

*This handbook is our attempt to articulate the policies and practices of our agency.
Please read it carefully and review it as necessary.
If you have a question about something in the handbook, or if your family is dealing with a
situation not addressed here, please get in touch with Mary S. Castrignano, Owner and
Executive Director, immediately.*

WELCOME TO ALL PARENTS

Thank you for choosing TOTS' TOWN INC., CHILD CARE CENTER for your child. We are excited to have you as part of our family. At TOTS' TOWN INC., CHILD CARE CENTER every child is important. Our program is academically rich and designed to promote your child's growth and development in a loving environment.

A transition in to any new environment can be challenging and cause anxiety for any child or adult. Our staff are trained to be alert and aware of your child's reaction to their new environment and will be sensitive to their feelings. After enrolling your child at TOTS' TOWN INC., CHILD CARE CENTER you and your child may visit and be introduced to our staff and meet his/her new teacher. This will give you an opportunity to get to know the staff involved in the care of your child prior to their first day.

Separation anxiety is common so your child may resist being left here in the beginning. However, after several days, drop-off becomes easier. We suggest that after you do the necessary signing in, simply give your child a hug and assure them that you will return for them that afternoon to pick them up – then leave. Prolonging your departure could cause more anxiety for your child. We encourage parents to call anytime during the day to see how their child is adjusting.

This handbook will help you understand our goals and policies. Our guidelines are designed to make sure that each child receives the best education possible. Please look over the information given so that you are familiar with our operations and guidelines. Also included with this Parent Packet is the paperwork for your child's file, health/immunization, registration form, emergency medical consent form, permission to transport, consent to release information, picking taking form use of pictures on my Facebook page. Please complete these forms in their entirety and return them promptly. Your child's current immunizations are required the day your child begins. Your child may not start without the proper paperwork on file.

Please let me know of any area in which we can be part of particular assistance to you. I am looking forward to getting to know you and your child and providing a rich, fun, safe and loving learning environment where all our students develop to their full potentially.

Best,

Mary S. Castrignano, Owner

OUR PHILOSOPHY

Philosophy

TOTS' TOWN INC., CHILD CARE CENTER recognizes that each child is unique and develops at his or her own rate. Therefore, our approach to learning is creative and organic – equally driven by a child's curiosity and through intentional, playbased experiences. We foster pride, values, and traditions, encourage children to develop a thirst for knowledge, and honor each child's individuality.

Values

- We are committed to educational excellence, as evidenced by our accreditation from Bright Stars.
- We warmly welcome children of all faiths, ethnicities, and backgrounds.
- We promote whole-children education, and we strive to realize the potential within each student, taking into consideration their individuality, learning-style, development, and desire to grow.
- We value and honor our teachers for their expertise, hard work, and devotion to our students.
- We provide a therapeutic and inclusive environment for all children regardless of their abilities.
- We see our students, teachers, and parents as partners working together toward a common goal of building a strong community.

Licensure

All Early Childhood Center programs are fully licensed by Rhode Island's Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF). This license is renewed annually. The Center adheres to all regulations, policies and procedures.

Population Served

TOTS' TOWN INC., CHILD CARE CENTER offers programs for children ages eighteen months through five years. We welcome children of all backgrounds and religions, as well as children with special needs, as full participants in all Center programs and activities. We also offer a before/after school program on a limited basis

The Toddler Program is designed to provide quality care and education to toddlers (ages 18 to 36 months). There is an overlap of ages in the young toddlers due to the specific circumstances of individual children and the time of year.

The Preschool Program is designed to provide quality early childhood education to young children ages three through five years. Children are grouped according to age and developmental level.

Non-Discrimination Policy

The Center does not discriminate in providing services to children and their families on the basis of race, religion, cultural heritage, national origin, political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation or disability.

TOTS' TOWN INC., CHILD CARE CENTER believes that building a strong community builds strong children. We welcome diversity and encourage all family involvement and interaction at TOTS' TOWN INC., CHILD CARE CENTER. We strive to accommodate the needs of families whose primary language is other than English. Please let us know if you need assistance with translation of conversation or materials to another language.

Confidentiality

Following our states licensing requirements, TOTS' TOWN INC., CHILD CARE CENTER treats information about your family and child with the strictest confidentiality. Only permanent teaching and administrative staff have access to your child's file, which hold his or her assessments, medical and other personal information, and they use it only for the purposes of communication more effectively

with you and designing the best environment, experience and curriculum possible for your child and in consultation with you. We will only release your child's assessment information if you have given us a written release to do so.

ENROLLMENT AND GENERAL POLICIES

Hours of Operation

Our program for toddlers and preschoolers operates from September through June. A summer camp program is also available for all children during the months of July and August. TOTS' TOWN INC., CHILD CARE CENTER is open Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Our school age program follows the Johnston School calendar, with the exception of not closing for December vacation, (we are closed only a portion of that week). We do, however, observe school holidays such as Veteran's Day and President's Day. Families may enroll their child(ren) for holiday weeks at the full-time tuition rates, so that the needs of families requiring consistent, full day care are met, except for the major holidays. A current calendar is provided to all participating families. Please consult the school calendars for a complete list of school closings.

LATE FEE POLICY

It is very important that you arrive at the center promptly at pick-up time. If your arrival will be delayed, please call the Center at (401)231-6886 to let staff know. This helps us explain to your child where you are and helps us plan for staffing needs. Current fees will apply.

