



Early Learning Center

Parent Handbook

Hug-n-Hearts Early Learning Center
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Hugs-n-Hearts is open Monday through Friday 6:30 a.m. to 6:15 p.m.

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Hugs-n-Hearts Early Learning Center Our Dedication to Quality

High quality child care does not just happen, it is the result of a delicate combination of personnel, facility, programming and dedication to serving children and parents. To make high quality child care happen, Hugs-n-Hearts has taken special measures to include the following crucial elements:

- ♥ Separate rooms for different age groups
- ♥ Separate room for large muscle play and other special activities
- ♥ Playground that exceeds state standards for size and equipment, including sandboxes, trike paths and large muscle equipment
- ♥ Bathroom facilities are located in each classroom and are child-size to help encourage self-help skills.
- ♥ Each classroom is equipped with a telephone/intercom system in case of emergency and for necessary communications.
- ♥ Fire exit doors and emergency exit signs are located in each classroom, along with a fire alarm system installed throughout the center.
- ♥ Observation windows have been included in each classroom so that parents may observe their children and supervisors may observe staff.
- ♥ A learning resource area is included in the center for promoting staff development, training and curriculum planning.
- ♥ A children's literature library is available for daily teacher-lead and independent reading.
- ♥ All full-time pre-school teachers at Hugs-n-Hearts hold a Degree in Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, a related field, or have extensive in-house training. Teachers are certified in first aid/CPR, communicable disease and recognition of child abuse.
- ♥ Curriculum is planned to provide a balance of quiet and active play, full-group and one-on-one activities, with a focus on the whole child's development-cognitive, physical, social and emotional.

To supplement your child's educational experience, Hugs-n-Hearts offers the following special programs at no additional charge.

- ♥ Large muscle play in the Gymnasium
- ♥ Music & Movement Classes
- ♥ Individual Computer Introduction Classes in Computer Lab, (children 3 years and older)
- ♥ Introduction to Spanish Classes (children 3 years and older)
- ♥ Cooking Classes (children 4 years and older)

Employees

Our employees are our greatest asset. We foster open communication, teamwork and the attention to detail required to provide superior services. Extraordinary effort is expected from our employees. We will foster an atmosphere in which our caregivers feel that their work is truly valued - an atmosphere in which dedication, commitment and excellence are recognized and rewarded. We will help our teachers to develop their skills and enable them to do their jobs professionally and competently.

Hugs-n-Hearts selects its full-time staff from professionals who hold a Degree in Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, a closely related field, or we provide extensive in-house training. Our full-time teachers are not hired on as Lead Teacher/Assistant Teacher; rather, they are hired to work on an equal level and to team teach through a collaborative effort and sharing of ideas. The majority of our part-time staff are upper-level college students pursuing a degree in the field of education.

Hugs-n-Hearts makes the reduction of staff turnover a priority by compensating our staff with additional incentives, such as comprehensive benefits and opportunities for promotion. Our goal is to make Hugs-n-Hearts Early Learning Center a career choice for professional teachers.

Ratio and Capacity

Hugs-n-Hearts is licensed for a maximum of 226 children. The teacher to child ratios are maintained as follows:

- ♥ Pooh's Place and Cub's Corner (18-24 months) - 1 teacher to 6 toddlers: maximum group size of 12 (State ratio 1:7 /maximum 14).
- ♥ Care Bears and Beach Bear Blvd (24-36 months) - 1 teacher to 6 to 7 toddlers: maximum group size of 12 to 14 (State ratio 1:8/Maximum 16).
- ♥ Corduroys, and Circus Bears (Young 3 yr olds)
2 teachers to 12 children: maximum group size of 12 (State ratio 1:12).
- ♥ Berenstain and Rainbow (3 yr olds) 1 teacher with a maximum group of 12 (State ratio 1:12).
- ♥ Paddington Pkwy (3 yr olds) - 1 teacher to 9 preschoolers: Maximum group size of 18 with 2 teachers (State ratio 1:12).
- ♥ Paw Place, Teddy's Trail, Panda Pkwy, ABC Bears Tiki Bears, Yogi's (4 & 5 yr olds) - 1 teacher to 14 preschoolers with a group size of 14. (State ratio 1:14)
- ♥ Muffy's Lane (Private Kindergarten) 1 teacher to 18 children. (State ratio 1:18). Maximum group size of 18.

Ratios for toddlers and preschoolers may be doubled for 2 hours at naptime as long as all children are resting quietly on their cots and enough staff is in the building to meet the regular required staff/child ratio if there is an emergency.

Your Child's Adjustment

Introducing your child to his/her first group experience can be an exciting time for both parent and child, it can also be a time of some anxiety - especially for younger children.

- ♥ Allow your child to accompany you on your initial visit to the center if possible. Allow them to look around and get a feel for the building and the people in it. Introduce them to the Director and to the classroom teachers. Encourage your child to ask questions.
- ♥ After your visit, talk with your child about what you saw at the center. Discuss all of the different things they will be doing once enrolled. If possible, visit the center again before your first day of enrollment and spend some extra time (30 minutes) in your child's classroom to observe and participate in the program. Even a brief half hour visit to your child's class before the first day of enrollment will help to acclimate your child to the environment and he or she will feel much calmer on the first day you leave them with us.
- ♥ When you bring your child to the center on those first days, help him or her off with their coat, hat, etc. and show him where they should store them. Make certain that your child's teacher sees them come in. Make a firm, quick "good-bye", assuring them that they will have fun and that you will be back, then leave. Your child's teacher will take over from there.
- ♥ Allow your child to bring a favorite "sleep toy" or blanket for those first days at the center. This will help him/her to feel more secure during nap time.
- ♥ Adjustment will be easier for your child if you accept any initial emotional reactions as normal and continue to calmly reassure them of your love and interest. A child will quickly pick up on any hesitation from their parents.
- ♥ Please feel free to give us a call later in the day to check on your child's adjustment.

