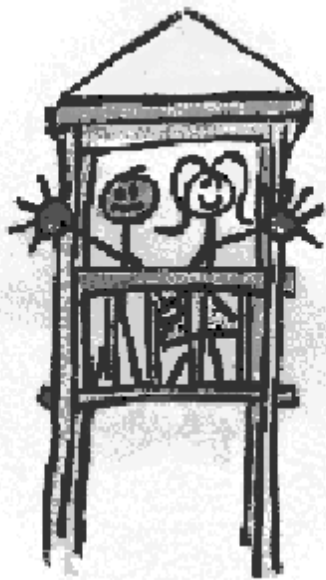


PLAY AND LEARN CHRISTIAN CHILD CARE



PARENT HANDBOOK

Amended August 2009
www.playandlearnccc.org

PARENT HANDBOOK STATEMENT

Please keep this Parent Handbook accessible while your child is enrolled at Play and Learn. A great deal of time and work has been put into it to provide you with concise information regarding the operational policies and procedures of the Center. It is a valuable reference that will help answer any questions you may have. Periodically as the Handbook is updated, you will receive policy addendums. However, if there is ever a question you may have that is not answered in these pages, please don't hesitate to ask a member of the administrative or teaching staff.

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PLAY AND LEARN CHRISTIAN CHILD CARE

35 East Stanton Avenue
Columbus, Ohio 43214
614-846-7576

BRENDA J. WEILBACHER

Director

Gethsemane Christian Day Care Center – Play and Learn (doing business as Play and Learn Christian Child Care and hereafter referred to as Play and Learn) is a privately owned and operated non-profit child day care center which is licensed by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services pursuant to Chapter 5104 of the Ohio Revised Code. Play and Learn is an outreach ministry of and housed in Gethsemane Lutheran Church. Child care services are provided for children ages 6 weeks to 10 years of age.

The licensing law and rules are available at the Center and a copy for review may be requested from the Director. The Center's licensing record, including licensing inspection reports and complaint investigations, as well as evaluation forms from the health, building, and fire departments that inspect the Center, are available upon request from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. Licensing inspection reports and substantiated complaint investigation reports for the current licensing period are posted on the bulletin board in the cafeteria of the main building for review by all parents and guardians in the Center.

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services' toll free number is **1-866-886-3537** (press option 2 then extension 4 to reach the Columbus field office) and is available for any person to use to report a suspected violation of Chapter 5104 by the Center. Or you may use the local telephone number: **614-466-7765**.

The licensed capacity for each age category is noted on the Center's license which is posted in the office.

It is unlawful for an administrator, licensee, or child-care staff member to discriminate in the enrollment of children based upon race, color, religion, sex, or national origin or disability in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 104 Stat. 327, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHILD CARE COMMITTEE

At Play and Learn, our primary concern is to provide quality Christian child care services at an affordable price to families with young children. We are proud of the contribution that each member of our staff makes in providing a safe and happy environment where young children are able to grow in mind, body, and spirit.

As a Christian child care center, we wish to exemplify our love for Christ in our daily lives by: (1) showing love and understanding for those with whom we come in contact; (2) supporting the work of the church, the child care, and the staff; and (3) supporting the goals, principles, and philosophy of education of Play and Learn as well as its programs and administration.

The Child Care Committee is composed of several church members, two appointed parent representatives, and the Center Director. The Committee is responsible for the entire operation of the Center and meets once a month to discuss matters presented by the Director and to periodically review policies and procedures. The Committee plans the budget and is responsible for the long-term planning of the Center. Parents may attend the Committee meetings at any time; however, the Committee chairperson should be contacted prior to the meeting.

GOALS AND PRINCIPLES

The goals and principles of Play and Learn are:

- To aid and support parents in the task of raising their children
- To provide children with loving care in a safe, healthy, cheerful, and stimulating environment
- To help children develop a positive self-image by encouraging individual initiative, creativity, self-control, mutual respect, and a sense of responsibility toward others
- To provide children with an excellent educational experience based upon individual and group activities, self-paced learning centers, and skill development in coordination, conceptualization, verbalization, and reading and math readiness
- To address the children's individual needs and concerns as they become evident
- To provide children with a religious foundation based upon the discovery and application of God's love for people in Jesus Christ
- To provide age appropriate and developmental activities that encourage each child to become involved with the learning process for children 6 weeks to age 10
- To foster growth in the area of self-help skills and the decision-making process

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

It is our philosophy that the development of the individual as a whole being is attained through the enrichment of the social, intellectual, and spiritual aspects of his/her nature. Our philosophy comes from the Christian commitment of Gethsemane Lutheran Church which encourages the celebration of life through love, respect, caring, and sharing. Thus, the staff at Play and Learn strives daily to promote the development of a healthy, inquisitive, and self-confident child that is prepared for the social and mental requirements of education and is nurtured in a warm, nurturing, and secure environment in which love for Jesus Christ and for others is taught and shared.

We believe children are unique individuals who grow and develop at their own pace with their own strengths, needs, and interests. The Center offers a variety of learning opportunities generated from these needs and interests. Many choices are provided within a carefully arranged structure. Learning through play and actual experiences is a cornerstone of the program.

STAFF

The staff of Play and Learn is selected from a field of qualified candidates and comprised of well-educated and caring adults who wish to take an active part in providing quality child care and early childhood education for all children. Play and Learn aims to employ individuals who have had a wide variety of experiences both professionally and personally and whose individual personalities and talents complement one another to present a well-rounded staff. Staff members shall be physically, mentally, and emotionally able to care for young children and be actively involved in fulfilling their job responsibilities at all times.

Each member of our staff has been carefully interviewed and trained to exemplify our philosophy of operation and education. We view ourselves as professional caregivers who are proud of the quality of our program and of the professional working environment. The staff is here to help guide your child in his/her life experiences in a Christian environment. We are always available to discuss any special needs or concerns you may have.

The administrative staff at Play and Learn is comprised of a director and an assistant director. Each classroom has one or more caregivers/teachers who are responsible for the over-all daily management of the classroom program. Each member of the teaching staff has been employed as a qualified and competent person to care for the individual needs of each child. No staff member shall be under the influence of any substance that impairs the staff member's ability to supervise children and/or perform assigned duties.

Each staff member is required to obtain the necessary training in early childhood development and education as required by law. This includes training in child development, health and safety, first aid, communicable disease recognition and management, and child abuse/neglect recognition and prevention. There is a staff member on site at all times who is trained in first aid, communicable disease recognition and management, child abuse/neglect recognition, and CPR procedures for infants and children in accordance with Ohio Department of Job and Family Services guidelines. Staff qualifications and staff/child ratios always meet and often exceed local and state requirements.

STAFF/CHILD RATIOS (OAC 5101:2-12-20)

The Center employs the number of child care staff members needed to meet staff/child ratios for the Center's license capacity. Child care staff members shall be assigned to a group of children and shall have regularly assigned working hours to give continuity of care and supervision to the children. Below are listed the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services child care licensing staff to child ratios and small group sizes for each group. However, the ratios we follow will often be lower than State licensing ratios.

<u>GROUP</u>	<u>STAFF/CHILD RATIO</u>	<u>SMALL GROUP</u>
Infants		
6 weeks-12 months	1 to 5	2 to 12
12-18 months	1 to 6	2 to 12
Toddlers		
18-30 months	1 to 7	2 to 14
30-36 months	1 to 8	2 to 16
Preschool Children		
3 years	1 to 12	2 to 24
4-5 years	1 to 14	2 to 28
School-age Children		
Kindergarten-10 years	1 to 18	2 to 36

HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION

The Center is open Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. It is closed the following holidays:

A Half Day New Year's Eve (Closing at 12:00 p.m.)

New Year's Day

Good Friday

Memorial Day

Fourth of July

Labor Day

Thanksgiving

The Day After Thanksgiving

A Half Day Christmas Eve (Closing at 12:00 p.m.)

Christmas

If the holiday falls on a Saturday, the Center will be closed the preceding Friday. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, the Center will be closed the following Monday.

CENTER CLOSING INFORMATION

The Center will not close for inclement weather unless a weather emergency is declared and persons in the Columbus and surrounding areas are advised not to be on the roads. In the event of a weather emergency, local television stations will be advised of the Center's closing. Parents should plan to listen for this information. Notification will be listed under "Play and Learn Christian Child Care."

Should there be a general emergency (including, but not limited to, threats to the safety of children due to environmental situations or threats of violence; natural disasters such as fire, tornado, flood, etc.; or loss of power, heat, or water) that necessitates the closing of the Center, local television stations will be advised of the Center's closing. Parents should plan to listen for this information as well.

Additionally, the Child Care Committee reserves the right to close the Center if warranted by illness or in cases when anticipated low attendance would result in operational costs that are truly prohibitive.

Should it become necessary for the Center to close during the regular hours of operation due to inclement weather or a general emergency, parents will be notified and expected to pick up their children within one hour. Regular tuition charges will be assessed for the duration of the closing.

When school programs are delayed or cancelled, the Center will continue to operate during its normally scheduled hours unless a weather or general emergency is declared.

ENROLLMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

To begin the enrollment process at Play and Learn, an interested parent/guardian should make an appointment to meet with the Director to discuss the philosophy, policies, and procedures of the Center. At that time a tour of the facility will be given and the child's specific program schedule discussed. The Director or Assistant Director will acquaint the parent/guardian with the required enrollment forms which must be completed in order for their child to officially be enrolled. Children's records, which are maintained in the administrative office, are considered confidential.

