

Tiny Steps Learning Center, Inc.

Parent Handbook

School Year 2019/2020

Welcome to Tiny Steps Learning Center, Inc.!

We are delighted that you chose Tiny Steps Learning Center, Inc. for your child to begin his or her exciting learning adventures at a home away from home.

Our goal is to provide a high quality, nurturing and safe learning environment for your child that will help him or her grow into a wonderful, curious, and happy person. Your child(ren) will be exposed to an exciting, theme-based program that includes many opportunities and experiences. All of these are designed to stimulate physical, social and emotional growth in a loving and comfortable environment.

As your child gets older, outings to many areas such as the library, swimming and parks are all a part of what makes Tiny Steps Learning Center a fun place for your child to be. As a partner in your child's care, we will do everything in our power to keep the lines of communication open. Interaction with you is as important as our interactions with your child. Feel free to come in or call at any time during the day or to set an appointment with us after hours to discuss any problems or suggestions you have with regards to your child's care. Throughout the year we will schedule conferences to discuss your child's progress.

Please take the time to go over your parent handbook and registration packet to ensure you understand the policies that are in place to help keep Tiny Steps a happy environment for everyone involved. This allows us to answer any questions you may have and to discuss important things we need to know about your child. This is also to ensure that all paperwork is filled out completely and correctly prior to your child starting their educational experience with us.

Thanks,

Cassie Branch
Chief Executive Officer / President

Mission and Philosophy

Mission Statement

Tiny Steps Learning Center, Inc. (TSLC) strives to provide quality education a step above the rest by focusing on the whole child to include fine motor development, cognitive and physical development, social development, mathematical and critical thinking skills, and increasing the positive self-concepts.

Learning Philosophy

The first five years of a child's life are the most important years in creating a solid foundation for their personal development. TSLC, while utilizing fun activities and exploration of learning centers, focuses on each child's fine motor development, cognitive and physical development, social development, mathematical and critical thinking skills, and increasing of positive self-concepts. TSLC strives to include the involvement of the parents and community in the children's educational experience. By focusing on the whole child and providing stimulating experiences, TSLC helps children develop advanced learning skills.

All children learn when they are happy, fed, rested and having fun. Trusting the caregivers is a critical element for a young child, so the staff is trained in positive interactions with children. Positive, nurturing and kind professionals genuinely enjoy the children in their care and demonstrate their patience with consistent, positive regard for all children.

The academic portion of the program uses a research based, high quality curriculum designed for the specific ages of each group. All children learn at their pace and are NEVER made to feel that they have failed! TSLC utilizes "The Creative Curriculum" and "High-scope Curriculum" which both rest on a firm foundation of research and meets requirements for addressing academic content.

The staff utilizes developmental screenings and assessments to develop a customized education plan for each child and/or children based on their develop progress. The progress of each child is shared with the parents through parent teacher conferences. Student Portfolios are available for viewing at any time. A full understanding of a child's strengths and weaknesses help the parents and teachers teach each child to reach their full potential.

Learning takes place through play, outdoor activities, games, positive and structured interaction between the children and the staff. The staff is always finding exciting ways to teach a new skill. Social skills and strong personal values are modeled by our highly trained staff.

Inclusion Policy

Early childhood inclusion embodies the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every infant and young child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families, communities, and society. The desired results of inclusive experiences for children with and without disabilities and their families include a sense of belong and membership, positive social relationships and friendships, and development and learning to reach their full potential. Tiny Steps Learning Center, Inc. ensures the defining features of inclusion (access, participation and support) are including throughout daily activities and daily parent-teacher-student interactions.

Tiny Steps Learning Center, Inc. does not discriminate against anyone (adult or child, staff member or parent) based on sex, age, religion, national origin, color, race, marital status, physical or mental disability or veteran status.

Professional Staff

All staff must have a comfortable and natural enjoyment when interacting with young children because children sense genuine kindness and respond with trust. The teachers of young children have a critical role to play in the healthy development of each child and their influence must be positive and reflect strong family values.

TSLC staff must be committed to constantly improving their own education if they are to truly value educating others. Each staff member is trained in their field, attends ongoing in-service training and completes continuing education as required by all regulatory agencies in addition to professional development training.

The staff has daily interaction with the director, regular meetings to discuss concerns, suggest ideas or to ask about specific situations. Additionally, the director records routine observations of each staff member, noting highlights in their techniques, special talents and areas for improvement.

Each person employed with Tiny Steps Learning Center has passed a Level 2 background clearance and subject to random drug testing.

