



# PARENT HANDBOOK

# Welcome to Green Day Early Learning Center

We are happy to have your child here with us at Green Day Early Learning Center. It is our goal to provide an environment of love, guidance and care so your child can grow and develop to his or her fullest potential.

Green Day Early Learning Center is a family owned and operated business. Our students, parents and staff are a very important part of our family, and together we will do everything possible to make sure your child is happy and secure

Please be sure to read the attached Parent Handbook for our policies and guidelines, sign the acknowledgment page and return it to the office.

Sincerely,

Gene Williams

Owner and General Manager

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## **Mission Statement**

Provide our community with a commitment to serve. Ensure that our community is always valued as our clients and family. Provide excellent service while creating a safe, healthy and nurturing environment.

## **Non-Discrimination Statement**

Green Day Early Learning Center does not and shall not discriminate (adult, child, staff or parents) on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, creed, gender, age national origin, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or veteran status, in any of its activities or operations. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our staff, clients and volunteers. Green Day Early Learning Center includes children with special needs and makes accommodations as required by the American's With Disabilities Act.

## **DCF Licensing**

Green Day Early Learning Center is licensed through the Department of Children and Families. This agency requires our staff to meet the state standards for childcare employment which is in accordance with the Florida Administrative Code 405-C. DCF will have two inspections of the program each year. Inspectors will arrive unannounced and conduct a thorough inspection of the entire program.

## **MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION GUIDELINES**

Green Day will not administer medications. Team members will not dispense medication to a child with or without written authorization from the child's parent or physician. Per DCF guidelines we are not permitted to administer non-prescription medications.

**Immunization and Physical forms MUST be current and original copies.**

**We will make you a copy for your records if you desire.**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION (ALPHABETIZED)**

#### ***Attendance Policy***

Each day is a unique teaching and learning experience. Attendance is compulsory unless unavoidable illness, etc. The full weekly tuition will be due regardless of the number of days attended. Please be sure to call by 7:00 a.m. if your child will not be attending. Students may not be dropped off after 9:30 a.m. Excessive absences may result in your child not being able to adjust to the teacher, other students or to the classroom routine. It may also result in poor developmental achievements. If there are excessive absences, a conference will be requested with the teacher, Director and parents of the child.

VPK and 4C students are allowed up to 3 days of unexcused absences per month. Anything more requires a doctor's note. VPK begins promptly at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 11:30 a.m. It is imperative that your child arrive to school on time to reap the benefits of our curriculum.

#### ***Birthdays***

Birthdays are a special occasion for young children. We encourage and welcome parents to send in fruit or cookies. In accordance with the Health Department, we are not allowed to serve homemade goodies. The students will share these treats with their classmates during snack time. Please notify the teacher in advance if you would like to send in special treats. Invitations to parties outside the school may be handed out at school if every child in the class is invited. Otherwise, invitation should be sent by mail to prevent any hurt feelings.

#### ***Child Abuse Policy***

Under Florida Law (Chapter 415) all childcare employees and teachers are among those professions legally mandated to report child abuse and or neglect to the Department of Children and Families. It is our policy at Green Day Early Learning Center to follow up on every incident, which is in any way suspected.

### ***Change of Clothes***

Each student should have a change of clothes in a gallon size Ziploc bag placed in their cubby. If a student has an accident at school, the teacher will assist them in changing and will place the soiled clothes in the Ziploc bag to be sent home. Please be sure another set of clothes is put back in your child's cubby the next day. **If a student has an accident and does not have clothes to change into, the parent will be notified and asked to bring them new clothes.** Potty-training classrooms require at least 3 changes of clothes to be in their cubby at all times.

### ***Communication Parents***

GDELC operates as a partner with parents/guardians in the care and nurturing of each child's uniqueness. The staff at the values regular communication with parents. This communication may include both formal and informal strategies.

At pick-up and drop-off times, the teaching staff greet parents and communicate information regarding the child's participation in the program. Activities are communicated via the Procure App.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to share with staff information about their children and family structure, their socioeconomic, linguistic, racial, religious and cultural backgrounds, as this information is helpful in providing the best care possible.

