

Dear Family,

Rutgers-Livingston Day Care Center is committed to providing the highest quality care for your child. The teachers and I respect you as your child's first and primary teacher, and look forward to working in partnership with you to support your child's learning and development.

This family handbook has been designed to help you understand our practices and procedures and in many instances, not just what we do, but why we do it! Rest assured, careful thought and much experience have guided us through its preparation. While this booklet is not all-inclusive, and new policies may be developed, and existing policies modified as needed, you will find answers to many of your questions here. If, after reading this, you find you need further clarification, please contact me here at the Center or via e-mail.

Thank you for choosing us for your child's early care and education!!

Kind regards,

*Cheryl Devine
Director
cheryl@rldcc.org*

Our History

Rutgers-Livingston Day Care Center has been providing high quality child care for the faculty, staff and students of Rutgers University since 1975. As a private, not for profit organization, the Center operates on parent fees and university support. Families with current Rutgers affiliation receive priority for enrollment and discounted tuition. If space allows, the Center welcomes community families, as well.

NAEYC Accreditation



Rutgers-Livingston is proud to hold the distinction of being part of the very first group of early childhood programs in the nation, and the first program in New Jersey, to be accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. NAEYC accreditation is voluntary, involving an extensive self-study of practices and policies by the staff and parents, followed by an on-site visit of early childhood experts. Retaining accredited status since 1986 requires the Center to uphold these high standards and repeat the entire process every five years.

Board of Trustees

A Board of Trustees, elected by the parents/guardians to represent them, governs the Center and serves as a support group to engage enrolled families in the education of their children, and to strengthen family/staff communication. Meetings are held throughout the year to review the Center's policies, procedures, practices and financial stability. Any family member interested in serving on the board can nominate himself in September when elections are held.

A Professional Staff

A Director and Assistant Director administer the program, each with expertise in early childhood education and business practices. Both are active at the local and state level of the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Each classroom team is comprised of a lead teacher, who holds a degree in Early Childhood Education and New Jersey Teacher certification, and assistant teachers of diverse backgrounds. Continued professional development is required and highly valued; staff members take college courses, or go to conferences and workshops to keep current in the field. In addition to an extensive orientation and regular instruction in CPR and Pediatric First Aid, the Center provides on-going professional development opportunities on site.

As part of the hiring process, the Center secures character references and ensures that the Office of Licensing clears the candidate; both the Child Abuse Registration Information report and fingerprinting are required.

Our Philosophy

Young children are explorers, investigators, scientists—trying to make sense of their world through interactions with the environment, adults and other children. They are active learners, continuously incorporating new information with that which they already know. Therefore, everything is the child's curriculum; every experience, conversation and observation, whether purposefully planned or inadvertent, is influential.

Young children develop and learn best when their physical, social and emotional needs are considered as important as their academic successes. They need nurturing adults who understand child development and who truly enjoy and respect children. They deserve specially educated teachers who value this unique stage of life and are dedicated to helping each child become an independent, life-long learner—teachers who will provide a safe community where social skills are practiced, risks can be taken, and self esteem flourishes. Children deserve teachers who respect the value of and safeguard every child's right to play. Play is the very core of children's learning and accordingly, our curriculum.

Young children develop with predictable sequence, but at their own pace, making each child an individual with a distinct personality, temperament and learning style. Children must be respected for who they are today, without undue pressure to get ready for who they may be tomorrow. Learning activities, planned from children's needs and interests, provide meaningful experiences that build knowledge, skills, attitudes and values in these areas: literacy and language, mathematics, art, science, dramatic play, cooking, social studies, music, technology, multiculturalism, physical and social development.

Young children come to us with their families, who are their primary teachers and caregivers, bringing diverse cultures, beliefs and practices, which must be respected. All families are welcomed and encouraged to be as involved at the Center as their schedules and other commitments allow.

Our Curriculum

In keeping with our philosophy, we define curriculum as everything the children do while at the Center, involving every aspect of the program from planned activities and lessons to meals and informal conversations. Every experience—how they are greeted, how they work with others, the materials available to them—must be thought of as curriculum, for each contributes to their understanding of the world and their future attitudes about learning, education and life.

Our curriculum is based on the principles of **NAEYC's Developmentally Appropriate Practices**, is consistent with New Jersey's Birth to Three Early Learning Standards and New Jersey's Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards, and supportive of the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards for Kindergarten. Our teachers skillfully balance planned learning opportunities with careful responses to the spontaneity of children's interests and enthusiasm.

Learning through play is natural for children and is the core of our curriculum. Our goal is to support each child's growth and development by providing multiple, extended periods for play throughout the day. Through play, children increase their understanding of and knowledge about the world around them, practice skills, develop relationships and rehearse roles. Play allows children to become deeply involved in what they find interesting. They create the agenda and the rules; they use their imaginations, muscles and planning skills. Their cognitive, physical, emotional and social development are all enhanced. The teachers help keep the play productive by carefully setting up the environment, adding materials and sometimes joining the play.

As part of their play and also through focused studies and projects, activities integrating art, science, music, literacy and language arts, physical development, mathematics, social studies and technology provide meaningful learning experiences. We consider our playgrounds extensions of our classrooms and important components of our curriculum. Our goal is to provide all children with daily opportunities for outdoor play and exploration throughout the year.

At Rutgers-Livingston Day Care, the teacher is responsible for the daily activities of her class. This usually begins with the choice of a specific study topic or project, based on the interests and needs of the children. She then plans the lessons/activities with the assistant teachers and includes input from the children as well. Careful consideration ensures that all activities offered reflect the age, developmental levels and interests of the children. Teachers integrate all the curriculum areas along with block-building, dramatic play, field trips and classroom visitors to fully develop concepts within each topic/project. While most activities are preplanned, teachers also look for teachable moments and are flexible, willing to change the project's direction as needed, to best meet the children's needs and interests. The Honeybee curriculum allows our youngest children to actively explore their environment and is built around hands-on learning, social interaction between children and adults and feelings of safety, security and belonging.

The Teachers will incorporate the goals of an individualized education plan (IEP) for any child with diagnosed special needs.

Families are encouraged to review our curriculum guide, which includes typical experiences provided in each classroom; ask to see the written document or find it at www.rldcc.org, our web site. The teachers post their lesson plans to familiarize families with the topics and planned activities. Families are encouraged to read them so the concepts can be reinforced at home; you are invited to share your expertise with the children, too!

Outcome Statements



R-LDCC's philosophy and curriculum are designed and implemented with the intent that **all children will have been:**

- treated with respect at all times;
- welcomed as valued members of the Center's community;
- respected as individuals, each with a unique developmental timetable, temperament, learning style and family background;
- viewed as competent learners;
- offered challenging activities and experiences that were developmentally appropriate, based on their needs and interests, and in keeping with New Jersey's Birth to Three Early Learning Standards and New Jersey's Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards, and New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards for Kindergarten, and, at all times,
- allowed to enjoy being children!

