

Toddler's Ink Parent Handbook



"Children learn as they play. Most importantly in play, children learn how to learn"

— Fred Donaldson

Our Child Care Program Mission Statement

It is our mission at Toddlers Ink LLC is to provide a safe, caring, loving, stable environment in which all children can thrive and succeed in their development. Toddler's Ink is a Missouri state-licensed all-day learning center that provides care for children from birth until twelve years of age.

We strive for excellence in our teacher staff at Toddlers Ink. The majority of our teaching staff has education, as well as experience in the field of child development. All of our staff have experience working and playing with children, helping them learn through play in developmentally appropriate practices.

Through the education that we provide, children will be involved in fun and challenging activities to help them grow emotionally, socially, and physically. Each child will be exposed to and challenged with different early educational activities that allow them to learn and explore in all developmental domains. We work with parents and children together to aid in the child's growth into a well-rounded, independent (as much as possible), happy child.

Heather Graves, manager and director, welcomes you and your child(ren) into our program. We are excited to have you join our family. We do not want you to hesitate to ask any questions or approach us with any and all concerns. We are dedicated to providing the highest quality of care for your precious child(ren).

Hours of Operation

Monday 5:30a.m. through Friday 6 p.m.

Extended hours available from 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

6637 Miranda Loop, Fulton MO.
65251

573-642-4444 (call or text)

C 573-590-0084 (call or text)

Heather Graves - Owner/Director

"Every child is gifted. They just unwrap their packages at different times...."

Enrollment Fees and Child Care Charges

Tuition Rates

- Ages Birth until two (2) years of age - \$245 per week
- Two (2) year-olds - \$185/week
- Three (3) years and up - \$175/ week
- Evening care (6 pm – 8:30 pm) - \$10 extra per evening
- Part-time or drop-in care, if available or accepted
 - 0-2 years - \$50/day
 - 2 years - \$42/day
 - 3-5 years - \$40/day
 - School age - \$40/day
- Before school – \$30/week After school - \$45/week Both - \$75 a week

Any other charges will need to be addressed to the manager and agreed upon in writing. There will be an enrollment fee equal to one (1) week of the child's care charge. This will be applied to the child's first week of enrollment. Toddler's Ink LLC reserves the right to increase childcare charges as needed. Sufficient notice will be given to parents/guardians when any increase is made.

Items to be Supplied by the Parent/Guardian

Please clearly label all items belonging to the child

- A couple of changes of clothing, please change out with the season.
- Diapers/Pull-ups.
- Formula (if a different brand is preferred other than what is supplied)
- Crib sheet/Blanket/pillow if child prefers their own.
- Pacifiers, if child uses a pacifier one or two shall be left at the facility (will only be used at nap time).

Being a daycare provider is easy. It's like riding a bike.....except the bike is on fire. You're on fire. Everything is on fire.

Payment Policy

There is an enrollment fee equal to one week of care for your child. This fee will be applied to the first week your child is enrolled. The enrollment fee is expected at the time of registration. Regular payments are expected on the first day of care whether it is paid weekly, biweekly, or monthly. Payments must be paid in cash, check, VENMO, automatic withdrawal/credit card through Brightwheel, or money order. There will be a \$35 fee for each returned check. If there are two insufficient checks given, then all future payments must be made in cash, VENMO, or money order. Payment is due based on the hours agreed upon in the contract whether the child attends or not. There is a late fee of \$5 each day. All payment procedures stand unless pre-made arrangements are made with Heather Graves, director.

At Toddlers Ink, we try very hard to keep costs down to provide you with affordable, quality childcare. To keep those costs down and to prevent unnecessary rate hikes, tuition must be paid in a timely fashion, so we have made some policy changes to aid in this situation.