The required State forms included in the enrollment packet are:

- Child Enrollment and Health Information form, including health and immunization records, emergency transportation authorization, and parent or guardian roster permissions
- Child Medical Statement (to be completed by a licensed physician within thirty days of enrollment)
- Copy of the Parent Handbook

Also included in the enrollment packet are:

- Supplemental Enrollment Information Form and Fee Agreement Contract
- Confidential Family History form
- Policy Agreement, Release of Liability, Media Release, and E-Mail Listing form
- Child and Adult Care Food Program Enrollment Form
- Parent Questionnaire
- Medical and Dental Emergency Plan

All children must be registered in advance and must comply with the state regulations with regard to physical examinations and immunizations. When the necessary enrollment forms are completed and returned, and the required non-refundable deposit in the amount of \$25.00 and the two-week security deposit are paid, a starting date will then be scheduled for the child.

Children are enrolled on a "first come" basis for full-time positions. Children may be enrolled on a part-time basis as positions become available. Play and Learn's definition of part time is a minimum of three full or half-days. Children who are enrolled on a part-time basis must adhere to their assigned days and hours. Any changes to this policy are at the discretion of the Day Care Committee.

In order to maintain an 80% full-time capacity in enrollment, we must limit our part-time spots to:

- Pre-Kindergarten: three spots
- Pre-School: three spots
- Toddlers: three spots
- Infants: no part-time available

WAITING LIST PROCEDURE

The following information is an attempt to clarify our enrollment and waiting list policies. Please read it carefully.

1. At least one member from your family must make an appointment with the Director for an on-site visit prior to being placed on our waiting list.
2. Priority is given for placement to staff members, church members, and children of families who are currently enrolled in our program.
3. Once your name has been placed on a waiting list, you will remain active for a period of one year. You are responsible for calling the day care office monthly to stay active on the list or when you are no longer interested in remaining on the list.

TUITION AND FEES

Effective August 24, 2009

Play and Learn exists as a non-profit organization with tuition and fees established to defray the primary cost of operation. Tuition and fees are determined by the Day Care Committee. Subject to revision, new rates shall be provided to parents in advance of the effective date.

Cost of Full-Time Child Care

Parents who pay the full-time private pay rates may leave their child any or all of the hours the Center is open. The following are the full-time tuition rates.

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Weekly Rate</u>	<u>Weekly Sibling Discount Rate</u>
Infant	\$236.00	-----
Toddler	\$219.00	\$198.00
Younger Preschool (Big Birds Class)	\$206.00	\$186.00
Older Preschool & Pre-K (Cookie Monsters & Kermits Classes)	\$189.00	\$171.00
School-Age (No School Days)	\$189.00 or \$41.00 per day	-----

Cost of Part-Time Child Care

Parents who pay a part-time private pay rate may leave their child the number of hours/days assigned in their part-time schedule. Parents who need to request changes to their child's assigned part-time schedule due to changes in their work schedules may do so by notifying the office no later than the Friday preceding the week of the requested schedule change. Requests for changes to the current week's part-time schedule due to a child's illness will not be permitted. A half-day is defined as five or less hours of attendance on any given day. The following are available part-time schedules with their assigned tuition rates.

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>4 Full Days</u>	<u>3 Full Days / 4 or 5 Half-Days</u>	<u>3 Half-Days</u>
Toddler	\$181.00	\$141.00	\$111.00
Younger Preschool (Big Birds Class)	\$171.00	\$131.00	\$101.00
Older Preschool & Pre-K (Cookie Monsters & Kermits Classes)	\$161.00	\$121.00	\$ 91.00

Fees

One-Time Registration Fee	\$25.00 per family
Annual Supplies/Materials Fee (Main Building)	\$50.00 per child
Annual Supplies/Materials Fee (Toddlers)	\$25.00 per child

TUITION AND FEES (Continued)

Sibling Discount

Any parent who currently has more than one child enrolled on a full-time basis at Play and Learn is eligible to receive a 10% discount off the weekly tuition cost when the second child and each additional child is enrolled on a full-time basis in the toddler or preschool classes. The discount applies to the older siblings' rate(s). There are no sibling discounts for children in the infant or school-age programs or for children enrolled on a part-time basis.

Registration Fee and Security Deposit

Payment of both a non-refundable registration fee of \$25.00 per family and a security deposit of two weeks' tuition secures the child(ren)'s position(s) in the Center. The registration fee and security deposit are considered to be part of the enrollment process; therefore, enrollment is not complete until these are paid and the necessary forms are completed. The two-week security deposit payment will be applied to the child's last two weeks of attendance at the Center.

Supplies/Materials Fee

There is a \$50.00 annual supplies/materials fee for each child enrolled in the main building and a \$25.00 annual supplies/materials fee for each child enrolled in the toddler class. This fee is to be paid in August prior to the start of each school year.

Holding Fee

A holding fee is charged when a child leaves the center for a period of four or more consecutive weeks. The holding fee is due prior to your departure. The child may be removed up to three months.

Summer – Pre-school and Pre-Kindergarten: A holding fee of \$150.00 is required to hold the space for your child until the fall program resumes.

Summer – Infants and Toddlers: Positions in the I/T house will not be held for a child away more than a week. Therefore there is not holding fee available in the I/T house.

NOTE: The fees are set by the Committee and reviewed annually and revised as necessary. These fees are current for the time of revision of this Handbook.

Parents Receiving Tuition Assistance Through the Franklin County Title XX Program

Parents receiving tuition assistance from Franklin County are responsible to pay their assigned co-pay and maintain the schedule provided by the County. Parents will also be responsible to pay for any absentee days (at the current private-pay rate) which exceed the amount allotted by the County as well as any other fees, including but not limited to, late fees, activity fees, transportation fees, or fees charged for child care services which exceed the hours and days authorized by the County.

Parents are responsible to submit any re-determination paperwork in a timely manner so as to maintain eligibility. Parents that, at any time, cease to be approved for the Title XX program will immediately become responsible for private-pay tuition rates until such time as they become eligible for tuition assistance.

TUITION PAYMENT POLICY

Payment of a non-refundable registration fee in the amount of \$25.00 and a security deposit of two weeks' tuition are required to reserve a space for your child when the Center notifies you that one is available. If you are notified that a space is available for your child but you do not need immediate care and yet another family is able to fill the spot immediately, you may be charged one-half of the regular tuition rate to reserve the spot until your child begins attending.

There is a \$50.00 annual supplies/materials fee for each child enrolled in the main building and a \$25.00 annual supplies/materials fee for each child enrolled in the toddler class. This fee is to be paid in August prior to the start of each school year.

Tuition is due each Monday for the week. A \$25.00 late charge per family will be added to your account if your balance is not paid by the close of the day on Tuesday. All tuition payments are non-refundable.

Payments may be made in checks, money orders, cash, or Auto Debit. All cash must be paid to the office. Play and Learn is not responsible for lost cash payments that are not made directly to the Director or Assistant Director in the office. A receipt will automatically be given if cash is received. Checks should be made payable to Play and Learn. Checks may be dropped in the payment box located in the main building front hallway or the box on the counter in the infant/toddler house. Receipts and/or copy of your payment record will be issued upon your written request.

There will be a \$35.00 charge for each returned check. This must be paid before the child can continue the program. An excessive number of returned checks will require that cash be paid prior to rendering future services.

Tuition is charged on a weekly basis. Tuition payments will not be refunded or credited for absences due to inclement weather, general emergencies (including, but not limited to, threats to the safety of children due to environmental situations or threats of violence; natural disasters such as fire, tornado, flood, etc.; or loss of power, heat, or water), illness, or other activity. If a holiday falls during a weekday, you will be charged your full week's tuition, the same as any other week.

Play and Learn closes promptly at 6:00 p.m. Should it be necessary to pick up your child later than 6:00 p.m., a late charge of \$5.00 per five minutes will be payable with the tuition payment for the following week (beginning at 6:05 p.m. after a five-minute grace period). Please be courteous and call in advance to notify the Center if you will be late and/or make other arrangements for someone to pick up your child(ren). If the Center has not been notified and a child remains after 6:30 p.m., the Columbus Police Department and Children's Services will be contacted.

Each child enrolled on a full-time basis is allotted one week of vacation time per calendar year. Tuition will be charged at one-half the regular rate during vacation time providing the child has been enrolled at the Center for at least six consecutive months and a two-week written notice is given.

A two-week written notice to the Director is required for withdrawal of your child from the Center. If a two-week notice is not given, you will be responsible to pay full tuition for the balance of two weeks.

Delinquent payments without prior satisfactory arrangements with the Director shall result in immediate withdrawal of your child from the Center until your account is brought current. If for some reason you are unable to meet the tuition payment schedule, please see the Director to make alternate arrangements.

If action is necessary to collect amounts past due on your account, you shall be responsible for all cost incurred related to collection of your past due account, including, but not limited to attorney fees and court costs.

You will be notified as soon as possible and not less than one month prior to the effective date of any rate increase.

Play and Learn will provide the Center's tax identification number to parents or guardians upon request.

VACATIONS

1. A child enrolled at the Center yearlong on a full-time basis is allotted five vacation days per year, whereby the tuition rate is one-half of the normal rate.
2. A child must be enrolled six consecutive months before being eligible for vacation time.
3. Vacation time is per calendar year from January 1st to December 31st each year.
4. Vacation time cannot be accumulated from year to year.
5. Vacation must be taken a full week at a time (Monday-Friday).
6. You must notify the Director in writing at least two weeks in advance when you are planning to take your vacation for the half-price weekly rate to apply.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Tuition payments will not be credited or refunded for absences due to inclement weather, general emergencies a general emergency (including, but not limited to, threats to the safety of children due to environmental situations or threats of violence; natural disasters such as fire, tornado, flood, etc.; or loss of power, heat, or water), illness, or other activity. If a holiday falls during a weekday, you will be charged your full week's tuition, the same as any other week.

All parents are asked to notify the Center by 10:00 a.m. if their child(ren) is/are not going to attend. Lunch counts are needed by this time each day.

Children who do not attend the Center for a period of ten days without notifying the office will be dropped from the enrollment roster.

