



POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Little Steps Daycare Center 2

6:30 AM - 5:30 PM Monday – Friday

Littlesteps31@yahoo.com

(513) 510-4433

2873 Stanton Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45206

Table of Contents

Welcome, Program Overview, Mission & Vision	1
Licensing Information & State Requirements	3
Communication with Families	3
Enrollment & Registration Requirements	4
Program Policies: Enrollment, Attendance & Withdrawal	7
Hours of Operation, Holidays & Closures	9
Tuition, Fees & Payment Policies	11
Arrival, Departure & Late Pick-Up Procedures	11
Health, Illness, Child's Absences & Exclusion Policies	12
Medical Requirements & Immunizations	16
Medication Administration	16
Emergency Procedures & Safety Plans	17
Child Abuse & Neglect Reporting	18
Nutrition, Meals & Special Diets	19
Daily Schedule, Activities & Rest Time	20
Child Care Practices (Diapering, Toilet Training, Hygiene)	23
Behavior Management & Discipline Policy	25
Parent Responsibilities, General Policies & Acknowledgment	26

Welcome, Program Overview, Mission & Vision

The purpose of this Parent Handbook is to outline the policies and procedures under which we operate as licensed Childcare Center

HISTORY AND MISSION STATEMENT

Little Steps Daycare Center LLC, LSDC, was founded in 2011 in a Brownstone in the part of Cincinnati, Ohio, called OTR. We believed that having a high-quality childcare-development center would serve all the families in the surrounding communities. By ensuring that our children have a peaceful, nurturing, safe, and secure environment that will stimulate their minds and support their physical, social, emotional, and intellectual growth. This school is unique because of its relationship to the community in which it was established.

We have an open-door policy, and Administrator hours are between 12 noon and 3 pm for consultations. Teachers are allowed to schedule their own meetings at their convenience during business hours.

MISSION

Our Mission is to maximize each child's potential by providing an active, collaborative learning environment where children, families, and educators become empowered for social, emotional, and academic success.

VISION

Our vision is a world where every child meets their maximum potential.

WELCOME

We believe the strongest partnership in a child's life is that between the child's parents and the Center in which their child attends. The goal that we strive to achieve is for our staff to team up with parents to make this experience an excellent one for your entire family.

We are committed to providing the highest quality of care for your child and for your family. We have an Open-Door Policy and want your involvement. We encourage you to get involved in the community, visit or volunteer in your child's classroom, chaperone field trips, and always be an advocate for your child.

We serve children between the ages of **30 months and 6 years old**. Our daily program promotes your child's intellectual, social, physical, and emotional development. We individualize our program to meet the needs of each child.

We continually train our staff using the most current research in child development and early education.

The beginning of school is an important time, and please know that we are available to answer any questions that may come up. We hope that you and your child will develop a lifetime of wonderful memories while enrolled in our program

Licensing Information & State Requirements

STATE LICENSING REQUIREMENTS

Little Steps Daycare is licensed and complies with all applicable licensing regulations and standards. These standards relate to our center, staff, health, safety procedures, nutrition, caregivers to child ratios and record keeping. We believe that these standards are in the best interest of the children. Our center is subject to inspection by state and city health, fire, and licensing officials.

Communication with Families

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

Timely and ongoing communication with parents is a top priority for our teachers and school leadership. Teachers can share photos and updates with parents in real time through our parent communications app. We maintain an open-door policy for parents to check in throughout the day as needed, and parents receive ongoing updates and school news via email. Our teachers place a high priority on routinely assessing students to ensure that they are progressing at a developmentally appropriate level and to tailor the child's lessons in areas where he or she may need improvement. Through phone calls, scheduled meetings, and parent/teacher conferences twice a year, our teachers encourage parents to be an active part of their child's educational experience.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT APP INFORMATION

Little Steps Daycare Center utilizes the Procure system as our primary platform for communication and daily operations.

All enrolled families will receive an invitation link to create an account through the Procure website upon enrollment. Parents are expected to register and maintain an active account to stay informed and engaged.

The Procure system will be used for:

- Daily communication between staff and families
- Announcements and important updates
- Scheduling and meeting notifications
- Sharing reminders and program information

In addition, Procure serves as the center's electronic check-in and check-out system. Parents or authorized individuals are required to use the application to record their child's arrival and departure each day. This system also functions as the official attendance record for the center.

Use of the Procure system is required for all enrolled families to ensure accurate communication, attendance tracking, and compliance with licensing requirements.

PROCARE PARENT SIGNUP GUIDE

Step 1: Receive Your Invitation

After your child is enrolled, you will receive an email invitation from Procure.

