

Elizabethtown  
Child Care Center  
(ECCC)

Parent  
Handbook

[www.etownchildcare.org](http://www.etownchildcare.org) fax: (717) 361-9824

ELIZABETHTOWN CHILD CARE CENTER  
777 S. Mount Joy Street  
Elizabethtown, PA 17022  
Telephone: (717) 361-9824

The Elizabethtown Child Care Center is a non-profit early learning program that was founded by the United Churches of the Elizabethtown Area in 1969. It is supported by funds from the United Churches of the Elizabethtown Area, the United Way of Lancaster County, the children's tuition fees, and by other gifts that may be received. It also receives some federal and state tuition subsidies. It is governed by an interdenominational Board of Directors representing churches participating in the United Churches of the Elizabethtown Area, the community at large, and parents from the Elizabethtown Child Care Center.

The mission of the Elizabethtown Child Care Center is:

1. To provide quality child care for children six weeks through eleven years of age regardless of race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, national origin, age, or sex. To provide this care in a manner which cannot be duplicated in excellence and diversity of experience in our area.
2. To provide an environment that would enhance the experience of each child. To provide daily early learning services that promote the sound physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of the children in the program. This will take place in an environment that invites free exploration of a variety of developmentally appropriate materials and activities, sensory directed discovery experiences, and hands-on learning.
3. To develop and maintain a group of teachers, caregivers, and support staff that is vital and growing in strength, experience, diversity, and versatility. This objective requires full and equal opportunity for employment, personal development, satisfaction, and reward based on achievement.
4. To develop and maintain the support of the parents. This objective requires the provision of quality child care and early learning that is responsive to parents' needs.
5. To maintain a budget under which those who are able to pay the full cost of the care for their children do so. Other sources may be used to provide for those who cannot pay the full cost.

This Handbook has been compiled for parents so that you might better prepare yourselves and your child for his or her time here at the Elizabethtown Child Care Center. We encourage you to read all of it and keep it available for reference. Supplemental newsletters and daily tracking sheets will also be sent home with your child. We want you to be informed and feel a part of our program, offering your suggestions, your time and talents, and your support.

## ELIGIBILITY

1. We admit all children from the age of six weeks through the end of fifth grade according to availability of space.
2. Admissions, the provision of services, and referrals of clients are open to all and shall be made without regard to race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, national origin, age, or sex.

Program Services shall be made accessible to persons with disabilities through the most practical and economically feasible methods available. These methods include, but are not limited to, equipment redesign, the provision of aids, and the use of alternative service delivery locations. Structural modifications shall be considered only as a last resort among available methods.

Any child (and their parent or guardian) who believes they have been discriminated against may file a complaint of discrimination with:

Elizabethtown Child Care Center  
777 South Mount Joy Street  
Elizabethtown, PA 17022

Department of Public Welfare  
Bureau of Equal Opportunity  
Room 223, Health and Welfare Building  
P.O. Box 2675  
Harrisburg, PA. 17105

Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission  
Harrisburg Regional Office  
Riverfront Office Center  
1101 South Front Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17104

US Department of Health and Human Services  
Office of Civil Rights  
Suite 372, Public Ledger Bldg.  
150 S. Independence Mall West  
Philadelphia, PA. 19106-1911

3. 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, Room 325-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

4. We admit:
  - a. children with one parent, who is the sole support of the family;
  - b. children with both parents working;
  - c. children where a long-term emergency occurs in the family (illness of mother, etc.)
  - d. children referred to the Center by other agencies;
  - e. children whose parents desire an enrichment program.
5. All information given to the Director concerning your child is strictly confidential.
6. Children may be enrolled for nine months or twelve months of the year. Elementary age children may be enrolled for the summer only. If desired, a spot will be reserved for the fall for a child not attending during the summer. Parents will be charged a holding fee for this service. A deposit of 2 weeks' tuition, at the current rate, will be required to hold his/her spot for the fall. This fee is NOT applicable towards fall tuition, and is non-refundable. If a child attends during the summer and does not attend during the school year, a deposit of one week's tuition, at the current rate, will be required to hold his/her spot for the following summer. This fee is not applicable towards summer tuition, and is non-refundable.
7. Part-time enrollments will be accepted only when there is a space available. When a child drops from full-time to part-time during the summer, approval from the director is needed, and a non-refundable deposit of one week's tuition, at his/her current rate, will be required to hold a full-time spot for the fall. This fee is not applicable to fall tuition.
8. Openings in the Center's program will be filled on a "first come, first served" basis. If the Center is at full enrollment, names of all children waiting to be enrolled will be put on a list according to the date their parents made official application. It is advised that parents desiring to enroll younger or older siblings at some future date fill out an application for that child at least six months prior to the time they wish that child enrolled. Younger or older siblings will have priority over other children on the list.
9. Priorities may be given to families with special needs at the director's discretion.
10. Each child entering the Center will have a one month adjustment period to determine the child's ability to adjust to the group situation and whether the school's program is serving that child's needs.
11. The Center will do its utmost to accommodate the needs of all children. However, sometimes a child has difficulty adjusting beyond the one month period. In the best interest of the child involved, withdrawal may be necessary upon recommendation of the teacher, approval of the Director, and after consultation with the parents. The Elizabethtown Child Care Center believes in providing service to all children. However, there are times when a child's behavior impedes upon our ability to provide services to other children. When behavior problems arise we will discuss them with the child's parent or guardian. Decisions regarding suspension or termination of service will be made on a case-by-case basis. Termination of service will be a serious matter given due consideration before the decision is made.
12. Please advise the Center of any change in the residence, employment, hours, pay rate (for those on a sliding scale), or names of persons permitted to pick-up the children.