Interview Procedures

TSLC Administration will meet with all new families. It is imperative that both parties feel comfortable and confident that the arrangements will work. The following steps must be completed before a child may attend TSLC.

- Completion of enrollment process at myprocare.com
- Review all of enrollment documents located at www.tinystepslc.com.
- Completed Tuition Agreement

School Hours of Operation

TSLC's standard hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 6:45 am to 6:00 pm. The School Calendar is posted at www.tinystepslc.com and throughout the school. Any deviation from the standard hours or the listing of school calendar will be communicated in writing to each family through lifecubby notifications, email, and/or posting on social media websites.

VPK is 9:00 – 12:00, Monday through Friday, however, students can arrive as early as 8:30. VPK Lunch Group hours are 6:45am to 2:30pm. Part-time rate is for 6:30am to 2:30pm.

Items Supplied By Parents

- Formula or Breast Milk and bottles for infants – One bottle per feeding required.
TSLC provides Carnation Good Start Gentle and Carnation Good Start Soy
- Baby food for infants with written preparation instructions
TSLC provides Gerber Stage 2 Baby Food and Rice Cereal
- Diapers and Wipes (*may be brought daily or in bulk*)
If parents fail to provide diapers, TSLC will provide diapers at a cost of \$2.00 per diaper. The brand of diaper may vary. The charge will be placed on the account and payment is due at the end of the month.
- Complete change of clothes (*place in Gallon Ziploc Bog*)
- A small blanket or sheet for napping (*must be same size or smaller than crib-sized sheet*)

Items Supplied By School

- All meals (Alternative Meal Policy)
- Gerber Good Start Gentle Formula, Gerber Good Start Soy Formula, Gerber 2nd Stage Baby Foods, Gerber Yogurt and age appropriate snacks.
- Sippy Cups
Parents may ONLY supply their own Sippy cup to assist in the transition from bottle to school provided Sippy cup. Parent provided Sippy cups cannot be re-used during the day and must be taken home daily.
- Crib Sheets (*If parent supplied, a new sheet must be brought to school daily*)
- Individually assigned mat or cot

Open Door Policy

Parents are welcomed to call or visit the school anytime. Parents are strongly encouraged to volunteer in their child's classroom. Parents will be required to sign the volunteer affidavit prior to volunteering or assisting in their child's classroom.

Attendance Policy

TSLC expects every student to attend daily, unless otherwise approved by administration. The first key to your child's success at any school is consistency.

- Educational instruction begins each day at 9:00am. Students should arrive by 9:00am to limit the amount of interruptions in the classroom. Students that are expected to arrive after 9:00am on a consistent basis must be approved by administration.
- Students not in attendance by 10:00am will be marked absent for that day and will not be permitted to stay at school that day. Parents must call the school prior to 10:00am to notify administration that the student is coming to school.
- Parents should notify administration of planned or unplanned absences. Parents are expected to notify the school if a student is expected to miss two or more consecutive days. Students absent for more than ten business days, with no successful contact with parent will be dis-enrolled and spot will be filled with another student.

If a child is dis-enrolled for failure to comply with attendance policy, tuition will NOT be prorated or refunded. Tuition will not be refunded or prorated based on student attendance records.

Security and Check-In Procedures

TSLC takes student safety very serious and works closely with local law enforcement and other agencies to ensure student safety. TSLC is a “secured” facility and procedures are in place to maximize student safety. The facility is equipped with monitored fire alarm, monitored burglar alarm, electronic access system, internal camera system and electronic check in/out system.

Electronic Access System

Key fobs will only be issued to custodial parents or legal guardians and/or individuals that have been authorized to pick up a child on a regular basis. The first two key fobs per family are provided at no cost. Additional key fobs may be purchased for a fee of \$5.00 per key fob. Key Fobs should never be shared with other individuals. If a key fob is being utilized by a person, other than the person it is assigned to, it will be discontinued immediately until the assigned person speaks with administration. The electronic access system tracks exactly who is entering the facility.

Internal Camera System

TSLC has an internal camera system that is utilized for monitoring of the classrooms by administration. Administration is the only staff that have access to view camera recordings. As child care personnel, TSLC staff and administration are required to sign a confidentiality statement. This means that TSLC staff and administrators are not, under any circumstance, able to discuss another child, staff member, or family with other people. Parent may request to view a “particular” situation on the camera recordings as long as the situation does not include another child. Viewings of the recordings cannot be guaranteed.

