

PARENT HANDBOOK

I Am! I Can! Preschool & Daycare Center, Inc.
3707 Grant Drive
Johnsburg, IL 60051
1-815-363-1333/phone
1-815-363-1333/fax

We serve children ages 2-8/The center is open 12 months of the year

Goals, Purposes, & Services:

To provide opportunities for being with other children in a setting conducive to the development of wholesome social relationships.

To provide appropriate experiences that contribute to the developmental needs of the child.

To provide opportunities for meaningful play that is based on the child's individual needs, interests and abilities that will build important foundations for future reading skills and other academic pursuits.

To help children become confident learners by letting them try out their own ideas and experience success, and by helping them acquire learning skills such as the ability to solve problems, ask questions, and use words to describe their ideas, observations and feelings.

GROUPING AND STAFFING

Age of children	Staff/child ratio	Maximum group size
Two years	1 to 8	16
Three years	1 to 10	20
Four years	1 to 10	20
Five years/school age	1 to 20	20
Five years to 8	Before and after school care	

Staff is trained to follow the DCFS staff/ratio standards and if not present replaces themselves with another qualified staff member.

UPON ARRIVAL EACH CHILD WILL NEED TO BE SIGNED IN /UPON DEPARTURE EACH CHILD SIGNED OUT

UPON ARRIVAL DAILY EACH CHILD WILL NEED TO WASH THEIR HANDS (This stops the spread of germs)

Daily schedule for preschool and daycare programs/hour of operation/Monday thru Friday

- 6:00 - 7:00 Morning breakfast snack (choice of cereal and milk)
- 7:00 - 9:00 Creative play
- 9:00 - 11:30 Structured theme based curriculum – Music – Art – Circle Time – Snack - Outside play
- 11:45 - 12:30 Lunch and stories
- 12:30 - 2:30 All day children will have rest time using their own cot and rest in a soothing environment
- 2:30 – 2:45 Snack
- 3:00 – 6:00 Outside or inside play (centers open for play and exploration)

DAILY SIGN IN/OUT

All children will need to be signed in/out on a daily basis (Sign in/out sheets are located by the door of each classroom).

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Parents must inform the center of special needs of their children before enrollment so we can determine if the staff and program is suited for the child. Special needs must be written out by parents and information will be kept in the child’s file.

DIAPER PROCEDURE

Untrained children should have an adequate supply of disposable diapers, wipes and gloves for diapering at the center. We will send you a note when your diaper supply is low. Please send the diapers and wipes immediately. I Am! I Can! requires the use of disposable diapers. If your child has diaper rash or any other condition that requires the use of a medication, written permission is needed. We follow the guidelines from DCFS while changing diapers. The center will work with parents on potty training routines that they wish us to follow. The center can also offer suggestions that we have found to work in the center.

CHILD HAND WASHING – HYGIENE

Hand washing is the single most effective method of reducing illness and the spread of germs. Children will be instructed and assisted to wash hands just as adults do. The proper procedure is: 1) Wet hands with running water 2) Use liquid soap 3) Wash front to back of hand to finger tips using a scrubbing, over and under motion for about as long as singing “Happy Birthday”. Rinse with running water 4) Dry hands with paper towels 5) Dispose of paper towel in a closed, lined trash can.

CHILDREN’S PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Children’s belongings should be clearly labeled with their name. A complete change of clothing is requested to be at the center at all times (shirt, pants, underwear, socks) in case a child needs to change. Please send the children in clothing that is comfortable and easy to take off for toileting purposes. They will get messy outside and during some of our projects. **Please change clothes seasonally. No flip flops or bodysuits allowed.** All shoes must have a back strap or a back on them.

SANITATION

Food handlers have a Food Service Sanitation Certificate.
Toys are cleaned on a regular basis. Toys that are put into a mouth are cleaned and sanitized on a need basis.

ADMISSIONS: NON-DISCRIMINATION

I Am! I Can! may not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, religion, creed, color, national origin, or source of payment. All children are welcome here.

