



Where Children Come First

Family Handbook

Full-Day Care
Infant, Toddler, Preschool
Before & Afterschool Care

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Statement of Purpose

The goal of The Learning Center of Hopkinton is to provide a safe, happy and nurturing environment in which children have the opportunity to grow and develop at their own pace. The Learning Center supports the family by offering quality care to children from 3 months of age until they reach 11 years.

Educational Philosophy

The Learning Center of Hopkinton believes in placing equal emphasis on the developmental needs of each child, including the physical, emotional, social, and intellectual components, which contribute to each child's maximum growth potential. Children are encouraged to express their ideas and thoughts through artistic representation, dramatic play, experimentation, and investigation. Teachers design the programs to meet each child's interests and needs. Classrooms are designed to provide a safe, happy, and stimulating environment in which each child can grow and develop. Parent input and support are an integral part of the learning experience. Parents are encouraged to discuss their ideas with their child's teacher.

Statement of Non-Discrimination

The Learning Center of Hopkinton does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, cultural heritage, political beliefs, national origin, disability, marital status or sexual preference. Toilet training status is not an eligibility requirement for enrollment.

Hours of Operation

The Learning Center of Hopkinton is open Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

TLC is licensed by The Department of Early Education and Care. They can be contacted at 508-798-5180 or at www.mass.gov/eec for information regarding our center & receive the program's compliance history.

Organizational Chart

Executive Directors and Owners - Jen Blodgett and Melissa LaPointe

Director- Lauren MacIntosh

Assistant Director- Valerie Fitzgerald

Holidays/Closures

The Learning Center of Hopkinton is closed on the following holidays:

- New Year's Eve 5:00 pm closing
- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Day: **Effective 2026**
- President's Day
- March 11th, 2026: Professional Development Day #1: **Effective March 2026**
- Patriots Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- August 20th, 2025: Professional Development Day #2: **Effective Immediately**
- Labor Day
- Indigenous Peoples Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Friday following Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve - 12:00 pm closing
- Christmas Day

If one of the above days falls on a Saturday, the holiday will be observed on Friday. If a holiday falls on a Sunday, the holiday will be observed on the following Monday. Substitutions in schedules cannot be made for holidays.

The center may also close the day before or after New Year's Day, Independence Day and Christmas and if less than 10 families are planning to attend.

Enrollment Procedures

TLC encourages parents to meet with the program administrators prior to admitting your child/ren to our program. Parents are provided with a tour of the program and are given the opportunity to meet our educators before your child is enrolled.

Educators will support transitions and coordinate with services offered by other providers. We request that parents share information about other therapeutic, educational, social, and support services received by the child. The child's developmental history will be shared and updated periodically by their parents.

Full Day Program

The center opens at 7:30 am.

Classroom programs begin at 9:00 a.m. Since teachers have planned schedules and activities, parents who cannot arrive by 9:15 a.m., should schedule an arrival time with the teacher so their time with the children is not disrupted.

TLC closes promptly at 6:00 p.m. Please allow time to greet, gather belongings and sign out before 6:00 p.m. to avoid a late pick-up fee. Parents who are delayed unexpectedly should notify the center by 5:45 p.m.

Important Parent Information

*Parents/guardians must walk children to the classroom each day. Once a child is picked up by a parent/guardian, they need to remain with them. Siblings/ other children accompanying a parent/guardian during drop off and pick up, must always remain with the parent/ guardian.

*No outside toys unless it is a scheduled show and tell day. Children may bring one lovey for nap time.

Birthdays: Parents are allowed to send in a birthday treat for their child if they choose. Most send some sort of sweet treat for the class to share. The children will enjoy the treat either at morning or afternoon snack and sing "Happy Birthday". Unfortunately, we cannot have outside vendors come to the school to provide parties for your child during school hours. If your child has an allergy, you can send allergy safe treat to be kept in the freezer at school so they are able to participate on these days.

School Parties: During the year, the students celebrate everything! Be on the lookout for teachers or administration to send out sign up/donation lists before events.

