

AFFORDABLE, HIGH QUALITY CARE



Parent Handbook

GENERAL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Updated: June 3rd 2019

Contact Us:

517-258-9290 | 144 SCHROEDER PARK DR. HOWELL, MI 48843



General Policies & Procedures

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General Policies and Procedures

Crossroad Learning Center (hereinafter referred to as CLC) is a service that provides childcare for newborn to 12 years of age, from 6:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. A variety of educational, recreational and hands on activities are included in our program. The goal of our center is to offer the children of Livingston County a safe, nurturing and learning environment; a fun place to be! CLC is licensed through the State of Michigan, Department of Human Services, Office of Children and Adult Licensing. It is our policy that no person, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, marital status, or handicap, shall be discriminated against, excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to, discrimination in any program or activity.

CLC is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to State and Federal Law concerning nondiscrimination. This policy will prevail in all matters concerning staff, students, educational programs and services, and persons with whom the Center does business.

1. Hours of Operation

The Center is open Monday through Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The Center will be closed on holiday breaks according to our calendar.

2. Registration

Pre-registration is required. A \$75.00 fee is due per family at the time of registration and \$30.00 annually thereafter. Before a child is admitted to our program, the following forms must be completed: Child emergency/information card, enrollment agreement, medication permission, photo permission/field trip permission, Licensing notebook notification, health appraisal form with immunization records, and individual care plans (infants and toddlers only).

3. Tuition

Tuition is paid on a weekly basis. Statements for services rendered will be emailed weekly by Monday afternoon. Payment is due **in full** no later than Friday evening of the same week. Parents do have the option to pay a week, two weeks or even a month ahead. **Automated payments is the required payment method.** There is a \$25 fee for returned checks or credit card declines due to insufficient funds.

Crossroads Learning Center has a three step policy for unpaid statements:

1. If payment is not made in full by Friday evening of the first week, a \$15.00 Late Fee will be added to the statement.
2. If payment is not made in full by Friday evening of the second week, an additional \$15.00 Late Fee will be added to the statement and a letter will be sent out to the parents. This letter will notify the parents that their children may be disenrolled from Crossroads Learning Center if payment is not made within another week.
3. If payment is not made in full by Friday evening of the third week, said children will be disenrolled from Crossroads Learning Center until the balance can be paid and 24 hours after
4. If late payments are reoccurring, crossroads has the right to disenroll children from the program.

4. Absences/Vacation Time

Missed days cannot be deducted from tuition. If your child does not attend on a scheduled day, your account will be billed and charged, regardless of notification. When your child is enrolled in our program, they are reserving space, staff, and program supplies. All schedule changes are to be made in writing by the parent or by a phone call to the Center. Verbal requests by the children will not be honored. Schedules will be adhered to unless formal notice is received from parent. CLC must be contacted if your child will not be in attendance. These absences will still be charged regardless if the center is contacted by 6:30 AM on their scheduled day. No accommodations will be made.

All families enrolled after June 3rd 2019 are allowed a maximum amount of two weeks of their enrolled days uncharged, per calendar year, and this uncharged time must be used a week at a time. Holidays in which Crossroads is Closed, will continue to be uncharged. Any days off beyond the two weeks, or Holiday closings will be charged at the normal weekly rate.

5. Late Charges

CLC closes at 6:00 p.m. Staff is not scheduled beyond this time. If a child is not picked up by closing, a \$20.00 fee will be charged for up to 5 minutes. Anything over 5 minutes will be calculated at \$2.00 per minute, per child. Parents must call the center if they will be picking their child up after 6:00p.m. Calling to advise lateness does not waive the late pick-up fee. If a child has not been picked up by 6:00 p.m., the staff will contact the persons designated on the emergency card to arrange for pick-up. If continued lateness becomes a problem we reserve the right to remove your child from the childcare program.

6. Sign-In/Sign-Out Procedures

It is requested that the parents accompany their child into the building in the morning and come into the building in the evening to pick them up. It is important that the children are signed in and signed out by the parent and/or guardian as they arrive and leave the center. Children will be released from the center ONLY to authorized persons whose names appear on the emergency card or on a written note from the parent (received in advance). A telephone call will only suffice in case of an emergency. Please give the Caregiver(s) advance notice if someone else is picking up your child. **Anyone who is picking up a child and is unfamiliar to a staff member must show a picture identification before the child can be released.** All designated individuals must be at least sixteen (16) years of age. If any individual (including the parents) attempts to pick up a child and appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs (as determined by appropriate staff person), we will contact another person on your emergency list to pick up your child. If this individual insists the child be release to him/her, the center staff will contact the police.

7. Non-Joint Custody

CLC requests a copy of any custody documents. Until the center receives such documents either parent may pick up the child and add names to the emergency list. In the case of joint custody, either parent may include names on the forms. Unless the center has documentation, it is assumed that either parent may pick up the child.

8. Termination

The program coordinator of CLC has the right to suspend and/or expel any child who exhibits destructive or inappropriate behavior that interferes with the quality and/or process of the program. Although each circumstance is unique, efforts will be made by the parties concerned to improve the situation prior to a termination decision. Should termination become necessary, a two-week written notice is generally provided to the family. Any prepaid tuition, which has not been used by the date of withdrawal, will be refunded. Any tuition due will be billed to the person responsible for the tuition. A child's attendance may also be discontinued if the parent does not abide by our published tuition policy.

