**ADVENT CHRISTIAN CHILD CARE CENTER**

Welcome to Advent Christian Child Care Center!

The Advent Christian Child Care Center is a ministry of the Mechanicsville Advent Christian Church. A five member Board of Directors, appointed by the Church Executive Board, governs the Center. Our purpose is to provide to our community a Christian environment in which children can grow spiritually, physically, socially, mentally and emotionally.

Our objectives as a Child Care Center are:

* To provide a Christian environment for your child’s growth in all areas of his/her development.
* To help the child develop Christian values and character.
* To help the child achieve readiness for public school.
* To provide the child with experiences in group activities and self-expression with those of his/her own age.
* To provide opportunities for church, school, and home to work together in meeting and developing the child’s needs.

Our philosophy reflects our understanding children need play and learning activities; and through developmentally appropriate practices they discover concepts of God, His creation, and His ways. We hope to assist each child in answering “Who am I? Who are you? What is the world like? And how do I relate to my world and the people in it?”

Daily activities will be developmentally appropriate for all age groups and provide opportunities for teacher-directed, self-directed and self-chosen tasks and activities.

An Administrator/Director is responsible for the day to day operations of the Center and partners with the Assistant Directors and the other Center teachers to ensure a safe environment, and a loving and secure atmosphere during the most formative years of a child’s life.

As a non-profit organization, our Center’s financial operation depends entirely upon the weekly income from tuition.

The Center is licensed by the State of Virginia and is periodically inspected by the Department of Social Services. We adhere to all state health and safety regulations and are also inspected by the Hanover Health and Fire Departments.

Please refer to this booklet if questions should arise concerning our policies and procedures. Supplements will be distributed if any changes occur, to keep your records current. If you have any questions that are not answered, please feel free to call our office.

Thank you for the opportunity to minister to your family.

Sincerely,

Advent Christian Church Child Care Board

**Children Learn What They Live**

If a child lives with criticism,

He learns to condemn.

If a child lives with hostility,

He learns to fight.

If a child lives with ridicule,

He learns to be shy.

If a child lives with shame,

He learns to feel guilty.

If a child lives with tolerance,

He learns to be patient.

If a child lives with praise,

He learns to appreciate.

If a child lives with fairness,

He learns justice.

If a child lives with security,

He learns to have faith.

If a child lives with approval,

He learns to like himself.

If a child lives with acceptance and friendship,

He learns to find love in the world.

 By Dorothy Law Nolte

**ADVENT CHRISTIAN CHILD CARE DIRECTORY**

Pastor: Heath Simpson 746-0895

Youth Pastor: Amy Williams 746-0895

Administrator: Pam Dicken 746-0279

 746-3906

Program Director: Gail Gathright 746-0279

 746-3906

School-age Coordinator: Jordyn Schloss 746-0279

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**Table of Contents**

 Welcome Letter………………………………………………………….…..…...1

 “Children Learn What They Live” Poem……………………………….…..…....2

 Advent Directory……………………………………………………..…..………3

 General Information…………………………………………………….…..……5

 (Admission, Registration)

 Payment Schedule/Tuition……………………………………….………….…...6

 Late Fees and Expulsion& Returned Check Policies……………………………6

 Activity Fees…………………………………………………………………......6

 Emergency Information…………………………………………………….……7

 Major/Minor Accident Policy and Injury Prevention Plan…….……….………..7

 Medicine Policy………………………………………………………….….…7-8

 Health Records……………………………………………………………….…..8

 Safety…………………………………………………………………………..…9

 Reporting Child Abuse…………………………………………….……..……....9

 Waiting Lists……………………………………………………..………..…....10

 Child Custody Agreements……………………………………………………..10

 Chain of Command………………………………………………………...…...10

 Programs & Services…………………………………………………….…......10

 Parent Orientation…………………………………………………………........10

 Vacation Policy……………………………………………………………..…..11

 Removing Children from Program………………………………………....…..11

 Arrival & Departure Procedures and Late Pick-Up……….…………………11-12

 Accepting & Storing Children’s Belongings………………………………..12-13

 (Clothing, Back Packs, Nap Articles, Toys, Electronics, Food)

 Discipline…………………………………………………………………...13-14

 Transportation Policy……………………………………………………….….15

 Illnesses……………………………………………………………………..….16

 Weather Closing Policy……………………………………………………..…16

 Addendums (Licensing Info, Current Fee Sheet, Remind 101)

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

 Center hours:

* 7:00 a.m. to 5:45 p.m. (Full day students), Monday through Friday.
* 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (Half day students), Monday through Friday.