Further, we recognize that to nurture the whole child, meaningful relationships must be developed and sustained with all families that trust us with the care and education of their children. To that end, it is our goal that **each family will have been:**

- respected as the experts on their child's development and as partners in their child's education;
- greeted warmly and sincerely whenever they came into the Center and made to feel valued members of the R-LDCC community;
- offered multiple and diverse opportunities to participate in Center activities and made to feel capable of making contributions to the Center;
- offered opportunities to share information regarding their cultural background, preferences and home language, and their child's interests, abilities, and special needs;
- encouraged to communicate freely with staff so that mutual goals for the child can be identified and supported;
- informed of what the children are doing while at the Center; and,
- included in the assessment process.

Assessing Children's Learning and Development

Assessment assists teachers in knowing how to best care for and teach the children entrusted to them. It can identify children's needs and interests, monitor their development and learning, and inform curriculum planning. Assessment at R-LDCC begins with the family completing an Ages and Stages Questionnaire [ASQ]. This is a developmental screening tool that can indicate if a child's development is typical for his age. The lead teachers have been specifically trained to review and interpret the ASQ and the protocol to follow if developmental concerns are indicated. Further information on this instrument is available upon request.

On-going assessment of children's learning and development is curriculum embedded. That is, children are observed and evaluated on what they actually do at the Center, within the framework of the curriculum. The lead teachers have all studied child development as part of their formal teacher preparation program; most assistant teachers have studied child development, too. All teaching staff have knowledge of the Center's curriculum and learning outcomes for children. They understand the importance of observation and documentation of children's growth, as well as areas needing further development. Additionally, families are encouraged to share their own observations of their children and to work with the teachers. Based on these observations, future learning experiences can be designed that will best support each child's development.

If concerns regarding a child's learning, development, behavior or health arise, the teacher and family will work together to determine the most suitable course of action. While quick answers to questions and casual anecdotes regarding a child's day at the Center are often shared at pick-up time, questions or concerns that require a more detailed response should be directed to the lead teacher when she can devote her full attention to you. An email or a brief note can initiate the conversation, and she will work with you to arrange a mutually convenient time to meet, when she is not engaged with the children.

Teacher/Family conferences are scheduled in October and March, and whenever requested by the family or the teacher. Family members are asked to contribute to the agenda prior to a conference, so their concerns, observations and goals can be included. In addition, written summaries of each child's learning and development are prepared and distributed to the family in December/January and May.

Each child's confidentiality is protected by limiting conversation about him to only those directly involved in his care and education. The Center restricts access to children's files to their parents/guardians, teachers, program administrators, the school nurse and regulatory authorities. We obtain written permission from a parent/guardian before discussing a child or sharing written information with anyone from outside R-LDCC.

Hours of Operation

The Center is open from 7:00-5:30, Monday through Friday, year-round. The lead teachers are scheduled so they are here until closing, ensuring they are available at the end of each day. Closing at 5:30 is a philosophical decision. To remain open longer would require us to hire part time workers to cover the end of the day. We appreciate the value of having the children cared for by their regular teachers, throughout the day, and make this our priority.

We close right at 5:30 and expect that you'll respect our teachers by making every effort to be on time and leave promptly; they too have families and obligations to attend to. In the event you arrive after 5:30, a late fee of \$5.00 beginning at 5:31, and an additional \$5.00 for each 5 minutes thereafter, will be collected, which will go toward paying the teachers for their extra time. The Center reserves the right to terminate a child's enrollment if tardiness is excessive.

A Sample Daily Schedule

As all planned activities reflect the interests and needs of the children, the children's schedules are room specific, may vary somewhat each day and are influenced by the weather! Each teacher posts an outline of how her class day typically unfolds. Here is a sample:

7:00	Center opens; self-selected activities	12:00	Lunch
8:30	Breakfast is served	1:00	Nap or rest
8:45	Story; children's choices	2:00	Quiet activities for children who have awakened
9:30	Clean-up time	3:00	Story and snack
9:40	Circle: music and movement activities	3:30	Teacher-directed activities
10:00	Small group activities	4:00	Indoor or outdoor play
10:10	Learning centers	5:30	Center closes
11:00	Outdoor or indoor play		

Family Etiquette

Family members are expected to supervise their children when they are at the Center. Please be sure your child remains with you and insist that the Center's rules are upheld. This means that children may not run through the building disturbing other classes, ignore classroom behavior expectations, or play in areas of the classroom or playground that are not "open," even when parents are present. When children are playing outdoors, everything in the classroom is "closed."

We also ask that out of respect for our teachers and children, cell phones not be used in our building or on the playground. Your child deserves your full attention during these separation and reunion times. The teachers are reluctant to interrupt your personal conversations to share even the most important information about your child.

Because the children's concentration and focus are easily distracted, we ask that all adult conversations [beyond simple pleasantries, of course] take place outside of the classrooms; chat in the hallway or on the playground.

Kindergarten

A full day Kindergarten is available for children who meet the age requirements in their hometown. Spaces are limited and registration takes place in the spring.

Kindergarteners living more than 2 but less than 20 miles from the Center may be eligible for transportation reimbursement from the state.

Middlesex Regional Educational Services Commission provides screening and service for speech therapy, English as a second language instruction and/or compensatory education for children enrolled in our Kindergarten.

Transitions

Welcoming new children and families to the Center

Children who are new to the Center are encouraged to visit before the first day, with a family member remaining at the Center to ensure the visit is positive. Recognizing that each child's adjustment is unique, families are asked how they want to handle the first few days. Families are also reminded to tell their child when they are leaving and that the teachers will take care of him until they return.

To help make the child and family feel welcome, a mailbox, cubby and coat hook are prepared. As soon as possible, photographs of the new child are added to classroom displays so he feels part of the community. The classroom website password is given to the new family and photos of the child are posted.

Transitioning children to a new classroom

Typically, children are moved from one class to another during the summer months. The child's development, relationships, size and language abilities are all considered along with chronological age when determining the timing for the transition. Families are consulted to assure that the timing is not counterproductive. Events outside the Center, such as a family move, vacations, visiting relatives or birth of a sibling are considered when constructing the transition plan.

Every effort is made to make the transition as stress free as possible for the child and the family. Whenever possible, two or more children are moved together to provide a support system.

Two to three weeks prior to the formal change of room we:

- Coordinate visit times with all three classrooms so they are the least disruptive.
- Schedule daily, short visits to the new room at varying times of the day. Communicate with the family about each visit.
- Allow the children to make longer visits as comfort levels increase. If a child is reluctant to visit the new classroom, one of his current teachers might go along to visit, too. Some children will need more encouragement and support than others.

Children who will be away from the Center for an extended period and return to a new group typically visit the new room prior to their absence.

Moving on to Kindergarten or First Grade

As our children come from several counties and sometimes from out of New Jersey, it is not possible for R-LDCC to provide accurate information on every potential school district. Registration information from local public schools explaining enrollment procedures and visiting opportunities is distributed to families eligible for enrollment, as it becomes available. Children are encouraged to talk about their upcoming move to a new school and any visits they may make. Our family library includes books about going to a new school that can be borrowed and read at home, or read to groups or individuals by our teaching staff.



