

Parent Handbook for Whistle Stop Child Development Center



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PARENT HANDBOOK FOR WHISTLE STOP CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER
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Mission Statement

At Whistle Stop we believe that children flourish in a child centered environment where they are respected and nurtured as individuals and are encouraged to grow in a secure, comfortable and happy community.

Welcome

We would like to extend a warm welcome to your child and family. We are thrilled to have you become part of our child care family. You will have made many decisions that took a lot of careful consideration. We take seriously the trust and responsibility that you are sharing with us.

Whistle Stop believes wholeheartedly in the policies and procedures described in this handbook. These policies and procedures will facilitate the smooth consistent day to day operation of our center. If you have any questions or concerns regarding information in the handbook, please speak with the director who will be happy to assist you.

Philosophy

In our center, we provide experiences that foster an excitement for learning, a respect for one another and awareness of the world around us. We advocate the importance of ongoing communication and an open cooperative partnership between home and center, so that all children may grow to their maximum potential. With a variety of age appropriate activities and educational experiences, we promote healthy physical, social-emotional and cognitive development. Guided by caring and experienced educators, we address each child's individual needs.

History

Bonnie Laackman started Whistle Stop in September of 1989. It began as a licensed childcare center offering a before- and after-school program for children ages 5-12. One year later she expanded the program to include children 12 months of age and to offer full-day programs. In November of 1991, Whistle Stop's ownership was transferred to Mark and Nancy Schaefer, who also own and operate The Creative Learning Center. In December 2005 Whistle Stop took quality care a step further and was accredited by **NAEYC (National Education for the Education of Young Children)**. This accreditation is reviewed every five years and is a significant indicator of a high level of quality child care.

Licensing Information

The State of Michigan Department of Human Services office of child and adult licensing licenses Whistle Stop. They can be contacted at www.michigan.gov/dhs or you can call our consultant at (231) 733-3877.

Center Calendar

Whistle Stop is open Monday through Friday from 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM. The center is closed on all the major holidays (New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and the Friday after, and Christmas Day). We also close at 12:00 noon on Christmas Eve and 3:00 PM on New Year's Eve. We also close on one Friday in October each year for an all-day staff training session. We inform parents of this date well in advance. If the holiday falls on the weekend, the program will close in accordance with local observances.

Enrollment

Enrollment at Whistle Stop is open to children from 12 months to 12 years old. Enrollment shall be granted without regard to child's race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, or disability. Whistle Stop complies with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and in accordance with the policy, will modify its practices, policies and procedures to assure people with disabilities are accommodated and not excluded from school programs, activities, functions, except when to do so would fundamentally alter the nature of the services, facilities, privileges and programs offered by the center. Whistle Stop will provide auxiliary aids and services to assure effective communication with people with disabilities except when to do so would result in an undue financial or administrative burden.

Parents can apply for enrollment by filling out the Application for Enrollment form and paying the \$50.00 registration fee. This registration fee is non refundable if you decide to not enroll your child to our center. At the time of presenting us with a signed contract, a non refundable two week deposit must be paid. A minimum commitment of 2 days per week is required to enroll.

Parents are given a tour of the Whistle Stop facility with the director. We also encourage families to meet their child's teacher or caregiver before the child's first day.

Before a child can begin attending Whistle Stop it is mandatory that we have on file all the information. These are requirements for us to have on file and failure to provide forms could result in your child's enrollment being delayed or canceled.

1. Registration Form
2. Child Placement Contract
3. Health Appraisal Form
 - a. Must include immunization record
 - b. Current physical signed & dated by doctor
4. Emergency Card
5. Child Profile

Withdrawal or Dismissal

Whistle Stop reserves the right to dismiss any parent or child at anytime for failure to adhere to polices stated in this handbook. Reasons for dismissal by WS staff could be but not limited to:

- Accounts over two weeks overdue
- Child does not adhere to our Behavioral Policy
- Whistle Stop is not best suited for your child's needs

Withdrawing from our program requires a two week notice for any reason. If the proper notice is given, any deposit will be refunded to your account for your last two weeks of care.

Tuition

Tuition is billed on a weekly basis every Friday for the following week. Tuition can be paid one of two ways:

Check or Money Order

Cash

- A \$25.00 return check fee charged to your account for insufficient funds charges.
- Tuition is due in full on or before Friday of each week. A late fee of \$3.00 per day will be charged to your account until payment is made in full
- There will be an after closing fee charge for children not picked up by 6:00 PM. A late fee of \$3.00 for every 5 minutes will be added to your account and will be paid to the employee who stayed late with your child.
- There is no credit given due to absence, holidays or bad weather days. We plan for, staff, and prepare for your child whether s/he is here or not. Our costs are based on enrollment figures, not on actual attendance. While we are entirely sympathetic to the situation of working parents and ill children, we are obligated to maintain sound fiscal policies.
- Tuition does not include fees for field trips or any extra curricular activities.
- Two weeks written notice is required for withdrawal from the program.