## FEES AND ATTENDANCE

1. The Child Care Center is open from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The Center closes promptly at 6:00 p.m. **Parents picking up from 6:01 – 6:05 p.m. will be charged an extra \$5.00 fee; those picking up from 6:06 – 6:10 p.m. will be charged \$10; and so forth. The fee should be paid directly to the staff person on duty. Time calculations will be made using the clock in the center's office.**
2. Tuition is due on Monday for that week of service. Tuition may be paid in advance. If tuition has not been paid for one week and the director or assistant director has not been contacted to make payment arrangements, a note is sent home with the child, and an email will be sent to the responsible party stating the amount due and requesting immediate payment. If another week passes and no payment has been received and no arrangements to pay the balance due have been made, a note will be sent home with the child, a letter and an email will be sent, and a phone call made, giving a two week notice of dismissal to the child/children of the family involved. This notice of dismissal can only be reversed if payment is made in full or an acceptable, signed, formal documented payment arrangement can be agreed to. If the balance remains two weeks after discharge, the account may be placed with an outside collection agency or a civil complaint may be filed with the district magistrate. This may affect your credit for seven years. Financially responsible parties (i.e. parents/guardians) are required to sign as being financially responsible to the Elizabethtown Child Care Center for the duration of time the child is enrolled.
3. Upon receiving notice from the bank that there were insufficient funds to cover a check received from a family, an additional fee will be charged to the family involved to cover handling costs.
4. Fees are based on the ability to pay. They may be increased or reduced to meet changes in the family income. Anyone on the sliding scale must pay the agreed upon payment each Monday. If a family receives tuition assistance, the Center is to be advised of any changes in the number of workers or people in the family or of any change of income level. The fee for each family on the sliding scale will be recalculated at least once each year and will be based on updated income information.
5. If your child is to be absent, please notify the Center at 361-9824 before 9:00 a.m. and state the reason for absence.
6. If a child is absent for two weeks without arrangements with the director, he may be discharged. Re-application must be made for permission to return to the Center.
7. If you find it necessary to withdraw your child from the Center, we require that you notify us **two weeks in advance** so that we can make proper arrangements with the next family on our waiting list.
8. A one-time only application fee will be charged to families of new children enrolling. An additional fee will be charged for one security prox card to access the building. All families are required to have at least one security card. Additional cards may be purchased.
9. The Center will be closed for the following holidays: Good Friday, Memorial Day, July 4<sup>th</sup>, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and the day following it. The Center will be closed for one week between Christmas Eve and New Year's Day inclusive. Parents may choose to use a free

day for a holiday or pay the regular fee. There will be no charge for Christmas week except for New Year's Day.

10. Two child care weeks may be taken without paying the usual daily fee. Free days may be used to pay for holidays, sick days, or vacation days or days when children are not attending scheduled field trips at the parent's discretion. **Please notify the Center of vacation time in advance** and indicate your use of free days using a blue free day form. Free days may only be used when a child is absent or the Center is closed. Full tuition will be charged when your child is absent and you do not use a free day. Free days are **pro-rated** each calendar year a child is enrolled. Free days are not cumulative; they must be used within the current calendar year and are not transferable to the next calendar year. Families who receive CCIS subsidy do not receive free days.
11. When the Elizabethtown Child Care Center is closed due to extreme weather conditions or any other cause beyond our control, parents will be responsible for paying for up to, but no more than, two missed days per calendar year. Staff likewise will be paid for up to, but no more than, two missed days per year. If desired, parents may use some of their free days in lieu of payment.

### **PREPARING YOUR CHILD TO ATTEND ECCC**

1. Tell your child what he/she will find at school – children his/her own age for playmates, toys and equipment especially for him/her, friendly adults for teachers. Try to make time for your child to visit before his or her first day.
2. Be casual. School should be a routine - never a threat, bribe, or reward.
3. Allow enough time for dressing and eating so that your child arrives at school feeling relaxed and unhurried.
4. Do not tell your child he “must be good” but rather to “have a happy time”.
5. Say goodbye to your child at the door to the classroom. Assure him/her that you (or someone) will be at the Center to pick him/her up when work is over.
6. If your child strongly insists that you remain during the first session, please be seated and leave the guidance of your child to the teacher. Let him come to you for comfort, affection or reassurance. Limit your conversation with him/her or with other adults or children. Do not slip away when your child is not looking.
7. Please do not discuss your child in his/her presence or discuss other children in front of your child.
8. Every child must grow in his/her own way, at his/her own pace. Watching, as well as solitary play, parallel play, and cooperative play, is a normal pattern.
9. Do not expect your child to verbalize about the day's activities. It is better to ask if he/she had a good day or a happy time than to ask what he did or what he learned. You'll receive a daily activity sheet, and you can mention activities listed on the sheet.

## EMERGENCIES

1. In case of medical/dental emergency we will attempt to notify you and your child's physician or dentist. We will use the facilities of Penn State Medical Group on Continental Drive, Norlanco, or the physician of your choice as indicated on enrollment documents if we cannot reach you. We will request that you sign permission forms for emergency medical/dental treatment.
2. We review our Emergency Operations Plan every fall to make sure that it provides for responses to all types of emergencies. Depending on the circumstance of the emergency, we will use one of the following protective actions:

**Immediate evacuation:** Children are evacuated to a safe area on the grounds of the center in the event of a fire, etc.

**In-place sheltering:** Sudden occurrences, weather, or hazardous materials release may dictate that taking cover inside the building is the best immediate response.

**Evacuation:** Total evacuation of the center may become necessary if there is a danger in the area. The type of emergency will determine which relocation center will be used. The relocation centers are:

1. Elizabethtown College gymnasium (within walking distance),
2. Shepherd's Flock Child Care at St. Mark's Church at 29 E. Main St, Mount Joy (within 3-5 miles)
3. Landisville Mennonite Church at 3320 Bowman Rd, Landisville (>10 miles)

**Modified Operation:** May include cancellation/postponement or rescheduling of normal activities. These actions are normally taken in case of a winter storm or building problem that makes it unsafe for students (such as utility disruptions), but may be necessary in a variety of situations.

If an evacuation is required off site to a relocation facility listed above, the management of Clearview Bowling Lanes has agreed to allow us to use their two buses.

Please listen to FM radio stations 90.3, 96.1, 101.3 or 103.3, or television stations WGAL (NBC 8), WHTM (ABC 27), WHP (CBS 21 or CW 15), or WPMT (Fox 43) for announcements relating to any of the emergency actions listed above. We will also attempt to call each parent within a reasonable time period after the emergency response is activated or contact you by email.

We ask that you not call during the emergency. This will keep the telephone line free to make emergency calls and relay information. Our alternate cell phone number to call in an emergency event is 717-341-1768.

We specifically urge you not to attempt to make different arrangements during an emergency. This will only create additional confusion and divert staff from their assigned emergency duties.

In order to ensure the safety of your children and our staff, we ask your understanding and cooperation. Should you have additional questions regarding our emergency operating procedures, please contact the office.

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3. The center has available and will distribute Potassium Iodide (KI) tablets to those children whose parents have signed permission for us to do so. This will be done only if we are instructed to do so by the governor or emergency agency.



## CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENT/TRANSITIONS

1. The director will assign children to an individual classroom upon enrollment and in September and June. Occasionally there are opportunities for a child to move from one class to another at other times during the school year. Criteria for determining the child's assignment include the availability of openings, the child's chronological age, the child's developmental needs, the class make-up (including girl-boy ratio, class personality, etc.), and teacher and parental feedback.
2. All attempts will be made to keep infants and toddlers/twos together with their teaching staff for nine months or longer.
3. Realizing the importance of continuity in a child's life, the program will also make every attempt to minimize the number of changes in a child's day (groups of children, teaching staff, and classroom transitions) and program year.
4. When a transition is anticipated, current staff and the child's parents will be consulted. Parents will have the opportunity to meet and talk with the child's new teachers, see the new classroom, and obtain information about the classroom schedule, expectations, parent communication, etc. Each child is given opportunities to visit their new classroom, spend a period of time in the new environment, and become acquainted with their new teachers before a move occurs.
5. Children transitioning to kindergarten will have opportunities to visit the public schools as provided by the area school district. Upon request and with written parent permission, student evaluations from ECCC may be shared with local school district personnel.

## CURRICULUM

The philosophy of learning that guides curriculum development at the Elizabethtown Child Care Center is developmental in approach. When planning, staff keep in mind the needs of the age group of children they teach as well as the individual variations in development among the specific children in their class. Observations of every child are completed on a regular basis, and lesson plans are based upon these as well as on the Pennsylvania Learning Standards for Early Childhood. The teacher's role is one of supporting, guiding, and facilitating development and learning. Recognizing that children learn best through play experiences that provide opportunities for exploration, experimentation, and manipulation, it is the teacher's job to plan an environment that introduces stimulating objects, experiences, and people with whom the children may interact. Such experiences should, as a result, foster the child's thinking, reasoning, problem-solving, and decision-making skills. Activities are planned that involve children in active, hands-on learning experiences. Concepts and skills should be taught in a meaningful context that is relevant to the child. We do not use workbooks or dittos. A unit, theme, or project approach is used as a conceptual framework with an integration of activities from various "subject areas". We currently use The Creative Curriculum in our program.

Underlying all structures, however, is the understanding that children learn best when their physical needs are met and they feel safe, comfortable, capable, and accepted. Therefore, the curriculum promotes feelings of success, competence, and enjoyment of learning while at the same time leading to an acquisition of skills and concepts. There is a balance of periods of active and quiet play, as well as child initiated and teacher initiated activities. The staff makes

every effort to include meaningful opportunities for parents to become involved in the program, being sensitive to the cultural differences in the children and families we serve. Frequent communication between ECCC and home is a priority.

## **ASSESSMENT**

At the Elizabethtown Child Care Center, assessment is an ongoing task that helps us support the children's learning, improve the quality of our program, and remain accountable to our parents, community, and funders.

In the classroom, teaching and assessment go hand in hand. Through assessment, teachers find out what the children, both individually and as a group, know and can do in relation to developmental milestones and curricular goals. With this information, we can:

- Describe the child(ren)'s development so that we can then plan activities that are stimulating for each child and that help each individual progress to the next level in development;
- Discover the children's needs and interests so that our curricular activities and experiences are exciting and challenging and that the instructional strategies we use are appropriate for each child and class;
- Identify children who might benefit from special services;
- Facilitate communication with parents and families;
- Plan for program improvement; and
- Build better relationships between children, parents, and staff.

Teachers use a variety of techniques to assess children's development. Ongoing observations of each child will be completed while the child is participating in their normal, everyday classroom setting. Likewise, observations are completed by staff who are familiar with the children and who have had at least two hours of annual training on observation and assessment.

Teachers also collect a variety of work samples in a portfolio for each child. These may include dated writing samples, artwork, drawings, journal pages, dictated stories, photos, etc. Taken together with the observations notes, these documents are very helpful in showing the child's progress over time.

All children will receive a developmental screening within ninety days of their entry to our program. Results will be shared with parents and, if indicated, parents will be assisted in securing further evaluation and referral. Vision screenings will be available on a yearly basis at no charge to parents. While teachers use the data they collect on each child on an ongoing basis to adjust curriculum and teaching strategies, more focused assessments will be completed in October, February, and May. We currently utilize the Ounce Scale and Work Sampling Assessment systems for infants, toddlers, and preschool children. Parent-teacher conferences will be held at various times during the year. Written updates will be made available in February and during the summer months if the child is in attendance at that time. We urge families to share their insights and observations from home to assist us in better understanding their child.

All data from observations, checklists, and the children's portfolio is kept in a locked box in the child's classroom during the year. Scored reports and copies of quarterly progress reports will be transferred to the child's file in the ECCC office at the end of the school year. Observation data is shredded in a manner consistent with the center's policy on document destruction. The director(s) and the child's current teachers will have access to the child's current data as well as

former reports as needed. No information will be shared with any other person without the written consent of the child's parent. Parents have the right to view the child's file at any time.

Besides being accountable to parents, the Elizabethtown Child Care Center desires (and in some cases is required) to be accountable to a variety of government, funding, community, and regulatory agencies that have oversight responsibilities for early learning programs. The state of Pennsylvania has developed early learning standards for infants, toddlers, preschool, and kindergarten age children. We use our assessment data internally to see if our program helps children meet these standards.

## **PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES**

1. Individual conferences will be scheduled in November and May for infants, toddlers, and preschool, and January and May for kindergarten age children. School age conferences will be held in January. This is a very important part of our program and we encourage parents to come in to discuss your child's development.

The purpose of the conference is to share information with you about your child's interests and skills and to give you a broad picture of his/her overall development level. It is also an opportunity for parents and teachers to share concerns and develop plans for meeting each child's and family's needs. This evaluation is not meant to predict or pass judgment on your child's future success but will, over time, help give you a more complete picture of your child's growth while they are here at the Center.

It is our goal to help each child reach their own potential, rather than expecting every child to attain a set of predetermined skills by a set time. Assessments help us to know what we need to do to meet the needs of both the class as a whole as well as the individual children in each class.

2. If you have concerns or questions at other times, please write a note to your child's teacher, email, or leave a message with the office and he/she will contact you as soon as possible.
3. Visitors are always welcome in our center. We encourage parents to spend a morning with us early in the year so you can better understand our program.
4. We value input from parents regarding the Center's policies and procedures. If you have a concern or issue with any of our policies, please don't hesitate to speak with any administrator or the board chairperson (see the "Policy on Resolving Differences"). Please also know that parents are welcome to attend all board meetings which are usually held on the second Tuesday of each month at the Church of the Brethren.
5. Translation services are available to families upon request for all meetings.

## **GUIDANCE POLICY FOR BEHAVIOR**

Behavior guidance at the Elizabethtown Child Care Center is implemented in a loving, positive manner. We believe that adults can support all domains of children's learning through strong, positive interactions during play and everyday routines. Promoting healthy social and emotional development, including self-control, is one of the fundamental responsibilities of our

program. The early years are a critical time for children to learn to understand, manage, and control their thoughts, feelings, attention, impulses, and behavior. They are learning how to get along with others and how to be a friend. Children are not born with these skills. Teachers and caregivers must teach social-emotional skills just as they teach washing hands, or academics.