Holidays:

The Center closes on the following holidays:

* Friday before Labor Day (Staff Training)
* Labor Day
* Thanksgiving Day
* Friday following Thanksgiving
* Close at 3:00 p.m. Christmas Eve
* Christmas Day
* Friday following Christmas if it falls on Thursday.
* Close at 3:00 p.m. on New Year’s Eve
* New Year’s Day
* Memorial Day
* July 4th

If a holiday falls on a Saturday, the Center will be closed on the Friday before the holiday. If a holiday falls on Sunday, the Center will be closed on the following Monday. **Full tuition is paid for weeks containing holidays for full-time and part-time students.**

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Application for our Pre-school Program requires completion of our registration forms, completed physical form by your child’s physician after examination and finally payment of our registration fee. (This fee is non-refundable)

YEARLY REGISTRATION

A registration fee of $50.00 is due in March, for the following school year, which starts in September and runs through August. If your child begins child care in March or after, the registration fee will be pro-rated to $25.00 through August.

**PAYMENT SCHEDULE/TUITION**

Payments/tuition are due on Monday or the 1st day of the week your child attends. **Tuition will NOT be refunded due to absence for illness or travel.**

Please make all checks payable to Advent Christian Child Care Center. We do accept credit card payments, but we will not accept rewards card as we are charged huge fees.

**IMPORTANT: Print your child’s name on the check or credit card receipt.**

If other fees are included in your payment, please print that on your check also. We appreciate that this can be tedious, but it is very helpful in assisting with accuracy of correctly crediting payments.

**LATE FEES AND EXPULSION**

Late fees will be assessed each week that you do not have a zero balance. The first week a $5.00 fee will be charged. The second week of non-payment an additional fee of $10.00 will be charged. The late fee will increase in $5.00 increments. It is imperative tuition is paid on time to avoid late fees and dismissal of your child from the program. After two weeks of non-payment, the parent will receive written notice that payment is past due. **If you have missed three consecutive payments, your child will not be permitted to return until full payment is received.** If you find your family in a hardship situation, please do not hesitate to speak with the Director.

**RETURNED CHECK POLICY**

A RETURN check fee of $30.00 will be charged for processing a returned check. Parents will also be responsible to pay all fees billed by the bank to Advent for any returned check.

**ACTIVITY FEES**

There are frequently scheduled (age appropriate) activities throughout the year. A printed calendar of events is sent home with the children ahead of time. Activity fees for our preschool students are charged/included in the tuition. School-age students will be charged a school year activity fee in September and an additional fee for the summer when most of their activities will occur. The summer fee may be paid in two installments—the first is due by June 15th and the second installment is due by July 15th. For part-time students, the activity fee may be prorated.

 **EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

The Center should be able to contact the parent at any given time during the day. The necessary information is given at the time of enrollment, but must be kept up to date. Any changes should be reported promptly. Also, please provide specific actions to be taken by staff in case of an allergy related emergency involving your child.

**MAJOR AND MINOR ACCIDENT POLICY**

**Minor**: If a child receives any type of mark due to a minor fall, etc., the accident will be recorded on an accident report form. The parents are required to sign the accident report. Please do not hesitate to talk with the Director if there any questions.

**Major:** If a child gets hurt more severely and the teacher has any doubt of the severity due to bleeding, unconsciousness, etc., someone will call 911 while the child is being made as comfortable as possible, using our first aid knowledge.

**INJURY PREVENTION PLAN**

Twice yearly, the Director reviews the accident report file. Upon such review, all injuries will be noted as to how, when and where the accident occurred. The director will carefully consider the number and location of injuries. After careful consideration, preventative measures will be taken to try to lower the number and severity of injuries that seem to occur most often. Recorded injuries that occur less frequently, but stand out as preventable, will be noted as well. Preventative measures such as repositioning staff, changing and/or adding resilient surfacing, removing specific “trouble” equipment may be considered.

