

2026-2027

Parent Handbook



LINDA'S HOUSE
PEDIATRIC DAYCARE & PRESCHOOL

Linda's House Pediatric Daycare & Preschool



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lindahousedaycare.com



Welcome to Linda's House

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Linda's House Pediatric Day Care & Preschool. Thank you for trusting us with the care and education of your child. We know how much your child means to you, and we are committed to creating a warm, loving, and supportive environment where they can grow, learn, and thrive.

At Linda's House, we value open communication and transparency. We truly believe that it takes a village to raise a child, and we are honored to be part of your village. Whether you're working on developmental milestones, supporting new behaviors, or building family traditions, our team is here to support you every step of the way.

Please take a moment to read through our family handbook to become familiar with our policies, routines, and expectations. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns as you read, we encourage you to reach out. We're always here to help.

Warmly,

Alica Durand
Center Director
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Mission & Educational Philosophy





Our Mission

Our mission is to provide young children with high-quality, nature-inspired educational experiences that foster holistic development and a deep connection to the natural world. Through joyful, hands-on learning, we aim to inspire a love for nature while promoting mindfulness, social connection, and environmental stewardship.

Educational Philosophy

Our mission is to provide a safe, inclusive, and stimulating early childhood education that fosters the intellectual, emotional, and physical development of each child. We strive to:

- Encourage independent thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Support the social and emotional growth of children through meaningful interactions.
- Foster creativity and imagination through hands-on learning experiences.
- Partner with families to create a strong home-school connection.

Our Educational Philosophy

At Linda's House, we believe that children learn best through play, exploration, and guided discovery. Our curriculum is designed to support whole-child development by integrating the following approaches:

Play-Based Learning

- Encourages active engagement and joyful learning.
- Builds foundational skills in literacy, numeracy, and social interaction.
- Develops problem-solving and critical thinking abilities.
- Nature and environmental education are infused into all areas of our curriculum, not taught as separate subjects.

Social-Emotional Development

- Teaches children how to express emotions and communicate effectively.
- Promotes empathy, cooperation, and self-regulation.
- Creates a warm, inclusive classroom environment.

Hands-On Exploration

- Provides sensory-rich experiences through arts, music, science, and nature activities.
- Encourages creativity and innovation through interactive projects.
- Develops fine and gross motor skills through active play.

Early Literacy & Language Development

- Teaches children how to express emotions and communicate effectively.
- Promotes empathy, cooperation, and self-regulation.
- Creates a warm, inclusive classroom environment.

Family Partnership

- Recognizes parents as a child's first and most important teachers.
- Provides opportunities for parent involvement in school activities.
- Encourages open communication and collaboration between families and teachers.

We create a learning environment where each child can grow at their own pace. Our team provides love, security, guidance, and support, while engaging children in the joy of learning.





Financial Policy, Tuition & Fees



Financial Policy

Linda's House Pediatric Daycare & Preschool is committed to providing high-quality early childhood education and care in a safe, nurturing, and enriching environment. By enrolling your child, you agree to the financial policies outlined in this handbook. Tuition is charged weekly and is due regardless of your child's attendance. This includes payment during illness-related absences, family vacations, holidays, scheduled school closures, and emergency closures due to weather or utility interruptions, as operating expenses continue regardless of attendance.

We reserve the right to review and adjust tuition annually. Tuition increases allow us to keep pace with rising operating costs, including supplies, insurance, utilities, facility maintenance, curriculum materials, and classroom improvements. Tuition also supports competitive wages and professional development for our teaching staff. Families will be notified of any changes to the 2027-2028 tuition no later than March 1, 2027. We believe that reliable, well-supported educators are the foundation of an exceptional early childhood program, and our ability to attract and retain dedicated teachers depends on the strength of our financial partnership with families.

Families receiving Care 4 Kids assistance are responsible for the full cost of tuition until their certificate has been approved. If Care 4 Kids does not cover the full tuition amount, the family is responsible for paying the remaining balance. All initial enrollment and re-determination paperwork must be completed and submitted by the parent or guardian. Re-determination paperwork should be submitted at least 30 days before the renewal deadline to help prevent interruptions in benefits. Families receiving Care 4 Kids assistance will receive monthly invoices for any remaining parent responsibility rather than weekly invoices.

Timely tuition payments are essential to the operation of our program. Repeated late or returned payments may result in late fees, returned payment fees, suspension of attendance, or other action deemed appropriate by the Center Director. Linda's House Pediatric Daycare & Preschool reserves the right to deny attendance when an outstanding balance exists and no reasonable effort has been made to resolve the account.

A minimum of 30 days' written notice is required for any permanent withdrawal or change to your child's enrollment schedule. Tuition remains due throughout the full 30-day notice period.

We appreciate your partnership in helping us maintain a financially sustainable program that values both the children we serve and the educators who care for them. If you have any questions regarding tuition, payment schedules, financial assistance, or these policies, please contact the Center Director, or Business Manager.

Procare Billing

All tuition payments are processed through Procare, our childcare billing and classroom management system. Automatic ACH billing is required for all families and is scheduled to process each Tuesday for the weekly tuition invoice. Families receiving Care 4 Kids assistance will be invoiced monthly for any remaining parent responsibility, with payment due on the 1st of each month.

Parents or guardians must enter their ACH banking information into Procare prior to their child's first day of attendance. We can only accept payments through ACH bank accounts with a valid bank routing number. It is the family's responsibility to ensure that billing information remains accurate and up to date. Any questions regarding billing or account setup should be addressed before your child's first day of care.

Updating Your Billing Information

If you need to update the ACH account saved in Procare, please contact our Business Manager before making any changes. We will temporarily remove your account from automatic billing while you update your banking information. Once the new account has been entered and saved in Procare, automatic payments will resume. Families may also make a one-time payment using a different bank account through the billing section of Procare at any time. If you would like that account to become your new recurring payment method, simply let us know.

Split Family Billing

We are happy to accommodate split family billing for parents or guardians who wish to be billed separately. If your family's circumstances change, please reach out and we will help make the necessary billing arrangements.

Flexible Spending Account (FSA) Statements

Families using Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) for childcare reimbursement may request monthly or quarterly tuition statements by email. Please contact our Business Manager if you would like to be added to the reimbursement statement distribution list.

