



## **Parent Handbook**

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This Parent Handbook is provided to you to aid in the smooth and happy admittance of your child into our program. The directors will go over each point with you, to insure that you fully comprehend each item of information. You will be asked to sign a form stating that you have received this handbook, read it thoroughly and accept the registration agreement. The directors will be available at any time to discuss any questions or problems you may have concerning the center.

### **FORMS:**

Every child who attends The Children's Garden must have the following forms on record at the center:

1. Registration Form
2. Family and Child Information Form
3. Authorizations Form
4. Authorization for Administration of Non-prescription Topical Medications Form
5. Child Health Record
6. Signed Parent Contract

All information must be accurate, and any changes **MUST BE REPORTED** to the center immediately. Your child cannot be admitted to the center unless all forms are completed and on file with us.

### **HOURS:**

The center is open from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. It is essential that children be dropped off and picked up within this time frame. Part-time children should be at the center no more than 5 hours (ADDITIONAL FEES WILL APPLY IF CHILDREN ARE AT THE CENTER PAST THE 5 HOUR TIME PERIOD. See Pick-Up Policy).

Part-time parents, if you need to extend your child's day beyond his or her regular contracted schedule, adequate notice must be given at or before drop-off time so that we may make provisions.

### **DROP-OFF POLICY:**

We ask that you be consistent in timing. We encourage parents to drop their children off no later than 10:00 am to minimize disruption to the classroom and for scheduling reasons. Please notify the center if your child will be arriving later than 10:00 am. Please advise the directors or teacher upon arrival of any problems your child may have had, physical or emotional in the past 24 hours.

### **PICK-UP POLICY:**

Again, we ask that you be consistent in timing. Half-day children should be picked within the 5 hour time frame. There will be an additional \$10.00 charge per hour for children left at the center past the 5 hour time frame. If someone other than the parent will be picking up the child, *written* notice must be given at or before drop-off time. This is for your child's protection. If you will be picking up your child at a time different from his or her normal schedule, please notify the director or teacher in the morning and be sure to indicate the time on your child's weekly schedule sheet.

When picking up your child, please follow these rules: 1. Enter the building by the front door, even if your child is on the playground. 2. Once your child is with you, please keep them in your sight and under control. Do not allow them to run through the center unattended or to exit the building without you. 3. Once your child is with you, we can no longer supervise their activity, so please be responsible.

### **SCHEDULE SHEET:**

Each classroom will have a weekly schedule sheet. Please sign the sheet at drop-off time and pick-up time every day. This is something that is mandated by the state. You will put down the time you dropped off your child, the time you picked him or her up and your initials. Please use the center clock for time accuracy. The schedule sheet will hopefully eliminate any discrepancies in time and facilitate the billing process.

### **CLOTHING:**

Because of the wide range of activities, we recommend that children be dressed in washable, seasonal, comfortable clothing that they are able to easily manage. Shirts or smocks are provided by the center for art and water activities.

Spills, bathroom accidents, etc. necessitate that an extra set of clothes be kept at the center. All clothing should be marked with the child's name. The center will provide labeled bins for clothing storage. If wet or dirty clothes are sent home, please return a clean set the following day.

Please remember that the children are taken outdoors daily. Boots, heavy jackets, hats and mittens should be worn on winter days and cool clothing in the summer. Sandals are not conducive to climbing and running; sneakers are best for play and we ask that your child be wearing them or have a pair to change into for outdoor play.

We ask that the following items be brought and left at the center:

- Two complete changes of clothes
- Crib blanket
- Crib sheet (portable size)
- Mobile (optional)
- Two pacifiers (if your baby uses one)
- One week or more diaper supply
- Wipes, creams, powders
- Daily supply of bottles
- Weekly supply of baby food
- Two or three bibs
- Feeding spoon

Please make sure all items are clearly labeled with your child's full name.

### **BIRTHDAYS AND SPECIAL OCCASIONS:**

Parents are welcome to send cookies, cupcakes or other treats to share with the children on birthdays or other special occasions. We celebrate in some fashion, all holidays and "special" days. Please notify the staff in advance that you will bring in a treat.