Electronic Attendance System (PROCARE)

TSLC utilizes an electronic student attendance tracking system (PROCARE) for parents to check in and out students. The check-in station is located in the Front Lobby. Custodial parents, legal guardians or other authorized individuals are required to check students in and out utilizing this system. Each user of the system will set up a “personal id” and “password” for this system. The personal id and password should never be shared. Individuals may chose to register a fingerprint in lieu of the personal id and password. All individuals that are not recognized by administration must have a government issued id available. Without proper authorization from custodial parent or legal guardian and a government issued id, the student will not be released.

Under no circumstance will a child be released to an intoxicated or impaired individual. TSLC staff has been trained to detect individuals that appear to be intoxicated or impaired. Staff will not release the student and will immediately contact administration utilizing the school intercom system. The intoxicated or impaired individual will be asked to leave and another authorized person listed on the enrollment form will be contacted to pick up the student.

Child Release Code

During the enrollment process, each family must provide a release code. This code will be verified should the custodial parent or legal guardian call to authorize a person to pick up that is not already listed as authorized to pick up their child.

Emergency Policy in Case of Failure to Pick Up Child

In the event that a child is not picked up by 6:00 p.m., staff shall use all contact information in attempting to arrange for the earliest possible pick up. If parents are not reachable and another approved person (as

indicated on Application for Enrollment) picks up the student and TSLC staff leaves for the evening, the information will be left on the parent's voicemail and a message will be posted on the Center's front door.

If a child has not been picked up by one hour after school's closing time or notification of emergency evacuation, and all attempts to reach parent/guardians have been unsuccessful, staff shall call the local authorities, including Florida Department of Children and Families to request assistance in locating a responsible adult to pick up the child. Staff will fully document all efforts, including names and times, throughout this process and provide documentation to the Director the following workday.

Tuition Agreement

The tuition agreement is a separate document and must be turned into the office to complete the registration process. The tuition agreement lists all other fees. The agreement must be signed by both parties prior to enrollment with TSLC. Failure to adhere to the policies and procedures could result in termination of care at TSLC.

SUSPENSIONS &/OR TERMINATIONS POLICY

The policies outlined in this handbook are strictly enforced to provide fairness to all parties that render and receive services. It is therefore important that each parent/guardian carefully review the conditions listed below:

- **Failure to pay for services rendered (fees) or failure to pay on time**
- **If receiving tuition assistance or VPK voucher, failure to maintain eligibility requirements and/or re-determination responsibilities**
- **Failure to provide updated Health and Immunization Records for each child as required**
- **Failure to abide by TSLC rules and regulations**

If TSLC is forced to terminate the enrollment contract or tuition agreement immediately because a parent has failed to meet the above requirements, full tuition will still be due.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Discipline Policy

The most unique feature of Tiny Steps Learning Center is the methods employed for correcting children's unwanted behavior. Corporal Punishment is NEVER used! The staff is trained to re-direct children, use logical consequences and teach self-control. All children want to please and all children respond to the fun of cooperation.

Infants establish their own schedules, are diapered when necessary and are NEVER permitted to cry for an extended amount of time. Research clearly states that infants must have their needs met in order to develop trust.

Children are not put in "timeouts"; however we may remove a child from the situation and allow them to cool down away from the other students.

There is absolutely no punishment associated with toileting, eating or napping. Tiny Steps Learning Center WILL NEVER use humiliation, anger, scolding, hitting or fear to control a child's behavior. Positive techniques are used within a safe, connected environment to guide the behavior of children by setting appropriate limits, teaching missing or developing skills, and encouraging children to choose positive behavior.

If a child has extreme disruptive behavior on a consistent basis, the Director and the parent will establish a positive intervention to change the unwanted behavior. This will include positive behavioral intervention models specifically to reduce the possible occurrence of expulsion. All children will be protected at all times from extreme, destructive or dangerous behavior of another child.

Biting

Biting is a stage that most children will go through during the toddler years. In the case of a biting situation, Tiny Steps Learning Center staff and administration will work with the parents and children involved to come up with ways to remedy the biting situation. We will work with the child and parent to determine what is causing the biting and come up with creative ways to deter the negative behavior. Staff is trained to look for key elements of the incidents such as: When Does the Child usually bite?, What seems to trigger the behavior?, Who is the victim?, What happens when the child bites?, and Does the child bite him or herself, other toys or place items in mouth often. In most cases, our staff can work with the parent and child to stop the biting situations. However, for the safety of all children, continuous biting is not tolerated therefore, we have created this policy. Each time a child is bitten, his or her parents will be notified with a written accident / action report. If a child bites another child more than once, both parents will be notified with a written accident / action report. If the child continues to bite after all preventative measures and safety precautions have been implemented, Tiny Steps Learning Center administration will work with the parents to determine the next best action. If a parent is not willing to work with the staff and administration to implement preventative measures, Tiny Steps Learning Center will work with the parent to locate a more suitable environment for the child.