Nonpayment of tuition is grounds for dismissal from our program. However, if you anticipate difficulty with paying on time, please discuss the situation with the director immediately. Alternative arrangements may be made and you are expected to follow those arrangements to make sure you secure your enrollment to the center.

In order for us to meet our financial commitments, you are responsible to pay for your contracted times, wether or not your child attends (including holidays). Since our staff are paid for the holidays and most other costs remain the same, these costs must be covered by tuition.

Your tuition has been set on your contract and is subject to change with a 30 day notice. If you would like to change contracted days the center director will need a two week notice. We will do our best to accommodate additional time, but cannot guarantee space at a time/day other than specified on your contract.

Subsidized Care

Whistle Stop does accept childcare subsidies. However, most subsidies do not cover all of our tuition. Parents are responsible for all co-pays that will incur for their child's tuition. Parents are also responsible for filling out all the necessary paperwork to keep their funding current. If for some reason the parent loses the subsidy you are responsible for full payment of tuition.

Multiple Child Discounts

There is a 10% discount for families with two or more full-time children at Whistle Stop. The discount will be taken off the tuition of the oldest child at the center.

Confidentiality

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) has a Code of Ethical Conduct outlines guidelines for responsible behavior in the early childhood education. Confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with employees of WS who have a “need to know”. Confidential and sensitive information about faculty, other parents and/or children will not be shared with parents as we respect the right to privacy. Confidential information includes, but not limited to disability information, HIV/AIDS status or other health related information of anyone at WS. Outside Whistle Stop, confidential and sensitive information will only be given with written permission, except when it is required by law.

You may observe children at our center who are disabled or who may have behavior that may appear inappropriate (i.e. biting, hitting, spitting, screaming). Parents may be curious about that child but our confidentiality policy prohibits employees from discussing anything about another child with you.

Mandated Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse And/or Neglect

Under the Michigan Child Protective Law, mandated reporters are required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. Child care employees are considered mandated reporters, under the law. They are not required to discuss their concerns to the parent prior to reporting any suspicions. Under the law if an employee does not report suspicion of child abuse or neglect they could be held criminally responsible. At Whistle Stop we take this responsibility very seriously and will make warranted reports to the authorities. The Child Protective Law is made to protect the welfare of our children and their best interests. Reasons for reporting suspected abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to: unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the child's body, severe verbal reprimands, improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, season, transporting child without proper child restraint, parents appearing to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, failure to seek medical treatment as needed for the child, and children who exhibit consistent behavior to abusive situations.

Procedures for Check in and Releasing Children

When planning your departure time from home, please incorporate 10-15 minutes to allow for you and your child's transition time when arriving at the center. While we understand that the morning hours are usually a busy time, we feel it is important to plan time for a relaxed unhurried separation for you and your child. During this time you will need to sign your child in on the sign in sheet located in each classroom. For our young toddlers (Sweet Peas room), we ask you fill out a short daily log telling us about your child's hours at home before arriving to the center. When arriving at the center, please take a few minutes to sit quietly or play with your child, put away belongings, and share any information needed with your child's teacher. Although there will be times for tears/conflicts and “tiptoeing to the door” may seem much easier-always try to remain positive. Smile, hug and kiss your child, and say good bye.

At the end of the day, please remember to sign your child out on the attendance sheet, and say good bye to your child's teacher. A child may only be released to a parent or other authorized adult listed on the emergency card. We must have permission from a parent to release your child to anyone other than you. The names of these persons must appear on the emergency card, or may be in the form of a

specific dated letter. We also check an appropriate picture identification card when someone we are not familiar with picks up your child. Please notify us in advance of an alternate drop off/pick up person.

Notification of Absence

Parents are asked to contact the center if a child will be arriving late or not attending that day. This will enable the center to more effectively maintain appropriate ratios and help the classroom teacher effectively plan for the day.

If your child is ill, we request that you notify the center not only of the absence, but also the nature of the illness. This enables our staff to keep track of any illnesses, which may occur at our center. This information will only be shared with the staff on a “need to know” basis. If your child has a communicable disease, we ask that you share the diagnosis with the Director. Parents at the center may be notified that a communicable disease is present. We will make every effort to keep your child information confidential. Parents are not required by law to disclose this information, and your continued enrollment will not be effected.