BOOKS, SCHOOL PICTURES, NOVELTY ITEMS

Workbooks may be required as part of a class; however, they are not included in the tuition payments. They are sold at cost to parents. Notification of book fees will be made so as to allow ample time for payment.

School pictures and items such as Play and Learn T-shirts and tote bags will be offered throughout the year without obligation to purchase.

TAX STATEMENTS

A tax statement indicating the amount spent for child care services is completed for each family who has had children enrolled at the Center during the course of the calendar year. Parents will be notified when the statements are ready to be picked up in the office. Parents of children no longer enrolled at the time the statements are printed may call and request a copy to be picked up in the office. Tax statements generally are not mailed.

UPDATED ENROLLMENT FORMS AND CHANGE OF INFORMATION

Prior to the beginning of each school year in August, the Center will distribute a packet of updated enrollment forms to each parent or guardian as required by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. A set of forms will need to be completed for each child enrolled at the Center before your child(ren) can continue the program. Please be sure to notify the office in writing immediately whenever you have a change of information, such as a new home or work address or phone number, a person to be added to the authorized pick up list, a new emergency contact, etc. This will better enable us to serve you and your child, and it is extremely important in the event of an emergency.

PARENT ROSTER

A parent roster including the names and telephone numbers of parents who have children enrolled at Play and Learn is maintained and available upon request. The parent roster is updated at least once annually. The roster does not include the names and telephone numbers of parents who do not wish to be included.

DAILY ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

The center is open to children at 6:30 a.m. At times, staff may arrive earlier than that time to set up for the day; however, they are not authorized to unlock the doors until the opening time of 6:30 a.m. Upon arrival at the Center, each child must be taken directly to his/her assigned classroom/teacher. Under **no circumstances** is a child to be dropped off outside the building, left at the main entrance, or permitted to enter/exit the building alone. Parents are expected to assist the child with removal of coats, boots, hats, etc. prior to departing. Each teacher keeps a class attendance roster with him/her to document your child's arrival and departure. Parents should be sure that the staff member in charge has acknowledged the child's presence during drop off and recognized the child's departure during pick up, to ensure the constant supervision of your child.

Children will only be released to their parents or persons who have been authorized in writing by their parents at the time of enrollment. A child will only be released to persons sixteen years of age or older, except when parent or guardian permission is on file. Any changes in authorization must be done in the parent's handwriting and submitted in advance to the office. Under **no circumstances** will a child be released to an unauthorized person. Be aware that any person picking up your child may be asked to show some form of picture identification before your child will be released. Children who are not picked up by 6:00 p.m. will be charged at the rate of \$5.00 per five minutes that they remain at the center. A five-minute grace period is extended to all with late charges being assessed beginning at 6:05 p.m. Please be courteous and call in advance to notify the Center if you will be late and/or make other arrangements for someone to pick up your child(ren). If the Center has not been notified and a child remains after 6:30 p.m., the Columbus Police Department and Children's Services will be contacted.

If a custody agreement is in effect, Play and Learn must be provided a copy of the agreement to maintain on file. A parent of a child enrolled at the Center who is not the child's residential parent shall be permitted unlimited access to the Center and be afforded the same rights as the residential parent unless there is court documentation limiting access and conditions of the nonresidential parent. Under the laws of the state of Ohio, both parents may have the right to pick up their child, unless a court document restricts that right. The enrolling parent, who chooses not to include the child's other parent on the authorized pick-up list must file an official court document (e.g. current restraining order, sole custody decree, divorce decree stating sole custody). Without that document on file, the Center may release the child to either parent, provided that parent documents his paternity/her maternity of the child.

Children transported in vehicles must be buckled securely into car safety seats/seatbelts that meet state requirements. Parents will take whatever steps are necessary to maintain and use car safety seats. Play and Learn does not maintain extra car seats on sight to loan to parents. Additionally, Play and Learn staff members are not permitted to install car seats in parents' vehicles. Play and Learn reserves the right to contact another person on the authorized pick up list if this requirement is not met. When a staff member believes that the safety of the child is better served if the parent does not drive, parents agree to either leave the program by taxicab and reimburse the Center for the cost of the cab or have another person on the authorized pick up list be called to pick up the child.

REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

(OAC 5102:2-12-21)

It is our intent to build a partnership with parents to help them provide the most suitable environment possible for their children. Toward this goal, we have many resources and referrals available to parents upon request.

We understand that children will sustain a variety of bumps and bruises as a result of just being a child; however, we ask that you let us know of any unusual injuries and/or accidents that occur at home. It is important for parents to be aware that under section 2151.421 of the Revised Code, the administrator and each employee of the Center are required to immediately report their suspicions of neglect and/or physical (including but not limited to suspicious bruises, cuts, or marks), emotional, and/or verbal child abuse to the public children services agency (Franklin County Children's Services Agency). It is the responsibility of this agency to investigate each report.

TERMINATION OF SERVICE

If a parent/guardian wishes to terminate enrollment of his/her child in our program, a two-week written notice is required. If a two-week written notice is not given, a parent/guardian will be billed for the period of two weeks from the date of the notice and the two-week security deposit will be forfeited. Any parent/guardian who terminates enrollment without paying all due fees will receive a bill specifying the amount owed and a time limit for payment.

It is our sincere hope that your child has a positive experience at our Center. However, we acknowledge that sometimes either children are not ready for a large group experience or home and Center environments drastically differ to the extent that the child is extremely unhappy. The Center reserves the right to re-evaluate any child's continued participation in the program who has needs that cannot best be met by the Center or that may be detrimental to the health or progress of the other children. The Center may, under these circumstances, request withdrawal of the child from the program. Play and Learn will be happy to recommend suitable alternatives that may better suit the child's needs. A two-week notice will generally be given should the Center request withdrawal of the child from the program. However, if the child is an immediate danger to himself/herself or others or presents behavioral problems which unreasonably disrupt the Center, immediate withdrawal may be requested. Play and Learn reserves the right to terminate child care services with or without cause or notice.

Reasons the Center may choose to terminate a child's enrollment include, but are not limited to:

- A child's severe and repeated misbehavior. Program staff will work with the child in a positive manner as specified in our guidance/management policy. Children who do not respond positively and who create dangerous situations for themselves or others may be better accommodated in another setting. Parents will be consulted by the Director whenever any difficulties arise and kept informed about disciplinary processes.
- A parent's noncompliance with program policies and requests for cooperation in working with his/her child or a parent's inappropriate actions or comments directed toward any staff member and/or other children enrolled in the Center. If a parent disregards such specific requests for compliance and cooperation or acts in an inappropriate manner toward Center staff and/or enrolled children, child care services may be terminated immediately.

SUPERVISION
(OAC 5101:2-12-20)

The children shall be organized in groups with assigned specific child care staff members to give continuity of care and supervision to the children on a day to day basis.

The child care staff in charge of a group of children shall be responsible for their supervision. Supervision means child care staff members have knowledge of children's needs, accountability for their care, and knowledge of which children they are responsible for at all times. No child shall ever be left alone or unsupervised. Children shall be within sight and hearing of child care staff members at all times.

A record of each child's daily attendance shall be maintained in the child's assigned class group. The class attendance roster shall remain with the group at all times throughout the day including during outdoor play, during emergency evacuations and drills, and when groups are combined.

Children may visit the next older age group for transitioning purposes. Before a child begins a transition period to the next class, a transition agreement must be signed by the child's parent or guardian. The written agreement between the parent/guardian and the Center shall specify the beginning and ending date of the transitioning period and include the transitioning schedule. A copy of this agreement will be available in the assigned classrooms. A child's transition may be initiated at the request of the parent/guardian or the Center.

A school-age child may run errands inside the building or use the restroom alone without adult supervision as long as the child is within hearing distance of a child care staff member and the child care staff member checks on the child until he/she returns to the group. The child may not leave the classroom until he/she has obtained permission from the child care staff member in charge of the group.

A preschool or school-age child may participate in activities in the building sponsored by other groups, such as computer or gymnastics classes, as long as signed and dated written permission has been obtained from the child's parent or guardian detailing the nature, location, and starting/ending times of the activity, the arrangements for going to and from the activity, and the time period for which the permission is given.

CARE AND NURTURING OF CHILDREN
(OAC 5102:2-12-21)

The child care staff shall be responsible for the well being and safety of each child in the group to which they are assigned and for meeting each child's basic needs. Staff will acknowledge and respond appropriately to children who are crying or who show distress. Staff shall implement practices that are supportive of individual developmental needs when caring for children with special needs.

All children must be served food that is not a choking hazard and that is developmentally appropriate in size, amount and texture. Children will be permitted the opportunity and encouraged to learn to feed themselves as their developmental levels allow.

Diapers and clothing shall be checked regularly and when wet or soiled shall be changed immediately. Parents are responsible to provide, as needed, a daily supply of diapers and at least one complete change of clothes including shoes for their child.

Staff will assist with the needs of the children such as toileting, hand washing, and basic hygiene.

The administrator and each employee of the Center shall protect or remove children from a person or situation that is determined to be unsafe. Children shall not be exposed to inappropriate language, conversations, or behavior by Center employees, media, parents/guardians, or visitors.

CARE OF CHILDREN WITH HEALTH CONDITIONS

(OAC 5101:2-12-38)

It is important that you inform the staff of any allergies or medical conditions your child may have. This will assist us in being better equipped to handle any emergencies that may arise and to provide the best possible care for your child.

A child with health conditions or requiring medical procedures may be cared for at the Center providing the Center is properly equipped and a detailed "Medical/Physical Care Plan" is completed with all the necessary information and signed and dated by the child's parent or guardian on the prescribed form. This plan shall also be signed and dated by the child care staff member(s) responsible for the child, the Center Administrator, and, if applicable, the certified professional who trained the Center staff to perform the medical procedures. Each Medical/Physical Care Plan must be updated/revised at least annually, or more often, if necessary. Only child care staff members trained by the parent, guardian, or certified professional shall be permitted to perform medical procedures. There shall be a trained child care staff member onsite at all times whenever children who require treatment are present.