**MEDICINE POLICY**

1. Prescription medication shall be given to a child only with written authorization from the parent. This authorization must be written on the proper form and also on the medicine log kept in the medicine lock box.
2. Over-the-Counter medication **will only** be given with the **written consent of the parent and the physician.**  The physician must state the child’s name, the name of the medication, the dosage, the times to be given and the duration of the medicines administration. **We will not give OTC meds without this written consent**. We realize this may be an inconvenience for you, but it will help us lessen the chance for medication errors. Please consider the following alternatives:
3. Keep your child at home or have a back-up sitter who can administer the OTC meds.
4. Come to the Center to administer the meds yourself.
5. Find OTC meds which only need to be given twice a day, (morning & evening), before bringing the child to the Center and after arriving at home.

C. The authorization for administering medication shall be effective for a limited time not to exceed ten days, unless otherwise prescribed by a physician. If a child is on a long term medication, the physician must fill out an authorization form. Each day the medication is to be given, it must be recorded on the medication log.

D. It is Center policy that all medication be labeled with:

The child’s name

The name of the medication

The dosage amount

The times to be given

 E. Prescription medication shall be in the original container with the prescription label

 affixed. (No out of date or expired medicine shall be given.)

 F. All medication shall be kept in a designated, locked place or refrigerator inaccessible

 to children.

G. All medication must be returned to the parent as soon as it is no longer being administered. Any medication left at the Center beyond the dates of administration shall

be disposed of according to the state guidelines.

H. All medications shall be administered only by staff trained in Medication Administration by an approved licensed trainer.

**HEALTH RECORDS**

Every child is required to have a completed physical and updated immunization record. This must be done prior to entering the program. The state also requires all children must have an additional physical with updated immunizations between their 4th and 6th birthdays. We must keep a copy of this updated immunization in our files.

**SAFETY**

We do not allow toys to be brought from home EXCEPT naptime toys. These toys must be soft, without sharp edges. We cannot allow balloons or plastic bags at any time. Shoes must have good tread. No flip-flops o backless shoes are allowed, and we encourage tennis shoes or other durable shoes. Advent also does not allow “sippy cups” or other non-disposable containers at the Center.

**POLICY FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE**

Under Virginia law, teachers, or other persons employed in a public or private school, kindergarten, or preschool program and persons providing full or part-time child care for pay on a regular basis, are required to report suspected child abuse. Reports are made to Hanover Sheriff’s Office, the local police department at 730-6140, or Hanover County Social Services at 365-4100. Reports also can be made to the Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline (1-800-552-7096).

When making a suspected child abuse report, the following information will be given if possible:

* Name, address, and phone number of the child & parents or other persons responsible for the child’s care.
* The child’s age, sex and race.
* Names, ages and relationships of persons who live with the child.
* Whether or not there is a family member who can protect the child.
* Name, address, and phone number of the suspected abuser & his/her relationship to the child.
* The nature and extent of the suspected abuse or neglect.
* Any other pertinent in information.
* Name, address & phone number of the reporting party or the report can be made anonymously.

**CHILD CARE WORKERS WHO FAIL TO REPORT SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT COULD BE CHARGED WITH A MISDEMEANOR. IF FOUND GUILTY, THE FINE RANGES FROM $100 TO $1000.**

**WAITING LIST**

The Center has waiting lists for each program (Preschool & Before/After School). Having a child in one program does not guarantee your child can automatically enter another program. Having a sibling is one program does not automatically guarantee a spot for a second child. Names are placed on a Before/After School waiting list as of the starting date in preschool. The children who have been with us the longest will have the first available spots in the Before/After School Program. We will always follow a “first-come – first serve” policy.

**CHILD CUSTODY**

If a custody agreement applies to your family situation stating sole or joint custody of your child, a copy of the legal agreement must be on file at the Center. Without a copy of the agreement, neither parent nor the custodian can be denied access to the child.

