



**AMAZING U, INC.  
Early Learning  
Center**

***Parent Handbook  
2020-2021***

***AMAZING U, INC.  
EARLY LEARNING CENTER***

***1061 Lantrip Road  
Sherwood, AR 72120  
501.833.2277***

## **OUR PURPOSE**

Amazing U Early Learning Center seeks to provide enrollment in private Christian preschool program. The center provides developmentally appropriate activities and guidance to help each child reach his/her greatest spiritual, physical, emotional, social and academic potential. We have open communication with our parents regarding the welfare and safety of their children. We strive to be proactive in every area of our operations.

## **OUR PROGRAM STRUCTURE & STAFF**

The Director and Owners govern Amazing U, ELC. Each member of the teaching staff is an experienced teacher who possesses the competency and understanding essential in teaching young children. Our staff and teachers love children and are dedicated to the enrichment of every child.

## **OUR CURRICULUM AND FACILITIES**

Our classes are open to any child, regardless of race, nationality, and religious beliefs. Amazing U ELC operates as a locally owned private Christian preschool. Each classroom has a daily schedule which includes activities such as circle time, snack, lunch, nap, outside play, centers, academics. The children learn age appropriate bible verses, stories, and songs to enhance the curriculum and strengthen their knowledge of Jesus Christ.

The center will continue to evaluate and improve seven broad areas of our program.

- |                          |                       |                              |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| * Space and Furnishings  | * Basic Care          | * Needs of parents and staff |
| * Language and Reasoning | * Learning Activities |                              |
| * Interactions           | * Program Structure   |                              |

Our goal is to strengthen our partnership with parents. Know that you have chosen high-quality care that will lay a solid foundation for your child's development.

Amazing U's curriculum is Carson Dellosa, Pocketful of Preschool and Spanish. Supplementary texts will be used to enrich this material. The curriculum is appropriately designed to the age groups and to the stage of development of each child. Since children learn best through hands-on activities and imaginative play lessons are built around play and experiential learning. A love and appreciation for Jesus, and the things of God have been developed into our curriculum and classroom experiences.

We have an age appropriate playground for children ages 2 – 5. It is clean, spacious, partially shaded and furnished with safe playground equipment.

## **PARENT SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP**

Parents are expected to support and uphold Amazing U's policies just as we support our families. Without this support, it is counterproductive to the students' development and Amazing U's effectiveness. It is explained at the time of enrollment that in any relationship there may be disappointments or misunderstandings. In the event an issue arises please call Tara Gregory, Owner/Director of Amazing U at 501-833-2277 and a conference will be scheduled.

## **ARKANSAS STATE LAW, ACT 397 OF 1975**

Arkansas Law mandates all Faculty as reporters of any reasonable cause for suspicion of abuse and or neglect. DHS and State Police Investigators have authority without securing prior parental

consent, to audit all Center records and have the ability to talk to or observe the physical condition of any enrolled child including by a licensed medical professional. It is beyond the authority of any licensed center or school to modify this access to children enrolled. It is center policy, however, that a school administrator will remain with any child during such time. The center may be directed NOT to contact a parent prior to their contact with the child.

## **SECURITY**

Amazing U endeavors to keep all children and staff secure and has provided locked entrances.

Parents are given one personal identification card per child enrolled. A second card may be purchased for \$30.00. No refunds on key cards will be given. Key cards are for a keyless entry pad by the door they enter. You're asked to NOT allow entrance by holding open the door, for someone you do not know. Everyone who comes in is expected to enter the area where your child is, by identification cards only. **Exits** have a green push button that releases the magnetic locks. Children take a "secured route" to the playground as well.

Cameras have been added in each classroom. Cameras are recording for further safety and security of your non-verbal child. You will also find cameras in all halls and the outside the building. Cameras are monitored throughout the day by administrators in the office.

**Amazing U ELC does have an "Open Door Policy"** which means you have access to your child at any time. Informal visits are welcome. If possible, let us know when you plan on coming. Understand that it may upset your child if you plan to come up and visit and then leave them here.

We do not want visitors to upset a child and cause disruption for everyone in the class. Also, since parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc. are not background checked, visitors will be asked to take child to a playroom where there are no other children. Avoid nap times due to disruption unless you are picking up your child.

