



**19423 N. Turkey Creek Road  
Morrison, Co 80465**

**(West Ranch Center @ Hwy 285)**

**Office Number 303-697-9125**

**Email: [Littledenco@gmail.com](mailto:Littledenco@gmail.com) or [kidcentralinc@gmail.com](mailto:kidcentralinc@gmail.com)**

**Website [www.littleden.org](http://www.littleden.org)**

**Hours 6:30 am to 6:00pm Monday – Friday**

# Parent Handbook

Thank you for choosing Little Den Early Learning Center for the care of your Child/ren. We are excited to have the opportunity to work with your family. We believe in providing the best care possible. We are continually striving to make changes that will bring about long term success for all children. Each child we care for is important to us. Our challenge is to ensure that every child we come in contact with knows how valuable and important he/she is.

## **Mission Statement**

The Mission of Little Den is to provide the highest quality care available at an affordable rate while maintaining the highest standards achievable with well-trained, quality staff and excellent child/adult ratios.

## **Purpose/Philosophy**

Little Den's goal is to provide quality program. Little Den strives to bring nature into the daily curriculum with hikes, visits to the creek, time to enjoy and observe the nature around us. The center will have daily planned and supervised activities and provide homework help during the school year.

Little Den's philosophy is that children need a supervised environment where they are able to play and learn through various games, crafts, literature, lessons and their own creative endeavors.

Love, understanding, positive development, and high self-esteem are the active ingredients of our pursuit.

At Little Den we believe in providing an environment conducive to your child and knowledge levels. We are a "Developmentally Appropriate Practice" Center. Our children are often up moving around. They are busy playing, learning, talking, exploring, and developing good social skills. This type of environment, although noisier than school atmospheres, helps your child/ren learn valuable social skills while increasing their educational skills. We also focus on helping your child learn that they are unique and that they do count as individuals.

Children learn through interactive experiences. We have created an environment and program that helps them get the experiences they need. They shift from one experience to another, building healthy social interactions with their peers.

## **Eligibility for Participation**

Children must be at least 3 years old and under 15 years old to participate in Little Den's programs.

### **Children with Special Needs**

We, at Little Den, believe that all children should have the opportunity for quality care. Our staff will assess each child to see if we can meet his/her needs. We will do all we can to accommodate and integrate each child with other children. We work with Behavioral Therapist/ Speech Therapist and Occupational Therapist to meet your child's needs.

### **Interpreter**

If English is not your home language, we will help in assisting you. We will find someone local in the community that can help or will resource out to a translator.

### **Resources**

We are in contact with a speech therapist, occupational therapist, behavioral therapist and psychologist that we can get advice from and would be happy to refer your family to if the need comes up. We are here to help you. We do have a parent resource board with information you may find useful. We also have parenting books that are always welcome to borrow. There are many resources available to families from Child Find to our local Conifer Resource Center.

### **Enrollment**

All children must be registered with all emergency, medical and waiver pages completely filled out and immunization records on file within one week of starting with us. We will require at least one emergency contact number other than parent numbers. This number may be out of state if necessary.

### **Withdrawal**

Parents are required to submit a written two week notice, in advance of withdrawing a child from Little Den. If advance notice is not received, you will be required to pay two weeks tuition.

### **Coded Door**

We are fortunate to have a security door system. Each family will be given their own code to enter the building. You can share this with others on your emergency or pickup list. Please do not share the code with your children.

### **Child Information Changes and Updates**

Any changes or modifications of your current home address, phone number, and place of employment, emergency numbers, change in custody, or change in the persons picking up your child **MUST** be reported immediately.

When immunizations are administered, we need an updated immunization record and health status form.

### **Hours of Operation**

The center is open from 6:30 AM until 6:00 PM Monday through Friday. We are open late start and early release days and non-school days for Jeffco Public Schools.

During the summer children must be dropped off by 9:00 AM to participate in their age group's program. If you arrive after 9 AM and your child's age group has left the center you can call the center to find out where to meet up with us. If you are running late please call so we can attempt to work out a place to meet you. We will return to the center by 4 PM. Children may be picked up at any time between 4:00 and 6:00 PM you also have the option of meeting us at the Field Trip location for early pickup.

We are closed on January 1, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and the Friday after Dec. 24th and 25th. We will be open snow days providing staff can get to the center.

### **Inclement Weather Procedures**

In cases of extreme heat, cold, or storms our activities may be revised for the comfort and safety of everyone. We encourage hats on hot, sunny days, jackets for cool days, and water proof gear for rainy days. In the winter children need boots, snow pants, hats, mittens, and jacket to play in the snow.