- Check your inbox (and spam/junk folder if needed)
- The email will contain a secure link to begin your registration

Step 2: Create Your Account

Click the link in the email and follow the instructions to:

- Set up your username and password
- Confirm your contact information
- Create your parent profile

Step 3: Download the App (Recommended)

For easier access, download the Procure: Childcare App on your mobile device:

- Available on iOS (App Store) and Android (Google Play)
- Log in using the account you just created

Step 4: Add Authorized Pick-Up Contacts

Within your account, you may:

- Add or update authorized pick-up individuals
- Ensure all emergency contact information is accurate

Step 5: Daily Check-In & Check-Out

Procare will be used for daily attendance:

- You must check your child in at drop-off
- You must check your child out at pick-up

This serves as the official attendance record for the center.

Step 6: Stay Connected

Through Procare, you will receive:

- Announcements and reminders
- Program updates
- Messages from staff
- Event and meeting notifications

Please check the app regularly to stay informed.

Need Help?

If you experience any issues with setup or access, please contact the center for assistance.

Enrollment & Registration Requirements

ENROLLMENT AND REGISTRATION CHECKLIST

Enrollment starts from 30 months through 6 years of age, regardless of race, creed, or religious beliefs. The State of Ohio and Little Steps Daycare Center requires the following forms to be read, completed and/or signed prior to enrollment:

1. Parent Handbook (read) and sign form Stating you Understand.
2. Parent-Child Enrollment and Health form - 01234 (complete/sign/date)

3. Child's Medical/Physical Care Plan - 01236 (complete/sign/date)
4. Parents must provide a copy of a valid photo ID.& S.S. Card.
5. Child Medical Statement for Child Care - 01305 (Complete by Physician/sign/dated)
6. Copy of Child/Children Parents Information (Photo ID & S.S Card).
7. Permission Forms that applies too: Field Trips, Routine Trips, Swimming and Water Activities. (complete/sign/date) - 01225
8. Liability Insurance - 01933 (sign/date)
9. Photo release form (sign/date)
10. Confidentiality Agreement (sign/date)
11. Private Pay Contract
12. LSDC Parent Handbook (sign & dated)
13. Co-payment contract - 0139
14. Routine Trip - 01225
15. Permission to Swim - 01227

FORMAL SCREENING & ASSESSMENTS RULE 5102:2-17-01

Once Enrolled into the childcare center you have 30 days from the start day to complete formal screening and assessments.

FIELD TRIPS AND TRANSPORTATION

LSCD must have a written fieldtrip form 01225 completed signed dated by parent or guardian. Accompanied with complete Child Enrollment form-01234, Child medical/physical-01236 and first aid Supplies. Each childcare staff shall care for no more than maximum group size (Toddlers1:8 max.14) at any one time. No more than 3 of those children may be under 2 years of age.

Program Policies: Enrollment, Attendance & Withdrawal

ENROLLMENT POLICIES

Enrollment at Little Steps Daycare Center LLC is open to children from 30 months to Pre-K. Enrollment shall be granted without regard to a child's race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, or disability, and without regard to a parent or guardian's race, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, gender, pregnancy, or disability.

Initial enrollment is contingent upon receipt of the completed enrollment application, signed fee agreement, registration fee, deposit, immunization records, and signed Parent Handbook receipt.

Before the start of your child's first day, their teachers will give families a welcome packet of classroom-specific information and suggestions. The packet will also include a family questionnaire to learn about your child's interests, your family's approaches to learning, your child's developmental needs, and your concerns and goals for your child. The teachers will incorporate this information into ongoing classroom planning.

Little Steps Daycare Center LLC reserves the right to dismiss any parent or child at any time with or without cause.

Continued enrollment at Little Steps Daycare Center LLC is contingent upon the parents', emergency contact persons', and child's adherence to the policies and procedures of Little Steps Daycare Center LLC as outlined in this handbook, including, but not limited to, timely payment of all fees and tuition.

Parents are required to notify Little Steps Daycare Center LLC immediately should any of the information collected at the time of enrollment or any time thereafter change. Failure to do so may result in the child(ren) being dis-enrolled from the program and forfeiture of any deposit. The full-time and part-time programs are 12-month programs. Enrolling spots will not be held for children who withdraw for the summer months.

Should parents choose to withdraw, they will have to put the child(ren) back on the wait list as of the date of withdrawal. Discounts will not be given for extended vacation during the summer months, and enrollment spots will not be held if tuition is not paid.

Requests for enrollment/program changes in the center will be handled on a first-come, first-served basis in the order that a request is placed on the Internal Waitlist.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Little Steps Daycare Center LLC is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all children and families. The center does not discriminate based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, disability, age, gender identity, or any other protected status in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.