Make sure that you tell staff when you are leaving with your child. You will be asked to sign a late form, which a staff member will also initial. You must indicate your method of payment at this time.

Our staff has been working all day and it is very important that they are able to leave when our center closes. If a child is picked up after we have closed (Monday-Friday at 5:30) you will be charged \$10 for each 15 minute you are late.

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Enrollment Policy

TODDLER PROGRAM

Parents interested in the Toddler program may initiate the process by a phone conversation with the toddler supervisor or other administrative staff. A family can then make an appointment to tour the Center and have all questions addressed. If there is an available opening that meets the family's needs, the toddler can be

enrolled as soon as all the paperwork is completed and initial fees have been paid. Otherwise, the child is placed on a waiting list, and the family is contacted as soon as there is an opening. Your toddler will be enrolled according to the program option that best suits your family's needs.

PRESCHOOL

The Preschool application process begins in February for the following school year. Families may contact the TOTS' TOWN INC., CHILD CARE CENTER office at any time to schedule an appointment to tour the Center and discuss program options. It is suggested that all families participate in a tour of the Center before their child is enrolled.

Applications are also accepted throughout the year if openings exist. In either case families must pay a non-refundable \$70 application fee.

Bright Stars Accreditation

TOTS' TOWN INC., CHILD CARE CENTER is BrightStars accredited. BrightStars helps families in Rhode Island access QUALITY child care, early learning, and school-age programs.

Through the BrightStars rating system and professional development services, BrightStars assists providers learn about best practices and apply them to the care children receive. BrightStars recognizes program quality and gives parents information to make choices about their children's care and education. BrightStars is funded by the United Way of Rhode Island.

The daily schedule provides a balance of activities (indoor and outdoor time; large muscle and small muscle activities; individual and group activities; child-initiated and teacher-initiated activities). Developmentally appropriate materials and equipment are available. Planned activities include music, art, movement, literacy, and science and math foundation. These are executed through fine-motor activities, sand play, water play, block building, dramatic play, cooking, outdoor play, and language development activities. The schedule provides a consistent routine, which allows for flexibility and attention to individual interests and preferences. The day

is comfortably structured with age appropriate learning tasks, play activities, hygiene tasks, snack, lunch, and nap or rest time.

Teachers interact frequently with children, expressing respect for and affection toward them by smiling, touching, holding and speaking to them at eye level throughout the day. Staff actively seek meaningful conversations with children and encourage children to verbalize feelings and ideas. Crying children are comforted by being held and/or talked to in a soothing way. Teachers encourage developmentally appropriate independence in children. Whether a child is a young infant or approaching Kindergarten, learning is occurring in every area of development. Education occurs for children at every age. From birth onward, the foundation is laid for each new experience. Each new learning experience builds upon the child's past experiences.

Supervision

We staff our program to meet the following ratios: Toddlers 1:4 (18 months – 3 years). The State of RI ratio regulations are 1:6 for toddlers. When toddler children turn 3 years old, the State allows the ratio to increase to 1:9. While it is our goal and our staffing pattern to be at the lower ratio, sometimes we may be for brief periods at a higher level consistent with State regulations. We maintain a ratio 1:9 for 3 and 4 year old children consistent with the State. At times, one staff person may be responsible for a combined age group of toddlers and preschoolers. During such time, we adhere to the lowest age ratio.

OUR STAFF

Early Childhood Teachers

Early Childhood Education is a profession. Those working in the field need to have specific knowledge and expertise in working with young children and families. They need to be loving and nurturing and have an understanding in the developmental needs of young children. Teachers are hired based upon their background in this area

as well as their desire and ambition to continue their own professional growth. Many of our staff have early childhood or elementary education degrees.

All staff participates in ongoing professional development. They are required to complete twenty (20) hours of related in-service training each year. This training includes CPR. The center supports the professional development plans, in house training, and mentoring. In addition financial resources are budgeted to assist staff in obtaining outside training such as conferences, workshops and courses. All staff that is not formally trained in early childhood are encouraged and supported to participate in formal education programs such as the CDA (Child Development Associate) credential or an Associate or BA program in early childhood education.

Consistency of Care

We value consistency of care for our children. This means that we have regularly assigned teachers to a group of children with as little transition as possible. Your child will be assigned to a classroom with a teaching team. Classroom teachers develop a deeper attachment to your child; assess your child's growth and development and act as your child's advocates in our center. Teachers work as a team with families to act in the best interest of the children in their classroom. Your child will also interact with other teachers in the program. This becomes very helpful in providing consistency of care and when it is time for your child to move into an older group.

Your interactions with center staff are not limited to the classroom teachers. You may contact the Director when needed may interact on occasion with the other staff. The classroom teachers, however, are the designated persons to communicate with you on a regular basis. If you feel the need for an in-depth conversation with your child's classroom teacher, please let us know so we can make arrangements for the teacher to be freed from teaching responsibilities in order to meet with you.

From time to time classroom teacher's assignments may change due to a number of possible circumstances. These changes will be communicated in a timely manner to all families affected.

