under the influence of mind-altering or polluting substances is required to leave the premises immediately.

Dangerous Weapons

A dangerous weapon is a gun, knife, razor, or any other object capable of inflicting bodily harm by how it is used or intended to be used. Families, children, staff, or guests (other than law enforcement officers) possessing a dangerous weapon will not be permitted onto the premises.

In cases involving a gun or any other weapon on our premises, the police will be called, and the individual(s) involved will be immediately removed. This policy applies to visible or concealed weapons.

Child Custody

Without a court document, both parents/guardians have equal custody rights. We are legally bound to respect the wishes of the parent/guardian with legal custody based on a certified copy of the most recent court order, active restraining order, or court-ordered visitation schedule. Without court documentation, we will not accept the responsibility of deciding which parent/guardian has legal custody.

Suspected Child Abuse

We are required by law to report all observations of child abuse or neglect cases to the appropriate state authorities if we have reasonable cause to believe or suspect a child is suffering from abuse or neglect or is in danger of abuse or neglect, no matter where the abuse might have occurred. The child protective service agency will determine appropriate action and may conduct an investigation. It then becomes the agency's role to determine if the report is substantiated and to work with the family to ensure the child's needs are met. Our center will

cooperate fully with any investigation and will maintain confidentiality concerning any report of child abuse or neglect.

EMERGENCIES

Lost or Missing Child

If a child is lost or separated from a group, all available staff will search for the child. If the child is not located within 10 minutes, the family and the police will be notified.

Fire Safety

Our center has fire safety equipment, alarms, extinguishers, and rolling cribs.

Our fire evacuation plan is reviewed with the children and staff every month.

Emergency Transportation

Suppose your child needs to be transported due to a medical emergency. In that case, if no other authorized person can be contacted and the need for transportation is essential, an ambulance will be called for transportation. A proper escort will accompany the child until a family member or emergency contact arrives.

Referral Program

Jacob's Ladder will reward every family that refers a new family to enroll with the company $50.00. After that family is enrolled for 30 days, this bonus will be credited to your account to help you with your fees after their 30 days of enrollment. If you don't have any fees, you will receive a money order/ gift card mailed to your address on file.

CENTER POLICIES

Our center policies are reviewed quarterly, updated annually or more frequently, and available for review upon request. To view the center policies, please get in touch with the center director.

Attention Parents

At no time will a child be allowed to use their cell phone while in care. If you, the parent, need to be contacted or make contact, please use the center phone!!! Your child's cell phone needs to be turned off or placed on vibrate while in care. We are not responsible for losing or damaging your child's cell phone.

