



*The Learning Center* is proud to have earned NAEYC accreditation—the mark of quality for early childhood education programs.

# THE LEARNING CENTER

*...The experience your child deserves.*



## Family Handbook

REVISED JUNE 2004

Third Street Alliance for Women & Children  
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# THE LEARNING CENTER

## FAMILY HANDBOOK

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### MISSION STATEMENT

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To provide the highest quality, affordable curricula for children 8 weeks to 12 years, encouraging cognitive, physical, social, and emotional growth for each individual child while responding to the needs of families.

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### PHILOSOPHY

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- ☺ *Children are the most precious commodities of this nation.* As child care professionals and teachers, we care for the minds and bodies of tomorrow.
- ☺ With this in mind, the Learning Center's philosophy is to care for children in a way that is loving, respectful, and educational. It is our job to assist children in growing to their individual potential in an atmosphere that is supportive, rich and challenging. We like for the child to set the scope and sequence of his/her program according to developmental level. All tasks set forth are age-appropriate.
- ☺ The Learning Center focuses on building a positive self-image for children. Early childhood development is the time for children to discover, grow, and learn about themselves. The environment must be healthy, clean, and safe for your children. The Learning Center is committed to the care of each child by providing loving, trained professionals, a supportive atmosphere, a structured curriculum, and a safe environment.
- ☺ Finally, at the Learning Center, we want children to feel safe and loved. We want parents to trust us in the care and education being given to their children. Caregivers and parents must be partners to attain these goals.
- ☺ *The most important job in the world is caring for children. At the Learning Center, we take our job seriously!*

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## CHILD CARE PROGRAM

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The Learning Center is state licensed by the PA Department of Public Welfare and meets all health and safety requirements. We provide developmentally appropriate child care for children 8 weeks to 12 years of age. Our hours of child care are 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

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## CHILD CARE STAFF

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II Our professional staff meets the state requirements. All child care staff are required to complete annual training, yearly health physicals, and initial criminal history checks and child abuse checks. Teachers have previous child care experience and Lead Teachers have degrees in education or human services. Our teachers are loving, supportive, patient, consistent and very creative people. It is our privilege to work with each of them. *We have a great team of individuals!*

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## TUITION RATES

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◆ **Infant Classroom:**

Teacher / child ratio: 1 to 3

Capacity of 6 children, 8 weeks to about 18 months of age

***Infant Full Time Tuition: \$145.00/week      Part Time Tuition: \$112.00/week***

***Toddler One (12 to 24 months) Full Time Tuition: \$142.00/week***

***Part Time Tuition: \$105.00/week***

\*Infant enrollment limited to children living in our shelter program or younger siblings of currently enrolled children.

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◆ **Toddler Classroom:**

Teacher / child ratio: 1 to 6

Capacity of 12 children, about 18 months to about 35 months of age

***Toddler One (12 to 24 months) Full Time Tuition: \$142.00/week***

***Part Time Tuition: \$105.00/week***

***Toddler Two (24 to 36 months) Full Time Tuition: \$135.00/week***

***Part Time Tuition: \$100.00/week***

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◆ **Preschool Classroom:**

Teacher / child ratio: 1 to 10

Capacity of 20 children, 3 to 4 years of age

***Full Time Tuition: \$130.00/week***

***Part Time Tuition: \$100.00/week***

**\*Children must be potty trained.**

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◆ **Kindergarten Readiness Classroom:**

Teacher / child ratio: 1 to 10

Capacity of 20 children, 4 to 5 years of age who will be entering Kindergarten the following September (Pre-Kindergarten) *or* who are currently in Kindergarten.

*Full Time Pre-Kindergarten Tuition: \$130.00/week*  
*Part Time Pre-Kindergarten Tuition: \$100.00/week*  
*Full Time Kindergarten Tuition: \$130.00/week*  
*Part Time (less than 5 hours per day) Kindergarten Tuition: \$100.00/week*

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◆ **School Age Child Care (SACC):**

Teacher / child ratio: 1 to 12 for children up to and including second grade  
1 to 15 for children third grade and on  
Capacity of 35 children (van space limited to 6 passengers)  
*Tuition: \$95.00/week*

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◆ **Summer School Age Child Care:**

Registration fee: \$50.00 at the beginning of the summer program  
*Full Time Tuition: \$120.00/week*  
*Part Time Tuition: \$95.00 / week*

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◆ **Monthly Preschool Tuition:**

AM Preschool and PreKindergarten for 3, 4 and 5 year olds: 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM  
\*Children must be potty trained

Two Days (Tuesday and Thursday)	<i>\$88.00 / month</i>
Three Days (Monday, Wednesday and Friday)	<i>\$132.00 / month</i>
Five Days (Monday through Friday)	<i>\$220.00 / month</i>

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## HOURLY LIMIT

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Children may attend the Learning Center for no more than **10 hours per day**.