Gifting Tuition

Occasionally, grandparents, family members, friends, or other generous supporters wish to contribute toward a family's tuition. We are happy to help facilitate these gifts. We simply ask that the donor first communicate directly with the receiving family, then contact the Center Director or Business Manager with the request and confirmation from the family. Gifted tuition payments should be made by cashier's check payable to Linda's House Pediatric Daycare & Preschool and include the receiving family's name in the memo line so the payment can be properly credited.

Questions About Billing

If you need assistance with billing at any time during the school year or have questions regarding your account, please contact our Business Manager, Jena Pucillo, at jena@thewhitebarncc.com.

Tuition Payments & Fees

Full tuition is expected during all closures, including holidays, professional development days, winter break, and weather or emergency-related closures. Tuition will not be refunded for daily absences, holidays, professional development days, winter break or inclement weather closures.

Tuition Rates (Per Child) effective 9/1/2026

Days of Care	Weekly Tuition (drawn on Tuesday)
5 DAYS Infant/ Toddler (Under 2y 8 mo)	\$330
5 DAYS Preschool (Over 2y 8mo)	\$315
3 DAYS	\$240
2 DAYS	\$195

Families with more than one child will receive a 10% discount on the second child's tuition, or applied to the lower tuition rate. 5% discount applied to a third sibling. Discount applies across Linda's House Pediatric Daycare & Preschool and The White Barn Children's Centre siblings.

Initial Registration Fee	\$100	Due one week prior to program start date.
Annual Supply Fee	\$100	Drawn annually on October 1st.
Bounced Payment Fee	\$20	Charged for any returned or insufficient fund payment. If a payment is returned, the outstanding tuition balance must be resolved immediately through the Procure App.
Late Payment Fee	\$25	Fee applied if a returned tuition payment is not resolved by the close of business on Friday of the same week.
Late Pick Up Fee	\$25	For the first 15 minutes, \$2 per minute thereafter

Care 4 Kids

Linda's House accepts Care 4 Kids, a state-funded program that helps eligible Connecticut families afford quality childcare.

Important Notes for Families:

- **It is the guardian's responsibility to complete** and manage all Care 4 Kids paperwork.
- **Redetermination forms must be submitted** at least **30 days before the due date** to avoid disruption in coverage.
- **Parents are responsible for paying tuition** until Care 4 Kids approval is in place.
- **Parents must cover any balance** not paid by Care 4 Kids.

What is Care 4 Kids?

Care 4 Kids is a partnership between the State of Connecticut, families, and licensed childcare providers that helps cover a portion of childcare costs for eligible families.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Families must: Live in Connecticut
- Be employed or enrolled in an approved training/education program
- Meet income guidelines based on family size
- Children must: Live in Connecticut
- Be under age 13 (or under 19 if they have special needs)

Benefits of Care 4 Kids:

- Financial assistance toward the cost of licensed childcare
- Annual eligibility review (reduced need to report changes)
- Job search certificate (3-month coverage if employment is lost)

How to Apply:

- Apply online or download an application at www.ctcare4kids.com
- Submit income documents (pay stubs, etc.)
- Complete a Parent-Provider Agreement (PPA) with Linda's House
- Once approved, you'll receive a Child Care Certificate that authorizes payment



General Policies & Procedures



Eligibility

Linda's House accepts children from age 6 weeks through age 5. Linda's house does not discriminate against any child based on race, creed, National origin, sex, disability or affiliation.

Hours of Operation

Linda's House is open from 7:30 AM to 4:45 PM. Students must be picked up by 4:30 PM. If necessary, a 4:45PM late pick-up option is available, but it must be approved in advance by the Center Director. **Please note that we close promptly at 4:45 PM.**

Attendance

Regular attendance is essential for a child's social, emotional, and academic development. Establishing a consistent routine helps children build a sense of structure and responsibility while making the most of their preschool experience.

Arrivals & Departures

Children may arrive as early as **7:30 AM**, but must be at school **no later than 9:00 AM**. If your child will be arriving late or will be absent for the day, please notify your child's teacher or a member of the administrative team so we can adjust staffing accordingly.

- A responsible adult must bring your child to the main entrance vestibule, where a staff member will greet your child and guide them into their classroom.
- Daily sign-in is required using the ProCare app. A barcode is posted in the vestibule for quick access and convenience.
- **Drop-off should take place outside of rest time, which runs from 12:00 to 2:00 PM.** Pick-up during rest time (12:00–2:00 PM) is permitted with advance notice only.

All children must be picked up from the main entrance vestibule, where a staff member will escort them out to you. Only individuals listed on the child's enrollment form are authorized to pick up. Any adult unfamiliar to staff will be asked to present a valid photo ID. Multiple staff members are present during arrival and dismissal to support safety and supervision. For security purposes, you may be asked to show your ID more than once. We appreciate your cooperation in keeping all children safe.

Safety Reminders:

- Never leave a child unattended in your vehicle during drop-off or pick-up.
- **Please hold your child's hand in the parking lot at all times.**
- Do not let children play in the parking lot.

Accidents & Injuries

All accidents or injuries that occur while children are in our care will be documented in an **Accident Report** sent to families through the ProCare app.

An **Accident Report** is created for injuries that leave a mark. A **Incident Report** is created for unwanted behaviors that cause physical harm or leave a mark. An **Illness Report** is created when a child is sent home sick.

- For minor injuries, parents will be notified via ProCare.
- For more serious injuries, emergency services will be contacted and the child will be transported to the nearest medical facility. Parents/guardians and emergency contacts will be notified immediately.

Please ensure that your child's records are kept up to date, including:

- Parent/guardian phone numbers (cell and work)
- Emergency contact numbers
- Your child's physician and hospital of choice

Our staff carry fully stocked first aid kits whenever outside of the building and are trained in emergency procedures, First Aid, CPR, and Medication Administration.

Ambulance

In the event of a medical emergency:

- Staff will provide immediate first aid and notify parents or emergency contacts.
- If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, the physician listed in your child's enrollment paperwork or a local hospital will be authorized to provide necessary care.
- If transport is required, your child and their medical records will be transferred via ambulance to the appropriate facility.

Families are responsible for any ambulance or medical fees incurred.

Building Safety

The safety of our students and staff is a top priority. Our team conducts regular drills, including:

- **Fire drills**
- **Shelter-in-place drills**
- **Evacuation drills**

In the event of severe weather, it is often safest for children and families to remain where they are. Linda's House has designated **safe indoor areas** and an **off-site evacuation location**, if needed.