Parents Right to Immediate Access

Whistle Stop has an open door policy where we welcome all parents into the center at anytime during the day. However in cases where the child is subject to a court order, Whistle Stop must be provided with a copy of the most recent order and all the amendments. The court order will be strictly followed unless both parents agree to differentiate from that order, then that needs to be put into writing for the child’s file.

In the absence of a court order Whistle Stop will give both parents equal access to their child. We cannot withhold or limit access to a child per parent request, regardless of the reason.

Center's Right to Refuse Admission

Whistle Stop reserves the right to refuse admission to any child at any time for the following reasons:

1. Staff deems the child too will to attend.
2. Parent's failure to maintain accurate, up to date records.
3. Parent's failure to complete and return required documentation in a timely fashion.
4. Parent's failure to make timely tuition payments.

Late Pick Up

Any parent picking up later than 6:00 PM will be charged a \$3.00 for every 5 minutes late fee for every minute the child(ren) are in attendance. The late fee will be added to your account. This late fee will be paid directly to the staff member that stayed with your child. A child's services can be terminated should the child be picked-up late more than 3 times in one month. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that someone (either a parent or Emergency/Alternate pick-up person) is available to pick up the child on time.

Persons Appearing To Be Impaired By Drugs/Alcohol At Pick-Up

The parent's right to immediate access does not permit the center from denying a custodial parent access to their child even if the parent appears to be impaired. However, the staff will delay the impaired parent as long as possible, while contacting the director, other parent, and if necessary the local police and Child Protective Services.

Any other authorized person who attempts to pick-up a child, and appears to the staff of to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol will be denied access to the child. The staff will contact the child's parents, local police and Child Protective Services to notify them of the situation.

Emergency Forms

At enrollment, parents will be presented with an Emergency form. Parents are encouraged to include on this form any, and all persons who, in the course of events, may at one time be asked to pick-up their child. In an emergency situation the child's parents will be called first. If they cannot be reached staff will call the persons listed on this form until someone can be reached.

Should the staff contact a parent, and the parent is unable to pick up the child, it is then the responsibility of the parent to arrange for their child to be picked up by someone on the emergency list.

The persons on the Emergency form will be required to provide a photo ID before the center releasing the child. There will be no exceptions to this rule.

All changes and/or additions to the Emergency form must be made in writing and be dated and signed. Only custodial parents have the right to make changes or additions to this form.

Emergency Closing and Inclement Weather Information

In the event of an emergency closing or in some cases of sever weather (heavy snow, ice, etc.), parents will be notified of the closing by T.V. (Wood TV 8 or WZZM 13).

Should the center need to close in the middle of the day, the staff will attempt to reach the child's parents first to arrange for pick up. Should the staff be unable to reach the parents, the person listed on the emergency contact form will be called until pick up arrangements can be made. Staff will notify the parents or emergency contact person at the time of the call, of the pick up location should the children need to be evacuated from the center. Parents or emergency contact persons should report directly to the alternate location if one is indicated. Should the center need to close for any reason, tuition will not be refunded.

Our Special Staff

Every staff member on our team has unique talents, skills, and characteristics that they bring into their classrooms making our center the special place that it is. Our teachers are selected on their knowledge of child development, the manner in which they interact with children and adults, and their enthusiasm and initiative. Each staff member completes a thorough application, screening process, complying with

Center's standards and local and government regulations before being placed in a classroom. This includes a criminal record check, a protective services check, and the verification of a minimum of two employment references. Staff members meet for in-services, including infant/child and adult CPR, and planning meetings. They also attend child development trainings and seminars throughout the year. We work together as a team and share individual talents with one another. Get to know your child's teachers. They are friendly and eager to know you and your child better.

High/Scope Curriculum *~Helping Children to Learn, to Grow, to Succeed.*

Here at CLC we take the High/Scope Educational Approach to learning, where we provide five elements to help your child grow.

Active Learning: Through direct, hands-on experiences with people, objects, ideas, and events, strengthen their emerging intellectual, physical, social and emotional abilities.

Adult Child Interaction: Through adults observing and interacting with the children on their level to support their initiatives, interests and developing abilities and by sharing control of all learning.

Learning Environment: Classroom furniture and equipment are arranged in several clearly defined interest areas that enable children to find, use and return the materials they need in order to explore, invent, and learn about their world.

Daily Routine: Each day follows a similar schedule of events, providing consistency for both children and adults. This routine gives children the opportunity to pursue their own interests, make plans, follow through on them and reflect on their experiences through both large and small groups.

Assessment: Teachers regularly record notes on children's behaviors, experiences, and interests. Based on these observations, adults can plan activities that will facilitate children's growth and development.

