

Today's Learning Childcare

And Education Academy

Building Blocks for Extraordinary Possibilities!



Parent Handbook

Revised 12/9/13

80 Huff Ave. Suite 2

Greensburg, PA 15601

(724) 834-TOTS (8687)

MISSION STATEMENT

Today's Learning Childcare and Education Academy is dedicated to providing your child with a safe and healthy environment, which will promote positive growth and learning. Your child will also be exposed to many new and exciting experiences and learn to interact with other children, which will aid in their intellectual development and prepare them for any challenges ahead.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Our facility is licensed by the Department of Public Welfare (DPW) and currently is a STAR 2 facility. Today's Learning Childcare is open Monday through Friday from 6:00 am until 6:00 pm. We have 2-5 day registration on a weekly basis. Children's schedules must be the same every week. Our staff is experienced, well qualified, and trained in First Aid, CPR and Fire Safety techniques. In addition, all staff participates in a minimum of 12 hours of training each year.

AGE GROUPS

INFANTS - ages 6 weeks to 1 year

YOUNG TODDLERS - ages 13 months to 24 months

TODDLERS - ages 25 months to 36 months

PRESCHOOL - 37 months through 4 years

PRE-K - 4 and 5 years

CURRICULUM AND ACTIVITIES

Age appropriate curriculum and activities is designed by our well-qualified staff to suit the needs and skills of the children in each age group. Religious themes may be emphasized without bias particularly around the holidays (i.e. Christmas, Hanukkah, Easter, Chinese New Year etc) monthly notices/calendars are distributed providing academic information and events for the upcoming month. TLC may also have parties for certain holidays throughout the year. This includes a Halloween Party Thanksgiving Feast, Christmas party etc. "Fun Days" are scheduled throughout the year such as Teddy Bear Day, Pajama Day etc. During the year TLC may have voluntary fund-raisers to raise money for special events and various items.

REGISTRATION

TLC only enrolls children for 2-5 days per week. Children's schedules are noted at time of enrollment and may not change from week to week. The days of the week must be the same every week. Drop off and pick up times may not exceed 10 hours on any day. During the enrollment process, TLC Director will review paperwork and receive feedback from parents. We will make sure that this is an appropriate setting for your child.

During registration, the following paperwork will be completed: Fee Agreement, Emergency Contact Form, Health Assessments, and other necessary forms per your child's classroom. A non-refundable registration fee of \$35.00 (\$15.00 for each additional child) is required. Registration occurs annually even for enrolled families and the registration fee is required. Annual registrations will be held every July.

For new enrollees, if we are holding your child's space for more than two weeks the \$35.00 registration fee and one week's tuition is due. One week's tuition is due for every three months that we are holding a space for your child. This is a holding fee. It is non - refundable and is not part of your tuition.

ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

The following information will be completed during enrollment, prior to your child's first day: Emergency Contact Information, Fee Agreement, Getting to Know You and Your Child Form, Medication Information, Health Assessments, and other necessary paperwork. If your child has an IEP (Individualized Education Plan) or IFSP (Individualized Family Service Plan) is helpful to share this information with the day care to keep on file. This will help us be sure we are meeting the specific needs of your child. Parents will be given information on relevant public, social, and community services. TLC will also share written information on topics including health and human services, wellness, nutrition and fitness, and/or child development with families at least yearly.

Parents will be offered a Getting to know you meeting within 60 days of enrollment. During the meeting parents will be able to address any issues or concerns that they may have. Staff will use this as an opportunity to share information about your child using Observation tools.

CHILD OBSERVATIONS / CHILD SERVICE REPORTS / CONFERENCES

Staff will complete an observation of your child within 45 days of enrollment using an age appropriate observation tool. Information gathered will be reviewed with parents and kept in your child's file. A Child Service Report will be completed semi-annually for each enrolled child. This report will describe your child's growth and development in the context of the service provided by our facility. A parent conference will be offered at least twice per year. Parents may request a conference at any time during the year to discuss any issues, concerns or needs.

TRANSITION

TLC will make every attempt to move your child to the next age group by the first of the month following their birthday. This is not always possible due to the availability of space. As the time approaches in which your child will transition to the next age group, information will be shared with families about the next classrooms and things we can all do to make the transition as smooth as possible for the child. When a child is ready to transition to kindergarten or any other educational setting, information regarding your child's progress within the day care can be shared with the appropriate school/day care with a signed Release of Information Form. Parents will also be given information regarding transitioning to kindergarten or other educational setting at graduation or any time by parent request.