- All payments are due on the FIRST day of care. For example, if you start on Monday, payment is due on Monday for the week. Payments can be made weekly, biweekly, monthly, or on the 15th and 30th. Heather must be aware of your desired pay schedule.
- There is an early payment discount available for daytime shifts to take advantage of. That discount is \$5 per child per week. EARLY PAYMENT DISCOUNTS are figured according to your planned pay schedule. To take advantage of the discount, Payments must be made at least a day early. Payments made on the due date are not subject to the discount.
- There will be a \$5 late fee assessed per day past the 24-hour grace period. For example, if your payment schedule is weekly, your payment is due on Monday. If you paid the Friday before, your amount to be paid would be \$100 (on a 3 & up child/not after school). If paid on Monday or Tuesday, the amount paid would be \$105. If paid on Wednesday or after the \$5 per day late fee will be added to the bill. Bills will be handed out on Friday afternoons for any past-due amounts.
- Tuition is to be paid up until the END of the TWO-WEEK NOTICE of withdrawal from the program

We understand that there are things out of our control that can prevent payment from being made in a timely fashion. In these situations, communicate with Heather at the earliest possible time. BUT YOU MUST COMMUNICATE!! We count on these payments to make the daycare expenses. If we don't receive them when expected, our expenses and payments may be delayed causing costly fees. Things are tight for everyone in these difficult economic times. We need to avoid any costly unnecessary expenses completely.

“A child is a discoverer. He is an amorphous, splendid being in search of his own proper form.”

~ Maria Montessori

Holidays

The facility will be closed on the following **PAID** holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Day
- Presidents Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving and the following Friday
- Christmas Day & Christmas Eve (depending on Christmas falling on a weekend, could be the Friday before or Monday and Tuesday after)
- 1 Floating Day for a yearly training/team building that the entire staff at Toddlers Ink attends (advance notice of this training will be posted for parents).

Emergency Days

Toddler's Ink LLC is allowed **5 PAID days** to be closed for emergencies each calendar year. There is no guarantee that this time will be taken each year. It will be up to the discretion of the owner and director if an emergency day is to be used and appropriate notice will be given. Emergency days can include, but are not limited to, snow days, disaster to the facility, severe illness, etc...

Termination of Contract

Toddlers Ink LLC reserves the right to terminate care for any of the following reasons:

- Lack of parental cooperation
- Disrespect to our staff
- Lack of the Child's adjustment
- Unable to follow facility rules.
- Failure to pay.
- Failure to provide proper paperwork.

If termination is necessary, as much notice as possible is given to the parent/guardian.

If the parent/guardian must terminate the contract, there is a two-week notice required or two weeks of payment.

All changes to the contract must be made in written form and will not take effect until approved by the manager and/or director.

Tuition is to be paid up until the END of the TWO-WEEK NOTICE of withdrawal from the program.

“Children are the World's most valuable resource and its best hope for the future.”

~John F. Kennedy

Rules, Regulations & Policies

- No Smoking will be permitted on the premises by anyone.
- Pacifiers will be used only at nap time or in the infant's crib – for sanitary reasons.
- No harmful or improper physical contact will be tolerated.
- No obscene language or bullying by parents will be tolerated.
- The staff will always be in charge.
- There is no outside food or drink allowed in the center except on special occasions, and it must be cleared by the director, Heather.
- No child will be allowed outdoors without the supervision of an adult.
- A child with a physical, developmental, or behavioral need shall have on file an individualized plan for specialized care from a professional, qualified source.
- There will be continual communication between staff, the director, the manager, and parents/guardians.
- A caregiver shall admit each child upon arrival and personally dismiss each child upon departure. Children shall be dismissed only by the parent/guardian or to individuals approved by the parent/guardian.
- Label ALL items that come into the center. This means clothing, coats, hats, gloves, etc. We have a lot of children's things to keep track of, and we have multiple classes and teachers, and many times things get left on the playground or in another classroom, or laundered, and another teacher is having to find the owner of the items. Labeling saves much wasted time and minimizes the risk of loss.
- Our employee policy states that no pictures are to be sent directly to anyone or posted on staff personal media pages, and pictures are to be posted only with written custodial parent permission.
- We do go outside, weather permitting, daily. Please make sure that your child is dressed for the day's weather or at least has a change of clothes that they can be changed into. It gets very warm in the summer and very cold in the winter, and not only do we want your child to be comfortable, but we also want to avoid any serious medical issues due to being too hot or too cold because they don't have the appropriate weather/temperature clothing. This includes making sure they have shoes daily. We do not have extra staffing for a child to sit inside while their friends are outside getting some much-needed Vitamin D and exercise.

