

# Parent Handbook

## 2019-2020



## The Children's Center

*serving families since 1974*

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# *From the Executive Director*

Welcome to The Children's Center,

Little did I know when I returned home to the Lakes Region from the Midwest in 2012 with my family that I would end up spending my second working career as part of an organization that has become one of Wolfeboro's greatest assets.

The Children's Center has served thousands of children since its humble start in 1974. In the beginning, founder and director, Edie DesMarais and her partners managed to rent a building in South Wolfeboro to care for about 30 children ages 3 to 12.

Year after year ever since, The Children's Center has responded to our community's needs. Everyone knows that communities have children under the age of 3. Communities have children with special educational needs. And communities have families who struggle financially.

Under Edie's and her successor Susan Whiting's leadership as executive directors, as well as a dedicated Board of Directors, The Children's Center has consistently taken on the challenge of doing something to help these families and their children. The continual effort to respond to the needs of the larger community is precisely what distinguishes our Center from so many other childcare facilities and home daycares.

Whether it be the need for infant and toddler care, quality early care and education, preschool special education, drop-in care, school-age before, after, and summer programs, social work consultation, parent education, grandparents support group, abuse prevention programs, services for socially and emotionally challenged children, nutritional and fitness programs to address childhood obesity, literacy programs, naturalized play areas for children to have the chance to interact with nature, funds for families who unable to cover the cost of child care, put food on their tables, pay for needed car repairs, or buy fuel in the winter, The Children's Center has addressed them all.

Audrey Hepburn once said, "Nothing is impossible, the word itself says 'I'm Possible.'" This has been the guiding attitude for more than 40 years...and it will absolutely continue.

I feel a deep sense of gratitude to be a part of such a caring and generous organization. I also am proud to be part of a community of practice who values things like respect, support, and commitment. Specifically, we believe each and every child is entitled to a safe and nurturing environment. We also believe each and every family deserves support in meeting the basic needs of food, clothing, shelter and education. And we believe society is stronger when it ensures that children and families succeed.

These beliefs, along with others we hold dear, hang in poster form on our walls. But more importantly, these words passionately come to life with each member of our staff, as we strive to make a genuine difference in every life, every day.

Thank you for your support of The Children's Center and for believing in our quest to love and learn.

Sincerely,

Teri Ann Cox  
Executive Director

# *Mission*

The Children's Center is a not-for-profit organization, founded in 1974 to enhance the well-being of families and the community by meeting the needs of children through comprehensive, affordable, high-quality child and family services, and to collaborate with other agencies serving these needs.

The annual meeting of the Corporation takes place on the fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) Monday of the month of September, when the election of the representative Board of Directors takes place.

The Board of Directors meets on the fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) Monday of the month from September through June, excluding December, to decide all policies of the WACC. Corporate members are welcome at any meeting and are encouraged to serve on committees to participate in the decision-making process of the Corporation.

# *Philosophy*

We recognize that all children are individuals with different needs and talents according to their rates of development and previous experiences.

Our goals are to provide a safe, nurturing and supportive environment that encourages positive self-esteem, individuality, exploration and self-expression; and to guide a child, through play, in the important work of learning and interacting with his world and others in it.

# *Hours of Operation*

Open: 6:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday – year round

Exceptions:

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- July 4<sup>th</sup>
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving and the Friday after
- Christmas

The Center very rarely closes on regularly scheduled days. In the event that we must close, e.g., severe weather that would make travel difficult for families or staff, we will post the closure notice on WMUR-TV and Facebook.

If you question whether the Center is open or not during a power outage, please call 569-2614 as this is our only true non-digital land line. Should we have to close early, we will notify parents by phone.

**Fees are not reduced when the Center is closed**

# Program Overview

## The Classrooms & What to Expect

The Center promotes the philosophy of “learning through play” play being essential to every aspect of a child’s development. In each classroom, the teachers foster learning and development in age-appropriate ways.