PAYMENT PLANS

All payments are due in advance of service. All Fee Agreements are in effect for six months. You may make a payment in the following ways:

MONTHLY: Payment due by the third of the month prior to service. There is a discount for paying for the month in advance. All monthly payments are based on a four week month.

SEMI-MONTHLY: You may pay for two weeks at a time. Payment for the 1st to the 15th is due by the third of the month. Payment for the remainder of the month is due by the 18th of the month.

LATE FEES - Any late payment not received by the due date as indicated on the Fee Agreement will be subject to a \$5.00 per day late fee. Accounts that are more than 14 days (2 weeks) past due are subject to termination of childcare services. Accounts that are more than 30 day's past due are subject to collections.

DISCOUNTS - Families that have siblings enrolled with us 5 days and is private pay; receive a 10% discount off of the total tuition. A family who has siblings enrolled in a 2-4 day program will receive a 5% discount off the total tuition.

LATE PICK UP FEES - If you are late picking up your child, you will be charged \$1.00 per minute per child. If any parent is more than 1 hour late, without notifying the center, staff will begin calling people on the Emergency Contact Form.

If your child does not attend all days in a week for which they are registered, you are still responsible for payment of their full tuition amount. If a holiday or closing falls on your child's scheduled day of the week, you are still responsible for full tuition payment.

CCIS

All CCIS recipients are required by CCIS regulations to have their co-payments paid on the first day in attendance each week. If weekly payments are not received, CCIS will be notified. The same policies listed above under Late Fees applies to CCIS payments.

FIELD TRIPS

The preschool aged children may have special field trips planned throughout the year. Parents will be notified of such events. Signed permission slips are required and children are required to be fully potty trained. Parents will be asked to chaperone their children on field trips. If your child's class attends a field trip and you choose not to send your child, you may be responsible for finding childcare for that portion of the day. This is because all available staff attend these field trips as chaperones to ensure the children's safety.

CLOTHING

Please send your child to day care in comfortable play clothes. During the day, they may participate in some messy activities and play outside. In addition, we use a variety of art materials that could potentially stain clothes. Please keep this in mind when helping your child dress for the day. Flip Flops are not permitted unless they have a secured back to them, open toed shoes are at parents own risk.

A full set of extra clothing for the appropriate season is to be provided from home and to be kept at the facility. Be sure to include socks, underwear, shirt, and pants or shorts. Soiled clothing will be sent home in a plastic bag to be laundered at home.

We strongly encourage all children to bring a pair of slippers/inside shoes to be kept in the facility especially during the winter months. This will help decrease the amount of dirt and virus causing bacteria in the carpets.

OUTSIDE

We have a fenced-in area for the children to enjoy outdoor play. Children will be given the opportunity to play outdoors according to their classrooms schedules. Please make sure your child is dressed in seasonally appropriate clothes. During the summer months, we ask that parents apply sun screen before arrival to the center. Parents may authorize staff to apply sun screen, but we do ask that parents provide NO RUB SUN SCREEN and a FACE STICK. This helps greatly reduce the amount of time it takes to apply sun screen to all the children.

During the summer months, all children (except infants) have a sprinkler day. On sprinkler day, we ask that parents send children to day care in their bathing suits (two pieces are best for girls) and send in a full set of clothes to change into.

MEALS

BREAKFAST:

Breakfast is served from 6 am to 8:30 am. If you would like your child to eat breakfast at the center, parents are to provide the breakfast food. We will supply the milk, drink, and utensils. You are welcome to bring in a box of cereal, oatmeal, frozen breakfasts etc. Please clearly label all items. **If your child arrives after 8:30 am and still needs breakfast a parent will have to stay with the child until they have finished.**

LUNCH:

Lunch is served from 11:15 to 1 pm. Lunch is also provided from home. The facility will provide utensils, napkins, bowls or plates if needed. Upon arrival, parents should place the child's entire lunch box on the appropriate class shelf in the refrigerator. Microwavable foods must be placed in microwavable dishes. Please do not send **cans of soup, spaghetti, Easy Mac**, etc. We provide milk to drink. If you do provide Easy Mac, please have it pre-made. If in an emergency and you have forgot your child's lunch, TLC will provide lunch and a fee of \$5 is to be paid at pickup time the same day, parents must call daycare and let us know if lunch is needed for your child by 11AM.

