

PARENT HANDBOOK

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CHILD CARE CENTER OVERVIEW

WELCOME

Dear Parents:

Welcome to the Land of Children Child Care Center (Day Care / After School and Summer Camp). We are pleased that you have enrolled your child in our program. We want you to be a part of our Center and your child's education. We ask that you look over this parent handbook and then keep it at home for future reference. Copies will also be kept in each classroom. We hope that your experience at our Center is a great one and that you are secure in the fact that your child is well cared for. Please communicate with us regarding any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Tatyana Volkova (Director)

Mailing Address:

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Telephone Numbers: 215-364-9575, 267-474-4200

E-Mail: landofchildren2006@yahoo.com

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MISSION

Our mission is to provide exemplary childcare for the children of our community by offering a model program-tailored to ensure the quality of child's daily experiences.

PHILOSOPHY

The primary goal of Land of Children is to serve the needs of the children.

In order to achieve the best and maximum result in children, our program strives to provide a safe and secure learning environment. Well-trained and consistent staff helps them to develop and build crucial foundational skills in all of the developmental areas: intellectually, socially, physically, and emotionally in a manner appropriate to their age.

Children are stimulated and encouraged to refine and strengthen their abilities through variety of activities and different materials. At our program children are also encouraged through continuity of sensitive care to develop a positive self-esteem.

Land of Children also believes that parental guidance is an important part of the child's early learning development, so we encourage parents and guardians to be involved in the school experience by helping with homework and going over the material covered in the classroom.

PROGRAM GOALS

The early years in a child's life set the tone for future learning. Our goal is to stay current on research in child development so that we are able to build a foundation for each child that lasts a lifetime. Our curriculum is designed with specific objectives for each age level and child; however, the following goals are incorporated into every classroom:

- To help the children achieve intellectual growth
- To provide a learning environment that will help all children develop intellectually, socially, physically, and emotionally in a manner appropriate to their age and stage of development
- To provide appropriate assessment that identifies the strengths and needs of each child in order to build upon these strengths and challenge the individual
- To provide for prevention, early identification, and early intervention of problems that interfere with the development of children's learning
- To help the children develop confidence in themselves and their ability to learn

- To include a balance of teacher-directed and child-initiated activities that offer choices for children
- To increase competence and skills in language arts: reading, writing, listening, thinking, and speaking
- To expand the children's knowledge of people, experiences, ideas, and things
- To increase physical coordination skills
- To increase competence in self-direction, initiative and independence
- To develop cooperative trusting relationships and team work
- To develop children's ability to focus their attention
- To acquire a level of communicative competence that is personally satisfying acquire social skills and abilities which enable them to relate to other children and to adults
- To increase competence in dealing with emotional feelings and social situations
- Develop social competence by providing daily opportunities for children to use problem-solving strategies to make decisions
- To develop the children's natural curiosity and their creative potential
- To help them remain true to their individual natures, being free to develop to their own potentials

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT AND STUFF RESPONSIBILITIES

As individuals who work with young children, we commit ourselves to furthering the values of early childhood education. To the best of our ability we will:

- Ⓢ Ensure that programs for young children are based on current knowledge of child development and early childhood education
- Ⓢ Respect and support families in their task of nurturing children
- Ⓢ Respect colleagues in early childhood education
- Ⓢ Serve as an advocate for children, their families, and their teachers in the community and society
- Ⓢ Maintain high standards of professional conduct
- Ⓢ Recognize how personal values, opinions, and biases can affect professional judgment
- Ⓢ Be open to new ideas and be willing to learn from the suggestions of others
- Ⓢ Continue to learn, grow and contribute as a professional.

ENROLLMENT ELIGIBILITY

Land of Children enrolls children, ages 3 months to 13 years.

HOURS OF OPERATION

We are licensed to be in operation from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. All children must be picked up by 7:00 p.m. If children are not picked up by 7:00 p.m., we will have to charge a late fee (of \$1.00 per minute for each child), to cover overtime for the staff.

ENROLLMENT

When you enroll your child there will be some necessary paperwork to be filled out. All paperwork should be completed promptly and returned to us.

Before you leave your child the first day, it is wise to make a visit with the child during the regular daycare hours. Mornings are the best, since the children sleep in the afternoons. This way your child gets to see what happens in the daycare and gives him/her a chance to meet us and the other children. Even if your child is just an infant, it is a good idea to visit because you get to see how we interact with the children. This visit is a good time to bring any items you wish to leave here (e.g., diapers, extra clothing, etc.). During this time we can give you some ideas on what you can do to make the transition as easy as possible for you and for your child.