**Please do not leave vehicles running or children unattended in vehicles when dropping off or picking up a child. Lock your car and take your purse/ valuables along with you.**

## **Drop Off and Pick Up**

**Children must be signed in and out on the Attendance Sheet upon arrival and departure each day. Please take your child to the bathroom and wash their hands before entering the classroom.**

**If your child is in the Junior or Senior classrooms they must not be dropped off in a pull up or diaper. To be promoted to these classes the children must be potty trained. Reverting to pull ups or diapers on weekends sets back the children and the teachers. Thank you for adhering to this rule.**

**When dropping off or picking up your child if you see the orange cones do not bypass the cones. You must stop and enter through the front of the building. The cones are set in place for your children's safety as they cross from the building to the playground.**

**Children can be dismissed *only* to persons listed on enrollment forms.** All children are to



be signed out each day by a parent or an adult on the written pick up list. **Parents must contact the Amazing U office if someone that is not on the pick-up list is going to pick up their child.** Inform them that a picture I.D. will be required at pick up. If the center is unsure they will verify pick up changes by contacting parents. For safety, the center will ask for I.D. of anyone picking up children until becoming familiar with you and your child. Parents must contact office to update records if any changes occur.

### **Divorced/Separated Parents & Blended Families**

Custody issues and tense family communications can be very emotionally charged and spill over to the Center.

Amazing U ELC takes a concerned but neutral stance and focuses on the best needs of the children in the center. Upon enrollment (or changes to Primary custodians), it's necessary to provide an official file marked copy of custody judgments. ***Deletions of authorized pick-ups are to be done in writing (so as to change multiple documents through out the center). However, ongoing parental conflicts and frequent changes to authorized pickups of a child can lower the center's stability of operations and increases risk for error and confusion. A high frequency may result in dismissal.***

### **ENROLLMENT**

**Enrollment is full time only. "Drop in Care" is not available.**

#### **Waiting list/Preferred Enrollment**

**1<sup>st</sup> Priority:** Siblings of currently enrolled families. **2<sup>nd</sup> Priority:** Age range and length of time on waiting list.

#### **Tuition Account Management**

- Tuition payments are due based on enrollment, not actual attendance.
- Tuition refunds are not given for absences, vacations, or illnesses.
- Registration and enrollment fees are nonrefundable.
- Year-end tax receipt will be distributed.
- \$25.00 fee for returned payments. **A pattern of insufficient funds will result in dismissal from the Center.**
- The Center may change tuition rates as needed due to operational expenses. Advance notice will be given about increases.

#### **Tuition/Payment Cycles**

**Our tuition is automatic draft only.** Parents are expected to pay as agreed upon per the automatic draft enrollment form. We can process the following payments:

1. **Weekly – Tuition will be debited weekly**
2. **Monthly – Tuition will be debited on the first day of each month**
3. **Semi-Monthly – Tuition will be debited on the fifteenth and last day of each month.**

#### **Automatic Draft Enrollment Form**

You will be given a form to fill out that allows us to automatically debit your tuition on an agreed upon term. Please be sure to include a valid e-mail address and a copy of your voided check. Please notify us of any banking changes as soon as possible to avoid drafting from a discontinued account.

## **HOURS OF OPERATIONS**

**Hours of Operation are from 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday – Friday**, twelve months a year. The center operates as a school and plans a structured schedule and curriculum daily.

Learning programs in preschool classes begin at 8:00 a.m. Arriving late to school is a disruption to the other children and the structure of the class. It is difficult to make up work for a tardy child while keeping the rest of the class on track. Arriving after 9:00 a.m. is not acceptable unless the tardiness is due to a Doctor's appointment and the center was notified in advance.

Department of Human Services requires centers to have a daily naptime of at least 1 hour (not more than 2). No Child will be accepted during nap time. The interruption could wake up other children who are resting and it is also very difficult on your child to be dropped off in a darkened class with no activity.