Appropriate Parent Behavior: Parents agree to work with our staff in a calm, respectful manner. Vulgarity, intimidation and sexual or other harassment will not be tolerated. Termination of childcare services will result.

*Parents are expected to read TLC's monthly newsletter (sent through email each month and posted in the classrooms) which notifies them of ongoing events, activities, and other important information and includes each classroom's curriculum for the upcoming month. Other pertinent information is posted on the parent bulletin board in the reception area.

*Each day, teachers speak with parents to provide a brief update of the child's behavior and progress. In addition, written progress reports are provided to parents every six months. Teachers are also available for parent/teacher conferences at the parents' request. Infant progress reports are provided every 3 months and school age progress reports are yearly.

*Parents may contact EEC for any information regarding the program's regulatory compliance history.

*Parents are provided with a packet on our curriculum, activity schedule, snack menu, and individual classroom schedule/routine during their tour of the center.

What Items do Parents Need to Bring?

*Note: All items must be labeled with your child's first and last name. TLC is not responsible for damaged, lost or stolen items. Please make sure to change your child's extra clothing for the appropriate season and their size.

Our babies: Two or more complete changes of clothes, a sleep sack, a labeled pacifier (if needed) diapers, wipes, formula bottles or sippy cup (enough for the whole day), a water cup (when developmentally ready) baby food/lunch. Formula or breast milk should be provided daily. Cans of labeled formula can be stored in the classroom to be made daily per bottle. For children who are breast fed, we ask you to provide filled bottles (labeled). The center can store some frozen breastmilk if needed.

Toddlers: Two or more complete changes of clothes, sleeping bag stored in a reusable shopping bag or pillowcase, lunch- stored in a lunch box with ice packs, diapers & wipes, & water bottle.

Preschool: Two complete changes of clothes, sleeping bag stored in a reusable shopping bag or pillowcase, diapers/pullups if needed (including nap time) lunch- stored in a lunch box with ice packs, & water bottle.

School-Age: During the school year- they need a change of clothes and water bottle. On non-school days and during the summer they need the above items and a lunch- stored in a lunch box with ice packs.

Clothing

Each day, children participate in several indoor or outdoor activities. For your child's comfort and safety, we request that you adhere to the following clothing guidelines:

Indoor wear - Children should be dressed in clothing that is comfortable and washable so that spills and soils do not matter. Families should dress children in shoes or sneakers that have some traction. The baby room has a "no shoes" policy.

Spring/Fall gear: Children should have light jackets, warm sweatshirts, hats and mittens.

Winter gear: Children need cold weather clothing during the winter months. They should have hats, mittens/gloves, snowpants and boots. Gear should be brought home on the weekend to be washed

Summer gear: Children need bathing suit, towel, hat, & water appropriate shoes. Gear should be brought home to be washed as needed. We do not suggest flip flops for summer shoe wear.

Parking Lot Safety

Please be mindful that the parking lot can be full of students and parents at any given time. Slow and cautious driving is required.

Parents must observe the directional arrows and signs to avoid any possible collisions. TLC's driveway is one way.

When the school bus is in the parking lot, no cars, whether in front of or behind the bus, may pull out of spots until the bus leaves.

Meals/Snacks

Snack: Each morning and afternoon, children are served a healthy snack such as fruits, vegetables, yogurt, crackers, and water. Children with allergies and special diets should only have food from home. Our snack menu is posted in the main foyer of the building.

Breast Milk/ Formula/ Whole Milk: Toddler parents who prefer whole milk should provide it themselves. Parents of infants should provide ready-to-use formula or breast milk.

Lunch: Lunch must be provided by the parents. Lunches should be stored in a lunch box with an ice pack. At TLC, we encourage children to eat their main meal/ healthy foods first as we feel nutrition is important to their growing bodies and minds. If you want to send a “warm” lunch, please send it already heated up in a thermos.

Pizza Friday: Every Friday is pizza day! It is 5\$ per Friday and your child will get two slices of pizza, a healthy snack and a sweet treat. Payment must be handed to your child’s teacher. You can pay for 1 month at a time by cash or check. Checks must be separate from tuition.