Curriculum Philosophy and Sample Daily Schedules

Toddler Curriculum Philosophy:

Hugs-n-Hearts understands that the period in a child's life from 18-36 months of age is a period of tremendously rapid growth and development. We believe all toddlers develop at their own rate and it's important to always have realistic expectations for their behavior, growth and development. Children of this age have an expanding curiosity about the world around them and are beginning to take their first steps toward independence through toileting skills, dressing skills and becoming responsible for their own personal hygiene (brushing hair and teeth independently).

Along with all of this, toddlers are also developing their fine and gross motor skills, exhibiting more refined and coordinated movements. They are also able to practice some basic sorting skills which are the foundation for early math skills.

In the short span of eighteen months it is no wonder that a toddler can frequently

become frustrated. They are increasingly independent and curious. Toddlers want to explore everything and can get very frustrated when they don't understand why this isn't always acceptable to the adults in their world. Keeping in mind that a toddler's safety comes first, a healthy curiosity is a good thing and is encouraged and shared whenever possible.

Toddler activities are planned in small groups so that each child has an opportunity to bond with their teacher and is eased into social interactions slowly. Creative art activities are conducted one-on-one with the toddler and focuses on "process" rather than "product". What this means, is that we feel it is far more educational for the toddler to experience the activity rather than focusing on the ending result. Examples of process art include: using their fingers to practice holding the crayon or paintbrush and seeing the effects of their strokes on the paper or to hear and see what happens to tissue paper when it is torn. These processes in themselves mean so much more to the toddler's development than having a finished piece of artwork that looks like the teacher did it!

Toddler play is primarily sensory-motor, which is the free movement of large and small muscles. The two-year-old is very active so activities are planned that include movement: chasing bubbles, dancing, crawling through tunnels and in/out of boxes, sliding, riding tricycles, etc. are all examples of activities that your child will experience to enhance large motor development. Waffle blocks, wooden blocks, puzzles, sand play, water play, stringing beads, etc. are examples of activities that your child will experience for the development of small muscles.

In every activity, we try to appeal to as many of the toddler's senses as possible in order to capture their curiosity and enhance learning. We do this by offering wet sand and dry sand to play and experiment with textures, put food coloring in the water table for visual effect and offer plenty of cups and scoops to develop the concept of full and empty. We may also add a scented oil to the water table, like spearmint or rose, have tasting parties, sniffing games or offer a feely box and describe the hidden texture.

Hugs-n-Hearts recognizes that the toddler is egocentric; that is, they are unable to see another's point of view and therefore find it difficult to share materials and toys. This is particularly true of later twos and early threes, who often demonstrate resistant behaviors around transition times. We accept this behavior as normal and use strategies of distraction and redirection to focus the toddler when a sharing conflict does come up.

Socially, we feel that the most important bond for toddlers in a childcare setting to establish is the bond between child and teacher. This bond will help them lessen episodes of separation anxiety and will allow the child to feel safe and secure enough to explore their environment freely. Hugs-n-Hearts staff realize that separation anxiety can be just as stressful for the parent as it is for the toddler and will make a special effort to develop an atmosphere of positive and open communication with parents for the benefit of the child.

Teaching and caring for toddlers requires patience, humor and a sense of wonder about the world. It is our belief that the toddler should be seen as a tender individual, not far from babyhood, who wants to feel proud, big, important and successful. Praise, encouragement and hugs, blended with good planning, stimulating activities and

opportunities to explore will provide the most enriching environment possible during this important time. Below is a sample daily schedule. Our toddler teachers will also provide tentative weekly lesson plans. However, curriculum in the toddler classroom is child directed and will follow the children's interests as they progress.

A written developmental assessment will be provided to you annually. Assessment and screening data are not reported to any outside party, including ODJFS, unless otherwise requested by parents.

Sample Toddler Daily Schedule:

6:30-8:00	Free Play/Breakfast/Restroom Break/Hand Washing
8:00-8:30	Large Muscle Activity/Muscle Room
8:30-9:00	Circle Time, Story Time, Music, Language Arts
9:00-9:30	Morning Snack
9:30-11:00	Explore Centers/Creative Art/Individual Table Time
11:00-11:30	Outside Play
11:30-12:00	Diapers/Restroom Break/Wash Hands
12:00-12:45	Lunch
12:45-1:00	Story Time/Books
1:00-3:00	Nap
3:00-3:45	Restroom/Wash Hands/Snack/Fine Motor Activity
3:45-4:30	Outside Play
4:30-4:45	Wash Hands and Faces
4:45-5:30	Free Play in Centers
5:30-6:15	Books/Videos

Three-Year-Old Curriculum Philosophy

Hugs-n-Hearts believes that the third year of life is a time of expansion for children's cognitive, affective and physical growth. Three-year olds are more conforming and predictable than two-year olds and tend to show curiosity toward anything new in their environment. Fifty percent of their play is sensory-motor resulting in a strong need for activities that develop fine and gross motor abilities. The spoken language of early three-year olds may consist of about 900 words and increases to 1500 by the age of four.

Three-year olds are capable of magical thinking - that is the belief that their actions and thoughts can bring about events. This egocentric and attractive feature of three-year olds allows them to create a life of fantasy and make-believe. Hugs-n-Hearts' teachers encourage this rich fantasy play by participating in dramatic play with the children.