Substitutes

While consistency of care is our primary way of providing care, from time to time the child's teacher may need to be away from the center (illness, family circumstance, and vacation – some staff work year round). In these cases, substitute teachers, who are familiar with our program, will be assigned to your child's classroom. As a parent, you may not have met our substitute teachers. We can assure you that all of our teachers are loving and nurturing and will take good care of your children. Substitute coverage is done in a way that is sensitive to children who are most affected by changes (infants and young toddlers). Many of the children are often familiar with other teachers in the center. We take the children for walks in the building and visits to other classrooms for special events. These experiences assist the children in becoming familiar with teachers and other adults who may serve as substitutes.

Assessment of Child Learning

Through the learning center approach, teachers are able to watch, listen to, and interact with children, giving them much insight into and information about individual children's developmental levels, skills and interests.

Informal assessments occur on a daily basis. Teachers take notes about observations, interactions, and conversations with the children in their class as well as of interactions between the children. These informal assessments happen regularly, and can occur at any time during the child's day in the program. These notes are filed in the children's confidential files. In addition to these observations, teachers keep a portfolio of each child's work. Over the course of the year, teachers might add to the portfolio, on a regular basis, such things as drawings, paintings, photos, short narratives of something a child said or did, milestones met (e.g., "On October 16, John used scissors successfully for the first time"). The portfolio system gives teachers a record of a child's development and becomes a terrific visual document to share with parents. Portfolios are shared with the parents during the midyear conference, but kept in the center to document progress throughout the rest of the

school year. The portfolios are given to the parents at the end of the year conference to take home.

Formal assessments, such as developmental checklists, rate children's progress according to a list of developmental milestones. Within the checklist system, narratives allow the teacher to write something more personal about each child. These formal assessments take place twice a year in the fall and in the spring. The checklist and narratives are based on careful, planned and intentional observations and tests. These are conducted within the classroom setting and regular daily schedule.

Using several types of assessments, give teachers and parents a clear picture of a child's strengths, interests, and progress. These on-going assessment tools also allow teachers to integrate assessment results with curriculum planning and individual goal design.

Assessment results are used in the following ways:

- Planning and designing of the curriculum to strengthen and encourage areas of development for the whole group, or small groups within.
- Planning and design of Individual Educational Plans with or without community sources for children within the group.
- Sharing an assessment summary with parents during parent teacher conferences.
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Behavioral Development

We are devoted to every aspect of your child's development, including appropriate behavior. Challenge, anger, and conflict are healthy, appropriate elements of human relationships and critical components of early childhood development. Our curriculum is designed to support your child's behavioral development by providing him or her with a positive, stimulating environment, using a well-planned structure, observing comments, opportunities for choice and other strategies to prevent behavioral problem before they arise.

Behavioral expectations are discussed openly with children so that they understand the rules and routines of school. Teachers make "observing comments" about

children's behavior to help them develop self-awareness and to facilitate productive social strategies. Teachers discuss and model problem-solving skills and conflict resolution techniques regularly, so that the children learn how to address the inevitable challenges they face as they grow. Whenever possible, teachers determine natural, logical consequences, that fit the individual situation in order to demonstrate why a given behavior is inappropriate. We do not punish children at TOTS' TOWN INC., CHILD CARE CENTER under any circumstances. No physical or verbal abuse is allowed, nor do we associate consequences with food, rest, or toileting.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

The Center welcomes children with special needs as full participants. We will make every attempt to accommodate a child with physical, cognitive, social/emotional, and/or medical needs within the resources we have available.

We understand the research documenting the importance of targeting a child's special needs at the earliest opportunity. Therefore, we encourage parents to seek professional support to address concerns regarding their child. Professional assessments will either clarify that it is a developmental issue or they will determine if a child has a special need. We have a list of community sources that serve children and will gladly help with the search for the appropriate one. These agencies help families who seek assessments and professional support as well as provide services.

When a child enters our Center with a previously diagnosed special need, or if the family has specific concerns about the child, the Director will work closely with the family and teachers to ensure that the child's needs, as well as the needs of the classroom as a whole, are met. The family and appropriate Center staff will confer about the matter. The family will be asked to provide the school with appropriate documentation. The Center and family may collaborate with outside agency personnel who are involved in providing resources. Individual Education Plans and Individual Family Service Plans will be respected and followed through in our program. Parents will need to see the TOTS' TOWN INC., CHILD CARE CENTER Director for a release that must be signed in order for information between agencies to be shared.

In the event that a staff member feels a currently enrolled child may benefit from additional social, mental health, educational or medical services, the following procedure will be followed:

- Teaching team will observe and discuss the situation.
- Team will discuss concerns with Director.
- Team will make a plan for observing and recording child's behavior and reviewing child's record.
- Should further action be required by mutual written agreement of family and staff, appropriate referrals may be made. Such referrals shall be in writing and shall include reasons for the recommendation, a summary of observations leading to the referral, and efforts made to accommodate the child's needs in the program.
- The Director will work closely with the family to ensure follow-up services are provided and that the child's needs are met. If required, time and space will be made available at the Center for specialists to evaluate and/or provide services to the child.
- We partner with Early Intervention (birth – age 3) and Child Outreach (ages 2 – 5 years) who periodically screen children to make sure developmental milestones are being met. Parents receive notification and a permission slip prior to screenings. No child will be screened without a signed permission slip.
- Your child's classroom teachers will collaborate with your family to discuss concerns and create a plan for evaluation or services. If your child qualifies for Medical Assistance, Katie Beckett, or has Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island, with proper documentation of their learning disability they would qualify for therapeutic services. These services may include speech, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and sensory integration therapy. If your child should qualify please see the office for more information.