APPLICATION CONTRACT

All children must be enrolled before attending. Once the decision to enroll is made, families must complete the following, sign where applicable, and return these to the center prior to the child's first day of attendance:

- ☉ An annual registration fee, supply fee and building maintenance fee per child is due upon enrollment and is renewable each year
- ☉ Signed/Initialed Enrollment Agreement
- ☉ Signed/Initialed Enrollment Information
- ☉ Signed Parent Policy Agreement
- ☉ Current Immunization record & Health Assessment with a physician's signature

As long as a child remains enrolled at Land of Children, all information in the file must be updated and current.

Parents must also participate in the following before the enrollment process is complete:

- ☉ Center tour
- ☉ Program orientation
- ☉ Parent Handbook review
- ☉ Meet the teacher

Center tours are scheduled by appointment during the hours of:

9:00a.m. - 1:00 p.m. or 3:00 p.m. -7:00 p.m.

TUITION

Tuition fees are charged weekly and these fees must be paid in advance of services being provided. Weekly tuition fees are due on Friday for the following week or the account can be pre-paid in advance for more than a week.

Parents will be informed of current rates when children are enrolled.

If there is an increase in rates, parents will be given a two-week notice regarding the new rates. Parents are responsible for making payments every Monday and for keeping the account current. At the end of each calendar year the center will furnish a report of all tuition payments and fees paid for each child, for income tax purposes.

FEES & PAYMENTS

Fees and policies in this handbook are subject to change. We will give you a two-week notice of any changes in our fees or policies whenever possible.

All fees are to be paid by check, money order or cash. There is a \$25.00 fee assessed for any returned check. If this happens twice, Land of Children requires that payment be made with a money order or cash, only.

Discounts

☉ If two or more children from the same family are enrolled in the center at the same time, the family will receive discount.

☉ In case of an absence due to an illness, there will be a 50% deduction from the days of absence.

Late payment

A late fee will be assessed on Friday by the end of the working day when payment is past due. Late fee is \$25.

Late pick up

Late fees are assessed if you fail to pick up your child on time. If children are not picked up by 7:00

p.m., we will have to charge a late fee (of \$1.00 per minute for each child), to cover overtime for the staff.

CANCELLATION

If for some reason you decide to stop bringing your child to our daycare, we require a two-week written notice. Any outstanding fees must be paid on or before the child's last day.

➡ *Cancellation, if approved, negates the privilege of priority registration for the next enrollment period.*

VACATION WEEKS

During the 12-month contract agreement, **1 week** may be designated as a vacation week. Payment is not required for that week. Land of Children needs to have the vacation request submitted in writing prior to the child taking the actual time off.

HOLIDAYS

The Center is closed for observed holidays (listed below). These closings do not affect tuition payments. In other words, a full week's tuition is due. Holiday scheduled closings on the following days: **Christmas Day, New Year's Days, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving Day and the following Friday.** Other holidays will be determined on a case-by-case basis, depending on the need of parents who have to work on those holidays.

ATTENDANCE/ ARRIVAL/ ABSENCES

Toddler and preschool classrooms begin curriculum instruction at 9:00 a.m. In order for children to receive the full benefit of our program and to participate in the group activities, we ask that you have your child here by that time. Please do not ask the Center or the teacher to hold breakfast for your child after 9:00 a.m. If there is a special circumstance such as a doctor's appointment requiring arrival after 10:00 a.m., please check with the Center/Teacher and receive special permission for a late arrival before bringing your child to the Center.

➡ Do not drop your child off during naptime at the Center.

➡ Call the Center (215-364-9575) no later than 10:00 a.m. if your child is going to be absent that day (10:00 a.m. is the time the daily lunch count is made).

A full week's tuition is due even if a child is absent one or more days during the week.

If you enroll your child for part time (i.e. two or three days per week) at Land of Children you may not

switch the days your child attends without prior approval from the Director and the Teacher.

CURRICULUM

(see attached papers in the back of handbook)

We believe children should have fun. Each month a theme is presented. These themes are all based on things, which interest children. During the month, many activities take place, which help promote basic skills (letter and number recognition, color and shape recognition, large motor skills, small motor skills, etc.) and most of these activities center around that week's theme.