Through this development of imagination and language, the three-year-old is also developing socially and will spend more and more time actively engaged with peers. The concept of sharing will slowly begin to make sense and the three-year-old begins to understand that other people have feelings too. They will then begin to participate in the give and take of cooperative play. Still, sharing conflict may arise and the three-year-old is ready to be introduced to the techniques for conflict resolution - learning how to use their growing language skills to help themselves in social situations.

Three-year olds are introduced to some basic science activities that are designed not for the purpose of teaching a concept as much as for the purpose of observing an effect and enhancing the young preschooler's awareness of their own observation skills. Beginning math skills are introduced through sorting and matching activities and memory games. Mid to older three-year olds are able to pair objects that go together (sock and shoe) or to choose an object out of three that does not belong (apple, chair, banana). Language development is also enhanced through songs, rhymes and finger plays.

Creative art activities take on a new dimension for three-year olds as their imaginations and fine motor skill increase. What was once scribbling takes on the shape of a face with facial features and arms/legs appear. Three-year olds are stimulated by the use of different media in art projects: painting with 2" brushes, Q-tips, pipe cleaners, pine cones or their feet! As in all art projects with any age group, Hugs-n-Hearts believes that it is the PROCESS of the project that matters most to the child's development and not the finished product. Teachers let the children do their own collage pictures, squeezing the glue, or placing the pieces on the paper. All these are signatures of their curiosity and creativity and should not be stifled by too much direction.

While the three-year-old may seem more like a preschooler than a toddler, at Hugs-n-Hearts we feel it is important to remember that they are still small and tender individuals who are looking to the adults in their life for support, trust and encouragement. Praise and self-esteem building skills are used every day to make them feel big, important and special...and to give them the encouragement they will need to grow into their school years.

A written developmental assessment will be provided to you annually. Assessment and screening data are not reported to any outside party, including ODJFS, unless otherwise requested by parents.

Sample Three-Year-Old Daily Schedule:

6:30-8:00	Morning Arrivals/Breakfast
8:00-8:45	Free Play in Centers
8:45-9:15	Wash Hands/Snack
9:15-9:45	Circle Time, Story Time, Music, Language Arts
9:45-11:00	Explore Centers/Creative Art/Individual Table Time
11:00-11:30	Outside Play
11:30-12:00	Restroom Break/Wash Hands
12:00-12:45	Lunch
12:45-1:00	Story Time/Books
1:00-3:00	Nap
3:00-3:45	Restroom/Wash Hands/Snack/Fine Motor Activity
3:45-4:30	Outside Play
4:30-4:45	Wash Hands and Faces
4:45-5:30	Free Play in Centers
5:30-6:15	Books/Videos

Four and Five-Year-Old Curriculum Philosophy

Hugs-n-Hearts believes that four and five-year-old children are lively and adventurous and they burst with motor activity. Like two and three-year olds, they are egocentric and will need our help to begin to see the world from another person's viewpoint. Although 40% of their play is sensory-motor, 30% is symbolic and is demonstrated largely through social-dramatic play that involves taking on roles and verbally interacting with other children. Such play is made possible by the expansion of spoken language in the fourth year. Four and Five-year olds can speak readily in sentences of ten or more words. This increased ability to communicate makes it possible for the teacher to reason with the preschooler and to be understood. Likewise, four and five-year olds should be encouraged to learn how to work out their own conflicts by using their communication skills.

Four and five-year-old children exhibit increased cognitive skills by asking more questions and showing greater curiosity about their environment. Teachers take advantage of this curiosity and turn it into learning opportunities by providing science and nature activities each week. The preschooler is able to understand some basic concepts of cause and effect and is fascinated by simple science experiments.

Preschoolers have a great interest in the printed work, especially their name. At Hugs-n-Hearts they are given many opportunities to participate in pre-writing skill activities, such as: tracing, stenciling, copying, coloring, painting and manipulating small objects. It is our goal, in all preschool instructional activities, to teach concept and skills to children in a very non-judgmental way and to focus on the PROCESS rather than the finished product. It is a very normal stage of development for kindergartners and beginning writers to write some letters backward or even upside down. At Hugs-n-Hearts we will always focus on the child's efforts and achievements.

At Hugs-n-Hearts, our pre-K program is our most goal-oriented and individualized program. We have developed a set of concepts and skills, based on guidance from area elementary school teachers, that we assist our pre-K students in mastering, prior to entering kindergarten: i.e. recognition of letters, numbers, basic shapes and colors; full name, address and phone number; left from right; how to zip, tie, lace, snap and button independently. These concepts are taught through fun and creative activities. We try to steer away from "drill and practice" and "graded" work that might make a child compare himself to his peers. We recognize that all children develop at different rates and that development sometimes occurs in "spurts". It is possible that the child who may seem behind the others today, has simply not reached that point in their development yet and may be comparing favorably with the rest of the children in the class in a week's time. One of our main priorities is to be sensitive to every child's need to feel successful at every point in his or her development and to recognize that every child is unique and special.

The child's progress is monitored through one-on-one work with the teacher. During this time, the teacher reviews the child's skills to assess what skills the child has mastered and which skills they need to practice further. Children who have mastered all the goal skills are challenged further with writing or reading activities.

A written developmental assessment and parent/teacher conference time will be

provided to you in the early spring to assist in decision making for kindergarten entrance. Assessment and screening data are not reported to any outside party, including ODJFS, unless otherwise requested by parents.