Allergies: TLC is not a peanut/tree nut free center. Those foods are allowed into the center. We will set up an allergy free table in a classroom if there is a child with an allergy. Classrooms will let parents know if there is an allergy in the classroom and parents can be aware of this when packing lunches/ sending birthday treats for the class.

Special Enrichment Activities

- Learning through Music with Gerry
- Tumble Bus (extra-curricular not included in tuition)
- Yoga

Confidentiality and Children’s Records

All information contained in your child’s records, including your personal information, is confidential. Anyone who is not directly in the care of your child or affiliated with childcare licensing, protective services or other government agencies will not have access to the records without your written authorization or a court order. As a parent or guardian, you can request access to your child’s record at any time. We are happy to provide access at reasonable times to your child(ren)’s records. Records are maintained for the minimum period of time required by EEC after withdrawal. If you want a copy of your child’s records, an administrative fee may be charged to offset the costs of copying and delivery.

All information about any child besides your own is confidential. Please do not discuss other children with educators and other families at the center. Out of respect for other children and families, please do not post photos or videos that contain images of children other than your own on the internet.

Tuition Policies

Registration Fee/Annual Re-Registration Fee

At registration, a non-refundable fee of \$100.00 per child. An annual re-registration fee of \$75.00 per child is due each year in February upon registering for the upcoming September.

Deposit

A non-refundable, non-transferable deposit in the amount of \$850.00 must accompany each new registration. The deposit will be applied to your child's last full month of care. One full month's notice must be submitted in writing in order to use your deposit. This deposit can only be reimbursed when care can be provided. Additional time needed for care will be assessed as needed.

Sibling Discount

Effective 2025 for Incoming Families: Families with two children enrolled five days a week receive 5% off the tuition of the older sibling. When three children are enrolled five days a week, families receive 10% off the tuition of the two oldest siblings.

Tuition Tax Credits

Tuition payments to TLC qualify for a federal tax credit. TLC's director will provide you with the center's Federal ID No. Please request tuition statements as needed. Email is the best method of request.

Methods of Payment

Cash, checks, or money orders made payable to The Learning Center of Hopkinton are accepted. Bill pay through your bank can be set up to mail us a check each month.

Insufficient Funds

If a check is returned for insufficient funds, you will be notified by The Learning Center and charged a penalty of \$35. You must pay the tuition plus the \$35 penalty within 24 hours of this notification. If a second check is returned for insufficient funds, only money orders or cash will be accepted.

Late Payments

Tuition is due in advance of services. If a tuition payment is not received within two days after the due date, a \$25 late payment fee will be charged. Monthly tuition is due by the 29th of each month for the following month's care.

Late Pick-Up Fee

If a child is left at TLC past our normal closing time a penalty of \$17 per 15 minutes (or any part thereof) per child, will be charged.

Illness, Vacations, and Other Absences

Due to staff scheduling requirements, TLC does not offer a credit or refund when a child is absent.

All full time children, receive a free, one week's vacation that is included in their monthly rate.

Enrollment Withdrawal

One full month's notice must be submitted in writing in order to use your deposit. Your \$850.00 deposit will be applied at this time. This deposit can only be reimbursed when care can be provided. Additional time needed for care will be assessed as needed.

Schedule Changes

Due to staff scheduling requirements, the center does not provide drop-in childcare services. A regular schedule is established for each child upon enrollment. Different hours cannot be substituted for those previously scheduled. However, the center tries to accommodate parents who need an additional day of childcare from time to time. In these situations, parents must make prior arrangements with the director or assistant director. Additional hours are billed at the applicable extra day rate, noted on our tuition rate sheet.

Policies and Tuition Changes

The Learning Center reserves the right to change its policies and tuition rates at any time with 30 days written notice.

Inclement Weather and Emergency Closings

In the event of building emergencies, heavy snowfalls, hurricanes, tornadoes, or other severe weather conditions, TLC will open or remain open for as long as safety permits. In these situations, parents are called and expected to arrange for the child to be picked up by the specified time.