Sickness Policy

We are partners in your child's education, health, and wellbeing. Therefore, we have made it a primary concern for Tiny Steps Learning Center staff and administration to ensure we maintain a safe and healthy environment for all. Therefore, we have a strict policy for sicknesses in the school. Parents are expected to adhere to this policy as this is the most important step in controlling spread of typical childhood illnesses. Parents shall keep children home if he/she:

- Running a fever – 101 degree F or above
- Severe coughing
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Abnormal discharge from the nose, eyes or ears
- Diarrhea/vomiting
- Pink Eye
- Exposed, open skin lesions
- Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Lice, (Strict no-nit policy; Students can returned when hair has been treated and no nits are located)
- Has symptoms of possible communicable disease

If a child is to become ill while not at school, parents shall notify the school the next business day. If it is determined that your child has a communicable disease, TSLC MUST be notified immediately. A doctor's note clearing the child from being contagious is required in order to accept him/her back to school or symptom free for 24 hours without medicine.

If a child becomes ill, while at school, with one of the above listed symptoms, he/she will be isolated from other students. TSLC has a designated area for ill children. Parents will be contacted to arrange immediate pick up. Parents are expected to have the student picked up within 1 hour of being contacted by the school. Parents that do not promptly pick up sick children from school are subject to a fee of \$30.00 per hour after the first hour.

Children **MUST** be symptom free for 24 hours without medication before returning to school or cleared to return by a medical doctor. TSLC reserves the right to require a doctor's note stating the child is not contagious and may return to school before the student can return to school.

TSLC will administer medication as authorized by custodial parent or legal guardian. Authorization to Dispense Medication form must be completed for each medication to be given.

Infants and Toddlers may exhibit indications of illnesses that are associated with erupting teeth and the staff will help you determine this, since this is clearly not contagious. TSLC reserves the right to require a doctor's note confirmed indications of the above illness are not contagious.

Should the school experience any unusual level or type of communicable disease, after notifying the proper authorities, we will inform you verbally or in writing if your child may have been exposed with information including signs and symptoms of the disease, mode of transmission, period of communicability, and control measures that have been implemented at the center and/or measures that should be implemented at home.

Absences, regardless of the cause, will not entitle the parent to a refund or discount on the regular rate.

Medication Policy

Tiny Steps Learning Center, Inc. will administer medication to children after the following requirements have been completed.

1. Written permission from the custodial parent or legal guardian to dispense prescription or non-prescription medications.
2. Prescription or Non-prescription medication (including diaper rash cream) must be brought into the facility by the custodial parent or legal guardian in the original container. Prescription medication must have a label stating the name of the physician, child's name, name of the medication, and medication directions. All prescription and non-prescription medication shall be dispensed according to written directions on the prescription label or printed manufacturer's label.
3. All medicine must have child resistant caps, if applicable, and shall either be stored in a locked area or must be inaccessible and out of a child's reach.
4. Medication which has expired or is no longer being administered shall be returned to the custodial parent or legal guardian or discarded if the child is no longer enrolled at the facility.

Immunization and Physical Forms

TSLC will monitor immunization and physical forms submitted. It is the responsibility of each parent or legal guardian to obtain valid immunization or physical forms as required by State law. Florida Certification of Immunization Form (DH681) must be submitted within 30 days of enrollment and updated as required by medical provider. Student Health Examination form (DH 3040) must be submitted within 30 days of

enrollment and updated 2 years of date of physical exam completed by medical provider. Students that do not have required documentation on file will not be allowed to attend, until updated forms are provided. TSLC enrollment packet includes a CDC handout with Recommended Immunization for Children from Birth to 6 years old. Parents may request a religious or medical exemption from obtaining proper vaccinations however; appropriate documentation must be submitted as required state licensing requirements. *These forms are not required for school age students.*

Allergy Policy

Parents must document on the Application of Enrollment any and all possible allergies that their child may have. If the director determines that the program's food service cannot safely provide snack and/or meals, the parents will be responsible for providing substitute healthy foods, which will be served by the staff. An allergy list is maintained by the director for all children who are enrolled. It is posted in every classroom, in the kitchen and outside on the playground and will be included on field trips. It is revised and reviewed monthly at staff meetings. The person who is responsible for food service will read all food labels to identify known allergens. No food will be served to children with allergies if a label of ingredients is not available for that product. Teachers of children with allergies will double check with the cook when food arrives in the classroom regarding the appropriateness of foods for the children with allergies. Teachers will not serve food to children with allergies if there is any doubt about the food content.