Arriving at the Center

We know mornings are hectic, but it is important that you take time each day to:

- Read the outdoor white board. This is where we list if a teacher is absent along with the scheduled coverage and information about special events. You may want to share pertinent information with your child; she may find it less stressful to know that a certain teacher has a day off *before* reaching the classroom.
- Check your mailbox. There may be important information from the office waiting for you.
- Bring your child into the classroom and make sure that the teacher is aware of his arrival before you leave.
- Sign the attendance sheet in the classroom. This is our reference in the event of an emergency.
- Stay with your child while he removes boots, coat, etc. and puts them away.
- Share any information that may impact your child's day by talking with the teacher or leaving her a note.
- Say "good-bye" to your child. While it is often tempting to leave when the child is distracted, we ask that you tell your child you are leaving and that the teachers will take care of him while you are gone. Reassure him that you will return later, say good-bye and then leave. Drawn out separation periods only cause added stress for the child (and adults!) Feel free to call us as often as you like to check on your child during the day.

Kindly note these additional guidelines:

- Children arriving after their classroom's scheduled breakfast time should have already eaten breakfast at home.
- Children arriving after 12 noon should have already eaten lunch at home.
- Children may not be dropped off at the Center between 12:30 and 2 PM to avoid disturbing other children who may be sleeping. Of course, children can be picked up at any time, at the family's convenience.
- Before planning a late arrival, please consider the experience from your child's perspective. We understand that families may schedule doctor or dentist appointments, car repairs or other errands before bringing the child to the Center. However, a child who was allowed to sleep late at home will not only miss the morning activities but will most likely have a very difficult time settling for a nap soon after arriving.
- The Center maintains an "open door" policy; parents are always welcome to drop in at any time for any reason. Respectfully, we request you consider your child's reaction to separation before deciding to make brief visits. For many children, one goodbye per day is enough!

What to Bring

Each child has her own cubby and coat hook to store personal items. Be sure to keep the cubby stocked with the following:

- One complete change of seasonal clothing (shirt, pants, underwear, socks and if possible, shoes)
- A sweater, light jacket or sweatshirt
- Extra underwear
- A wide-brimmed hat for outdoor play

It is important that all clothing worn at the Center

- **Allows your child to toilet independently.** Belts, suspenders, or tight clothes may look really cute but are often frustrating to young children. Your child will be most comfortable in clothes she can successfully manage with limited adult intervention.
- **Is appropriate for outdoor play and creative (often messy) art and sensory activities.** Send your child in wearing clothes that will not result in undue stress if s/he gets paint, mud or ketchup on them!
- **Is labeled with your child's name.** With so many children wearing the same size clothes it is impossible for us to keep track of what belongs to whom!

If your child is in diapers, be sure to check her storage box in the bathroom regularly, and replenish as needed. Families with children in diapers are asked to contribute a package of wipes with their monthly tuition payment.

All children play outdoors every day, even in the winter! Your child will need snow pants, a hat, mittens and boots for comfortable winter play.

Naptime

Each class has a rest period every day, after lunch. Most of the children sleep, tired from a full morning of activity; some just rest quietly on their mats. Either way, this is an important part of the children's day. It is a chance to relax in a quiet, calm setting. To help make naptime a pleasant experience, your child will need:

- A favorite soft toy or doll
- A small blanket
- A mat sheet*

Sheets and blankets should be small enough to fit in your R-LDCC tote bag. They are sent home each Friday, to be washed and returned on Monday. If you forget to bring a sheet or blanket the Center will provide one and charge you \$1.00 for laundering. Bring yours in as soon as you remember, and we'll use it the following Monday.

*The mat sheet is designed like a giant pillowcase, sewn closed on three sides, measuring 28" X 56". You may purchase one from the Center for \$10.00 or make your own. Many families find it is beneficial to have 2 sheets so one is always clean!

Family/Center Communication

We know you want to know what happens at the Center while you are away. Communication is important to us too! To keep these lines open, it is critical that the Center have accurate contact information, at all times. Please advise us immediately of any change in:

- ✓ Home, work or cell phone numbers
- ✓ Home address
- ✓ Email address
- ✓ Employer
- ✓ Matters of importance to your child, i.e. allergies, a new medication, a visit from grandma. . .

In order to maintain confidentiality and appropriate classroom supervision, the teachers cannot engage in lengthy conversation when they are with the children. For questions or concerns that require more than a casual response from the teacher, kindly arrange to speak with her when she can devote her full attention to you.

Each classroom has an area dedicated to communicating with families, where teachers post lesson plans and other messages. In addition, Honeybee families can check what their child ate for lunch and Honeybee and Duckling families can get information regarding naptime.

Periodically, the teacher will provide a written summary of development and learning for your child. These are designed to give you a glimpse of various aspects of your child's experiences at the Center, as well as noting changes, milestones and developmental concerns. Teacher/Family conferences are scheduled twice during each school year, and as needed.

The Center also relies on these communication tools; referring to them regularly will keep you informed

- Family mailboxes
- Entryway bulletin boards
- White board outside our front door
- Newsletter, distributed electronically
- Our website, rldcc.org
- Email

Each class also has a website where photos are posted regularly to offer families a glimpse of the children's activities and learning. Send your e-mail address to your child's teacher and she'll send you the password.

In the event a family has a situation that cannot be resolved with the classroom teacher, they are advised to call or meet with the Center Director. Every effort will be made to reach a solution that meets the family's needs within the parameters of Center policies and procedures.

A Secure Environment

The safety and security of the children is the responsibility of each and every adult coming to the Center. Continued enrollment is contingent upon your family's full cooperation with these safety practices:

Latch the front gate every time you enter or leave the playground. While it may seem somewhat rude at first, we ask that you do not leave the gate open for another adult, even if s/he is following closely behind you. We can't take any chance that a child may run out of the playground and into traffic.

Safeguard the front door. This is the only barrier keeping strangers out of our building. Only parents/guardians of enrolled children have access to an entry keyfob; it may not be shared with babysitters, friends or other family members. Likewise, do not allow people unknown to you into the Center, even if they look like parents! If they belong here, they'll have a key!

Hold your child's hand tightly when leaving the playground and securely buckle him/her in the car seat, every day. The university police regularly patrol the area to enforce this NJ law.

Respect the fire zone. Parking is permitted in the front of the Center, but not within or in front of the striped fire zone. Emergency vehicles must have full access to the building at all times.

Release of Children

The children's safety is our primary concern. Before releasing a child to anyone other than a parent/guardian, we will check to be sure there is **written** authorization on file, and verify the person's identity with photo identification. If there is any question, the child will not be released and a parent/guardian will be called. Neither a telephone call nor fax affords parents or the Center the same protection as *original written* authorization, and will not be accepted to release children. We suggest you provide permission for at least one additional person you can rely on to pick up your child in the event you are unexpectedly detained. The Center is required to contact the Office of Licensing any time a child is left at the Center one hour past closing. The staff will follow the recommendations given for caring for the child.

In addition, the Office of Licensing prohibits a child from being released to any individual, including a parent, who in the staff member's judgment would place the child in risk of harm (the individual appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, gives the impression of emotional instability, etc.) If this situation arises, the Center will attempt to make other arrangements for the child by calling the other parent or individuals named as emergency contacts. The university police will be notified for immediate assistance if the individual attempts to take the child from the Center.