*Once a year, a program evaluation is sent to the family so that parents/guardians can offer their observations of the program's strengths and weaknesses as well as their ideas for improvement. Parents/guardians are always welcome at our program. They are also encouraged to attend special events at the center.*

### ***Conferences***

Telephone conferences are scheduled when a director believes it is important, or if parents request to have one. If you wish to talk to a director, please call the office and leave a message. If a telephone call cannot solve the situation, the director will schedule a conference. Please follow the above procedure and please do not engage the teachers in discussion during class when attention needs to be with their students.

### ***Curriculum***

Green Day Early Learning Center uses Creative Curriculum. These programs are based on the philosophy that children learn best through hands-on activities that address the needs of the whole child (socially, emotionally, physically and cognitively). In addition, each program reflects the belief that children need a balance of child-initiated and teacher-facilitated activities each day. This approach is grounded in sound child development theory and appropriate practice.

Themes are used to introduce information and learning takes place as a child explores and manipulates real objects and events.

### ***Discipline and Guidance Policy***

Green Day Early Learning Center is committed to providing students and families with quality childcare in a safe and loving environment. Our children will be taught age-appropriate rules and encouraged to make positive choices regarding their behavior.

Our goal is to promote resiliency through the development of attachment, self-control, and initiative. Resiliency is defined in Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary (9<sup>th</sup> ed.) as the ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change. With the increase of resiliency, a decrease in behavioral concerns occurs. By using positive redirection and promoting self-discipline, it is our goal to have every child achieve positive growth in all areas. We must work together to guide each child toward personal success.

#### **Our teachers are expected to:**

- Set limits of behavior expectations that are developmentally appropriate.
- Praise and encourage children's positive behavior as well as model appropriate actions, attitudes and responses throughout date to day interactions with children and other staff members.
- Demonstrate what behavior is appropriate and give developmentally appropriate explanations for why behavior is expected. Focus on what the child CAN DO, not what the child cannot do.
- Provide age-appropriate alternatives for children who choose not to participate in an activity.
- Focus on students' actions rather than personality. Make each child feel worthwhile and respected.
- Teach children to solve conflicts and problems independently, and allow each child involved in a conflict to express "their side" of the situation before a consensus is made.
- Maintain a calm but firm tone when disciplining. Use words and tones that respect and reassure the student.
- Be consistent with consequences and disciplinary interactions that are both logical and intrinsic.
- Be proactive in preventing behavioral concerns in the classroom by taking into account the needs and abilities of each individual child.

#### **All staff is prohibited to:**

- **Use corporal or physical punishment • Associate punishment with**
  - o Food
  - o Naps
  - o Bathroom/Diapering
- **Use time-out as a form of discipline.**

### **EXPULSION POLICY**

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Unfortunately, there are sometimes reasons we have to expel a child from our program either on a short term or permanent basis. We want you to know that we will do everything possible to work with the family of the child(ren) in order to prevent this policy from being enforced. The following are reasons we may have to expel or suspend a child from this center:

#### **IMMEDIATE CAUSES FOR EXPULSION**

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- The child is at risk of causing serious injury to other children or him/herself.
- Parent threatens physical or intimidating actions towards staff members.
- Parents exhibits verbal abuse to staff in front of enrolled children.

#### **PARENTAL ACTIONS FOR CHILD'S EXPULSION**

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- Failure to pay/habitual lateness in payments.
- Failure to complete required forms including the child's immunization records.
- Habitual tardiness when picking up your child. Verbal abuse to staff.

#### **CHILD'S ACTIONS FOR EXPULSION**

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- Failure of child to adjust after a reasonable amount of time.
- Uncontrollable tantrums/angry outbursts.
- Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children.
- Excessive biting.

Prior to expulsion, a parent will be called and correspondence will be sent home indicating what the problem is, and every effort will be made by both the center and the parent to correct the problem. If, after one or two weeks, depending on the risk to other children's welfare or safety, behavior does not improve, and the center finds that they can no longer accommodate the child, the parent will be asked to remove him/her. The parent will be given a minimum of one week's notice to find another center to provide care for this child.