Center Guests

We regularly arrange for special guests to visit the center to provide enriching experiences for our students. Linda's House has an open-door policy. Parents are welcome to visit or observe their child's classroom at any time. If a special guest falls on a day that your child is not normally at school, they are welcome to attend with a parent or guardian.

Custody Disputes

In the case of a custody dispute, Linda's House does not make determinations about legal or physical custody. Instead, we follow the documentation provided by the enrolling parent or guardian. **Custodial parents must provide legal custody documents**, which will be kept in the child's file.

Gifts & Celebrations

Your child's birthday is a special day, and we love celebrating it with them! To help us create a joyful, inclusive experience, please keep the following in mind:

- **Food items and desserts are not permitted.**
- Each child will receive a **birthday crown** and their classmates will sing **Happy Birthday** (with your child's permission).
- Prior to your child's birthday, a teacher will contact you to request a few **photos or stories** to share with the class.
- If your child has a **special book, toy, or item** they'd like to share with their classmates, they are welcome to bring it for **show and tell** on their birthday.

Please speak with your child's teacher in advance to coordinate any special birthday plans.

Gifts for Staff:

Linda's House policy states that staff members cannot accept personal gifts or tips. If you or your child would like to show appreciation to a teacher, we welcome:

- **Handmade cards, drawings, or crafts** from your child
- **Books** for the classroom
- **Bird seed** for our feeders
- **Amazon gift cards** or other classroom-related donations

These gestures are always deeply appreciated and help enrich our program in meaningful ways!



School Closings & Communication



Family Communication

At Linda's House, we believe open and honest communication between families and staff is essential to supporting each child's growth and success. Our goal is to work as a team to meet each student's needs with care and consistency.

We use the **ProCare app** to communicate throughout the day, including:

- Reminders and announcements
- Photos and activity updates
- Accident reports and personal messages
- Curriculum notes

In addition:

- Monthly newsletters are emailed to all families with center-wide updates.
- Classroom teachers do their best to provide a daily recap at pick-up to share highlights of your child's day.
- Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled periodically to help track developmental progress. If any concerns arise, your child's teaching team and the Center Director will schedule a meeting to discuss next steps and support options.

Behavioral issues will be addressed privately and never discussed in front of children. If there is a concern, your child's teacher will reach out to you directly. For general communication, you may:

- Speak with your child's teacher at drop-off or pick-up
- Send a message through ProCare
- Call the office at (860) 315-5600
- Email the Director at alica.durand@lindashousedaycare.com

You can also follow Linda's House Pediatric Daycare & Preschool on Facebook, where we post weekly photos and updates about classroom activities and special events.

Respectful Communication & Code of Conduct

At Linda's House, we are committed to maintaining a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for all children, families, and staff. **Just as we hold our educators and team members to high standards of professionalism, kindness, and integrity, we also expect the same from the families in our care community.**

We believe that strong, respectful partnerships between families and educators are essential to a child's success. To that end, we ask that all family members communicate with staff in a manner that is courteous, constructive, and aligned with our center's values.

Code of Conduct for Families:

- Communicate with staff and administrators in a respectful, calm, and professional manner—even during times of stress or disagreement.
- Trust that our educators are acting in the best interest of your child, and work collaboratively to resolve any concerns that arise.
- Refrain from using aggressive, threatening, or demeaning language or behavior in person, over the phone, or in written communication (including email, messaging apps, or social media).
- Respect the diversity of our staff, children, and families, including differences in background, culture, identity, and perspective.
- Follow the appropriate channels for voicing concerns, beginning with your child's lead teacher or the director.

We do not tolerate disrespectful or hostile behavior toward our staff. If it is determined by the Director that the relationship between a family and the school is no longer a good fit due to ongoing conflict, breakdown in communication, or behavior that compromises the wellbeing of our staff or school community— we reserve the right to release a child from the program. This may be done with or without 30 days' notice, depending on the circumstances.

We thank you for being our partners in creating a nurturing and respectful learning environment for all.

School Closings

Full tuition is expected during all closures, including holidays, professional development days, winter break, and weather or emergency-related closures.

Holidays & Breaks

Linda's House is closed in observance of the following holidays:

- Indigenous People's Day
- Veteran's Day
- Thanksgiving Break (11/26-11/27/26)
- Winter Break (12/24/26 through 1/1/27. Reopening on 1/4/27)
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- President's Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Labor Day

Professional Development

Linda's House is closed for one Professional Development Day each year (**August 28 2026**). This time is used for:

- CPR/First Aid training
- Curriculum planning
- Team building
- Classroom and space redesign
- Best practices updates

Weather-Related Closures

While we embrace all types of weather as part of our nature-based program, there may be times when travel is unsafe for families or staff. In those cases, we reserve the right to delay or close the center on a case-by-case basis. Families will be notified of weather-related closures via Procure message.

If a weather emergency arises during the school day, we will follow our Emergency Preparedness Plan to ensure the safety of students and staff.

Unexpected Long Term Closure:

In the event of a long-term closure due to public health emergencies, natural disasters, or other unforeseen circumstances beyond our control, Linda's House may be required to close temporarily. This could include a government-mandated shutdown or a decision made by Linda's House administration in the best interest of our families and staff.

During any extended closure, families will be asked to pay a percentage of their regular tuition in order to hold their child's spot in the program. The tuition percentage will be determined based on several factors, including the anticipated length of closure, whether the closure is mandated by a government agency or initiated by Linda's House, and the financial obligations required to maintain the program's operations during that time.

This policy ensures we can support staff, maintain our facilities, and plan for a smooth reopening while preserving your child's place in the program. Details about tuition expectations will be communicated prior to any temporary closure.



Health & Wellness



Medication Administration

If your child requires medication during school hours, the following guidelines must be followed:

- A **Medication Permission Form** must be completed and signed by the parent or guardian. The form is available on our website under "[Parent Forms & Resources](#)." You can also ask for a copy from the Director or school nurse.
- All medications must be in the original container, with the original prescription label and clear instructions for administration.
- We can only administer medications that have been prescribed by a physician or accompanied by written instructions and approval from your child's medical provider.
- Over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol and Motrin are not routinely given at school. If required for pain control after surgery or injury we must have written instructions and approval from your child's medical provider on when to give and how often.

All medications are kept inaccessible to children. Controlled substances are secured in a locked container and tracked daily. A written medication log is maintained for each child and kept in their file.

Illness Policy & Return to Program

To help maintain a healthy classroom environment, children must stay home when they are unwell and may be sent home if symptoms arise during the day. The ability to participate in an active school day is a good point of reference if unsure.