Enrollment, services, and all program activities are provided without regard to these characteristics. Little Steps Daycare Center LLC ensures equal access to programs, services, and opportunities for all children and families. The center also complies with the requirements of the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services and all applicable civil rights laws.

TERMINATION POLICY

The first two weeks will be regarded as a trial period. In which (LSDC2) may terminate the contract without notice. After the first two weeks of enrollment, a two-week written notice must be given by your parents. The Director has the right to terminate the contract at any time due to gross misconduct on the part of the parent or child, which includes profanity, fighting, or threats of any kind. This is the grounds for immediate discontinuation of service.

Any parent who leaves without given there two weeks' notice will be responsible for the cost of two weeks' pay. Also, parents on the voucher system will also be responsible for two weeks of fees regardless of whether they have a co-pay or not. In cases of non-payment, legal action will be taken, and the parents will pay all legal fees incurred.

Hours of Operation, Holidays & Closures

DAYCARE HOURS

The Little Steps Daycare Center is open Monday through Friday 6:30am – 5:30pm.

HOLIDAYS

Easter

President's Day

Memorial Day

Fourth of July

Labor Day

Columbus Day

Thanksgiving Day

Day after Thanksgiving

Christmas Eve – Christmas Day

New Year's Eve & Day

All Parents will be informed in advance about any date changes and our Vacations.

Note: If the holiday falls on a Saturday, daycare will be closed the Friday before. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, daycare will be closed the Monday after.

SICK/PERSONAL DAYS

As strong as our immune system has become over the years, we unfortunately still get sick from time to time. Because of this, we allot ourselves five sick/personal days per year.

We also use these days for our continuing education classes (CPR, Pediatric First Aid, etc.) To keep our childcare license in good standing. Of course, we will give you as much advance notice as possible.

VACATIONS

We allot ourselves two weeks of vacation a year. The dates of our vacation will be posted at least one month in advance. Regular payment rates apply for your vacations, weeks with holidays, and sick/personal days.

Note: Parents are responsible for finding back-up care for their children during provider vacations, holidays, and sick/personal days, resulting in the daycare closing.

CLOSURE POLICY

Little Steps Daycare Center LLC may close due to scheduled holidays, inclement weather, emergencies, or staff development days.

Parents will be notified as soon as possible through the center's communication system (e.g., Procare, phone, or email).

Tuition remains due during scheduled closures unless otherwise stated. Parents are responsible for arranging alternate care during closure periods.

Tuition, Fees & Payment Policies

PAYMENT POLICY/ATTENDANCE

Option One: Payment will be due on Monday of each week or on the first day of the week attending daycare. If payment is received after Monday of each week, a \$35.00 late fee will be charged.

Option Two: Payment will be due on the first business day of each month or on the first day of the month attended at daycare. If received after the second business day of the month, a **\$40 late fee** will be charged. Understand that to hold your child's space, payment must be paid whether your child attends or not. Payment is based on contract, not attendance.

Option Three: We accept all major Credit Cards. No Personal Checks

Money order payable to: Little Steps Daycare Center LLC.

Arrival, Departure & Late Pick-Up Procedures

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE PROCEDURES

Please send your child clean, dressed (no pajamas, unless you don't mind your child wearing their pajamas all day), fed, and ready for the day, as well as all your child's necessary supplies needed for that day's care. Please do not send food, i.e., half-eaten breakfasts, breakfast bars, candy, etc., or gum with the children. Please make your goodbye brief (no more than a couple of minutes): the longer you prolong departure, the harder it gets for both parents, and especially for your child. Never leave without telling your child goodbye.

Please be in control of your child during drop-off and pick-up times. No one other than the parent or person designated by you will be allowed to pick up your child without advanced written permission indicating the person's name and relationship to your child. If there is a court order keeping one parent away from the child, we must have a written note from the custodial parent in our file to that effect. Otherwise, we cannot prevent the non-custodial parent from picking up the child. **The cut-off time for drop-off is 8:30 am.**

LATE PICKUP POLICY

If your child is not picked up after the scheduled pick up, there will be a late charge assessed of \$5.00 for every one minute (unless prior arrangements have been made). Please be courteous and arrive on time. Coming after contracted hours will inconvenience the staff and other parents. **After 1/2 hour, the authorities will be notified (If NO one has communicated with the Administrator or the staff).**

Health, Illness, Child's Absences & Exclusion Policies

MANAGEMENT OF ILLNESS

The center shall immediately notify the parents or guardian of the child's condition when a child has been observed with signs or symptoms of illness. A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness shall be immediately isolated and discharged to the parent or guardian. If their temperature is 100 degrees, combined with other symptoms of illness. The temperature shall be taken by a digital thermometer and sanitized after each use. Appendix B to Rule 5101:2-12-16

CARING FOR SICK CHILDREN

A child is sick when demonstrating any of the following symptoms:

- Temperature of at least one hundred and one degrees Fahrenheit (one hundred degrees Fahrenheit if taken axillary) when in combination with any other sign or symptom of illness.
- Diarrhea (three or more abnormally, unexpectedly, or unexplained loose stools within a twenty-four-hour period).
- Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound.