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## PAYMENT OF TUITION

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### **Registration Fees**

There is a Registration Fee of \$45.00 upon entrance to the program for all classrooms.

Additional fees: The Summer Registration Fee is \$50.00 at the beginning of each summer for children enrolled in the Kindergarten Readiness and School Age Child Care Classrooms, who attend The Learning Center in June, July and August.

### **Deposit**

New enrollments will be required to make a deposit equal to one week's tuition for each child enrolled. This deposit will be refunded when your child is withdrawn from the center and all financial obligations are met.

A two-week's written withdraw to The Learning Center Director is required. It is important to inform The Learning Center Director immediately when a decision has been made to withdraw a child, in order to prevent extra charges.

### **Tuition**

Full time tuition is based on a schedule of no less than 30 hours and no more than 50 hours per week, not to exceed 10 hours per day. Any time over 10 hours per day will be charged at \$5.00 for every 5 minutes and will be billed to the next week's tuition.

Part time tuition is based on a schedule of less than 30 hours per week, not to exceed 10 hours per day. The kindergarten part time rate is based on no more than 5 hours per day. Any time over 10 hours per day will be charged at \$5.00 for every 5 minutes and will be billed to the next week's tuition.

It is expected that parents will pick up their child at the time originally agreed upon. When you complete your fee agreement (yellow form), please indicate in the boxes labeled "child's arrival time" and "child's departure time" the times that you will be dropping off and picking up your child. You need to be precise with the agreed upon times.

Tuition will be charged if your child is absent due to illness, personal reasons, emergency, or an official closing of The Learning Center.

### **Payments**

Payments are due on the Wednesday prior to the child care service week. Any tuition payments not made by the Friday prior to the child care service week will result in an interruption of child care service.

### **Payment Options**

The Learning Center allows for tuition to be paid in cash, with a personal or business check, or by MasterCard or Visa. Credit card payments can be taken by phone. Returned check charges will be assessed at the rate of \$30.00 per instance. The Learning Center reserves the right to require a cash payment from families who have more than one check returned unpaid.

### **Late payments**

The Learning Center does not charge late payment fees. However, The Learning Center reserves the right to refuse care to children if tuition is not paid in advance. Parents needing to make payment arrangements other than those outlined above are encouraged to contact The Learning Center Director or the Executive Director as soon as possible to prevent an interruption in care. ***Children will not be allowed to attend The Learning Center if payment is more than one week late.***

### **Termination of Service Due to Non-payment**

The Learning Center will no longer provide child care to children of families who have not met the tuition obligations listed above. Written notification will be made to the parent when possible, but children will be refused upon entering the classroom if necessary. Paying for services in advance is the responsibility of the parent.

Families receiving **subsidized child care funding** from sources such as the county assistance office, NORWESCAP, and Child Care Information Services, Inc. will need to make weekly parent co-payments on schedule. If a subsidized family falls more than one

week behind on child care tuition to The Learning Center, the parent will be reported to the appropriate subsidized agency. Repeated failure to make scheduled payments could result in termination of child care services **and** termination of subsidized funding for up to 90 days.

### **Discounts**

If you have more than one child enrolled at The Learning Center (full time enrollment only), you are eligible for a 10% sibling discount on the oldest child/children.

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## **LATE PICK-UP**

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If you are going to be late in picking up your child or if a special circumstance arises, please inform the staff of the Learning Center as soon as possible.