Due to the possibility of "cross-contamination" between groups, no food is allowed on the playground unless approved by administration. Classrooms may serve food from the regular center menu in a picnic format on the playground with the following requirements:

- Other classrooms sharing the playground space must be informed in advance so they can consider any implications to their children
- Teachers must take special care to clean up the area thoroughly after eating
- No trash from the meal may be left outside

All staff members are trained in the management of allergies and allergic reactions part of the orientation, including all substitutes and floaters. The topic will also be included in the staff's annual CPR/First Aid training as a refresher.

Parents are required to update their emergency medical information immediately upon any change in allergy conditions.

Injuries and Accidents

While TSLC has put measures in place to attempt to prevent and reduce the chance of injury to students, some incidents are unavoidable. All incidents are documented and reviewed by school administration so that trends or patterns can be identified. This allows the opportunity for TSLC to put additional safety measures in place to assist in the preventing these types of injuries.

TSLC requires that all staff receives First Aid/CPR within a certain timeframe of hire and maintain these certifications for their entire tenure with TSLC. In the event that a child becomes ill or injured anywhere in the facility, the supervising staff member will make an immediate decision as to whether the incident is a non-emergency or an emergency situation.

In the case of a non-emergency:

1. Child is coherent and composed immediately after injury or illness

2. Child has a small cut or scrape with little bleeding
3. Child has little or no swelling
4. Child is able to move injured area, or does not experience pain when touched

The staff member will apply first aid measures such as stopping the bleeding, applying band aid and washing injury with soap and water. The staff member will immediately notify administration if there is excessive bleeding, abnormal swelling, or the situation involved a child getting bit by another child. The staff member will fill out an Incident report. The incident report will be reviewed by a member of administration and available for parent to review and sign at pick up. Parents may request a copy of the incident report, which will be available the next business day. Originals are maintained in the students file. If the situation may require medical intervention of a doctor or involves a bite, TSLC administration will contact the parent to discuss the next appropriate action.

Field Trips

Parents will receive at least two weeks notice of field trips. Notification will include, but not limited to destination, time of departure, anticipates time of arrival, and time of return. In addition, these notifications will include permission slips that must be returned and will be maintained with the applicable transportation logs.

Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect

All child care personnel are mandated by law to report their suspicions of child abuse, neglect or abandonment to the Florida Abuse Hotline in accordance with section 39.201(F.S.) of the Florida State statutes. TSLC Staff members are required to report any suspected child abuse or neglect.

Rilya Wilson Act:

The Rilya Wilson Act is explained in detail on the flyer located on the Parent Information Board. If you have any questions or concerns feel free to discuss them with the center's director.

Emergency Procedures and Drills

TSLC has specific emergency procedures in place for the safety and security of all students and staff. TSLC will have practice drills at varying times and all individual's, including parents picking up or dropping off students, must participate. No one will be allowed to leave the school until the drill is complete.

Building Emergencies:

Fire or other emergencies requiring evacuation from the building: TSLC staff member have been trained and will following all evacuation procedures. If the building deemed to be unsafe and TSLC is required to close, parents will be contacted and expected to pick their children up at the Fire Station located next to the school.

School must have functional electricity, water and plumbing in order to continue operation. Should one of these systems malfunction, TSLC will make every attempt to get system repaired immediately. If the problem is expected to take more than 2 hours to repair, TSLC will close for the day and parents will be contacted to pick up their children. Parents will not be allowed to drop off any students if these systems are malfunctioning. TSLC has frequent inspections by local contractors to assist in minimizing system malfunctions.

Severe Weather Conditions

If severe weather occurs while the children are attending school, TSLC will follow the required emergency procedures. Once the threat has passed, the children will then be returned to their classroom.

IN THE EVENT OF THREAT OF HURRICANE or any other natural disaster, the school will be closed if Leon County Schools are cancelled. TSLC will make every attempt to update our website and school voicemail system with closure information.

Smoking

Smoking is prohibited on the premises at all times. This includes tobacco, tobacco less and electronic mechanisms. Smoking is also not permitted when participating in off-campus activities. (F.S. 386.204)

Animals in the Classroom

Classrooms are required to maintain two living items in the classroom which only one maybe a plant. The school may have a various animals in the classroom to be utilizing as an educational tool. Animals are routinely evaluated by a licensed veterinarian receive the necessary preventative care. Staff and Children always wash hands prior to and following the handling of any animals. Often times, we have visitors from local museums. Any changes or expected animals visitors in the classrooms will be posted on the hallway information board.