“Enabling environments: mobilize the energy, attention, curiosity, and focus of children.”

~Howard Gardner

Discipline Policy.

Toddlers Ink LLC has established simple, understandable rules for children's behavior and shall continually explain them to the children. Expectations for the child's behavior are appropriate for the developmental level of that child. Constructive, age-appropriate methods of discipline will be used to help children develop self-control and assume responsibility for their actions. Praise and encouragement of good behavior will be used instead of focusing on unacceptable behavior. Brief, supervised separation from the group may be used. This specific area will be referred to as the "quiet area." This is a space where the children can be in their own space, away from any issues or other children. If this method is not effective, the parents/guardians will be notified. Firm, positive statements or redirection of behavior will be used with children. Parents/guardians can be assured that no physical punishment will be used. No discipline technique that is humiliating, threatening, or frightening to the children will be used. Children will not be shamed, ridiculed, or spoken to harshly, abusively, or with profanity. Parents are urged to be supportive of the center's guidelines.

“Having a parent who listens creates a child who believes he or she has a voice that matters in this world.”

~Rachel Macy Stafford

Potty Training Policy.

Potty-training is a big step in a child's development. Children generally achieve this between the ages of 2 & 3 years old. As with all things childcare-related, potty-training must be a collaboration between parents and the provider. We are happy to assist with this process with the understanding that it will only be successful if we work together. If there is a method working at home, please share that information with us so that we may adopt the same practice at the center. We use a low-key approach with lots of praise. Clothing should be toilet-training friendly and easy to manage to encourage self-help skills. Buckles, onesies, belts, and suspenders, when in a hurry to use the bathroom, may create a problem and can also be frustrating for the child. We require that the potty-training child have at least 4-5 changes of clothing. Best practices state that we should have the least amount of contact with the soiled clothing, so soiled items will not be rinsed out or laundered and will be sent home in a plastic bag. Please replace any soiled clothing sent home with a clean set the next day. And please check the child's cubby for soiled clothing each day during pick up.

Some signs that they are ready are:

- Your child announces when a wet or soiled diaper has occurred and/or requests to have it changed. This shows awareness of bodily function and also that the child dislikes the feel of the wet or soiled diaper
- The child can express and understand one-word statements, including such words as "wet", "dry", "potty", or "go".
- The child shows an interest in the toilet or potty seat by asking to use it or wanting to watch mommy or daddy use it.
- The child has a tendency to wet or soil their diapers about the same time period each day, and often remains dry for longer periods (2+ hours) during the day.
- The child shows facial expressions when wetting or soiling their diaper and may even hide in a corner or behind furniture or squat when soiling a diaper. This again shows awareness of bodily functions.
- Your child is able to undress without assistance to some degree. This shows the child has some physical coordination needed to do the work of toileting..

"Children learn more from who you are than what you teach."