Children must remain home if they are experiencing:

- **A fever of 100.4°F or higher**
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- An undiagnosed rash
- Persistent cough, sneezing, or runny nose
- Sore throat
- Head lice
- Pink eye (conjunctivitis)
- First 24 hours of antibiotic therapy

While at School:

If a child develops any of the symptoms listed above during the school day:

- A parent or guardian will be contacted immediately.
- The child must be picked up within one hour of notification.
- If a child vomits once or has two episodes of diarrhea, a parent will be called to pick them up.

Return to Program:

- Children must be well enough to fully participate in the daily program before returning. We reserve the right to send a child home at arrival if they appear ill or are not able to take part in classroom activities.

Illness & Return to Program

Diarrhea	24hrs since last episode and having improved/normal bowel movements
Vomiting	24hrs since last episode and eating and drinking has improved to near baseline
Fever (100.4 or above)	24 hours after being fever-free without medication. If the 24 hour time period ends after 12pm, please keep your child home until the following school day.
Pink Eye/ Conjunctivitis	24 hours after starting treatment with a doctors verification of treatment.
Strep Throat	24 hrs of antibiotic therapy before return plus fever free and feeling well enough to return.
Hand, Foot & Mouth	24 hours after being fever-free without medication and without fluid filled blisters. Blisters must be dry.
Rashes & Infected Skin Spots	With a doctor's note stating the spots or rashes aren't contagious.
Flu or RSV	48 hours after being fever free without medication, must have a doctors note, must consult with the nurse before returning.
Covid-19	Same protocol as Flu or RSV, as well as following the current CDC and local health department guidelines.
Head lice	Once treated, may return after 24hrs.

Antibiotic Therapy

Children who are prescribed antibiotics must remain home for the **first 24 hours** after beginning treatment, or have received at least three doses before returning. Children may return only if they are feeling well enough to fully participate in daily activities. Linda's House reserves the right to send a child home if symptoms persist or if they are unable to comfortably engage in the routine.

Hospitalization

After any hospitalization, a discharge summary and doctor's note must be submitted, confirming that your child is healthy and able to return to school. The school nurse must approve the return before your child resumes attendance. If your child is scheduled for a **surgical procedure involving anesthesia**, please inform the school nurse in advance. Because the effects of general anesthesia can linger for up to 24 hours, children must remain home the day after surgery to rest and recover.

Hand Washing Policy

Handwashing is our first line of defense against illness. Staff and children wash their hands thoroughly at the following times:

- Upon arriving at school
- After toileting or diapering
- Before food preparation or handling
- Before and after eating
- After sneezing, coughing, or blowing noses
- After touching animals
- After contact with bodily fluids
- After cleaning
- Before and after administering medication or providing first aid (when appropriate)
- After returning indoors from outdoor play
- Anytime hands are visibly dirty

We teach and model proper handwashing to help children build lifelong healthy habits.

Immunizations

All children enrolled at Linda's House must be fully immunized unless they have a valid medical exemption. The State of Connecticut no longer accepts religious exemptions.

- Immunization records or medical waivers must be submitted upon enrollment.
- Updated immunization records should be provided within two weeks of any new or required vaccination.

Referrals

If your child needs additional support in any developmental area, the Director or school nurse can assist you in making referrals to: **Birth-to-Three, Public school services**, and Other **educational, social, or financial support agencies** as needed. Our teaching team is also happy to offer guidance and suggestions to help support your child's development at home.

Health Forms

The State of Connecticut Office of Early Childhood requires all children enrolled in childcare to have current health documentation on file. To remain in compliance, your child's health forms must be updated annually.

Updated health forms may be submitted as a paper copy or uploaded directly to the Documents section of your Procure account. Please also provide a copy of any new immunizations your child receives throughout the year so we can keep their health records accurate and up to date.

If your child's health forms are missing, incomplete, or have expired, our school nurse will contact you directly. Please note that failure to provide the required health documentation in a timely manner may affect your child's ability to continue attending the program.

Individualized Care Plans

The school nurse in collaboration with the family will develop an individualized care plan for children with a medical diagnosis or those requiring specialized care. This plan will be reviewed and signed by all relevant staff and updated at least annually, or whenever there are changes in your child's care needs. Families should notify the school nurse and/or Center Director of any updates to their child's medical care.

Medical Supplies

Families are responsible for providing any medical equipment or supplies that their child may need during the school day. The school nurse will meet with the family prior to enrollment to coordinate care and any special accommodations.

Snacks & Lunch

We are an egg, peanut and tree nut free center.

Food Allergies

To help keep all children safe, Linda's House is an egg, peanut, and tree nut-free program. As a pediatric daycare, we care for many children with specialized medical needs and food allergies, and we appreciate your partnership in helping us maintain a safe environment for everyone.

If your child enjoys peanut butter, sunbutter is a great alternative. Please remember to check the ingredient labels on granola bars, snack bars, and other packaged foods to ensure they do not contain peanuts or tree nuts. Eggs may be included as an ingredient in baked goods, such as muffins or breads, but we ask that foods containing whole eggs, such as scrambled or hard-boiled eggs, not be sent to school.

What to Pack

Families are responsible for providing two healthy snacks and a packed lunch each day. We encourage nutritious options such as fresh fruits and vegetables, crackers, yogurt, meat and cheese, or other well-balanced choices.

Please include:

- An ice pack to keep cold foods at a safe temperature.
- A thermos for foods that should remain warm.

We are unable to heat meals at school.

Food Preparation & Safety

All food should arrive ready to eat. This includes peeling fruit, removing pits, and cutting foods into developmentally appropriate sizes before they are packed. We are unable to prepare or cut food at mealtime. Bento-style lunch containers are a great option for organizing meals and snacks.

For children under three years of age, please do not pack food in plastic zip-top bags, as they present a choking hazard.

If a lunch contains foods such as whole grapes, meatballs, hot dogs, or large pieces of meat that cannot be served safely, we will notify you and send the item home. Our highest priority during mealtimes is the safety of every child, and we appreciate your help in ensuring all foods are prepared before arriving at school.



Child Guidance & Safety Expectations



Child Guidance

At Linda's House, we are committed to creating a healthy, safe, and enjoyable learning environment for every child. Just as children need support in learning academic skills, they also need guidance in developing positive social behaviors. Some children require more support than others, and we ask that families remain understanding and collaborative as we help each child grow socially and emotionally.