We incorporate preschool curriculum into our daily activities for fun and to prepare the older children for school. Many of our activities revolve around stories, crafts, music, games, puzzles, etc. As part of this curriculum, we have a daily "circle time" for the older children. The younger children are free to sit in and observe. During the "circle time" we discuss something related to the week's theme, talk about the days of the week (put numbers on a calendar) and the weather for the day.

A daily schedule will be posted on the classroom clipboard or the bulletin board.

ASSESSMENTS

At Land of Children an assessment will be administered onsite to determine your child's developmental age upon enrollment and thereafter throughout the year. The child's assessments will be used to:

- Ⓢ Identify children's interests and needs
- Ⓢ Describe the developmental progress and learning
- Ⓢ Design classroom curriculum and adapt teaching practices
- Ⓢ Communicate with families
- Ⓢ Arrange for referrals when indicated

The assessments are shared with the parents during Parent/Teacher scheduled conferences.

For assessing children, Land of Children uses the Pennsylvania Learning Standards for Early Childhood as well as the Ounce Scale for infants/toddlers and the Work Sampling System for preschool through kindergarten. Parent/Teacher conferences will be held no less than twice a year to formally discuss concerns with the teacher.

REFERRALS

If the teacher suspects that a child has a developmental delay or other special need, this possibility is

communicated to families in a sensitive, supportive, and confidential manner with documentation and explanation for the concern, suggested next steps, and information about resources for assessment. Identifying children with disabilities or delays early, helps minimize or prevent future problems. All screening referrals will be kept strictly confidential and will be used only to help access appropriate care if needed.

PROGRAMS

The Young Toddler Program

(Age 3 - 24 Months)

Young toddlers, enrolled in the program, adhere to their own individual schedule throughout the day. Information provided by the parents is used to plan each child's day according to his /her needs.

Feeding, diapering, and napping are each an integral part of the daily curriculum. We have adapted the *Buttercups Curriculum* into the classroom. We follow their structure and guidelines of a comprehensive list of skills for ages 6 to 36 months.

We talk, read and sing to young toddlers; hold them and rock them and maintain the routine parents have established for feeding, sleeping and playing. Each infant will sleep in his/her own crib. Young toddlers participate in experience that will introduce them to gross motor skills, finger plays, songs, tapes, and outdoor/indoor playtime.

The Older Toddler Program

(Age 25-36 Months)

The older toddlers are enrolled in a curriculum program by We have adapted the *Buttercups Curriculum* into the classroom. We follow their structure and guidelines of a comprehensive list of skills for ages 6 to 36 months. The program entails students to a variety of songs, activities, and other developmentally appropriate activities.

The older toddlers are provided with the opportunity to gain a sense of mastery over their environment through exploration and play. Creativity and freedom of choice are encouraged as toddlers assert their independence.

Your child will delight in the storytelling and music, which we have selected to help them develop their communication skills.

**The Preschool Program (3 Years - 4 Years) and
The Pre-K Program (4 Years – 5 years)**

These two separate programs use the *Creative Curriculum* that is based on the foundations of theory and research. This program is designed to allow the students to learn literacy skills, math, science, social studies, the arts and technology through learning centers that the teacher facilitates. It offers a range of learning styles from child-initiated to teacher-directed learning.

Children participate in experiences that will introduce them to dramatic play, arts, music, dance, and hands-on activities.

Learning games are used to motivate the children and to make learning enjoyable and fun.

Kindergarten Program

(5 years – 6 year)

We are proud to be a Private Academic School since January 2010. Our program and curriculum are based on the Pennsylvania's Kindergarten Standards. We focus on reading, language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, art, music, library skill, and physical education. We support children's individualized learning opportunities by providing them with meaningful experiences that engage their interests, abilities, and cultures.

After School Program

(Up to 13 years old)

The older children, that attend the After School Program, are picked up from their schools by a driver and brought to the center. After a full course hot meal, each student completes his/her homework with a teacher, followed by different classes and playtime. The teacher will also be available for tutoring for additional costs.

EXTRA CURRICULUM ACTIVITIES

Children are offered opportunities to engage in enrichment programs. These classes are held at the center:

Sports, Aerobics, Circus Arts & Gymnastics

Current studies and research show that many adults and sixty percent of children today are overweight in the United States. Improper food habits and lack of exercise are the main causes. To prevent children from being overweight and having an outlet for their energy, playing a sport is just what a child needs. The center will offer Aerobics, Circus Arts and Gymnastics.

Aerobics is considered to be one of the most energizing types of sport. All of the muscle groups work out, which provides the overall toning of the whole body.