We know that when children are given the opportunity to learn, practice, and discuss self-control and other social and emotional skills, they develop the foundational abilities needed for academic life and success. We support this development through:

#### Our Environment

- We are flexible in our schedule and follow the lead of children's cognitive, physical and biological needs
- We provide children with materials and engage them in activities that are developmentally appropriate and respectful to them as individuals.
- We develop schedules to meet the needs of young children and avoid long periods of wait time without activity
- We regularly observe the environment and the children as they interact in it to ensure it promotes healthy interactions

#### Our Teachers

- Work to develop a relationship with each individual child
- Encourage peer relationships by creating social opportunities and working with children to resolve conflict
- Always speak to children using calm tones, especially during redirections
- Use words to help children label their emotions
- Utilize social stories with young children to teach healthy social skills
- Set developmentally appropriate expectations for children, and support them in skill acquisition
- Will teach children developmentally appropriate problem solving skills and support their attempts to utilize them.

#### Our Families

- We will encourage reciprocal communication and partnership between the center and families to ensure consistency in guidance between home and school
- Families will be encouraged to partner with us to meet the needs of their child(ren) as well as all other children

#### Our children

- Learn skills for effective problem-solving
- Develop confidence and self-regulatory skills

- Develop skills to help them identify and control their behavior and emotions.

We are committed to each child's social emotional development. Behavior concerns tell us that children need more time, support, and practice to develop their social and emotional skills. When serious concerns arise, we will partner with families and professionals in supporting children's social and emotional health. On rare occasions, we may work with families to seek the best care for their child if all parties agree that our program can no longer meet the needs of an individual child.

## **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE**

1. The adult bringing the child to the center must accompany the child into his/her classroom and be certain that a staff member knows that the child has arrived. Both parents and staff member should make a point to make verbal contact at that point.
2. A daily sign-in and out sheet is provided. You must sign your child in and out. There is space available on this to leave messages for your child's teachers.
3. If your child is having difficulty separating upon arrival you might want to discuss strategies with the teacher to make this transition easier. There are many different techniques to try that depend on the specific situation and your individual child.
4. When picking up your child, an adult must accompany him/her at all times. This person is responsible for the child once they come in contact with your child.
5. If your child arrives at the center on a bus, please help reinforce common bus safety rules such as using "inside" voices on the bus, staying in your seat, keeping all body parts inside the bus, etc.
6. Parents should enter the building at the rear entrance using their security proximity card. (Please see section on "Access to the Facility".) Those children who need ground level access due to a disability should contact the church office for access at the Plum Street entrance. An elevator is available to access classrooms on other floors of the building.
7. Please park in designated, lined spaces only (not under the covered entrance or by or on the grassy area). Your car cannot be left running, and you must drive with caution and at reduced speeds.

## **CHILD PICK-UP POLICY**

1. No adult, other than the enrolling parent, shall be allowed to pick up any child enrolled in the Elizabethtown child care Center without one of the following:
  - a. authorized approval by enrolling parent on the emergency contact form;
  - b. enrolling parent's verbal notification, by phone, etc.;
  - c. enrolling parent's written permission;
  - d. the adult is the child's natural parent and is not restricted by a legal custody agreement.
2. Parents who staff have not met and authorized pick up people who are unknown to staff will be asked to identify themselves verbally and with some further form of picture identification, such as a driver's license.
3. In addition, the Elizabethtown Child Care Center:
  - a. has the right to ask for a picture identification of any adult picking up a child;
  - b. will not release a child to an adult whom we feel is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, etc.
  - c. has no legal backing to deny a natural parent his/her child unless a court order has been established and is on file with the Center.

## ACCESS TO THE FACILITY

Families may visit any area of the facility at any time during the program's regular hours of operation. Upon arrival, please stop in the office to let administrative staff know of your visit. If you are planning to visit during a mealtime period, please let your child's teacher know at least a day ahead of time so that we can prepare an adequate quantity of food.

All doors to the facility will be locked during normal hours of operation. They can be opened with the use of a prox card which will be available and paid for during the normal registration process. All families are required to have at least one security card. Additional cards may also be purchased. Upon discharge of a student, a partial refund will be made if the cards are turned into the office within one week after the child's last day.

The cards will unlock our main entrance door (by the ECCC sign and office). All other doors will remain locked. Be sure to have your card available at all times as we cannot guarantee that someone from the office will be available to unlock the door. However, if you forget your card, ring the doorbell next to the door frame and wait for assistance. If one of your designated pick-up people is coming for your child, please call and let us know in advance. If that person does not have a prox card, he/she should also ring the bell and wait for assistance. While we will make every attempt to have administrative personnel available from 6:30 a.m. through 5:30 p.m., this may not always be possible. **It is therefore crucial to have your card available at drop-off and pick-up.**

**Finally, for the children's security, we want to stress that you should not allow other people to enter the building with you unless they, too, have an ECCC prox card.**

## SCHOOL CLOSING POLICY

1. ECCC is usually open even if public schools close for snow or flood days.
2. ECCC is always open on public school in-service days, weather permitting.
3. Please refer to the holidays previously listed under "Fees and Attendance" for a listing of days we will be closed.
4. In the rare case of a closing under extreme weather conditions or of a delayed opening or early dismissal, please listen to 90.3, 96.1, 101.3 or 103.3, or television stations WGAL-TV (NBC 8), WMPT (Fox 43) WHP-TV (CBS 21 or CW 15), OR WHTM (ABC 27) for information.

## HEALTH POLICIES

Both parents and teachers want to keep children healthy. In spite of everyone's efforts, children do get sick. Young children get sick more often because: 1) their immune systems do not fight illness as well as an adult's and 2) they have no experience with many of the germs that cause infection. Contagious diseases spread from one person to another. Often people who spread disease do not look or feel sick. The germs spread by direct contact (touching), by coughing or sneezing, or by germs from the stool, mucus, or blood getting on surfaces.

Providing a healthy and safe environment for your children is an important concern of the Elizabethtown Child Care Center. This policy is an effort of the staff, parents, and board to provide guidelines as to when children are too ill to be in group care. Parents can help keep their children healthy and prevent the spread of contagious diseases by:

1. making sure their child receives health assessments and immunizations according to the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics \*\*;
2. promptly picking up ill children;
3. consulting with the child's doctor about diagnosis and care;
4. notifying staff when children or other family members are ill with a contagious disease;
5. washing their child's hands upon arrival in the morning.

\*\*Exemption from immunization for a religious belief or strong personal objection equated to a religious belief shall be documented by a written, signed, and dated statement from the child's parent or guardian. Exemption from immunization for reasons of medical need shall be documented by a written, signed, and dated statement from the child's health care provider. If a vaccine-preventable disease to which children are susceptible occurs in the facility, unimmunized children shall be excluded for the duration of possible exposure or until the age-appropriate immunizations have been completed (whichever comes first).