Hand washing

Employees, volunteers, substitutes and children must follow the Centers for Disease Control guidelines for hand washing (May 2015).

Hand washing should occur:

- Upon arrival
- Before, during, and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- Before and after caring for someone who is sick
- Before and after treating a cut or wound
- After using the toilet
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
- After touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
- After handling pet food or pet treats
- After touching garbage

Hand washing is done by:

- Wet your hands with clean, running water, turn off the tap, and apply soap.
- Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
- Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.
- Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.
- Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

The use of hand sanitizers does not substitute for hand washing. However, in areas away from the facility where no running water is available, hand sanitizers may be used. Employees, volunteers, and substitutes with open wounds and/or any injury that inhibits hand washing, such as casts, bandages, or braces, must not prepare food.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Meals and Nutrition Policy

Menus are posted in the hallway and available on the TSLC website. Breakfast, lunch and snacks are provided by the school. Parents of those children that arrive prior to 7:30am may bring in a snack that will be served immediately upon arrival at school. Breakfast is served school-wide at 8:30am. Children in attendance by 8:30am will be included in the full breakfast. If you arrive after breakfast has been served, staff will make every attempt to provide identical breakfast. Substitutions may be necessary at this point. Each classroom eats lunch at a different time. Lunch is served between 11:15am and 12:30pm. Lunch is a well-balanced hot meal delivered to the classrooms from the kitchen. Afternoon snack is served between 2:00 p.m. and 3:30p.m.

TSLC participates in the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program. Our meals are planned around food children generally like and they are encouraged to try a variety of new foods. We follow the USDA Meal Pattern Requirements for all meals, which ensures that the foods we serve meet your child's nutritional requirements. Portions are served according to the child's age. Food is prepared, served and stored in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child and Adult Food Program (CACFP) guidelines. TSLC staff members also take courses to teach proper techniques for food preparation and sanitation.

We do provide vegetarian alternatives and allergy modifications for most menu items. Parents must provide suitable substitutes for the items that their child cannot eat from the menu if it is not an allergy and/or we are not able to meet your vegetarian alternatives. Please review the posted menu for appropriateness for your child. Lunch and snack foods brought from home must meet the guidelines of the Child and Adult Care Food Program for the types of foods and portion sizes (USDA Meal Pattern Requirements are available upon request and also online at:

http://www.fns.usda.gov/CND/Care/ProgramBasics/Meals/Meal_Patterns.htm.

Food brought from home will be labeled with the child's name, the date, the type of food, and any need for temperature control. Leftover food will be discarded. TSLC will not be able to cook or prepare food brought from home.

Clothing and Personal Items

Since the activities planned for your child may involve paints, clay and outdoor play, we suggest the following in order for your child to receive the maximum benefit from play:

- Dress your child in play clothes that are washable, roomy and easy for them to manage
- Provide a change of clothing in case of spills, accidents or emergencies
- Label all items brought to the school including outer garments with a permanent marker
 - TSLC is not responsible for lost items
- Closed-toed shoes are required at all times
 - Flip-flops and loose sandals are not permitted

- We have ample toys for the children's play. Do not allow students to bring toys from home other than a small, soft, cuddly toy for rest time and a special toy for "Show and Tell" days. Children MAY NOT bring money, small items, or play guns or swords to the school.
- For health and safety reasons, children 2 and under with beads in their hair will not be permitted. Please limit the use of bows, barrettes, earrings and other small, potentially hazardous items.
- For health and sanitary purposes, the use of a pacifier for children 2 years of age and older is limited to nap time and/or other transitional times as agreed with the parent.

We understand that many children have a need for security items. Although the school cannot be responsible for toys or other items brought from home, security items may be used by the child during the day when needed and stored in the child's cubby at other times.

Nap and Rest Times

TSLC makes every effort to provide an environment that is quiet enough for those who need to nap yet not too restrictive for those who do not. Parents may bring one small pillow or stuffed animal and blanket that is no larger than a standard size crib sheet. Toys that encourage children to play during rest time are not permitted. Teachers assist children in resting by reading stories, providing soothing music and rubbing backs. Children are not required to sleep but are expected to rest quietly on their mats during this time.

Infants follow a BACK to sleep policy, requiring all infants to be placed in a crib on their back with only a tight fitted crib sheet. Bottles, toys, mobiles, bumpers, blankets, or other items that could pose a safety risk are not permitted in the crib. The only exception is a light blanket for swaddling when medically necessary and documented by the child's pediatrician.