- ◆ A **late charge** of \$5.00 will be made for every 5 minutes that Learning Center staff has to wait beyond 6:00 PM for children to be picked up by their parent/caregiver. Late fees will be billed to your account for next week's payment, due each Monday.
- ◆ If parents should encounter an unexpected delay in picking up their child/children, **one of the parents** is expected to call Third Street Alliance to inform the staff of the situation. If one of the child's parents does not inform our staff about an unexpected delay within one hour after the Learning Center closes, then our staff will contact outside authorities (such as Children & Youth), for the best interest of the child.
- ◆ If parents are late in picking up their child (after operating hours) on three occasions during a one-month period, the parents will be given a two week written notice of **dismissal from the Learning Center**. The parent will then need to find alternate care.

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## **VACATIONS**

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Families at the center are entitled to one-week vacation (at \$0 tuition) as long as **written notification** is given to the Director one week prior to the vacation time requested.

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## **ADMISSIONS**

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Enrollment is open to any child, ages 8 weeks to 12 years of age. It is the policy of Third Street Alliance not to discriminate on the basis of gender, disability, race or national origin in its programs and activities as required by Title IX, Section 504, and Title VI.

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## APPLICATION PROCEDURE

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The philosophy, goals, curriculum, and policies of the Learning Center will be shared at the initial interview. All paperwork will be reviewed at this time. All paperwork should be completed and returned to the Learning Center Director before the first day of care.

A child is officially enrolled in the Learning Center when the parent has met with the Learning Center Director, filled out the required paperwork for the child, and has paid the appropriate registration fee and first week's tuition.

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## WITHDRAW OF ENROLLMENT

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Parents are asked that a two-week written notice be given in the event they are going to withdraw their child. *Please direct your letter to the child care Director.*

If a family falls one week behind on tuition payments, written notification will be made to the parent when possible, but children will be refused upon entering the classroom if necessary. Children will not be permitted to return to the program until arrangements are made to bring the account up to date.

The dismissal for inappropriate behavior will be decided after all resources of help have been exhausted and with the cooperation and involvement of the parents or guardians (i.e. Social Services, IU 20, Unconditional Child Care, etc.)

This withdraw is reciprocal. The Learning Center has the option to cancel a child's enrollment for reasons of inappropriate behavior, inadequate medical exams, non-payment of tuition, or any flagrant violation of the policies of the child care program. Families will be given a one-week notice of dismissal.

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## DROP OFF AND PICK-UP OF CHILDREN

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- ◆ In order to make every child's experience here a consistent and enjoyable one, ***all children must be in attendance by 9:30 a.m.*** Children arriving after 9:30 a.m. will not be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made between the parents and the teachers.
- ◆ Parents or caregivers must accompany children to the classroom and pick them up from their classroom each day. Parents are also required to sign their child in and out each day. **At no time is a child permitted to enter, leave, or walk in any part of the building unattended.**
- ◆ On the application form and the Emergency Contact form, there is a space provided to tell us who will be picking up your child. **YOUR CHILD WILL NOT BE RELEASED TO ANY PERSON NOT LISTED ON THE EMERGENCY CONTACT FORM.** In

the event that an alternate is picking up your child, we will require written notification (including the pick-up person's name and phone number) from you before the alternate arrives. Each classroom has the appropriate form for release to a "non-parent." We can accept verbal notification if an alternate is picking up your child, but only in extreme emergencies.

- ◆ Pick up of children by a non-parent that teachers do not recognize will need to show picture identification to the classroom teacher. All teachers (including substitutes) will ask for I.D. if he or she has not met the pick-up person previously. Parents will need to inform the people picking up the child that they need to be prepared with picture identification. Children will not be released to an adult without picture I.D.
- ◆ Persons other than a parent picking up a child must be over the age of 18.
- ◆ If there is an emergency and you are unable to be reached, the Learning Center Director will contact your emergency contact person. These individuals will be required to **immediately** pick up your child. Please choose two emergency contact persons whom you trust with your child. Remember, if you allow your emergency contact to pick up your child, their names also need to appear in the "persons to whom the child may be released" box on the Emergency Contact form.

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## HOLIDAY CALENDAR

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Third Street Alliance for Women & Children and the Learning Center ***will be closed*** on the following days:

<b>New Year's Day</b>	<b>Labor Day</b>
<b>Martin Luther King, Jr. Day</b>	<b>Thanksgiving Day</b>
<b>President's Day</b>	<b>Friday after Thanksgiving</b>
<b>Good Friday</b>	<b>Christmas Eve Day</b>
<b>Memorial Day</b>	<b>Christmas Day</b>
<b>Independence Day</b>	<b>New Year's Eve Day</b>
	<b>New Years' Day</b>

The Learning Center may also close for teacher in-service days, not to exceed two per year. Third Street Alliance may substitute a holiday that falls on a Saturday or Sunday with a closed weekday.