HEALTHY AND SAFETY

RI State Law Regarding Pediatric Health Documentation. Rhode Island requires documentation by your child's pediatrician prior to enrollment. Every child must have annual documentation of:

- A general pediatric health examination
- A lead screening (FeP); and
- Up-to date immunization records (or documentation of a release from parents or guardians – see www.health.ri.gov/immunization/).

If your child has any medical conditions, including asthma, any allergies (including foods, medicines and environmental) and/or any developmental concerns, your pediatrician's report should also address these conditions in detail. Please have your pediatrician complete an immunization form.

Lead Test

Rhode Island State Law requires that children under six years of age (9-71 months) be screened for blood lead levels at least once annually. Lead careening may be discontinued after lead test at age 3 if prior test were not elevated, the child has not moved, and the home has not undergone renovations.

All childcare facilities (private and public) are required to have evidence of compliance with this law. Please have your child's physician report the completed screening on the medical/immunization form or provide a separate note with evidence of its completion.

Immunizations

Purpose: To reduce the overall incidence of communicable diseases and to protect the students and staff from outbreaks of communicable diseases.

Policy: All students are required to provide proof of up-to-date immunizations according to the RI Department of Health.

Students who have not received the minimum number of required immunizations, who are not in a prescribed waiting period between doses and are not in an exempt

category, shall be excluded from school pending the completion of the required doses.

*The State of RI allows for medical, religious and temporary exemptions.

Medical exemptions require the signature of the student's health care provider and the medical reason for the exemption of specific vaccinations.

Religious exemptions at TOTS' TOWN INC., CHILD CARE CENTER require a written statement from the student's religious leader explaining the reason for the exemption. This exemption is for religious reasons only. Rhode Island does not allow for philosophical reasons for exemptions from State mandated vaccinations. This written statement from the student's religious leader must be renewed every year.

In the event of an outbreak of a communicable disease which an exempt student has not been vaccinated, the student must be excluded from the school building until the threat of transmission is over.

RI State Law Regarding Child Abuse/Neglect.

Rhode Island requires that "Any suspected case of child abuse and/or neglect must be reported to the Department of Children Youth and Families by calling 1-800-RI-CHILD." If the staff at TOTS' TOWN INC., CHILD CARE CENTER has any reason to believe that a child is being or has been abused or neglected, we will, as required by law, report the information to the DCYF. RI law also states that children under the age of 7 should not be left alone in a car or elsewhere, and children also must use appropriate car seats (children under 8 years old, less than 57 inches tall and weighing less than 80 pounds must be transported in the rear seating position of a motor vehicle and properly restrained in a child restraint system).

Policies Regarding Illness.

All families feel stress when their child is not well. For working parents, a sick child presents other concerns that increase this tension. Our health policies are designed to minimize the risk to your child and other children in the Center. We encourage you to develop a plan for "sick care" when you first enroll your child in our program. This will assist in ensuring that your child is comfortable and it lessens some of the stress on you as a parent. Open communication will help us work as a team to keep ALL our children healthy!

Many factors go into building a healthy body- sound nutrition, lots of sleep, physical activity, and a happy environment. It takes time for a young child to build physical resistance/immunity to illness. Exposure to contagious, mild illness is increased once a child is in an early childhood program. A child who is otherwise healthy can experience 6 to 9 viral infections in a year. It is important to remember that although it is difficult to take time off from work to be with your sick children, children need to build immunity, and the best way for this to happen is for the illness to run its course in a quiet, healing environment- the home. Parent cooperation is expected in understanding the special needs of a sick child, as well as, the necessity of maintaining a healthy environment at school and for our staff.

TOTS' TOWN INC., CHILD CARE CENTER is a place for healthy children. If in our estimation an illness prevents a child from participating comfortably in activities, then the illness requires a greater need for care than we at the Center can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children. If your child is ill, please call the Center to provide information as soon as you hear it. If a child has a communicable disease such as measles, mumps or chicken pox, we will notify all families as soon as possible.

Children who become ill while at the Center will be kept in a quiet area of the classroom until the adult family member arrives. When you receive a call that your child is ill, *please make arrangements to pick up your child as soon as possible* in order to protect the health and well-being of the other children.

When to Keep Your Child Home

At times your child may be experiencing symptoms such as a fever, runny nose, stomach pain, vomiting, diarrhea, headache or other aches and pains that may suggest a contagious illness. When such symptoms are observed by families before the school day begins, or if you feel your child is not well enough to fully participate in daily activities, it is best to keep your child home. This will allow him/her to recover from illness in the comforting environment of home, and will also prevent the spread of such symptoms throughout the center. If we observe such symptoms after your child's arrival at the center, we will call you to pick your child up, as suggested by the Department of Health's guidelines.

We will ask you to pick up your child if: your child's symptoms prevent him/her from participating in class activities, resulting in needing greater care which compromises the health and safety of other children in the program; or your child could have an infectious disease.