**ORGANIZATIONAL CHAIN OF COMMAND**

The chain of command begins with the Child Care Board, Senior Pastor, the Administrator, Program Director, Program Coordinators, Lead Teachers, Supervisors and Aides. This is posted on the bulletin board in the reception area and the School-age bulletin board for easy reference.

 **PROGRAMS AND SERVICES**

We offer Pre-school for children 2 - 5 years of age. We also offer Before/After School care for 5-12 year olds. Full days, half days and if available, some part time days may be offered. All students must be enrolled at least 2 days per week and they must be the same days each week. You are not allowed to switch days but may add an extra day, when needed, with prior approval from the administration.

 **ORIENTATION**

Parents and children are welcomed and encouraged to visit our facilities prior to enrollment to help bring about a comfort level for both before starting regular attendance. Parents must have an orientation time with the Director prior to or at the time of enrollment. Our Church Pastor may also join the orientation. A group orientation may be offered or individual orientations may be scheduled.

**VACATION TIME**

If your child attends the program from September through August **without interruption,** he/she is entitled to two (2) free weeks of vacation **(one week to be given between September 1st and February 28/29, and the second week between March 1st and August 31st).** If a child is out of the program for the summer or does not attend from September through August, they are **not** entitled to the vacation time. Early termination will result in vacation weeks that have already been taken, to be reimbursed to the Center. Vacation must be taken 5 days at a time, Monday through Friday. Your child must **not** attend Advent during your designated vacation weeks. Vacation request forms must be filled out in advance or you will be billed for those weeks. **Vacation time will not be granted if you have an outstanding balance.**

**REASONS/PROCEDURES FOR REMOVING CHILDREN FROM ROLL**

Parents are required to give at least two (2) weeks’ notice in writing before withdrawing their children from the Center. If notice is not given, tuition payments will be expected. If the Center deems it necessary to dismiss a child, we will make every effort to give two (2) weeks’ notice to parents. However, we reserve the right to remove any children without notice if it is in the best interest of the other children and/or the Center. Each case may vary due to circumstances.

 **ARRIVAL OF CHILDREN**

The Center posts a **sign-in/sign out** sheet in the foyer of the Preschool building and the School-age bulletin board. This sheet must be initialed with time upon arrival of the child. If the child arrives late, the following procedures must be followed:

* The child must be delivered directly to his/her assigned teacher.
* If the class is on a field trip, the child should be delivered to the Director, Administrator or the immediate supervisor on the premises, who will place the child in an alternate class.

**DEPARTURE OF CHILDREN**

Initial with time the appropriate **sign-in/sign-out** sheet.If someone other than the parentor guardian is picking up the child, his/her name must be listed on the registration form as an alternate person. Parents may add new names to the Emergency Contact Form (in writing) at any time. If the staff does not recognize the person picking up a child, they will ask to see identification and may call the parent to verify.

**LATE PICK-UP**

If you are late picking up your child, 5:45 pm (full day students) and 12:00 (half day) students, you will be given a late slip verifying the time you picked up your child and there will be a $2.00 charge for every 5 minutes that you are late. If an authorized person does not show up to pick up your child, the following steps will be taken:

 a. Parents will be called at every available number.

 b. If parents cannot be reached, contact people will be called.

 c. If no one can be reached, two (2) staff will remain with the child.

 d. If no one has picked up the child by 7:00 pm, the police will be notified.

**Note:** For the safety of all**, please park your vehicle in a parking space and turn off your engine** before entering the building to pick up your child.

**ACCEPTING & STORING CHILDREN’S BELONGINGS**

**Clothing:** The children play actively and hard so they need sturdy clothing. They should wear comfortable clothing that they can handle easily in the bathroom. We will be doing messy, fun activities and many times playing on the floor or in the sandbox when outside. Dress them so their play will not be spoiled for fear of getting clothes dirty. Children are required to have a complete change of clothing (including underwear & socks) in their cubby. Clothes, (coats, caps, sweaters, mittens, shoes, blankets, etc.) should be marked well with the child’s name. Also a plastic shoe box sized container must be provided to house these articles.

**Backpacks:** Backpacks are not allowed in preschool. You may use them to carry items to school: empty the backpack and store it in your car. Food and/or medicine can be left accidentally in a backpack or cubby. Any food or medicine left unattended is a potential safety hazard and prohibited.