- *Our infants* are busy daily learning the basics. They begin to develop a sense of self, build relationships with caregivers and peers, begin to express their needs and emotions, explore movement and their environment, listen to music and stories and interact with teachers and each other.
- *Our toddlers* move on to learning a degree of independence in caring for themselves. Teachers introduce them to colors, shapes, objects and concepts through music, movement and stories during short circle times. The toddlers have the time to explore and observe, work on sharing, listening and taking turns.
- *Our preschoolers* participate in a robust curriculum that addresses all areas of preschool development: early literacy, math, science, history, social science, health education, the arts, and social-emotional learning.

## Early Care and Education for Infants, Toddlers and Preschoolers



Our infant/toddler program provides a warm and nurturing environment designed to encourage our little ones to explore and learn new skills. Because we are able to maintain low child-to-staff ratios, there is plenty of opportunity to cuddle and meet the individual needs of each child. The toddler program focuses on teaching self-help skills, potty-training, and appropriate social skills, while the children enjoy a variety of sensory experiences and art activities. Outside, our separate infant/toddler playground offers little ones the chance to explore without the intrusion of older children.

Play is the important work of a preschooler at the Children’s Center. Activities are designed to encourage children to question, seek answers, make decisions, and work cooperatively with others. Our goal is to provide experiences that entice your child to want to learn more. Our children go on to kindergarten with the confidence and skills to listen, follow directions, make good choices, interact cooperatively, and succeed academically.

## Before and After School Program



During the school year, children attending Carpenter and Crescent Lake schools may be enrolled before school, after school, and on no school days. This includes vacation weeks, school holidays and those called because of weather. A variety of activities are provided, as well as games, Legos, and toys that pique the interest of children ages of 5 through 12. Outside time on the spacious playground, the basketball court, and lower field provide lots of opportunity for gross motor activity and organized group games.

## Summer Programs



The summer brings a more relaxed atmosphere throughout the Center. Preschoolers enjoy lots of outdoor play, picnics on the playground, walks to Cate Park and Foss Field and the occasional trip to Squam Lakes Natural Science Center or Conway Scenic Railroad. Due to a generous donor, the Children's Center owns a bus for field trips, which is only driven by qualified staff. Parents will be asked to provide car seats or booster seats if necessary.

Camp All Stars is ten weeks of exploring, experimenting, and exceptional fun for the school-age child during summer vacation. Hiking, swimming, and kayaking are weekly adventures, along with group games and lazy afternoons on the playground. Plenty of arts and crafts activities are offered throughout the week, with beach days every Friday (weather permitting). Because we have a certified lifeguard on staff, we can take trips to the Basin and Kinsman Falls, Odiorne Point and Echo Lake. Knowing your school-age child is enjoying a camp-like program along with extended hours of 6:30 to 6:00, makes the summer less stressful for our parents.

## Early Childhood Education

The Children's Center is a best in class Early Childhood Education Program that provides an inclusive preschool environment with special education services and supports for children ages 3 through 5 years. We have a special education team consisting of an administrator from the Governor Wentworth Regional School District, a special educator, an occupational therapist assistant, a speech therapist and trained classroom teachers who provide educational service to children with individualized educational plans. Please feel free to contact our preschool special need coordinator if you would like to learn more about the services we offer.

## Social Services



The Children's Center is fortunate to have a master's-level counselor/social worker on staff to provide resource and referral services, child and family counseling, parent training, and classroom consultation. The counselor also administers our Family Assistance Program. The Children's Center understands that financial stress takes it toll on the well-being of families so, each year, the Children's Center raises funds to help families facing a financial crisis. Families have accessed the funds to pay for energy costs, food, rent, car repairs, etc.

Please feel free to contact our social worker should you find yourself needing some professional consultation or financial assistance.