Birthday Celebrations

Birthdays are exciting events for children! Although birthdays are special, TSLC requests that they be celebrated simply – no gifts, please. Feel free to visit with your child and his or her classmates during the day. If you would like to provide a special treat at snack time, TSLC will be glad to include that treat with the snack. For birthday parties, allergy policies must be followed precisely. All food must be store bought with a list of ingredients on the label.

Program and Curriculum

Children will be taught on an individual basis unique to their own stage of development. Daily communication, both written and verbal helps assure the best care for your child. We will post all planned experiences and also provide written communication daily. For all children, toys and materials are rotated to ensure that they are never bored and maintain their interest in their surroundings.

All children one year of age and younger experience a language rich environments with a variety of developmentally appropriate toys and materials. The infant and toddler staff primarily focuses on valuable, secure experiences. The staff promotes security since this is the number one indicator of successful experiences for a toddler.

Children 2 years of age and older participate in developmentally appropriate activities which are planned using specific thematic topics to enhance their learning experience. Classrooms are arranged into learning centers, which allow children the freedom to play and develop skills. Opportunities are available for:

- Art and creative expression

- Science and discovery
- Sand and water play
- Language and reading development
- Block and transportation play
- Imaginative and dramatic play
- Music and movement
- Large and Small motor development
- Food experiences
- Math, problem solving and number concepts
- Health and safety
- Self-help routines.

The daily schedule is a carefully planned balance between self-directed and teacher-guided activities. During “free play” children have the freedom to choose activities and playmates. Each child is offered large and small group experiences, one-on-one interactions, as well as time to play alone if he or she chooses. Children are encouraged to participate in activities, but are never forced to do so. The activity plan for the week is posted for your review and we encourage families to participate in our curriculum activities as often as they desire. We offer children an opportunity to play outdoors daily, weather permitting.

Curriculum

We use *The Creative Curriculum*® system in our program. This system includes curriculum, assessment, implementation and evaluation, as well as professional development. All of our staff has received training on the curriculum, and are able to answer any or your questions.

The Creative Curriculum® for Infants, Toddlers & Twos translates research and theory from the field of early childhood education into a practical, easy-to-understand approach to working with children and their families. It is a comprehensive curriculum with a clear organizational structure and a particular focus on routines and experiences.

The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool balances both teacher-directed and child-initiated learning with an emphasis on responding to children’s learning styles and building on their strengths and interest. Resting on a firm foundation of research, it has an environmentally-based approach that defines the vital role of the teacher in connecting content, teaching, and learning for preschool children and offers a practical, easy-to-understand approach to working with children and their families. It is a comprehensive curriculum with a clear organizational structure and a particular focus on interest areas.

TSLC staff will, occasionally, include an educational program into the class lesson plans. Television or video viewing is NOT a regular occurrence. Administration must approve all videos before the videos can be utilized in the classroom. (APPLE 1.4)

Toilet Learning

Deciding when the right time to go through the process of toilet learning is different for every child. When you feel your child is ready to toilet-learn, we will be happy to assist you. Your child may be ready to potty-learn if he or she is:

- Walking well
- Staying dry for several hours

- Able to communicate the need to use the toilet
- Appears to be aware of when they are wet or have a soiled diaper
- Is not fearful of the bathroom

There is no definite age when a child is ready, but should be done when parents and TSLC staff agree that it is appropriate. Both the parents and staff should use the same procedures for training so it does not confuse the child. If there is too much anxiety or stress, it may be better for the child to wait and try again at a later time. During training, it is very important to dress your child in suitable clothing (elastic waist pants that the child can easily pull down and up, no belts or snaps) and provide at least three changes of clothing. Students must be fully potty trained to move to preschool room (Room 7).

THE PARENT ROLE

Parent Conferences

Parents are invited to speak with their child's teacher or TSLC administrator at any time concerning your child's development or any other concerns. It is best to talk directly to your child's teacher if you have concerns regarding your child or your child's classroom and to a director if you have concerns about a staff member, policy or procedure.

Parent / Teacher conferences are pre-scheduled as indicated on the List of Important Dates provided in the enrollment packet. Parent/Teachers conferences can be scheduled at any time if the parent or TSLC staff member feels it is necessary.

Parent Engagement

Parents are encouraged to become involved with the program. TSLC honors the important role of parents. Current research shows that children enjoy a more enriched learning experience when their parents take an active role in their education. As partners with your child's school, parents are encouraged to:

- Volunteer in their child's classroom
- Have lunch with your child
- Participate in seasonal events
- Participate in "Children's Week" activities
- Sharing a talent (music, art, sewing, etc.)
- Donating items for Dramatic Play

TSLC understands that the world is becoming increasingly busy and individual's time is limited and very much valuable. We encourage your involvement but don't want to overburden you with high expectations, so it's up to you as to how involved you would like to become with the program.