#### ***Behavior Management***

Expected behavior is based on the child's developmental level. Initially, a few simple and understandable age-appropriate rules are established. These rules set the limits of behavior for

the safety and protection of the children. Adults are firm, consistent, and supportive in their approach. Spanking, physical abuse, verbal abuse, name calling, or isolation will never be used to discipline a child. Neither food nor sleep will ever be withheld from children as a means of punishment. Children are encouraged to use their words to resolve conflict whenever possible or are redirected to alternative activities as necessary. Our overall goal is to help each child develop self-control.

We ask you to support us in modeling positive behavior with all the children at the center. Please do not use developmentally inappropriate language or harsh discipline measures while at the center or in front of any of the children. Please do not discipline other children that are enrolled in the program. Any concerns should be brought immediately to center staff. On occasion a child may appear to have difficulty in a classroom for various reasons. It's our policy to talk with parents and come up with a plan to help support the child. If the plan does not work, we would then recommend having an outside source evaluate the child and we would look to them for recommendations. As a last resort we would withdraw the child. We have found with past experience that sometimes a child requires a behavior plan or individual support that Green Day cannot provide.

### ***Drop off and Pick Up Guidelines***

All students should be dropped off and picked up by a parent or authorized person over eighteen years old. NO student should be allowed to walk to class alone. Please enter the building through the main lobby and sign your child into ProCare. A photo ID will be required if someone different picks up your child. Students MUST sign in and out daily in the main office.

We have a no cell phone policy for parents that are entering the center to drop off or pick up their children. This is a safety concern for the obvious reason that talking on a cell phone can be very distracting. Pick up and drop off is a time when attention should be focused on transitioning your child/children safely to and from day care.

We have a policy that your child can only be here 9 ½ hours per day. It is our philosophy that a longer day would just be too difficult for a young child to be expected to withstand. Our staff work a 9-hour day, therefore, in order to maintain ratios and consistency throughout the day we ask that you adhere to the 9 ½ hour day for your child. We also ask that you maintain the same time for drop off and pick up every day.

When you pick up your child at the end of the day, please check your child's cubby for notes, artwork or soiled clothing. Please notify your child's teacher of his/her departure and sign-out on the computer at the front entrance. No child will be released to anyone without your authorization. If custody is an issue, we must have a notarized court order on file outlining the custody arrangement. Identification will be required from any person picking-up your child. Green Day will not release a child to any person that cannot or does not upon request, present a valid driver's license or proof of identity and does not have previous parental authorization. If,

for any reason it deems appropriate for the preservation of the safety and wellbeing of the children and staff in the center, Green Day has the right to temporarily or permanently exclude any person from the center, including a parent who is likely to pose a risk to the center or who fails to conduct him/herself in a manner befitting a child care environment. Prohibitions include, but are not limited to: profanity, yelling, threatening, aggressive, violent behavior, or intoxication.

### ***Group Placement/Transition***

Upon enrollment, your child will be placed in a group based on his/her chronological age. Each child's advancement or transition is based on chronological age, developmental readiness, and availability of space. Parents will be given notice of all transitions prior to their child moving. In the early mornings and late afternoon, age groups may be mixed. Children arriving early or staying later in the afternoon, may be assigned to a transitional room as teacher's open or close rooms accordingly. Infants will never be mixed with children over 18 months.

### ***Emergency Phone Numbers***

All student files should contain at least two alternate emergency phone numbers in case something happens to a student and parents cannot be reached by phone. If there are any changes in these numbers, please notify the school of the new information immediately. It is imperative that current numbers are always on file.

### ***Fire and Tornado Drills***

Green Day Early Learning Center will conduct monthly fire drills and at least one tornado drills to ensure student's quick, safe exit from the building in case of fire or other hazards. The continuous ringing of the fire alarm signals the drill. Teachers will have instructed their students in proper procedures. Students should follow these quickly and quietly. Fire drill routines are posted in every room.

### ***Grievance Policy***

We at Green Day Early Learning Center strive to keep a harmonious relationship with parents, students and staff. Should you have any concerns pertaining to our facility or staff, please notify the Director. The Director will discuss the situation with you and decide to set up a roundtable discussion with the necessary staff to resolve the situation.