SNACK:

A snack and drink are provided by the center in the morning and afternoon. Water is served with snack time. If you would like to donate a snack, please refer to the posted allergy alert in each room. Choose a healthy snack portioned for your child's classroom. ,

NAP TIME

Most children lay down from approximately 1:00 pm until 3:00 pm. Younger age groups may have a quiet time scheduled for the morning as well. A fitted crib sheet and small blanket are to be brought to the center. If your child is in the Infant Room, 2 pack 'n play sheets are required. Clearly label all items. Sheets and blankets will be sent home weekly to be laundered. Due to storage issues we ask that you do not send large items such as sleeping bags and pillows. We do understand that children outgrow naps at different times, especially in the preschool years. We do feel it is necessary for all children to have a quiet time or rest time in the afternoon. We encourage all children to lie down quietly for at least 20 minutes or until other children have fallen asleep. If your child does not fall asleep they will be given quiet activities for the remainder of rest time.

ACCESS CONTROL SYSTEM

In order to provide security, the TLC entrance door is locked and opened only by coded access. Parents and designated others who frequently pick up children are the ONLY people to be given the access control system code. Children are not to be given the code and are NEVER to use the keypad.

DROP OFF AND PICK UP PROCEDURES

The lower level parking spaces are reserved for dropping off and picking up children. All cars must be turned off with the keys out of the ignition before entering the building. **NO CHILDREN MAY BE LEFT IN A VEHICLE UNATTENDED ***THIS IS A STATE LAW*****

Be sure to sign your child in and out in the binders in your child's classroom. Please DO NOT allow your child to run the hallways at any time during drop off or pick up times. This could be dangerous to the other children and adults in the building. ALL CHILDREN ARE TO BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT DURING DROP OFF AND PICK UP TIMES. Please do not send in older siblings to escort younger children. We need to know with whom each child is leaving to make sure it is an authorized adult on the Emergency Contact Form. A child will not be dismissed in an unauthorized adult comes to pick up a child and we have not received proper notification.

If you contact us by phone to give notification that an adult who is not on the Emergency Contact Form will be picking up your child the following will occur:

We will verify your phone number with you and then call you back

We will request picture ID from the adult whom is picking up the child

Picture ID will also be required of someone picking up, even if they are listed on the Emergency Contact Form.

The carport is for quick and easy drop off and pick up. Parents are welcome to park under the carport during pick up and drop off. If you are parked in the car port, please pick up your child quickly so that you do not block other cars. **DO NOT LEAVE YOUR CAR RUNNING! DOI NOT LEAVE CHILDREN UNATTEDED AT DROP OFF OR PICK UP!**

It is the responsibility of the parents to inform the Director of any special custodial issues or concerns so that we can provide a safe environment for your child.

EMERGENCY PLAN

TLC has planned for the safety of your children during an emergency situation such as fire, severe storm, utility disruption, etc. Depending on the type of emergency, the Director will decide whether to evacuate or shelter the children. If evacuation is needed, the following will occur:

1. The children will walk to Westmoreland Gymnastics located directly across Huff Avenue from our driveway.

2. Parents and guardians will be kept informed via the Director regarding the situation, relocation, and/or pick up arrangements.

3. If evacuation of the area is necessary to not be in the immediate area we will relocate to a second TBA to site.

A copy of TLC's Emergency Plan is located on our information board, located across from office.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Please notify us IMMEDIATELY if there has been a change of address, employment, telephone number, or authorized people to whom your child may be released. You will be asked to complete a new Emergency contact Form. This form will be completed every 6 months to ensure up to date information. This is a DPW regulation.

MEDICATION

All medications to be administered to your child while at the center MUST be supplied in the ORIGINAL CONTAINER and labeled with your child's name. If it is an over the counter medication, it must also be in the original container and you must label it with your child's name. Please do not send in a medicine spoon filled with the medication. *The ONLY Over the counter medication that we will administer includes the following:*

Children's or Infant's Tylenol (acetaminophen)
, Children's or Infant's Motrin (ibuprofen)
Infants Gas Drops
Diaper Rash creams or ointments

We will not administer cough syrups or cold and flu over the counter medications. If your child is taking these medications, you may administer them at home, but please inform staff members because these medications may affect your child's comfort and behavior. Parents of children who may have allergic reactions may keep Benadryl or other antihistamines here but, **we will not administer Benadryl or antihistamines unless you have a doctor's note with the exact dosage clearly written for your child.**

Also, we will not administer daily multi-vitamins at the day care. If your child is taking a daily prescription medication we ask that you make every attempt to time these medications so that they may be administered at home.

If we are to administer daily prescription medications of any form including asthma maintenance medications, we may ask for a doctor's note indicating that it must be administered during their scheduled time at day care.

All medications to be administered must also be signed in on the medication log in your child's classroom. You must supply a dispenser with clear dosing information. If the form is not completely filled out with exact dosing instructions we will not administer it to your child. If your child's medication is not signed in, we are not permitted to administer it to your child.