If weather conditions are severe in the early morning hours, a mass email will be sent to the parents by 6:00am.

Full tuition is due for weeks in which emergency conditions require the center to close.

Center - Family Relations

It is our belief that parent/teacher communication is the key to a successful relationship between TLC and its families. We realize and appreciate that parents need to know as much about what happens here as they do when their children are at home. We record and communicate details about daily activities, developmental progress, sleeping and eating patterns, diaper changes, and toilet training. We plan for individual differences, special abilities, and cultural diversity. We welcome family involvement and appreciate parental input.

TLC welcomes parents' visits to the center and the child's classroom at any time. Parent participation is encouraged during classroom time, field trips, and special events. TLC provides an open-door policy where parents are welcome at any time.

Behavior Management

Behavior management is based on an understanding of the individual needs and development of each child. Teachers help children develop self-control through understanding by setting reasonable expectations, offering choices, and encouraging children to verbalize their feelings. When necessary, teachers help children assess problems and devise solutions, which may include redirecting the children to another activity. Persistent problems are brought to the parents' attention and a conference will be scheduled if necessary.

The following practices are strictly prohibited:

- Spanking or other corporal punishment of children
- Subjecting children to cruel or severe punishment such as humiliation, verbal or physical abuse, neglect, or abusive treatment including any type of physical contact inflicted in any manner upon the body, shaking, threats, or derogatory remarks.
- Depriving children of outdoor time, meals or snacks, force feeding children or otherwise making them eat against their will, or in any way using food as a consequence.
- Disciplining a child for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet, forcing a child to remain in soiled clothing or to remain on the toilet, or using any other unusual or excessive practices for toileting.
- confining a child to swing, highchair, crib, playpen, or any other piece of equipment for an extended period of time in lieu of supervision.
- excessive time-outs. Time-out may not exceed one minute for each year of the child's age and must take place within an educator's view.

Biting

Biting is common among young children. During early childhood, children are sensory learners and often explore orally. Impulse control can lead children to bite as a way of making their needs known, especially before their language skills are fully developed.

We realize that biting can be a big concern, and we do everything we can to minimize the behavior. Our teachers and staff are trained to try to recognize triggers for biting and how to prevent and decrease incidents.

If your child bites or is bitten, you and the family of the other child involved will receive an Incident or Accident/Injury report that keeps the identity of both children confidential. These reports are logged and placed in your child's file. Chronic biting incidents will require a meeting with the parents to discuss a plan and ways to minimize biting. If you have any concerns regarding a biting incident, please contact the office staff.

Suspension

Parents will be provided an opportunity to meet with the child's educators to discuss options other than suspension. They will be provided with referrals for services and will help develop a plan for behavioral intervention at home and in the program.

If the first measure is not met by the parent and the child, our protocol is as follows:

- Assaulting other children
- Assaulting staff members
- Repeated non-compliance with program rules as evidenced by incident reports or other documentation.
- Chronic, disruptive behavior as evidenced by incident reports or other documentation.
- Seriously jeopardizing the safety of themselves or another child as determined by the directors or substitute authority.

Children in infant, toddler, and preschool programs are generally ineligible for suspension; however, exceptions may be made under extreme circumstances.

Termination

A family may be terminated from TLC for violation of center policies outlined in this handbook. It is TLC's policy to give families at least 2 weeks' notice of termination and to support families in finding alternative childcare.

If a family is at risk of termination, the director shall issue a written notice to the family. The notice shall review the reasons for termination, referrals for alternate childcare, and other referrals deemed appropriate by the director.

Where appropriate, the director shall inform the family what action, if any, may preclude termination from TLC. The director has final authority to terminate a family for violation of the

center's policies. Children will be prepared for termination consistent with their ability to understand. In extreme or extenuating circumstances, TLC reserves the right to cancel a child's enrollment immediately and without notice.