~ Unknown

Prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and use of safe sleep practices

All licensed, license-exempt, and registered childcare providers are required to complete training on safe sleep and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) at the time of hire. Prevention of sudden infant death syndrome and the use of safe sleep practices, as a caregiver, is important to ensure that an infant's sleep environment is a safe one. All caregivers must follow safe sleep practices as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) to reduce the risk of SIDS or suffocation death and other infant deaths that could occur when an infant is in a crib or asleep. Training requirements for caregivers include appropriate sleeping areas (cribs, pack and play), bedding, sleepwear, items in cribs, and sleeping on the back. Through training, the objective is for staff to recognize that safe sleep practices reduce the risk of SIDS or suffocation death in infants. The techniques trained and used include:

- Place the baby on his or her back to sleep alone, for naps and nighttime.
- Place the baby in a safety-approved crib with a firm surface and fitted sheet.
- Do not use an infant seat, swing, or any other type of furniture/equipment that is not a safety-approved crib.
- Remove all soft objects, toys, blankets, bumper pads, and pillows from the sleep area.
- Dress the baby in a sleeper or sleep sack instead of using a blanket or other covering.
- Routinely observe the infant by sight and sound

*"Education is not the filling of a pail,
but the lighting of a fire."*

~ William Butler Yeats

HEALTH AND SAFETY STANDARDS

Prevention and control of infectious diseases (including immunizations). Good hygiene, proper sanitation, and consistently following universal health precautions in early childhood settings are essential for reducing health risks to children and adults by limiting the spread of infectious germs. All are designed to promote wellness and prevent and control infectious diseases. Using appropriate sanitation measures and universal precautions protects the health and safety of everyone. Requirements for staff to have medical examinations, immunization requirements for children, restrictions for children and staff to be present when ill, diapering and handwashing requirements, proper handling of food, water play, and using the toilet or assisting a child in the use of a toilet. Standards require that providers have a set and routine cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting process using soap and water, bleach/water solution, dishwasher, and washing machine. Knowledge of signs and symptoms of illness, decision making if the child should remain or be excluded from the child care setting, and when to notify the parent/guardian that the child has signs or symptoms of illness.

Health/Illness Policy

- Fever – If your child is running a fever over 100, they will be sent home for the day (they will need to be picked up immediately) and may not return to care until they are fever-free for **24 hours without medication**.
- Vomiting – If your child vomits while in care, they will be sent home immediately for the day. They may return to care the next day if they do not vomit during the night. If your child vomits on the way to the center, please do not bring your child to care that day.
- Strep – If your child is diagnosed with Strep, they may return to care when and with the note where the doctor states they can.
- Diarrhea – if your child has 3 or more diarrhea bowel movements in a day, they will be sent home and will not be able to return to care until they are 24 hours free of diarrhea or a medical exam saying they are free of communicable diseases.
- Rash with fever – children presenting with a rash and a fever will be sent home and may not return until a medical exam says they are able to return.
- Sores in and around the mouth – if your child has these, they will be sent home immediately and will not be able to return until the sores are healed or a medical exam stating they can come back to care.
- Eye redness/drainage - if your child has eye drainage or redness of the eyes, they will be sent home and may not return to care until a medical exam states they can.
- Hand, Foot and Mouth – may not return until fever is gone, and the child is well enough to participate in routine activities (sores or rash may still be present).
- Croup – until fever is gone and the child is well enough to participate in routine activities.
- Scabies may not return until 24 hours after treatment begins.

Lice – We have a no nits or live lice policy. We conduct weekly lice checks, more if and when if needed. If your child has live lice or nits, they will be sent home and may not return to care unless they are lice and nit-free.

“The way we talk to our children becomes their inner voice.”

~Peggy O'mara

Allergic Reactions

- Each classroom with have a list of children with allergies along with procedures to follow if the child has an allergic reaction.
- Staff is currently trained to identify the symptoms of an allergic reaction such as rash, redness, swollen, etc...

Administration of Medication

Childcare providers must to use caution when giving medication to children in their care. Childcare providers must have written consent and instructions from a parent to give children any medication (prescription or over-the-counter). Childcare providers must have on file written consent from the parent/guardian for each prescription or over-the-counter medication to be administered to the child in the childcare setting. The written consent must include:

- The child's name.
- The name of the medication.
- The date(s) and times the medication is to be administered.
- The dose or amount of medication to be given.
- Method of administration.