A daily plan-do-review process is the core of the High/Scope routine and gives children the opportunity to pursue their own interests make plans, follow through on them, and reflect on their experiences. Adults observe and interact with the children at their level to support their initiatives, interests, and developing abilities. In this way, the adults share control of all learning experiences with the children. Teachers also regularly record notes on each child's behaviors, experiences, and interests to assess each child's development and help plan activities that will facilitate the children's growth. Teachers also use these notes in parent meetings to help parents better understand their children's development.

The classroom environment is arranged in such a way to enable children to find, use and return materials they need as they explore, interact with, and learn about their world. Children follow a similar schedule of events each day, providing consistency for both the children and adults.

Samples Daily Schedule of Activities

Sweet Peas Program:

(1 -2 ½ yrs old)	7:00-9:00	Welcome/Choice Activities
	9:00-9:30	Snack
	9:30-10:00	Personal Care/Diapering
	10:00-11:00	Small Group/Outside
	11:00-11:30	Lunch
	11:30-12:15	Personal Care/Diapering
	12:15-12:30	Music & Movement
	12:30-2:30	Nap

2:00-3:00	Personal Care/Diapering
3:00-3:30	Small Group Activities
3:30-4:00	Snack
4:00-6:00	Outside/Floor Time
4:30-5:00	Personal Care/Diapering
5:00-6:00	Parent Greeting/Good-byes

This schedule is a guideline only. Growing into toddlerhood is not an exact science and requires patience and flexibility each and every day.

Jelly Beans Program:

(2 ½ yrs.-3 yrs. old)	7:00-9:00	Plan/Work Time
	9:00-9:15	Clean Up
	9:15-9:30	Large Group/Wash Hands
	9:30-9:45	Snack/Recall Time
	9:45-10:15	Bathroom/Work Time
	10:15-10:30	Small Group
	10:30-11:30	Outside
	11:30-12:00	Wash Hands/Lunch
	12:00-12:30	Music & Movement/Bathrooms/Tooth brushing
	12:30-2:30	Rest Time
	2:30-3:30	Work Time/Bathrooms
	3:30-4:00	Clean Up/Snack
	4:00-6:00	Outside/Work Time

Jumping Jacks Program:

(3 yrs.-4 yrs. old)	7:00-8:45	Arrival/Check-In/Free Choice
	8:45-9:15	Greeting Time/Message Board/Special Helper/Snack
	9:15-9:30	Planning Time
	9:30-10:15	Work Time
	10:15-10:30	Recall Time
	10:30-11:00	Small Group
	11:00-11:15	Music & Movement
	11:15-12:00	Outside Time
	12:00-1:00	Lunch
	1:00-1:30	Reading/Puzzles
	1:30-3:00	Quiet Time/Nap
	3:00-3:15	Planning Time
	3:15-3:45	Work Time
	3:45-4:15	Recall Time/Snack
	4:15-6:00	Outside Time/Departure

Young Explorers Program:

(4 yr.-5 yrs. Old)	7:00-8:45	Arrival/Check-In/Planning Time/Work Time
	8:45-9:00	Clean Up

9:00-9:15	Greeting Time/Calendar/Message board/Room Helpers
9:15-9:30	Wash Hands/Snack/Recall Time
9:30-10:00	Small Group
10:00-10:20	Music & Movement
10:20-11:30	Outside
11:30-12:00	Large Group
12:00-1:00	Lunch
1:00-1:15	Bathroom/Tooth brushing
1:15-1:30	Reading/Puzzle Activities
1:30-2:30	Quiet Time
2:30-2:45	Getting Up
2:45-3:15	Small Group
3:15-3:30	Snack
3:30-6:00	Outside/Work Time/Departure

Staff to Child Ratios

The **Maximum** number of children per teacher and classroom size:

- Toddler-1 adult: 4 children/8 per toddler per room
- Preschool (2 ½ -3)-1 adult: 8 children/14 per room
- Preschool (3.-4)-1 adult: 8 children/16 per room
- Preschool (4-5)-1 adult: 10 children/20 per room
- School-age (6-12)-1 adult:18 children

Educational/Personal Supplies Needed

Whistle Stop will supply all the educational materials for the classrooms. However, we would welcome and encourage donations such as recycled paper, outdated envelopes, magazines, newspapers, paper towel rolls, and any items the children can use for art. Through emails and teacher communications, teachers will ask for other items that go along with their curriculum.

Birthdays and Other Celebrations

If you would like to provide snack for your child's class on his/her birthday or other occasion, please let the teacher know in advance so he/she can plan accordingly. You may include special cups, napkins, and 100% fruit juice. We appreciate nutritious snacks low in sugar and salt. With health department regulations all food brought into share with children in the classroom must be store bought. No homemade foods can be allowed in the classroom. Learning about good nutrition is part of our program, and snack time is a perfect time to experience it. The following are some suggestions for healthy snacks are fresh fruit and yogurt, cheese and whole wheat crackers, muffins, snack mix, veggies and dip, or oatmeal cookies. Your child's teacher will be happy to give suggestions or make the snack at school with the children if you send in the ingredients and the recipe.