A Healthy Environment

All of the Center's health and safety policies are based on currently recognized best practices as detailed in Caring for Our Children, 3rd Edition. If you'd like to read the standards for yourself, go to <http://cfoc.nrckids.org/index.cfm>.

In order to provide an environment that supports good health:

- The Center recognizes the importance of handwashing. The children and all adults working in the Center follow established guidelines for when and how to wash their hands.
- Toothbrushing is offered daily.
- Children have daily opportunities to play outdoors in the fresh air, throughout the seasons. The teachers balance active play periods with time to rest and reflect.
- The building is cleaned each evening and sanitary procedures are followed throughout the day.
- Immunization records are updated on a routine basis and daily health checks are done to insure that children in attendance are up to the task of participating in group care.
- Families are routinely provided with resources on health issues, including nutrition and childhood obesity and mental/behavioral health issues.

For each enrolled child, the Center is required by the Office of Licensing to maintain on file a Universal Child Health Record, updated annually, along with an immunization record and a special care plan (if applicable).

The Center is committed to providing care and education for every child, including those with special needs. Further, the Center will assist families in finding an alternate program if it is deemed that the child's needs would be better met elsewhere.

Even with all we do to promote good health, children are still going to become ill. To protect the other children and the staff and in keeping with the requirements set by the Office of Licensing, your child may not come to the Center if he has:

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| -severe pain or discomfort | -vomiting | -fever over 101.5°F with behavior changes |
| -acute diarrhea | -severe coughing | -infected, untreated skin patches |
| -yellow eyes or jaundiced skin | -difficulty breathing | -weeping or bleeding skin lesions |
| -red eyes with discharge | -stiff neck | -mouth sores with drooling |
| | | -lethargy more than expected tiredness |

or shows any other signs of illness or communicable disease.

Temporary exclusion from group care is required when a child's illness prevents him/her from participating comfortably in regular Center activities OR when the child's illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising their ability to care for the other children.

A child or staff member with an excludable communicable disease, as set forth in the Department of Health's reporting requirements for Communicable diseases and work-related conditions quick reference guide—available at www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/reportable_disease_magnet.pdf—is not permitted to be admitted to or to remain at the Center until he presents a note from a health care provider that he has been diagnosed and presents no risk to himself or others OR the state or local health department pediatric health consultant advises the Center that the individual poses no health risk to others.

If your child appears to be ill while at the Center, we will call you to pick him up. We'll expect you to come as soon as possible and certainly within the hour; sick children require and deserve more attention than we can provide here. After an hour of attempting to reach parents or waiting for their arrival, fees for individual childcare will be charged, at the rate of \$25 for any part of an hour. As these emergencies can arise at any time, we ask that you notify us whenever you cannot be reached at your regular phone number. Please confirm with the individuals you list as your emergency contacts that they are both willing and able to accept responsibility for your child if we must call them.

On the occasion your child is sent home sick from the Center, we will prepare a written summary of the symptoms s/he is presenting and the actions we have taken (you may want this information for the doctor). This will indicate when s/he may return to the Center and if a doctor's note will be required for readmission, as well.

We will inform you whenever we become aware of any diagnosed communicable diseases your child may have been exposed to at the Center.

A registered nurse is assigned to the Center via the Middlesex Regional Educational Services Commission to assist the Center with recordkeeping and establishing health policies and guidelines.

It takes the commitment of all the Center's adults—families, staff and the nurse—working together to provide a healthy environment.

Medication

The Center can administer medication only if the parent/guardian has:

- provided a completed physician's order form (copies are available in the office and at rldcc.org);
- supplied prescription medication in the original, child-resistant container that is labeled by a pharmacist with the child's name;
- supplied the appropriate measuring device needed to give the accurate dose of the medicine;
- completed and signed the medication log in the front office daily.

Families are urged to call to remind us when it is time to give the medication. In the course of a busy day, we may not always remember every medicine, and assume no responsibility for such.

Because having medication in the Center is a safety hazard, families should check with their child's physician to see if a dose schedule can be arranged that does not involve the hours the child is at R-LDCC. The first dose of medication should always be given at home to see if the child has any type of reaction.

Parents/guardians of children with a recurring or chronic condition or emergency situation will work with the Director and their child's physician to provide a care plan specific to their child. The Center should be advised if your child receives any medication at home on a regular basis.

Outdoor Safety

We take the children outdoors almost every day, winter, spring, summer and fall!

To protect them from the potential harm of the sun, we:

- ✓ encourage families to apply sunscreen before bringing the children to the Center in the late spring and summer,
- ✓ reapply sunscreen for afternoon outdoor play when the ultraviolet index (UV) is 5 or above,
- ✓ encourage each family to provide a hat and encourage each child to wear it,
- ✓ alter the daily schedule to take advantage of the coolest parts of the day,
- ✓ encourage and if necessary require the children to play in the shade,
- ✓ monitor both the heat and UV index and limit time outdoors following our guidelines, and
- ✓ build in water breaks, when the whole class stops playing for a drink.

To protect them during the winter months, we:

- ✓ alter the daily schedule to take advantage of the warmest parts of the day,
- ✓ limit the amount of time spent outdoors in accordance with the weather conditions,
- ✓ expect families to provide a warm coat, hat, snow pants, boots, and mittens--not gloves (any family finding this a financial hardship should speak to the Director for assistance),
- ✓ change the children into dry clothes if they get wet playing in the snow or rain,
- ✓ expect families to keep at least one complete change of clothing in the cubbies,
- ✓ keep extra outdoor clothing on hand to make sure everyone gets time to play outside!

Sometimes a family requests that a child is kept inside for fear of catching a cold. Rest assured that we have consulted with many healthcare professionals and have been repeatedly told that children get sick from germs, **not** from playing outdoors, as long as they are properly dressed! Children too sick to go out to play are likely too sick for group care and should rest at home until they recover.

Emergency Procedures

Monthly, the children practice evacuating the building, under the supervision of the university fire department. The Center has a sprinkler system and a fire alarm connected to Rutgers Emergency Services. If, for any reason, we have to vacate the building for an extended period, the children will be taken to the Livingston Recreation Center.

All staff members are required to be trained in Pediatric First Aid, so they are prepared for the inevitable scrapes and bumps of childhood, as well CPR and AED for any emergency situations. We'll put a note in your mailbox any time your child has a minor injury, reporting the first aid we gave. Please be advised that the Center is required to call and inform you if your child falls from a height greater than his own, receives a bite that breaks the skin or hits his head. A call from us is not necessarily cause for alarm--- usually we're just advising you of the incident.

If emergency treatment is required, the Center will call Rutgers Police to notify the rescue squad. The child and a staff member will be transported to St. Peter's or Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital. You will be called to meet them at the hospital.

Meals

The Center serves breakfast, lunch and snack each day, freshly prepared by our cook, in our own kitchen. We participate in the Child and Adult Food Program and follow the nutrition guidelines as required by this U.S. Department of Agriculture sponsored program.



Our menus are posted on our website and emailed to families monthly. Menus are subject to change so that we can take advantage of seasonal specials and sales. Families are encouraged to offer menu suggestions or recipes to the Center; we'll try out those meeting the food program's guidelines!