### **TOYS AND CANDY:**

Every Thursday and Friday is sharing days. Your child may bring in items from home to share on these days. Please do not send toys from home on any other days. The center is not responsible for any loss or breakage of any personal items. Please do not allow your children to bring fragile treasures to the center or to wear delicate watches or valuable jewelry, as their safe return home cannot be guaranteed. No guns are allowed in the center at any time; this includes popguns, squirt guns, any gun or weapon related to the many superheros or any toy that in any way resembles a gun. Please do not allow your child to chew gum or eat candy upon entering the center or at the center. Gum is not allowed and candy is only rarely allowed.

## **FOOD AND REST PERIODS:**

The center will provide preschoolers and toddlers with snacks and juice in the mornings and afternoons. Milk is provided for the children to drink at lunch. The staff should be notified verbally and in writing (on the Child & Family Information Form) of all food allergies or dietary restrictions in order to insure the health of your child. Please provide healthy, nutritious lunches that you know your child will eat. Heated soup or other hot meals may be sent in a thermos. All lunch containers should be clearly labeled with your child's name.

All children in the toddler and preschool groups will be required to rest on cots during nap time.

The following nap items should be brought in and remain at the center:

- Sheet for cot (crib sheet fits best)
- *Small* blanket (no afghans please)
- *Small* pillow (if needed)
- *Small* stuffed animal

The sheets and blankets will be sent home weekly to be cleaned.

## **MEDICINE:**

The Center will store and administer prescribed inhalers and epi-pens, non-prescription topical medications and EMERGENCY oral medications (i.e. Benadryl) with parent's consent. An authorization form, which must be signed by an authorized prescriber & parent available at the Center.

The form includes information such as:

- The child's name, address and birth date
- The drug name
- The prescribed dosage
- The method of administration
- The time to be administered
- The side effects
- The prescriber's name and address

Medications must be in their original container and clearly labeled.

All medications will be locked in the office cabinet or the locked box in the refrigerator. Emergent, first line of defense medication will be stored unlocked but in a safe manner & inaccessible to children to allow for quick access in an emergency. Non-prescription medication will be allowed to be stored in the locked containers with signed permission by parents. The topical medications must be stored "inaccessible" in the original container and be labeled with the child's name and directions for administering.

The Center will keep accurate documentation of all medications administered. Included in the documentation are:

- The date the medication was administered
- The time it was administered
- The dose that was administered
- The signature of the staff administering
- Any comments

Parents will be notified when/if a child has been administered any medication. Staff is trained in the administration of medication by our nurse consultant. This training is renewed every three years. Training for injectables is repeated once per year. At no time is an untrained staff allowed to administer medications.

## **MEDICAL GUIDELINES AND ILLNESSES:**

State regulations require us to maintain a medical record on each child. This form must be updated by the child's physician on a yearly basis. The medical form must be current, within one year from the date it was signed by the physician. For the protection of all the children, your

child **must be kept home** (we cannot accept him or her at the center) if he shows any of the following symptoms:

- Temperature
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Rash
- Excessive nasal discharge or discharge from eyes or ears

Upon showing any one of the above symptoms a child **must be kept home for 24 hours after symptoms have ceased.**

Parents should exercise caution and keep their child home if any symptoms occur. If the child has been exposed to any contagious diseases, he or she should be kept home and this information reported to the center. Strep throat, viral infections, chicken pox, measles, mumps, scarlet fever, etc. are among those conditions categorized as highly contagious.

### **COMPLAINT PROCEDURE:**

Any complaints should be referred to the Center Director or the Assistant Director. All inspection reports and compliance letters are available for your review at this program or by contacting the Department of Health Services.

### **DISCIPLINE PROCEDURE:**

We strive for a policy of *positive* discipline at The Children's Garden. We promote acceptable behavior through positive reinforcement until it becomes a natural part of the child's life. We do not allow any behavior that may be harmful to your child or the other children. Positive reinforcement will be used at all times to move the child from inappropriate behavior toward acceptable behavior. The directors will be glad to discuss any methods or ideas you may have regarding discipline and your child. Any Child that may display constant inappropriate behaviors may be placed on a behavior plan. If need be that child's enrollment will be terminated at any time without any specific notice. Inappropriate behaviors include: excessive physical behavior, excessive disrespect towards adults and/or any other behaviors that cause serious disruption to our classrooms.

Rewards are part of all of our lives. Sometimes the rewards are tangible, like a star or a sticker; sometimes they are intangible, like a hug, positive verbal response or a special privilege.