ADMISSION PROCEDURE

Parent and child orientation which includes a tour of classroom and school.

FEES/PAYMENT OF BILLS

Pre-school fees are due by the first of each month.

All day fees are due the last day of the week; the week before service. Please bring payments to the office in an envelope with your child's name and place in the basket marked "checks". If the center receives a bounced check; all checks thereafter will need to be cashier checks or payment will need to be made in cash (cash receipts will be written). NSF fees will be applied.

Extra day and extra time: Payments to be made before scheduled day or the morning of extra service.

REFUNDS

There are no refunds on registration fees. If daycare or preschool is pre-paid past the 2 week withdraw period, then funds will be refunded.

FIRST DAY AT THE CENTER

Children often cry the first few times they are left. Try a brief goodbye. Delaying departure is hard on the child and the parent, as both become more upset and reinforce each other's fear feelings. If your child is upset when you leave the center, feel free to call the center back after some time to check on your child's progress. We will call you if your child does not settle down. Most children quiet down quickly, they are reassured by the teacher and become interested in the toys and other children.

On the first day you should bring the following items:

Any forms not yet completed and first full payment

A complete change of clothing, weather appropriate, outside apparel

Diapers and wipes if not potty trained

All day children will need a small blanket no bigger than 30" x 45" and favorite stuffed beanie sized animal

GENERAL CURRICULUM AREAS (LANGUAGE/LITERACY/COMMUNICATION/SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT/PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT/HEALTH & WELLBEING/ART/SCIENCE/MATH)

Our school implements the Creative Curriculum and also implements Instructional Learning

Art – We use a variety of materials so the child may experience the joy of creating by cutting, gluing, coloring and painting. Art may be used for instructive purposes such as identification of shapes, learning to follow oral instructions, sequencing steps and learning various skills, such as cutting and pasting. Activities are geared to the child's level and are concerned with the process of creating instead of the final product.

Science – A variety of science materials will be out for exploration by the child in learning centers and books. Science study increases vocabulary and general knowledge, encourages curiosity, helps the child discover natural laws, and helps the child become more aware of his/her surrounding world.

Music – Music is used to express emotions, reinforce subject material, and as a source of joy. We use tapes, CD's, records, rhythm instruments, lummi sticks, scarves, singing, clapping, and body movement.

Group Time – This is a period which serves as a vehicle for teaching a wide variety of subjects. It often includes finger plays, stories, games, songs, and discussion centered around one topic. This topic is the basis for our weekly themes, which may include Ocean, Dinosaurs, Numbers, Shapes, Animals, etc.

Small Muscle/Large Muscle – Through manipulation table toys, games, and other activities, small muscle coordination grows. A variety of small motor toys are offered and changed to coordinate with the weekly theme. Children build large muscle coordination through outside play and indoor activities.

Colors – Curriculum goals involve the children knowing about the spectrum of colors in the rainbow. Children should be able to name colors and identify colors of various objects.

Animals – Animal themes create opportunities for preschoolers to learn about the world and the environment.

TRANSITION TO A NEW ROOM

When a child is approaching the age at which they will move up to the next room, they will be slowly accustomed to the change by Staff. Staff will occasionally take them for visits to the next room and explain to the child as well as the parents about the differences in the next room.

The parents and staff and the Director will determine together a child's readiness to move up to the next group. Such movements will occur when vacancies are available.

TRANSITION ACTIVITIES

Children in 4/5 age classrooms are read stories about moving onto kindergarten.

Children in 4/5 age classrooms have group discussions about moving onto kindergarten.

I Am! I Can! staff helps in coordinating first day of school bus riding with parent's involvement.

PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Effective communication between staff and parents is essential to the well-being of the children.

Communication takes place in day-to-day conversation.

Initial meeting with parents: When you enroll your child, the director will show you through the center and answer any questions you may have. You may wish to share concerns about your child with the director. Please tell us if your child has special traits of which the teachers should be aware.