Childcare providers and staff/volunteers should ensure that all medications, refrigerated or unrefrigerated, have child-resistant caps, are stored away from food at the proper temperature, and are inaccessible to children.

"Play is the highest expression of human development in childhood, for it alone is the free expression of what is in a child's soul."

~Friedrich Froebel

Arrival / Departure

Although we prefer earlier, the drop-off cut-off time is 10:00 unless prior arrangements are made. We would like children to arrive clean and dressed. This includes a fresh diaper and shoes, dressed appropriately for the weather that day. This may include gloves, boots, coats/jackets, and hats. **Children are not to bring in any food or toys from home (unless approved by the teacher). If these items are brought to the facility, they will be sent away with the parent/guardian.**

Upon arrival, the child must be released into the care of the staff, and the child must be released into the care of the parent/guardian when departing. The staff will check the child in and out on the Brightwheel app for attendance. Only those authorized will be allowed to pick up the child; this authorization must be in written form before the child is allowed to be released into their care. Please inform each authorized person picking up the child to have an acceptable form of identification available each time the child is picked up.

The safety of every child is of the utmost importance. Any parent/guardian who is under the influence of drugs or alcohol when picking up the child will be reported to the police and child protective services. Also, the child needs to have acceptable safety seats in the car during arrival and departure, if not they will be reported.

Saying Goodbye

While we want parents to give their child a kiss and a hug goodbye each morning, we do not want this part of the morning to be prolonged. Goodbyes are always important to your child, so don't forget to do this or sneak out while they aren't looking. Tell them goodbye, give them a kiss and a hug, and wave goodbye, and a teacher will take them from there. If they are having a difficult goodbye, follow the same routine but inform the teacher of this. They are there to help. The longer this process is prolonged, the harder it is on everyone...the child, the class, the teachers, and you as the parent. It's a tough process, and it hurts our hearts to see our children upset, but they do adjust more quickly the less parents linger.

Parking

Parking is only allowed in the appropriate areas. Please do not park in such ways that will inhibit traffic flow. Toddlers Ink LLC is not responsible for the safety of the children from the vehicle to the door or vice versa. Parents/guardians supervision is a MUST when transporting children to and from the vehicle to the building.

"No significant learning occurs without a significant relationship."

~ James Comer

Field Trips

All parents/guardians will be notified in advance of all field trips or excursions. In the case that the facility takes a field trip, booster/car seats must be provided by the parent/guardian. Written parental/guardian permission must be on file at the facility for field trips. Short, unscheduled walks may be taken without parent notification.

Nap Time

All children will participate in nap time. They are not required to sleep, but must rest on a cot or mat. A caregiver will remain in the room with the children while they are napping. Instrumental music or nature sounds will be played during this time, and the lights will be off. There will be enough lighting so that the children and staff to be able to see without difficulty.

Animals on premises

We have 3 cats on the premises. They are indoor/outdoor cats, and they come and go as they please. They are a part of our curriculum, make great therapy animals to upset littles, and are a part of our daycare family. They are fantastic with our kiddos and help us teach them compassion, soft touches, respecting space, empathy, and provide amazing emotional support. We have had children and staff with allergies at the facility with no adverse reaction, but that chance always exists, depending on the severity of the allergy. We always try to keep cats away from those who are allergic, but we cannot guarantee that. Please know that enrolling your child at our facility comes with that risk and enrolling at your own risk. We will not be held liable if you choose to do so.

“Either we spend time meeting children’s emotional needs by filling their cup with love, or we spend time dealing with behaviors caused from their unmet needs. Either way, we spend time.”

~ Pam Leo

Meals & Snacks

This facility offers Breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snacks. Breakfast will be served around 8, lunch is served 11:15 – 11:45, and afternoon snacks will be served around 2:45. The menu is posted for parents to view on the Brightwheel app. Please inform and document any of your child's allergies and foods you prefer your child to have/not have. Children must be at the facility in time for these meals to participate unless special arrangements are made.