## Magic Moments Preschool Lab Program



Magic Moments Preschool is a collaboration between the Children's Center and the Lakes Region Technology Center. The program, for children ages 3 to 5 who are potty trained, runs daily from 9:00 to noon at the Technology Center. It is staffed by a preschool educator and teacher assistant. Additional assistants in the classroom are high school students enrolled in the Careers in Education Program. These students spend part of their class time working in Magic Moments getting practical experience. Because this program is housed in a public school, we follow the GWRSD school calendar. We are also able to access all the beautiful amenities of the Kingswood complex including the dance studio, the agriculture Center, and the culinary arts restaurant. Before-care is available.

## Parent and Family Participation



As a Strengthening Families Center, the Children's Center encourages families to participate in the many networking opportunities held throughout the year as classroom events, Center-wide celebrations, and community fundraising activities. The Children's Center invites parents to serve on board of director's committees that set policy and practices.

Feel free to share your talents and ideas with Center staff. We welcome your contributions, whether in the form of sharing music, art, woodworking, foreign languages or another interest. Your presence, time and sharing make a difference in your child's attitude and experiences.

# Enrollment



Upon enrollment and annually families will provide the Center with a completed *Child Care Registration and Emergency Information* form which will accurately contain identifying information, including where the parents/guardians can be reached while a child is in care, and contact information of an alternative person who could assume responsibility for the child in an emergency, or who could pick up the child if the parent/guardian cannot be reached. Families will also indicate if the child has any chronic conditions, allergies, or takes any medications which could be important in an emergency. Families will authorize medical treatment in the case of an emergency.

If a child has a medical condition which could develop into an emergency situation (e.g. asthma, food or bee-sting allergies, diabetes, and seizure disorders), upon enrollment, please provide the Center with a completed *Emergency Action Plan* or *Special Care Plan*, signed by the child's physician, with clear direction as to the course of action caregivers can follow to care for the child, should such an emergency take place.

Families agree to inform the Center whenever there is change in the emergency contact information or if the child develops a new medical condition and provide any necessary *Emergency Action Plan* or *Special Care Plan*.

- Children are enrolled for full days. Partial-day enrollments are not an option, except for school-age children.
- The Center permits part-day enrollment (minimum of four hours a day) in the summer for kindergarten and school-age children to accommodate families and to allow children to participate in the many activities offered locally.
- The Center grants care on additional days as space is available. Please contact the office if you need care.
- You must report all changes in address, phone numbers, places of employment, emergency contacts, etc., to the office in writing as they occur.
- The Center requires a two-week written notice when canceling or changing enrollment. Insufficient notice will result in all fees for that two-week period.
- There is a minimum withdrawal period of eight weeks before a child can be re-enrolled. The registration fee will be charged upon re-enrollment. The executive director may make an exception under special circumstances.

# Payment

**Weekly fee:** At the time of enrollment, parents will be notified of their weekly charge. Weekly bills are not issued.

**When is payment due?** Payment is due on the first day of attendance every week. Biweekly or monthly payments are accepted as long as the biweekly payment does not fall at the end of a two-week period. Monthly payments are due at the beginning or middle of the month.

**Forms of payment:** We accept payment by cash, check, credit card, or ACH debit. Weekly or monthly credit card or ACH payments can be set up to occur automatically. The monthly automatic payment occurs on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. Payments by credit card (including debit cards) will be subject to a 1.5% convenience fee. There is no cost for the ACH debit. Parents are also able to log into “MyProcure” to pay their accounts online.

**Where/who do I pay?** If not set up to pay automatically, payment may be given to the Receptionist or dropped in the locked mailbox outside the front office.

**Late fees:** If payment is not received by noon on Friday for services provided that week, a late fee in the amount of 10% of the balance, up to a \$10.00 maximum, will be charged. In order to use the services of the Center the following week, the previous week tuition, the late fee, and the current week’s tuition must be made. Parents who are late two times in one quarter will be required to pay a security deposit in the amount of one week’s tuition.

**Repeated late payments:** Parents whose accounts are in arrears three times in one quarter will be required to enroll in a monthly payment plan through the use of their credit or debit card or by ACH bank debit. Parents who do not own a credit card, or choose not to use it, will be required to pay a one-week deposit, which will be held in a non-interest bearing account, to be applied to the last week of tuition. Parents who choose to pay the deposit must keep their accounts current.