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## INCLIMATE WEATHER

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Though it is rare, Third Street Alliance reserves the right to close the facility in the event of treacherous weather. If we call you in the middle of the day, we will make every effort to give you sufficient time to pick up your child. In the morning we urge you to listen to the following radio and television stations for weather alerts:

**WAEB 790 AM/104 FM**

**WCTO 96.1FM**

**WEST 1400 AM**

**WFMZ TV Channel 69**

**WLEV 100.7 FM**

**WEEX 1230 AM/99.9 FM**

**www.wfmz.com**

You may call Third Street Alliance after 8:00 AM for additional information.

\*Payment is expected for the days your child misses due to the weather.

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## **PERSONAL PROPERTY**

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All items must be clearly labeled with your child's name for easy identification.

Personal items such as games, toys, etc. are not permitted unless approved by your child's teacher. These toys often cause conflict among the children and may be at risk of being broken or misplaced. Please look for special days indicated in classroom newsletters asking for items from home to reinforce learning concepts.

Your child may bring a soft toy from home for naptime only. This toy will need to remain in your child's cubby until the naptime portion of the day and will be placed in the cubby after naptime.

The Learning Center is not responsible for replacing personal property brought from home.

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## **DRESS CODE**

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Children must be dressed appropriately for the season. The state mandates that all child care programs must take children outside when weather permits. Please have your child come with an extra sweater or lightweight jacket in the late spring or early fall.

For hot weather, we do turn on our air conditioning and it can get cold. It is better to have your child remove clothing than to have him/her feel uncomfortable and get sick. During the summer months your child must wear socks and shoes or sneakers. Sandals or open toed shoes *will not be permitted* and children wearing them will be sent home. Please provide appropriate clothing, especially during the summer...we don't want anyone getting severe sunburn.

During our winter season we do go outside, weather permitting. Please have your child come with a snowsuit, hat, scarf, mittens, and boots. The Learning Center staff thanks you for your support and cooperation, as we don't want any child to be sick!

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## **EMERGENCY RE-LOCATION**

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If an emergency situation arises with the physical facility, the Learning Center has made arrangements with the Trinity Church to have use of the church school classrooms located in their building. Trinity Church is located directly next door to Third Street Alliance. All parents will be directly notified by the Director of such an occurrence.

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## **FIRE DRILLS**

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Fire Drills are conducted at least once a month. Staff and children are trained in emergency evacuation procedures.

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## **CLEANING**

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Third Street Alliance has a janitorial staff that is in charge of cleaning the classrooms on a daily basis. The restrooms are cleaned once a day. Classroom teachers are trained in proper handwashing techniques for themselves and for the children, as well as proper disinfecting procedures for toys and furniture. If at any time you feel that a thorough cleaning job is not being performed, please notify the child care Director so that the proper authorities can be made aware.

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## **CHILDREN'S HEALTH APPRAISALS**

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State regulations require age appropriate health appraisals on entrance and at intervals recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics. These are requested at the following ages:

6-8 weeks	15 months	5 years
4 months	18 months	6 years
6 months	2 years	8 years
9 months	3 years	10 years
12 months	4 years	12 years

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## **MEDICATION**

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Prescription and non-prescription medication is administered to a child only in its original container with current orders from a physician and written permission from the parent. The label on the prescription is accepted as a physician's order.

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## SICK POLICY

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If your child is sick, please do not send him/her to the Learning Center. In the event your child does become ill while in our care, the teacher or the Learning Center Director will contact you and ask that arrangements be made to have your child picked up within an hour of the initial phone call. The Learning Center does not have the facilities or a registered nurse to attend to your sick child.

When you pick up your sick child, a teacher will give you a readmission form describing our policies and procedures. A physician's note may be required following illness or suspicion of contagious conditions prior to readmitting a child.

In accordance with PA State Regulations for Daycare, the Teacher/Director may exercise his/her discretion to send a child home for the following reasons:

### **Fever**

Children with an auxiliary temperature (under the arm) with 100 degrees or greater will be sent home. The child may return after his/her temperature is normal for 24 hours without the use of aspirin or Tylenol products.