HEALTH/MEDICAL CONDITIONS

If your child has a special medical condition or severe allergy, please notify the Director in writing regarding the extent of the condition and proper medical procedures to be followed. This will help us protect your child's health.

You will be required to provide age-appropriate health appraisals and immunizations from your doctor for your child. The typical schedule is as follows: 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, and 24 months. And then once per year after age two. The Director will notify you when a new Health Assessment is to be completed. **If the Health Assessment is not completed as requested, the Director may suspend day care services until such an assessment is completed by your pediatrician.** Payment for your child's spot will be due if your child's day care service is suspended for not completing a Health Assessment.

ILLNESS

If your child has a rash, sore throat, excessive cough, fever, or has experienced vomiting/diarrhea, or discharge from the eyes within the last 24 hours, please keep them home. If these symptoms occur after you drop your child off, we will call you to come for your child within the hour.

We strictly adhere to this policy so that your child may receive prompt medical treatment and to protect the other children from infection. If we feel that we cannot adequately care for your child when they are ill, and we are compromising the care of other children we will ask that you pick up your child within one hour.

Please keep the following information in mind:

FEVER - If your child develops a fever of 101 degrees or above, you will be contacted and need to make arrangement to pick up your child within one hour

STREP THROAT - He or she may not return to the center until antibiotics have been administered for a full 24 hours

CHICKEN POX - Your child may not return to the center for at least 6 days from diagnosis OR until pustules become dry and scabbed. **A Doctors note is required to return to day care.**

IMPETIGO - Your child may not return to the center until drainage from the sore is no longer present AND is not considered infectious by your physician.

CONJUNCTIVITIS (PINK EYE) - Your child may not return to the center until antibiotics have been administered for at least a full 24 hours (this typically turns into a 48 hour dismissal)

For a complete list of all illnesses and when a child may be excluded from child care, please refer to our reference guide titled "Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools". This reference guide is kept in the director's office.

Anytime your child is sent home with an illness, we ask that they be picked up within one hour. This helps decrease the amount of germs spread throughout the center. You will be asked to sign a Sending Home Agreement. This will be filled out by your child's staff and will indicate when your child may return to the center. If a child returns prior to the time indicated on the Sending Home Agreement, you may be asked to come and pick them up. **If your child is ill and needs to go home, we will call both parents first. If we cannot get in touch with parents within one hour (or earlier, depending on severity of illness) we will begin calling person listed on Emergency Contact form and make arrangements for the child to be picked up. A request for a doctor's note for your child to return to daycare is at the discretion of the Director. If your child becomes ill and does not attend daycare, please call and let us know, especially if it is considered contagious. Staff will take extra steps to sanitize. Also we may need to post information for other concerned families. When we post information on illnesses, information on specific children will remain confidential.**

If your child is home due to illness, full payment is required for those days your child is absent. For extended periods of absence (1 week or longer) other arrangements may be considered by the Director. It is also extremely important that you notify the center as soon as possible if your child will be absent and for approximately how long. In addition, we would like to know if your child is experiencing symptoms that may pose a health risk to other children so that proper preventative measure can be taken with the center.

SCHEDULE CHANGES

We are required to adhere to strict staff/child ratios set by The Department of Public Welfare. Your child's scheduled days are designated at time of enrollment. If parents would like to make a change in schedule or request an extra day, you must fill out the Parent Request to Change Schedule Form located in your child's classroom. The Director will make every attempt to accommodate your request, but this is not always possible. Changing days and adding extra days will result in a fee being charged as well. The fee will be indicated on the Request Form. If the day care is closed for a holiday, and the holiday falls on your child's scheduled day, tuition in full is still required.

VACATION

After one year of registration, a family is eligible for ONE WEEK vacation in which you do not have to pay that week tuition. Vacation may be used only one time period during the year of consecutive days. You may not take sporadic days throughout the year. If a closing or holiday falls during your scheduled vacation week, you will not be compensated for the holiday or closing and will lose those days. Notification of vacation is required in writing two weeks in advance, and must be used during one payment cycle. Your monthly tuition will be pro-rated. Families enrolled for the summer only, or who do not attend during the summer months are not eligible for vacation time. As of November 1st all families enrolled after one year, December will be a pro-rata month for all families. This month's tuition will include your free week/vacation week. We will not pro-rate any other month's tuition.

HOLIDAYS

The center will be closed for at least thirteen scheduled holidays per year (July to June). A list of scheduled closings is distributed annually in June. Typical closings include, New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Thanksgiving Day, Day after Thanksgiving, Labor Day, Christmas Day, and Christmas Eve. We also close for two staff In-Service days per year. One is scheduled for the end of August and one is typically scheduled in February.