Families of children with dietary restrictions should arrange to meet with the Director/Assistant Director to discuss how to meet their child's nutritional needs.

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 or (202) 720-6382 (TTY). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

To protect children with severe allergies, NO FOOD may be brought into the Center unless preapproved by the teacher.

R-LDCC will support breastfeeding mothers, including employees, by:

- Providing a private space for feeding their babies or expressing milk;
- Respecting a mother's decision to breastfeed in the presence of others, including in the classrooms or on the playground, if she prefers; and
- Providing refrigerated storage for expressed milk. Mothers must provide their own containers that are clearly labeled with their name and date.

Toilet Teaching Philosophy

As each child's development is unique, there is no ideal or right time to begin or deadline to complete toilet learning. The decision to begin toilet teaching should be made jointly by parents and caregivers. This partnership can help to make the process a natural learning experience for the child.

Many factors must be considered when deciding a child's readiness for independent toileting. The child must be ready to participate willingly and have the physiological ability to control elimination. It is also important to consider the timing, planning for a low stress period. For example, when a family is moving, at the birth of a sibling or while transitioning caregivers may already be anxiety-filled events and are likely not the ideal times to begin toilet teaching.

Children can be prepared for independent toileting by helping them to learn about and by giving them words to describe the elimination process. They can be encouraged to pull their pants up and down, allowed to flush the toilet and taught proper handwashing prior to beginning to use the toilet. Starting before a child is ready or interested may set up a lasting power struggle. As children mature they want to imitate others and be independent. They will choose the toilet over diapers when they are ready.

When the decision to begin toilet teaching is mutually reached, the family will be expected to bring the child to the Center dressed in clothing that encourages independent toileting; short dresses, elastic-waist pants or shorts, and easily managed underpants are good choices. We ask that children NOT wear onesies, long dresses or skirts, overalls (these frequently wind up dangling in the toilet water), belts, tight pants, or any other clothing that inhibits their progress. It is especially important at this time to keep the cubby well stocked with extra pants, underpants, shoes and socks, and to check it daily to remove soiled or wet clothing.

While at the Center, the child will be taken to the toilet at regular intervals, as well as at any time he requests it. Anytime the child wets or soils his clothing, he will be taken to the bathroom and reminded to use the toilet next time. We will give him dry clothing, and assist him to change. Dirty clothing will be put into tied plastic bags to be taken home. For sanitary and health reasons, no clothing will be rinsed out at the Center.

Toilet learning is rarely fast and often inconsistent. Children should not be punished for lapses; they need our understanding and patience. Adult support shortens the process; punishment may prolong it and turn it into a power struggle.

During the toilet-teaching period, it is appropriate for adults to express their expectation that the child use the toilet. However, a child's resistance or "accidents" should be handled matter-of-factly, without anger or resentment. Remind the child to use the toilet the next time and express your confidence that he will be successful.

Independent toileting is a skill to be mastered and should never be associated with punishment or humiliation. Parents and teachers working together will ensure that the child understands exactly what is expected of him.

Our Thoughts On Biting

Biting is an issue that often surfaces when young children are in group care. We know that biting is not unusual behavior for toddlers, and many go through a biting stage. Children may bite for a variety of reasons including teething, inability to communicate verbally, impulsiveness, curiosity, frustration, exploration, and sensory stimulation.

Even though biting is developmentally normal and can be expected, it is nonetheless a concern to families and teachers. When biting occurs we:

- Intervene immediately to separate the children and say in a firm, calm voice, “No biting.”
- Offer comfort and care to the bitten child. Fortunately, most children are consoled with reassuring words while the bite is carefully washed with soap and water. When necessary, ice is applied.
- Return to the biter to carefully and firmly explain that biting hurts and is not allowed.
- Make a note about the circumstances surrounding the incident including the date, time, setting, target and possible trigger.
- Inform the parents of the bitten child without identifying the biter. If the skin is broken, parents are contacted by phone, otherwise we tell them at pick up time.

If biting changes from a relatively unusual occurrence to a frequent behavior, it is considered a more serious situation. Our philosophy is to work with the parents to help the child through this stage by:

- Reviewing the records of the past biting incidents for possible cause.
- Discussing the situation and concerns with the parents to develop a plan of action.
- Insisting that everyone involved in the child’s care consistently reacts to biting incidents as described above in a firm, nonpunitive manner.

Since children and the circumstances influencing their development and behavior are unique, there is no prescribed remedy or fixed timeline. However, in extreme cases, parents may be asked to provide an adult to “shadow” their child to insure the safety of the other children. If all attempts to eliminate the biting are unsuccessful, the Center may restrict the child’s enrollment until the biting stage has subsided.



Discipline Policy

At Rutgers-Livingston Day Care Center, adults are the models for positive and acceptable behavior.

Positive discipline is a process of teaching children acceptable behavior. Positive discipline respects the needs of the individual child, the group and the adult. Positive discipline is different from punishment. Punishment tells children what they should **not** do; positive discipline tells children what they **should** do. Punishment teaches fear; positive discipline builds self-esteem.

We use positive discipline by **planning ahead**, by **intervening when necessary**, and by **showing love and encouragement**. Some specific techniques include:

- ◆ Modeling desired behaviors: using words to solve problems, giving attention to others' needs.
- ◆ Having a few consistent, clear rules that are explained to children and understood by adults.
- ◆ Giving children attention for appropriate behavior before they demand it in unacceptable ways.
- ◆ Communicating to children that they will be protected from being hurt and that they cannot hurt others. When behavior is harmful to others, property or the child him/herself, it must be stopped immediately.
- ◆ Redirecting the child to a new activity to change the focus of a child's behavior.
- ◆ Providing alternate activities and acceptable ways to release feelings.
- ◆ Pointing out natural or logical consequences of unacceptable behavior.
- ◆ Offering a choice only if there are two acceptable options.
- ◆ Explaining why behavior is unacceptable; not by labeling the child as unacceptable. Rather than, "You are a naughty, bad child," say instead, "I cannot allow that here."
- ◆ "Catching" the child being good. Responding to positive behavior, in words and in gestures lets the child know clearly that you appreciate what s/he is doing.
- ◆ Using encouragement rather than competition, comparison or criticism.
- ◆ Overlooking small annoyances, and deliberately ignoring provocation.
- ◆ Giving attention, hugs and caring to every child, every day.

Positive discipline takes time, patience and repetition, but it's worth it, because positive discipline works! It enables the child to develop an inner discipline; it helps children learn to solve problems together, using words to settle conflicts; it gives children opportunities to think and make decisions; it makes children feel good about themselves as individuals and as members of a group.

Time out—removing a child for a few minutes from the activity or area so that s/he may gain self-control—is used only as a calming device, not a punishment. One minute per each year of the child's age is a guideline for maximum time out. A child in time out is always visible to a staff member.

Following this philosophy and practice, it is clear that adults caring for children will not hit, neglect, abuse or exploit them in any way. They will not use abusive language, frighten, punish or threaten the children with punishments for issues related to rest, toileting, food/eating or for any other reason.