Due to numerous allergies to peanut oil/peanut butter, we do not serve peanut butter.

Parent Involvement

Parent involvement is the key in any successful early childhood program. There are many ways

parents can become involved in their child's classroom. Whistle Stop has an open door policy, we encourage parents to stop by at anytime. You are welcome to join us for work time, lunch or just stop by to read a book before rest. Other ways that you can become involved could be attending field trips when possible. These things may not be an option for you so classrooms periodically host family fun nights, fundraisers, and parent teacher conferences. Parents can help gather materials needed for classroom activities. Parent involvement on various levels relays the message to children that school and learning are important.

Parent Teacher Communication

We believe that the relationship between teacher and family is one of the best indicators of quality care. We try to communicate with families in an assortment of different ways. All parents are put on an electronic mail list at the beginning of enrollment. E-mails will be sent by the director including reminders, letters and personal notes. Parents will also receive a quarterly center wide newsletter highlighting staff, upcoming events, staff training updates, reminders, articles, community dates for family activities, and more. In addition, each room has a monthly newsletter that pertains directly to your child's classroom and a weekly calendar of planned activities. Children under 3 years old will also receive a daily sheet that documents eating, sleeping, diaper changes, activities they were involved in, milestones, and any other pertinent information. Take time to review these sheets and talk to your child about them. By staying informed of the daily activities, you will be able to provide more follow through with your child at home.

Communication between parents and staff is essential for our program to function smoothly and effectively. No matter what age child, we encourage parent to call if there is a concern, to visit when possible to help out if you can be of assistance, and spend time getting to know your child's teachers and friends.

Parent-Staff Problem Solving and Communication

On occasion, parents may have questions or matters they would like to discuss with the staff. We recommend the following suggestions for addressing them.

1. Talk with your child's teacher. Try not to "drop in" for a talk. Set up a time that is convenient for both of you, so the teacher can give his or her undivided attention. Try to select a time when the teacher is able to confer with you without having to oversee children. A call to arrange such a meeting is always welcome.
2. Be clear on what you have a question or concern about. State the nature of the concern and what it is you would like to see happen. Be sure when you finish talking that you both are clear about what is discussed and the desired outcomes, including timeframes, for what is discussed.
3. Keep matters confidential. This is the best way to keep the matter in perspective.
4. If you do not feel the problem or concern is resolved after discussing it with your child's teacher, talk with the director.

Parent Education/Workshops

We are always willing and happy to supply you with needed information or answer questions regarding your child's growth and development. We will hold periodic education workshops and/or discussions groups when interest is shown by groups of parents. In addition, we are also open to securing a

speaker or expert on a particular topic concerning children and families if interest warrants.

Behavioral Policy

All children need to know that the people who love and care for them will provide for their safety by setting consistent, reasonable limits. One of our primary goals is to promote positive growth in your child's social and emotional development and keep conflicts to a minimum. We set a positive interactive structure by showing encouragement, following children's interests, giving choices, and listening. We believe that the best form of discipline evolves from having the following components in each classroom:

1. Consistent, knowledgeable and professional teachers.
2. A clear and positive set of classroom rules developed with participation from the children.
3. A consistent and predictable daily routine/schedule.
4. A well-organized and labeled classroom equipped with an adequate amount of developmentally appropriate materials.
5. The classroom is arranged in a way that facilitates learning.
6. Developing appropriate expectations for children.
7. Positive redirection.
8. Logical and appropriate consequences.
9. Model appropriate behavior.
10. Ignore minor misbehaviors.
11. Stay consistent.
12. Teach children problem solving techniques.
13. Treat children as individuals and respect their needs, desires and feelings.
14. Acknowledge when children are making good choices.
15. Teamwork and communication with parents.

Positive developmentally appropriate discipline will be used when necessary to reinforce inappropriate behavior. Staff shall never make a child feel a lack of self-esteem or self-worth.

There is no form of physical punishment that will be deemed acceptable.

Staff never use threats or derogatory remarks and neither withhold nor threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline.

Appropriate forms of discipline that may be used:

Discussing with the child what type of behavior is acceptable.

Review the choices that the child has made.

Discuss what choices are appropriate.

Redirect inappropriate behavior.

Loss of the privilege of participating in an activity where inappropriate behavior occurred.

Group problem solving with teacher and children who are having a conflict.