Four and Five-Year-Old Sample Daily Schedule:

6:30-8:00	Morning Arrivals/Breakfast
8:00-8:45	Learning Centers
8:45-9:15	Wash Hands/Snack
9:15-9:45	Circle Time, Story Time, Music, Language Arts
9:45-11:00	Explore Centers/Creative Art/Individual Table Time
11:00-11:30	Computer Lab/Cooking/Spanish
11:30-12:00	Restroom Break/Wash Hands
12:00-12:45	Lunch
12:45-1:00	Story Time/Books
1:00-3:00	Quiet Time/Books/Nap
3:00-3:30	Restroom/Wash Hands/Snack
3:30-4:00	Afternoon Learning Activity/Learning Centers
4:00-4:45	Outside Play
4:45-5:00	Wash Hands and Faces
5:00-5:30	Free Play in Centers
5:30-6:15	Books/Videos

Guidelines for Promotion

Hugs-n-Hearts' building is divided into separate classrooms for different age groups to allow us to provide the most developmentally appropriate activities possible. Children are promoted from one room to another based on age and social/academic readiness. Because we feel that children develop very strong social bonds to their peers while they are in a classroom, we prefer to promote a large group of children to the next age level at the same time. These "graduations" occur at the beginning of the summer and/or fall each year. This group promotion allows the classroom curriculum to develop along with the children as they learn and mature. It also allows students to move to their new classroom and new teacher with a lot of familiar faces. Occasionally, Hugs-n-Hearts will promote a child mid-year if there is space available. This individual promotion may be based on development and readiness or on age. Two weeks prior to the start of a new summer or fall session, we begin the transition process for those children moving to a new classroom. This involves the child visiting the new classroom and spending one or two hours getting to know their new teacher and becoming comfortable in their new classroom surroundings. Parents are notified of their child's new classroom and teacher prior to their child's transition.

Child Guidance and Management Policy

All staff at Hugs-n-Hearts Early Learning Center shall provide each child with guidance that helps the child acquire a positive self-concept, self-control and teaches acceptable behavior. Discipline and behavior guidance used by each caregiver will at all times be constructive, positive and suited to the age of the child.

Children are not expected to immediately understand or fully comply with all of the rules; rather, they are to be gently taught, reminded and when necessary, redirected. The staff has the responsibility to set up the environment to encourage cooperation and sharing, rather than promoting aggressive behaviors.

The following standards and rules will apply in the prevention of unacceptable behavior in the Toddler Program:

1. Teachers will model appropriate behavior
2. The classroom will be arranged to enhance the learning behaviors that are acceptable.
3. Use of descriptive praise when appropriate behavior is occurring.

When unacceptable behavior is about to occur or is occurring in the Toddler program, the teacher will use:

1. Redirection: Substitute a positive activity for a negative activity.
2. Distraction: Change the focus of the activity or behavior.
3. Active Listening: To determine the underlying cause of the behavior.
4. Separation from the group: This is only used when the less intrusive methods have been tried and the behavior of the child is dangerous to him/herself or the other children. In the event that a time out is necessary, the child will remain in sight and hearing distance of the staff. The child will be separated from the group for a period of time according to their age.

Preschoolers behavior management techniques will follow the same prevention procedures as the toddler program. Procedures for dealing with unacceptable behavior of older children will include the same methods of: redirection, distraction and active listening as the toddler program and may also utilize the following methods;

1. Logical Consequences: a child who damages a toy, for instance, may be prohibited from the use of that toy for the current play period.
2. Verbal Reprimand: These brief verbal behavioral guidance measures consists of a statement of the problem behavior, the fact that it is unacceptable and the statement of the acceptable alternative.
3. Separation from the group: Utilizing the same guidelines as the toddler protocol, making certain that the time out is no longer than necessary and no longer than the age of the child in minutes. This will be communicated to parents verbally.

Conferences/Disenrollment

If the parent or teacher has concerns about behavior, child development, or programming that need further attention, a conference will be scheduled so that a plan for behavior guidance may be developed cooperatively. Parents and teachers should communicate directly when possible. If additional steps are needed, parents or teachers should discuss their concerns with the building administrator, and then with the Owner/Director as applicable.

Parents are encouraged to make the staff aware of any stressful events or situations that a child may be experiencing outside of the center and any positive techniques used successfully at home. Hugs-n-Hearts reserves the right to request a parent conference and temporary or permanent withdrawal from the center for ongoing extreme behavior/safety issues. Disenrollment will be required when the Owner/Director feels that the safety of the child, the children in the classroom, or staff may be compromised.

Hugs-n-Hearts complies with all federal, state and other relevant laws which prohibit corporal punishment and complies with Ohio Child Care Licensing Law.

Withdrawal

Parents who wish to withdraw their child from Hugs-n-Hearts must give a two-week written notice to the Director. Parents who fail to give a two-week written notice will still be held responsible for two full weeks of tuition post withdrawal.

Meals and Snacks

Hugs-n-Hearts will provide breakfast for any child arriving before 8:00 a.m. A nutritious snack is served mid-morning and mid-afternoon. Parents must provide a packed lunch for their child daily. Each child who enrolls will be given an insulated Hugs-n-Hearts lunch bag in which to pack their lunch. A supplemental "Lunch Letter" is included with this handbook to assist parents in packing nutritious lunches. The center will provide 1% milk for lunch. Toddlers under 24 months receive Vitamin D milk. If you wish to provide non-cow's milk for your child, there is a special form that must be completed. Parents may pack foods that need to be heated as there is a microwave in every classroom for this purpose. Supplemental food is available if needed. Weekly breakfast and snack menus are posted in each classroom and in the kitchen for your information.

Birthdays

Parents are welcome to send snacks to share with their child's classmates on their birthday, although it is not necessary. Please be aware that the classroom may have dietary restrictions and/or allergy warnings. Please check with your child's teacher before selecting a birthday snack.