### **Fee Schedule**

We have a summer and school year contract. Summer is from the last day of school until the first day of school Typically Late May-Mid Aug. School Year is Mid Aug to Late May. You will be asked to fill out a new registration form for the school year and summer care. A registration fee will be charged for both. This is to help offset the cost of supplies the center needs for activities for your children.

Payment must be received by Friday the week prior to service or a \$5/child fee will be charged. If you need to change one of your scheduled days for the week you must call us and if we have the staff to cover the change it will be allowed.

**There is no credit for missed or sick days.** (the expense of operation does not fluctuate with the number of children present each day: therefore, you will be charged your normal tuition rate regardless of absence.)

Each family may take one vacation week each school year, with written notice, at half price.

During the summer you sign up for care you need. You are welcome to take as many vacations as you would like but you must sign up for vacation when you enroll in the summer camp program. We are willing to work with you on changing your vacation if possible but we staff the program based on the days you register for.

### **Supervision of your children**

Children will be directly supervised at all times. The center will open and close areas as they are staffed.

Children will be counted every 10-15 minutes. All leaders are trained in emergency locating procedures.

Outside the center (field trips) children will be assigned to a leader with the ratio appropriate for the age group. At all times each leader will carry a list of assigned children and their emergency information. Children will be counted every 10-15 minutes.

When everyone is out of the center the main phone number will be forwarded to the director or assistant director so you will be able to reach us at any time.

### **Outdoor Play**

At Little Den we believe that outdoor experiences should be provided for all children. This includes free play, planned activities, and nature walks. Please make sure that your children are dressed appropriately for the weather and outdoor play. Having a change of clothes for afterwards if we are wet and cold.

### **Special activities**

Little Den offers lessons at various times that are taught by people other than Little Den staff. At all times staff will be present, in the correct ratios, in a supervisory position.

### **Holiday Celebrations**

Little Den will celebrate Holidays throughout the year and will be sensitive to the interest and wishes of others within the center. We welcome your input and will respect others needs to have their children removed from holiday activities.

We love to celebrate birthdays. You are welcome to bring in a treat to share with the kids and staff.

### **Movies**

We generally watch G rated movies. Some PG movies are watched by the group only if they have been previewed by staff and are appropriate for the group. If you have gave permission for only G rated movies your child will have another activity to do during the movie time.

### **Discipline**

Our main goal is to keep everyone safe and respect our center, materials, and equipment. Little Den believes in positive reinforcement. Don't be surprised if you are informed at the end of the day that we 'caught your child being extra good'. We have a reward system where children will receive play money when they are 'caught being good'. They may use this money to purchase little toys from our store at various times.

When we do catch children doing less than expected behavior we will:

1. Communicate with the child as to why the behavior is inappropriate, ask them to change the behavior and remind them of consequences.
2. If behavior continues we will use a 3 – 10 minute sit-out. Sit-out time will never be more than 1 minute per year old.
3. We will discuss the behavior with the parent and child together with the goal of coming up with a plan for change.
4. If the problem continues the child will be suspended from the program for one day.
5. If there still isn't a change in behavior the child will be permanently removed from Little Den programs.

Little Den expects children to have respect for its toys and property.

Physical punishment is never used. Children will not be subjected to physical or emotional harm or humiliation. Punishment is never associated with food, rest or toileting.

It will be helpful if parents choose to inform Little Den staff if their child has any behavioral, mental, or physical challenges which may affect his/her day-to-day activities at the center. Such issues can be specifically noted on the child's registration form and emergency card. If a child's behavior is a problem and/or jeopardizes the safety of others or themselves, a decision could be made to suspend or remove the child from the program.

### **Sick Children**

If your child is exhibiting any signs or symptoms of illness, please be respectful of your child, other children and our staff by keeping your child at home. Consult a physician to determine if your child's symptoms are contagious and when they should return. If a child should become ill or get injured during Little Den programs the parents/guardians will be notified.

Little Den staff will judge each individual situation and call parents when necessary. If your child shows symptoms of illness and/or cannot participate in normal activities in his/her program they need to be at home. A fever is not necessary to send a child home. If we determine your child is not well enough to attend, we will call you immediately. Your child must be picked up within one hour of the call. We are not staffed to care for a sick child one on one. Time after one hour will be billed at \$60 an hour in 15 minute increments.