We use positive guidance techniques rooted in developmentally appropriate strategies. Our goal is not to punish, but to **teach children how to self-regulate, develop empathy, and build respectful relationships**. Teachers use consistent, realistic rules and focus on prevention by reinforcing positive behaviors, offering gentle reminders, redirecting behavior, modeling empathy, and using natural or logical consequences when appropriate. **Our approach encourages self-discipline and internal motivation**, with minimal teacher intervention when possible.

Responding to Disruptive Behavior

At times, children may struggle to manage their behavior in a busy classroom setting.

Disruptive behavior is defined as any behavior that negatively impacts the experience or safety of others. This includes, but is not limited to: hitting, biting, kicking, pushing, throwing objects, spitting, damaging school property, or forcefully taking toys from other children. When disruptive behavior occurs, teachers will:

- Guide the child to **check on the well-being of the other child involved**.
- Engage in a brief discussion focused on **identifying emotions** and **exploring more positive behavior choices**.
- Encourage the child to **take action to show care or apology**, such as offering a hug, drawing a picture, or using another comforting gesture. Verbal apologies are not required but are welcomed if initiated by the child.

Calm Corner

As part of our guidance approach, we use a designated space called the Calm Corner. This is a peaceful and supportive area designed to help children regulate big emotions.

Unlike traditional "time-out" spaces, the Calm Corner is not punitive. Instead, it provides children with a moment to refocus, with a staff member nearby to offer support if needed. This helps children reintegrate into the group calmly and positively.



Ongoing Support & Communication

If a child frequently needs Calm Corner breaks or continues to display disruptive behavior, teachers will reach out to parents to schedule a conference. Together, we'll develop a plan to support the child's needs and outline specific steps and expectations.

If the behavior involves aggression, destruction, or puts others at risk, the child's guardians will be contacted, and the child may need to be picked up immediately. Our staff are trained to manage challenging behaviors and **create individualized support plans** when needed. If, after appropriate interventions, the behavior continues and impacts the safety or learning of others, the Center Director will evaluate whether the child can remain enrolled in the program.

When Further Steps are Needed

We will make every effort to work with families in resolving behavioral concerns. However, in rare cases where a child's behavior remains unsafe or disruptive despite all support strategies, it may be determined that Linda's House is not the right fit for that child's needs. In these situations, families may be asked to withdraw their child from the program in the best interest of the child, the staff, and the broader classroom community.

Biting Policy

Biting is a common developmental stage in early childhood. At Linda's House, we recognize this behavior as part of a child's growth, while also prioritizing the safety of all students. If biting becomes a recurring issue:

- A meeting will be held with the child's guardians, teachers, and the Center Director to create a support plan.
- The plan may include strategies such as: using a highchair during busy transitions, wearing a teether, or having a teacher closely supervise during group play.

If a child bites **more than three times in one day** or if **blood is drawn**, the child's parent or guardian will be called to pick them up. The child may return **24 hours after pickup**.

If frequent biting continues despite a plan being in place for at least one month and minimal progress has been made, the child may be discharged from Linda's House. Written notice will be provided before this step is taken.

Physical Contact & Respecting Boundaries

We actively teach children to respect each other's personal space and physical boundaries. All children are encouraged to:

- Be aware of their own bodies in shared spaces.
- Check in with others before engaging in physical touch or play.
- Use clear language like **"please keep your hands to yourself"** or **"I need space"** when setting boundaries.

Physical Play Guidelines:

- Physical play is developmentally appropriate and allowed when safe and respectful.
- Because physical play can sometimes lead to confusion around boundaries, staff are always nearby to support and redirect when needed.
- If physical play becomes **aggressive or unsafe**, it will be stopped immediately.
- Children who continue to cause harm to others after receiving consistent support and reminders may be **dismissed from the program** to maintain a safe environment for all.

Child Abuse Reporting

All staff undergo a thorough background check. Linda's House staff are required to complete training upon hire that defines child abuse and neglect pursuant to Connecticut state law, and outlines the staff member's personal responsibility to report all incidents of child abuse and neglect. All staff are mandated reporters and are required by law to report any suspected physical, sexual, or emotional abuse or neglect of any child. If we suspect abuse, we will contact and make a report within 24 hours to the Connecticut Department of Children and Families.



Daily Schedule & Class Routines



Rest Time

All children at Linda's House are expected to rest or nap after lunch each day, for a period not exceeding two hours. The only exception is for young infants, who follow individualized sleep schedules based on their developmental needs. To help your child feel comfortable during rest time, please provide:

- A **crib sheet** and familiar **blanket** to remain at school for the week (sent home at the end of the school week for laundering).
- For children under 12 months, please send a **sleep sack** (no swaddles that confine arms or weighted sleepwear). These items will also be sent home weekly.

Safe Sleep Policy:

Linda's House follows safe sleep guidelines. The following items are not permitted during rest time:

- Swaddles that restrict arm movement
- Weighted sleep sacks
- Binky clips or WubbaNubs

Rest Time Hours: 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM

- Drop-off is not allowed during rest time. If your child has an appointment that ends during this time, they may return after rest time has concluded.
- Early pick-up during rest time should be avoided whenever possible. If necessary, please notify your child's teacher in advance so we can prepare your child with minimal disruption to others.

Toilet Training

We are fully committed to supporting families through the potty training process. Our goal is to keep the experience positive and pressure-free. For older toddlers:

- Diaper changes occur in the bathroom
- Children are encouraged, but never forced, to sit on the potty
- All efforts are praised to build confidence and support their progress

Indoor & Outdoor Play

At Linda's House, we believe play is essential to every child's development. Children will have daily opportunities for both **parallel** and **cooperative play**, indoors and outdoors.

Outdoor Play:

- Outdoor time is built into your child's routine at least twice per day, weather permitting.
- Outdoor play may be canceled if temperatures are too hot or cold, or if air quality is deemed unsafe due to pollution or environmental conditions.
- Please **dress your child in weather-appropriate layers** and **apply sunscreen and bug spray at home** during warmer months.
- Children must wear **closed-toe shoes** each day for safety.

Toys from Home: We ask that children do not bring toys from home, as they often lead to conflict and distraction in the classroom. Linda's House is not responsible for lost or damaged toys. If a child is having difficulty parting with a toy, teachers may support them by briefly allowing the child to show and share the toy with classmates before placing it in their backpack for the rest of the day.