State of Michigan licensing regulations states the following regulations regarding discipline:

1. Staff shall use developmentally appropriate positive methods of discipline which encourages self-control, self-direction, self-esteem, and cooperation.
2. Staff shall be prohibited from using the following as a means of punishment:
 - a. Hitting, spanking, shaking, biting, pinching, or inflicting other forms of corporal punishment.

- b. Restricting a child's movement by binding or tying him or her.
 - c. Inflicting mental or emotional punishment, such as humiliating, shaming, or threatening a child.
 - d. Depriving a child of meals, snacks, rest, or necessary toilet use.
 - e. Confining a child in an enclosed area, such as a closet, locked room, box, or similar cubicle.
3. Non-severe and developmentally appropriate discipline or restraint may be used when necessary to prevent a child from harming himself or herself or to prevent a child from harming other persons or property, excluding those forms of punishment prohibited by sub-rule (2) of this rule.
 4. A center shall have a written policy regarding the discipline of children. This policy shall be furnished to staff and parents.

Webster defines “Discipline” as: to teach. Our goal is to help children gain self-regulated control of their behavior and choices.

Biting & Behavior issues

We recognize that biting is a developmentally appropriate behavior for children in the toddler through 2½ year old classrooms. Biting is a way that children communicate their feelings. Sometimes it happens so quickly that we don't see it until it is too late. Parents will be notified through the course of the day if their child has been involved in a biting incident. We ask you to remember that this is a developmentally appropriate behavior, and staff are working hard to identify any indicators as to why this is happening and how to prevent it in the future. The staff may not discuss with either parent the identity of the other child involved in the incident. This information is considered confidential and cannot be disclosed. The staff will not punish, but encourage the child who has bitten to help care for the other child. Children older than 3 years may occasionally be involved in a biting situation, with these children the staff will use the discipline procedures outlined above. Parents are expected to cooperate with staff to help eliminate this behavior. In a situation where a child bites three times in one day, the parent will be called to pick up their child. The child may return their next scheduled day unless it has been determined by the director that a longer waiting period is necessary.

We want to provide a safe and healthy environment for all children to enjoy. If a child is causing injury to a child, center property or a staff member, parents will be notified and, action will be left to the discretion of the director. Concerns will be discussed with parents and outside referrals may be made. If inappropriate behavior continues and becomes more than we are capable of handling or becomes a threat to the well being of the children and staff, we will recommend alternative arrangements to the parents.

During the “NO” tantrum phase, toddlers will be given necessary leeway, gentle guidance and support on their road to autonomy by allowing for choices when appropriate and encouraging emerging self help skills and independence.

Individualized Plans for Challenging Behavior

In the situation where we are encountering a challenging behavior staff will take the following measures to secure a plan for improving the child's experiences at our center.

1. Anecdotal records/Behavior chart will be made to collect specific information on

- the child's behavior.
2. Parent/Teacher conference will be scheduled to discuss concerns and share observations.
 3. Teachers may suggest outside resources (i.e. Arbor Circle KEEP Program, school districts, private programs or others) to support staff and families.
 4. An agreed upon plan will be put into place.
 5. Follow up meetings will be set up to reassess child's progress/behavior.

Toys From Home

Due to the risk of damage, sharing issues and loss, children are not permitted to bring in toys from home, unless specifically requested by the classroom teacher for use as part of the curriculum. Parents are responsible for enforcing this policy with their child. Parents are encouraged to consult the classroom teacher should they find their child is having difficulty with this policy.

Children in classroom with nap/rest time are permitted to include with their bedding a special item they may normally sleep with. This toy is to be placed in the child's cubby and use of it will only be allowed at nap/rest time.

Dress Code

Your child's comfort is the most important factor in deciding how to dress your child to attend our center. Provide simple clothing that is free of complicated fastenings. Dress your child in play clothes that will allow him or her to feel comfortable about spills, paint drips, mud, etc. We try to keep things neat, but we are not always able to prevent spills or dirty clothes.

Suitable outdoor clothing will be needed each day. Always send clothing appropriate to the weather and perhaps a little extra as the weather can change dramatically in the course of the a day. Coats, hats, gloves, snow pants and winter boots must be provided in the winter months. Childre are required to have one seasonably and size appropriate complete change of clothing at the center at all times. A complete change of clothing includes shirt, pants, underwear, socks and shoes. We also encourage to have rain boots on hand for your child.

All clothing items must be clearly labeled with the child's first and last name. We are not responsible for lost or damaged items of clothing.