Illness

Children must stay home if they have any of the following symptoms:

- A fever over 101.0 during the previous 24-hour period
- Diarrhea or vomiting during the previous 24-hour period.
- A bad cold with heavy nasal discharge
- Possible symptoms or diagnosis of a communicable disease (chicken pox, lice, scabies, strep throat, impetigo, meningitis, or mononucleosis)

If your child will not be attending school, please telephone the center by 9:30 a.m. If your child has a communicable disease, please notify the center as soon as possible so that others can be notified.

If the staff feels that a child is ill, or becoming ill, parents will be notified and expected to make arrangements for the child to be picked up. The ill child will be made as comfortable as possible and taken care of on a one-to-one basis until a parent has arrived.

Administration of Medication

Non-Prescription & Prescription

The Learning Center staff shall not administer prescription or non-prescription medication to a child without written authorization from the child's parent and physician, indicating the date, child's name, and dosage. (The label on prescription medication may serve as the physician's written authorization.) Standard authorization forms for over-the-counter medication such as Tylenol and Motrin are available for your pediatrician to sign. Medications will be stored in a safe manner as directed on the label. TLC shall not administer the first dose of a prescribed medication.

All medication must be given to the Educator directly by the parent. Do not leave medication in your child's cubby, pockets, lunch box, or backpack.

All children with a chronic medical condition (example: allergies that require epi-pens, asthma in which inhalers/nebulizer need to be used) which has been diagnosed by a licensed health care provider, must provide TLC with an Individualized Health Care Plan. Forms can be obtained by office administrators or your child's educator.

Parents are asked to please provide all medications prescribed by your child's physician. (Epi-pens, inhalers, nebulizers, etc. that are prescribed daily)

TLC's Health Care Policy is posted in every classroom for the parents review. You can also obtain a copy from your child's educator or from administration.

***NO MEDICATIONS, STOOL SOFTENERS, OR VITAMINS MAY BE PLACED IN BOTTLES OR WATER BOTTLES.**

Topical Ointments and Sprays

Topical ointments and sprays such as petroleum jelly, sunscreen, diaper rash ointment, insect repellent and hand sanitizer will be administered to your child with written parental permission. The signed statement from the parents will be valid for one year. Parents should specify what type of diaper rash cream they will provide. All creams, lotions, and bug repellent should be labeled with your child(ren)'s first and last name.

When topical ointments and sprays need to be applied to wounds, rashes or broken skin, the teachers will follow the written procedure for non-prescription medication which includes the written order of the child's physician, which is valid for a year, and the Authorization for Medication form signed by the parent.

Emergency Care

The TLC staff are trained in first aid and CPR. In case of accidental injury where medical assistance is immediately required, the following procedures are followed:

- 1) Rescue/paramedics will be called if the child needs to be transported to the hospital. The director will accompany the child and bring the child's medical information.
- 2) Parents will be notified immediately of the child's injury and of the emergency procedures that have been followed.
- 3) If the parents cannot be reached, the emergency contact person assigned by the parents will be called.

The center will maintain a parental consent form agreeing to this policy.

Transitions

Children who are chronologically ready to transition into the next specified age group are given the opportunity to spend short periods of time in their new classroom on a frequent basis. When the child becomes familiar with and confident in his/her new classroom environment, the educator's assessment and parental input will aid in the permanent transition.

Progress Reports

A written report will be provided every six months on the progress of each child in the program. Parents will be offered a teacher/parent conference to discuss the content of the report. A copy will be provided to the parent and a signed copy will be kept in the child's record.

Frequency of reports is as follows:

- Infants and Children with Special Needs - Every 3 months
- Toddlers and Preschoolers - Every 6 months
- School Age - Annually at the midpoint of the program's year

SIDS Reduction and Safe Sleep

EEC has very specific regulations around safe sleep practices. All infants will be placed on their backs for sleeping unless the child's health care professional orders otherwise in writing. Infants will nap in their individual safety approved crib. Slats will be no wider than 2-3/8 inches apart. Cribs will not contain pillows, comforters, stuffed animals or other padded materials. Children will begin to transition to a sleeping bag at 12 months of age.