**Naptime Articles:** Children must bring a small blanket. They may also bring a small pillow with pillow case and a soft sleep toy (all labeled). Bedding and pillow cases need to be taken home to be laundered weekly. **Please do not bring sleeping bags.** All nap articles should fit in the top section of the cubby.

**Toys:** Toys are **NOT** permitted unless there is a special activity such as Show

 N’ Tell Day.

**Electronic Devices in the Before/After School Program:** The use of any electronic device with internet accessibility is prohibited. Such devices include, but are not limited to: Cell phones, DSIs, Lap tops, and MP3 players such as Ipods, etc. Other electronic game devices will be allowed seasonally and or at specifically set days and times. Electric cords to charge games will not be allowed at Advent. Please make sure all games are charged beforehand or battery operated. Any game label “T” for Teen or having an adult oriented label is unacceptable in the child care environment and will not be allowed. Please help your child determine decisions regarding what is acceptable and unacceptable to bring from home.

**Food Policies:** The Center provides two (2) snacks and a hot lunch daily. Menus are posted monthly. Children are not to bring candy, gum, or any food/drink product containing nuts. Children are allowed to bring food from home with prior approval from the administration. (Please advise at time of enrollment any food allergies your child/children may have. **Advent is a totally nut-free Center. Do not bring in any food/drink containing nuts or any foods processed on machines that also process nuts. If it is brought to the Center, it will be thrown out. We must adhere to this policy as it could be a life or death matter for some children or staff.** Parents are allowed to bring in special treats for birthdays and holidays with prior approval from the Lead Teacher with a clear understanding of what type of items may be brought. The snacks may not be homemade (per health department) but must be purchased and must be brought in covered containers, with the ingredients clearly labeled. They should be brought on the day to be used and will be placed in the kitchen (refrigerator when applicable) until time to be served.

Food of any kind brought in by parents is to be given to the teacher or the adult in charge to insure that other children will not have access to the food until the planned time.

All unused portions of food brought by parents will be disposed of or returned to the parent at the end of the day.

 **DISCIPLINE & GUIDANCE POLICY**

At Advent, our goal is to encourage children to learn to make safe and responsible behavior choices. We believe that being treated with respect, teaches respect and by setting limits and boundaries, children will learn acceptable behavior. Limiting privileges when inappropriate behavior is acted out, reinforces the code of the group to which the child is a part. Children need to know that all behaviors have consequences.

Behavior problems will be handled with love and understanding. The teachers will discuss with the children what behaviors are appropriate and inappropriate and remind them of Advent’s rules. All children **are expected** to follow these simple rules.

1. Use inside voices.

2. Use listening ears.

3. Use walking feet.

4. Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself (in your space).

 By following these rules, children learn that they will not be allowed to hurt them- selves or others. Advent will never use corporal punishment. We will redirect

 children and follow **1, 2, 3 Magic** discipline guidelines which give children 3

 chances to obey before being sent to a quiet spot to calm down. The quiet spot

 will be within view of the teacher. There he/she is given space and time to calm

 down. Children will stay in this spot for 1 minute per year of their age.

 Occasionally, children will demonstrate aggressive behavior. Some of these

 behaviors include biting, hitting, kicking, etc. This behavior is not only in-

 appropriate but can be disruptive, destructive or harmful to the child, other

 children, and staff. When aggressive behavior occurs, a child will be sent to the

 quiet spot immediately. An incident report will be written and it must be signed

 by the parent. After 4 incidents have been reported, parents will be called in for

 a conference to discuss the problem behavior with an administrator and the

 child’s teacher. Parents will be told that if another incident happens, the child

 will be suspended for one day. If another aggressive incident occurs upon the

 return of the child, parents will be called to pick up the child immediately and

 he/she will be dismissed from the program. However, if the child’s behavior

 improves while still enrolled, and eight weeks pass without an incident, the

 child’s case will be reviewed and the Center may decide to give the child a

 “clean slate.” The Center reserves the right to suspend or dismiss children

 who demonstrate continued or severe behavior problems. The safety of the

 children in our care is our highest priority.