- Difficult or rapid breathing.
- Yellowish skin or eyes.
- Redness of the eye or eyelid, thick and purulent (pus) eye discharge, matted eyelashes, burning, itching, or eye pain.
- Untreated infected skin patches, unusual spots, or rashes.
- Unusually dark urine and /or gray or white stool.
- Stiff neck with elevated temperature.
- Evidence of untreated lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestations.
- Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing.
- Vomiting more than one time or when accompanied by any other sign or symptom of illness
- Isolate the sick child away from other children in another room or portion of a room, but within sight and hearing at all times.
- Provide the sick child with a cot or mat or the sick infant with a crib, and make them comfortable.
- Notify the child's parent(s) immediately to arrange discharge and if the child's condition worsens during isolation.
- Sanitize the thermometer after each use.

A Child isolated due to suspected communicable disease shall have a comfortable cot and a safe, quiet space. With regular supervision.

Illness notifications will be posted in the program and submitted on the Parent Engagement App.

HEALTH MATTERS

For the health and safety of your child and all the children in our daycare, please do not bring your child to daycare sick. In which case, we in turn may become sick, making it difficult to care for the children at the high standards that we have set for ourselves. We can only care for children with mild cold-like symptoms who are otherwise feeling and acting well and who have a temperature less than 100F under the arms. Mild cold-like symptoms are a clear runny nose, a slight cough, and a slight or no fever. If you are not sure if your child should be brought to daycare, then please call and check with us.

If a child becomes ill during daycare hours, the parents will be contacted to pick up their child. Parents need to pick up their children within one hour of being notified. If parents are not available, the emergency contact person will be notified.

✓ If the child must be transported by anyone other than a parent for emergency treatment, the child's enrollment, health, and medical records are to accompany the child. The center administrator or a childcare staff member is to stay with the child until the parent assumes responsibility for the child's care.

Note: Once the child is removed from daycare due to illness, they may not return to daycare until symptoms requiring removal are no longer present or with a doctor's excuse. The child must also be avoided of any contagious disease, unless accompanied by a doctor's note stating the illness in question is not contagious, and the child is otherwise feeling well enough to participate in our daily schedule.

GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN REQUIRING EXCLUSION FROM DAYCARE

A child with any of the following illnesses must be completely free of any symptoms before returning to daycare. If the child is taking antibiotics for an illness, the child may return to daycare after the initial 48 hours of beginning antibiotics if he or she has a slight to no fever (under 100F

under the arm), no longer contagious, and is otherwise feeling well enough to participate in our daily schedule. Signs of illness include the following: unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying for no reason, runny nose (more than clear), cough (more than slight), difficulty breathing, diarrhea, vomiting, mouth sores, rashes (note from doctor stating non-contagious is ok), pink eye, chicken pox, mumps, measles, rosella, hepatitis A, impetigo, lice, ringworm, scabies, strep throat, scarlet fever, tuberculosis, shingles, and any other contagious disease or rash. Any child with a fever of 100 degrees or above, orally (in the mouth), or axillary (under the arm), may not attend daycare.

State law requires that we notify parents of children. Who has been exposed to certain contagious diseases? **Please notify us if your child becomes infected, so a note can be posted.**

Note: A fever in and of itself is not all bad (given that it is not too high). A fever is your body's natural way of trying to protect itself against whatever virus or bacteria is attacking it. Illnesses that cause fevers cannot live in our bodies' abnormally hot environment. However, a fever is an obvious indicator that the child is sick and possibly contagious, therefore requiring exclusion from daycare.

CHILD'S ABSENCES AND/OR VACATIONS

If your child will not be attending daycare due to illness or other reasons, please let us know as soon as possible so the day's activities will not be held up waiting for your child to arrive. In addition, we need to know how many children we need to prepare for. No discounts will be given for your child's absences due to illness or vacations.

If your child will not be attending daycare for whatever reason, you are still required to pay the fee. After a week of **NO COMMUNICATION**, you are in danger of losing your child's position at the center.

Medical Requirements & Immunizations

MEDICAL STATEMENTS / IMMUNIZATIONS

Rule 5104.014 – States that children must have a medical form on file (name, date of birth and date of examination sign by Physician or certified nurse practitioner). Children without immunizations must have a medical form stating an examination has been done and the child does not have conditions that prohibits the child from being immunized and a written statement from the parent.