Please keep your child home when:

1. He/she has a fever of 101 degrees temporal or 100 degrees axillary or orally with behavior change and/or other symptoms.
2. He/she has been ill during the night or early morning.
3. He/she has had two or more instances of vomiting in the past 24 hours.
4. He/she has a sore throat with accompanying fever.
5. He/she has pasty, reddened eyes with thick white or yellowish discharge.
6. He/she is not able to participate in all program activities including outdoor play.

Often, children who seem well when brought to the Center in the morning develop symptoms of contagious disease during the day. To minimize the risk of infection for the rest of the children and so the ill child may rest and recuperate comfortably, staff may call the child's parents and request that the child be picked up as soon as possible or within two hours unless otherwise arranged with the director.

Staff and parents should use the following three criteria to exclude children with short term illnesses:

1. The child does not feel well enough to participate comfortably in the usual activities of the program (including outdoor play).
2. The staff cannot care for the sick child without interfering with the care of the other children.
3. The child has any of the symptoms that indicate a contagious disease as defined under "Recognizing the Ill Child". If so, keeping the child at the Center may pose an increased risk to the child or to other children or adults with whom the child will come in contact.



## OTHER HEALTH POLICIES

1. A doctor's examination is required for every child within 6 weeks of admission and every year thereafter or as recommended by the Department of Public Welfare. The Center provides a form to be completed by the examining physician. Your child's health information is kept confidential and will only be shared with staff who you have given permission to have access to your child's information.
2. Immunizations must be current according to recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics.
3. In the event of an emergency, we will attempt to notify you and then take the child to a physician of your choice, to a hospital, or we will call for an ambulance if the condition is life threatening. We request that you sign permission forms for emergency medical/dental treatment.
4. Department of Human Services regulations will allow us to administer medications to your child. We require written instructions from a licensed health care provider each time he/she prescribes or recommends a medication.
  - The child's name and prescribed dosage must appear on the bottle, and the prescription label must be current.
  - For fever-reducing medications, or other over-the-counter medications, we may use a blanket permission form including an order from a licensed health professional including dosage instructions. The blanket permission form must be updated annually by a licensed health professional. For non-prescription medicines, an age or weight-appropriate dosage must be indicated on the bottle.
  - For **all** medications, you must complete and sign for us to administer the medication on an individual medication log which is kept in your child's room. The first dose of any medication should be given at home. As many doses as possible need to be given at home.

## RECOGNIZING THE ILL CHILD

### **Pinkeye**

Symptoms: *Red, irritated eyes or redness of the eye lining; may be accompanied by excessive tearing, pain or itching of the eye, swelling of the eyelid, and a watery or yellowish-white discharge.*

Action: *Your child will be excluded if any of the following are noted: discharge is thick and white or yellow, eyelid is swollen or discolored, and/or your child is too uncomfortable to participate in program activities. Child may return 24 hours after treatment is started or is symptom free, and he/she is able to participate in daily activities.*

### **Chicken Pox**

Symptoms: *Begins with a rash of small, red bumps that develop into blisters on a red base, often starting on the stomach or back. Blisters crust over in a few days and eventually fall off. May be accompanied by fever, runny nose, and cough.*

Action: *Child will be removed from class if possible and parent is called. Child may be readmitted when all lesions are crusted and dry and no new lesions have appeared within 24 hours.*

### **Sore Throat or Trouble Swallowing**

Symptoms: *Child complains of pain when swallowing. May be accompanied by swollen glands, fever, and white patches on throat or tonsils.*

Action: *Child will be excluded if fever is present, child looks or acts very ill, or is unable to swallow anything. Staff may suggest that child be tested for strep infection. If strep is documented, child may return after 24 hours of antibiotics. If strep is not documented, child may return when free of fever for 24 hours and is able to participate in daily activities.*

### **Vomiting**

Symptoms: *Child experiences abdominal pain and vomits digested/undigested stomach contents. Child will usually experience loss of appetite and look and act sick.*  
*Vomiting brought on by a cough or in an infant who vomits after feeding or burping is not usually caused by a virus.*  
Action: *Child is removed from class if possible and parent is called. Child may be readmitted when vomiting is resolved for 24 hours and he/she is fever free and able to fully participate in program activities.*

### **Head Lice**

Symptoms: *Presence of tiny, sesame seed size, pearly-white objects that adhere to the hair shaft or scalp especially near nape of neck, top of head, or behind ears.*  
Action: *Child and belongings are removed from class and parent is called to pick-up child. Child will be readmitted following treatment and combing out of nits. Upon return, the child will be rechecked for nits prior to admission. The director will make the final decision as to whether the child may stay.*  
**\*\*Please note that no chemical treatment for lice is 100% effective. Parents should contact their physician regarding follow-up treatment.**  
The Elizabethtown Area School District has a nit-free return policy. ECCC cannot provide child care for school-age children who cannot return to public or private school because of the presence of lice or nits.

### **Fever**

Symptoms: *An axillary temperature of 100 degrees or greater. Infants 8 weeks or younger with an axillary fever of 99.4 will be excluded, and recommended to be seen by a doctor. Children can be excluded with lower axillary temperatures if accompanied by behavior changes (e.g., excessive crying, not participating in activities, lying around, etc.) or other symptoms such as earache, sore throat, or uncontrolled coughing.*  
Action: *Parent is notified to pick up child. Fever-reducing medication may be administered with parental consent and physician's Instructions. Child may be readmitted when fever free for 24 hours, shows no other symptoms, and can fully participate in program activities.*

### **Severe Cough**

Symptoms: *Severe, persistent cough. May be accompanied with symptoms of breathing difficulty, wheezing, fever, or other cold symptoms.*  
Action: *Child is excluded if cough is accompanied by fever, is unable to fully participate in program activities, or experiences difficulty with breathing and/or eating. May return when symptoms resolve.*

### **Colds**

Symptoms: *Child may have a runny, stuffy nose, scratchy throat, excessive sneezing, or coughing and watery eyes. These symptoms may continue for 6-10 days.*  
Action: *Child will be excluded if symptoms include fever and accompanying behavior change, difficulty breathing, or accompanying gastrointestinal symptoms, or if child is unable to fully participate in program activities. May be readmitted when fever free, child no longer appears ill, and any breathing difficulties are gone.*

### **Impetigo**

Symptoms: *The child has a skin infection or sore which is characterized by red, cracking, oozing blister-like pimples.*  
Action: *Child will be excluded until 24 hours after treatment is begun unless it can be completely covered without risk of exposure.*

### **Ringworm**

Symptoms: *The child exhibits a reddish scaling circular patch with raised edges and central clearing on the skin.*

Action: *If there is only one lesion, it will be covered until the end of the day and the parent will be notified to have the child evaluated. If the area is extensive or there are several suspicious lesions, the child will be excluded. Child may return 24 hours after treatment is begun, or sooner if lesion can be completely covered, or with a doctor's written recommendation.*

### **Diarrhea**

Diarrheal diseases spread very easily among young children. Your help by keeping your child home when they are experiencing diarrhea is greatly appreciated. We do understand, however, that certain foods and/or medications may cause your child to have diarrhea, so please notify us if you are aware of any of these.