We understand the desire to bring in treats for your child's birthday; however, Toddlers Ink participates in the Advanced level of the food program, so we encourage you to try to bring in non-food treats such as balloons, party favors, toys, or stickers.

Fundraising

There is a lot of cost that goes along with running a childcare center. In an effort to keep costs low, we will conduct fundraisers throughout the year. I know fundraising is a pain and something no one particularly likes to do. But these things help keep tuition costs down. We are asking for your help in our fundraising efforts. If anyone has any fundraising ideas, please let Heather know!

Notice to DFS Sponsored Parents

Subsidy children must be signed in and out daily in Kinderconnect. Corrections must be made within 5 days, as that's all the app will allow. There will be a late charge to those parents who don't have theirs completed within the first few days of the month. \$5 per day after the 3rd. If it is more than 2 weeks late, you will be responsible for paying the full tuition amount.

Center Insurance

When a child gets hurt at the center and medical attention is required, our center insurance will only cover the incidents in which we are negligent (which we are responsible for causing). Hopefully, this will never happen.

“The more risks you allow your children to make, the better they learn to look after themselves.”

~Roald Dahl

Regarding Immunizations

On August 28, 2015, a new law regarding immunizations went into effect. Section 210.003.7, RSMo. States: “All public, private and parochial daycare centers, preschools and nursery schools shall notify the parent or guardian of each child at the time of initial enrollment in or in attendance at the facility that the parent or guardian may request notice of whether there are children currently enrolled in or attending the facility for whom an immunization exemption has been filed. Beginning December 1, 2015, all public, private and parochial, daycare centers, preschools, and nursery schools shall notify the parent or guardian of each child currently enrolled in or attending the facility that the parent or guardian may request notice of whether there are children currently enrolled in or attending the facility for whom an immunization exemption has been filed. Any public, private, and parochial daycare centers, preschools, and nursery schools shall notify the parent or guardian of a child enrolled in or attending the facility, upon request, of whether there are children currently enrolled in or attending the facility for whom an immunization exemption has been filed.”

Under Section 210.003.7. RSMo., the parent or guardian of a child enrolled in or attending Toddlers Ink LLC may request notice or whether there are any children enrolled at our facility with an immunization exemption on file. If you would like to request this information, please contact Heather Graves and the information will be provided to you. Please note, the name or names of the individual children are confidential and will not be released. Our response will be limited to whether or not there are children enrolled at our facility with an immunization exemption on file.

Reporting Child Abuse

As a childcare center, we are mandated reporters and are legally obligated to report any suspicions we might have when it comes to a child being abused or neglected. We will always talk about any suspicions that we have with the parent first. However, when a child appears, or has stated, to be in a dangerous situation (physically or mentally), we will report any concerns we have.

24/7 Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline 1.800.392.3738 TDD 1.800.669.8689

“Play is the shortest route between children and their creative calling.”

Vince Gouman

Tips for preparing your child to begin our program

- Per licensing, babies are required to sleep in a baby bed without anything in the crib with them. Babies who are used to co-sleeping have a very difficult time adjusting to crib sleeping. Any move towards crib sleeping is greatly appreciated. Please see our safe sleep policy included in the handbook.
- Please understand that we have multiple babies and only 2 staff members per classroom. We cannot hold the babies all day, even if that is what they are used to at home. Allowing them to self-soothe is appropriate and necessary for their development when following proper self-soothing practices. Go to <https://www.baby-sleep-advice.com> for more information.
- We encourage open communication with your child's teacher. This is a team effort between you as the parent and us as the caregiver. We spend much time with your little one, and we get to know firsthand what behaviors or actions are unusual for the child. Speaking with your child's teacher about any concerns or medical issues (no matter how minor or major they might be) is imperative so that we know what to be looking for or to pay attention to. Likewise, we will communicate when we have concerns as well. We take lethargy, ear-pulling, rashes, developmental delays, etc., very seriously.