January ***Seasonal Weather theme: winter***	**February** ***Seasonal Weather theme: winter***	**March** ***Seasonal Weather theme: Winter/spring***	**April** ***Seasonal Weather theme: Spring***
Week 1- Winter **Week 2-** Winter **Week 3-**Polar Regions **Week 4-** Jesus Healed a woman ***Luke 13:10-17*** **Sight Words**- do, got, good, had, who, will, cat **Numbers**-7,8 / **Color**- Blue **Letters-** K, L /**Shape-** Square **Special Days**- New Year's 1/1; *MLK B-day 1/15;*	**Week 1-** Black History **Week 2-** Dental Health/Nutrition **Week 3-** Presidents **Week 4-** Jesus read the scroll ***Luke 4:16-22*** **Sight Words**-with are, be, big, all, mom **Numbers**-9,10 / **Color**- Yellow **Letters-** M, N /**Shape-** Heart **Special Days**- *Groundhog Day 2/2; Valentine's Day 2/14; Presidents Day 2/17*	**Week 1-** Dr. Seuss **Week 2-** St. Patrick's Day **Week 3-** Five Senses **Week 4-** The Crowd welcomed Jesus ***Matthew 21:1-11*** **Sight Words**-put, ran, she, sits, like, dad **Numbers**-11,12 / **Color**- Orange **Letters-** O, P /**Shape-** Star **Special Days**- *ST. Patrick's 3/17; Dr. Seuss B-day 3/2;*	**Week 1-** Jesus is alive ***Matthew 28:1-10*** **Week 2-** Dinosaurs **Week 3-** Farm **Week 4-** Caterpillars & butterflies **Sight Words-**me, it, the, and, out, **Number-**review/ **Color-** Grey **Letters-** Q, R / **Shape-** Oval **Special Days:** *April Fools 4/1; Easter 4/12; Earth Day 4/22*
May ***Seasonal Weather theme: Spring***	**June** ***Seasonal Weather theme: Spring/Summer***	**July** ***Seasonal Weather theme: Summer***	**August** ***Seasonal Weather theme: Summer***
Week 1- Cinco de Mayo **Week 2-** Gardening **Week 3-** Nursery Rhymes **Week 4-** Two men met Jesus ***Luke 24:13-35*** **Sight Words**- his, lot, of, well, **Numbers**- 13,14 / **Color**- Red **Letters-** S, T /**Shape-** Rectangle **Special Days**- teacher day 5/5; Mother day 5/10; Memorials Day 5/25;	**Week 1-** Rainforest **Week 2-** Zoo/Jungle/Safari **Week 3-** insects/Bugs **Week 4-** Peter preached about Jesus ***Acts 2*** **Sight Words**- not, on, ten, tell. **Numbers**-15,16/ **Color**- Black **Letters-**U, V, W /**Shape-** Octagon **Special Days**- 1st day of summer 6/20; Father's Day 6/21;	**Week 1-** Fairy Tales **Week 2-**Outer Space **Week 3-** Under the Sea **Week 4-** Jesus Taught about giving ***Mark 12:41-44*** **Sight Words**- us, yes, get, off, so **Numbers**- 17,18/ **Color**- Green **Letters-** X, Y, Z /**Shape-** Cross **Special Days**- independence Day 4th	**Week 1-** Circus **Week 2-** Vacation **Week 3-** Camping **Week 4-** Jesus Told about a loving Father ***Luke 15:11-32*** **Sight Words**- up, we, as, now **Numbers**-19,20/**Color**- Purple **Letters-** Review /**Shape-** Hexagon **Special Days**-
September ***Seasonal Weather theme: Summer/Fall***	**October** ***Seasonal Weather theme: Fall***	**November** ***Seasonal Weather theme: Fall***	**December** ***Seasonal Weather theme: Fall/Winter***
Week 1- Back to School **Week 2-** All About Me **Week 3-** Pets **Week 4--** Jesus Taught about God's Care ***Matthew 6:25-34*** **Sight Words**- was, but, for, her, white, said, where, **Numbers**-1,2 / **Color**- White **Letters-**A, B, C /**Shape-** Circle **Special Days**- 1st day of Fall 9/22; Labor Day 9/7;	**Week 1-** Fire Safety **Week 2-** Community Helpers **Week 3-** Transportation **Week 4-** Paul Listened to God ***Acts 15:36-41; 16:1-12*** **Sight Words**- have, look, help, six, brown, that, when **Numbers**- 3,4 / **Color**- Brown **Letters-**D, E /**Shape-** Sphere **Special Days**- Columbus Day 10/12 Boss Day 10/16; Halloween 10/31;	**Week 1-** Fall **Week 2-** Farm **Week 3-** Harvest **Week 4-** Paul Taught in Athens ***Acts 17:16-34*** **Sight Words**-him, they, some, four, hot, or, back **Numbers**-5,6 / **Color**- Pink **Letters-** F, G, H /**Shape-** Triangle **Special Days**- Veterans Day 11/11; Thanksgiving 11/26	**Week 1-** Hibernation & Migration **Week 2-** Children around the world **Week 3**- Christmas around the world **Week 4:** Birth of Jesus/ Shepherds/ Wise Men ***Luke 2:11*** **Sight Words**- if, must, our, from, pink, could, let **Numbers**- review / **Color**- Review **Letters-** I, J /**Shape-** Diamond **Special Days**- Christmas 12/25;

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