### ***Holidays and Vacation***

Green Day Early Learning Center will be closed on the following holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and the day after, Christmas Day. If a holiday should fall on a Saturday, we will be closed on that Friday. If a holiday falls on a Sunday, we will be closed on the following Monday. There is no reduction in tuition for these holidays. One week vacation will be given after the first year of enrollment. Vacation weeks will

not be carried over from year to year. Please complete a vacation request form at least two weeks in advance of your vacation.

### ***Hours of Operation***

Green Day Early Learning Center is open from 6:30 a.m. until 6:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, with a maximum of 9 1/2 hours per day. After 6:30 p.m. there will be a late fee of \$10.00 and then \$1.00 per minute thereafter.

### ***In case of Injury***

If your child is injured at the center, you may want to consult with your family physician to determine whether the nature of the injury requires medical attention. If your child requires immediate medical attention the proper emergency steps will be taken. If your child receives a small injury during the day, an incident report form will be completed by his/her teacher, and a parental signature will be required. If your child receives an injury from another child, names will be kept confidential.

If your child receives a bite or bites someone else, you will receive a call from director and/or an incident report. Please keep in mind that toddlers, especially, will often use biting as a form of communication. If your child receives a bite at the center, we will comfort your child and care for his/her needs immediately. Due to confidentiality, the name of the biter will not be released. Although we acknowledge that biting is a developmental stage, it is taken seriously. If your child bites repeatedly, Green Day will develop a plan with you to try to correct the problem. However, if the biting is aggressive or does not lessen within a reasonable time frame, Green Day may temporarily withdraw your child until the biting diminishes. Upon your child's return, if biting continues Green Day will then again, withdraw your child until he/she is older and the biting behavior has subsided.

### ***Management of Illness***

Green Day's policy is to care for only well children. At no time do we provide care for sick children. Children will be excluded if the symptoms or illness prevents the child from participating in activities and/or poses an increased risk to the child or other children in the program.

Do not bring your child to the center if he/she is not well enough to participate in a normal day's activities or if he/she has been exposed to a contagious disease, develops symptoms of a contagious disease, or is diagnosed by a physician as having a contagious disease.

Children will be visually screened when they arrive. If your child appears ill upon arrival, you will be asked to take him/her home until he/she is not contagious or is able to withstand a normal day, including outdoor time. In the event a child becomes ill and needs to be picked up, the parent(s) will be called and are expected to come pick up their child within 30 minutes. If a parent cannot be reached, the emergency contact person will be called and asked to come collect the child up. In the event of a serious illness or injury, at the discretion of the administration, paramedics will be called, and your child will be transported to an emergency medical facility.

### **Guidelines for the Management of Illness**

This information was derived from various state childcare and health department agencies. Please keep your child at home if he/she develops any of these symptoms of contagious disease until he/she is no longer symptomatic. If any of these symptoms arise while your child is at Green Day he/she will be sent home. Please note, although we may recommend your child be seen by his/her physician, opinions may vary and Green Day's health policies will always be strictly enforced. If your child acquires an illness that is not listed in this handbook it is your responsibility to contact Green Day so that we can consult the necessary medical experts to obtain protocol. Once protocol is obtained it is again, the parent's responsibility to follow Green Day policy.

Fever of 100 degrees F or above: Fever is defined as having a temperature of 100 F or higher taken under the arm (axillary) or 101 F taken orally. A child needs to be fever free for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to Green Day, that means the child must be fever free without the use of any fever reducing medication. It is strictly against Green Day policy to give your child fever reducing medication to mask illness/symptoms prior to bringing him/her to the center. This may result in immediate withdrawal of your family.