### **After Hours Pick-Up**

If your child is picked up after 5:30 p.m. a late pick-up fee will be charged: **\$5.00 for the first 5 minutes and \$1.00 per minute thereafter (per child)**. Two staff members are required to remain with the child. Regardless of the reason, the late fee must be assessed to pay the staff's overtime. **Dismissal will result if a consistent pattern of late pick up continues.**

### **Separation from Parents**

The process of separation from the parent as the child enters and attends preschool is one of the most important accomplishments of the preschool child and his/her parents. Arriving at school can be an exciting, but difficult moment. Children may appear eager, but suddenly balk when you start to leave. Separation anxiety is normal and reduces when treated lovingly yet "matter of fact". A few suggestions are to allow your child to accompany you on initial visits. Offer your child a transitional item to bring to keep in their cubby. Encourage them to play upon arrival. Prolonging a goodbye gives the child reason to think they should be distressed. Once you decide to leave, hug the child quickly and say your goodbyes and depart. It is important to do this without giving in to the temptation of staying if they begin to cry. Avoid remaining at classroom windows to view them because it conveys an expectation that the child will cry. They will feel this apprehension and respond as you fear. Stand out of sight to listen instead. Sometimes it is helpful if someone different brings the child to school if difficulty continues. Separation issues usually last only about two weeks.

### **Class DOJO**

Class DOJO is an app to download for communication between Amazing U and each classroom. We will set your phones up on enrollment. The app allows you to communicate directly with your teachers and the Director. School News is posted on this app along with any closings, events, etc.

### **AMAZING U EARLY LEARNING CENTER CLOSINGS**

**Center closes annually for the following Breaks and Holidays:** Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day. Winter Break December 28<sup>th</sup> through January 1<sup>nd</sup>. Spring Break March 22<sup>rd</sup> through 26<sup>th</sup>. One-half day in May for graduation to be determined. One day in August before School starts to be determined. Actual closing dates may vary if the Holiday occurs on a weekend a notice will be sent to parents. There are NO tuition discounts for closings.



### **Inclement Weather Policy**

**Bad weather closings normally coincide with inclement weather closings of the Pulaski County Special School District (snow, ice).** Amazing U ELC may choose to only delay opening due to snow or ice when the roads are too hazardous for driving in the early morning. A message will be left on the voicemail 501-833-2277, on Amazing U, Inc. facebook and an announcement will be attempted over local TV stations. ***No tuition refund or reduction is possible when closed for inclement weather.***

### **Outside Play**

DHS Licensing mandates that children are to have at least 1 hour of outside play per day as weather permits. No child is allowed to miss this and stay in the office or with another class during this time. If a child has been ill and needs to be kept indoors, it is expected that the child be kept at home until he is able to participate in all of the activities of the program. Children and teachers do not go outdoors if the temperature (wind chill or heat index) is below 40 degrees or over 90 degrees.

### **Illness and Accidents**

CLASSES DEPEND ON YOU TO HELP MAINTAIN WELLNESS. **Upon arrival, Parents are asked to wash their children's hands before entering the classroom.** This will help alleviate bringing outside germs into the classroom. Teachers will continue to observe children upon arrival for injury or symptoms of illness.

**Children with symptoms such as a fever of 101 degrees, severe cough, vomiting, or diarrhea will be sent home. A wellness form will be filled out and sent home with parents regarding wellness policy.**

Children cannot return to school until symptom free for 24 hours (without the aide of fever reducing medicines), unless a physician relays that the illness is **non-contagious** (such as ear infections, etc.). Parents will be notified when a child has been exposed to a communicable disease within the Center. Parents must also notify the school when children are exposed to a disease outside the Center. Teething symptoms may include loose stool or low-grade fever. However, if a temperature reaches 101 degrees (per age of child) or they vomit or have 3 loose stools, parents will be contacted to pick up the child.

**Each child must have emergency information and treatment authorization on file. This is a licensing requirement from DHS.**

### **Medications**

Children on medication must be healthy enough to take part in all areas of the program. Medication forms must be completed. ***Medications cannot be left in backpacks, diaper bags, etc. due to endangering all children (includes teething gel, creams or any topical medications).*** All medications will be kept in a locked area and require the original label or prescription with the name of the medicine, the child's name and dosage instructions (extends to non-prescription drugs also). Refrigeration for medication is available.