Rest Time

For healthy growth and development, it is essential for children of all ages to have rest or enjoy quiet activities during the day. Parents will provide their child(ren) a clean sleeping bag for rest time each day. Sleeping bags should be stored in a reusable grocery bag or pillow case. Sleeping bags should be taken home at the end of each week to be washed. We are required to provide a period of rest for children who are in our care for longer than 4 hours. Our rest time at the center is typically 12:30-2:30 each day. If a child has not fallen asleep after a period of time, they will be given quiet activities like books, puzzles, small manipulatives, or coloring for the remainder of rest time. If they wake up early, they will be given quiet activities as well.

Our school-age children are not required to nap or bring a sleeping bag on non-public school days. We do have a quiet time built into their schedule where they will participate in reading time, puzzles, small manipulative, individual play, etc.

Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect Policy

Staff and volunteers at TLC are mandated to report suspected child abuse or neglect. Anyone who suspects child abuse or neglect will report their suspicions to the director/administrator, who will notify the department of social services on behalf of the center. In the event a parent makes claims of child abuse or neglect against a staff person or volunteer, that person shall be removed from the classroom and an immediate investigation shall be made. A decision as to whether the staff person shall remain or be terminated will be determined from the results of the investigation.

- All staff are mandated reporters and must report suspected child abuse or neglect. The report shall be made by the Director/Asst. Director. The Director will then make the report to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) pursuant to M.G.L.c. 199, s. 51A.
- The Director will then notify EEC immediately after filing the 51A, or after learning that a 51A has been filed, alleging abuse or neglect of a child while in the care of the program or during a program related activity.
- The Learning Center shall cooperate in all investigations of abuse or neglect.
- EEC regulations prohibits staff accused of child abuse/neglect from working directly with children until after DCF investigation is completed and for such further time as EEC requires.
- Staff will not discuss suspicions with parents. All allegations will be kept strictly confidential for the Director to handle.
- Documentation will be kept of all suspicions including child name, date, time, suspicions of staff, comments from child, bruises, etc.
- Staff can report any suspicions on their own even if the director does not think the situation warrants it.
- Staff will cooperate with all investigators.
- If DCF supports any allegations, TLC will work with and provide any information to comply with the allegation.
- If DCF supports the allegations the employee will be terminated immediately. No exceptions will be made.

Referral Services Plan

All Educators are responsible for noticing and reporting any inappropriate behaviors or suspect emotional, social, cognitive or physical delays observed in a specific child. The classroom Educator will notify and discuss with the Directors or Assistant Director and will be logged in the child's file. The Educators will be responsible for observing and logging these behaviors for a set amount of time where an appropriate plan can be devised. The Directors or Assistant Director are responsible for the complete process of any referral plan and teacher's actions. These components may be used in developing such a plan:

- Educators write observation reports and records and reported to the Directors.

- A child with concerned behaviors will have a logbook that all observations will be written in
- The Directors are involved in further observations and reporting after viewing the logbook and meeting with the Educator.
- There is a review of the child's past behaviors and discussed in a team meeting.
- A meeting with the family along with the reporting Educator and Director will be set.
- The parents are informed of the concern and directed to their pediatrician or other resources suggested by the Directors, which may include services such as dental checkup, vision or hearing screening, social, mental health, educational and medical services for their child.
- Parents provide a written note describing any special education the child will receive outside or inside the center. This will be maintained in the child's file.
- Staff will coordinate with Education specialists and parents to work with the child's needs in the center.

Diapering and Toileting

Diapering

Infant and toddler teachers record all diapering times in the *Infant's Daily Routine Chart* and all bowel movements in the *Toddler's Daily Report*.

The following procedure is followed when changing diapers:

- 1) Wash hands thoroughly using liquid soap and warm water.
- 2) Apply gloves.
- 3) Make sure the changing area is clean and the paper liner has been changed.
- 4) Place the child on the changing pad and paper liner.
- 5) Educators keep at least one hand on the child at all times when the child is being changed on an elevated surface.
- 6) Remove the diaper and place it in the diaper pail.
- 7) Wash the child, using disposable wipes or other disposable products at the changing area. Dispose of used wipes in diaper pail.
- 8) Place a fresh diaper underneath the child.
- 9) Apply powder or cream as directed by the parent.
- 10) Fasten diaper.