**We will not be able to care for the child(ren) of any parent/guardian whose fees are not paid each and every week or are enrolled in one of the plans described above.** Families who experience unexpected, temporary financial setbacks may apply for special tuition assistance to help them get back on a regular payment schedule. Please speak with someone in the office for details.

**Rates are based on a child’s schedule** and take into account the six holidays the Center is closed. There is no reduction of fees for absence or Center closure.

Please see the Center’s rate sheet for information on additional fees, such as late pick up or payment.

# *Scholarship*

State and Center scholarship funds are available to eligible parents who are actively seeking employment (limited time period), enrolled in a formal job training program, or employed.

Determination of likely eligibility can be made upon enrollment or in the event of a major life event such as divorce, job loss, etc.

# *Security*



The Children’s Center has worked with the N.H. Dept. of Homeland Security, the Wolfeboro Police Dept., Wolfeboro Fire/Rescue and Northeast Security to develop an emergency preparedness plan and adopt emergency procedures to safeguard the children in our care. Many security measures are in place in addition to code access entry. All classrooms are equipped for lockdown, auditory emergency cues are in place throughout the building, emergency alert systems allow for direct contact with the Wolfeboro Police Dept. and staff members are trained in emergency procedures.

All external doors are either always kept locked or are code accessible. When you enroll, the office will assign you a number that will allow you access into the building during hours of operation.

Please DO NOT share this code with children, family or friends. Allow the office to admit them into the building.

DO NOT hold the door for others.

Family situations can change dramatically overnight. Please do not hold the door open for the person behind you. Let parents use their code to enter the building. Always enter and exit the building through the front door.

**If, at any time, circumstances dictate that a parent or family member has been legally denied the right to see your child, advise the office IMMEDIATELY so that we may take the proper precautions.**

In the case of an emergency condition in the Children’s Center program facility, children may be relocated to an evacuation site. We will notify parents by text or phone call as to the location of the reunification site.

# Meals



The Children's Center participates in the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Child and Adult Care Food Program. We provide meals (breakfast, lunch and two snacks) that meet USDA nutritional requirements without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, or political beliefs.

The Children's Center believes in the importance of a healthy, active lifestyle and hopes to encourage sound nutrition through its food program. The food program provides nutrient dense foods in a supportive food environment.

Our goals are to:

- introduce children to a wide variety of healthy foods;
- serve an abundance of fresh fruits and vegetables;
- limit foods high in saturated and trans fats;
- offer whole grains;
- offer an array of protein sources, limiting the amount of red meat and processed foods;
- encourage children to recognize their hunger and satiety;
- encourage children to taste new foods;
- provide a supportive meal environment.

We believe the introduction of a new food should be done with a frequency that increases a child's familiarity with it, and should be coupled with healthy, "old favorites." We believe a child should be encouraged to taste new foods without having undue attention paid to his eating behaviors. We believe a child's willingness to taste new foods should be recognized as a healthy food attitude. We believe our food program serves balanced snacks and meals, meets a child's nutritional needs and does not require substitution or supplementation.

We believe that no more than a moderate second helping of a popular food should be served to a child with a still almost-full plate of less preferred foods.

*The Center does not allow food to be brought in from outside except in certain situations. Children with milk or food allergies may bring in their own milk substitute (if oat milk is not acceptable) or food. If you are bringing in food, you must bring in all snacks and meals. A doctor's note is required.*

We do observe holidays and birthdays. If you send in a treat for your child's classroom, please be mindful **that the Children's Center is peanut and nut free.**

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, gender, religion, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter 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;
- 2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- 3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

# Policies

## Health

### Health History and Physical Examination Requirements

Upon enrollment the Center requires an up-to-date physical exam and health history report for each child, signed by a physician. This report will include an up-to-date immunization record, indication of any known allergies, and any special considerations for the child's full participation in the program.