### **Children who become ill. Have an accident or an emergency**

Ill children will be separated from the other children and will be offered a blanket and mat to lie on while parent/guardian is called to pick up child. If a child is injured, first aid will be administered and if deemed necessary, 911 will be called. A parent/guardian will be notified immediately as to the condition of the child and if they need to pick up the child at Little Den or if they are being transported by emergency vehicle to the hospital. Minor scrapes and bumps will be reported to the parent/guardian when they arrive to pick up their child.

### **Medication**

If your child needs to have over the counter or prescription medication while at Little Den the following procedures must be followed:

Medication form filled out and signed by parent and doctor.

Medication must be in the original container.

Medication will be kept in a locked box at the center or with us on field trips.

At least one staff member is certified in medication administration will be present to administer prescription or nonprescription medications.

### **Immunizations**

Every child's immunization must be kept up to date. If a parent wishes exemption from the immunization requirements due to religious or personal beliefs, they must fill out the state of Colorado exempt form and follow the State of Colorado's rules on exemption. Please note if you choose to not immunize there could be times your child will need to stay home for health safety reasons. You will still pay your weekly tuition.

### **Natural Disasters**

All staff members are trained in established safety procedures. Drills are held monthly to familiarize staff and children on the procedures to follow in the event of an emergency such as fire or severe weather.

Please look at our Emergency Plan document for more information.

### **Active Shooter or Lockdown**

In the event that the area is not safe. All children will be moved away from windows and doors. Children will be given quiet activities to do until we receive the all clear. Staff will lock all doors and cover all windows and doors.

### **Lost Children**

The following steps will take place in a situation where a child is lost:

Lock down of the center and search of immediate area.

Notification to the director or assistant director who will immediately notify police.

Local authorities will begin work immediately along with Little Den staff.

Children's parents/guardians will be notified promptly.

### **Transportation**

Children will be transported by Little Den passenger vans. Children are expected to follow rules and regulations explained Little Den staff. Booster seats must be provided for all children required to have one. All children will be strapped in their own seat belts. All staff driving the passenger vans are 21 years and older.

Van Rules: All children must be seated at all times and in proper seat belts or car seats according to age/weight. Children must face forward and talk only to those in their row. Noise level must be low so the driver or other staff can be heard at all times. Backpacks must be under the seats to allow aisle movement. Hands or toys should never be outside the windows. Electronic toys may be played.

### **Emergency procedures on the road**

In the case of a vehicle break-down, flat tire, etc., the staff driver will immediately make sure all children are in a safe location, and medical attention administered as necessary. Then they will contact the Little Den Director or Assistant Director. At that time the Director, Assistant Director or driver will contact road-side assistance or police as is necessary. As soon as the situation is under control a staff person will begin to contact parents regarding any changes of schedule such as different arrival time at the center, change of field trip plans, and change of pick-up location.

### **Arrival/Dismissal of Children and Sign-in/Sign-out procedure**

All children must be accompanied with parent/guardian or authorized person (at least 18 years old) to sign-in and sign-out. Sign-in and sign-out will include child's name, parent/guardian signature and time. These records are kept at the center for 5 years. Verbal consent will be accepted only in an emergency.

At 6:00 or when all children have been signed out by parent/guardian the closing staff person will go through the entire center to be certain there are no children left inside before she locks the center.

### **Procedure for individuals not authorized to pick up child**

In a case in which an unauthorized individual arrives to pick up a child, the child will not be released. Children will only be released to people who are designated in the child's file. Director or Assistant Director will okay the release only if the parent has given written permission.

### **Homework Help**

We are happy to help your children with homework after school. Some days it might not be possible to give as much help as you would be able to give at home. Some days it just might not be possible for us to give this time to your child. This is here to help your family with the struggles in the evening but as the parent you will need to check and verify homework is done.

### **Late pick-up or failure to pick-up**

The center closes at 6:00 PM. Anything after 6 PM is considered a late pick-up and is subject to the following late pick up fees. Please call 303-697-9125 to inform staff about a late pick-up. A call does not eliminate the late fee, but it will let the staff know when to expect you and we can reassure your child you are on the way. One staff member will always stay until all



children have been picked up. If the staff member on duty cannot stay, she/he will call in the director or assistant director.

### **Late Fee**

The family will be charged \$1 per minute for any amount of time late. The fee can be paid that day or we can add it to your next bill.

If late pick-up becomes habitual the Director or Assistant Director will discuss with parent/guardian possible solutions to the situation. If the problem continues the child may be asked to leave the program.