### **Upper Respiratory Infection or acute cold**

A child who exhibits difficulty breathing, wheezing, severe coughing and/or thick, yellow or green discharge will be sent home and may not return until the symptoms have subsided or with a doctor's readmission note.

### **Diarrhea**

If a child has had diarrhea type stool movement more than twice in one day, he/she will be sent home and may not return until the diarrhea has stopped for 24 hours without the use of medication. If a child is sent home twice in one week, then he/she may not return without a doctor's note.

### **Vomiting**

A child who has had more than one episode of vomiting will be sent home and may not return until the vomiting has stopped for 24 hours without the use of medication.

### **Inflamed Eye**

A child with an inflamed eye will be sent home and may not return until the inflammation has cleared, or accompanied with a doctor's note. In the case of conjunctivitis (pink eye), your child may not return until medication is received for 24 hours.

### **Rash**

A child with a rash will be sent home until the rash disappears or until the parent provides a doctor's note stating that the rash is not contagious.

### **Head Lice**

Children found to be infested with adult lice or nits (eggs) will be sent home immediately. Your child may not return until 24 hours after initial treatment (medicated shampoo, rinse, or lotion specifically for head lice) has been applied. Your child must also be **free of nits** before readmission to the Learning Center.

The above policies are for the protection of your child, as well as for the other children and staff.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact your child's teacher and/or the Learning Center Director.

If in your child's classroom, there are two or more children absent from school with the same symptoms due to a cold, intestinal virus, etc., your child's teacher will post a note so you will be made aware.

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## EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE

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Small children in a group setting occasionally receive and cause bumps, bruises, scratches and bites. Minor first aid is administered to children by staff as required, and accident reports are filled out.

In the case of a medical emergency, the parent is notified immediately. Transportation is provided if possible. ***Please be sure your emergency contact information (especially phone numbers) is always kept up-to-date.***

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## CHILD CARE ATTENDANCE

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If your child is not able to attend child care, please call us. Teachers become concerned if your child is absent and we haven't heard from you. If your child is sick, please let us know when he/she will be returning to our program.

If your child arrives at child care and is sick, please be prepared to receive a phone call from us immediately if we should detect one of the contagious symptoms listed under the "sick policy." Your child will then need to be picked up as stated in the "sick policy."

If your child is in our School Age program, please take a moment to call one of our staff to let us know that your child will not be coming to the Learning Center. Our school age teachers follow a strict bus stop and transportation schedule and it is ***crucial*** for us to know when a child will not be coming to the bus stop.

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## DISCIPLINE

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We believe that children learn best through experiences. We believe that the teachers must lovingly guide and redirect the children to help them to learn to cooperate with their peers and to have positive, educational experiences to encourage and enhance their growth and development while in our care. We believe that we can best accomplish this by:

1. Having a variety of developmentally appropriate activities for the children.
2. Using of group management techniques, limiting the number of children in each area of the room to avoid overcrowding and allowing for sufficient materials and the opportunity for constructive interactions.

3. Speaking with a child if his/her behavior is inappropriate for the area or material in use and giving a warning to the child.
4. Using positive language with the children to give praise for appropriate behavior, i.e., “I like the way John is sitting”; we say, “only walking,” or “you need to walk in the hallway” instead of “don’t run.”
5. Sometimes just a touch on the shoulder can let a child know of an adult presence and this will in turn put him/her back on task.
6. After using the above techniques, if a child is having a problem cooperating in an area of the room, he/she is asked to go to another area for a while. The children are “redirected” to another area or activity.
  - ◆ If group behavior is a problem, the area that has become a problem for the group to handle is closed and the group is broken up and redirected to other activities in the room.
  - ◆ If cleaning up is a problem for the entire group, we discuss it, and incorporate the “logical consequence” technique, which is, “if we take a long time to clean up, because teachers have to remind children often, then we run out of time for the fun things, like singing, story, outdoor play, etc...” This helps the children realize and internalize responsibility and what can happen.
7. After exhausting these methods, if a child still has a problem with appropriate behaviors, the child is asked to sit apart from the group on the thinking chair. The thinking chair is a time out place to think about what he/she has done with the help of the teacher’s discussions, which might be a better way to interact with the other children, materials, etc. Thinking time lasts for as many minutes as the child’s age. Repeated trips to think in a given session would indicate that an informal conference or note home was in order, to inform the parent and to enlist their assistance in working with their child.
  - ◆ Children with consistent difficulties are taken through the above procedures, and the parents are counseled regularly. If necessary, outside assistance (i.e. Social Services, IU 20, Unconditional Child Care, etc.) is sought and ultimately, the child could be dismissed from the program (please see page 8 “withdraw policy”).
  - ◆ An “incident report” is filled out when a child demonstrates behavior on any one occasion that is considered potentially dangerous to the people around him/her. The incident report is written documentation of unacceptable behavior in a child.
    - P For children in the toddler, preschool, or kindergarten readiness programs, after several incident reports have accumulated, a parent conference is scheduled to find an immediate solution together. If the behaviors continue after the parent conference and all attempts have been given to correct the behavior, the child will be dismissed from the program.