If your child is experiencing the following symptoms please keep them home:

- Diarrhea: Three (3) or more loose stools in a 24-hour period. Bloody stool of any kind, grey/white.
- Vomiting
- Severe Cough
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Redness of eyelids or eyes or discharge of the eye
- Mouth Sores
- Unusual spots or an unidentified rash

- Sore throat or trouble swallowing
- Infected skin patches
- Severe itching of body or scalp
- Unusually cranky, less active behavior
- Headache and stiff neck
- Tea colored urine/blood in urine
- Loss of appetite

### **Post-Illness Re-Admission Criteria**

Illness Keep your child home until:

**Ear Infection** Child is fever free, can withstand a normal day

**Diarrhea and Vomiting** A symptomatic for 24 hours

**Bacterial Meningitis** Local health department certificate

**Chicken Pox** One week after onset of rash and until chicken pox are scabbed over

**Coxsackie Virus** Fever free, blisters are no longer visible

**Diphtheria** Five days after antibiotic treatment

**Hemophilus (H-Flu, Hib)** Provide local health department certificate

**Impetigo** 24 hours after treatment began, rash must be covered until gone

**Infestations** (lice, scabies) Until child is completely nit, scabies etc., free and has had appropriate and recommended treatment by the State Health Department

**Measles** Six days after onset of rash

**Rubella** Seven days after onset of rash

**Mumps** Nine days after onset of swelling/until a symptomatic

**Whooping Cough** Five days after antibiotic treatment has begun

**Conjunctivitis** 24 hour after antibiotic treatment

**Pneumonia** 24 hours after antibiotic treatment, able to withstand a normal day

**Ring Worm** 24 hours after antibiotic treatment, rash must be covered until gone

**Strep Throat** 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has begun

**TB** 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has begun

**Thrush** 24 hours after anti fungal treatment has begun

*\*Please note under no circumstances is a child allowed to return to Green Day with a fever. All children must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to the center and must be able to withstand a normal day's activities\**

## **Required Reporting**

For the protection of all children and staff, we ask that you notify the center within 24 hours after your child has developed a known or suspected communicable disease, or if any member of the child's immediate household has a communicable disease. If we become aware of a communicable disease affecting children in the center, a health alert will be posted. We will attempt to communicate to you the earliest symptoms so additional exposure can be avoided. It is extremely important that all families keep Green Day informed of all illnesses.

Green Day employees are mandated reporters. We have a legal and moral obligation to the well being and safety of children. If at any time a child's safety is in question, we will take the necessary steps.

## ***Lost and Found***

Please label all of your child's jackets, shirts, pants, shorts, blankets, cups, pacifiers, etc. This will help us in returning them if misplaced. Articles not claimed within 30 days will be given to a charitable organization.

## ***Lunch and Snacks***

We serve breakfast during the day at 8:30 a.m. Lunch will be served at 11:30 a.m and afternoon stacks at 2:30pm. Students brought in after these hours will need to be fed before coming to school. Menus will be posted on a weekly basis. If your child has specific allergies, please inform their teacher so it can be documented on the classroom allergy sheet. If parents send bag lunches, they should not contain perishable foods. We cannot refrigerate or heat lunches. In fairness to the other children please do not send in cookies, candy or other sweets as all the children will want that snack. If your child does bring in food that is not healthy, he/she will be asked to put it away until it is time to go home. Please label any food brought into the center and be sure that it is properly sealed to prevent spoiling. Lastly, please only provide food for your child that he/she has eaten at least twice before to reduce allergy risks.

## ***Sharing Food***

When parents bring food in for birth days or share must be whole fruit or commercially prepared items sealed and packaged in its original container.

## ***Nap Time***

After lunch each day your child will have a rest period. We will provide a sanitized cot. Parents are asked to furnish a small blanket and cot sheet with your child's first and last name clearly labeled on it. The blanket will be sent home every Friday to be laundered and asked to be returned on the following Monday.

## ***Newsletters***

Monthly newsletters to update you on current and upcoming events will be available in the office.

### ***Referrals***

We are proud of our Learning Center and we hope you tell your friends about us! If your friend registers a full-time student after the 6<sup>th</sup> month of his or her enrollment you will receive one week FREE tuition!

### ***Refund Policy***

Registration fees are non-refundable. A two-week notice is required if you will be withdrawing your child from the center. You will continue to be charged for tuition if you do not give notice.