Rewarding appropriate behavior is a way of making it happen again. Our goal is for lots of stars and hugs.

We would like to comment briefly on the subject of physical contact. Today, it is a very unfortunate fact of life that we must warn our children about strangers and always be watchful for abuse. We encourage our staff to become your child's protector and friend. We believe that things like hugs, holding hands, and pats on the back are natural and nurturing responses in many circumstances. They should be encouraged between caregiver and child, and also between child and child. Hugs are okay!

### **LEFT CHILD PROCEDURE:**

On the advisement of State of Connecticut officials, we are herewith stating our policy concerning children who are left at the center after closing time. Two staff people will always remain on the licensed premises with the child. In the event of an emergency, when you cannot be at the center by closing time, you must notify us and make arrangements for an authorized person to pick up the child (name must be listed on authorization form). If the parents have made no contact by 5:45 p.m., we will then contact the persons that you listed on your form. If we cannot reach anyone to pick up your child, we have been advised by state and local officials to then contact the Woodbridge Police Department. They will take the child into protective custody until the parents can be located. Under no circumstances can any staff transport your child home. Please be prompt in picking up your child in order to avoid the **\$15.00 per 15 minute late fee.** Excessive tardiness will result in the termination of your day care provisions.

### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT:**

We encourage your involvement in the center's activities. In the past, parents have assisted on field trips, at parties and have come to the center to talk about their careers. We strive to

maintain close personal contact with each family member, as you are entrusting us with your most precious possessions. Parents will receive a monthly newsletter updating them on the center's happenings. The directors are always available to discuss your child's progress at the center. Parent-Teacher conferences will be held periodically; you will be notified to schedule an appointment.

Please come see us! We will schedule an Open House periodically to let friends and relatives visit our facility. However, the door is always open. We encourage you to visit at anytime. Please remember two things when you visit: 1. You may not arrive at a blissful, structured moment; we may just be "ourselves". 2. Please make your visit short, since prolonged visits may be disruptive to your child's well being, as well as to the continuity of the day. If you would like to spend a whole day or a particular segment of the day with your child, please let the directors know.

### **FIELD TRIPS/SUMMER PROGRAM:**

Field trips and nature walks are important components of our program and will be taken on occasion to nearby places. The center will provide the same responsible supervision on trips as we do in our facility. Your permission for your child to participate in any walking excursion is part of this agreement. For all car and bus trips, you will be required to sign a separate form. There will **additional fees** during the summer due to field trips and in houses. These fees will be charged at the start of our summer program and will be required to be paid in full before the summer program begins. This is part of our program and all children in attendance will be charged for in house events. Preschool children only will have the option of attending outside field trips to specific locations. Children in the Toddler classroom and older will be involved in all in house events. Sufficient notice will be given of events and fees.

### **TUITION PAYMENT PROCEDURE/WITHDRAWAL**

#### **PROCEDURE:**

**Tuition is to be paid on Monday(or first day of services) for services provided that week. If tuition is not paid by Wednesday morning, a late fee of \$15.00 will be charged. If tuition is not paid by Friday of each week including all late charges your child may not return to the center until tuition for the week owed and the following week are paid in full!!! No exceptions. If you wish to pay on Friday's you MUST be a FULL WEEK ahead!**

There is a \$20.00 fee for all returned checks. If your check is returned from the bank for any reason, and is the second occurrence, the tuition due, as well as all further tuition payments must be paid by money order.

You will be charged for Holidays the center is closed (please see school calendar). Tuition will also be charged for all snow days the center is closed.

You will be charged for any necessary shut down periods due to any failure of electricity, heat, telephone service or any other further emergency that would also affect safe operation of the day care.

The Children's Garden reserves the right to terminate day care provisions at any time to any person not fully complying with all payment procedures. Any delinquent tuition fee will be subject to legal action.