Medication Administration

MEDICATION

At Little Steps Daycare Center, we do not give non-emergency medications to the children. If your child needs to be medicated to get through the day and be able to comfortably participate in our classroom activities, then he or she may be too sick to attend daycare. We will, however, give doctor-prescribed emergency medications to the children. If you are not sure if we will administer a certain medication or not, please feel free to ask.

In the event medication is required at the program, prior parental permission must be obtained and on file. The JFS 01236 Medical/Physical Care Plan must be completed, prescription medication must be correctly labeled, and the doctor's permission must be obtained as required.

Medical food would require a doctor's instructions and would be provided by the family. Please see the administrator if this is a need for your child.

Please do not allow your child to arrive with restaurant-ready foods and high-sugar items.

Emergency Procedures & Safety Plans

MEDICAL AND DENTAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Emergency information is kept on file at the daycare. In case of illness or injury, this information will be used to notify you, or the person designated by you, of your child's status. If your child is injured while at the daycare, first aid will be administered. If treatment by a doctor is necessary, we will make every effort to contact you or the doctor you have chosen to treat your child. In all cases, an injury report is completed, and a copy is given to the parents and the Department of Social Services. Authorization for emergency treatment must be signed at the time of enrollment to ensure that, in the event of an emergency, we can make sure your child receives the necessary emergency treatment he or she needs. All emergency contact information must be kept up to date and correct.

Please inform us immediately of any changes to keep your information current. Parents are responsible for all costs involved in emergency medical treatment, including emergency transportation if required.

Note: In case of a serious accident or sudden illness requiring immediate medical attention, the following procedures will be followed:

1. A phone call to 911 is made.
2. Child's parents (or emergency contacts) are called.
3. Child is separated from the other children and appropriately cared for.
4. Parent, provider, or ambulance takes the child and health records to the doctor or hospital.

EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION

Call 911

EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Little Steps Daycare LLC has written policies and procedures for dealing with emergencies and natural disasters. Evacuation plans are posted in the daycare. In the unlikely event, the children will be evacuated to an emergency location, and you will be notified as soon as possible. Our emergency location of choice is:

Primary – Out the back door, across the yard, and across the parking lot. When there's bad or severe weather were to go to:

Primary

- OVFS (Ohio Valley Food Systems) 3011 Stanton Ave. Cincinnati, Ohio 45206 (513)961- 2660

Secondary

- Cincinnati Children's Hospital Home Care, 660 Lincoln Ave. Cincinnati, Ohio 45206

**In the event of severe weather, we will follow our Disaster Plan.
Which will be in every classroom.**

Child Abuse & Neglect Reporting

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

We are required by law to report any suspected incidents of possible child abuse or neglect. Your child can be questioned by child protective services at any time without your consent.

Nutrition, Meals & Special Diets

MEALS/SNACKS

Each day, we provide three nutritious and well-balanced meals. The morning snack is offered between 8 am and 8:30 am, Lunch at 12 pm to 12:30 pm, and the afternoon snack at 2:30 pm and 3:30 pm. Milk or water is served with all the meals and snacks, and water is offered throughout the day. Attached, you will find an example menu showing the different types of food we serve throughout any given week. The meals and snacks for each week constantly vary to ensure the children receive a well-balanced diet.

The children are offered the food, but they will not be forced to eat. It is our goal to offer nutritious meals and snacks to the children in our care, as nutrition is a vital part of a child's health. Children need to eat well-balanced meals to meet their dietary needs daily to provide nutrients to help promote energy needs and to help them build a strong body and mind. We know that the good food habits a child develops will help them prevent cavities, iron deficiency anemia, and obesity, etc

SPECIAL DIETS

Here at Little Steps Daycare Center parents are required to supply pack lunch for their children. If your child has any dietary needs resulting from being a vegetarian, or having allergies, religious beliefs, or nonreligious beliefs, etc., then we must be informed, and when applicable given a doctor's note stating the fact.

At that time, it will be determined if your child can participate in the CDA program. Certain meals and different types of foods can usually be substituted in place of, to still fulfill the dietary requirements of the CDA Program.

However, if a viable solution cannot be reached between parents, provider, and the CDA Program concerning their rules and regulations, then all the child's meals and snacks will have to be provided by the parent

Daily Schedule, Activities & Rest Time

DAILY SCHEDULE

This schedule is meant to give you an idea of your child's day. Actual times and activities may vary depending on the time of the year, weather, age, and temperament of the children. Age-appropriate activities are scheduled with the flexibility allowed to respond to the needs of each child and their various ages.