A child with a health condition includes a school-age child whose medical condition requires the availability of an inhaler or medication for emergency needs. The child may be in possession of these items only if they are kept in a closed bag/backpack out of the reach of other children and signed and dated written permission is obtained by the child's parent/guardian. Center staff shall be notified of these children whose condition necessitates the carrying of these items.

HEALTH POLICY AND ILLNESSES

Upon enrollment, the child's medical statement must be completed, dated and signed by a licensed physician and must be renewed annually for all children under six years of age. At Play and Learn, we are very conscientious about your child's health and safety. Because your child has entered into a large group situation, he/she will be exposed to a wider variety of germs. Our illness policy encourages parents to keep ill children at home until they are fully recovered.

A staff member with currently valid training in the management of communicable disease will observe each child daily upon arrival at the Center to ensure each child is free from any apparent communicable disease. Staff members are trained in the recognition and management of communicable diseases as well as proper handwashing techniques and disinfecting procedures. The Ohio Department of Health Communicable Disease Chart is posted in both the main building and the infant/toddler house.

Please do not send your child to the Center with a fever, sore throat, or other suspicious symptoms. Play and Learn reserves the right to temporarily deny any child admittance to the Center for reasons of obvious illness, or to request early departure should symptoms become apparent during the course of the day in keeping with the guidelines outlined in Ohio Administrative Code, Chapter 5101:2-12-33. This is to ensure the continued good health of everyone at the Center.

If your child becomes ill while at the Center, he/she will be isolated from the other children and provided a cot/crib and blanket and observed carefully for worsening condition. You will be contacted immediately when it becomes necessary for you to pick up your child due to an illness. Please refer to the "Management of Communicable Disease" page in this handbook for the signs and symptoms of illness which require immediate discharge of a child from the Center. Whenever someone develops a communicable disease, a notice is posted at the entrance of the affected classroom. Notes will be sent home to all families of children in the affected classroom. Should your child develop a contagious disease, please notify the office immediately.

We can all work together in practicing preventative medicine. Proper handwashing techniques should become daily routine. Children should be taught to cover noses and mouths for sneezes and coughs. Balanced meals and adequate rest/sleep should be incorporated into each child's stage of development.

MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

(OAC 5101:2-12-33)

The current version of the Ohio Department of Health Communicable Disease Chart will be followed for appropriate management of suspected illnesses. Copies of this chart are posted in the cafeteria of the main building and in the main hallway of the infant/toddler house. If your child has been exposed to a communicable disease at the Center, a notice will be posted at the entrance of the affected room within the next day of Center operation.

Many parents ask, "How do I know if my child is well enough to go to Play and Learn?" The following guidelines should assist you in making that decision:

1. The child should enjoy his/her day at the Center and should not become overly fatigued as the result of normal participation in activities.
2. The child should not be given aspirin, Tylenol, or other fever reducers to mask a fever prior to arrival at the Center. If the child has a fever, he/she must be fever free without aid of medication for 24 hours prior to returning to the Center.
3. If your child has a communicable disease, the period of communicability must be over prior to return, in accordance with the communicable disease chart posted in each building.

A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness shall be immediately isolated and discharged to his/her parent or guardian or a person designated by the parent or guardian:

- Temperature of at least one hundred degrees Fahrenheit (taken by the axillary/arm/pit method with a digital thermometer) when in combination with any other sign or symptom of illness
- Diarrhea (three or more abnormally loose stools within a twenty-four hour period)
- Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Redness of the eye or eyelid, thick and purulent (pus) discharge, matted eyelashes, burning, itching, or eye pain
- Untreated infected skin patches, unusual spots or rashes
- Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool
- Stiff neck with an elevated temperature
- Evidence of untreated lice, scabies, or other parasitic infection
- Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing
- Vomiting more than one time or when accompanied by any other sign or symptom of illness

The parent/guardian of the child will be notified by telephone and the child will be discharged to the parent, guardian, or other authorized person **within one hour**. A child who exhibits any of the above symptoms of illness may return to the Center only when he/she has been free from the symptoms for at least 24 hours and/or has completed any necessary course of treatment to assure that he/she is not contagious. (A physician's note may be required depending upon the illness and its method of treatment.)

A child isolated due to suspected communicable disease shall be: 1) within sight and hearing of an adult at all times, 2) cared for in another room or portion of a room away from other children, and 3) provided with a cot and made comfortable. A mildly ill child who is experiencing minor cold symptoms or who does not feel well enough to participate in activities, but who is not exhibiting any of the above symptoms may attend the Center. The child will be cared for within the child's group and observed carefully for signs and symptoms of worsening condition. If the child should develop any of the above listed symptoms (as stated in OAC 5101:2:12:33), he/she will immediately be isolated and discharged to the parent, guardian, or authorized person **within one hour**. If both parents/guardians are unavailable, the persons designated as emergency contacts will be notified to pick up the child. A form will be sent home with the child detailing his/her symptoms and information regarding his/her return to the Center.

If your child requires medication, vitamins, or a special diet, there is a required form available at the office to be completed and signed each time medication needs to be administered. Medication that does not have a prescription label must be clearly marked by the parent with the child's name, dosage, time, and why it is being given. It must be in the original container.

MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASE (Continued)

(OAC 5101:2-12-33)

Staff will be trained in the recognition of common childhood illnesses by attending the American Red Cross Course or a state-approved alternate course taught at least annually. The aspect of the course on communicable disease recognition and management teaches the proper handwashing and diapering techniques to our staff. When a staff member becomes ill, the same policies will apply. If a staff member is unable to perform his/her assigned duties due to an illness or a communicable disease, the staff member will be sent home to recover and an approved substitute will be assigned to cover that staff member's class.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATIONS, FOOD SUPPLEMENTS, OR MODIFIED DIETS

(OAC 5101:2-12-31)

State law requires that the Center obtain written instructions signed by a licensed physician or dentist and written and dated instructions signed by the parent or guardian on the prescribed form each time a medication, food supplement, or modified diet is to be administered. A "Request for the Administration of Medication" form is available upon request at the office. In order for a medication, food supplement, or modified diet to be administered by the Center, written instructions must be secured by a licensed physician or dentist or a prescription label must be provided which contains the child's name, a current date (within the last twelve months), the exact dosage to be given, the specific number of dosages to be given daily, and the means of administration. Written, signed, and dated instructions of the parent or guardian must be completed on the provided form. Medication will not be administered on an "as needed" basis. A medication, food supplement, or modified diet shall not be administered for any period of time beyond the date indicated by the physician, advanced practice nurse certified to prescribe medication, or licensed dentist, or **twelve months**, whichever comes first.

Over-the-counter, non-prescription pain/fever-reducing medications that do not contain aspirin will only be administered by the Center if accompanied by written instructions from a licensed physician which include a specific diagnosis and reason why the medication is to be administered. Over-the-counter, non-prescription cough or cold medications that do not contain codeine may be administered by the Center without written instructions from a licensed physician if written instructions from the parent or guardian are provided on the medication request form. The name of the medication, name of the child, birth date of the child, date, and the parent or guardian's signature must be included on the form. The full name of the child who is to receive the medication is to be printed on the medication container. The medication shall be in its original container with its original label attached which specifies appropriate dosages based on the child's age and weight. Recommended dosages for your child's age and weight will not be exceeded. The Center will administer the medication for no longer than **three consecutive days** within a fourteen day period unless accompanied by signed instructions from a licensed physician.

Non-prescription topical ointments, creams, or lotions may be administered by the Center without written instructions from a licensed physician if written instructions from the parent or guardian are provided on the medication request form. The form shall also include the name of the ointment, cream, or lotion; name of the child; birth date of the child; date; and the parent or guardian's signature. The written instructions will be valid for no longer than **twelve months**. Authorization for administration of the ointment, cream, or lotion may be canceled by written request of the parent at any time. When used for skin irritations, such as diaper rash, the topical product shall be administered by the Center for no longer than **fourteen consecutive days** at any one time period of use unless accompanied by signed instructions from a licensed physician. Cough drops, creams, sunscreens, and lip balms are considered medication. Instructions for over-the-counter medications must be followed. Non-prescription topical products and lotions used only as a preventative measure do not need to be documented. Signed and dated written instructions from the parent/guardian must be obtained, however, on the medication request form.

A school-age child with a health condition may be permitted to have possession of an inhaler or medication for emergency needs if these items are stored in a closed bag/backpack out of the reach of other children and signed and dated written permission is obtained by the child's parent/guardian. Center staff shall be notified of these children whose condition necessitates the carrying of these items.

MEDICAL, DENTAL, AND GENERAL EMERGENCIES

(OAC 5101:2-12-34)

Persons trained in first aid and CPR will be readily available at all times during the hours the Center is in operation. A Medical, Dental, and General Emergency Plan which gives the emergency telephone numbers, the names of those persons trained in first aid and CPR, and specific instructions to follow in the event of an emergency is posted by each telephone in the offices and in each classroom and in other spaces used by the children, such as the atrium.

A first aid kit is readily available in the kitchen cabinets of both the main building and infant/toddler house. The Center staff shall have access at all times to a working non-coin operated telephone.

An emergency medical authorization statement must be completed by the parent/guardian of each child upon enrollment at the Center. This statement will be kept on file in the office for ready reference when a child is being considered for medical or dental treatment. Play and Learn reserves the right to deny admission of a child whose parent/legal guardian denies consent for emergency transportation to a source of medical treatment.