Curriculum Lessons & Group Experiences

At Linda's House, we believe that children learn best through play, exploration, and meaningful connections with the world around them. Our curriculum is designed to support each child's developmental journey through hands-on experiences, creative expression, movement, and social interaction. Lessons are thoughtfully planned around children's interests and emerging skills, allowing us to nurture curiosity, independence, and a love of learning in a joyful, supportive environment.

Our days include a balance of structured group experiences and open-ended play. Teachers lead small group activities, circle times, story-based learning, music and movement, nature walks, and sensory play — all designed to build foundational skills while honoring each child's unique pace and personality. While we follow age-appropriate developmental goals, we recognize that every child's path is different. Our goal is to create a space where children feel safe, capable, and excited to explore their world.



Ocean Class

Infants & Crawlers

Milestones:

- Rolling over
- Tummy time development
- Sitting unassisted
- Pulling up to stand
- Sleeping independently in a crib
- Bottle feeding
- Introduction to purees and finger foods

Families are encouraged to limit co-sleeping and begin introducing breastfed infants to a bottle regularly at home. This supports smoother feeding routines during the school day and encourages early independence.

Time	Activity
7:30 - 8:30 AM	Arrival & Classroom Play
8:30 - 9:30 AM	Diapering & Handwashing, AM Nap
9:30 - 9:45 AM	AM bottle/snack if needed
9:45 - 10:15 AM	Listening Walk
10:15 - 10:30 AM	Diapering & Handwashing
10:30 - 11:15 AM	Interactive Floor Play & Curriculum
11:15 - 11:30 AM	Bottle/Lunch if needed
11:30 - 1:30 PM	Diapering & Handwashing, PM Nap
1:30 - 2:00 PM	Diapering & Handwashing, PM Snack if needed
2:00 - 3:00 PM	Outdoor Play, Weather Permitting
3:00 - 3:30 PM	Gross Motor Room
3:30 - 4:00 PM	Interactive Floor Play & Curriculum
4:00 - 4:30 PM	Diapering & Handwashing, Interactive Floor Play



Ocean Class



Library





Lake Class

Crawlers & Walkers

Milestones:

- Building independence
- Exploring a wider variety of foods
- First vocabulary words
- Active exploration of toys and classroom environment
- Transition from crib to cot for naps

Support your child's development by promoting independence at home—encourage trying new foods, simple self-help tasks, and allowing safe exploration of their environment.

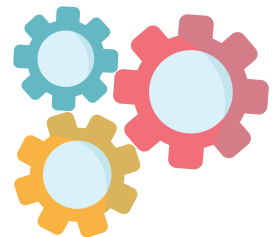
Time	Activity
7:30 - 8:30 AM	Arrival & Classroom Play
8:30 - 8:45 AM	Diapering & Handwashing
8:45 - 9:00 AM	Table Top Toys
9:00 - 9:45 AM	AM Snack, Morning Meeting
9:45 - 10:00 AM	Diapering & Handwashing, Transition to Outside
10:00 - 10:45 AM	Outdoor Play
10:45 - 11:15 AM	Transition to Classroom, Diapering & Handwashing
11:15 - 12:00 PM	Lunch & Clean Up
12:00 - 2:00 PM	Nap
2:00 - 2:30 PM	Diapering & Handwashing, PM Snack
2:30 - 3:15 PM	Listening Walk or Outdoor Play
3:15 - 4:00 PM	Handwashing, Gross Motor Room Play
4:00 - 4:30 PM	Diapering & Handwashing, Interactive Classroom Play



Lake Class



STEM Room





Earth & Sky Classrooms

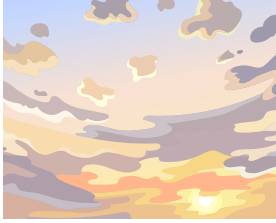
Toddlers

Milestones:

- Early turn-taking and sharing
- Expanding vocabulary
- Introduction to potty training
- Transition from high chairs to sitting in child-sized chairs
- Using toys and materials purposefully
- Beginning self-regulation

At this stage, reinforcing independence at home is key. Encourage simple routines and begin gently introducing potty training as your child shows signs of readiness.

Time	Activity
7:30 - 8:30 AM	Arrival & Classroom Play, Diapering & Handwashing
8:30 - 9:00 AM	AM Snack, Transition to Outdoors
9:00 - 10:15 AM	Outdoor Play
10:15 - 10:30 AM	Diapering & Handwashing
10:30 - 11:00 AM	Rotating Specials
11:00 - 12:00 PM	Morning Meeting, Handwashing, Lunch
12:00 - 2:00 PM	Nap
2:00 - 2:30 PM	Diapering & Handwashing, PM Snack
2:30 - 3:15 PM	Interactive Classroom Play
3:15 - 4:00 PM	Outdoor Play
4:00 - 4:30 PM	Diapering & Handwashing, Interactive Classroom Play



Sky Classroom



Earth Classroom



Meadow Class

Toddlers

Milestones:

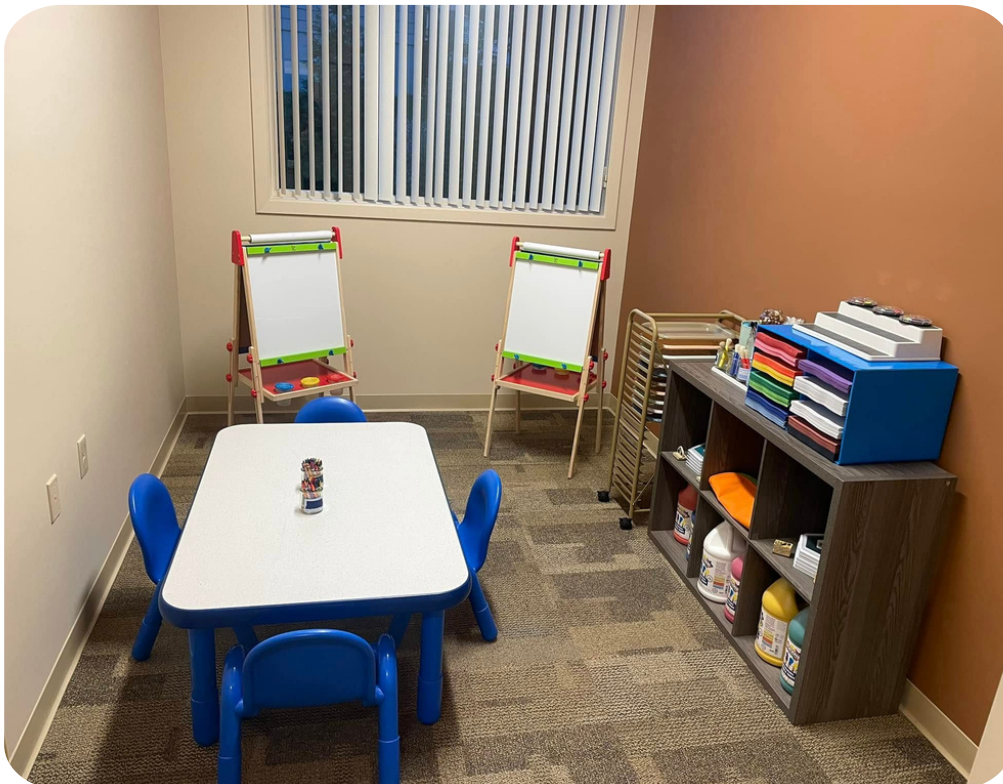
- Growing attention spans
- Engaging in center-based play
- Participating in longer group activities
- Progressing in potty training
- Developing self-help skills
- Following simple step directions
- Exploring special rooms and enrichment areas