- 6:30 am – 8:30 am drop-offs (8:30 am is the cut-off time). Children's free-play and/or structured-play, trains, story-time, etc.
- 8:45 am and 8:30 am breakfast, clean-up/wash-up
- 9:00 am Children enter classrooms.
- 10:00 am - 10 am arts and crafts, story-time, various learning games
- 10:00 am - 10:30 am music, song, and dance, tumbling exercises
- 11:00 am - 12:00 outside playtime
- 11:30 am - Noon lunch time, clean-up/wash-up, brush teeth, and get on cots.
- 12:30 pm – 2:30 pm rest-time and/or quiet-time
- 2:30 pm and 3:30 pm afternoon snack, clean-up/wash-up
- 3:30 pm – 5:30 pm free-play and/or structured-play, interactive videos, games, puzzles, or outdoor play.

Pick-ups and outside play (depending on season), coloring, playdough, toys, story-time, etc.

LEARNING AND FUN

This ongoing childcare program is offered Monday through Friday and is both entertaining and educational. Your child will enjoy activities ranging from art and craft projects to games, songs, finger plays, storytelling, creative dramatics, exercises, science, shapes, numbers, colors, alphabet, and much more through various monthly themes. Some of these projects will be taken home to share with you, and others will be group activities that you can ask about. We know that children learn best by "doing".

Therefore, the activities the children participate in are developmentally appropriate, concrete, hands-on, and most of all fun, because we believe that learning is an exciting experience. For ages 24 months and younger, we work on and with the following: throughout each day, we practice on large and small motor skills by reaching, grasping, rolling, sitting, crawling, standing, walking, climbing, throwing, catching, kicking, cooing, and talking; whichever developmental stage your child happens to be in at the time.

Infants and toddlers learn through play by utilizing flash cards, books, numbers, shapes, colors, the alphabet, stacking blocks, puppets, age-appropriate toys, and much more. We encourage participation, but the child will not be forced to participate. Most importantly, our goal is to make learning for all ages fun, and non-intimidating. It is our hope that both you and your child will be as enthusiastic as we are about our program.

ACTIVITIES

We know that children also learn through play; because of this, we don't underestimate its importance on a growing child's mind, body, and spirit. Therefore, the children under our care receive lots of both free play and structured play throughout each day. During structured play, we primarily have only one group of toys or activity out at a time to allow the children to concentrate fully on each thing they do. Age-appropriate activities will be scheduled with the flexibility allowed to respond to the needs of each individual child and their various ages. Activities that the children and we participate in include, but are not limited to, the following. Indoor activities

include: books and story-time, Legos, circle-time, tumbling exercises, Lincoln Logs, Kids-Knex, music and dancing, dress up, play food, interactive stuffed animals, cars/trucks/planes, arts and crafts, puzzles, flash cards, animals/dinosaurs, trains, musical instruments, balls, dolls and Barbie's, various learning toys, musical instruments, various games, Mr. Potato Head, bean bag toss, blocks, beads and string, song games, play dough, coloring, sing along story books, painting, science, board games, puppets, Simon-says, and singing. Outdoor activities include jumping, running, balls, jump rope, racing, water balloons, parachute, catch, bubbles, follow the leader, squirt bottles, ride-on toys, wagons, tunnels, safe water toys, various games, water table, painting, neighborhood walks, exploring nature/weather, soccer, and yes, falling.

As you know, children play hard and will get some bumps and bruises from time to time. We do our best to limit the number of times this occurs with constant supervision and watchful eyes. Due to the safe environment/toys we have surrounded ourselves with, we hope to prevent any injuries before they can happen.

During the summer months (June, July, and August), we allow for more outdoor activities and creative art projects. Weather permitting, we play outdoors every day.

NAP TIME

Infants and toddlers sleep in separate rooms. The infants sleep in provider-provided cribs, and the toddlers sleep on cots. Our goal is to have the two different age groups (24 months and older, younger than 24 months) sleeping on the same afternoon nap schedule. Typically, children 6 months and younger may need a second nap during the day, which can be incorporated into their late afternoon schedule. No child will ever be forced to sleep; however, they are encouraged to remain quiet and on their mat during this time. For the older, toddler-age children, sleeping on mats, please send a crib sheet, pillow, and blanket that can be kept at the daycare for your child.

Child Care Practices (Diapering, Toilet Training, Hygiene)

DIAPER POLICY

It is the parents' responsibility to provide diapers, wipes, or clothing for your child. It is also the parents' responsibility to check periodically to see if or when your child needs more diapers, wipes, and cream (not the providers). Each child has his or her own clearly labeled diaper bin in either the infant/younger toddler room or the older toddler/preschooler room, depending on the age of the child. Diapers are checked frequently and changed every three hours or more often if required. Diapers containing #2 are changed immediately. The diaper changing tables are cleaned and disinfected between each diaper change, and hand washing of the childcare provider and the child is performed after each diaper change.