Naptime

Your child's day at Hugs-n-Hearts is planned to provide many exciting, active learning activities. A rest period is scheduled each day to balance the active time. The toddlers and preschool-aged children will rest on cots after lunch. Children who are unable to sleep will be allowed to engage in some quiet activity while lying on their cot. Parents who wish to do so may provide a small blanket or security object for their child to use at naptime to make him or her more comfortable. Blankets and soft toys should be labeled and taken home for laundering at the end of each week.

Toilet Training

Between the ages of 24 and 36 months, Hugs-n-Hearts will assist parents in the potty training phase of their child's development. Hugs-n-Hearts is very reluctant to begin a potty training program with any child before 24 months of age. It is our belief that though a child may be cognitively ready to begin training and possibly even physically ready, a one year old is most likely not ready socially or emotionally to interact with the two and almost three-year olds of our potty training classes. If your child is showing interest in the potty training process earlier than 24 months, please communicate with your child's teacher.

Patience, diligence and positive reinforcement are the focus of our potty training. Two-year olds are taken to the potty frequently and on a scheduled basis so that they may gain familiarity with the routine and overcome any fears. A teacher will assist your child, on a one-on-one basis in the restroom so that your child is properly assisted and provided with appropriate praise and encouragement for his or her level.

Between the ages of 30 and 36 months is when you will most likely see the most potty training success with your toddler. As the child's success rate increases, we will encourage the child to gradually become more and more independent; i.e. encourage them to take their own pants down and pull them up, encourage them to sit on the potty by themselves, and assist them in learning sanitary and reasonable wiping skills. Proper flushing and hand washing are taught throughout. If a child who is just beginning training has three accidents in one day, we may put the child back in a diaper or pull-up for the remainder of the day. Too many accidents in one day may only serve to lower the child's self-esteem. Teachers always handle toileting accidents with a positive attitude and remind the child that they can succeed next time. Children are always encouraged to use their words to communicate when they have to use the potty and are always supported and encouraged during this big step towards independence.

The "Bear" Necessities

Hugs-n-Hearts has provided this general list for your convenience, so that you may provide the necessary items for your child each day. Please be sure that all items are clearly labeled. You may refer to your child's classroom packet for a more specific list.

Toddlers (18-36 months)

- 6 or more diapers per day
- 2 complete change of clothes
- Blanket for naptime
- Appropriate outerwear for weather

Preschoolers (3-5 years)

- 1 complete change of clothes (including socks)
- Blanket for naptime
- Appropriate outerwear for weather

Blankets and/or pillows brought into the center should be taken home weekly for laundering. Toys from home should be limited to one that is relevant to the learning theme of the week or for share day only. The classrooms are very well supplied for lots of fun and educational activities. Hugs-n-Hearts cannot be responsible for lost or broken personal items.

Required Enrollment Forms

All enclosed forms MUST be completed in full and are due at least one week before your child's first day of attendance. These forms will require annual review and signatures.

The forms to be returned include:

1. Child Enrollment and Health Information for Child Care
2. Child Medical Statement for Child Care *
3. Child and Family History
4. Request for Administration of Medication – SUNSCREEN
5. Parental Agreement Form
6. Pick-Up Authorization & Photograph Permission
7. Permission to Walk Between Buildings
8. Parent Account Information

If Applicable:

9. Child Medical/Physical Care Plan
10. Administration of Medication
11. Parental Consent for Non-Cow's Milk

If the applicable paperwork is not received prior to your child's first day of attendance, Hugs-n-Hearts has the right to refuse admittance until all paperwork is completed and returned.

***Child Medical Statement:** Ohio Childcare Licensing Law requires that all children enrolled in a childcare setting must have a completed medical statement and immunization record on file that is signed by a licensed physician or certified nurse practitioner. The medical statement and immunization record must be update annually.

Immunization Policy

Hugs-n-Hearts requires that all children are up to date on all suggested immunizations unless medically contraindicated by a physician. Hugs-n-Hearts reserves the right to refuse childcare services for children whose immunizations are not current for any reason other than medically contraindicated by a physician. If your child has a medical condition that prohibits immunizations, please provide a letter from your child's current physician. If your child is not immunized because it is medically contraindicated, we will inform you of any communicable diseases present at Hugs-n-Hearts that may impact your child.

Separation/Divorce/Custody

In the event of parental separation or divorce, both parents have equal access to their child. Hugs-n-Hearts has no legal right to deny parent access to his/her child unless we have a copy of legal custody papers including a restraining order in our files. Any changes in custody orders must be provided to the center immediately.

Parent Access

Parents are welcome to visit the center and participate in our program at anytime. Hugs-n-Hearts' open door policy encourages you to do so. Parents are invited to share feelings, concerns and suggestions about their child's care verbally with their teacher or the center director. If desired, concerns can be voiced in written form and left in the tuition box for follow-up as needed.

Parent Participation

Hugs-n-Hearts will host several special events per year in which parents and family members may come to the center and be involved in their child's early learning experience. Hugs-n-Hearts always appreciates parental participation as room helpers, chaperons and special guests. Parents are welcome to bring a packed lunch and join their child for the mid-day meal. (Keep in mind that this may be difficult with younger children who do not understand why their parent is leaving them for a second time that day!)

Parents are encouraged to be deeply involved in the developmental process. It is our belief that we must work together with our families to provide stable, nurturing environments for our children. We will support parent's efforts at parenting and serve them as valued customers. We will maintain the highest level of responsiveness to parent needs/sensitivities and strive to develop a relationship of trust, integrity and compassion. We understand that we do not replace parents, we are partners in helping them to raise their children.