Symptoms: *An increase in the number of stools over what is normal for that child (generally three episodes in a four hour period) **and** stools that are unformed, loose or watery. May be accompanied with abdominal pain and fever.*

Action: *A child with diarrhea that is easily contained in the diaper or toilet and with no other symptoms does not need to be sent home. Otherwise a child with symptoms of diarrhea as well as other symptoms will be sent home and may return when free of symptoms for one day. If child is not yet toilet trained, he/she may return when stool is contained within the diaper and stool frequency and consistency improves.*

### **Hand Foot & Mouth Disease**

Symptoms: *Fever, sore throat, runny nose, cough accompanied by tiny blisters in mouth, on palms of hands, and soles of feet.*

Action: *Child will be excluded until fever free for 24 hours without medication, and child is well enough to participate in normal daily activities, or upon doctor's recommendation.*

### **Fifth Disease**

Symptoms: *Headache, body aches, sore throat, fever, chills, rash that leaves a slapped-cheek appearance on the face and a lacy pattern over the body. Rash may come and go over weeks to months.*

Action: *Exclude when accompanied by fever and child is unable to participate. May return upon doctor's recommendation, when fever free for 24 hours without medication, and when child is able to fully participate in the program.*

### **Rashes**

Symptoms: *There are many different types of rashes with differing appearances. Some may be related to infection and some may be caused by irritation or injury to the skin.*

Action: *Check for fever and behavior changes. If fever is present, parents need to pick up child. Child may return with physician's recommendations. If fever is not present, parents will be called to determine appropriate action.*

### **Earaches**

Symptoms: *Ear pain that may be accompanied by fever or drainage from ear. Child may also experience difficulty in hearing.*

Action: *Child will be excluded if he/she looks or acts very ill, has behavior changes and fever, drainage from ear, or pain lasting more than 3 days. Child may be readmitted when fever free and is able to participate in normal daily activities.*

## MEALS AND SNACKS

1. Breakfast, afternoon snack, and a well-balanced lunch are provided for all ages.
2. **To the best of our ability, the Elizabethtown Child Care Center is a peanut-free facility.**
3. No child may bring candy, chewing gum, or other food to the Center. If you want to treat the children, please make arrangements with your child's teacher in advance.
4. A child is encouraged to celebrate his/her birthday by furnishing a snack for his/her class. However, foods brought from home for sharing with other children must be either whole fruit or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers. Please check with a staff member about the number being served.
5. We encourage children to taste new foods, but we will not force a child to eat. We will not deny any food and will allow children the time they need to finish their meal. We encourage appropriate table manners and proper use of utensils. We encourage children to grow in the ability to serve themselves at mealtime, taking polite portions of food so that they all may be served.
6. A doctor's note is required if, for medical reasons, the child is unable to eat an item on our menu. In this case, after discussion with the director, the parent will need to supply a substitute that meets the Child Care Food Program guidelines. Otherwise, no menu substitutions may be made. The substituted item must be labeled with the child's name and date.

## BRINGING THINGS TO SCHOOL

1. Each teacher has his/her own show and tell policy which will be communicated to parents of children in his/her class.
2. Children will be encouraged to bring certain items, such as nature items, things they have made, appropriate books and music, etc. You will be notified of themes and units that each class is studying so that you can help your child select items that could be useful and interesting for the whole class.
3. We have a "no cell phone" policy for children in our center. If a child brings a cell phone, it will be taken and held by a teacher or the office. If you need to contact your child, call the office and the staff will attempt to connect you with your child or will give your child a message. If no one is available to take your call, leave a message and it will be given to your child as soon as feasible.
4. Guns, war toys, and other toys of destruction are not permitted in our center.

## CLOTHING

1. Children should wear comfortable, practical play clothes. We suggest pants or shorts and shirts for boys and girls. Never send your child to the Center with pins in his/her clothing.
2. Children should also wear appropriate footwear for climbing and outdoor play. Sneakers are the most appropriate. Sandals, jellies, and shoes with an elevated heel may be dangerous. In order to use the climbing equipment, children's sandals must have a rubber sole, be closed at both the heel and toe area, and remain on their foot. Flip flops are not permitted to be worn daily; they may only be worn during outdoor water play time on splash days. "Heelies" are not permitted at ECCC. If a child is wearing inappropriate shoes, a parent will be called to bring another pair.
3. Children should wear clothes they can take care of themselves when using the bathroom.
4. There should be a complete change of clothing, including underwear and socks, kept at the Center at all times for emergencies. All items must be marked with the child's name. A large, labeled zip lock bag works well for this.
5. Each child should wear appropriate clothing for outdoor activities. The state requires that the children have outside activities every day weather permitting, and the Center cannot provide extra clothing for all children.
6. All coats, sweaters, mittens, boots, etc., should be clearly marked with the child's name.

## NAPS AND REST PERIODS

1. Children in the infant, toddler, and preschool classes have the opportunity to take an afternoon nap. The infant-toddler staffing patterns allow the children to sleep as long as desired. In the preschool classes, most children sleep 1.5 - 2 hours. Kindergarten children also have a short, one-hour rest period. No child has to sleep, but they are encouraged to rest quietly for the sake of other children. Several staff are always available to rub backs and to help children who need to use the bathroom.
2. Upon request, we will work with parents to develop a plan to accommodate the needs of children who no longer need as much of a nap.
3. Preschool children should bring a cot-sized cover for the nap period. This should be clearly marked with the child's name. It will be sent home to be laundered weekly.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

1. Several field trips occur throughout the year for children four years of age and older. You will be notified in advance and will need to sign a permission slip for each trip. If your child chooses not to attend a field trip there is no alternate care at ECCC; there will be no decrease in the weekly tuition for days missed due to not attending on field trip days. A free day may be used.
2. We typically transport by bus rented from Petermann Bus Company. Staff bring a cell phone and first aid kit as well as emergency contact information for each child in case of emergency. If preferred, parents may provide transportation for their own child.
3. Generally, parents will be asked to pay the admission fee and transportation fee for the trip. Scholarship assistance for these fees is always available.
4. We will try to schedule several in-house special events (e.g., puppet shows, animal demonstrations, etc.) for children younger than four years of age.