A child who is sent home sick may not return the next day unless parents provide a doctor's note stating that the child is not contagious and may return to school. In addition, your child must be free of contagious disease symptoms (temperature of 101 or higher, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, unexplained rash, blistering or open sores) for 24 hours before returning to school. It is necessary to have a 24-hour fever free period without the use of antipyretics (i.e. Tylenol, Motrin, etc.) prior to returning to school. Following an illness, a child may return to TOTS' TOWN INC., CHILD CARE CENTER only if he or she is able to participate in outdoor activities.

If you are contacted by us to pick up your child due to illness, your child must be picked up within one hour of the time of the call. We do not have the ability, staff and space required to care for sick children at the center. If this is not possible, please arrange for an authorized pickup person who is able to pick up your child, and inform the classroom teacher and/or Director of the name of the adult that will be coming. Please remind this person to bring photo identification. If we are not able to reach a parent, we will call the emergency person(s) you have designated.

A physician's note shall be required for re-admission after an absence due to an illness of five days duration; after any length absence due to a reportable communicable disease as defined by the RI Department of Health; at the discretion of the TOTS' TOWN INC., CHILD CARE CENTER director.

Illness Notification

When your child is sick or diagnosed with a contagious disease please notify us so we can take the necessary infection control measures and notify appropriate individuals about the illness. Thank you for your cooperation.

Do not bring your child to the Center if he/she has had any of the symptoms listed below in the previous 24 hours:

A. Diarrhea:

- If your child has more than one loose stool, we will call you to pick up the child as soon as possible.
- The child may return to the Center after having no diarrhea for 24 hours.

B. Fever: • If a fever is suspected, we will check the child's temperature.

- If the child's temperature is 100.4° or higher, we will call you to pick up the child as soon as possible.
- The child may return to the Center after his or her temperature has dropped below 101° for 24 hours.

C. Rash:

- Rashes can be symptoms of contagious disease such as chicken pox, impetigo, ringworm, etc. • If we note a rash, we will notify you and check the child's temperature. • If the child's temperature is 101° or higher or if the rash is concerning for a possible communicable disease, we will call you to pick up the child as soon as possible.
- The child may return to the Center after his or her temperature has dropped below 101° for 24 hours and/or the rash has been deemed noncontagious by the child's physician. We reserve the right to request a physician's note to indicate that the child's condition is not contagious or is being appropriately treated.

D. Congestion, Cough, and Nasal Discharge

- Admittance of a child with lung congestion, a contagious cough or purulent discharge from the nose is at the discretion of the Center's Executive Director.
- A child diagnosed with pertussis (whooping cough) may return to the Center only after 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment.

E. Conjunctivitis (pinkeye):

- There are many different causes of pinkeye, some of which are contagious and some that pose serious risk to they eye.
- Viral conjunctivitis, while not serious, can be extremely contagious. Like a child with congestion, a cough or nasal discharge, a child with

pinkeye will be admitted at the discretion of the Executive Director or Assistant director and a physician's evaluation may be requested.

- Any child with purulent eye discharge, eye pain, visual changes or fever should be evaluated immediately by a physician. A note from the physician may be required for the child to return to the Center.

F. Head Lice:

- The first time we find nits in your child's hair, we will call you immediately. Until you arrive for pick up, we will limit your child's interactions with other children, doing our best to provide developmentally appropriate activities during that time.
- Your child may return after completing treatment that has removed all lice and nits, which we will confirm upon arrival the next day. • If we find nits in your child's hair on a subsequent day, or if we find a live louse in your child's hair, we require that you pick up you child immediately for treatment.

G. Vomiting:

- Children who have vomited must be kept at home for 24 hours since their last vomit.
- If a child vomits while at the Center, we will call you to ask that you pick up your child as soon as possible.

H. Sore Throats:

- Occasionally, strep bacteria cause sore throats, and one cannot determine this without a strep culture taken and tested by a physician. A child who tests positive for a strep culture must be on antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to the Center. As strep is contagious, please inform the center so that we can notify other families

In all other situations, the Center reserves the right to requests a doctor's written release if such a statement is deemed necessary by the Executive Director.

If your child has Asthma, you must submit a treatment plan that includes descriptions of how to avoid situations that can trigger the asthma symptoms, how to treat the symptoms when they arise and the names, doses and methods of all treatments.

Medication: If your child requires medication while at the Center, you must follow the following procedures:

- You must fill out a “Medicine Authorization Form” for each medication, which includes the name of the medication, reason for taking medication as well as dosage amount and time to be given. Medication (except for asthma medication) will only be given once while at the Center and generally around noon time.
- You must give medication to your child’s teacher in its *original container with your child’s name on the prescription label*.
- Non-prescription medications recommended by the health care provider will be administered at the discretion of the Director.

In Case of a Minor Injury.

The staff at TOTS’ TOWN INC., CHILD CARE CENTER will provide treatment for any injury requiring basic first aid. The teacher will complete an incident report, a copy of which will be given to you, and you will be contacted as soon as possible.

In Case of a Medical Emergency.

The Center will call 911 if necessary to insure prompt medical care for your child. In addition, the majority of our staff is trained in CPR and first aid. Every effort will be made to contact adult family members or emergency contacts immediately. In order to authorize staff to assure prompt medical care, you are required to sign the emergency form provided in the enrollment packet.

Hand washing.