P For the children in the SACC program, the year is divided into four “quarters,” each lasting three months. If a SACC child accumulates two incident reports in a quarter, a parent conference is required. If that child has a third incident report during that quarter after the parent conference, the child will be dismissed from the child care program.

- ◆ If a child demonstrates inappropriate behavior in the Third Street Alliance vehicle and receives two incident reports specifically describing inappropriate vehicle behavior, the child will receive a three-day suspension from the vehicle. Parents will be responsible for transportation to and from school.
- ◆ ***Physical aggression*** from a child cannot be tolerated. *If your child acts out and puts other children or staff members in physical danger, the parents will receive copies of incident reports describing the behavior. If after attempts at home, and during care, no change is demonstrated, the parent will be asked to find alternate care.*
- ◆ Please be advised that under the state regulations for child care centers in Pennsylvania, a staff person may not use any form of hitting, corporal punishment, abusive language, ridicule, harsh, humiliating or frightening treatment towards a child. This is against our philosophy and **NONE** of these behaviors will ever take place from a staff person at the Learning Center.

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## ADJUSTMENT

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It is normal for your child to have some fears and misgivings about being away from you. Children, like adults, need time to get used to new situations. Try to prepare your child for the changes as far in advance as possible. Discuss any concerns. Talk about some of the new people your child will meet and the new things your child will do. If you are enthusiastic, soon your child will be too.

If this is the first time your child has been separated from you, it is natural for him/her to be hesitant. A cheerful good-bye kiss, a smile, and a reassuring word that you will be back after work is all you need to do. Our caring staff will take it from there. Usually the child will settle down shortly after you leave. Please feel free to call your child’s teacher when you arrive at work. Chances are that your child will be busy playing and you can relax and concentrate on your work.

Depending on their age, some children will “act out” their feelings by:

- |  |                                 |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Clinging to you and refusing to let go.  | Having emotional outbursts.     |
| Forgetting their toilet training.        | Not eating.                     |
| Waking up at night or having bad dreams. | Thumb sucking.                  |
| Bed-wetting.                             | Expressing desire to stay home. |

Usually these problems are temporary. If your child is treated lovingly but firmly, this behavior will subside.

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## DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICES AND THE LEARNING CENTER CURRICULUM

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Our curriculum encompasses and encourages social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development. Promoting the use of developmentally appropriate practices is vital to our successful programs. The Learning Center's guidelines include age appropriate activities, toys, and play areas. Our programs include structured activities, as well as independent play times.

***Developmentally Appropriate Practices*** result from the process of teachers making decisions about the well-being and education of children based on at least three important kinds of information or knowledge:

- 1) what is known about ***child development and learning*** – knowledge of age-related human characteristics that permits general predictions within an age range about what activities, materials, interactions, or experiences will be safe, healthy, interesting, achievable, and also challenging to children;
- 2) what is know about the strengths, interests, and ***needs of each individual child*** in the group to be able to adapt for and be responsive to inevitable individual variation; and
- 3) knowledge of the ***social and cultural contexts in which children live*** to ensure that learning experiences are meaningful, relevant, and respectful for the participating children and their families.

Please consult the Learning Center Director or Teacher for specific learning experiences, monthly themes, weekly lesson plans, and daily schedules. Daily schedules as well as weekly plans are posted in each classroom.