The Center requires a copy of any subsequent physical exam and health history reports, which are required annually until after the child reaches 5 years of age, and every 2 years thereafter.

### Immunization Policy

The state mandates minimum immunization requirements for child care attendance. All children enrolled in the Center's care must be up-to-date on their vaccinations. (Certain religious and medical exemptions are allowed in accordance with state law RSA 141-C:20-c.) The Center requires the child's immunization record by the first day of enrollment. If the child's immunization status is not current, he/she may be taken out of child care until he/she has begun the series of shots needed. Parents/guardians are responsible for informing the Center when the child receives additional vaccinations.

<u>Age of Your Child</u>	<u>Minimum Immunization Requirement for Child Care Attendance</u>
3 - 4 months	1 DPT, 1 Polio, 1 HepB, 1 Hib
5 - 6 months	2 DPT, 2 Polio, 2 HepB, 2 Hib
7-15 months	3 DPT, 2 Polio, 2 HepB, 3 Hib
16 - 23 months	3 DPT, 2 Polio, 3 HepB, 4 Hib, 1 MMR, (<4 Hib acceptable if last dose given after 15 months)
24 months - school entry	4 DPT, 3 Polio, 3 HepB, 4 Hib, 1 MMR, 1 Varicella (<4 Hib acceptable if last dose given after 15 months)
School age	5 DPT, 4 Polio, 3 HepB, 2 MMR, 1 Varicella (4 DPT acceptable if last dose given after 4 <sup>th</sup> birthday; 3 Polio acceptable if <u>all</u> IPV or <u>all</u> OPV schedule <u>and</u> last dose given after 4 <sup>th</sup> birthday; Hib not required after child's 5 <sup>th</sup> birthday)

Notes: PCV is recommended for all children < 2 yrs of age, and should be considered for all children < 5 yrs of age who attend group child care. Influenza vaccine is recommended annually for children age 6 - 23 months, and strongly recommended for children > 6 months who have a chronic heart or lung condition, such as asthma.

DPT=DTaP,DT,orDTP=diphtheria,pertussis,and tetanus vaccines; IPV=inactivated polio vaccine; OPV=oral polio vaccine; HepB=Hepatitis B vaccine; Hib=haemophilus influenza type b vaccine; MMR=measles,mumps,and rubella vaccine; PCV=pneumococcal conjugate vaccine

### **Illness or Injury: Center Procedure**

The Children's Center does all that it can to reduce the spread of communicable diseases. Hand washing is the number one step in containing illnesses. The caregivers and children wash their hands frequently throughout the day, (e.g.), before and after each meal and food preparation; after each diaper change or toileting; after contact with a body fluid; and after cleaning up and/or handling garbage.

The Children's Center observes N.H. Child Care Licensing rules regarding the care of ill children. If a caregiver observes the following, we will ask you to come promptly to pick up your child:

- your child has an oral temperature of 101 degrees F or above
- your child has an auxiliary temperature of 100.4 degrees F combined with: diarrhea, rash, earache, sore throat or vomiting
- your child has more than one episode of vomiting in 24 hours
- your child has uncontrolled diarrhea, or an increased number of water stools not contained by a diaper
- your child has uncontrolled coughing, wheezing, or difficulty breathing
- your child has skin lesions not diagnosed by licensed health care practitioner, or a rash with fever or behavior change
- your child requires more care than personnel are able to provide without compromising the wellbeing of the ill child or the other children in their care
- your child is unable to participate in regular activities

In the event a child develops an emergency illness or sustains an emergency injury, the Center will quickly assess the child's condition, call 911 as needed, give first aid and CPR if necessary, and follow the plans as put forth in an *Emergency Action Plan* (if such a plan has been completed for the child for that specific condition) and then contact the child's parent or legal guardian, or alternative person listed on the *Child Care Registration and Emergency Information* form.

A staff member shall supervise the ill or injured child and provide for the comfort (and privacy, if needed) of the child until a parent or legal guardian or another designated emergency contact person arrives to take the child or until the child is transported to the emergency room.