TOTS’ TOWN INC., CHILD CARE CENTER will teach your child the steps to effective hand washing: wetting hands, getting soap, making suds while counting to 20, rinsing and drying. This healthy habit promotes good hygiene and helps to stop the spread of diseases. We wash hands after using the bathroom, when entering the classroom, before eating, and before and after wet or messy classroom activities.

Diapering and Toilet Teaching

Only disposable diapers are used, for hygienic reasons, at our center. The parents supply diapers, wipes and creams. Each family is asked to send in and maintain a supply of appropriately sized disposable diapers and a box of wipes for their child. The package should be labeled with the child's name. Diapers are changed whenever necessary. Staff are required to wear gloves. The changing table is disinfected after every use. Diapers are wrapped and disposed of in our outside trash bins.

***Please note that CLOTH DIAPERS are not permitted in the Center.**

Toileting independence is a major milestone for children and parents alike. Toileting teaching will be undertaken at the Center, consistent with the child's physical and emotional abilities, and in consultation with the child's parent(s). When you decide to begin toilet training, speak to your child's teacher and we will be consistent in working through the plan with you. Toddlers engaged in the toilet teaching will be taken to the bathroom as frequently as needed. A staff person will supervise the child and provide encouragement and positive guidance.

It is important that parents make sure that a number of sets of extra clothing are kept at the Center while their toddler is undergoing toilet teaching. Soiled clothes will be placed in a plastic bag and sent home. The pros and cons of using diapers, "pull-ups" or training pants during toilet teaching should be discussed with Center staff before a method is chosen.

It is encouraged that all children be toilet-trained before entering the Preschool. However, we recognize that this is not always possible, due to developmental or medical issues. In such cases, Preschool staff will work with the child's family to develop a toilet teaching plan, consistent with the child's physical and emotional abilities. If your child is still in the process of toilet training, please bring several sets of clothing. We reserve the right to use a pull-up or diaper at the discretion of the staff if your child has repeated accidents over the course of many days. This policy is crucial to our maintaining a safe and healthy environment for all.

Children are offered the opportunity to use the bathroom as frequently as needed. A teacher always supervises the children and makes sure that children and staff wash their hands with soap and water after using the facility.

Remember that children this age may still have accidents, even though they are fully toilet trained. It is important that each child have an extra set of clothing, including underwear and socks, and shoes if possible.

Emergency Plans

The Center conducts evacuation fire drills to familiarize the children with evacuation procedures. We have two evacuation routes (primary and alternate), and a designated spot outside the building to gather and await for permission to return to the classroom.

In the event of an evacuation, we follow the following emergency procedures:

- Transfer children to Our Lady of Grace Church located 1 block away.
- Administrators will post signs on the door of the building to inform families.
- Staff walks calmly with the children, the emergency contact binder, and the classroom attendance sheets.
- If the Center must close during a school day, we begin contacting families to pick up children. If the evacuation is temporary, we contact parents as soon as possible and before the end of the day.

In case of an unforeseen emergency requiring children and staff to remain on the premises beyond regular hours, the Center has a supply of food on hand to keep the children as comfortable as possible.

We are also required to practice “lockdown drills,” during which children are moved to the Director’s office and kept there until release by the Director. We call the procedure “*meeting time*,” so named because teachers gather children in an area to meet and keep them still and quiet until released. It is done in the Director’s Office/ We do not discuss the reason for this requirement with your children, nor do we share the official “lockdown” name with them. Instead, we use research-based best practices to approach this requirement in a calm, trustworthy manner while taking every precaution to make sure we both comply with the regulations and keep your children safe.

GENERAL POLICIES

Arrival and Departure Sign

In and Out.

You or the adult responsible for your child (must be 18yrs or older) must sign that child in and out every day. You should write the times of drop-off and pick-up with your name.

Transition Challenges.

Arrival and pickup can be stressful transition times for children and families. Children are often confused by the differences between “home rules” and “school rules” and they may respond to those differences by testing limits. To help children during these transitions, families are asked to follow classroom rules while at the Center. Teachers and administrators have many strategies to assist families that have difficulty separating from or picking up their children in a timely fashion; please talk to us if this is an issue for you or your child.

Please Stay with Your Child at All Times.

Children may never be left alone by any adults while at TOTS' TOWN INC., CHILD CARE CENTER. You must accompany your child into the Center and acknowledge to the teacher that your child has arrived. Children may not enter or exit the building or classrooms alone or with a sibling.

Playground Rules During Pickup Times. TOTS' TOWN INC., CHILD CARE CENTER is fortunate to have a wonderful playground, with varied activities available to all of the children in the Center. During pickup time, the playground is filled with excited children, socializing families, and busy teachers and staff. While this makes the playground a wonderfully social part of TOTS' TOWN INC., CHILD CARE CENTER, it also can lead to a lack of consistency, structure, and safety for the children. As a result, we ask that you recognize and follow these guidelines:

- Children often use pickup time to test the rules of teachers, parents, or both. For the safety of your child and of the other children, it is crucial that everyone follow the guidance provided by the teachers on the playground.
- When you sign your child out, please take a moment to notify your child's teacher as your family is leaving the playground.

Authorized Adults.

Children can be picked up only by those adults who are authorized to do so. If an individual other than the child's parent or guardian is picking up the child, we must be notified in advance, preferably in the morning when the child is brought to school. If changes occur during the day, you must notify us by email or phone. Persons unknown to us will not be allowed to pick-up your child unless we have been notified in advance and a picture ID is presented at the time of pickup.