Field Trips

Throughout the year, children 3 years and older participate in a variety of off premise field trips. Parents are required to give written permission for their child to attend each field trip. Notification of a field trip will be sent home in advance of the trip, with all the pertinent trip information including, destination, date, time, reason for the trip, cost, and mode of transportation. The field trip permission slip must be filled out completely and accurately, and all trip costs must be paid in advance in order for your child to attend.

If your child is not scheduled to attend on the day of a field trip and you wish for your child to participate in the trip, please discuss this with your child's teacher in advance to see if there's room for your child to attend on the field trip.

Field trip to various locations help children to learn about many things in their community. They are fun and educational at the same time. Parents are welcome to come with their child on field trips.

Health and Sickness Policy

The State of Michigan requires that we have a Health Appraisal Form, proper immunization record, and an Emergency Card on file for each child by the first day he or she attends the center. The Health Appraisal Form must be updated every year for infants-2 ½ years old and every 2 years for children 2 ½ -5 years old. It is also very important that Emergency Cards are kept current with any changes in emergency names or telephone numbers.

In the event of an accident or emergency, a child's parent will be contacted immediately. If we are unable to reach you, we will contact the other people listed by you on your child's Emergency Card. If we cannot reach any of the people listed, we will seek emergency medical care as specified by you on the Emergency Card.

Please notify us in writing of any known food allergies, special health concern or precautions. Information will be posted so that all staff people, including substitutes, are aware of these concerns.

For your child's well being, as well as that of other children and caregivers, please keep your child at home if he or she seems ill. WE MUST TAKE EVERY PRECAUTION TO KEEP ILLNESS FROM SPREADING WITHIN OUR CENTER. We know you will appreciate other parents following these guidelines as well.

If you notice that your child has any of the following symptoms, please keep him or her at home:

- Fever of 101.3 degrees (with other symptoms)
- Vomiting/excessive spitting up formula or food
- Frequent loose or foul smelling stools (3 or more)
- Continuous hard, croup-like or hacking cough
- Difficulty breathing or eating due to congestion
- Excessive yellow or green discharge from nasal passages (a slight, clear runny nose is not usually a sign of serious or contagious illness).
- Skin rash (other than diaper rash or redness)
- Runny or red eyes
- Unusual paleness or clamminess of skin
- Pronounced loss of appetite
- Unusual crankiness, continuous fussing or crying; lethargy.

Also, please keep your child home for 24 hours after running a fever of 101.3 degrees or more.

Children should be symptom and Tylenol free to assure that an active infectious illness is not present in order to return. When a child leaves the center ill during the course of a day and is started on antibiotics or other prescription medication, he/she will be allowed to return within 24 hours, provided he/she does not exhibit other "ill" symptoms described above.

Parents are required to pick up an ill child within 45 minutes of notification by phone. If a parent is reached, but cannot pick their child up within 45 minutes, it becomes the parent's responsibility to arrange for alternate pick up with someone listed on the child's emergency contact form. If a parent cannot be reached, the staff will begin to call the people listed on the emergency contact form, until arrangements can be made for the child to be picked up.

Please notify us if your child will be absent. We will be concerned until we hear from you.

Daily outdoor play is an important requirement for healthy development. Unless the weather is inclement, children will go outside two times per day. Children who are too ill to go outdoors are too ill to attend the center.

Also, children at our Center are constantly on the go. It can be hard for children to muster the energy to fight illness, recover, and play with so many peers all at once. Our final health requirement is that if children are well enough to come to our Center, they must be well enough to participate in all our activities, both indoors and out.

Medication

A parent permission slip must be completed before the staff can give any medication. All medication must be in its original container labeled with your child's name on it. NOTE: OVER THE COUNTER DRUGS ARE STILL DRUGS---PLEASE CONSULT WITH YOUR CHILD'S PHYSICIAN. NON-PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS WILL NOT BE ADMINISTERED TO CHILDREN UNDER TWO YEARS OF AGE WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION AND INSTRUCTIONS OF THE CHILD'S PHYSICIAN. Each child's medication shall be childproof and must have the pharmacy label on it including the name and strength of the medication, the child's name, the doctor's name, and specific instructions. Medication will be administered in accordance with these instructions. All medication will be recorded on a posted medication sheet with the child's name, name of medication, dosage, time given, and initials of the staff person who gave the medication. All medications are stored in a locking cabinet unless refrigeration is required.

Children with Severe Allergies

For the safety of all children it is required that parents provide us with any allergies that your child may have, food or otherwise. This must be disclosed on the family profile and emergency card. Any medication required to treat an allergic reaction must be provided in accordance with our medication form and be kept at the center in case of an emergency.