Circus Arts is a type of the sport that has not been as popular here in the USA, but the interest toward it has been increasing greatly. We believe that children will love and enjoy it.

Gymnastics is the most popular sport among our children, girls in particular. Irina will be able to teach the children the proper stretching exercises and gain the ability to perform complicated gymnastics routines.

Dance

By learning and performing dances of different countries, children simultaneously are learning about other world cultures. Dance is offered once a week through the center but additional classes may be added at the request of the parent for additional costs.

Music, Singing, And Performing

Even those people who have no sense of tune enjoy singing. Imagine training children who have the talent to sing. Any child will be able to sing his or her heart out in our music classes. With the instruction of notes, starting from basic music reading, the students will be able to increase their knowledge of music. We are planning to teach children to play different musical instruments as well. Classes are offered at least once a week for each class through the center as part of the curriculum.

TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Land of Children uses technology to extend learning within the classroom and to integrate and enrich the curriculum. The use of passive media (television and video) is limited to developmentally appropriate programming. School-Age children will be limited to the use of technology in accordance to the PA Department of Education.

WEEKLY LESSON REVIEWS

On-going assessments will be conducted throughout your child's time with us. These assessments are used to determine the weekly lesson plans for the whole class and also to help develop individual curriculum goals for your child. Each teacher designs classroom lesson plans around the emerging skills of the whole class. There are also plans for individualized skill building for those children who need help or challenge with emerging skills.

A weekly review of the lesson is available for parents.

We encourage parents to support the activities and to practice the vocabulary each week; it is also helpful if parents read books to their children and to sing the songs learned in the classroom.

TRANSITIONS/PLACEMENT

Placement of a child in a classroom is determined by age and developmental level. We want your child to be placed where his/her needs are met and their potential challenged. While we do accept input from parents about room assignments, the director and the teachers will make the final decision based on what is best for the child, other children, teachers and the center.

OUTDOORS PLAY

When the weather cooperates, we will spend time outdoors. We are permitted outside when the temperature is higher than 25 degrees and lower than 90 degrees and no precipitation. These are regulations set by the Department of Public Welfare. Please dress your child appropriately. During the summer months tennis and soccer fields and also the pool are used. Please note that before the start of Summer Camp, appropriate papers and forms must be signed in order for your child to use pool.

NAPTIME

All children under the age of five are required by state law to have a rest time. We will provide a safe, quiet place for your child to rest. Children, who wake up before the naptime is over, will be guided to find a quiet time activity that will not disturb the sleeping children.

MEALS AND SNACKS

We serve breakfast, lunch, afternoon snack, and dinner each day as part of our program.

- Please do not send snacks or candy with your child to daycare unless prior approval has been given.
- If your child has an allergy to a specific food, please let us know and we will try to make an appropriate substitution. If a child has many allergies and cannot eat from the menu at all, we may require the parents to provide his lunch and/or snacks.
- We will post a monthly menu on the classroom clipboard or the bulletin board.
- We never force a child to finish what is on his/her plate, but we do encourage each child to try one or two bites of everything.
- For children who are not ready for table food, we ask that the parents provide the child's food and milk or juice.
- Please label all bottles and food containers with the child's name and the current date, and then place all bottles and food containers in a bottle bag or zip-loc type plastic bag. Please label the bottle bag or plastic bag with the name of the child.
- Monthly menus are carefully planned to meet the nutritional guidelines of the state child food

program. Breakfast is served from 8:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. Children **must arrive no later than 9:00 a.m.** in order to eat breakfast at the center. Please do not ask the center or the teacher to hold breakfast for your child after 9:00 a.m. If a child arrives at the center eating his or her breakfast, the parent will be asked to supervise the child away from the other children until he or she is finished. We begin serving lunch at 12:00 p.m. and **the lunch count is based on the number of children at the center by 10:00 a.m.** Please call the center if you are going to be late.

➡ If a child requires a special diet, you **must provide the food from home and your child's file must include a signed statement** that Land of Children is not responsible for the nutritional value of the food brought from home or for meeting the child's daily food needs. In addition, if a child requires diet modifications for health reasons we must have a written approval from a physician or registered-licensed dietician. Any food or beverage brought from home must be labeled with the child's name and date.

DISCIPLINE/ GUIDANCE METHODS

Discipline and Behavior Management Policy

At Land of Children the purpose of discipline is to help children develop self-control and to become responsible for their own behavior. We use non-punitive methods of discipline, which are directly related to the child's behavior and encourage the child's participation. Teachers like to work closely with parents to understand each child and to determine which methods work best for that child, thus, teamwork with parents is very important.