Outdoor Play

Outdoor play and exercise are important in every child's life. Children at Hugs-n-Hearts Early Learning Center will be scheduled for outdoor time on our expansive playground every day that the weather permits. This means that even in the winter months, your child should come to school ready for outdoor play with hats, mittens, boots and warm coats. We will use the H-n-H Campus gym for indoor large muscle motor play. If the weather is below 25°C, rainy, or if there is a heat advisory or an air quality warning for the day, we will not go outdoors. Children may play outdoors if the temperature falls within the range of 25°C-90°C.

Registration Fee/Tuition/Late Payment Fee

Tuition is due on the first day of the week that your child attends. A late fee will be assessed for late payment and will accrue weekly. Please refer to the Tuition Schedule for additional pricing information and annual registration fee information. Hugs-n-Hearts will provide the tax identification number upon parent request.

Late Pick-Up Fee

Hugs-n-Hearts will close promptly at 6:15 p.m. Parents who pick up their child after 6:15 p.m. closing time will be charged a late pick-up fee for every minute past the closing time that they are late. The late pick-up fee is requested by the closing staff member and will be billed to your account. All late fees will be due no later than 24 hours after they are

billed. We encourage parents to please consider drive time, traffic patterns, and weather conditions to avoid late departures. Please refer to the Tuition Schedule for additional information.

Delinquent Accounts/Returned Checks

In the event that your account becomes 14 or more days delinquent, we may without liability suspend or deny services and obligations hereunder until payment has been made in full. In the event of returned checks, Hugs-n-Hearts may ask for cash payment. In order for Hugs-n-Hearts to provide services or collect payment that you may owe, you may be contacted by telephone, text message, or e-mail at any phone number/e-mail address associated with your account, including wireless numbers, which could result in charges to you. Methods of contact may include pre-recorded/artificial voice messages and/or use of an automatic dialing device, as applicable by a third party. Upon withdrawal or disenrollment, all past due balances must be paid in full within 30 days. Failure to do so will result in your account being turned over to our third party collection agency.

Arrival/Departure

Upon arrival at the center, please sign your child in at the front desk and walk your child into their classroom or playground if outside. For the safety of your child, our staff must be made aware of your child's presence before you depart. Any special messages, medications, special pickup notes, etc. are to be given to your child's teacher or the front desk administrator.

At the time of pickup, please sign your child out at the front desk. We ask that you make contact with your child's teacher to ensure that they are aware that your child has been picked up. This is especially important when children are on our playground.

You are responsible for the supervision of your child before their teacher has signed them into their classroom and after their teacher has signed them out of their classroom. Please do not let your child wander unattended through the center.

Alternate Pickup

For your child's safety, Hugs-n-Hearts has included a form in the enrollment packet, on which parents may give names and physical descriptions of persons, other than the child's parent/legal guardian, who are authorized to pick up your child from the center. Any time an alternate will be coming to pick your child up we ask that you inform your child's teacher and the front desk in advance. Any alternate pick up that arrives at the center to pick up will be asked to show a valid driver's license as proof of identification. Please instruct your alternate pick-up to ring the doorbell at the front entrance. Please do not share our security code with ANYONE other than parents/legal guardians.

Attendance/Absences from Hugs-N-Hearts

Every child's attendance will be noted by the staff on the classroom roster. Time of arrival and departure will be recorded.

If your child will not be attending on their scheduled day, please inform the center

in person, by phone, by email, or through the Tadpoles app. Tuition is not pro-rated or adjusted for absences.

****If your child attends another program, such as the Olentangy Special Needs Preschool, you MUST inform us if your child will not be returning to Hugs-n-Hearts on the bus.

Holidays and Closings

The center will be closed in observance of the holidays listed on the annual Hugs-n-Hearts calendar included with this parent handbook. The date in which the center closes in observance of the holiday is subject to change from year to year based on the day of the week in which the holiday falls. Parents will receive closure information prior to the start of each calendar year in order to allow ample time for alternate arrangements to be made.

Due to hazardous weather and road conditions, Hugs-n-Hearts will close when a Level 3 warning has been issued for either Franklin or Delaware County, irrespective of whether or not the public schools are closed or delayed. Hugs-n-Hearts also reserves the right to close the center early or open on a 2-hour delay. The Owner/Director will make this decision if weather and driving conditions are unsafe for staff and families. Any closings will be broadcast on all major local TV stations as well as noted on our center's website @ hugsnheartselc.com, and sent as an emergency alert through the Tadpoles app. Hugs-n-Hearts makes opening/closing decisions in as timely a manner as possible.

Tuition is not pro-rated for these holidays and weather closings.

Medication

In the event that you complete a Request for Administration of Medication form and/or a Child Medical/Physical Care Plan, you authorize Hugs-n-Hearts to administer medication and care to your child in accordance with the instructions on the form(s). You represent and warrant the accuracy and completeness of information provided on any Request for Administration of Medication form, Child Medical/Physical Care Plan, or any other form you provide to us. These forms must be updated annually. Hugs-n-Hearts cannot administer medication without the completed, up-to-date, above mentioned forms. We cannot keep medication at the center once the Request for Administration form, the Child Care Plan form, or the medication itself expires. Hugs-n-Hearts is not responsible for missing or insufficient information or medication resulting in harm to your child. You are responsible to meet with your child's teacher(s) and front desk administrator to inform them of any medication and care instructions pertaining to your child. Medication will be stored in a designated area and may not be carried by your child or kept in your child's backpack, lunch box or diaper bag.

Administration of Medication

If your child has a modified diet, food supplement, or medication to be administered while attending the center a "Request for Administration of Medication" form must be completed. The form requires that the following information is thoroughly completed:

1. Type of medication.
2. Child's name, date of birth, and weight.
3. Name of Medication.
4. Exact dosage.
5. The specific time at which the medication should be administered.
6. Period of time to administer (no more than 3 consecutive days for a non-prescribed medication).
7. Parent's signature and date.