## **RELIGIOUS TRAINING**

There is no formal religious instruction. All discussions of a religious nature are spontaneous. We include a grace before meals, celebrate Christmas as a religious and secular holiday, and some religious books may be available on the shelves for the children to look at.

## **EMOTIONAL OR OTHER PROBLEMS**

1. Should your child be particularly upset about some situation at school or at home, please contact the teachers directly so that the problem may be given appropriate attention. Very often reports received from the child are unclear and it is helpful to all to clarify the situation as soon as possible.
2. If there are situations at home which might cause your child to be anxious (sickness, death, separation, etc) or if your child is on medication that might affect his behavior, please share this information with his/her teacher. We will also communicate any notable behavioral changes with the child's family.

## **EDUCATIONAL SERVICES**

1. We are dedicated to making our center a welcoming place for all children and meeting, to the best of our ability, the developmental needs of each child. If a teacher identifies a child as possibly needing specialized services (for speech, vision, hearing, emotional needs, learning disability, motor problems, etc.), we will discuss the problem with the parents first and possibly refer the parent(s) to the appropriate agency which may include Early Intervention, IU 13, ECMH, Schreiber Pediatric Center, etc. No information will be released to any other entity without the written consent of the child's parent.
2. Should a child have an IEP, IFSP or other individualized plan, the center staff will work with the parents and coordinating agencies to provide the appropriate supports and help the child meet his/her goals.

3. If it is deemed appropriate that staff from coordinating agencies work with the child on the ECCC premises, we ask that the therapist first contact the director and child's teacher so that we can work together to meet the child's needs and the needs of other classroom staff and children.
4. We ask that parents invite center staff to any future IEP and IFSP meetings.
5. We will make every attempt to schedule free vision screenings for all pre-kindergarten age children.

### **POLICY ON USE OF SPECIALIZED CONSULTANTS**

When we suspect a child has needs beyond what we can meet we provide information and urge parents to contact appropriate agencies. We will also provide any documentation requested by appropriate agencies. If a consultant is deemed necessary, a meeting with the director and the teacher before services begin will be held to arrange appropriate times, to discuss services that will be rendered, to arrange for the center's representation at IEP meetings, and to discover the expected input from the center. All consultants will be hired, screened, and paid by an accredited agency. We will contact accredited agencies annually to ensure we have appropriate contact information, a service agreement, and up to date materials to distribute to parents.

### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

1. All parents are welcomed and encouraged to participate on a variety of committees. Meeting times and frequency vary based upon parent schedules and necessity. ECCC has an active PTO (parent-teacher organization) for any interested parents. The development director oversees the PTO as they plan fundraisers and events. Parent advisory committees provide input into the center's operations, including evaluation and assessment of the program.
2. Two parent representatives are elected to serve on the Child Care Center Board of Directors.
3. Parents are always welcome at the Elizabethtown Child Care Center; teachers will also ask for parent volunteers throughout the year for various projects or trips. Other possible ways to become involved in your child's program include lunch visits (with at least a day's advance notice so we can plan for food), using the parent resource library, reading to your child's classroom, completing program evaluations, suggesting ideas for classroom activities and topics, etc.

## **POLICY ON RESOLVING DIFFERENCES**

While we at the Elizabethtown Child Care Center strive to meet the needs of all parents and children, there may be times when differences of opinion become apparent. If this should happen, we will make every attempt to facilitate clear communication, answer questions, and give all parties opportunities to express their needs and concerns.

Specifically, if you have a concern or issue with any of our policies:

1. Speak first with our executive director or assistant director for clarification
2. If the issue is not resolved, contact the board chairperson for inclusion on the board agenda

If you have concerns about your child's program experiences or a difference of opinion with your child's teacher, please:

1. Speak to the lead teacher in your child's classroom. In most cases it would be best to request a special conference or telephone conference to ensure the teacher's full attention and to ensure privacy. If desired, other staff members in the classroom team and/or an administrator can also be invited to attend.
2. If you are not satisfied with the resolution, ask for an opportunity to meet with the executive director to talk about the issue.
3. If the issue is still not resolved to your satisfaction and you would like to bring it to the board's attention, please call the board chairperson who will make a decision about whether to take the issue to the full board or a specific committee.

If you have concerns about another child in the program, please:

1. Do not approach the child directly. The safety of the children is our top priority.
2. All situations concerning children need to be dealt with by speaking to your child's teacher or to the office. Any event of not following this policy may result in your child's immediate dismissal from the Center.



## INFANT – TODDLER PROGRAM

The Elizabethtown Child Care Center strives to present an infant-toddler program that is developmentally appropriate for the age and stage of the children in care. Appropriate infant-toddler programs are not scaled-down versions of good preschool programs but are developed around the needs and characteristics of children ages six weeks through three years.

Infants and toddlers learn by experiencing the environment through their senses, through play, and through active exploration, trial and error, repetition, imitation and identification. Teachers guide and encourage this learning by providing a safe, supportive, and responsive environment that helps each child first and foremost develop a sense of trust and feelings of competence. Infants and toddlers are offered a choice from a wide variety of stimulating materials, activities, and experiences planned within a reliable, but flexible, framework of routine. In fact, routines (toileting, feeding, etc.) are just as important in infant-toddler curriculum as looking at a book or working on a puzzle.

Within the daily schedule, teachers plan a variety of activities for each child to stimulate their development. Every child will have many opportunities to participate in both teacher-directed and self-directed play. Frequent observations are used to aid in planning activities to meet the individual needs of each child. Activities for listening and talking, such as reading books, looking at mobiles, or talking with puppets are designed to foster language skills. Activities like playing with balls, pegboards, or lock blocks stimulate large and small motor development. Creative activities with art, music, block or dramatic play not only provide opportunities for self-expression but also build social skills. Finally, the children will learn from the world around them as they use their senses to explore their environment and form basic concepts of size, shape, number, and color. The activities will be play-oriented, most often involving one child and one teacher as children of this age do not yet have the attention span or social skills to learn in groups.

It is, in fact, the quality of the relationship between the child and the teacher that is of prime importance in our program and in all quality infant-toddler programs. Children are assigned to a primary caregiver. Many responsive one on one contacts with a gentle, pleasant manner occur. Infants are not left in cribs while awake, but are held, talked to, and played with. Needs are responded to quickly and routine care times are regarded as learning opportunities and a time for warm interactions. We are responsive and supportive of children as they try new tasks and acquire new skills. Guidance includes positively worded directions, patient redirection, and explanations to help children grow in controlling their own impulses and behavior. For your child's safety, our program does not include baby walkers. We will personally guide your child as he or she works on this developmental accomplishment.