Precautions are taken to prevent accidents and to insure the safety of children and adults. However, should a serious incident, injury, or illness occur affecting a child, the child's parent or guardian would be notified immediately. Should a child need to be transported by emergency squad to the hospital for treatment due to a serious incident, injury, or illness, the child's health and medical records will accompany the child. A Center administrator or child care staff member will accompany and stay with the child until the parent or guardian assumes responsibility for the child's care. Subsequent medical supervision and/or treatment, if necessary, is the parent's responsibility. If your child should sustain any type of head injury, no matter how slight, you will be contacted immediately.

An incident/injury report will be completed by the child care staff in charge of a child when the following occur: 1) an illness, accident, or injury which requires first aid treatment; 2) a bump or blow to the head; 3) emergency transporting; or 4) an unusual or unexpected event which jeopardizes the safety of children or staff, such as, a child leaving the center unattended. You will be given the completed report to sign. You will receive a copy, and a copy will be placed in your child's file at the Center.

A Medical, Dental and General Emergency plan; a Dental First Aid Chart; and a fire and weather emergency plan including evacuation routes is posted in the offices, in each classroom, and in each area used by the children. Monthly fire drills are conducted at varying times. In addition, monthly tornado drills are conducted during the spring months (March through June).

Should there be a general emergency (including, but not limited to, threats to the safety of children due to environmental situations or threats of violence; natural disasters such as fire, tornado, flood, etc.; or loss of power, heat, or water), staff members are instructed to follow the directions detailed on the Medical, Dental, and General Emergency Plan. Parents or guardians would be notified immediately if the general emergency requires the children to be picked up from the Center or an alternate evacuation site (St. Michael School).

Please keep the office updated of any changes in your business and home addresses and telephone numbers so you can be easily located and reached in the event of any emergency.

CONCEALED WEAPONS LAW

(Ohio Revised Code Section 2923.1212)

Unless otherwise authorized by law, pursuant to Ohio Revised Code, no person shall knowingly possess, have under the person's control, convey or attempt to convey a deadly weapon or dangerous ordnance onto Center premises.

SAFETY

The child care staff in charge of a group of children shall be responsible for their safety in keeping with the policy established by the Center. No child shall ever be alone or unsupervised (by staff or parent) while at the Center. There is to be no running in the building except during directed physical activity in the great hall or multipurpose room.

Two responsible adults are on the premises at all times. A staff member trained in first aid, communicable disease recognition and management, child abuse/neglect recognition, and CPR is available at the Center in both the main building and the infant/toddler house at all times.

Upon arrival to and departure from the Center, parents will be responsible to check in with the staff member responsible for their child's care. Staff members are to greet each parent and child upon arrival to and departure from their class and mark the class attendance sheet to reflect each child's arrival and departure. In the parent's absence staff members assume responsibility for the child. Upon arrival to the Center the parent re-assumes full responsibility for his/her child.

The Center staff has immediate access to a working telephone at all times. Monthly fire drills will be held. A record of the dates and times is kept in the office. Fire emergency and weather alert plans (including evacuation routes) are posted in each classroom.

Whenever children are transported away from the building in a vehicle for field trips, special outings, or routine trips, a first aid kit and a working cellular phone will accompany them. A person trained in first aid/management of communicable disease and CPR shall be available on the trip. Each child shall have proper identification including: the Center's name, address, and telephone number. Emergency exiting procedures from transportation vehicles shall be practiced with the children on a monthly basis by all staff responsible for transporting children. A record of the dates, times, and staff involved is kept in the office.

Before a child can participate in a water or swimming program where the water is more than two feet deep, a signed and dated permission slip is required indicating whether the child is a swimmer or non-swimmer. The children will be supervised by the child care staff and the pool or body of water shall be supervised by persons who are certified lifeguards or water safety instructors in compliance with the rules of the American Red Cross. The required staff/children ratios of Ohio Law shall be maintained during all swimming and water play activity.

When an accident or injury occurs or when any other incident necessitates the emergency transportation of a child, the Center shall complete a report on the form prescribed by Ohio Law. A copy shall be given to the parent/guardian and a copy shall remain on file at the Center.

The use of spray aerosols is prohibited when children are in attendance at the Center. This includes aerosol sunscreens and medications. Cleaning equipment and materials shall be kept in spaces inaccessible to children. Cots, pads, or mats used for napping shall be thoroughly cleaned with soap and water and sanitized at least every three months. Cots which become soiled during daily use shall be cleaned immediately with soap and water and sanitized with an appropriate germicide. Cots are to be sanitized with the germicidal agent once a month or when a cot becomes soiled or reassigned to another child. All equipment should be inspected regularly to ensure its safety. Electrical outlets must have appropriate coverings when not in use.

Equipment safety and safe use of the equipment are a high priority at our center. Equipment is routinely maintained, and children are instructed as to the rules for safe play as part of our curriculum.

All child care staff members are required by law, ORC 2151.421, to immediately notify the Local Public Children's Services Agency when a child is suspected to have been abused or neglected. The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services number is (614) 466-7765 locally or 1-866-866-3537 for any person to use to report a suspected violation by the Center.

SWIMMING AND WATER SAFETY

(OAC 5101:2-12-17)

Before a child can swim or participate in an activity in or near a body of water two or more feet in depth, a permission form must be signed and dated by the child's parent or guardian indicating: the child's name and birthdate, whether the child is a swimmer or non-swimmer, the location of the swimming site, a statement of whether or not the Center is providing additional adults or child care staff members above the licensing ration requirements for this activity, and a statement that the parent or guardian grants permission for the child to participate.

All swimming sites shall meet state and local guidelines for environmental health inspections and for onsite and private pools. Swimming activities shall not be permitted in lakes, rivers, ponds, creeks, or other similar bodies of water with the exception of school-age children who have the written permission from the child's parent or guardian.

Activities in bodies of water two or more feet in depth shall be supervised by persons who are currently certified as lifeguards or water safety instructors by the American Red Cross or an equivalent water safety program. If the lifeguard is a child care staff member, he/she shall not be counted as a child care staff member in the staff/child ratio. Child care staff members and all adults accompanying the children shall be actively supervising children and shall be able to clearly see all parts of the swimming area including the bottom of pools. The required staff/children ratios of will be maintained or exceeded during all swimming and water play activities.

Before an infant or toddler child can participate in water activities using wading pools, a permission form must be signed and dated by the child's parent or guardian indicating whether the child is a swimmer or non-swimmer. The children will be supervised by the child care staff, and the required staff/children ratios shall be maintained or exceeded during all water play activities.

Child care staff members shall review swimming and/or water safety rules with the children each time they participate in water activities. Included in these rules there shall be a system for checking to ensure that each child is safe when in the water.

TRANSPORTATION/FIELD TRIP SAFETY

(OAC 5101:2-12-18)

Before a child may participate in a field trip, special outing, or routine trip, a permission form must be signed and dated by the child's parent or guardian. Before leaving the Center, each child shall be given a proper identification tag to wear including: the Center's name, address, and telephone number. Children shall be assigned to specific child care staff members for all trips. Attendance rosters including the number of children present will accompany the group on each trip. Staff/child ratio requirements shall be met and often exceeded on all field trips. At least two staff members will supervise the group on any walking field trip.

Whenever children are transported away from the building in a vehicle (either by bus or parent/staff volunteers) for field trips, special outings, or routine trips, a first aid kit and a working cellular phone will accompany them. A person trained in first aid/management of communicable disease and CPR shall be available on the trip. Child care staff members shall also ensure that the following are taken with the group on each trip: emergency transportation authorization forms for each child, the health record and treatment supplies for any child who has a health condition, and a record listing each child on the trip. Emergency exiting procedures from transportation vehicles shall be practiced with the children on a monthly basis by all staff responsible for transporting children. A record of the dates, times, and staff involved is kept in the office.

Should a child need to be transported to the hospital for medical treatment due to a serious incident, injury, or illness, an emergency squad would be contacted. Transportation by emergency squad is the only type of emergency transport used at the Center. An emergency medical authorization statement must be completed by the parent/guardian of each child upon enrollment at the Center. Play and Learn reserves the right to deny admission of a child whose parent/legal guardian denies consent for emergency transportation to a source of medical treatment.

GUIDANCE/MANAGEMENT

(OAC 5101:2-12-22)

The child care staff members assigned to supervise a child or group of children shall be responsible for their guidance and management in keeping with the policy established by the Center. Child training and guidance will be handled with kindness, consistency, and understanding in accordance with the individual needs of each age group and each child. Child guidance and management measures shall be developmentally appropriate for the child, shall be consistent, and shall be explained to the child.

The child care staff member shall:

- 1) Use developmentally appropriate techniques suitable to the children's ages and relevant to the circumstances, such as, but not limited to: setting clear limits; redirecting the child to an appropriate activity; showing children positive alternatives; modeling the desired behavior; reinforcing appropriate behavior; and encouraging children to control their own behavior, cooperating with others, and solving problems by talking things out.
- 2) Intervene, when needed, as quickly as possible to ensure the safety of all children.
- 3) When necessary, use developmentally appropriate separation from the situation which shall last no more than one minute for each year of age of the child and shall not be used with infants or toddlers under the age of two years. When the child is to return to the activity, child care staff members will review the reason for the separation and what behavior is expected.
- 4) Communicate and consult with parents or guardians prior to implementing any specific behavior management plan. This plan must be in writing and signed by the parent/guardian.

The staff will discuss the rules thoroughly with children and explain why it is necessary to have them. We do not want children to hurt themselves or others. We want them to learn to respect other people and their property. Through the language of support and positive reinforcement, expectations are made clear and behavior is reinforced when these expectations are fulfilled. Developmentally appropriate child guidance and management techniques are used at all times.