Praise and positive reinforcement are effective methods for the behavior management of children.

We try to stress two main patterns of behavior: respect for people and respect for property. As a result, we don't allow children to hit or shove other children or verbally abuse them. We also stress that they treat material possessions (ours or theirs) with respect. If a child exhibits continually disruptive and unsafe behavior that is not resolved through appropriate behavior management strategies, the teachers will discuss the situation with a supervisor and parents to develop an action plan. All reasonable attempts will be made to work with the child and the family to resolve the behavior problem. Staff will keep parents informed of the progress made.

Occasionally children do not behave in respectful ways. We first remind them of the proper behavior. If the problematic behavior is repeated, a "*time out*" chair is used. The amount of time a child sits in "*time out*" varies according to his age. Most experts agree that one minute per year of age is the most effective

length of time, but this amount will never exceed five minutes, even if the child is more than five years old. When his "time out" is up, we talk to the child (by now he has calmed down) and try to explain why that behavior was inappropriate. Each room is equipped with a "quiet area" that children are permitted to use throughout the day to think and calm down as needed.

➡ Children are never punished for lapses in toilet training or for accidents (spilled milk, for example). In the case of the latter, we will have the child help us clean up, not for punishment, but to help teach responsibility.

What We Do to Help Reinforce Positive Behavior:

1. Praise, reward, and encourage the children
2. Reason with and set limits for the children
3. Model appropriate behavior for the children
4. Modify the classroom environment to attempt to prevent problems before they occur
5. Listen to the children
6. Provide alternatives for inappropriate behavior to the children
7. Provide the children with natural and logical consequences of their behaviors
8. Treat the children as people and respect their needs, desires, and feelings
9. Explain things to children on their levels
10. Use short, supervised periods of time-out
11. Stay consistent in our behavior management program

What We Do Not Do:

1. Spank, shake, bite, pinch, push, pull, slap, or otherwise physically punish the children
2. Make fun of, yell at, threaten, make sarcastic remarks about, use profanity, or otherwise verbally abuse the children
3. Shame or punish the children when bathroom accidents occur
4. Deny food or rest as punishment
5. Relate discipline to eating, resting, or sleeping
6. Leave the children alone, unattended, or without supervision
7. Place the children in locked rooms, closets, or any kind of confinement with a limited movement as punishment
8. Allow discipline of children by children

9. Criticize, make fun of, or otherwise belittle children's parents, families, or ethnic groups

TOILET TRAINING

When you feel your child is ready for toilet training, we ask that you begin this training at home first. We will follow through and encourage your child while in our care. We also ask for the child to be dressed in "user-friendly" clothing as much as possible during the transitional period. The best clothes are shorts and pants with elastic waists, or dresses for girls. Try to avoid really tight clothing, pants with snaps and zippers. We will gladly help you with the transitioning your child from diaper use to independent toilet use.

CHILDREN'S CLOTHING

Your child should be dressed in play clothes that are durable, comfortable, and appropriate for play and for the season. We will go outside daily if the weather permits. Many of your child's favorite activities may be a little messy, like finger painting and digging in the sand, so make sure the child's clothes are suitable.

At Land of Children, children's safety is of great concern, therefore, we ask that you send your child to school wearing a sturdy shoe that supports the foot properly and protects the toes. Sneakers with socks are the best. Children are not permitted to wear open-toed sandals, clogs, and boots or flip-flops on the playgrounds because they are dangerous for running and climbing.

We ask that you provide a complete change of clothing for your child to be left at school, including shoes and socks. In order to avoid confusion and lost items, label each article of clothing. Please place these items in a bag labeled with the child's name.

BRINGING ITEMS FROM HOME

Children frequently want to share with their class nature items and treasures from home. Such items are especially welcomed if they support the topic being studied. It is always a good idea to check with a child's teacher first before bringing objects to the Center.

We do discourage children from bringing toys from home; although, some teachers will allow items of comfort, such as a soft cuddly stuffed animal, to be brought to school to help the child sleep more comfortably (please check with the teacher first). When a child brings a toy from home, it is sometimes difficult for them to share, causing behavior problems or the toy could get lost or broken.

The staff will not be responsible if these items are lost or damaged.

The Center does not allow, at any time, toys of violence like guns, swords, or violent action figures.