Families should continue to foster independence and introduce age-appropriate boundaries and expectations. Begin or reinforce potty training routines at home to support consistency across environments.

Time	Activity
7:30 - 8:45 AM	Arrival & Classroom Play, Potty & Handwashing
8:45 - 9:00 AM	Morning Meeting
9:00 - 9:15 AM	AM Snack
9:30- 10:00 AM	Rotating Specials
10:00 - 10:15 AM	Potty & Handwashing
10:15 - 11:30 AM	Nature Walk, Outdoor Play
11:30 - 12:15 PM	Potty & Handwashing, Lunch
12:15 - 2:15 PM	Nap
2:15 - 2:45 PM	Potty & Handwashing, PM Snack
2:45 - 4:00 PM	Outdoor Play
4:00 - 4:30 PM	Potty & Handwashing, Interactive Classroom Play



Meadow Class



Art Class





Forest Class

Jr. Preschool

Milestones:

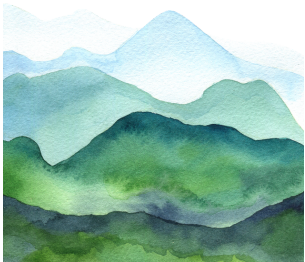
- Progressing toward cooperative play
- Improving attention span
- Managing smoother transitions and daily routines
- Introduction to academic skills (letters, numbers, shapes, colors)
- Beginning critical thinking (e.g., question of the day)
- Practicing self-regulation
- Strengthening friendship and social skills
- Exploring enrichment rooms

Families should support potty training progress, establish clear expectations at home, and partner with the teaching team to ensure consistency between home and school routines.

Time	Activity
7:30 - 8:30 AM	Arrival & Classroom Play
8:30 - 8:45 AM	Morning Meeting
8:45 - 9:15 AM	AM Snack, Potty & Handwashing
9:30 - 10:00 AM	Rotating Specials
10:00 - 11:30 AM	Outdoor Play
11:30 - 12:15 PM	Potty & Handwashing, Lunch
12:15 - 2:15 PM	Nap
2:15 - 2:45 PM	Potty & Handwashing, PM Snack
2:45 - 4:00 PM	Potty & Handwashing, Outdoor Play
4:00 - 4:30 PM	Potty & Handwashing, Interactive Classroom Play

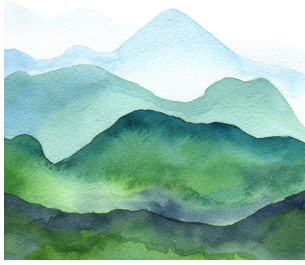


Forest Class



Mountain Class





Mountain Class

Preschool

Milestones:

- Practicing self-help skills
- Engaging in cooperative group play
- Strengthening self-regulation and social-emotional skills
- Understanding process-focused learning (versus just outcomes)
- Advancing academic skills (letter recognition, phonics, sorting)
- Developing pre-writing skills
- Mastering color and shape identification
- Continuing potty training mastery

Students in this classroom should be potty trained or nearly fully independent. They should be able to pull up their own pants and underwear and follow simple step directions. At home, families should support independence and reinforce skills that prepare children for preschool and beyond.

Time	Activity
7:30 - 8:30 AM	Arrival & Classroom Play, Morning Meeting
8:45 - 9:30 AM	Potty & Handwashing, Rotating Specials
9:30 - 10:00 AM	AM Snack, Potty & Handwashing
10:00 - 11:30 AM	Outdoor Play
11:30 - 12:15 PM	Potty & Handwashing, Lunch
12:15 - 2:00 PM	Potty & Handwashing, Nap/Rest
2:00 - 2:30 PM	Potty & Handwashing, PM Snack
2:30 - 4:00 PM	Outdoor Play
4:00 - 4:30 PM	Potty & Handwashing, Interactive Classroom Play



Outdoor Play & Nature Based Learning



CLOTHING

Children should be dressed in layers to accommodate all weather. Students should have a minimum of two extra outfits that will be stored at school at all times. If a soiled outfit returns home please send your child a clean replacement outfit the next time they attend school.

Items to be kept at school daily:

Spring

- Waterproof rubber boots
- Hiking boots or sneakers
- Jacket or sweatshirt
- Rain jacket w/hood
- Rain pants
- Hat
- Waterproof gloves



Summer

- Close-toed sandals/ shoes
- Sun hat
- Light-weight, long-sleeved shirt for sun protection
- Rain jacket w/hood
- Rain pants

Fall

- Waterproof rubber boots
- Hiking boots or sneakers
- Jacket or sweatshirt
- Rain Jacket w/hood
- Rain pants
- Hat
- Waterproof gloves or mittens



Winter

- Waterproof/insulated snow boots
- Waterproof snow pants
- Waterproof winter coat
- Multiple insulating layers
- Two pairs of waterproof mittens/gloves
- Scarf/neck cover
- Hat/ear covers
- Wool/fleece socks

ALL CLOTHING SHOULD BE LABELED, including boots, mittens, coats, etc. Although staff members will do their best to keep track of clothing, Linda's House is not responsible for lost articles of clothing.

Changes of clothes should include underwear, pants, shirt, socks, and layers appropriate for each season.