TOILET TRAINING

We are more than happy to encourage potty training as long as the child is ready (typically between 2 and 3 years old). The initial start needs to be done at home for at least two weeks with success before it can be effectively started at daycare. Parents will be required to supply pull-ups and wipes. Children will be allowed to come to daycare in cotton training pants/underwear after they have been accident-free for at least two weeks in pull-ups. Communication between parents and the daycare provider is imperative for a successful transition from diapers to toilets.

CLEANLINESS

We take the well-being of your child very seriously and work hard to provide an environment that is as healthy as possible. We are committed to keeping our home and the children in it as clean as possible, to help minimize and/or prevent the spread of germs. Our home is kept clean and always disinfected. We thoroughly clean surfaces that children come in close contact with using soap and water, or Lysol, etc. The highchairs are cleaned between each use, and the diaper changing tables are cleaned and disinfected between each diaper change. Toys are cleaned and

disinfected before being filled with water and carefully supervised when in use. Hand washing is the single most effective practice in preventing the spread of germs. We wash our hands many times throughout the day, as well as the children's hands, before and/or after engaging in a thorough list of activities.

Provider and Employees will wash their hands:

- Before beginning work
- Immediately before handling food or feeding children
- After using the toilet, helping a child use the toilet, or after changing soiled clothing or diapers
- After encountering any bodily fluid, such as a wet or soiled diaper, runny nose, spit, or vomit •After handling a pet or pet equipment.
- Whenever hands are visibly dirty
- After cleaning a child, the room, toys, or bathroom
- After work

CHILDREN WASH THEIR HANDS:

Upon entering the building and before entering the classroom, all children, with the assistance of their parents, must wash their hands. Followed by a health inspection by the teacher.

- Immediately before and after eating
- After using the toilet or having soiled clothing or a diaper changed.
- Before and after using water tables
- After using playdough or other substances
- After playing on the playground •Whenever hands are visibly dirty
- Before going home

Behavior Management & Discipline Policy

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT & DISCIPLINE

We believe that the discipline of a child is achieved through patience, consistency, and positive reinforcement. We also try to teach the children in our care manners, kindness, and to be respectful to others. One of the ways in which we do this is by the example we as providers set. We understand that our actions and reactions speak much louder than our words. The children are explained the rules of the daycare frequently, so they know what is expected of them. Once a child is old enough to understand the rules and disobeys them by exhibiting inappropriate behavior (hitting, aggression, etc.), hurts others, or property, the following developmentally appropriate guidance techniques will be used. These techniques are as follows:

1. Positive Reinforcement: The child will be encouraged when he or she is demonstrating acceptable behavior.
2. Redirection: The child is redirected to another activity and given an opportunity to try again at another time.
3. Quite-Out: The child is separated from the group for an age-appropriate amount of time (one minute per one year of age). This technique is only used when a child repeatedly will not follow our directions or listen to our words, exhibits temper tantrum-type behavior, or hurting oneself, others, or equipment. When the child shows that he or she is ready to demonstrate acceptable behavior, they are encouraged to join the rest of the group to try again.
4. Last Resort: When a child's behavior is continually upsetting or dangerous to others, a conference will be called with the parents. If the problems cannot be resolved, arrangements will have to be made for the child to go elsewhere for care.

Note: Sometimes, if both a parent and a provider are both in the same area (examples would be during drop-off and pick-up times), a child may forget the rules or test the boundaries. Please help show your child that

you respect us, the rules of our house, and our property by reminding them that the rules still apply when you are around. We will also remind them of the rules and correct them if needed.

Parent Responsibilities, General Policies & Acknowledgment

OPEN DOOR POLICY

Please feel free to come and visit at any time throughout the day to visit your child. However, we encourage scheduling times. Please keep in mind that, in doing so, it can prove to be disruptive to the other children in our care. During times like these, the other children have a hard time listening and following our directions. Furthermore, if you or any other part of your family i.e. (grandparents, etc.) would like to come and visit or play with the child for an extended period of time, please take the child in question out of the daycare, to places such as your home, a park, or on a walk, etc., after which, feel free to bring the child back to daycare.

TOYS

We have well-organized, separate, age-appropriate toys for the toddler's class. Children will not be allowed to be around or play with small objects and toys. During the initial adjusting period, we encourage your child to bring a piece of home with them; a special blanket, toy, or teddy can be very comforting. Photos of family members, neighbors, and pets can be left with us to help remind your child of familiar people if he or she feels lonely during the day. However, please do not bring your child's toys to daycare except on designated sharing/show and tell days. As much as we try to encourage sharing, this seldom works when it is the child's own personal toy. It only causes problems between them and the other children. Never send your child to daycare with toy weapons.