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### ☺ *INFANT & YOUNGER TODDLER PROGRAM*

The Infant & Younger Toddler Classroom consists of children ranging in age from 8 weeks to about 18 months. Infants younger than 12 months of age can only be enrolled if he or she is a sibling of a currently enrolled older child. Through daily interactions with responsive, affectionate adults, babies experience their first positive relationships. Trust and emotional security develop when infants learn that their needs will be met predictably and consistently. Infants flourish when they are free to explore and when they feel that caring adults encourage and take pleasure in their emerging interests and skills. Very young children need security most of all. Learning that they can count on being cared for helps babies build a sense of security.

Goals:

- P Provide a loving, clean, safe, secure, and trusting environment.
- P Play independently or paralleled play and participate in planned activities.
- P Developmentally appropriate activities and experiences.

- P Ratio is 1 adult to every 4 infants or younger toddlers.

Supplies Needed from Home:

- P Diapers.
- P Diaper wipes.
- P Powder or diaper rash ointment (if used).
- P Two complete sets of seasonal clothing (shirt, pants, socks, undershirt).
- P Weather appropriate clothing for outdoor activity.
- P All of your child's personal items should be labeled with a permanent marker.

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☺ *TODDLER PROGRAM*

The Toddler Classroom consists of children ranging in age from about 18 months to about 3 years. Cuddling is as much a part of our program as developmental activities. At this age, toddlers need help in accomplishing most tasks. Teachers allow children to do what they are capable of doing and help with those tasks that are frustrating. Toddlers are beginning to develop specific preferences for familiar people, food and objects. Teachers allow children to keep their favorite toys or stuffed animals, allowing them to feel secure in their environment. Toddlers need to be redirected when children fight over the same object. Teachers encourage the use of language skills in problem solving activities, such as two children wanting the same object. Most importantly, children are praised for their accomplishments. This helps them feel competent, in control of themselves, and develops a positive self-image.

Goals:

- P Provide a loving, clean, safe, secure, and trusting environment.
- P Play independently or paralleled play and participate in planned activities.
- P Learn body control and identify body parts and common objects.
- P Develop and increase vocabulary and verbal communication skills.
- P Developmentally appropriate activities and experiences.
- P Ratio is 1 adult to every 5 toddlers for Toddler classroom.

Supplies Needed from Home:

- P Diapers.
- P Diaper wipes.
- P Powder or diaper rash ointment (if used).
- P Two complete sets of seasonal clothing (shirt, pants, socks, undershirt). At least three complete sets of clothing during potty training.
- P Weather appropriate clothing for outdoor activity.
- P All of your child's personal items should be labeled with a permanent marker.

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☺ *PRESCHOOL PROGRAM*

Our preschool children are 3 through 4 ½ years of age. These children are learning to take responsibility for their behavior and make decisions about different activities throughout the day. Our program provides children with an environment rich in learning opportunities. It is important for them to learn through touching, exploring, and experimenting with different learning materials in the classroom. Most importantly, each child is a very special and unique individual, developing and learning at his/her own pace. Children are encouraged to try new things, but are never forced. We want learning to be fun for everyone.

Goals:

- P Provide a loving, clean, safe, secure, and trusting environment.
- P Develop language, social skills, and problem solving skills.
- P Develop self-control.
- P Introduce colors, shapes, numbers, and letters incorporated with developmentally appropriate activities and experiences.
- P Ratio is 1 adult for every 10 preschoolers.

Supplies Needed from Home:

- P Two complete sets of seasonal clothing (shirt, pants, socks, undershirt).
- P Art smock, apron, or old shirt to protect clothing during art projects.
- P A bathing suit, towel, and plastic bag once a week for swimming.
- P A backpack to transport important papers or creations home.
- P Weather appropriate clothing for outdoor activity.
- P All of your child's personal items should be labeled with a permanent marker.

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☺ *KINDERGARTEN READINESS*

Our kindergarten readiness children are age 4 ½ through 6 years of age. They are either in kindergarten or will be entering kindergarten the following September. The children are exposed to a fuller spectrum of experiences through a literature-based curriculum and will include pre-reading, pre-writing, role-playing, math, science, social skills, art, music, and more. The kindergarten readiness children will come to grasp letter and number recognition, left and right coordination, sequences of thought and action, as well as fine motor control for writing. Our staff encourages the active involvement of children in the learning process to help them discover more about themselves and the world around them.