Likewise, we recognize that you, as parents, are a vital and important part of our program. You are, of course, your child's primary source of affection and care. Mutual support and good communication between home and ECCC are essential to creating a stable secure environment for your child when he is away from home. We urge you to share information with us about your child's routines, unique behaviors, and daily activities. We will do the same with you. Each day we will provide you with a description of your child's routine care, plus insights into his/her activities and interests. Our parent bulletin board and newsletter will provide you with information about child development and program highlights. As your child matures, we'll need your help to know how to best

meet his/her changing needs – be they a change in feeding patterns, a developmental milestone reached, etc. We'll provide opportunities for two formal conferences each year to discuss your child's needs and developmental progress, but please feel free to ask questions or share concerns or ideas at any time. Let's work together to provide the best for your child.

## **Feeding/Meals**

Parents of infants have the option of participating partially or fully in the Child Care Food Program. The formula offered by the Center is Enfamil with Iron and Prosoabee.

Bottles and food are heated in a pan of hot water or in a crock pot. The temperature of the water does not exceed 120 degrees F. Baby food is not heated in the jar; small portions are heated in bowls. A feeding schedule form is provided, and it will need to be updated periodically. If you are providing formula, please bring one bottle per feeding, as we discard any unused formula. Please label your child's food and bottles and place them in the refrigerator upon your arrival.

We are happy to have mothers come to the center to nurse their babies. There are rooms available for privacy if desired. Please notify us if you are sending bottled breast milk so we can take any necessary precautions for heating and storage.

Toddlers are served breakfast, a well-balanced lunch, and an afternoon snack. No food may be brought to the center in the morning. A small snack is provided before breakfast for early arrivals. We will need a doctor's written consent to comply with any special dietary needs your child may have.

## **Toilet Training**

We will assist parents in developing toilet habits for your child when he/she shows signs of readiness. The changes that take place in a child's development occur at times that are individual for each child. Some signs of readiness are as follows: the child has some regularity in his/her bowel movements, shows interest in sitting on the toilet, has some way of letting you know he is uncomfortable, and enjoys doing things for your approval. A casual, patient attitude without great expectations is a good approach. Under no circumstances will a child be humiliated for having an "accident". If after attempting training the child resists or shows frustration, we may (after conferring with you) recommend postponement of training for a certain period of time. We will work closely with you concerning this important milestone in your child's growth, and at that time will ask you to provide underwear.

## **SCHOOL AGE CHILD CARE PROGRAM**

The purpose of the School Age Child Care (SACC) program is to provide quality care, guidance, and nurturing of your child when school is not in session. It is your child's "home away from home" and is a place where a great deal of growth and development take place. One of our goals is that each child develops a sense of belonging to the group. To do this, the children play a large part in developing the program. They are given the opportunity to suggest activities that they would like to do and topics that they would like to explore.

In order to meet the diverse needs, interests, and developmental levels of each child, many free play activities are offered. The children are given much freedom and many choices. Our goal is to provide a challenging environment, both mentally and physically, to foster independence, and to allow children to grow, develop, and succeed at their own rate. Some of the activities that will be available to your child are cooking, science and nature, arts and crafts, reading, drama, sports and outdoor activities, games, and puzzles.

In order to meet your concerns for your child, communication is vital. We urge you to communicate with us any specific needs and/or concerns that you may have for your child. For example, if you want your child to spend a specific amount of time on homework each day, or if you want your child to be involved in group games, please let us know. Individual report sheets will not be sent home every day, but we may send home notes periodically to let you know how your child is doing in the program. We also schedule parent-teacher conferences in January.

Although freedom of choice is emphasized, the safety of the children is critical. Because of this, structure and limits are necessary to avoid chaos. Clearly posted rules, which the children help develop, enable the children to know what is expected of them. Rules are enforced consistently and the children will know what the consequence is for breaking them. If the children feel safe and secure, they will feel free to select and pursue activities that hold their interest. Many school-age children equate limits with love. If there are no limits placed on them, they may feel neglected and act out inappropriately. Conflict resolution, problem solving techniques, and proper social interaction skills will be taught in the program.

## **WEAPONS POLICY**

### Intent

The intent of the policy is to provide a safe and secure child care environment.

### Definition

A weapon shall mean any instrument or implement for the infliction of, or capable of, inflicting bodily injury including but not limited to any knife, razor, razor blade, or other cutting instrument, martial arts device, chemical agent, gun, any explosive device, slingshot or other similar device from which a projectile may be discharged, etc. As stated under "Bringing Things to School", guns, war toys, and other toys of destruction are not permitted at the center.

### Staff Responsibility and Procedures:

1. If a staff member sees a student in possession of a weapon, that staff member will alert the office immediately.
2. A student is in possession of a weapon when the weapon is found on the person of the student, in the student's personal belongings, or at any center function held away from the center.
3. If, in the judgment of the staff person and /or administrator, there is no immediate danger, the staff member will attempt to confiscate the weapon and turn it into the office.
4. If that judgment indicates potential danger, the staff member will notify the office immediately. An administrator will notify the appropriate law enforcement authorities immediately.

### Consequences

1. The director or assistant director shall report the discovery of any weapon prohibited by this policy to the student's parents and to the proper law enforcement officials if necessary.
2. The director shall report the discovery of any weapon and further action to the Board of Directors at its next regular meeting.
3. If the student was attempting to use the weapon to inflict injury, the student will be discharged immediately.
4. If the weapon was found in the student's possession but was not being used, the student will receive a verbal and written warning and the parent will be notified. A second offense will result in suspension or discharge as determined by a committee made up of the child's teacher, director, and assistant director.

Please complete and return after reading the ECCC Parent Handbook.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, the legal guardian of \_\_\_\_\_ have read the Parent Handbook and agree to the following: (Initial by each)

\_\_\_\_ I will follow the procedures in the program handbook.

\_\_\_\_ I will obtain a Special Care Plan (if applicable – refers to medical conditions, IEPs, etc.)

\_\_\_\_ I have read the Sick Child Policy and agree to abide by its provisions.

\_\_\_\_ In the event that I find it necessary to withdraw my child from the center, I will provide two weeks' written notice in advance of my child's last day. I understand that I will be responsible for paying tuition for those two weeks whether my child attends or not.

I will:

\_\_\_\_ Obtain health assessments and immunizations for my child according to the schedule recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the PA Department of Public Welfare.

\_\_\_\_ Cooperate with staff in the follow-up of any medical, dental, or developmental needs of my child

\_\_\_\_ Notify the staff when my child is ill or has been exposed to a contagious disease

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of parent or guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date