TV VIEWING

Television viewing is only done once or twice a week, no more than half an hour at a time, and is limited to PBS, the Disney Channel, and Baby Einstein for the younger ones. On occasion, usually only on Fridays, we may pick an appropriate children's video to watch, i.e., (Creative Curriculum). Children are never required to sit and watch TV, and TV is not offered in place of free play or learning activities.

SUPPLIES NEEDED AT DAYCARE

Parents are responsible for supplying the following items: diapers/pull-ups, wipes, diaper creams, toothbrush, weather-appropriate clothes, and a change of clothes, jacket, and shoes that lace-up or Velcro and/or stay on feet (no flip-flops please), pacifier (if needed), and a swimsuit. We supply and apply sunscreen every day to any child playing outside. For the older children sleeping on a mat: a crib sheet, a blanket, and a pillow are needed. If necessary, a comfort object for rest-time, and anything else your child may need. Your child's crib sheet, blanket, and pillow should be taken home every Friday and washed and returned to daycare the following Monday. There is a good possibility your child will get dirty throughout the day because of food, paint, markers, dirt, bubbles, etc.

So please dress your child accordingly for play. We will wash the children's clothing, or you may take your child's clothing home to be washed, whichever you prefer. We are not responsible for replacing stained or soiled clothing. Furthermore, we suggest that you write your child's name on the tags of their clothing (especially socks and underwear) to prevent any clothing mix-ups.

Note: Please periodically check your child's locker/cubby to make sure they still have all of their necessary items needed at daycare. Furthermore, as the weather changes throughout the year, so do your child's items needed at daycare. We greatly appreciate your adherence to this subject, as it helps ours and the children's day run more smoothly to have all of their necessary belongings with them at daycare. This way, we can care for your child in the best possible way.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Understand that your child may be included in classroom evaluations by State Licensing officials, Head Start Program, CDA Nutrition, and other parents observing their right to our open-door policy.
- Understand that your child may be included in pictures connected with our daycare program, unless otherwise specified by you the parent.

PROBLEM RESOLUTION BETWEEN PARENTS AND EMPLOYEE

The Director or Administrator will schedule a meeting with **ALL PARTIES**. Where at that time everyone will have an opportunity to speak. If at that time there's NO Resolution Director or Administrator, we will make a Final Decision as to how to handle the situation.

REFERRALS

For past and present clients: a referral from a client is one of the biggest compliments we can receive. As a special thanks to you, we provide families with a \$10 gift certificate for each referred child who has successfully enrolled in our daycare. The \$10 gift certificate will be given to you after the referred child has attended the daycare through the two-week trial period without gross misconduct on the part of the parent or child. If at the time of the referral, we are full and have no more spots available for the child, then the family will be given the option to be put on a waiting list. If in the future, when a spot becomes available, the family in question takes the spot, then at that time, you will be given the \$10 gift certificate. If at that time your child no longer attends our daycare, the \$10 gift certificate will be mailed to you (so stay in touch).

COMMUNICATION

We can provide the best possible care, please feel free to communicate any needs, wants and/or concerns regarding your children. It is only through good parent/provider interaction that good quality nurturing care can be achieved.

CONTRACT ADHERENCE

This is a safe judgment-free environment, so please be respectful of other families and businesses by adhering to the policies and procedures outlined in the parent handbook. We realize this is a lot of information to absorb. Because of this, please keep your parent handbook accessible so you can periodically review our policies and procedures as necessary. We reserve the right to amend any portion of the Parent-Provider Contract/Enrollment Application and Parent Handbook at any time. If we do make a change to the contract, you will be given a copy

RESPONSIBILITY FOR DAMAGES

Parents/guardians are responsible for the cost of repair or replacement of any property that is intentionally or negligently damaged by their child while at the center. The center will notify the parent/guardian of the incident and any associated costs.

FINAL NOTE / ACKNOWLEDGMENT

It is important that you feel comfortable with our policies and procedures. If you do not understand something, have a concern, or feel uncomfortable with one or more of our policies and/or procedures, it is important that you express that to us before enrolling your child in our daycare. We are always open to suggestions and feel communication is a very important part of a quality daycare.

If there are any problems or concerns in the future, we encourage you to talk to us about them. If a lengthy discussion is needed, a time that is convenient for both of us will be scheduled, as the other children still need our attention during business hours. Thank you for the opportunity to work with you and care for your little one. We look forward to a future of keeping your child smiling and safe.

Note: By signing the Parent-Provider Contract/Enrollment Application, it is understood that all the policies and procedures of the Little Steps Daycare Center 2 handbook are understood and agreed upon.