### **Illness or Injury: Parental Responsibilities**

In an effort to prevent the spread of illness and disease, it's important to keep your child home if he/she shows signs of an acute illness in the morning. Should your child become ill or injured while at the Center, you will be notified. If the Center determines your child should be excluded from group child care because of an illness or injury, please plan to promptly pick up your child or make alternative arrangements for pick up. If a child is excluded because of illness that is accompanied with fever (greater than axillary

temperature of 100.4 F), the child shall not return to the Center until he has been fever free for 24 hours.

Please inform the Center by calling the office or messaging your child's teacher when your child has a potentially contagious condition, or will be absent due to illness.

The following nonreportable infectious medical conditions will require temporary exclusion from child care as follows:

<u>Condition</u>	<u>Duration of Exclusion</u>
BACTERIAL CONJUNCTIVITIS	Until 24 hrs after treatment is initiated
CHICKEN POX (Varicella)	Until 1 week after chicken pox rash first appears or when blisters have scabbed over
HEAD LICE	Until after first treatment
IMPETIGO	Until 48 hrs after antibiotic is initiated
PINWORMS	Until 24 hrs after treatment is initiated
RINGWORM	If unable to cover lesion, then until treatment begins and the lesion starts to shrink
SCABIES	Until 24 hrs after family has been treated
STREP THROAT and SCARLET FEVER	Until 24 hrs after treatment is initiated

If an acutely ill child develops a potentially contagious condition while at the Center, staff members will isolate the child from other children and susceptible staff members. All injuries and acute illnesses will be recorded in an *Accident/Incident Report*. A copy of the completed form will be given to the injured or sick child's parent or legal guardian, and a copy will be maintained at the Center. Reports will be periodically reviewed for accident prevention and infection control surveillance.

### **Infectious Disease and Child Abuse/Neglect Reporting Requirements**

State law requires the reporting of some suspected or confirmed diseases to the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, Bureau of Communicable Disease Control. If a child were to develop a communicable disease that requires reporting, the health department would then determine what control measures need to be taken to prevent the spread of the disease to others and how long the child must be kept out of child care. The list of reportable diseases is too extensive to copy here, but includes such conditions as bacterial meningitis, food poisoning, and measles. The Center retains the complete list of reportable communicable diseases.

In cooperation with local and state health departments, the Wolfeboro Area Children's Center or the health department shall notify parents or legal guardians about any unusual level or type of communicable disease to which their child was exposed.

It is also the responsibility of the Children's Center to report any suspected cases of child neglect or abuse to the State's Division for Children, Youth and Families.

## **Medications**

Should your child need medication while at the Center, parents/guardians must comply with the Center's medication policy and complete a *Medication Administration Form*.

### **Benadryl**

The Children's Center programs serve very young children, many of whom have not had exposure to potential allergens in their environments. In the event that a child exhibits signs of a severe allergic reaction such as wheezing, croupy cough, hoarseness, difficulty breathing or swallowing, chest or throat tightness, drooling, slurred speech, confusion, weakness and fainting, rash, hives, itching, and facial swelling, we will:

- Administer an age and weight appropriate dose of Benadryl;
- Call 911;
- Contact parent or other designated emergency contact;
- And observe the child closely for changes until the emergency medical team arrives.

You will be asked to give permission for the center to give your child Benadryl if needed on enrollment paperwork.

### **Sunscreen and Bug Spray**

In season, the Children's Center uses Rocky Mountain Sunscreen Enhanced Broad Spectrum SPF 30, (fragrance free, water resistant) lotion as our standard sunscreen, and Deep Woods Off (25% DEET recommended by the EPA) to protect your child from mosquitoes, ticks, biting flies, EEE and West Nile Virus.

You may elect to use Center provided protection for free, or you may provide your own sunscreen and bug repellent. Please indicate your preference by selecting one of the options upon enrollment.

You will be asked to give permission for the center to apply sunscreen and bug spray to your child on enrollment paperwork.