Tuition and Fees

Tuition fees are determined annually by the Board of Trustees to ensure that there are sufficient funds to provide high quality care and education for the children. This is based on the cost of providing quality services including materials, equipment, supplies, meals and, most importantly, a well-qualified, professional staff.

To make certain there are adequate funds to meet these expenses, all parents sign a contract for a specific enrollment period, agreeing to pay the contracted amount on the first of each month, and to give the Center a minimum of 4 weeks written notice to terminate enrollment. Currently enrolled children are given the opportunity to extend the enrollment period annually. A non-refundable deposit is collected as part of the process.

Scheduled Closings

The Center will be closed to children on these days:

- Martin Luther King Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving and the day after
- Winter Holiday (six week days between December 25 and January 1, corresponding as closely as possible with the University calendar)
- Professional Development Days (two days in late August and/or early September, two days in the fall, and one in the winter, dates determined annually)

The Board of Trustees sets the annual calendar that will include additional days, determined annually. This calendar, with specific dates, is distributed to families and is available on our website.

Unscheduled Closings

Our goal is to be open and ready to care for your child, every day. Past experience tells us that sometimes Mother Nature has other plans for us! If the Center must close or have a delayed opening because of extreme weather conditions, an advisory will be posted on the Center's website, rldcc.org and Facebook page. If the Center must unexpectedly close early due to hazardous weather or operating difficulties, like loss of power or heat, parents will be contacted by email or called to pick up the children.

Family Involvement and Support

Families are considered an integral part of our Center. Our goal is to work closely with families to provide for the varied needs of the children. Rutgers University assists the Center by providing the building and utilities. The Center depends on tuition and private support to cover all other expenses. There are many ways you can support your child's early education, such as

- Completing the developmental screening: Ages and Stages Questionnaire
- Sharing information about your child's development and experiences at home
- Participating actively in scheduled activities—clean-up days, Parent Night, Family Fun Night, Family Picnic, Stay & Play, Teacher/Family conferences.
- Offering your time and talents in the classroom. The children enjoy and benefit from having family members read aloud, cook or play a musical instrument. They are also interested in learning about your job and/or hobbies.
- Serving on the Board of Trustees.
- Making specific purchases. Each class (and the Center) has a wishlist!
- Donating materials for dress-up, the playground and our many art projects. We can recycle discarded office paper, fancy shoes, laundry detergent tops and paper towel rolls!
- Sponsoring an event, outing or project. Our shade structure, renovations on the Honeybee playground and the creation of our original website were all dreams made reality by direct family support.
- Saving Big G *Boxtops for Education* and putting them in the box on top of the family mailboxes.
- Dropping loose change into the Magic Penny Jar. We buy books for our lending library with these donations.
- Using www.goodsearch.com and www.goodshop.com to browse the internet or shop online.

As the Center is a private, not for profit organization, any contributions you make are tax deductible. You can be certain that all donations are fully appreciated and put to the best possible use.

Families are invited to an informational evening each fall, where information is shared regarding our curriculum, philosophy and daily schedule, the family's role in early care and education, and R-LDCC's philosophy, policies and protocol. It is also an opportunity for family members to meet and network with one another and with the teaching staff.

For other family support information, visit the website www.njparentlink.nj.gov, the early childhood, parenting and professional resource center.

Lost and Found

When we find items and we don't know to whom they belong, we put them in the wicker basket next to the family mailboxes in the front entryway. This is why we recommend labeling each and every item your child wears or brings to the Center. Check the Lost and Found basket if something is misplaced. Periodically, unclaimed items are donated to charity.

Babysitting Policy

Babysitting of children enrolled at R-LDCC by staff members is **strongly discouraged**. It is our goal that our staff be respected as professionals with specialized skills and expertise, not thought of as babysitters. In the past, we have experienced issues with confidentiality and favoritism. However, if a staff member chooses to enter into a babysitting relationship with a Center family or any other family, the following limitations must be understood by both the staff member and the family members:

- The Center assumes no responsibility for either the staff member or the child (children) during the duration of any babysitting arrangement. A staff member engaging in babysitting outside the Center is acting as an independent contractor, and not acting as a representative of the Center.
- A staff member may not transport an enrolled child from the Center in a private passenger vehicle.
- The Center's insurance policies do not cover the staff member while babysitting.
- Babysitting arrangements are a personal agreement between the staff member and the family and should not interfere with the staff member's responsibilities at the Center. All arrangements must be made away from the program, not during the school day.
- Confidentiality must be honored at all times. It is inappropriate to discuss other children, staff members, or business outside of the Center. It is also inappropriate to discuss anything pertaining to the family at the Center.
- Children who are being babysat by a staff member must not receive preferential treatment during the school day and families should not expect special accommodations for their children if a staff member also babysits in their home.

Lending Libraries

The Center has several lending libraries for families and children! Every morning our borrow cart is available, loaded with children's books. Check for the "R-LDCC Borrow Book" label on the back. Each classroom has its own lending library, too. Check with your child's teachers for location and borrowing procedures.



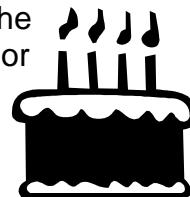
A collection of resource books is available to parents/guardians as well. New or frequently borrowed books and magazines are displayed on the shelves near the office. Additional books on a variety of topics including child development, parenting, new baby, death and others can be borrowed anytime.

Kindly return all borrowed materials promptly and in good condition so others can enjoy them too. If materials are lost or damaged while in your care, please inform us so they can be replaced.

Birthdays

If families wish to observe their child's birthday at the Center, we ask that they respect the other children, the teachers and the program by following these guidelines:

The birthday child may bring in a treat for afternoon snack, enough for the entire class. Due to children's food allergies, home-baked goodies or bakery items **cannot** be served. Check with the teacher for suggestions that can be enjoyed by all the children. Please bring in the treats *the day before* so we can double-check the ingredients before serving them to the children.



The teachers will give the child a small gift. Many families like to present a gift to the class in honor of the birthday. Please check with the teacher in advance for suggestions of toys, books, or other items that would be appropriate for and much appreciated by the class.

To avoid competition (and even blackmail!) among the children (and sometimes the parents), we specifically request that you **DO NOT BRING OR SEND IN:**

- goody bags
- balloons
- party hats
- blowers
- candy
- tablecloths
- party plates or cups
- special candles
- or any individual favors for the child's classmates

Save these items for your celebration at home!!

R-LDCC is a balloon-free environment!

Research and Fieldwork

Being located on a college campus makes the Center a natural setting for fieldwork and research. Before permission for a research project is granted, an application is completed and the individual is interviewed. Further, all applications must be approved by the Director and the Research Committee, and have approval from Rutgers University's Internal Review Board. A child will participate in a research project only when these criteria are met and written parental permission is secured. Participation is strictly voluntary; families or children may withdraw from a study at any time.

Each semester, University students volunteer at the Center to fulfill fieldwork requirements. The Center also employs students through the federal WorkStudy program. These extra adults provide extra hands to attend to the multifaceted needs of the children.

Children's Sexuality

- Is a positive and fundamental part of human existence and affects all aspects of their lives.
- Is basic to who they are as male or female persons.
- Is a natural part of life from birth to death.

The teachers and board members have developed these guidelines that help us consistently respond to children's questions regarding sexuality.