Open houses – In August we have a one hour informational open house for all parents; we also have an open house for children and their families.

Please feel free to call the school at any time; if a teacher is busy, they will call you back as soon as possible.

Parents meetings are offered in September in which the teachers provide one hour of classroom information; pertaining to each individual classroom.

Parent Information Board – Each classroom has an information board located by their entrance door.

Monthly information, newsletters and interesting happenings will be posted on the boards.

Monthly Calendars - Each classroom will have a monthly calendar posting what the classroom will be learning and working on throughout the month.

I AM! I CAN! Newsletter – The center newsletter is monthly and will contain information that is pertaining to the entire school.

Parent – Teacher Conferences

This will be set up if a parent or teacher feels that there is a need to set up a time to discuss care or an individual child.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents may volunteer at specific times of the school year for journaling, field trips and certain party days. We have an "open door" policy and are proud of our school at all times. Please feel free to visit at any time.

SNACKS/NUTRITION

The center provides a morning and afternoon snack. This includes a beverage of juice or water and food items of crackers, animal cookies, friendship fruit salad or possibly a birthday treat.

THE CENTER DOES NOT ALLOW FOOD TO BE BROUGHT FROM HOME UNLESS IT IS FOR A RESTRICTED DIET (ALLERGIES)

LUNCHES

Lunch is served at 11:45 daily. Monthly menus are posted in the hallways. Lunches consist of a protein (meat) vegetable, fruit and possibly a bread. Milk or water is served with lunch. The center does not allow food to be brought in from home unless the child is on a restricted diet or has food allergies.

MAKE UP DAYS

There are NO make-up days or trading of missed days. Due to the licensing standards we cannot add more children to classrooms than we are licensed for.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

On the days when a staff member is ill or absent there will be a substitute to assist in the daily activities.

ABUSE/NEGLECT OF A CHILD

Abuse or neglect of a child will be reported by staff to DCFS if it is suspected. We are legally required to report any suspected abuse or neglect.

WITHDRAWALS

When the time comes to withdraw your child from the center, two weeks written notice is required. Staff members will gather your child's possessions for you on the child's last day. Please pay your bill in full before your child's last day at the center.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

In the event of misunderstandings, personality conflicts, or specific complaints against the center staff or about the center policies, parents are encouraged to make an appointment with the director to remedy such problems. Good communication and interpersonal relationships make problem solving much easier. Please take the time to get to know the staff and to let them know you.

SNOW DAYS AND WEATHER RELATED CLOSINGS

Due to the following circumstances beyond our control the school will be closed. No electricity, blizzard conditions, or any other weather condition that compromises the health and safety of the children.

Radio: Listen to radio station 105.5 (FM) or WGN Radio 720 (AM) on bad weather days. The radio stations will announce if we are closed.

Television: You can also watch on television CBS 2, Chicago 5, ABC 7, WGN 9, Fox 32, or CLTV News for weather related closings.

Online: www.EmergencyClosingCenter.com

Search Information: Facility Name: I AM! I CAN! Inc. Location: Johnsburg Phone #1-815-363-1333

You can try to call the school and if there is electricity the answering machine will inform you of a closing.

*There are no refunds or make up days for the above circumstances.

Please use your own personal discretion!! If your roads are icy and you feel it is dangerous; please do not risk driving to school.

Due to the many storms we have during summer; the following policy exists if we are already in school and the electricity goes out. No electricity compromises the health and safety of the children.

If the electricity goes out we will wait for ½ of an hour. If after ½ hour goes by and we still do not have electricity; we will call parents to pick up their children. Phone calls will probably take ½ hour to be completed and many parents work up to an hour or more from school. Our emergency lighting is good for approximately three (3) hours. Please pick up your children as quickly as possible.

HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

Holiday closings that fall during the week are paid for. These include Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thursday & Friday of Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve & Day, and also New Year's Eve & Day. Paid holiday closing funds are used for in-service fees, education & first aid/CPR training for all staff.