Legal Matters.

If your child's situation involves a court-ordered custody arrangement or restraining order, you must provide TOTS' TOWN INC., CHILD CARE CENTER with a copy of such arrangements for your child's file.

Clothing

During the course of his school day, your child will engage in many hands-on learning experiences. He/she will be encouraged toward independence in many ageappropriate tasks. This can be a messy proposition! We recommend that you send your child to TOTS' TOWN INC., CHILD CARE CENTER in comfortable, casual washable clothing and shoes Each child should also bring a bag with extra set of clothes (appropriate for the season and including underwear and socks) to be kept

in the classroom. Spills and accidents are the rule, not the exception for young children!

If your child is in the process of toilet teaching, you may want to send in several sets of clothing.

Toys From Home

Toys brought from home may be disruptive to the classroom routine and may prevent your child from focusing on activities provided in school. They can also be easily lost or broken. We highly encourage you to talk with your child that home toys (with the exception of sleep toy) belong at home and that we have many things in school for playing with. The exception might be a special book to read or a specific toy that goes along with the curriculum or once a month for Show & Tell. Please check with your child's teacher before allowing your child to bring in a toy from home. The Center is not responsible for personal toys broken or lost at school.

Playground

Your child will be going outdoors to the playground every day, weather permitting. Our playgrounds offer children the opportunity to engage in sliding, climbing, sand play, imaginative play, building as well as ball play and group and individual activities. In the summer, a small wading pool and several water tables are introduced to encourage water play activities. In the late spring, and early fall, parents are asked to apply sunscreen to their child before arriving at the Center each day, as well as to provide a bottle of sunscreen specifically for their child to be kept at the Center. Parents are also asked to send in hats, mittens, snow pants or snowsuits, boots and scarves during the winter.

Children are fully supervised while on the playground. New equipment and activities are regularly introduced. A list of playground rules and developmentally appropriate playground activities is available upon request.

Please make sure your child comes to school with outerwear appropriate for the weather and season.

Outdoor Walks and Field Trips

Children spend time out of doors on most days, either in the play yard, or by taking walks in the neighborhood. You will be asked to complete and sign a Neighborhood Walk Permission Form upon your child's enrollment in the Center.

Preschoolers also have the opportunity to participate in field trips. Parents will always be asked to sign permission slips for these activities in advance. Parents may choose to keep their child at home on a field trip day. Parents are always welcome to join us on a field trip.

Sunscreen/Insect Repellent

Sunscreen can help protect the skin from sunburn and some skin cancers, but only if used correctly.

We recommend using sunscreen that says "broad spectrum" on the label and that has an SPF (sun protection factor) of at least 15. The higher the SPF, the more UVB protection the sunscreen has.

For sensitive areas of the body, such as the nose, cheeks, tops of ears and shoulders, choose a product with zinc oxide or titanium dioxide. Some come in fun colors that kids might enjoy.

Our policy is to apply sunscreen, which you supply, every time we plan to go outside. Our aim is to apply it 15-30 minutes before we go outside.

We apply insect repellent only during times which the State or RI Department of Health issues a recommendation to do so due to higher risks of mosquito bites. Please make sure to fill in an Insect Repellent authorization form and supply your own Deet based insect repellent labelled with your child's first and last name. we will only apply it once during the child's day at the center.

Biting

Toddlers may bite another child. When toddlers and preschoolers are in a group situation biting can happen from time to time. While this is a normal stage of development for some children, this does not lessen the concern around the issue.

Young children who bite do so for many reasons: teething, impulsiveness, lack of self-confidence, to make an impact, excitement, over stimulation and frustration. As teachers, the staff looks to see if we can assess the reasons for biting and then put strategies in place accordingly. Some of the strategies we use as follows:

- Give a teething toddler objects to bite on
- Avoid having children be in close physical contact
- Provide a calm environment
- Make sure that there are duplicate toys where necessary
- Keep children in small groups
- Distract children as necessary
- Avoid child waiting
- Teach problem solving skills

As an educational team, we work on strategies to eliminate the biting and to comfort all parties involved. No one is to blame when a toddler is biting. In an article from *Places for Childhood*, Jim Greenman, early childhood expert, reflects upon biting.

Preventing Inappropriate Behaviors

There are many strategies we use to help prevent inappropriate behaviors:

- Planning or clear, consistent routines.
- Providing a safe, respectful environment with logical guidelines.
- Planning for efficient transitions.
- Offering choices within clear limits.
- Modeling kindness, fairness, firmness and consistency.
- Helping the child learn self-control by teaching him/her to cope with angry impulses.
- Intervening in a situation before the child has an opportunity to react negatively.
- Teaching children problem solving skills.

When Behavior Becomes A Problem

All children exhibit inappropriate behavior at times. This is natural and developmentally expected. However, sometimes the nature of a behavior causes or has the potential to cause harm to child or another child. When a child exhibits behaviors of this nature more frequently than what would be considered normal, the following steps will be taken:

- The Early Childhood Director will be advised of the situation and will observe the child and review incident reports.
- The parent(s) of the child will be asked to meet with the Director to discuss the situation. The purpose of this meeting is for the Center staff and the family to work together to develop a plan to teach appropriate behavior. A behavior management plan will be designed and put in effect with parental input and approval.
- Follow-up meetings with Center staff and parents will take place on a regular basis to monitor progress.
- For toddlers, behavior problems are most generally a result of development. In rare cases, a parent may be asked to seek outside assessment in order to

determine if the child has a documented special need or needs behavior intervention.