 If your child is suspended/dismissed due to said behavior, you will not be entitled

 to a refund from fees paid.

 If after a time, a biting child’s behavior improves as the child matures, you may

 be allowed to re-enroll.

 Parental help is essential to ensure the child understands and follows the rules

 Set forth. Cooperation of the parents is vital to quickly resolve any behavior issue.

**TRANSPORTATION POLICY**

The Advent Christian Child Care Center provides transportation for Washington Henry, Pearson’s Corner and Kersey Creek in the afternoon for a nominal fee. We have limited morning transportation. Rural Point students are transported by Hanover County Public School buses in the afternoon with limited transportation in the morning, per Hanover County,. The Center also provides transportation for all planned field trips using the vans owned by the Center. Parents will be notified ahead of time via a monthly activity sheet regarding planned field trips. Parents are always given the option of having a child participate or not on some trips during the school year. During the summer, parents may not have this option. We do not have staff available to keep children at the Center while others are on field trips.

All drivers shall have a valid Virginia State license. The vehicles shall be in safe operating condition and shall display current inspection stickers. The drivers shall check the gas, oil, window washing fluid and tire pressure. Vehicles shall be clean and free of any obstructive debris on floors or seats. First aid kits shall be aboard and stocked.

The vehicle shall stop at curb, out of traffic, and on a side street instead of a very busy street. Flashing lights shall be on if the vehicle has them. Adults shall supervise children when boarding or leaving the vehicle. Children shall exit and enter one at a time. Regarding field trips, a signed permission form shall be obtained for each child. Emergency medical authorization and information shall also be aboard for all children on the trip.

The driver shall obey all posted speed limit signs. Doors shall be closed/locked when the vehicle is moving. The driver shall drive in the far right lane except when making left turns. Children shall never be left unattended in a vehicle. Windows shall be opened or closed only with permission of an adult. The driver shall always wear a seat belt. All children must be seated when the vehicle is moving and secured with proper restraints required by the Department of Motor Vehicles. Children shall use quiet voices inside the vehicle and keep all body parts inside the windows at all times. Food and drinks shall be consumed outside the vehicle. Children who are frequently disruptive, causing a hazard for the safe operation of the vehicle, may be barred from participating in any trips. Parents may be asked to provide child safety seats or boosters for children under 8 years of age.

**ILLNESSES**

Please keep your children home if they show any symptoms of illness. Leave bad colds, coughs, and fevers at home. If your child is ill, please notify the Center. If the outside temperature is above freezing, you child will be expected to go outside with the other children during outside time. Following an illness, we will (upon request) keep your child inside for not longer than three days. There is not sufficient staff to remain inside with your child while others are outside. We will try to work with you in the best interest of your child, but we cannot continue to keep children isolated from others. If your child develops a fever, diarrhea, or vomiting while at the Center, you will be notified to pick up your child from the Center. **The child should remain at home until 24 hours after a fever subsides.**

 **WEATHER RELATED CLOSING INFORMATION**

During periods of extreme weather (such as heavy snow and ice) and when conditions are hazardous, Advent will close. Conditions can dictate whether or not the Center closes early, has a delayed opening or closes for the entire day. In the case of a delayed opening Hanover County will not be able to provide morning transportation for all Rural Point students. In the event of a weather related closing, Advent will make every effort to notify you with as much advance notice as possible. We will attempt at least two avenues by which to notify you, either by:

* E-mail. Make sure we have current e-mail addresses.
* WTVR, CBS, Channel 6 News, On-line [www.wtvr.com/closings](http://www.wtvr.com/closings), Please watch for our Center to be listed.
* Remind 101 text messaging system. Enter this number 81010 into your contacts. Then text this message @)0f095 and follow the prompts from Mrs. Dicken.. This is a one way message system. If you sign up for this, you will receive messages by text from our Center. (Additional Smart phone method to sign up for REMIND is found at the end of this handbook.)
* By telephone

If we are closed for a weather related event, parents are required to pay for the first day of closure. If we are closed for two consecutive days, parents will not be charged for the 2nd day or thereafter for each weather event.

**Advent reserves the right to make changes to the policies in this handbook, if it becomes necessary. We will notify parents in writing of any changes**