HEALTH EPIDEMIC CLOSINGS

If a pandemic flu or health epidemic (determined by the McHenry Health Department) breaks out our school will be closed to protect the health and safety of the children and staff. Listen to 105.5 radio station or call the school if in question. Also, a sign will be posted on the front door informing you of the status of the epidemic.

DISASTER PLAN

In the event that we would have to evacuate the building we would go across the street to the McHenry Municipal office. If the entire area had to be evacuated the McHenry Township would transport us to a safe area (This cannot be determined until time of disaster). Township phone# 1-815-385-5605 (**Risk Management Plan can be viewed online at www.iamican.info**)

TORNADO DRILLS

Tornado drills are conducted from April-September, and a log is kept. In the event of a tornado, the safest place is the basement and we would take the children down until the weather scanner relays that it is safe enough to return to classrooms. Teachers take emergency cards & roll calls to the basement. The basement has supplies if needed & a land line. If you are facing the building, the basement door is the furthest door to the left.

FIRE DRILLS

A monthly fire drill is conducted the entire year, and a log is kept. In the event of a fire we would evacuate to the playground to the appropriate classroom assigned safe areas.

HEALTH

Your child's health is a matter of major importance to all of us. Upon enrollment, you must file with us a health form signed by a physician. Certain immunizations are required (a staff member will inform you on the specifics).

Your child may be sent home if any of the following symptoms appear during the day. In such cases, your child will be immediately isolated from the others and you will be contacted. Also, keep your child home if he or she:

Has a fever or has had one during the previous 24 hour period.

Has been on an antibiotic for less than 24 hours.

Has a heavy nasal discharge and a constant cough.

Has conjunctivitis (pink eye).

Has symptoms of a possible communicable disease (These are usually sniffles, reddened eyes, sore throat, headache and abdominal pain, plus a fever). Please notify the school at once if your child does have a communicable disease.

ONCE YOUR CHILD HAS BEEN SENT HOME FROM SCHOOL SICK THEY MUST REMAIN OUT OF SCHOOL FOR AT LEAST A 24 HOUR PERIOD.

MEDICATIONS GIVEN AT THE CENTER

Medication forms must be filled out in entirety (forms located in office); with written permission to administer medication. The center must follow written instructions on prescription or non-prescription medicine.

YOUR CHILD MAY COME TO SCHOOL

If there has been an exposure to a communicable disease but the school has been notified so that the incubation period can be discussed and it can be determined on what dates your child should stay home.

There are certain illnesses that will require a physician's permission to return to school. If a child becomes acutely ill they will be isolated in the office with the Director until they can be picked up. They will be excluded from the program until a physician has put in writing a release for them to come back to school.

ACCIDENTAL INJURY

In case of an accidental injury we will make an immediate attempt to contact a parent. If necessary we will call 911. Until the arrival of a parent, an ambulance, or paramedics, the Director will need to make all necessary decisions. You will be expected to assume responsibility for any resultant expense not covered by our \$25,000.00 no fault, secondary insurance. All charges will be submitted to your insurance carrier and also to our carrier. The school will maintain a parent signed consent form agreeing to this provision. It is to your child's benefit that you keep the school up to date on phone numbers, emergency numbers and other pertinent contact information.

ALLERGIES

All children with allergies, asthma or epi-pens will need authorization and permission from parents and a physician for administration of medications. Two (2) epi-pens will need to be supplied. Parents will bring in medications in prescription bottles that are clearly marked (please pick up a form in the office if needed).

HEAD LICE

Children will not be allowed back at the center until the morning after the first treatment. Exclusion from the center is required until the child is lice and nit free.