BIRTHDAYS/CELEBRATIONS/HOLIDAYS

The Center celebrates children's birthdays in age-appropriate ways in the classroom. The birthday celebration, however, is purposefully kept simple and child-centered.

Food brought from home must be approved for sharing. Parents may bring cakes/cookies/cupcakes that are store-bought and labeled with the ingredients. These will be served during afternoon snack and parents are welcome to join the children.

*Birthday party invitations for parties away from the Center may be distributed at school **only** through the teacher. If you do not want your child's birthday celebrated, please notify the Center in advance in writing.*

Land of Children observes traditional, national, cultural and seasonal holidays with activities that are child-centered, educationally oriented and developmentally appropriate. Please share with the Center staff any celebrations that are important to your family, so that these too may be included in our classroom planning.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

There will be times and ways you can get involved in your child's daycare and preschool education. You are welcomed and encouraged to participate in any of the following:

- 🌀 Lending objects for units of study
- 🌀 Helping your child at home with the concepts we are studying here
- 🌀 Helping to provide treats or other items for our parties
- 🌀 Chaperoning on field trips
- 🌀 Parent/Teacher Conferences
- 🌀 Input on lesson planning

Naturally, you are welcome to drop in and visit or observe any time the center is in operation. Just make sure to let us know ahead of time.

Parents: The School/Home Connection

It is important for parents to know what is happening in their child's classroom as well as at the Center. Please make every effort to stay informed about the progress and well-being of your child. The director and the teacher will gladly answer any of your questions.

Classroom Parent Information Board

There is a bulletin board located in the classrooms that contains both general and specific parent information. Please make a point to stop by and check the information on the board each day. This will help with the process of communication and connecting parents with the Center.

Parent Conferences

All parents are invited to participate in parent/ teacher conferences. These conferences will be held during school hours and at a time that is convenient for both the parents and the teacher. Occasionally a teacher may request a parent conference when there are special concerns in the classroom. We ask that parents respect this request with prompt attention.

Parent Meetings/Classes

Land of Children has parent meetings through out the year. This includes general meetings, new parent orientations, and program/classroom Open House. Periodically, parenting classes are held in the evening. These classes cover a variety of topics related to the Center's program and the young child's development. The Pre-K Counts classroom also hosts Friday Family Forums throughout the year. These typically take place around lunch time and parents of the Child Care Center are encouraged to attend.

PARENT/ TEACHER COMMUNICATION

For problem solving at the classroom level:

- Ⓢ First, bring any concern to the teacher.
- Ⓢ Then, if you still have a concern, schedule a meeting with the Director.

When you have a concern, please remember:

- Ⓢ Teachers want parents to be satisfied with the care their child is receiving.
- Ⓢ Talk to the teachers directly whenever possible.
- Ⓢ Realize that if you have a concern with a teacher, the Director will need to investigate and talk with the teacher about your concern in order to deal with the issue in a straightforward manner.
- Ⓢ Please give teachers a chance to correct minor issues. On the other hand, don't allow concerns to build up. As concerns occur, share them with the teachers. It is disturbing to find out later that a parent had a number of concerns and never expressed them.
- Ⓢ Sometimes we cannot make the changes you may request, due to other restrictions, but we always want to hear your suggestions. We promise to consider them seriously and respond to you in a timely manner.
- Ⓢ If at anytime a parent wishes to meet with their child's teacher to discuss issues that may arise,

he/she can contact the teacher to schedule a meeting.

We do ask that you schedule a conference with your child's teacher to discuss issues in depth, and do not try to discuss them during drop-off and pick-up hours.

CHECK IN/ CHECK OUT PROCEDURES

- ☉ Children must be brought into the Center and **signed in**
- ☉ Children then should be escorted to their classroom and released to the staff
- ☉ Be sure the classroom staff sees you and greets your child before you leave
- ☉ When children are picked up from the Center, you must **sign them out**
- ☉ Anyone signing the child out must be on the approved drop off form signed at registration and at least 18 years of age.
- ☉ Inform the classroom staff that you are taking your child

Please note that as long as the child's parent is on the Land of Children premises, the parent is still responsible for their child.

CHILD RELEASE POLICY

Our normal procedure is to release the child only to his or her parents. If someone other than the parent is to pick the child up, please notify us ahead of time. A verbal notice is fine on that day if this person is on the emergency contact list. If the person is not on that list, we must have a written and signed permission to release your child. The emergency contact list, you are required to complete, designates who may pick up the child if there is an emergency and you cannot contact us. Please make sure those listed are persons with whom you would allow your child to. Those on the list should also be people we could call in the event something happened and you did not show up to pick up your child and at least 18 years of age.