If a child is sick or going on vacation and will thus be absent, parents must notify the center at least 2 weeks prior to vacation and as soon as possible if child is sick. If you do not notify the center then you will be charged full tuition for that week You will charged half your tuition for any week your child is absent for the **ENTIRE** week up to a maximum of 2 weeks per calendar year for vacation weeks. **ALL HALF WEEK PAYMENTS MUST BE MADE PRIOR TO A VACATION WEEK OR YOUR CHILD'S SPOT WILL NOT BE HELD!!!! You will have to the following Monday to make a half week payment if your child is out sick to avoid late charges.**

**\*\*The Children's Garden closes each year for approximately one week during the summer to allow for staff vacations and maintenance of the center. The dates of**

**closing and reopening are listed on the school calendar. You will be charged for this week so checking the calendar when planning summer vacations might be wise. After your child has been at the center for one year, there will be a 50% charge for this week.**

Tuition will increase annually every September. 30 days notice of a tuition increase will be given to all families.

If you are planning to withdraw your child from the program, you must notify the center at least 2 weeks in advance in writing and include 2 weeks tuition payment along with that notice. If upon notification of withdrawal, the 2 weeks tuition is not paid then enrollment will be terminated immediately.

The Children's Garden does not have a probationary period for newly enrolled children. We do however maintain the right to dismiss a child from the program at any time. Two weeks written notice will be given to parents who are asked to withdraw a child unless Center Director feels that a child's enrollment must be terminated immediately due to non payment or safety reasons.

### **CARE 4 KIDS TUITION AND PAYMENTS:**

Our center accepts the Care 4 Kids program. Our policy regarding this program is as follows: Any family enrolling in the center and applying for Care 4 Kids is responsible for the full tuition payment until Care 4 Kids issues a certificate of approval for that child. Once the C4K Certificate has been issued a 2 week security deposit of the portion not paid by C4K will be required. How we determine the families portion is based on the amount that Care 4 Kids will pay each week which is then deducted from our tuition rate. The center will take the monthly payment amount on the issued certificate and divide it by 4.3 (the average amount of weeks per year), this then gives us the weekly total C4K will pay; then that total is deducted off our weekly tuition rate, the difference is then the family's responsibility. The 2 week security deposit will be held and used towards the last 2 weeks of enrollment at the center. This security deposit can not be used towards a tuition payment unless a special request is made to the Director and it is approved by management. As per our tuition policy all tuition payments are to be made on the first day of services and no later then Wednesday morning to avoid a \$15.00 late fee. \*The C4K program has a re-determination period every six months; coverage is subject to change based on your information. Please complete re-determination paperwork in a timely manor to ensure there is no lapse in Care 4 Kids payments. If your current certificate expires and a new certificate has not yet been issued then you will be responsible for full tuition until we receive your new certificate.

### **WEATHER CANCELLATIONS, EARLY CLOSINGS AND HOLIDAY CLOSINGS:**

The Children's Garden will post all delays and closing on NBC 30 and [www.nbc30.com](http://www.nbc30.com). If the center is to close early an announcement will be made on NBC 30 and phone calls will be made to all parents. Please refer to our school calendar for all holiday closings. Your tuition payment remains the same during any of the above mentioned situations. In other words, you will be charged for holidays, snow days etc.

### **CLOSING TIME:**

The center closes at 5:30 p.m. Anyone coming to pick up their child after 5:30 p.m. will be subject to a \$15.00 per 15 minute late fee. *No exceptions will be made to this rule.* Only the child's parents and the persons listed on the Authorization Form will be allowed to pick up the child at the center. Please inform the staff in writing if anyone other than you will be picking up the child. Please inform the person picking up your child to enter through the door and sign the child out on the form provided. A teacher will be present to say goodbye and to give the adult any necessary information, art projects etc.

**OTHER:**

The State of Connecticut requires that all members of day care institutions be on the lookout for, and report any and all cases of abuse to a child. The Children's Garden is therefore, obligated to report suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect to the state.

**A FINAL WORD:**

The Children's Garden admits children regardless of race, color, nationality or religious background. Our goal is to provide a loving, caring growth environment for your child. We endeavor to enrich each child's development in the areas of social and emotional growth, gross and fine motor skills, music, dance, arts and crafts, as well as a variety of other areas. We appreciate your support and involvement with The Children's Garden ChildCare Center, and we are looking forward to a happy year together with you and your child here at the center.

*Revised: August 2010*

**I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND ALL POLICIES STATED IN THE CHILDREN'S GARDEN PARENT HANDBOOK:**

**PLEASE SIGN BELOW AND RETURN THIS PAGE TO THE OFFICE!!!!!!**

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**PARENT'S SIGNATURE**

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**DATE**

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PARENTS SIGNATURE

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DATE