AUTHORIZATION TO PICK UP CHILD

No child will be released to a person not authorized by a parent to pick the child up. We must have written or verbal authorization in this respect. Even though a person is authorized on an emergency card or registration form to drop or pick up your child, we still need to have a note signed and dated by the parent confirming who will be transporting your child. This gives the staff peace of mind that the person your child is released to has your approval for that specific date. This should also give you peace of mind that the staff will not release a child unless we have written confirmation pertaining to that particular day.

RELEASING INFORMATION ON CHILDREN

All personal information pertaining to the child; (developmental, social, emotional and behavior) will only be discussed with the child's parents. We will contact parents by note or phone call.

BIRTHDAY TREATS / INVITATIONS

If your child has a birthday coming up we would like to help them celebrate. Let one of the teachers know which day you will bring a treat in. We will mark it on the calendar and celebrate with your child on that day. Granola bars, donut holes & fruit snacks are good treats. No PEANUT products please. No homemade treats are allowed per health department. Parents sending out invitations from the center must include all of the children in the classroom; invitations may not be in an envelope and a copy given to the office.

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE

"It is the slow, bit by bit, time-consuming task of helping children see the sense in acting in a certain way".

We show respect for all children. 2. We try to anticipate unacceptable behavior and attempt to avoid problems before they occur. 3. We act consistently 4. We talk quietly to the children. 5. We change activities if children appear to be getting out of control. 6. If all else fails, we give the child a (few minutes) time out followed by a short explanation of why he/she was separated from the group. WE DO NOT RAISE OUR VOICES, PHYSICALLY HURT A CHILD OR UNDERMINE A CHILD'S SELF-ESTEEM.

SAFETY IN PARKING LOT/JOINING OUR CLASSROOM

Always hold your child's hand in our busy parking lot and walk your child to his/her classroom and sign children in.

NO PETS OR ANIMALS ARE ALLOWED

SMOKING/TOBACCO USE/PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES/WEAPONS

There is no smoking, tobacco use or prohibited substances allowed on the center property. No weapons of any sort on property.

PLAYING OUTDOORS

Always dress your child as if they are going to play outdoors. Layer your child's clothing if you are not sure what the day will bring. When the weather is below 45 degrees send boots, winter jacket, snow pants, mittens, hat and gloves. All children must go outside to play. If the weather is 10 degrees above zero including wind chill we play outside. On days that it is colder or raining we will stay inside and do indoor activities.

LATE PICK UPS

A child who is left at the center after the respective pick up time of either 11:30 or 6:00 is considered late. A warning will be issued first and then the second time the parent will be charged the late fee amount (See tuition policy). The parent will sign a form the teacher will provide that will state the time of arrival and the amount due. ***Please have a backup plan for days you are running behind or stuck in traffic.

If a parent is late picking up their child/children the following steps will be taken:

- 1) Staff will call each parent of the child
- 2) Staff will call persons listed for authorized, alternate pick up
- 3) Staff will call persons listed for authorized, emergency pick up
- 4) If, no one can be reached and we have not heard from either parent by (11:45 pre-school) (6:15 daycare) (15 minutes after preschool or closing), then authorities will be notified. School will request police assistance in locating the parents.

BITING POLICY

1. If your child bites 2 times (as long as the skin on the other person is not broken) on any one day then your child will be sent home for the remainder of that day.
2. If at any time the skin is broken due to a bite then the child will be asked to go home immediately.
3. If the biting continues and is adding undue stress on the other children or the environment it may become necessary to terminate childcare arrangements. This is not something that I Am! I Can! likes to do and please know that this would be a last resort.

911

In an emergency 911 will be called and parents will be notified immediately.

PESTICIDE POLICY

The state requires that we notify you of our center's pesticide policy:

The choice of using a pesticide will be based on a review of all other available options. Selected non-chemical pest management methods will be implemented whenever possible. It is the policy of this school to utilize IPM principles to manage pest populations adequately. The full range of alternatives will be considered. When it is determined that a pesticide must be used; the least hazardous material will be chosen. We will notify parents of upcoming treatments. Notices will be posted in designated areas at school and sent home with students.