Communication

TSLC values our relationship and communication with parents, as we serve as partners in the care of your children. TSLC encourages you to let us know anything that might help us in our work with your child – a move, developmental or medical needs, the birth of a baby, divorce or separation, death in the family, a new pet, etc.

TSLC staff will share information with you about your child's day on a daily basis through the use of LifeCubby. Although we want you to be aware of certain situations and behaviors your child may be

exhibiting at school, the reason we are communicating it is not necessarily because they need to be “fixed” at home. We will handle the situations that arise, but just want parents to be aware of what we are doing in the classroom as it pertains to your child.

A monthly newsletter is distributed to provide information concerning center curriculum, policies, announcements, and general information about young children. TSLC makes every attempt to be involved in community events and encourage parent / student involvement.

To enhance parent communication, we ask that you refrain from talking on your cell phone while dropping off or picking up your child.

Grievance Procedures

If parents have any questions or have concerns, we ask that the following procedures be enforced.

- First, go directly to the person with whom you have a difference (the teacher, another parent or other staff member) address the issue in a non-accusatory manner and attempt to reach a resolution. It is not acceptable to discuss an issue with any persons not directly involved.
- Second, if the conversation with the person does not bring resolution, the concern should be addressed with the director. The director will then work with the parents in an attempt to resolve the problem.

Once the issue has been discussed in the above order, it should be considered exhausted and the above steps are final. TSLC administration will make every attempt to work through all situations; however, an agreement may not be reached on every situation.

While it is understood that parents will not always agree with the employees of TSLC or the parents of the other children, it is expected that all disagreements be handled in a calm and respectful manner. Confrontational interactions are not an appropriate means by which to communicate a point and are strictly prohibited.

Annual Registration Process

Each year, in August, re-enrolling families are required to review all enrollment information to ensure the most up to date information is on file with TSLC. Information will include, but not be limited to, names, addresses and phone numbers of parents and guardians; emergency contact information; medical information and immunization/physical records.

Parent Code of Conduct

- Read the bulletin boards, notices and newsletters that are sent home. Important information is shared with you on a regular basis, but you must make the effort to read it.
- Value staff members and show them common courtesy. TSLC staff members are more than just babysitters. TSLC employs teachers who have training and education in child development. Show respect for their position as an important part of your child's development.
- Staff of TSLC is prohibited from being employed by any client (current or former). Parents are prohibited from soliciting any staff member for the purpose of employment. Employment refers to any relationship outside of the center's services which involve an employee of TSLC to interact with a current or former client of TSLC. Such relationships include but are not limited to, baby-sitting, house-sitting, mother's helper, nanny services, and carpooling regardless whether or not those services are voluntary or paid.
- Do not pressure staff or other parents to release confidential information. Within TSLC, confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with employees who have a "need to know" in order to most appropriately and safely care for your child. Confidential and sensitive information about staff, other parents and/or children will not be shared with parents, as TSLC strives to protect everyone's right of privacy. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to: names, addresses, phone numbers, medical information or internal camera footage. You may observe children at our center who have a medical issue or exhibit behavior that may appear inappropriate. You may be curious or concerned about the other child. Our Confidentiality Policy protects every child's privacy. Employees of TSLC are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you.
- Focus on your child when you pick him/her up. Take time to greet staff and your child and see if there is anything the teacher wishes to communicate before you leave. Please refrain from using cell phone during pick up.
- Pay your fees on time. We are providing a valuable service and deserve prompt payment. Don't put the director in the position of begging you for payment or having to threaten removal from the program.
- Make sure your children follow rules. If we ask that you don't bring in toys, please don't allow your child to do this. It is impossible to fully enforce all policies at all times, but know that your disregard for a policy is causing a problem.
- Make sure your child is wearing appropriate clothing. Children will get dirty at school. It is not realistic to send them in good clothing and expect teachers to keep them clean. Make sure clothing is easy to remove if your child is in diapers or in the process of toilet training.
- Keep a sick child home. The state mandates health regulations to prevent spread of infections illness. Although it may seem inconvenient at times, these rules also keep YOUR child from being infected by others as well.
- Address concerns in a respectful way and to the appropriate person. Do not bad mouth staff to others – seek to resolve your problem with the appropriate staff member.
- Make sure children get a good night's rest so they are ready for their busy day.