What are the benefits of **NATURE BASED LEARNING**

As a result of their participation in Linda's House Pediatric Daycare & Preschool, children will:

- Feel comfortable in nature and connected to the land.
- Respect all living things and seek to disturb as little as possible in the natural world.
- Have confidence and motivation to explore, learn and grow.
- Have stronger social skills that prepare them for the learning environment and abilities required in kindergarten, including getting along with peers, being helpful, showing compassion, following directions and cooperating.
- Ask questions and desire to investigate answers.
- Be creative and intellectually curious.
- Become future stewards of our environment.

Research shows children who play in dirt are happier and healthier! A friendly bacteria found in soil has been shown to activate a group of neurons that produce the brain chemical serotonin, enhancing feelings of wellbeing. These earth elements allow children to explore the world using their senses, express themselves creatively and just have fun.

Preschool students may come home dirty from Linda's House. We recommend that you allow yourself time to change and clean up before planning an activity after school. Wear clothes that can (and will) get muddy. We will splash in puddles, make mud pies in the mud kitchen, climb through mud pits, and dig in the sand. Although we will clean up as much as possible before going home, you may want to have a change of clothes in the car.

PLAY BASED LEARNING

Young children have a vital need to play, play is their “work” and there are many benefits gained through that play. Our play based learning environment invites children to construct knowledge through their explorations. We carefully plan our environment and our activities to allow children to use all their senses to gather and process information. We do not use worksheets, coloring pages, flash cards or “cookie cutter” art projects. We are able to help children prepare cognitively, socially, emotionally, and physically for kindergarten through play.

- Play contributes to cognitive and physical development.
- Play teaches vital social and emotional skills that are linked with success in school and life.
- Play allows children to problem solve and reason.
- Play keeps the body and mind active.
- Play allows children to use all their senses to learn about the world, which forms solid connections in young minds.
- Play allows children to experiment and explore in a safe environment.
- Play gives children opportunities to make choices.
- Play allows children to learn and teach at the same time.
- Play helps children to sort and classify ideas.
- Play allows children to self-regulate.



Outdoor Play Expectations

At Linda's House, we believe outdoor play is essential to healthy development. Allowing children to engage in moderate risk helps them build body awareness, strengthen their senses, and develop confidence through real-world challenges. Activities like **climbing**, **balancing**, and **running on uneven ground** support not only physical growth, but also emotional resilience.

We recognize that outdoor play comes with potential risks, and we take safety seriously. Our staff are trained to guide children in setting personal boundaries and understanding their environment. The outdoor space is regularly assessed, and adjustments are made as needed to maintain a safe and engaging setting.

To ensure safety, staff always carry walkie-talkies, first aid kits, and cell phones during outdoor play.

Nature Trail (new Spring 2026)

Our Nature Trail is an extension of our outdoor classroom and provides children with additional opportunities to learn, explore, and connect with nature. Throughout the year, classes use the trail for nature walks, outdoor investigations, storytelling, seasonal observations, sensory experiences, and imaginative play. Children are always under the active supervision of our teaching staff, and clear expectations and boundaries are established before each visit to ensure a safe and positive experience.

Whenever children are outside of the fenced playground area, all students are required to wear high-visibility yellow safety vests. These vests help staff maintain visual awareness of the group and provide an added layer of safety during outdoor exploration. Families should send children to school each day dressed for outdoor play, including closed-toe shoes and clothing appropriate for the weather and natural environment.



Ticks

As a nature-based program, we will spend large portions of the day outdoors. We recommend you check your child for ticks every day when you return home.

Before school: Apply insect repellent to your child prior to the start of school. Always follow product instructions. Apply this product to your child, avoiding the hands, eyes, and mouth.

Upon return home: Check your child's clothing for ticks. Check all parts of your child's body, including under the arms, in and around ears, inside belly button, back of knees, in and around hair, between the legs and toes, and around the waist. Placing clothes in the dryer on high heat for at least 10 minutes will kill ticks. Conduct a full body check and bathe soon after returning home. Showering within two hours of being outdoors has been shown to reduce the risk of getting tick borne illnesses. If you find a tick, use tweezers or a tick key to remove the tick by pulling the head directly up from the skin. For more information about the proper way to remove ticks, visit https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/removing_a_tick.html

Climbing

Children are allowed and encouraged to climb. We guide children to be aware of their surroundings, the placement of their body, their proximity to others, and any potential risks they may be approaching. Teachers do not lift or assist children with climbing. We trust that children will take on challenges their bodies are developmentally ready for.

Throwing

Throwing natural objects (like pinecones, leaves, or sticks) is permitted when done with awareness and purpose. Children must throw away from others and check their surroundings before doing so. Throwing becomes unsafe when others are nearby or if the object is too heavy or sharp.

Sticks

Children are allowed to play with sticks! Stick play fosters creativity and motor skills—but we set clear boundaries:

- Sticks must be no longer than twice the child's arm length.
- Larger branches may only be dragged (with one end touching the ground) or carried with a partner or team.
- Sticks may not be used as weapons, pretend guns, or carried while running.
- Children must remain aware of their surroundings when playing with sticks.

Flora and Fauna

Children are expected to care for and respect all living things. We teach children not to cause intentional harm, even if they feel afraid. We encourage quiet observation over physical interaction, especially when a plant or creature is unfamiliar. While we do our best to avoid contact with potentially irritating plants or insects, minor skin irritation is sometimes unavoidable.

Wandering

Children must remain within sight of a teacher at all times. We regularly remind children:

"I need to see you, and you need to see me. If you get lost, hug a tree."

Our outdoor space is designed with safety in mind. Staff conduct silent head counts every 10 minutes and verbal checks before and after transitions. Teachers carry walkie-talkies for consistent communication and wear emergency whistles to alert children when they must immediately return. If a child repeatedly wanders after reminders, they may be removed from the program for safety reasons.

Yelling & Screaming

We encourage children to use their outdoor voices and enjoy yelling during play. However, screaming is not allowed, as it can be confused with an emergency. Children are reminded: "Screaming is for emergencies only."

Physical Contact

Children are expected to respect each other's personal space. We teach them that every person has the right to decide who can touch them or come close. Before touching others, children are encouraged to check in and use respectful words such as:

- "Please don't touch me."
- "I need space."

Physical Play

Physical play, like wrestling or playful chasing, is developmentally appropriate and often joyful. However, it can also lead to confusion or escalate quickly.

We guide children in understanding boundaries and keeping play safe. If physical play becomes aggressive or one-sided, it is no longer considered safe. Children who regularly cause harm, despite reminders and support, may be removed from the program for safety concerns.