"If you trust play, you will not have to control your child's development as much. Play will raise the child in ways you can never imagine."

~Vince Gowman

Custody conflicts

This childcare facility and its staff have no legal authority to refuse any parent or guardian the right to pick up their child unless a court order has granted temporary or permanent custody to one parent or guardian or a third party, AND I have been furnished with a copy of the order bearing the court's signature.

Receipts for payments will be written out to the paying party only. No copies of receipts for payments will be given at any time. How parents work out their tax filing is their business, and I will not take part in personal financial agreements. Any incorrect filing of the payment total amount and EIN provided by me will result in immediate termination with no refunds.

All custody issues must be resolved outside of childcare; this includes paternity cases. If accusations are aimed at the facility and its staff because we refuse to take sides, I will file in court for liability and any damages that were done (this includes slandering my business and false charges called into CPS). This behavior will not be tolerated.

Problems between custodial and non-custodial parents or involving me in a dispute in any way will be cause for immediate termination with no refund after ONE warning. Non-notice termination fees in the amount of 2 weeks' payment will apply.

We MUST HAVE custody paperwork showing in writing the terms, including visitation rights, and they may not interfere with my business hours...this includes not making any staff the point of supervised visitation at any time. Authorized pickups will be allowed by both parties according to the visitation rights agreement... unless court paperwork says otherwise. For example, if it's mom's (or dad's) pickup day, that person decides who can pick their child up.

Do not request that the center and its staff do anything for you other than the normal array of services you have received in the past. We will NOT document anything other than legitimately suspected mistreatment, so do not ask us to spend time evaluating your ex's parenting skills or capabilities as a parent. If the court feels like they need our opinion, they will provide us with the list of written questions that we will answer to the best of our ability. We operate an honest business and consider our integrity the hallmark of our center.

Any information we observe and keep regarding child safety, wellness, and progress that is shared with one custodian will be shared with the other custodian. We do not take sides or withhold information about a child's well-being. This includes information for future schools, like entrance evaluations, or therapist request; and report cards or parent-teacher conferences about the child's academic progress while in our care.

Please remember! We come from a place of love and concern for our children. Our center is your child's safe space. We will love them and keep things normal for them while they are at our center, regardless of what is going on at home. We understand that there are a lot of emotions going on in times like these and it is difficult to keep things in perspective, but please remember your child is suffering also.. It is in the best interest of the child to keep things as civil as possible. They are the most affected by these life changes and it is even harder on them than it is on you.

"Children are natural and confident learners and very conscious of what's happening around them."

~Manjinder Kaur

Emergency Preparedness & Response Plan

- **Center-wide emergency** - this is the step-by-step plan that will be followed, such as nuclear power plant issues, **lockdown**, or building issues (fire), etc...
 - Ensure children's safety – the owner or director will decide if it is safe for the children to remain at the center based on the type of emergency that is happening.
 - If the center is unsafe due to damage or possible contamination, all children will be transported as safely as possible (fitting as many children as safely possible in a staff member's vehicle). All staff members will transport children in the case of an emergency to Court Street United Methodist Church (719 Court Street) in the hall below. When leaving the Toddlers Ink facility, the emergency bags, along with the classroom tablets, will be taken by each lead teacher. In the emergency bags, there are snacks, water, wipes, spare clothing, diapers, and activities for the children to do.
 - If the center is physically safe, but we decide that we need to be in lockdown mode, all doors will be locked, and a staff member will be located at the door to watch the surroundings and check for pickups.
 - Parent notification - All parents will be notified via brightwheel (asking for a response to ensure they received the message, and those who do not respond will receive a text message and eventually a call if they still do not respond via text.
 - Anyone who is picking up the children will be asked to produce photo identification and must be on the current pick-up list of the children. NO EXCEPTIONS
 - Management staff will decide if the center is able to be reopened the next business day and will notify parents via Brightwheel and our Facebook page. (Reminder that we have 5 paid emergency days that we can use in these types of situations).
- **Lost/Missing child** – In this situation, our facility would go into immediate lockdown procedure (see above). All rooms and surrounding areas would be searched for children.
 - Authorities would be notified immediately.
 - Parents will be notified along the emergency procedures above.
- **Intruder/ Threatening Adult** – the center would go into the immediate lockdown procedure above.
 - Children would be gathered by the closest exit door in the room they are in (teachers with them).
 - If an intruder makes it into the center, teachers will lead the children out the door, across the field behind the center to the Callaway Christian Church.
 - Parents would be notified as listed above.