## **Child Safety Protocol Regarding Administration of Over-The-Counter Medicines (Tylenol, Motrin & Cough Medicines, etc.)**

Amazing U Early Learning Center does not administer over the counter medicines (OTC) including Tylenol and Motrin, etc. to children under 30 months, without a specific note from their Dr. w/ dosage instructions for each illness/ event. We do not provide OTC Tylenol, Motrin, etc. Parents must provide OTC medication and a medical administration form must be signed.

## **Immunizations**

The laws of the State of Arkansas and the Department of Human Services require the following immunizations for all children enrolled in school:

DPT/DTAP	Polio	Pneumococcal	Hepatitis B
Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)	Hib	Hepatitis A	Varicella

***A shot record is required on or before your child's first day of attendance.*** To maintain enrollment, children must have an up-to-date immunization record on file. Parents are responsible for obtaining immunizations for their child by the due dates and returning the new immunization record to the Center office.

## **Class and Teacher Assignments**

The Director assigns children's classrooms and teachers according to factors such as Kindergarten year based on age, developmental abilities, and personalities of the children and teachers, etc. A child may be moved from one class to another at the Director's discretion. See below regarding starting age.

## **Approved Arkansas Bill 217 is now Arkansas Act 462**

A child must turn 5 by August 1 to start Kindergarten.

## **Clothing, and Bedding**

Children should be brought to school in comfortable, washable play clothes and shoes that will enable them to play on the outdoor playground. It is recommended not to send children in any clothing that includes a drawstring due to the potential choking hazards. Good sturdy footwear enables children to run and play without tripping or falling. Boots, sandals, and flip flops that are not secured to the foot are discouraged. Shorts must be worn under dresses as to keep our children modest during day to day activities.

A change of clothes (including underwear, shoes and socks) is to be brought and put in your child's cubby. Toilet training children will need several changes of clothes in their cubby. Toilet training toddlers will need training pants as well as outerwear. This is important for even the older children as accidents do happen. All belongings must be marked with the child's first and last name. The Center cannot be responsible for items not labeled with your child's name. Lost and found items are placed in a bin marked as such by the back foyer.

Parents provide naptime items such as a small light-weight blanket and sheet. All bedding, clothing, coats, and diapers should be labeled with the child's full name. Teachers will notify parents if anything additional is needed.



Sleeping mats are onsite and provided by Amazing U Early Learning Center.

### **Show and Tell**

Items are to be brought **only** on the day planned by the teacher. Personal toys can create a sharing problem. Valuable items, contraband, or guns are inappropriate. Transition toys will be placed in the child's cubby for safe keeping after the drop off transition subsides.

### **Supply List and Fees:**

**A classroom fee is assessed at time of enrollment. Teachers will post a list of classroom supplies if you choose to purchase the supplies.**

### **Donations**

Amazing U welcomes donations of gently used clothes including shirts, pants/shorts, and socks (to use when children have accidents), gently used toys and books.

There may also be times when we send a letter home asking for a specific size of gently used clothes if we know of a child that is in need. This is a wonderful way those of us at the Amazing U ELC can minister to others and show them the love of Jesus.

*Fundraisers are held from time to time to assist in improvement to our programs.*

### **Lunches/Snacks**

**A nutritious, hot lunch and two snacks are provided daily that** meet (or exceed) DHS regulations for daily requirement of food groups. Parents are welcome to join their child occasionally for lunch for \$2.00. Fast food lunch is not allowed unless provided for the entire class and arranged in advance with our office.

No outside food or drinks will be allowed in the mornings at drop off as it creates confusion among the children. Please note: Amazing U stops serving morning snack at 8 am. If your child is brought in after 8 am the next food served will be our hot lunch.

***Food allergies should be noted on enrollment forms and also verbalized to the office and teachers. The center will provide a monthly menu and also notify of any menu changes. Families are to provide alternative meal choices. Severe food allergies may not be manageable by the center therefore, voiding the enrollment opportunity due to the level of risk to the child and the center.***

**Parent/Teacher conference** will be scheduled throughout the year and parents will be notified by text, note or Class Dojo. A reminder of upcoming events will be in parent newsletter on Class Dojo. If the need arises before schedule conference parents should notify office and a conference will be scheduled. It is expected that adults NOT discuss problems concerning children in front of them. Children are not allowed to attend conferences.