Emergency Procedures

Tornado or Severe Weather

During a severe weather watch, the children will remain indoors. Staff members will turn radios to a local radio station for up to date weather information. If a warning should occur while the center is open, all rooms will be alerted verbally by the office to take immediate shelter in their designated areas. NO PHONE CALLS WILL BE MADE OR ACCEPTED AT THIS TIME. Parents may pick up at their discretion, but we discourage this practice. Once alerted, teachers will lead their group to their shelter, remain calm and explain to the children what is happening. Teachers will take their sign in sheets and an emergency box of toys, books etc. Parents who arrive at the center in the time of a warning may join the group until the all clear is given

Fire

In the case of a fire, the alarms will sound and all staff members have specific duties to make sure all children are escorted safely outdoors. The director will make phone calls to authorities and parents to have children picked up if needed. In the case of inclement weather children will be brought to the

Marywood basement tunnel. Signs will be posted on the classroom doors for parents. Children may be picked up by entering Marywood through the business entrance located on the north side of the building (by the circle drive) Our buildings are equipped with fire extinguishers and fire alarms.

Drills

Two times a year we conduct an emergency/evacuation drills with Marywood Dominicans. Announced and unannounced fire and tornado drills are held on a regular basis. Staff will explain to the children what they are and why it is important. This is also an excellent opportunity for parents to go over a plan of what children should do if a fire or tornado at their home.

Incident/Accident Emergency Procedures

Minor injuries such as bumps and bruises will be tended to and reported to parents by means of an ouch report. These situations will be handled with proper first aid care using only water to wash wounds and extra TLC by a staff member. Any major accidents will be reported to parents immediately. Necessary immediate care will be given and transportation will be arranged per parental instructions. In the case where parents are unavailable, emergency contacts will be called. In the case where no person is available, Whistle Stop staff will take whatever emergency measures deemed necessary for medical care for your child. On duty staff will complete a written report that may be submitted to the licensing bureau.

Alternate Safe Location

Should the administration or any emergency services personnel determine the building which houses the child care agency to be dangerous to be occupied, the staff and children will be taken to Marywood Dominicans or Mayfair Christian Day Care (corner of Lyon & Plymouth NE). Once the children are assembled here, the staff will begin contacting parents or emergency contact persons for pick up, as stated before.

Safety Policy

In order to ensure safety of children at Creative Learning Center we ask that all parents enter and exit through the center front door. The gates at the playground must stay closed at all times. The front door is locked and a key code is required for entrance. Please be mindful if you are letting people into the building. Make sure if they do not know the code that they are helped by an office staff.

Hygiene Policy

Personal hygiene is taught and encouraged. Children wash their hands many times throughout the day including at arrival and leaving the center, after toileting, before and after eating, after wiping noses, and when hands are soiled. They are also encouraged to cover their mouths when coughing or sneezing and use a tissue when needed. All children brush their teeth after lunch. Parents are asked to provide a toothbrush that can be kept in your child's classroom.

Nutrition Policy

Good health and nutrition are important for the proper development of each child. Calorie needs of children differ according to body size, growth spurts, and physical activity level. Each child is required to bring his or her own lunch. Serving a variety of foods in their lunches can help children grow properly and maintain a healthy body and weight. For a diet with plenty of vegetables, fruits, and grain

products, the US Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service recommends these servings:

- Three or more servings of various vegetables

- Two or more servings of various fruits

- Six or more servings of grain products

Serve less fat and fewer fatty foods. Serve sugars and sweets only in moderation. Following these recommendations will result in healthy meals for children whether they need to gain, maintain, or lose weight.

We recommend a cold pack in your child's lunchbox to keep the lunch cold. For your convenience, we provide a microwave oven for items that need to be heated.

We provide a nutritious morning and afternoon snack for the children each day. We also provide milk at some snack and lunchtime. Snack menus are posted weekly in each room and are available for parents to take home.

As an option for families, we offer pizza lunches that is catered in on Mondays.

Parents are required to provide written notification of any food/dietary restrictions (i.e. Lactose intolerance, vegetarian diets, wheat free/gluten free diets).

Smoking

For the health of all staff, children and associates, smoking is prohibited anywhere on center property. Parents are prohibited from smoking in the building, on the grounds, and in the parking lot. Parents who are smoking in their car must dispose of the cigarette before entering the parking lot. Smoking is also prohibited in the presence of children outside of the center (i.e. Chaperoning field trips). **This is a State of Michigan mandated regulation.**

Firearms and Weapons

At no time is any person permitted to carry any type of Firearm, Ammunitions and/or Weapon on the Center property for any reason. Violation of this policy will result in immediate dismissal from the program.

Transportation

Whistle Stop shares three 10 passenger vans that transport children on field trips with our sister center, The Creative Learning Center. All children under the age of 8 years old will be in a properly fitted car seat that meets the Michigan State Standards of Transportation Safety.