Prescription medication must be sent to the center in the original container with the prescription label attached and will only be administered in accordance with the instructions on the label.

Over the counter medications must be in the original container, clearly labeled with the child's name, and will only be administered in accordance with label instructions. We cannot administer any over the counter medication for more than 3 consecutive days in a 14-day period, or exceed the recommended dosage without written instructions from a physician. A "Child Medical/Physical Care Plan" which outlines symptoms and treatment procedures may be required.

All medications must be checked in at the front desk (NOT LEFT IN THE CLASSROOM) so that they may be placed in the kitchen/staff room in a designated area which is up and out of reach of children, including school-aged children. Medications will only be administered by a trained staff member. Lotions, sunscreen, ointments, diaper creams, and cough drops also require the appropriate medication administration form to be completed. These may be kept in the classroom in a designated area and out of reach from all children, including school-aged children. These items, or any other medication, may not be kept in your child's backpack or diaper bag.

Food supplements and modified diets will require a physician's statement and a "Child Medical/Physical Care Plan" to be completed by the child's parent.

Respiratory inhalers, Epi-Pens, and other emergency medications will accompany the child off-sight for class fieldtrips.

Communicable Disease Policy

All children will be observed as they enter the center each day for signs of communicable disease. This responsibility will be given to a person trained in the recognition and management of communicable diseases.

The following precautions will be taken for a child suspected of having a communicable disease:

- A. The center's designated staff members who are trained in Communicable Disease recognition will notify the parent or guardian by phone of the child's condition. If a parent cannot be reached by phone, they

will be contacted by email.

B. A child with the following symptoms will be immediately isolated and discharged to his or her parent or guardian:

1. Diarrhea (more than two abnormally loose stools within 24 hrs).
2. Sever or persistent coughing, causing the child to become red in the face or to make a whooping sound.
3. Difficult or rapid breathing.
4. Yellowish skin or eyes.
5. Conjunctivitis-redness of the eye or eyelid, thick and purulent (pus) drainage, matted eyelashes, burning, itching or eye pain.
6. A temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit in combination with any other signs of illness.
7. Untreated, infected skin patches, unusual spots or rashes.
8. Unusually dark urine or gray or white stool.
9. Stiff neck with an elevated temperature.
10. Evidence of lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestation.
11. Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
12. Vomiting

Children who show signs of illness will be isolated in the lobby, kitchen, office, or Li-Bear-y, and the parent will be notified by phone. The ill child will remain with a staff member comfortably seated or on a cot until the parent arrives. Blankets, pillows and soiled clothing will be sent home to be laundered. The affected cot will be disinfected. Parents will be notified by a sign on the door or via Tadpoles if we learn that children have been exposed to a known communicable disease.

Children may return to the center when they have been free of fever and other symptoms for at least 24 hours or have completed 24 hours of a prescribed antibiotic. If they are not symptom free, a signed doctor's note will be required stating that the child has been seen and is not contagious.

Safety Policies/Emergency Plans

1. No child will be left alone or unsupervised.
2. Parents are asked to escort their child into the center each morning and **sign the child's time of arrival in the sign-in book located at the desk in the front lobby. The same procedure should be followed when signing the child out in the evening.** Any time that an alternative person will be picking up your child, please let teachers and administrators know and make a note of the change in the sign-in book.
3. Parents should escort their child to his/her classroom. Parents are responsible for the child until he or she has reached the classroom and the teacher is made aware of his or presence. Please DO NOT drop your child off outside or in the lobby. Always be certain that the teacher responsible for your child at the end of

the day is aware that you are picking up. (This is especially important if you arrive while the children are outside on our playground).

4. Each classroom is equipped with a telephone so that all staff persons have access to communication in the event of an emergency.

5. All staff members are mandated reporters of child abuse. If staff have suspicions that a child is being abused or neglected, they **MUST** make a report to the local children's services. The owner/director will immediately be notified of suspected child abuse or neglect.

6. Hugs-n-Hearts has devised several procedures to follow in the event that an emergency would occur while a child is in our care. In the event of a fire, tornado, gas leak, loss of power or water, or a precautionary lockdown, staff would follow the written instructions posted in each classroom, describing emergency evacuation routes and/or the procedures to be followed to assure that children are safe in the building or have arrived at the designated evacuation spot. In order to prepare children for the unlikely need to evacuate, we conduct monthly fire drills, and periodic tornado and lock-down drills. Should we need to evacuate due to fire, or the loss of power, heat, or water, our emergency destinations are the front parking lots, the playground areas or one of the other two buildings. Parents will be contacted through Tadpoles as soon as possible stating that we have been evacuated and where you can pick up your child. If a parent cannot be reached, we will attempt to contact the emergency contacts listed on your child's enrollment information. In the case of inclement weather or flood, all children will be safely secured and parents will be contacted via Tadpoles to pick their children up as soon as possible. In the unlikely event there would be an environmental threat or a threat of violence, the staff will secure the children in the safest location possible, contact and follow the directions given by the proper authorities and contact the parents as soon as the situation allows. An incident report would also be provided to the parents if any of the following occur: the child has an illness, accident, or injury which requires first aid; the child receives a bump or blow to the head; the child has to be transported by emergency squad; or an unusual or unexpected event occurs which jeopardizes the safety of the child.