WE BELIEVE THAT CHILDREN:

- Begin learning about sexuality as soon as they are born and will continue to learn throughout their lives.
- Learn about sexuality through their interactions with the *total* environment.
- Learn from how people touch them, talk with them and expect them to behave as male or female.
- Learn early attitudes and values about sexuality that affect future feelings and behaviors.
- Are naturally curious about how their bodies look and work, about how male and female bodies differ, and about where babies come from.
- Trust and communicate with adults who are open and honest with them.
- Have the right to decide who touches them.

WE BELIEVE THAT PARENTS are their children's most important teachers.

WE BELIEVE THAT EARLY CHILDHOOD STAFF can be a positive influence in children's learning about sexuality, assisting parents in their role as their child's most important caregiver and teacher.

YOUNG CHILDREN IN OUR PROGRAM WILL:

- Learn that it's okay to talk about sexuality and ask questions about it.
- Develop positive feelings about their own bodies, including the sexual parts.
- Feel good about themselves as male or female persons and be aware of their full human potential regardless of their gender.
- Understand their body rights and responsibilities, i.e., that each person has the right to determine who will touch his/her body, particularly the sexual parts.

Based on our philosophy and goals regarding young children's learning about sexuality, the staff at **Rutgers-Livingston Day Care Center** will implement the following procedures:



Regarding CURRICULUM, we will use teachable moments when they arise to address such topics as accurate names for body parts, including genitals; identification of differences between male and female genitals; boys grow up to be men and girls grow up to be women; babies grow inside the mother's uterus; how families provide for babies' needs; body rights and assertiveness skills.

Questions about how babies are born or get started will be referred to the parents.

Regarding RESOURCES, we will make accessible for both sexes, in equal amounts, an assortment of resources on bodies, birth, babies, families, feelings, relationships, and touching such as anatomically correct baby dolls, puzzles, books, song tapes/CDs, pictures, videos, dress-up clothes, and baby care equipment for dolls or pretend play.

Regarding TOUCHING, we will:

- Provide good nurturing touch when appropriate for a child's growth, through hugs, shoulder squeezes, hand-holding, cheek-kissing, back-rubbing, holding, holding on laps, cuddling.
- Discourage inappropriate touching of staff or of other children by a child through gently interrupting such touch and calmly explaining guidelines for touching others, using accurate terminology.

Regarding BOY/GIRL EQUITY we will:

- Give boys and girls equal access and equal encouragement to use every resource in the classroom (books, toys, equipment, games, dolls, dress-up clothes).
- Offer boys and girls equal opportunities to participate in all activities (helping tasks, teams, groupings).
- Respond to behaviors, emotions, and language in the same way regardless of the sex of the child.
- Use gender as the basis for grouping children no more frequently than other categories for grouping.
- Emphasize the potential for any person to fulfill any occupational or family role.
- Use gender inclusive language (*firefighter* versus *fireman*, *people do* versus *girls don't* or *boys do*).
- Use posters, books, songs, and pictures that are both non-traditional and traditional in their portrayal of males and females, and provide equal representation of males and females in the resources available to children.
- Provide equivalent time to boys and girls, including attention, touch, praise and discipline.

Regarding other QUESTIONS/COMMENTS, we will:

- Validate the child by acknowledging the question and/or the comment.
- Determine what the child is asking or feeling and consider impact on other children.
- Whenever appropriate, respond immediately, using the "teachable moment."
- If inappropriate for other children listening, promise private talk later, being sure to follow up.
- Respond honestly and simply.
- Use age appropriate language.
- If appropriate, encourage the child to talk further with his/her parents and/or inform the parent of the child's question.

Regarding TOILET TALK, STREET LANGUAGE, "PUT DOWNS," we will:

- Treat matter-of-factly and ignore if incidental.
- Provide substitute language appropriate to the situation.
- Identify/label and acknowledge the child's feelings/motivation in using and other children's feelings in hearing.
- Tell child guidelines for word use at the Center and why (i.e. private, others don't like to hear, not grown-up, not kind to others' feelings.)

Regarding DIAPERING, we will:

- Change diapers in the bathroom where other children may be present.
- Use accurate terms when referring to the genitals.
- Avoid facial or verbal expressions of disgust and discourage those expressions by children as well.
- Allow child to touch own genitals while changing diapers.
- Address other children's questions/comments about genital parts matter-of-factly using accurate terms.

Regarding TOILET LEARNING AND BATHROOM USE, we will:

- Communicate with parents regarding child's readiness to learn toileting skills, or lack thereof.
- Encourage child with reminders, trips to the toilet and praise.
- Clean up "accidents" matter-of-factly without drawing any undue attention.
- Discourage facial or verbal expressions of disgust, dirtiness or odor from children.
- Supervise children in the bathroom.
- Have open and closed-door facilities for choice by individual child.
- Permit only one child per toilet.
- Explain to all children that they have a right to privacy if desired and that they should not "peek" on another child who wishes privacy.

Regarding SELF-PLEASURING, we will:

- Ignore if private (i.e. during naptime); remind children making noise or movement to be quiet (may need a more private location).
- Privately respond to public (during story time, eating, activities) and repeated by:
 - Making sure the child is aware of behavior, determining what the behavior means to the child.
 - Acknowledging that touching genitals feels good, but is to be done in private places.
 - Helping child identify "public" and "private" places while avoiding calling undue attention to the behavior.

Regarding BEHAVIORS TRADITIONALLY CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE FOR THE OTHER SEX, we will:

- Acknowledge the behavior matter-of-factly.

- Discourage other children's "put-downs" of the non-traditional behavior.

Regarding CLOTHING AND DRESSING, we will:

- Ensure that children always have bottoms covered.
- Allow boys and girls to change clothes in front of each other or in private, wherever they feel comfortable.
- Encourage children to participate in all activities regardless of how they are dressed (i.e. girls may hang upside down in skirts).
- Avoid "fussing" over girls in dresses.

Regarding BEHAVIORS OF CONCERN, we will pay attention to whether:

- The sex-related behavior is compulsive, repetitive, chronic, or if the child is preoccupied with it.
- The *affect* is intense, anxious, secretive, confused, brooding, or angry instead of playful.
- The child consistently teases, embarrasses or makes fun of other children.
- The child is physically or verbally abusive/exploitative of self or others.
- The child exhibits developmentally "precocious" behavior and/or knowledge as compared with community/culture/peer-group/family norms.
- Sex-related behaviors occur between children of widely dissimilar ages.

Regarding COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS, we will:

- Share with parents observations about child's sexual learning and questions.
- Communicate with parents if child's behavior fits any of the above criteria of concern:
 - If the communication is likely to result in a positive outcome for the child.
 - If parental assistance would be necessary/helpful to manage the behavior.
 - If staff have no reason to suspect child has been, or will be, subjected to verbal, physical or sexual abuse as a result of the communication.

In order to fulfill its responsibility regarding the identification and reporting of sexual abuse, this Center will ensure that all staff:

- Are informed about the mandatory reporting of known or suspected sexual abuse, or potentially abusive circumstances for a child.
- Are trained and encouraged to identify the sexually abused/exploited child.
- Know to report any suspicious sexual abuse/exploitation to the lead teacher and/or Center Director.
- Know to report any suspicion of sexual abuse/exploitation to appropriate juvenile protective services.