The purpose of guidance and management is to enable the child to develop inner controls and self-discipline. To help the child accomplish this, we use positive and supportive communication. Discerning right from wrong is a continual learning process. We want to approach child guidance and management with positive action so that there is reinforcement for acceptable behavior and a learning process taking place as a natural part of the child's growth and development. With this in mind, these are the ways we guide and manage the children:

- Rather than focusing on negative outcomes, we **encourage positive choices and interactions**. By doing this, we help the child realize his/her accomplishments.
- We use **redirection**. This occurs when a teacher helps the child determine different ways to deal with situations. The children are encouraged to problem solve on their own so they can determine the best outcomes for themselves.
- **Communication** is an important part of guidance and discipline. We talk to a child when unacceptable behavior occurs to be sure he/she understands the rules and why they exist. We then encourage the child to communicate his/her feelings and why the choice was made. This enables the child to process the best way to handle the situation.
- If the unacceptable behavior continues, the child may be separated from the group in the classroom for a **time out**. Time outs are to be used sparingly and are not to be abused by the teacher. This can be an opportunity for a child to be removed from a situation so the teacher can communicate what has transpired. A time out should last no more than one minute per age of the child. It is hoped that this will encourage the child to understand the importance of acceptable behavior.

The use of active listening and discussion with the child is used to redirect the child to appropriate behaviors. When necessary the child is removed from the group either in the classroom or the office until the child is ready to return to the group. A child may lose a privilege if the misbehavior is extreme. Once the child is redirected, separated from the problem situation, talked to about the problem situation, and then praised for appropriate behavior, he/she is welcomed back to the group. If inappropriate behaviors persist, a plan of action will be devised and implemented by the parent, teacher, and Center Director. When children's behavior is unacceptable, the child care staff members shall:

1. Use developmentally appropriate techniques suitable to the children's ages and the circumstances
2. Use developmentally appropriate separation from the situation only as necessary
3. Communicate and consult with parents or guardians in implementing any specific behavior management plan

GUIDANCE/MANAGEMENT (Continued)
(OAC 5101:2-12-22)

If a child is dangerous to himself/herself or to others in the class, a member of the administrative staff is to be notified at once. Inappropriate behavior reports are to be completed by the teacher and then signed by the Director. The report shall then be given to the parent/guardian of the child to be read and signed. A copy of the report shall remain on file at the Center. If the behavior continues, the parents may be notified to attend a conference with the Director in order to come to a satisfactory solution. In cases involving the chance of injury to another person or the destruction/vandalism of property, it may become necessary to suspend or dis-enroll a child from the Center either temporarily or permanently. Play and Learn provides a quality and safe environment with a large amount of equipment for the children. If a child causes significant damage to the property equipment, the parent/guardian will be held responsible for the cost of replacement or repairs.

All Center employees and child care staff members shall not:

1. Abuse, endanger, or neglect children
2. Utilize cruel, harsh, unusual, or extreme techniques
3. Utilize any form of corporal punishment
4. Delegate children to manage or discipline
5. Use physical restraints on a child
6. Restrain a child by any means other than holding children for a short period of time, such as in a protective hug, so that the children may regain control
7. Place children in a locked room or confine children in any enclosed area
8. Confine children to equipment such as cribs or high chairs
9. Humiliate, threaten, or frighten children
10. Subject children to profane language or verbal abuse
11. Make derogatory or sarcastic remarks about children or their families
12. Punish children for failure to eat or sleep or for toileting accidents
13. Withhold any food (including snacks and treats), rest, or toilet use
14. Punish an entire group of children due to the unacceptable behavior of one or a few
15. Isolate and restrict children from all activities for an extended period of time

Parents of children in our Center should not use any guidance or management techniques with their children other than those described in this policy while their children are on Center property. Parents are also not permitted to discipline other children at the Center. Parent concerns should be directed toward the staff. The Center shall not abuse or neglect children and shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in the Center's care. The specifications of this Guidance/Management Rule 5101:2-12-22 of the Ohio Administrative Code applies to all employees at the Center.

OUTDOOR PLAY
(OAC 5101:2-12-14)

The Center will provide outdoor play each day in suitable weather for any toddler, preschool, and school-age child who is in attendance four or more consecutive daylight hours. Generally children can play outside when the temperature is between 25 and 90 degrees. However, outdoor play may be restricted due to weather factors including, but not limited to: extreme wind chill factor, high humidity or heat index, high ozone levels, high pollen counts, thunderstorms and lightening, high winds, precipitation, etc. If the weather is not suitable for outdoor play, classroom staff will be notified by a member of the administrative staff to keep the children indoors, and another type of large muscle activity will be provided in the atrium or classroom.

Child care staff members are responsible to watch for potential hazards while observing the children and shall actively supervise to prevent injury. Should an emergency situation arise which creates unsafe outdoor play conditions, classroom staff would be notified by the administrative staff to keep the children indoors and would be given other specific instructions to follow as necessary.

CURRICULUM

Play and Learn offers a variety of programs and curriculum to meet the needs of children ages six weeks through schoolage. General curriculum activities include:

- Music
- Arts and Crafts
- Reading Readiness
- Writing Readiness
- Math Readiness
- Health and Safety
- Gross/Large Motor Skills
- Fine/Small Motor Skills
- Life Skills
- Speaking and Listening Skills
- Science
- Social Studies
- Outdoor Play

We believe learning should be fun. Play and Learn's theme-based curriculum is designed to be age appropriate and meet the needs of each individual child and focuses on the whole child, not just the brain. We take an active approach to learning and use an experience-based process to introduce cognitive concepts. We foster the child's competence through hands-on learning and problem solving while exploring a weekly or monthly theme. The activities focus on the social, physical, emotional, and cognitive development of each child. Math and reading readiness, colors, shapes, and visual and auditory discrimination are presented in a variety of learning games and activities. Social and communicative skills are also emphasized in our daily routines.

We believe that the children and the teachers are a team that work together to learn about the world. Our classrooms are child-directed with the teachers establishing areas of interest based on the needs and interests of the group. The environment is set up to be both supportive and safe. Activity centers are set up throughout the room to offer children a variety of opportunities for exploration. This provides the child choices to investigate the activities at his/her own pace. The centers include, but are not limited to imaginative/dramatic play, blocks and transportation, science, language development/reading, games and manipulatives, and creative art.

The basic premise for our curriculum is that the children learn through play. Children use play to test and understand the world in which they live. During play, children have the opportunity to interact with others, build their social and intellectual skills, and explore their individual surroundings. It helps them learn about independence as well as caring and sharing with others. It allows them to problem solve while critically thinking about their effects on their world. We value play and encourage it through our curriculum.

We maintain an open-door policy at Play and Learn. Any custodial parent or guardian of a child enrolled at Play and Learn shall be permitted unlimited access to the Center during the hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided by the Center, or evaluating the premises. A parent of a child enrolled at the Center who is not the child's residential parent shall be permitted unlimited access to the Center and be afforded the same rights as the residential parent unless there is court documentation limiting access and conditions of the nonresidential parent. **Upon entering the premises, however, ALL PARENTS and VISITORS must report to the office!**

Play and Learn provides a variety of age appropriate activities for the children. The classroom schedules provide both active and quiet play opportunities. A schedule of the daily program for each age group is posted in each classroom and a copy may be obtained from the office. The following are sample schedules for each age group serviced at the Center.

SAMPLE SCHEDULES

Infant Schedule

6:30 – 9:00 a.m.	Arrival, cuddle time, breakfast, bottles, diapers, and free play
9:00 – 9:30 a.m.	Music, stories, and puzzles
9:30 – 11:30 a.m.	Large muscle play (indoors or outdoors), art, and morning naps
11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Lunch, bottles, and diapers
12:30 – 3:00 p.m.	Quiet play, cuddle time, and afternoon naps
3:00 – 4:00 p.m.	Snack, bottles, cuddle time, stories, and diapers
4:00 – 5:00 p.m.	Large muscle play (indoors or outdoors), songs, and music movement
5:00 – 6:00 p.m.	Free play and departure

Toddler Schedule

6:30 – 8:30 a.m.	Arrival and free play
8:30 – 9:00 a.m.	Breakfast
9:00 – 10:00 a.m.	Breakfast clean up, diapers and potty, and table top activities
10:00 – 10:45 a.m.	Large muscle play (indoors or outdoors)
10:45 – 11:00 a.m.	Circle time
11:00 – 11:20 a.m.	Art, sensory, and group activities
11:20 – 11:30 a.m.	Music movement
11:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Lunch
12:00 – 12:30 p.m.	Lunch clean up, diapers and potty, and circle time
12:30 – 1:00 p.m.	Video, stories, prepare for nap
1:00 – 3:00 p.m.	Nap/quiet time
3:00 – 3:30 p.m.	Wake up, diapers and potty, and songs
3:30 – 4:00 p.m.	Snack
4:00 – 4:45 p.m.	Large muscle play (indoors or outdoors)
4:45 – 5:00 p.m.	Group story time
5:00 – 5:30 p.m.	Free play
5:30 – 5:40 p.m.	Clean up
5:40 – 6:00 p.m.	Table top activities and departure

Younger Preschool Schedule

6:30 – 8:15 a.m.	Arrival and free play
8:15 – 8:30 a.m.	Bathroom break and wash hands for breakfast
8:30 – 9:00 a.m.	Breakfast
9:00 – 9:45 a.m.	Center time
9:45 – 10:00 a.m.	Clean up and bathroom break
10:00 – 11:00 a.m.	Large muscle play (indoors or outdoors)
11:00 – 11:20 a.m.	Circle time
11:20 – 11:45 a.m.	Art and sensory activities
11:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Clean up, bathroom break, and wash hands for lunch
12:00 – 12:30 p.m.	Lunch
12:30 – 1:20 p.m.	Large muscle play and group games
1:20 – 1:30 p.m.	Bathroom break and prepare for nap
1:30 – 3:15 p.m.	Nap/quiet time
3:15 – 3:45 p.m.	Wake up, bathroom break, books and table top activities, and wash hands for snack
3:45 – 4:15 p.m.	Snack
4:15 – 5:00 p.m.	Large muscle play (indoors or outdoors)
5:00 – 5:30 p.m.	Free play
5:30 – 6:00 p.m.	Combine in Kermit's class, free play, and departure