"If children feel safe, they can take risks, ask questions, make mistakes, learn to trust, share their feelings and grow."

~ Alfie Kohn

- **Natural Disasters** – these emergencies would consist of tornado & flood watches/warnings, winter storms, etc...
 - Tornado & Flood watches – Teachers will closely monitor the weather situation.
 - Tornado warnings – Children and teachers will remain inside the specified rooms (Storage room for preschool and school-age children, staff bathroom for infants and toddlers). One staff person will remain at the door to aid with the pickup of children. Parents will be notified of the situation via Brightwheel and our Facebook page.
 - Flood warnings – Students will remain in their classrooms with their teachers. One staff member will maintain a watch on the surrounding water; parents will be notified if the center needs to close due to the likelihood of the center flooding.
 - Winter storms – Management will closely monitor the weather situation and notify parents via Brightwheel and our Facebook page if the center needs to close for the day. If the center is already open and children are in attendance, and management decides that, for the safety of everyone, the center needs to close, parents will be notified via the emergency procedure above along with the time their child will have to be picked up by.
- **Serious Injury/Illness** - there are numerous situations this topic would encompass, each situation may be different; this is why all staff members are first aid and CPR trained so they can handle the different aspects of each situation.
 - The lead teacher in charge of the child's care assesses the child and the situation.
 - Emergency – Help the child, whatever needs to be done for the child, for example SIDS, Shaken Baby Syndrome, seizures, etc... In these situations, teachers should follow the training they received in First Aid and CPR training, and then follow the instructions of the 911 operator.
 - - Call out for help
 - - Call 911
 - - Notify Parents via calling.
 - - Notify Management
 - - Document everything that happened
- **Non-Emergency** – Help the child, whatever needs to be done for the child, for example, bumps, cuts, bruises, etc...
 - In injury situations, teachers should follow the training they
 - Received First aid training.
 - - Get assistance
 - - Notify Management
 - - Notify Parents via Brightwheel
 - - Document everything that occurred

"The greatest gifts we can give our children are the roots of responsibility and the wings of independence."

~Maria Montessori

Child and Adult Care Food Program Parent Letter

Non-Pricing Child Care Centers July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026 Dear Parent or Legal Guardian:
Our center is currently participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program. This program reimburses the center for the partial cost of meals provided to children and allows the center to provide nutritious meals without increasing the center's fees to you. If your yearly income is equal to or below the amount listed for your family size on the chart below, your child is eligible for free or reduced-price meals. If the income is higher than the amount listed for your family size, you do not need to complete the income application.

Family Size	Yearly Income	Family Size	Yearly Income
1	\$28,953	5	\$69,653
2	\$39,128	6	\$79,828
3	\$49,303	7	\$90,003
4	\$59,478	8	\$100,178

For each additional family member, add \$10,175

To apply for free or reduced-price meal benefits for your children, you must complete the attached Income Eligibility Form (IEF). Your application for free or reduced-price meal benefits cannot be approved unless the attached application is completed according to the directions provided; however, you are not required to complete the IEF. Notify the center should the household income decrease and/or if the household size increases. A participant may be eligible for free or reduced-price meals. The application is valid until the last day of the month in which the form was approved/dated/signed one year earlier.

Sincerely,

Center Owner/Director

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD 3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

2. fax:

(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

3. email:

Program.Intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.