### **Children's Birthday Parties**

Birthday parties can occur during snack times by advance arrangements with the teacher. Parties should be simple such as a cake, cupcakes, cookies, and punch. No balloons are allowed due to the potential choking hazard. Off-campus party invitations can only be passed out if for the whole class.



### **Consent to Photograph your Child**

Your privacy is important to us. Our new security system utilizes security cameras of the playground and parking lots as well as building entrances. Throughout the year we have special programs, class parties and open house events where video and/or photographs may be taken of the children and their activities by Amazing U ELC staff and/or parents. Children enrolled will be in photographs and videos and on surveillance videos. By enrollment you are giving Amazing U Early Learning Center permission to photograph your child. It is understood that once these pictures are released, the center is held harmless of any claims and liabilities resulting from displaying these images.

### **Aggression and Biting**

Biting and aggression are normal developmental mishaps but are taken very serious and patterns of aggression must be addressed. The center has established procedures of how staff will address biting and aggression. The child will be separated from the group and the injured child will receive immediate attention. When appropriate, the aggressive child will be included in the comforting process of the injured child to encourage empathy. The Assistant Director assesses biting and aggression records for patterns of aggression from or to any single child and will act accordingly. If normal methods do not deter aggression, the center will accelerate the steps to include sending a child home for the remainder of the day. This is not to punish or discipline the child (or family) but to protect the class of children continuing to be exposed to the aggression or biting. The center will make every effort to maintain an aggressive child, as it is usually a short stage of development that decreases with increased verbal skills. If biting or aggression stays at a high-level dismissal will result.

### **Cease of Enrollment**

If a family voluntarily withdraws, two weeks notice is required. Refunds of unused tuition shall be given only if two weeks notice has been given. Payment will be expected for the two weeks of a child's notice or in the absence of notice parents will be billed for these two weeks.

The Center can terminate the enrollment agreement for reasons not only limited to the following:

1. The child's account is delinquent on an ongoing basis
2. Failure of the parent/guardian to honor the obligations listed in this handbook or in any rules, regulations, or manuals provided by the Center.
3. Any parent who openly demonstrates to students, teachers or other parents a lack of support for Center policies and is undermining the Center, hindering its effectiveness and jeopardizing the enrollment relationship.
4. Ongoing or extended illness
5. Ongoing late pick-up of child(ren)
6. Children who intentional run and hide from staff or teachers. This is a violation of licensing with DHHS and is not tolerated.
7. The center determines that it is unable to meet the needs of the child or that it is not in the best interest of the center to have the child in attendance
8. Amazing U Early Learning Center reserves the right to suspend and terminate care contracts of any child whose behavior presents a threat to the safety and well-being to others or to our program.

## Discipline

### **Time-Out**

Time out can only be used for children two-year olds through school age. The time limit for a child in time out must be no more than the child's age in minutes. If a child is two years-old they can only be made to sit in timeout for no more than two minutes. Children under the age of two can use independent play to be separated from problem areas. The child must be given a toy or an activity while in independent play.

### Progressive Classroom Discipline

*Discipline techniques are examples to be used with children and are not the "end all" of discipline possibilities. There are exceptional situations for everyone. This is to give everyone the same information base to build from. Consequences should fit the severity of the behavior.*

The following steps and techniques will accomplish this goal:

1. **Ignoring** – To be utilized as a teaching tool to help children learn to solve their own problems when a small situation between classmates presents. This technique means that the teacher notices that the situation is present, they are close by, unobtrusively listening and observing, ready to intervene with distraction, redirection or more, should the situation call for it. Ignoring as a behavior technique does not mean we not listening or supervising.
2. **Distraction** – The teacher changes the subject content or the activity to a more appropriate subject or activity.
3. **Redirection** – Teacher redirects or addresses unacceptable choices of behavior and asks for acceptable ones.
4. **Time Out** – The teacher goes to the child and asks them (in a quiet voice tone) to be separate from the group to a designated quiet area to allow for refocusing themselves so that they can then return to the normal functions of the class. This refocusing period of time will not be more minutes than the child's year of age (i.e. 7 years old would not be more than 7 minutes, etc.). Before a child rejoins the group, Teachers are expected to talk with them to clarify the need for the refocusing time and ask the child what different choice they could have made that would have avoided the time out.
5. **Notes to Parents** – Most choices of misbehaviors are in a range we call normal behaviors and can be managed by above steps and would not result in a note to a parent about "Normal Childhood Behavior." If a pattern of these behaviors continues or if a behavior choice is out of bounds of the expected or tolerated choices of preschoolers a note can be sent home to the parents by the teacher.
6. **Daily Folders** – In the event there is behavior/biting issue(s) we will communicate daily with parents, to make them aware of current classroom situations, behaviors, etc. We use this technique so we may be in unity with one another and be a positive reinforcement both at school and home. A meeting for a plan of action will be set up and implemented to benefit the child, their families and the staff.
7. **The Director** (or other management staff) – If a child's behavior choices results in a risk to the safety of the environment, is part of an ongoing pattern of behavior, or is seriously out of bounds they will be sent to the Director for a consult. This meeting will either result in a note home from the Director or a phone call to the parent with the child present. An additional conference with parents may be requested without the child present.



## WE DO

Communicate to children using positive statements.

Communicate with children on their level.

Talk with children in a calm, quiet manner.

Have the children apologize for their behavior. Forgiveness feels good. 😊 Using our words with each other helps them to improve social and emotional skills that will become a part of their adult life. Example: Child 1: It hurts me when you hit me

Child 2: I apologize for hitting you.

Child 1: Okay.

Child 2: Please forgive me.

Then both hug with direction from teachers stating we love our friends, we have nice hands, etc.

Explain unacceptable behavior to children.

Give attention to children for positive behavior.

Praise and encourage the children.

Reason with and set limits for the children.

Apply rules consistently.

Model appropriate behavior.

Set up the classroom environment to prevent problems.

Use storybooks, skits and puppets to work through common conflicts.

Conferences will be scheduled with parents if particular disciplinary problems occur. If a child's behavior consistently endangers the safety of the children around him/her, then the Director has the right, after meeting with the parents and documenting behavior problems and interventions, to terminate child-care services for that particular child.

Note: If, at any point, there is an indication/suspicion that a child may have special needs, Amazing U Early Learning Center will inform the child's family and help them make contact with DHHS or PCSSD for assessment and assistance. DHHS and PCSSD offers OT, PT and Speech therapy free to children enrolled.

### **Early Learning Center Computer Software (Child Care Sage)**

Upon enrollment, we enter this information into our child-care computer software program (Child Care Sage) to use as our contact information for your child(ren). When your child needs you, we will call the **Primary contact** first and then move on to the **Secondary contact** (if listed), followed by the **Contact List** (in the order given) from enrollment application. We must have at least 3 emergency contacts.

**The information provided on this form is the only information we have to contact you when your child needs you or if there is ever an emergency.** Parents must update the office for changes of information.

### **Custody & Pick-Up Issues**

**By law, we cannot restrict parental rights, UNLESS we have documentation of file (court order, birth certificate showing they are NOT a legal parent, etc.), legally restricting a parent's rights from visiting the center, picking up the child, requesting notes, conferences, bills, child behavior information, etc.**

- A. The center requires all custodial parents be listed on enrollment paperwork.**
- B. If legal custody does change, a copy of the court ordered paperwork defining this change must be provided to the center before Amazing U Early Learning Center records and action steps change.**
- C. If there is JOINT Custody, both custodial parents are to be listed. The primary pick-up parent should be listed first.**
- D. If there is JOINT Custody but one parent is "not in the picture" (lives out of town, etc.), they must still be listed so we can denote their custody rights as well.**
- E. In the event there is an emergency, we will call the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> pick-up parent. If neither can be reached, we will then go to the Contact List (in the order listed).**
- F. It is the Amazing's U position that payment for services must be rendered in a timely manner. The center cannot carry overdue balances into the next payment period. No matter who was "supposed to pay," partial payment or lack of payment jeopardizes your child's enrollment.**
- G. Our goal is to increase safety. We are not the "judge" and are not able to "take sides." We cannot provide additional security or take additional time documenting special precautions or communications, etc. as it lowers the time left to care for your child. We must focus on safety for all the children by avoiding emotionally charged communications and crisis at the center. We will take the same measures with all families enrolled.**