SAMPLE SCHEDULES (Continued)

Older Preschool Schedule

6:30 – 8:15 a.m.	Arrival and free play
8:15 – 8:30 a.m.	Bathroom break and wash hands for breakfast
8:30 – 9:00 a.m.	Breakfast
9:00 – 9:30 a.m.	Bathroom break and group activity
9:30 – 10:30 a.m.	Large muscle play (indoors or outdoors)
10:30 – 11:00 a.m.	Circle time
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Center play and art/sensory activities
12:00 – 12:30 p.m.	Lunch
12:30 – 1:30 p.m.	Large muscle play, group games, and music movement
1:30 – 2:00 p.m.	Bathroom break, story time, and prepare for nap
2:00 – 3:15 p.m.	Nap/quiet time
3:15 – 3:45 p.m.	Wake up, bathroom break, books and table top activities, and wash hands for snack
3:45 – 4:15 p.m.	Snack
4:15 – 5:00 p.m.	Large muscle play (indoors or outdoors)
5:00 – 5:30 p.m.	Free play
5:30 – 6:00 p.m.	Combine in Kermit's class, free play, and departure

Pre-Kindergarten and School-Age (No School Day) Schedule

6:30 – 8:15 a.m.	Arrival and free play
8:15 – 8:30 a.m.	Bathroom break and wash hands for breakfast
8:30 – 9:00 a.m.	Breakfast
9:00 – 9:30 a.m.	Calendar, weather, and group activity
9:30 – 10:30 a.m.	Large muscle play (indoors or outdoors)
10:30 – 11:00 a.m.	Circle time
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Center play and art/sensory activities
12:00 – 12:30 p.m.	Lunch
12:30 – 1:30 p.m.	Large muscle play, group games, and music movement
1:30 – 1:45 p.m.	Bathroom break, story time, and prepare for nap
1:45 – 3:00 p.m.	Nap/quiet time
3:00 – 3:45 p.m.	Wake up, bathroom break, books and table top activities, and wash hands for snack
3:45 – 4:15 p.m.	Snack
4:15 – 5:00 p.m.	Large muscle play (indoors or outdoors)
5:00 – 5:30 p.m.	Free play
5:30 – 6:00 p.m.	Combine in Kermit's class, free play, and departure

MEALS AND SNACKS

(OAC 5101:2-12-39)

Play and Learn daily provides breakfast, snacks, and a hot lunch. All of our meals are nutritionally balanced and meet the minimum daily requirements as determined by the State. We offer a variety of menu items and encourage children to “take two bites” of everything served. The weekly dated breakfast, snack, and lunch menus are posted on the bulletin board in the cafeteria outside the kitchen, in the infant/toddler house, and in each classroom. Should your child require vitamins or a special diet, you must have a written prescription or statement signed by a licensed physician. Children are not permitted to bring their own food to the Center for meals unless they are on a modified diet.

Breakfast

Play and Learn provides a breakfast which includes a minimum of one serving each of milk, fruit/vegetable, and bread/grains every morning at 8:30 a.m.

Snacks

Children will receive an afternoon snack daily. These nutritious snacks will include a minimum of two foods from the four basic food groups.

Lunch

The noon meal will include a minimum of one serving of fluid milk, one serving of meat or meat alternative, two servings of vegetables and/or fruits, and one serving of bread/grains and will supply one-third of the child’s recommended daily dietary allowance. The noon meal will be served to every child who is in attendance at the Center entirely through the hours of 11:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

Milk/Formula

For children under twelve months of age, the Center shall use formula or breast milk provided by the parent/guardian unless otherwise directed in writing by a licensed physician. For children twelve months to twenty-four months of age, the Center shall provide and use whole homogenized vitamin D fortified cow’s milk unless otherwise directed in writing by a licensed physician. For children over twenty-four months of age, the Center shall provide and use fluid milk that is vitamin D fortified. Reconstituted dry powdered milk shall be used only for cooking and shall not be used as a beverage.

Juice

Only full-strength (100%) fruit or vegetable juice shall meet the fruit or vegetable requirements for meals or snacks.

Modified Diets

Modified diets shall be approved in writing by a licensed physician. If an entire food group is eliminated, the parent/guardian shall provide written instructions from a physician on the prescribed form. When special diets are required for cultural or religious reasons, signed and dated written instructions shall be provided by the child’s parent/guardian.

If a child is unable to have a food item listed on the weekly menu, parents are responsible to provide a suitable alternative in conjunction with the physician’s instructions provided for the modified diet.

Meal Counts

Parents are asked to notify the Center by 10:00 a.m. if their child has not yet arrived but plans to be at the Center to eat lunch since meal counts are due by this time each day. If you have not notified the Center and your child arrives after 10:00 a.m., you will be responsible to provide a lunch for your child.

USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program Nondiscrimination Statement

“In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.”

INFANT DAILY PROGRAM, CAREGIVERS, AND FORMULA/FOOD

(OAC 5101:2-12-40 & 41)

The staff members responsible for the care of the infants shall plan and implement a program of activities suitable to the age levels and abilities of the infants under care. Provisions for outdoor play shall be available according to the infants' stage of development.

Staff members will be assigned to have primary responsibility for each group of infants in care during each staff daily shift to assure continuity of care. Parents or guardians will be kept informed of the primary caregivers assigned to their infants. The Center shall assure that any necessary information regarding an infant's care is exchanged between child care staff members and between staff members and parents.

Each infant shall be allowed to safely and comfortably sit, crawl, toddle, walk, and play according to the infant's stage of development in a designated space apart from the sleeping area each day. Each infant shall be removed from the crib, swing, infant seat, or other equipment throughout the day for individual attention. Each infant shall be removed from his/her crib for all feedings and be held or fed sitting up for bottle feedings.

Infants shall be cared for in a safe manner. Infants shall not be placed in the cribs with bibs or any items which could pose a strangulation or suffocation risk. Infants shall be placed in their cribs for sleeping, and shall not be allowed to sleep in car seats, swings, or other equipment. If a medical condition exists where a child needs to sleep in equipment other than a crib, written permission shall be obtained from a licensed physician. Infants shall be placed on their backs to sleep unless the child's licensed physician provides a written request to do otherwise on the "Sleep Position Waiver" form.

Parents/guardians shall provide the staff with detailed information on feeding schedules and sleeping schedules for their infant. A log is maintained for each infant so that parents can be kept informed of what is happening throughout the day with their infant. Parents/guardians will be given a daily report for their child which details the child's food intake, sleeping patterns, times and results of diaper changes, and information about daily activities.

Infants shall be served food in conformity with dated written instructions from the parent or guardian or physician. The instructions shall include amounts of food, type of food, and feeding times and be updated as needed based upon the child's needs and parent's instructions. Should parents/guardians not provide instructions for the serving of food to their child, the infant shall be served formula and/or food in sufficient amounts to meet the meal pattern and quality of the USDA child and adult food program child care component.

Parents/guardians are responsible to provide the appropriate number of prepared formula and/or juice bottles their child needs each day. The bottles must be labeled (bottle and cap) with the child's name and the date. The Center generally does not prepare formula. Parents/guardians are also required to maintain a backup supply of powdered formula and bottles for use at the Center if formula is spilled and/or if not enough formula is provided to meet the infant's daily requirements. The backup supply of formula and bottle(s) should be labeled with your child's name and will be stored and used for your infant if and when it becomes necessary. Play and Learn does not store filled bottles of formula, milk, or juice at the Center overnight.

Open containers of ready to feed and concentrated formula shall be covered, dated and refrigerated according to the manufacturer's instructions. Prepared formula and food shall be discarded or sent home daily if not used.

Until used, all formula or food shall be labeled with the child's name and date of preparation and refrigerated immediately after preparation or upon arrival and sent home daily. Formula or food that is commercially prepared may not be required to be refrigerated until after opening and shall be stored and served according to the manufacturer's instructions and the expiration date on the label and labeled with the child's name and date of preparation.

INFANT DAILY PROGRAM, CAREGIVERS, AND FORMULA/FOOD (Continued)

(OAC 5101:2-12-40 & 41)

If breast milk is provided by the parent or guardian, it shall be labeled with the child's name, date expressed, and the date of receipt. Centers shall follow the chart below in regard to storing breast milk:

If breast milk is stored:

- At room temperature (up to 78 degrees Fahrenheit)
- In the refrigerator (39 degrees Fahrenheit or lower)
- In a freezer compartment inside a refrigerator (5 degrees Fahrenheit)
- In a freezer compartment of a refrigerator with separate doors (0 degrees Fahrenheit)
- In a chest or upright freezer (-4 degrees Fahrenheit)

Then keep it as long as:

- 6 to 8 hours
- Up to 5 days counted from the day breast milk was expressed
- 2 weeks
- 3 to 6 months
- 6 to 12 months

In the infant program, the children are on individual feeding and sleeping schedules as determined by the parent and teacher. Activities such as stories, songs, large muscle play, etc. are planned to be done individually and in small groups. As the infants develop, they are gradually introduced to group activities so that by the time they are 18 months of age, they will be ready to be promoted to the toddler group. Provisions for outdoor play shall be available according to the infants' stages of development.

INFANT AND TODDLER PROGRAMS

Each infant is assigned a separate crib for sleeping. If a crib is considered hazardous for an infant, regardless of age, the infant may be assigned to a cot with written permission from the parent or guardian. An infant sixteen months of age or older may be assigned to a cot with written parental permission. All children over thirty-five inches tall will be assigned an individual cot for sleeping.