- 11) Remove gloves.
- 12) Remove the child from the changing pad.
- 13) Wash your hands and the child's hands.
- 14) Return the child to the play area.
- 15) Place soiled or wet clothing in a closed plastic bag to be taken home.
- 16) Dispose of used paper liner in diaper pail.
- 17) Clean the changing area with a bleach solution.
- 18) Replace paper liner on the changing pad.
- 19) If the diaper pail is full, empty it in the dumpster.
- 20) Wash hands with liquid soap and warm water.

Toileting

Staff members train children in accordance with the requests of their parents and in a manner that is consistent with the child's physical and emotional abilities. The following guidelines are also used:

- There is no verbal reprimand for soiling or wetting clothes. School age children change independently and privately in the bathroom. Preschool children are encouraged and supported with verbal assistance at the door as they change themselves in the bathroom.
- Children may go to the bathroom whenever they need to and are not rushed or disallowed.
- School age children toilet independently. Preschool children are encouraged to wipe themselves, but will be assisted as necessary. Toddlers who are training will be assisted as necessary.
- After toileting, all children must wash their hands with liquid soap and warm water.
- Soiled or wet clothing must be placed in a closed plastic bag for parents to take home.
- All staff must wash their hands with liquid soap and warm water after handling wet or soiled clothes or assisting a child in the bathroom.

Toilet Learning Policy:

When your child is ready, toilet learning should not take a long time. It should be a positive experience for your child. Problems in toilet training arise because adults do not pay attention to the child's lack of readiness. Children should be physically and developmentally ready.

*We will try toilet learning with your child for a minimum of 10 days. We highly suggest that toilet learning start after you take a long weekend (at least 3 days) at home to begin the process. Children should be in underwear consistently for those days at home. During the first and second week we will set a reminder timer for every 30-45 minutes and in a kind and encouraging way say to your child "it's time to use the potty" If your child says "no" and refuses, we will try again a few minutes later but we will not force them to sit on the potty.

*We use both potty chairs and potty seat with climbing stool here at the center. However, we do suggest starting right with the big toilet with a potty seat and climbing stool. It makes the transition to the big potty easier and children tend to have an easier time going to the bathroom in public places. We recommend that you let us know what you are using at home so we can stay consistent here. For boys: do you want him to sit or stand?

*Please let us know what words/ vocabulary you are using at home so we can stay consistent at school and not confuse your child.

*We suggest that your child is dressed in loose-fitting clothing that is easy for your child to manage without assistance. Pants with elastic waistbands are easy to pull up and down, are perfect. No overalls, or onesies. Clothing with buttons and snaps can be difficult and frustrating. No dresses or skirts because children cannot see to pull down their underpants.

*When your child is ready to start toilet learning, we prefer that you do not bring the child to the program in pull-ups or training pants because it may delay and extend the toilet-learning process since they cannot feel if they are wet or dry. Your child will be more aware when they have had an accident in regular thin cotton underwear. We will put your child in a pull up or diaper for rest time if needed. This can go over or under their underwear.

*Children need to have the following extra items in case of accidents. Please replace these items as needed. All items should be labeled.

- 4 to 5 pairs of extra underwear
- 4 to 5 pairs of pants and shirts
- 4 to 5 pairs of socks
- 1 extra pair of shoes

*Please know that we feel it is helpful to leave the bathroom door open to increase children's interest in the toilet. We leave the door open here at our facility.

*If you want to send a small treat (i.e. skittles, m&ms, gummies, stickers) to help as a reward, please do so. We tend to use sticker charts in the bathroom as well.

*If your child exhibits signs of not being ready, such as not showing interest or having too many accidents, after 10 days we will re-visit the questions above and see if we should wait longer to start the process. If your child has more than 4 to 5 accidents in a day- for sanitary reasons we may put them in a pull up for the remainder of the day.