Field Trips

Families are informed in advance of every field trip, outing or special event away from the Center and must provide written consent before a child participates. The one exception to this is walks taken on the Livingston Campus, which are included in the blanket consent form on the enrollment form.

When children are taken off Center property, these safety guidelines are implemented:

- A minimum of two adults will accompany the children, even if child: teacher ratios would allow only one;
- Attendance will be taken upon departure, at least hourly and upon return;
- First aid supplies, a cell phone and children's emergency medical treatment authorization forms will be brought along; and
- The Director or Assistant Director will be informed of the destination and, if walking, the route to be taken.

Sometimes families are asked to contribute toward the extra expenses incurred with field trips, but no child will be denied the opportunity to participate in any outing for nonpayment. Family members will be invited to join us when there is room on the bus and enough tickets! A parent/guardian deciding a child will not accompany the class on a trip must understand that no alternative care will be provided by the Center.



Terminating Enrollment

The Center reserves the right to terminate a child's enrollment if:

- The family's financial responsibilities are not fulfilled;
- There is a pattern of excessive late pick-ups;
- The child's behavior presents a danger to other children, staff members or the child himself; or,
- The behavior of parents/guardian or other family members is deemed as endangering, threatening or abusive to a child, staff member or anyone at the Center.

Before a child's enrollment is terminated, the Director will meet with the family to discuss the cause(s) for concern and to generate an action plan. In the event the situation cannot be resolved, the parents/guardians will receive written notification of the decision to terminate enrollment, in not less than 2 weeks.

If the Director determines that the Center cannot maintain the safety of the children, families, the staff, or the child himself if a child remains enrolled, enrollment may be terminated immediately, without prior notice.

Enrollment will not be terminated as a result of complaints made by parents/guardians to the Office of Licensing regarding any alleged violations of licensing regulations against the Center or for questioning the Center directly regarding its policies and procedures.

Parents/guardians may terminate their child's enrollment by giving the Center four weeks' written notice or payment in lieu of notice.

**Department of Children and Families
Office of Licensing
INFORMATION TO PARENTS**

Under provisions of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers (N.J.A.C. 10:122), every licensed child care center in New Jersey must provide to parents of enrolled children written information on parent visitation rights, State licensing requirements, child abuse/neglect reporting requirements and other child care matters. The center must comply with this requirement by reproducing and distributing to parents this written statement, prepared by the Office of Licensing, Child Care & Youth Residential Licensing, in the Department of Children and Families (DCF). In keeping with this requirement, the center must secure every parent's signature attesting to his/her receipt of the information.

* * * * *

Our center is required by the State Child Care Center Licensing law to be licensed by the Office of Licensing, Child Care & Youth Residential Licensing, in the Department of Children and Families (DCF). A copy of our current license must be posted in a prominent location at our center. Look for it when you're in the center.

To be licensed, our center must comply with the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers (the official licensing regulations). The regulations cover such areas as: physical environment/life-safety; staff qualifications, supervision, and staff/child ratios; program activities and equipment; health, food and nutrition; rest and sleep requirements; parent/community participation; administrative and record keeping requirements; and others.

Our center must have on the premises a copy of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers and make it available to interested parents for review. If you would like to review our copy, just ask any staff member. Parents may secure a copy of the Manual of Requirements by sending a check or money order for \$5 made payable to the "Treasurer, State of New Jersey", and mailing it to: NJ Department of Children and Families, Office of Licensing, Publication Fees, PO Box 657, Trenton, NJ 08646-0657.

We encourage parents to discuss with us any questions or concerns about the policies and program of the center or the meaning, application or alleged violations of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers. We will be happy to arrange a convenient opportunity for you to review and discuss these matters with us. If you suspect our center may be in violation of licensing requirements, you are entitled to report them to the Office of Licensing toll free at 1 (877) 667-9845. Of course, we would appreciate your bringing these concerns to our attention too.

Our center must have a policy concerning the release of children to parents or people authorized by parents to be responsible for the child. Please discuss with us your plans for your child's departure from the center.

Our center must have a policy about administering medicine and health care procedures and the management of communicable diseases. Please talk to us about these policies so we can work together to keep our children healthy.

Our center must have a policy concerning the expulsion of children from enrollment at the center. Please review this policy so we can work together to keep your child in our center.

Parents are entitled to review the center's copy of the Office of Licensing's Inspection/Violation Reports on the center, which are issued after every State licensing inspection of our center. If there is a licensing complaint investigation, you are also entitled to review the Office's Complaint Investigation Summary Report, as well as any letters of enforcement or other actions taken against the center during the current licensing period. Let us know if you wish to review them and we will make them available for your review.

Our center must cooperate with all DCF inspections/investigations. DCF staff may interview both staff members and children.

Our center must post its written statement of philosophy on child discipline in a prominent location and make a copy of it available to parents upon request. We encourage you to review it and to discuss with us any questions you may have about it.

Our center must post a listing or diagram of those rooms and areas approved by the Office for the children's use. Please talk to us if you have any questions about the center's space.

Our center must offer parents of enrolled children ample opportunity to assist the center in complying with licensing requirements; and to participate in and observe the activities of the center. Parents wishing to participate in the activities or operations of the center should discuss their interest with the center director, who can advise them of what opportunities are available.

Parents of enrolled children may visit our center at any time without having to secure prior approval from the director or any staff member. Please feel free to do so when you can. We welcome visits from our parents.

Our center must inform parents in advance of every field trip, outing, or special event away from the center, and must obtain prior written consent from parents before taking a child on each such trip.

Our center is required to provide reasonable accommodations for children and/or parents with disabilities and to comply with the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (LAD), P.L. 1945, c. 169 (N.J.S.A. 10:5-1 et seq.), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), P.L. 101-336 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.). Anyone who believes the center is not in compliance with these laws may contact the Division on Civil Rights in the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety for information about filing an LAD claim at (609) 292-4605 (TTY users may dial 711 to reach the New Jersey Relay Operator and ask for (609) 292-7701), or may contact the United States Department of Justice for information about filing an ADA claim at (800) 514-0301 (voice) or (800) 514-0383 (TTY).

Our center is required, at least annually, to review the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), unsafe children's products list, ensure that items on the list are not at the center, and make the list accessible to staff and parents and/or provide parents with the CPSC website at <http://www.cpsc.gov/Recalls>. Internet access may be available at your local library. For more information call the CPSC at (800)638-2772.

Anyone who has reasonable cause to believe that an enrolled child has been or is being subjected to any form of hitting, corporal punishment, abusive language, ridicule, harsh, humiliating or frightening treatment, or any other kind of child abuse, neglect, or exploitation by any adult, whether working at the center or not, is required by State law to report the concern immediately to the State Central Registry Hotline, toll free at (877) NJ ABUSE/(877) 652-2873. Such reports may be made anonymously. Parents may secure information about child abuse and neglect by contacting: DCF, Office of Communications and Legislation at (609) 292-0422 or go to www.nj.gov/dcf and select Publications.

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