## Parental Transportation



As childcare providers, we have the responsibility to protect the health and safety of the children we serve. Use of alcohol or drugs by adults prior to transporting children can create an unsafe situation. If, in our opinion, the person picking up a child cannot safely transport the child, we will ask that person not to transport. We will suggest that the person contact another person to transport.

If the person picking up does not agree to this and insists on transporting the child, he/she will be told that we will immediately call the police to report the potentially unsafe driving situation.

## Communication



We value our partnership with our parents and hope to establish and maintain open communication channels.

Check your parent mailboxes daily to stay abreast of information concerning your child and the Center. Monthly newsletters and weekly menus along with special dates and events are posted on [thechildrenscenternh.org](http://thechildrenscenternh.org). Visit our Facebook page for regular updates.

Please feel free to share your thoughts and concerns with your child's teacher. Should a situation arise when you feel that a concern is not being adequately addressed in the classroom, please speak with your child's program coordinator. If you think a matter requires greater attention, do not hesitate to speak directly with the executive director. We wish to create the most beneficial environment for your child(ren) and need your help to do so.



The office staff is available during all of the Center's operating hours.

The infant/toddler program offers parent conferences in May. The preschool program encourages parents to meet with them in November and May to review developmental assessments and discuss any concerns.

The Children's Center uses an interactive website that allows our teachers to send daily updates via email. You can receive it using your favorite email program, whether on your phone, tablet or computer.

## Toys and Electronics from Home



With the exception of an occasional “show and tell” toy or naptime stuffy, we ask that you keep your child’s personal toys and electronics at home or in your vehicle. We serve children ages 6 weeks through 12 years and are required by N.H. Child Care Licensing to strictly monitor each child’s environment to protect them from danger and injury. We can’t effectively do this if we don’t know which toys have been brought from home.

## Nap & Rest Periods



New Hampshire Child Care Licensing requires that we “provide children who are in attendance for more than 5 hours the opportunity for at least one hour of rest, relaxation or sleep, depending on the child’s needs.”

Infants have on-demand rest schedules. We provide cribs and crib sheets. Toddlers and preschoolers rest after lunch daily on individual mats. We provide mats and mat covers. We launder the crib sheets and mat covers weekly, or more often if needed. If your child is over a year old, you may provide a special stuffy or blanket for use during rest time. Children who do not fall asleep within 30 minutes will have the opportunity to do a quiet activity.

The Children’s Center reduces staff, by one less staff person in a classroom than required at other times, during naptime for children ages 24 months through 5 years old according to NH Licensing Rules (He-C 4002.23 (i) through (l)).

## Outdoor Play



Your child will spend time outdoors on a daily basis whenever the weather permits. Please dress your child for the weather and for active play. Understand that a busy child will get his/her clothes dirty. We ask you keep a spare set of clothing in your child’s cubby.

We strongly recommend sturdy footwear for outdoor play. Your child will miss out if he/she is not wearing sneakers or comparable shoes.

Please label all of your child’s clothing including towels.

## Drop Off & Pick Up



Please accompany your child into and out of the building and classrooms.

Please make personal contact with your child's caregiver upon drop off or pick up, particularly when your child's group is outdoors.

Enter the driveway slowly. Be alert to children and traffic.

- For the safety of your child, and at the request of the Wolfeboro Police Dept., NEVER leave a child unattended in your vehicle or leave your vehicle running in the parking lot. Remove your key from your vehicle.
- Attendance sheets are posted outside your child's classroom. State regulations require that you provide the time of drop off and pick up AND sign your child's time sheet each week.
- We will only release your child to an adult that you have authorized as a pick-up person on your registration form. We will ask for photo identification until the person is familiar. When it is necessary for someone other than an authorized person to pick up your child, you should notify both the front office and your child's teacher in writing. There are permission forms for this purpose in the office.
- We cannot deny a parent access to their child unless we have a copy of the custody agreement or a court order that relinquishes such parental rights on file in the office.
- **Please phone the Center when your child will be absent.**

## Discipline



The Children's Center understands that each child's behavior is driven by his/her developmental level, a need for independence and natural curiosity. Our role is to guide a child as they learn how to get along with others and behave in an appropriate manner. We believe that a child must have the freedom to learn from poor choices and experience the consequences of his/her actions and decisions.