Holiday's and closings are figured into the overall cost of your tuition, and will not be deducted.

CENTER DELAYS AND CLOSINGS

The center may have to close or have a delayed opening due to inclement weather or other reasons including power failure. Our delayed openings and closings will be listed on both WTAE-TV and KDKA-TV or KDKA radio AM channel 1020. TLC will be listed as "Today's Learning Childcare, Greensburg PA".

If the center would close early, we will notify parents via telephone calls and inform you of the time we are closing and you must make arrangement to have your child picked up by closing time.

If you arrive at the center on a day where there is inclement weather, but no delay or closing has been issued and no staff has arrived, please be patient as staff try to make their way to work.

Closing and delays have also been figured into the tuition rate. If they are used, you are still responsible for your full tuition payment.

DISCIPLINE

Today's Learning Childcare uses discipline intended to teach children appropriate behaviors and a sense of responsibility for their actions. Positive reinforcement, redirection, and quiet reflection time are the techniques utilized for discipline methods at the center. A Discipline Agreement will be signed at time of enrollment.

DISMISSAL FROM THE PROGRAM

Our staff has experience and understanding in working with unruly children, however TLC reserves the right to dismiss any child for continued uncontrollable or harmful behavior. The following steps will be taken for children displaying such behaviors:

STEP 1 - A Director or child's teacher will make a verbal statement regarding the behaviors to the parent.

STEP 2 - A written letter from the Director will be issued listing the behaviors and suggestions for improvements and outlining what needs to occur to prevent further action.

STEP 3 - A meeting will be held with a Director, parents, and child's teacher. A corrective action plan will be implemented for a two week time period. If no improvements are seen in two weeks, the center will terminate childcare services.

A Discipline Agreement will be signed by all parents at time of enrollment. The Director may terminate child care services at any time if parents are unwilling to participate in a corrective action plan or if the child's behavior is harmful to other children, staff, or themselves in the day care.

WITHDRAWAL FROM SERVICES

If you will be terminating childcare services from TLC, we require a **written 2 week notice** to be given to a Director. Your payment for the last two weeks must accompany this notice. If notice and 2 week payment is not received, we will not consider services terminated and you will still be responsible for full tuition amounts. Our Late Fee policy will apply and you may be subject to collections.

Dismissal from day care services is at the Director's discretion and can occur for the following reasons: failure to pay tuition, unwilling to participate in a behavioral corrective action plan for child, failure to complete Child Health Assessment or other required paperwork, not following sick child policy, or other reasons determined by the Director.

MISCELLANEOUS

It is our intent to provide a wholesome and safe environment at TLC. For these reasons the following will be enforced: No Profanity, No Gum, No real or toy weapons.

Toys are not permitted to be brought in from home unless it is specifically requested by your child's teacher.

TLC will not be responsible for any lost or damaged property. This includes: money, toys, videos, lunch boxes/containers/ eyeglasses, blankets or other items from home.

LABEL ALL YOUR CHILD'S BELONGINGS CLEARLY

NON-DISCRIMINATION

In compliance with the Title VI of the Federal Civil Rights Act and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, let it be known that it is the policy of Today's Learning Childcare to enroll all children and provide its services to the people of the surrounding communities without regard to race, creed, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, or those who may be handicap.

CHANGES TO PARENT HANDBOOK

The Director will review the Parent Handbook at least annually and make any necessary changes. Parents will be informed in writing whenever there is a change.

Changes Made as of:
11/1/2010

Vacation policy- all families enrolled a year or more will be pro-rata the month of December for their one week vacation.

Meals- Lunches can be provided by TLC in case of emergency for children with a fee of \$5 which will be paid at pick up the same day.

Changes made as of:
6/13/13

Late tuition payments- As of July 1, 2013 TLC will charge a fee of \$5.00 per day for outstanding balances past 30 days due. This will be enforced immediately per direction of the owner.

Curriculum and Assessments- All of our classrooms implement the Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards into our lesson planning and daily activities. All children are assessed throughout the year and shared with parents at least twice per year during parent teacher conferences offered.

Changes made as of:
12/09/13

Referrals to Services- If Director and or teachers request a conference regarding changes in behavior or concerns with any area of development we will help refer families to different stakeholders in the community. This service is an option for families and not forced in anyway. But if behavior continues and we do not receive help from outside service we do have the right to **terminate services**.

Anti-Bullying Policy – TLC enforces a **NO BULLYING POLICY**, TLC staff members encourages anti- bullying rules.

- We will not Bully others.
- We will try to help students who are bullied.
- We will try to include students who are left out.
- We will not label a child as “BAD” or “Problem” as the teachers and Parent.