Goals:

- P Provide a loving, clean, safe, secure, and trusting environment.
- P School preparedness through lessons from our developmentally appropriate curriculum.
- P Develop language, social skills, and problem solving skills.

- P Demonstrate appropriate behavior through role playing and modeling.
- P Encourage independent thinking and problem solving.
- P Provide many opportunities for exploration and discovery.
- P Demonstrate letter and number recognition and reading readiness.
- P Ratio is 1 adult for every 10 children.

Supplies Needed from Home:

- P Two complete sets of seasonal clothing (shirt, pants, socks, undershirt).
- P Art smock, apron, or old shirt to protect clothing during art projects.
- P A bathing suit, towel, and plastic bag once a week for swimming.
- P A backpack to transport important papers or creations home.
- P Weather appropriate clothing for outdoor activity.
- P All of your child's personal items should be labeled with a permanent marker.

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☺ *SACC (School Age Child Care)*

Our school age child care group is children from 7 to 12 years of age. We provide both before and after school care and all day care during the summer months. Our van provides transportation to area schools. While in our care, the SACC children enjoy age appropriate arts and crafts projects, weekly swimming, structured gross motor play in our gym, and homework supervision. Our staff focuses on and encourages building positive social skills and accepting diversity.

Goals:

- P Provide a loving, clean, safe, secure, and trusting environment.
- P Provide support for school homework.
- P Encourage social skills, cooperation, and respect for others.
- P Ratio is 1 adult to every 12 children, up to third grade; 1 adult to every 15 children, fourth grade and higher.

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☺ *INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAM*

Children participate in our “Intergenerational” program. Some children have never seen their grandparents or visit them only twice a year. We live in such a mobile, fast paced society that we sometimes forget to “smell the roses” and forget that elderly people are a vital part of our society. Whether you are young or old, everyone has something positive to offer. With this in mind, we feel the need to have a grandparenting program at Third Street Alliance for Women & Children.

Goals:

- P To have a positive, healthy experience, memories, and shared quality times.
- P Each class visits once a week.

- P Activities planned range from arts and crafts projects, stories, music activities, or sharing times.
- P Clients are mentally or physically challenged elderly people. They are functionally well enough to be able to remain out of nursing homes or institutions. They live at home with their spouse, other family members, or in a group setting with a caregiver.
- P Programs are licensed by the State of PA Department of Public Welfare. Both programs will be at full staff ratio and health physicals will continuously be updated as directed by state regulations.

*If for some reason, you would prefer your child not to participate in this program, that is a decision we will respect. We want this to be a positive experience for everyone!*

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### IF THERE'S A PROBLEM...

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A parent's greatest fear: all is not well in your child's child care program. When you recognize problems, it is critical that they be addressed immediately. Even little problems and concerns can build if not addressed and cause irreparable harm to your feelings about your child's program and sometimes to your child!

To take action:

- If the problems relate to the operation of the center, fees, policies, or procedures, set an appointment to talk to the director, and if that doesn't help, ask for the executive director of Third Street Alliance or a list of parents on the advisory board.
- If the problem is with the teacher, the classroom, instruction, or conflict between your child and another child, schedule an appointment with the teacher. Address the problem in a meeting, - not as you are picking up or dropping off your child.
- If you talk with the teacher and don't feel it is resolved, ask for an appointment with the director, and include the teacher if possible.
- If the children in the program may be in danger because of licensing violations such as too many children or there are safety or health violations that the program refuses to address, contact your local licensing agency.

When you talk to a director or teacher, try the **SOLVE** method:

**S** State the problem without placing blame.

"I am concerned because \_\_\_\_\_ occurred" or "I see \_\_\_\_\_ and wondered if we could discuss it?" is often a good way to begin.

**O** Offer and ask for ideas to solve the problem. Then, decide together what you and the caregiver will try.

**L** Listen and stay calm.

**V** Value the caregiver. Let them know you appreciate them and are willing to work with them to find a solution.

**E** Evaluate after a few days or weeks by talking with the teacher or director, sharing your feelings and asking for theirs.

If things aren't working out, go through the SOLVE method again! "SOLVEing" problems can provide your child with uninterrupted, consistent care, and can set a good example of how to problem solve by working with people whenever possible.