Please inform your emergency contacts that if we do not know them and the child is too young to recognize them ("Hi, Grandma!") that we will ask for identification. We do not mean to offend them. This is simply a measure taken for the child's protection.

Children are **released only:**

- ☉ To an authorized parent/guardian
- ☉ To a person authorized by permission from the parents with a picture I.D. (a written and signed notice is required if the person is not on the emergency contact list)
- ☉ To an authorized sibling 18 years of age or older

State Licensing requires that any request for a new person to be added to your child's pickup list must be in writing and delivered by the parent to the Center.

CHILD CUSTODY ISSUES

It is the Center's intent to meet the needs of children especially when the parents may be experiencing difficult situations such as a divorce, separation, or remarriage. However, the Center **cannot legally restrict** the non-custodial parent from visiting the child, reviewing the child's records, or picking up the child unless the Center has been furnished with current legal documents. Copies of these court documents will be kept in the child's file.

VISITOR POLICY

Any visitor of Land of Children must:

- Ⓢ Provide identification
- Ⓢ Have an approved purpose for a limited visit
- Ⓢ Be courteous of the classroom schedule and activities

CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT

If we suspect a child has been abused or mistreated, we are required to report it within 48 hours to the PA Department of Family and Protective Services and/or to a law enforcement agency.

Child abuse and neglect are against the law, and so is failure to report it.

NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE 1-800--4-A-CHILD

24 Hours a Day 1-800-252-2873, 1-800-25ABUSE

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Land of Children does not discriminate against any child or family based on race, color, national origin, gender, religion or disabilities. Reasonable accommodations will be made to provide services to all children enrolled in our program. Civil Rights Central (717) 787-1127, Philadelphia (215)560-2230 www.dpw.state.pa.us

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

We feel that religious teachings should be left up to the parents. That does not mean that God or religion is never mentioned. We believe that children should understand that different beliefs exist and that there

are many different traditions in different cultures upheld by different people. We also celebrate Christmas, Easter, Hanukkah, Purim, etc. If you do not wish to have your child participate in these, please let us know. We do not celebrate Halloween.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Accidents/Emergency/First Aid

Land of children works hard to provide a safe environment for the children, at all times. However, part of growing up can include bumps and bruises. Our Center is equipped with first aid supplies and if a child has a minor accident, the staff will provide appropriate first aid to the child. All staff is trained in pediatric first aid and CPR. Minor cuts and abrasions suffered while at the center will receive proper care; they will be washed with soap and warm water and properly bandaged. Treatment will be logged and we will tell you how and when the injury occurred. We are also required to log any injuries we observe on your child which have occurred outside of our care.

When injuries do occur, we make two copies of a written report to inform parents about the accident. One copy is for the parent and the other copy is to be signed by the parent and kept in the child's file. If a child has a serious injury, a trained staff member will provide first aid and you will be contacted to pick up your child. If there is an emergency requiring immediate medical attention, 911 emergency personnel will be called and the parent and/or the child's physician will be notified. If a child needs to be transported by an ambulance, a staff member will accompany the child if the parent is not available. When a parent is unavailable, emergency contacts in the child's file are contacted as well.

Illness/“Symptom-Free” Rule

Please do not bring ill children to the Center and if your child becomes ill at the Center, please pick the child up immediately if the child has any of the following conditions:

- Fever, temperature of 99.4 degrees or higher
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Head Lice
- Symptoms of an infectious disorder such as ringworm, pink eye, etc.
- Communicable disease, (refer to the Preventing & Managing Communicable Diseases)

www.headstartinfo.org

We need your help in order to prevent the spread of disease.

If your child is diagnosed with a communicable disease, please notify the Center. It is important for us

to be aware of what children may have been exposed to, so that we can communicate this with the other parents.

The 24-Hour “Symptom-Free” Rule

The Center's policy requires that your child be free of symptoms of illness: fever (Fever-free without medication for fever reduction), diarrhea or vomiting for at least 24 hours.

The Center reserves the right to require a doctor's statement before the child can be re-admitted to the Center.