Play and Learn will provide breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack for the infant and toddler children. Parents are responsible to bring pre-mixed formula in the necessary number of bottles their infant will need throughout the day. The bottles must be labeled (bottle and cap) with the child's name and the date. Parents will also provide food for those children not yet eating "table food". The food must be labeled with the child's name and the date. Please remember that meal times can be very messy for your child. Therefore, please dress your child in "play clothes" and supply bibs and changes of clothing as necessary. We understand that your child may need help with some foods and might be reluctant to try new foods. The staff is here to help your child during meal times.

Disposable diapers are to be provided by the parents and sufficient quantities shall remain at the center for daily use. The child/ren should be wearing a clean disposable diaper upon arrival at the center. Parents may also choose to provide a pacifier or attachable teething ring for their child to use while at the Center.

DIAPERING AND TOILET TRAINING

Parents are expected to supply disposable diapers for non-toilet trained children. Ointments, creams or other topical substances are considered a medication and will only be applied if proper procedures are followed for the administration of medications. (See the "Administration of Medications, Food Supplements, Modified Diets, or Fluoride Supplements" page in this handbook for more information.)

The staff is very happy to assist you with your child throughout the toilet training stage. When you feel your child is ready, discuss the matter with your child's teachers and they will continue your efforts at the Center. The Center shall ensure that toilet training is never forced. Parents should bring several changes of clothes and underwear for those children who are being toilet trained.

NAP/QUIET TIME

For toddler, preschool, and school-age children a nap/quiet time is set aside each afternoon after lunch. We encourage the children to rest and lie quietly. Any child who does not fall asleep after an appropriate length of time during the designated nap/quiet time shall have the opportunity to engage in quiet activities.

Each toddler or preschool child shall be assigned an individual cot for sleeping/resting. If the use of a cot is hazardous to a child, the Center will obtain parent/guardian written permission for an alternative plan. School-age children who rest, nap, or sleep may be provided with a clean, washable pad, mat, or comfortable furniture instead of a cot. No child is permitted to rest, nap, or sleep on the floor. Each child should have a small blanket and pillow for nap time. Parents are responsible for laundering blankets at least once weekly. All cots, pads, mats, or other furniture are cleaned and disinfected before reassignment to another child.

TOYS AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS

We cannot be responsible for toys and personal belongings brought to the Center. In order to avoid lost articles, please make sure that all of your child's belongings are clearly marked with his/her name.

Each child will need a complete set of extra clothing that is appropriate for the season. Infants and toddlers may need additional changes of clothing. Each child may bring a blanket that is to remain at the center for naptime and a small sleep toy or animal. "Special" blankets may be taken home at night. All other blankets and sleep toys will be sent home on Fridays to be laundered.

We request that you check with your child's teacher before allowing toys to be brought from home into the classroom. Sharing personal toys is often difficult for young children. Generally toys for preschool and schoolage children may be brought from home only on a designated "share day". Please do not allow your child to bring items that either you or your child would be upset if they got broken.

We ask that "adventure toys" (such as, but not limited to: super heroes, toy guns and other weapons, etc.) not be brought into the classrooms as these toys are often associated with aggressive play. No weapons of any kind are permitted on Center property. Teachers must be consulted prior to bringing live animals into the classroom.

CLOTHING

Please remember to dress your child as comfortably as possible to enable him/her to participate in the different activities of the room. Children, regardless of age, may need assistance in selecting proper clothing to wear for the daily weather. Guidance in making sure that your child will be dressed for comfort as well as health is a parental responsibility. Parents may also need to intervene to determine whether an item of clothing is too small or too large to wear.

In the summer, the rooms are air conditioned. Children will play outside as long as the temperature is below 90 degrees. So you should plan to dress your child appropriately. In the winter, the children play outside if the temperature is above 25 degrees. Make sure your child has appropriate outdoor wear: boots, a hat, mittens, long pants and/or snow pants, a warm coat, and any other necessary clothing to insure your child's warmth during outdoor play. Shoes that are comfortable with nonskid soles are preferred. Also, shoes that tie or fasten/buckle are safer during active play than are those that simply slip on. Due to the active nature of the program, please do not send your child to the Center in flip-flops.

You will need to leave at least one complete extra set of clothing for your child (including shoes, socks, and underwear) at the Center at all times. Parents of infants and toddlers should plan to provide multiple sets of clothing for use as needed throughout the day. All clothing should be clearly marked with your child's name and stored in the designated place in your child's classroom/cubby. All soiled clothing needs to be taken home daily. Make sure to check for these in your child's take home basket every day.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

(OAC 5101:2-12-32)

Play and Learn encourages all parents to actively participate in their child's education and in the fellowship of the Day Care. We provide many opportunities throughout the year for parents to participate.

We maintain an open-door policy at Play and Learn and welcome your presence at the Center. Any custodial parent or guardian of a child enrolled at Play and Learn shall be permitted unlimited access to the Center during the hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided by the Center, or evaluating the premises. A parent of a child enrolled at the Center who is not the child's residential parent shall be permitted unlimited access to the Center and be afforded the same rights as the residential parent unless there is court documentation limiting access and conditions of the nonresidential parent. **Upon entering the premises, however, ALL PARENTS and VISITORS must report to the office!**

A roster of the names and telephone numbers of the parents or guardians of children attending the Center are available upon request. The roster will not include the name or telephone number of any parent who requests his/her name or telephone number not be included.

Any parents interested in enrolling their child at the Center will meet with the Director or the Assistant Director for an orientation session to discuss the philosophy, policies, and procedures of the Center. Time will be given for a tour and answering any questions and concerns the parents may have.

Prior to the beginning of each school year, the Center will host an open house. This is designed to provide parents and children with the opportunity to meet classroom teachers, administrative staff, and other child care staff. At this time teachers can share information on classroom activities, policies, educational goals and objectives with the parents.

At various times throughout the year, Play and Learn will sponsor special events and activities for staff, parents, and children. These may include parties, Week of the Young Child Celebration, Christmas and spring programs, carnivals, and special programs for entertainment and educational purposes.

The individual classrooms will also have special activities, such as birthday parties, holiday parties, and field trips at which we encourage parents to volunteer and participate. Parents should be sure to look for the posted sign-up sheets for these activities. Any parent who has a special interest or skill that they would like to share with the children may schedule a time to visit the classrooms. Special arrangements can also be made for you to join your child at a meal for a nominal fee.

Play and Learn publishes a monthly newsletter which may include: upcoming Center and community events, parenting articles, notes from the Director, classroom updates, and other important information.

Any important announcements and upcoming events, weekly menus, and parent information will be posted on the bulletin board in the cafeteria of the main building and at the entrance of the infant/toddler house. Also parents should be sure to check in their child's classroom for any posted additional information, communicable disease notices, and classroom activities.

Parents who need assistance with problems or complaints related to the child care program are encouraged to make an appointment with the Director to discuss the matter.

The Center will schedule periodic conferences for each parent/guardian to meet with the appropriate child care staff member in order to discuss the child's behavior, progress, social and physical needs, or any other pertinent matter. These conferences will occur at least once each year for children enrolled in the toddler, preschool, and pre-kindergarten programs. Telephone conferences will occur only when an in-person parent conference is not practical. All conferences, whether done in person or by telephone, will be documented in writing and kept on file at the Center. Conferences for parents/guardians of infants and school-age children are available upon request.

PARENT DONATIONS

We welcome donations of almost any kind. Toys and clothing that your children have outgrown will be put to good use at Play and Learn. Things you throw away can often be used in the classroom. Suggestions include: egg cartons, clean dishwashing soap and bleach containers, juice cans, old sponges, toilet paper and paper towel rolls, cereal boxes, old socks, cardboard, scrap lumber, old clothes for dress-up, clothespins, buttons, etc.

DAILY COMMUNICATIONS

Children enrolled at the Center are assigned an individual pocket, cubby, or basket to be used for storage of their personal belongings as well as a means of Center communication to parents. Monthly newsletters, parent memos, program announcements, etc. will be periodically placed in your child's take-home pocket, cubby, or basket. Plan to check your child's take-home pocket, cubby, or basket regularly for this important information. All correspondence to be placed by parents in other children's pockets, cubbies, or baskets in the Center, with exception to children's birthday party invitations, needs to be approved by the Director or Assistant Director before being distributed.

PARENT TO STAFF RELATIONS

One of our main goals is to assist you in your task of child rearing. As professionals, we try to plan activities and learning experiences that will encourage your child's skills and interests on an individual basis. Progress reports are completed periodically and formal conferences held at least once per year for children who are enrolled in the toddler, preschool, and pre-kindergarten programs. Children who are enrolled in the infant program receive daily reports and also can have annual conferences.

As a staff member, it helps to know if your child didn't sleep well, was up late, complained of a stomachache, or just is in need of some extra TLC. Please don't hesitate to share your thoughts with us. From time to time, your child's teacher may write a note to you describing a situation or an incident that he/she feels you should and would want to know about. We feel this is an important line of communication between parents and staff that is mutually beneficial to maintain.

PARENT TO DIRECTOR RELATIONS

The Play and Learn Director is responsible for the daily operation of the center, its programs, and its staff. Priority is given to maintaining the highest quality of child care services for our families. The Director's door is always open if you feel like chatting or if you wish to discuss a matter of concern. Your suggestions and comments are welcomed and appreciated.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

If you have a problem or concern, please direct it to the Director immediately. Together we can work to attempt to resolve the issue in a prompt and satisfactory manner.

Any grievance between a parent/guardian and Play and Learn shall be handled in the following manner:

1. The issue shall be discussed with the Director.
2. If the grievance is not alleviated following this discussion, then the matter is to be presented to the Director in writing, offering possible solutions.
3. The Director has five (5) working days to respond to the parent's/guardian's grievance in writing.
4. If the parent/guardian remains unsatisfied, a written request may then be made to the Child Care Committee to discuss the grievance.
5. The Child Care Committee will discuss the grievance and reach a decision. The decision of the Child Care Committee is final.