The Center uses the Pyramid Model, which is a positive behavioral intervention and support (PBIS) framework. The model helps our educators build skills for supporting, nurturing and responsive caregiving, creating learning environments that include social-emotional skills, and support children with challenging behavior. Specifically, our staff has been trained in the following proactive practices:

- Establish clear expectations with reasonable limits
- Communicate our love for the child even when rejecting the behavior
- Give verbal warnings and redirect child from negative behavior
- Reassess classroom environment, suitability of activities, level of supervision
- Use positive methods of listening and language while disciplining children
- Allow choice making and praise appropriate behaviors
- Apply natural and logical consequences consistently
- Give time and safe place to regain control using de-escalation strategies

## Suspension or Expulsion

We will do everything possible using the above-mentioned methods to keep a child at the Center, including working with the family to prevent such an occurrence. Unfortunately, there are sometimes reasons we must remove a child from our program. The following are reasons we may have to expel or suspend a child from the Center:

## CHILD'S ACTIONS FOR EXPULSION

- The child is at risk of causing serious injury to other children or himself/herself
- Failure of child to adjust to a larger, inclusive environment after a reasonable amount of time
- Uncontrollable tantrums / angry outbursts / physical aggression
- Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children

## PARENTAL ACTIONS FOR CONTRACT TERMINATION

- Failure to pay/habitual lateness in tuition payments
- Failure to complete required forms including the child's immunization records
- Verbal abuse to staff or other parents
- Parent threatens physical or intimidating actions toward staff members
- Habitual tardiness when picking up your child

## SCHEDULE OF EXPULSION OR CONTRACT TERMINATION

- Child's/Parent's disruptive behavior will be documented and maintained in confidentiality
- Parent/guardian will be notified verbally or face to face
- Parent/guardian will be given written copies of the disruptive behaviors that might lead to expulsion
- The director, program coordinator, classroom staff member and parent/guardian will have a conference to discuss how to promote positive behaviors

If after these steps have been taken and depending on the risk to other children's welfare or safety, behavior does not improve, and the Center finds that they can no longer accommodate the child, the parent will be asked to remove their child. The parent will be given a minimum of one week's notice to seek alternate child care, that is unless there is a risk to other children's welfare or safety in which case, the child will be expelled immediately.

## Social Media



The Children's Center staff regularly take photographs. These photographs, with parental permission, are shared in-house, published in the local paper, used in promotional materials, as well as posted on social media or our website. Upon enrollment, you will give us permission as to where your child's photo may be posted.

## Confidentiality



The Children's Center will not release information to agencies or individuals without written permission from a parent or guardian, except as we are legally bound. We will share information regarding your child only with those individuals directly concerned with your child's welfare and/or program.

## Babysitting

**It is the policy of the Children's Center to refrain from recommending any individual or childcare provider, public or private, for private child care /babysitting.** Staff members who undertake private child care/babysitting positions do so individually and not as employees of the Children's Center or qualification to undertake and fulfill such positions, nor is the Center in any way connected with or responsible for any such person or their actions. Any staff member agreeing to private child care/babysitting is required to provide a waiver form to parents hiring them to acknowledge the Center's policy.

## Firearms

No individual, parent, guardian or authorized pick-up or drop-off person shall carry a loaded or unloaded pistol, revolver, or firearm or any other deadly weapon, whether open or concealed or whether licensed or unlicensed, upon their person or within any of their person's possessions **within the Children's Center building or onto the playground.** Any firearm in the Center's parking lots must be in locked storage.

The only persons exempt from this policy are law enforcement personnel.

Individuals who violate this policy will be asked to leave the property. Failure to do so will result in a criminal charge of trespassing.