7. In the event that there is a serious incident at the school, we will contact ODJFS and complete a serious incident report by the next business day which will include all details from the incident. Serious incidents include: death of a child at the center, a bump or blow to the head that requires first aid or medical attention, an incident, injury, or illness that requires a child to be removed from the center for medical consultation or treatment, and unusual or unexpected incident which jeopardizes the safety of a child or employee at the center. You authorize us to provide any information related to you, your child, and the services to ODJFS and its representatives. The report will be provided to ODJFS licensing staff and to you within 24 hours of when the incident occurred.

8. Parents are asked to notify the director of any change of address or place of employment so that we are able to reach you in the event of an emergency.

9. The Hugs-n-Hearts buildings are constructed to facilitate one main entrance from which parents and visitors may enter. Each main entrance is equipped with a security system which requires a code to enter the building. Parents are asked **NOT** to give out building security codes. Please have alternate pickups ring the doorbell and a staff member will let them in. This ensures that all persons entering and exiting the buildings pass through the main lobby where a staff person is on duty at all times and will screen unfamiliar individuals/check ID's before being allowed to continue on to the classrooms. *Emergency doors are locked when not in use.

10. Please be aware, if when picking up your child and you do not see his/her teacher (whether they have left for the day or have stepped out of the room) please be sure to notify another staff member that your child is leaving.

11. An emergency plan of action is in place that our entire staff is aware of should a situation occur for a lockdown.

12. In the event that emergency transportation is necessary, Hugs-n-Hearts ELC may utilize EMS to treat and transport your child. You hereby consent to the use of EMS in the event of your child's injury or illness. Hugs-N-Hearts reserves the right to refuse childcare services to parents who refuse to grant consent for transportation to the source of emergency treatment.

Field Trips

Occasional fieldtrips will be scheduled for Pre-K aged children. They are often planned to go along with the weekly learning theme in your child's classroom. Written permission is required whenever a child is to leave the center on a fieldtrip or routine trip. The center will notify you in advance of any planned excursions. Parents are always welcome to join us as chaperones!

Field trips will be conducted under the following safety policies:

1. Each child on a field trip or special outing will have identification attached to himself containing the center's name, address and phone number.
2. Each teacher will have emergency treatment/transportation/enrollment and health information for each child on the outing, as well as all appropriate medications.
3. A first aid box will be available on each bus and at the final destination for each child on the outing.
4. At least two staff members will accompany each field trip with at least one of these staff members being trained in CPR, emergency first aid and communicable disease procedures.

5. Appropriate child restraints will be used while transporting children on all fieldtrips. (Ohio law requires that children must be transported in an approved child safety seat until they are 4 years of age and weigh at least 40 pounds. All other children should be properly restrained with a safety belt).
6. Children will be transported for all trips via Hugs-n-Hearts school buses and will be under the direct supervision of a specified staff member.

Swimming and Water Safety

Toddlers and preschoolers may participate in water games on the center playground during the summer months. Water tables and sprinklers will be supervised by staff at all times and will be emptied and sanitized after each use. Wading pools will not be used at any time.

Records Release Policy

If you wish to have your child's records released from Hugs-n-Hearts ELC to any third party, you must sign a written release before we can provide any documents. Examples of records include Child Medical Statements, progress reports, Tadpoles reports, etc.

Parking

Parents should use extreme caution when driving up to and away from the center. Please park only in designated parking spaces and never in front of the entrance doors, as this is very dangerous. Under no circumstances should a car be left in the parking lot unattended with the motor running. Please enter and exit the parking area at a reduced speed and ABSOLUTELY NO vehicle movement should occur in the lots when the elementary school buses are dropping off or picking up.

Extra Child Care by Hugs-n-Hearts Staff

Employees of Hugs-n-Hearts Early Learning Center are free to provide additional child care services to Hugs-n-Hearts clients on evenings and weekends. Hugs-n-Hearts is not liable for any employee performing child care services outside the center.

Breast Feeding

For mothers wishing to breastfeed or pump onsite, the office or Li-Bear-y are available for use.

Acts of God

We shall not be liable or responsible to you, nor be deemed to have defaulted or breached this Agreement, for any failure or delay in fulfilling or performing any term of this Agreement when and to the extent such failure or delay is caused by or results from acts or circumstances beyond our reasonable control including, without limitation, acts of God, flood, fire, earthquake, explosion, governmental actions, war, invasion or hostilities (whether war is declared or not), terrorist threats or acts, riot, or other civil unrest,

national emergency, revolution, insurrection, epidemic, lockouts, severe weather, strikes or other labor disputes (whether or not relating to our workforce), or restraints or delays affecting vendors or contractors, or inability or delay in obtaining supplies of adequate or suitable materials, materials or telecommunication breakdown or power outage.

Center Parent Information

The center is licensed to operate legally by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. This license is posted in a noticeable place for review.

A toll-free telephone number is listed on the center's license and may be used to report a suspected violation of the licensing law or administrative rules. The licensing rules governing child care are available for review at the center.

The administrator and each employee of the center is required, under section 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code, to report their suspicions of child abuse or child neglect to the local public children's services agency.

Any parent of a child enrolled in the center shall be permitted unlimited access to the center during all hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided by the center, or evaluating the premises. Upon entering the premises, the parent, or guardian, shall notify the Administrator of his/her presence.

The Administrator's hours of availability and child/staff ratios are posted in a noticeable place in the center for review.

The licensing record, including licensing inspection reports, complain investigation reports, and evaluation forms from building and fire departments, is available for review upon written request from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

It is unlawful for the center to discriminate in the enrollment of children upon the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin or disability in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 104 Stat. 32,42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.

For more information about child care licensing requirements as well as how to apply for child care assistance, Medicaid health screenings and early intervention services for your child, please visit <http://jfs.ohio.gov/cdc/families.stm>