### **Failure to pick-up child**

If a child is not picked up by 6:00 the staff member in charge will call parent/guardian to make them aware of the situation. We understand that sometimes there are miscommunications between different parents picking up. If a child is not picked up at a regular time we may start this investigation procedure before closing time. If the situation arises that a parent/guardian cannot be reached, other authorized adults in the child's file will be called. If we still cannot contact a person we are authorized to release the child to we will turn the child over to proper authorities after 30 min of no success of reaching anyone on the contact list.

### **Children's belongings and money**

Items, including money, sent with the child to the center are the ultimate responsibility of the child. Everything must be labeled that is sent with your child (lunch box, backpack, swimsuit, sunscreen, hat, electronics, toys, etc.). Little Den is not responsible for lost, broken or stolen items.

Please send a large enough back pack so all their belongings can be kept in one place. This will prevent loss. Lunch box can be separate.

On field trips when the director has allowed money for souvenirs the money will be kept with the director until it is time to spend it. It will be labeled with your child/ren name.

### **Sunscreen**

Little Den provides sunscreen for all students. You may bring your own if you prefer a brand. We will apply sunscreen to all children 15 minutes before outside play and then as needed throughout the day.

### **Meals and Snacks**

#### **Breakfast:**

Children may eat breakfast between 6:30 and 8:30 with food you are providing from home.

**Lunch:** All children must have a lunch on full days including a drink. If we are at the center items may be refrigerated or heated. If we are away from the center we cannot refrigerate or heat.

If a child forgets their lunch they will receive a lunch from Little Den that meets one-third of a child's daily nutritional needs. The child may not get choices. Lunch will most likely consist of a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, fruit, crackers and juice. This is to be used when lunches are forgotten at home. **Charge for lunch is \$5.**

**Snacks:**

Morning and Afternoon snack will be provided.

**Dress Code**

Please dress children according to weather, planned activities and for comfort. Tennis shoes/sneakers and socks must be worn on hiking trips. It's best to keep a poncho or rain jacket in their backpack and sweatshirt for cooler, rainy times of the day. Flip flops or sandals are allowed, Little Den is not responsible for injury to children for your choice of shoes or outfits. We will ask them to change shoes before hikes. We ask that an old pair of shoes is left in their backpacks daily.

Remember your children are going to be very busy with projects from painting to sliding into home base, so don't send them in their best clothes. We do not allow midriff baring or low cut shirts and blouses. No pants that are cut low around the waist.

**Toilet training and Diapering**

We are happy to assist you with potty training needs. We realize that this process and children are all different and they will be ready on their terms. Positive reinforcement and patience are essential during this time. We are happy to discuss ways that potty training works for you at home.

Please leave many changes of clothing, and or pull-up for nap time. If we are seeing multiple accidents throughout the day, we might need to revisit if your child is ready.

**Nap/Rest Time**

All children under 5 years of age will have a rest time after lunch every day. Little Den will provide sheets and blankets for each child that will be kept in a cubby marked with their name. They will be washed weekly.

**Parent/Staff Conferences**

When a child starts preschool at Little Den his/her parent or guardian will meet with the child's direct supervisor to discuss education, behavior and social goals and concerns. Every November and May the parent/guardian will have the opportunity to meet with the child's teacher to discuss progress and concerns. If the parent/guardian chooses not to meet, a written report will be sent home with the child.

For school age children and summer camp children, we are always available to discuss your children's specific needs or discuss problems that may arrive. A conference can be set up at any time that you feel it is necessary. We will discuss anything that is of concern when we see them.

### **Electronics**

Children may bring their electronic toys if they are marked with their name. If you would like to set limits as to when they can play or for how long please talk with the staff. Little Den is not responsible for lost, broken or stolen electronic toys.

### **Visitors and Volunteers**

Visitors to the center will be kept to a minimum during open hours. All visitors are required to check in with a staff member and sign and date the Visitor Log at the sign in desk. Persons unknown to staff will be required to show a state issued photo ID for identification. Volunteers and instructors will also sign and date the Visitor Log. Volunteers will always work with a Little Den staff member. When the volunteer job or lesson is over the person will promptly leave the center after signing out.

### **Safety**

We strive to be a safe environment for your child. If at any time a parent feels they have witnessed an unsafe practice, or sees a potential hazard, they may speak with the Director or Assistant Director. We welcome this information at all times and take it very seriously.

### **Swimming Safety**

We only swim at facilities that provide qualified lifeguards in the required ratios. In addition to this supervision, Kid Central staff will be assigned to watch our children at various locations at the swim facilities. Identification of each child will take place every 15 minutes. Staff will supervise both boys and girls locker rooms.