### ***Returning Students***

To maintain enrollment status, qualifying students will be given the opportunity to re-enroll each spring with notification and appropriate forms being provided by the administration. Re-enrollment forms will be given out, and a designated period of time will be allowed for returning the necessary forms. At the conclusion of the designated period of time, the privilege to reserve available spaces cannot be guaranteed.

### ***Structure of Fees (Payment Plan)***

Please refer to separate Structure of Fees Form. Weekly payments are prepaid and due on Monday of each week. Payments over one-week past due must be discussed with the school Director prior to attending class. A \$20 fee may be assessed on overdue balances.

### ***School Closure***

In the event of severe weather, such as a hurricane, we will follow the course taken by local County Public Schools. Please listen to your local radio or television broadcast for school closures.

### ***Student Pictures and Photography***

Student pictures will be set up through a professional photographer at least once a year. On occasion, we make take a picture of your child in a group setting and or with their art work during a special event or evaluation. Should this be a problem, please notify the front office.

### ***Tardy Regulations***

It is extremely important that parents instill the value of being punctual to their young child. It is disruptive to the teacher and class when students arrive late. Excessive tardiness will lead to

a Parent, Teacher and Director Conference. We urge the parents to cooperate in this vital area by having their child to the classroom on time. Please remember consistent tardiness may also be embarrassing to the child to come into class consistently tardy.

### ***Toys***

It is very disappointing when a special toy is broken or lost, therefore, please instruct your child to leave their toys at home. Occasionally the teacher will have a special Show & Tell Day and will send home a note outlining what the student may bring in. Please do not allow your child to bring any type of sword, gun or weapon to school even for Show & Tell.

### ***Visitors***

Parents are welcome to visit campus any time. We require that you please sign in and out through the front office before visiting with the children so that we know who is on campus at all times.

### ***Withdrawal and Dismissal Procedures***

Written notice is required at least two weeks prior to withdrawing your child from Green Day Early Learning Center. We reserve the right to dismiss any child for any reason that we deem necessary, such as inappropriate behavior, failure to pay tuition, etc. We expect children to conduct themselves appropriately and abide by our discipline policy. Termination would occur only as a last resort.

### ***Volunteer Parent Aides***

We always appreciate the cooperation and help we receive each year from our parents both in the classroom and during special events. We ask that when you are assisting in these areas that you follow the teacher's dress code and do not wear shorts, halter tops, etc. We want to thank you for your cooperation in this matter. Please make sure to sign in and out through the front office.

### ***Yearly Assessments***

We utilize a system known as "Portfolio Assessment" on each child. The observation tool will enable us to monitor your child's growth and development. This information is strictly confidential and will only be shared with you, the Director and teacher.

### ***Open Door Policy***

Green Day Childcare Center offers an Open-Door Policy. An open-door policy allows parents to visit their children in our facilities any time they wish. We do ask parents who plan to visit their

children frequently to follow the classroom routine, to avoid disturbing classroom schedules and activities. We also ask that visits are respectful of the other students in care, we suggest short visits or watching from the hallway. This is ensuring that the students are not distracted from their learning activities and classroom rules.

Green Day often has classroom celebrations that you and your child may want to be a part of. As much as appreciates parent involvement, visitors can be overwhelming to teachers, students and even your own child. During 's hours of operation all children present add to our capacity whether or not parents are present. With that said, if you wish to allow your child to participate in celebrations on days not normally scheduled, please see tuition policy for charges that apply. Furthermore, limits a total of 2 additional adults in each classroom. Please speak with your child's Lead teacher about arrangements: First requested, first granted. Our only exception to the rule is when parents are formally invited to our quarterly show tell and lunch days.

If you wish to meet with the Director or Lead teacher, please make an appointment so that arrangements can be made. This is to ensure that appropriate attention is being given to all of our students during hours of operation

## DISCLAIMER AND SIGNATURE

I, \_\_\_\_\_ the parent/guardian hereby acknowledge the receipt of this Parent Handbook. I have read and understand Green Day policies and procedures. And I understand that Green Day Early Learning Center has the right, without prior notice, to modify, amend or terminate policies, practices and other institutional programs within the limits and requirements imposed by law.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_