Medications

In order for Land of Children staff to administer medication, we must adhere to the following:

- All medicine must be in the original container
- The container must be labeled with the child's name
- If it is over-the-counter medication, it must state the amount to be administered
- All medicine must be labeled with the date (if prescribed) or the date brought to the Center
- The medicine must include directions on how to administer it
- If the medication is prescribed, the name of the physician prescribing the medication must be on it
- All medications must have an expiration date and we cannot administer medication after the expiration date
- The medicine can only be administered to the child for whom it was intended
- The parents have to sign an authorization form and indicate the dates and times for the center to administer the medication and these directions must follow the label directions. These forms are available at the office.

Emergency Procedures/ Drills

The Land of Children places a high priority on being prepared for a variety of emergencies that may arise. We have set up an emergency plan as follows:

- Stay informed.** Land of Children staff monitors alert statuses of any kind on a daily basis. When an alert is in a heightened state (for weather or otherwise), the radio and Internet are checked regularly for breaking information.
- Assess the situation and act.** Upon receiving pertinent information and/or official notification, a decision is made to move to a predetermined safe area of the building, evacuate or conduct a shelter-in-place.

Evacuation - Fire and evacuation drills are held monthly to acquaint the children with evacuation procedures. These practice drills are supervised and documented by the office. Evacuation routes are

posted in each classroom. Please refer to the EMERGENCY PLAN placed in each classroom.

Shelter-in-Place - In the event of a shelter-in-place decision, each room is equipped with an emergency supply kit that includes all of the items recommended by the US Department of Homeland Security www.reddy.gov

Each room has a step-by-step manual on what to do in a variety of situations.

Severe Weather Emergency/General Procedures

- Stay inside, away from windows
- Assume protective posture
- Keep calm
- Use two-way radios to monitor the situation and to communicate if further action is necessary

PROGRAM QUALITY/ STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE

High quality early childhood education benefits children. Children who experience a quality program are more likely to have greater academic success, enhanced self-esteem and increased self-control. Land of Children aligns the program and curriculum with federal and state guidelines; is licensed by the *Pennsylvania Department of Education* and participate in *National Association for Early Childhood Education*; participate in *Keystone Stars - PA Early Learning Keys to Quality* and have currently earned star three (3) in quality rating.

For more information about program quality you can visit the following websites:

www.pde.state.pa.us/early-childhood and www.pakeys.org

STAR RATING

Keystone STARS is an initiative of the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) to improve, support, and recognize the continuous quality improvement efforts of early learning programs in Pennsylvania.

The Keystone STARS Performance Standards provide the foundation for the program. The Performance Standards are grouped into four levels: STAR 1, STAR 2, STAR 3, and STAR 4. Each level builds on the previous level and utilizes research-based best practices to promote quality early learning environments and positive outcomes. The standards address staff qualifications and professional development, the early learning program, partnerships with family and community, and leadership and management.

Centers that are meeting the minimum licensing requirements will receive a one star license. Programs that choose to voluntarily meet higher standards can apply for a two through four star licenses. The

number of stars a program earns is based upon the education levels their staff meet, the history of their compliance with licensing requirements, and the program standards met by the center. www.pakeys.org

PARENTAL RIGHTS

- ➡ Parents have the right to enter a family childcare home or center at any time while their child is present.
- ➡ Parents have the right to see the license displayed in a prominent place.
- ➡ Parents have the right to know how their child will be disciplined.
- ➡ The law and rules are developed to establish minimum requirements, but most parents desire above average care for their children. Childcare resource and referral agencies can provide help in choosing quality care. Check the telephone directory or talk with a childcare provider to see if there is a childcare resource and referral agency in your community. For more information about quality child care, parents can visit The National Child Care Information Center (NCCIC) www.nccic.org/user/parents.html - or visit the regulation requirements for Child Care Centers website at: www.dpw.state.pa.us.

HOW TO REPORT A PROBLEM

PA law requires staff from the Department of Public Welfare, Bureau of Child care Certification to investigate a licensed childcare center when there is a complaint. If you believe that a child care provider fails to meet the requirements described in this pamphlet, or if you have questions, please call the Regional office 1-800-346-2929.

PARENT RESOURCES

Helpful resources for parents can be found at the following web sites:

- Ⓢ Children's health and safety www.paaap.org
 - Ⓢ National Child Care Information Center www.nccic.org
 - Ⓢ Keystone STARS www.pakey.org
 - Ⓢ Parent to Parent www.parenttoparent.org
 - Ⓢ Pennsylvania Library Association www.pla.org/earlyliteracy.htm, www.pafamilyliteracy.org
- Subsidized Child Care www.palegalservices.org, www.dpw.state.pa.us