### **Parking lot safety plan**

In the morning a large section of the parking lot will be coned off so children may play in this area. This area will be directly supervised by Little Den staff. Due to traffic in the afternoon children may only play in the fenced in area. After check out children may not go into the parking lot until their parent are with them.

### **Transitions**

We at Little Den understand that transitions can be hard, this could be joining us here at Little Den, moving up from Preschool to our school age program or new transitions at home. We love to help. We are happy to give ideas on how to help with transitions and change. We feel the more we work together and communicate the better we can understand changes with your child. We will help to make changes smoother on our end by communicating what we see and have extra patience during new transitions. We will observe and listen to what you feel your child needs. Maybe this is a few extra snuggles or extra prompts to prepare for the next activity. Please come and talk with us if you have any questions or concerns. As your child moves from preschool to kindergarten, we will be happy to help those first days of school. Help them find

their classroom or which bus they need to ride. Little Den staff feel like you are family we are happy to help discuss problems with school teachers or make sure notes get to the teacher.

### **Code of Conduct**

Little Den follow the NAEYC code of ethics and code of conduct. You can find a copy of this at the parent resource center or by searching NAEYC.

### **Smaller Class Size**

State requirements for our center: mixed age a 1:10 ration, school age 1:12, Preschool 1:10. That is 1 staff for every 10 or 12 children. NAEYC believes a better ratio is 1:9. Or 1:11 We at Little Den strive to follow NAEYC'S standards and will work for a 1:9 or 1:11 ratio.

### **Primary and Continuity of Care Practices**

At Little Den staff will be with your children from the age of three until they age out of the program. Because of our unique classroom setting. The teachers will watch your children grow and get to know the ins and outs of your child and family. This gives us the unique ability to truly understand your family and for you to know and trust us. You will not have to worry about your child moving up into new classrooms and losing their beloved teacher. Because we are a smaller center the teachers you drop off are often the same teacher you will see at pickup. If it is not the same teacher you can be assured whomever is in the classroom has spent the majority of the day with your child and can update you of the days activities.

### **Center Documents**

Little Den has on site forms that you are more than welcome to look at. These are at the parent resource area. This information is in a 3 ring binder Documents will include:

Quality Improvement Plan	Health Inspection Report	Building Inspection Report
Survey Results	NAEYC code of conduct	Emergency Plan
Year Long Calendar.		

### **In the case of an emergency**

#### **Little Den's Emergency Plan**

In the event that staff and children are evacuated to a shelter due to a pre-evacuation or mandatory evacuation location every attempt will be made to inform parents of the shelter location as soon as staff and children have been safely evacuated. If evacuation happens parents will need to immediately make plans to pick up their children.

- In the event of an evacuation specific to the childcare facility, the staff and children will evacuate the building and gather at: **West Ranch Dental 194132 N. Turkey Creek Rd Morrison, CO 303-697-4038**
- In the event of a local evacuation, the staff and children will be transported to: **Jenn Mackety's house 26894 Grey Moose Trail Conifer, CO**

- In the event of evacuation of mountain area, we will be at: **The Ridge Recreation Center 6613 S. Ward St, Littleton, CO 303-409-2333**

**Filing a Complaint**

1. Complaints regarding suspected licensing violations must be reported to:  
Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care  
1575 Sherman Street, Denver, CO 80203-1714 303-866-5958
2. Complaints regarding our daily program or facility should be reported to the Director in writing or call 303-697-9125.

**Reporting of Child Abuse**

1. Staff is required by law to report suspected abuse or neglect.
2. Staff will notify the Little Den Director if they suspect an abuse or neglect situation.
3. The Director will investigate and call Social Services and/or the Police Department and report suspected abuse/neglect.
4. Social Services and/or Police Department will determine the next course of action.
5. All information will be logged in with a detailed account of the conversations with the child, parent/guardian, and Social Service Caseworker or the Police Officer.
6. An incident Report will be completed and kept on file in the Little Den office.

I have read and understand Little Den’s Policies and Handbook. I understand that Payments are due weekly and late payments will be applied to past due accounts. I understand that I am required to give two weeks’ notice to cancel care and that I will be charged for two weeks of care regardless if I have given two weeks’ notice. I understand that I am responsible for all daycare days I have signed up for even if we do not come. I also understand that I am responsible for any extra activity fees. If necessary Little Den will send past due amounts to a collection agency or small claims court and all fees and expenses will be added to the amount due.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parents Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director’s Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Enrollment