- At the preschool level if the child's behavior does not change over time, a recommendation will go to the parents to obtain an outside assessment of the child's development, in order to determine if special services are needed. The Center continues to work with the child as long as parents seek the needed resources to ensure the best experience for all children.

Other Aggressive Behavior

The Early Childhood Staff will follow the biting policy and procedure in case of other aggressive behavior (such as hitting, kicking, scratching, etc.) exhibited by a child in the center against another child, resulting in injury.

The Center Prohibits

- Spanking or the use of other corporal punishment.
- Subjecting children to humiliation, verbal or physical abuse, neglect or abusive treatment.
- Depriving children of meals, snacks, or desserts.
- Force-feeding children.
- Disciplining children for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet; forcing a child to remain in soiled clothing; forcing child to remain on the toilet; or using any other unusual practices for toileting.
- The use of time-out, unless as part of an established behavior program developed and approved by the Center staff and the child's parents.

Nap/Rest Time

Toddlers and Preschoolers are provided cots on which to nap or rest in the early afternoon. Rest time is approximately 1-2 hours and is supervised by staff.

We encourage families of toddlers or preschoolers to send in linens, a light blanket, a small pillow and a special stuffed animal, which may assist your child in feeling comfortable and restful. Please avoid large and bulky beddings and oversized pillows as they are difficult to store in the children's cubbies. A small tote bag for your child's linens can be helpful in keeping your child's belongings together, and stored in his or her cubby.

Bed linens must be taken home and washed on a weekly basis.

Birthdays

A child's birthday is a very special event! We are happy to celebrate your child's birthday at the Center, and you are welcomed to attend if you desire. You may send in a special food item for all to share. Just let us know ahead of time what your plans are. Please ensure all products are nut free.

NUT POLICY

Peanut and tree nut allergies develop at an early age (usually by age 2) and account for the majority of anaphylactic reactions. Of those allergic to peanuts, 35% - 50% also develop an allergy to tree nuts. Most of the accidental ingestion of these allergens occurs at daycare settings, restaurants and in schools. Taking these statistics into account and for the eliminate potential risk of severe allergic reactions to peanut and tree nuts, TOTS' TOWN INC., CHILD CARE CENTER is a nut free facility.

The following NUT FAMILIES are prohibited at the Center:

Peanuts, walnut, pecan, butternut, artificial nuts, coconut, ginko nut, chestnut, nut meal, Nangai nut, chinquapin, Brazil nut, pistachio, cashews, Legythus, beechnut, hazelnut, filbert, praline, hickory nut, shea nut, litchi nut, almond, almond paste, almond milk, macadamia, marzipan, pili nut, pine nuts, nut extract and nut butters.

RESOURCES FOR FOOD ALLERGIES

Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America www.aafa.org

The Food Allergy Network
www.foodallergy.org

Snack Safely
Snacksafely.com

FAMILIES Family Participation

One of the goals of the Early Childhood Center is to build community. We value the participation of all our families in our Center. Parents may visit the Center at any time that their child is present. We encourage open communication with the teaching staff and the director as well. Input about your individual child, the program or any ideas that will enhance the quality of the program or build community is always welcomed.

Some ways you can become involved with the Center are:

- Volunteer to assist with social or fundraising event

- Send in recycled items for arts and crafts activities
- Set up time to join us to share a special skill (e.g. art or music)
- Volunteer in the classroom

We are always receptive to any suggestions you may have. Parent evaluation assists at continuing to maintain our high quality program and is conducted annually.

Family's Rights and Responsibilities

- The Center will make staff available for individual conferences with parents at parental request.
- Information contained in a child's records shall be privileged and confidential. Such information shall not be distributed or released to anyone not directly related to implementing the program plan for the child without written consent of the child's parent(s).
- The child's parents shall have access to their child's records upon request.
- Upon written request of the parent(s), the Center shall transfer the child's records to the parent(s), or any other person the parent(s) identifies.
- Parents will advise the Center of all information pertaining to their child that would impact the quality of service to that child.
- Parent conferences will be held twice a year in order to share assessment information with families and collaborate on the child's behalf.

TOTS' TOWN INC., CHILD CARE CENTER has an open door policy. You are welcome in the school at any time and we encourage you to be participants in the classroom. Once your child has successfully transitioned into the program, feel free to visit during a break in your schedule expect rest time. (Keep in mind that some children find unplanned visits disruptive, particularly when they are transitioning into the Center; we encourage you to discuss any such concerns with your child's

teachers.) Also, you are encouraged to plan with classroom teachers activities you would like to share with the children.

We have a Parent Information board, located at the entrance to the Center, in the cubby room, on which you will find information about the daily schedule of activities and other items that will help you be more informed of your child's experience here. Newsletters and other correspondence from the administrative staff will be placed in your child's cubby or e-mailed to you on a regular basis.

FACEBOOK

Finally, we have an active Facebook page that provides photographs, information and updates on school holidays, closings and events. Please like us at www.facebook.com/TOTSTOWN-INC-Child-Care-Center-347448931949794.