*Is my child ready for toilet learning? If you can answer true to most of the following questions, then your child is most likely ready for toilet learning.

- My child can walk to and sit on a toilet.
- My child can pull down their pants and pull them back up again.
- My child can understand and follow basic directions.
- My child is dry at least two hours at a time, or is dry after nap each day.
- My child's bowel movements are regular and predictable.
- My child becomes uncomfortable with soiled or wet diapers and asks for them to be changed.
- My child asks to wear "grown-up" or "big kid" underwear.
- My child appears to be aware when they need to use the bathroom.
- My child knows the vocabulary and can express when they need to go.

Child Guidance

Educators will provide positive and consistent guidance in a manner based on the understanding of the individual's needs and development of the child. It will include:

- Encouraging self-control, recognizing and reinforcing children's appropriate behaviors, having reasonable and positive expectations, setting clear and consistent limits and redirecting
- Helping children learn social, communication, and emotional regulation skills they can use in place of challenging behaviors
- Using environmental modifications, activity modifications, adult or peer support, and other teaching strategies to encourage appropriate behavior and prevent challenging behaviors
- Intervening quickly when children are physically aggressive with one another and helping them develop more positive strategies for resolving conflict
- Explaining rules and procedures and the reasons for them to children, and where appropriate and feasible, allowing children to participate in the establishment of program rules, policies, and procedures
- Discussing behavior management techniques among staff to promote consistency

Contingency Plans for Emergency Situations

In case of a Fire, Natural Disaster, Or Situation Necessitating Evacuation of the Building:(bomb threats, chemical spills, fire, etc) All children will be walked to Saint Paul's Episcopal Church, 61 Wood Street, Hopkinton, MA. All parents will be called by cell phone or phone at St. Paul's. Elmwood School has been designated as a shelter for extreme emergencies. All children would be transported by staff via staff private vehicles, or the center would walk to the shelter. **St. Paul's phone number: 508-435-4536**

In the case of Power Outage: TLC will stay open for one hour. If power is not restored, then parents would be called to pick up their children at the center. **(NSTAR): 800-592-2000**

In the case of loss of Heat: TLC will stay open for one hour. All parents would be called to pick up their children at the center if heat could not be restored. **Terry Oil: 508-435-6224**

In the event of loss of Water: We are to call the Hopkinton Water Department at **508-497-9765**. Alert them that TLC has no water and that we are a childcare center. If water is not restored within one hour, all parents would be called to pick up their children at the center.

In the event of a Missing Child: We are to call the Parents of the missing child and the Hopkinton Police Department. They are to be notified immediately. The child is searched for in all areas.

- After the Police and Parents of the missing child are called, the Director/Assistant Director will immediately notify EEC.
- The Director and Assistant Director will immediately conduct the search until the Police department arrives. All available staff shall help with the search.

Emergency Procedures-Potential Threat Identified/Confirmed:

- Local reverse 911 calls are provided by the Town of Hopkinton
- Call 911
- Maintain Safety
- Listen to radio for instructions from authorities on whether to evacuate or "stay put."
- In the event that TLC needs to "stay put", the entire center would meet in the lower level of the building, until we were alerted that we could leave safely. All outside doors and windows would be kept closed and sealed. The school-age program will do the same in their building.
- Call Parents
- Follow emergency instructions from emergency response personnel.

The Learning Center maintains first aid kits and flashlights in each classroom. Non-perishable food items and a supply of water is on hand and would be used during an emergency situation.

Custody and Visitation

Some families have legal custodial orders that address who is permitted to pick up or visit a child. If there are custody orders relating to your child, a copy must be provided to office management for your child's file. This information is confidential and solely for the safety and well-being of your child(ren). Families must update the office management when custody orders change or expire. Please note that employees cannot be responsible for supervising parent time (visitation), and, as a result, visitation for non-custodial parents is not permitted in our center. If an individual has court-ordered legal custody, employees must release the child(ren) to that legal custodian regardless of visitation schedules. Please discuss any questions about custody arrangements with the office staff.