9. Aggressive, Physical, Disruptive or Biting Behaviors

These are the steps that the Director and /or Assistant director will follow when aggressive, physical, disruptive or biting behaviors become an issue with a child:

Step 1: Talk with the parent/guardian and make them aware of the situation.

Step 2: Have a conversation with the parents to address the situation and to come up with a plan to work together to help resolve the situation.

Step 3: Have a formal conference with the parents/guardians regarding the situation.

Step 4: Possible disenrollment from the program.

The center will be keeping documentation on these incidents.

10. Withdrawal

We respect the parent's decision to withdraw a child from CLC. Children that no longer need CLC program may be withdrawn from the program with a **minimum of a two-week notice in writing**. If any prepaid tuition has not been used, a refund will be paid. Refunds or prepaid tuition may be forfeited with less than a two-week notice. CLC reserves the right to bill parents for an additional two weeks in the event that no written notice of withdrawal is given.

11. Meals and Snacks

CLC provides nutritionally balanced snacks and meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner). Menus are posted in the Center and copies are available upon request. We encourage children to have a "thank you" bite, that is – to try a taste of everything. CLC participates in the Federal Food Program and requires that the enrollment forms be completed upon registration.

12. Program Plan

Crossroads Learning Center provides a program for daily activities. Our program is based on the philosophy that children are unique individuals. We recognize the fact that each child in our program has distinct likes, and dislikes; each has different family and cultural backgrounds, as well as distinct patterns and capabilities. Our primary concern is that we meet each child at his/her developmental level. Our teachers take great care in getting to know each child and supporting his or her growth in sense of self, respect for others, personal responsibility and empathy.

CLC will provide a play-based program for daily learning. Diverse program activities provide opportunities for growth in the areas of physical development (including small and large muscle group activities), social and emotional development, creative, math, science, language, communication and music. Detailed preschool programming information is available upon request. Infant/Toddler programming is outlined in *Infant/Toddler Policies and Procedures*.

13. Parent Participation

Parental involvement is encouraged. Cooperation with all policies and procedures is essential. It is good to take every opportunity to talk with the center staff each day and ask your child about the program. You can offer special talents you may have or provide items from your home to use as crafts or supplies. Parents are invited to visit or call at anytime and are encouraged to discuss any concerns they may have.

14. Program Staffing

CLC meets all of the State of Michigan licensing rules for child care centers as set forth by the Department of Human Services. Staff/child ratio is posted on the family bulletin board in each classroom.

Staff Training

All staff members are subject to a criminal background clearance and have received a child-abuse clearance from the DHS.

All new staff is required to attend an orientation prior to starting work in the center. The orientation covers the following topics, sanitation procedures for diapering, food preparation, cleaning; basic child development theory and age-appropriate activities; discipline; administering medications, keeping accurate records; first aid for common injuries; the guidelines for management of illnesses, and all other center procedures. Additionally, all staff has completed Blood borne Pathogens Training, SIDS, Safe Sleep and are required to attend 16 hours of training per year.

Health policies and procedures are posted throughout the center and are strictly enforced. The center works cooperatively with the local Red Cross, County Health Department, and other local health agencies for on-going staff workshops such as CPR, First Aid, and food preparation.

15. Discipline

CLC encourages and guides children to release their energy through positive activities. The goal of our discipline policy is to help children develop self-control to the degree possible for their age and experience. To facilitate this goal our staff will follow these guidelines:

- a. Provide daily activities and learning opportunities;
- b. Equipment and materials that are age appropriate;
- c. Set reasonable limits, keeping the children's safety and security in mind;
- d. Consequences of unacceptable behavior are logical, specific and adults follow through;
- e. Limits are stated specifically in terms of what the child CAN do;
- f. Anticipate problems and move in to redirect or stop the activity;
- g. Show respect and concern for children;
- h. Model appropriate behavior;
- i. Help children stay in control by offering alternative ways to express feelings, giving choices that are acceptable to the child and the adult; and giving choices only when there is one;
- j. Practice conflict resolution techniques with children;
- j. Be consistent in their responses to children's behavior.

If there are any incidents where we feel a more structured discipline is necessary, the child will be counseled and isolated in an open area away from other children. Disciplinary action will be taken if

a child hurts themselves, hurts another child or staff member is interfering with the daily schedule, or is misusing or destroying materials and/or equipment.

If disciplinary action is necessary, it will be handled in a positive manner that encourages self-control and self-direction. Parents will be informed of any continued disciplinary problems. Corporal punishment **will not be used** at any time.

16. Child's Health

Each day your child attends CLC, they will be given a preliminary health check. This check is a look over to see if they appear ill, tired, or upset, as well as to see if they have any cuts, scrapes, or bruises. If a teacher notices something, they will inquire as to the nature of it and how long they have had it. We want to be sure we are prepared to give your child the proper care they need.

If your child becomes ill during the day, a staff member will attempt to contact you as a courtesy. If your child has a fever of 100 degrees or more, parents will be notified to come and pick up their child. Children cannot return to Crossroads until they are fever free for 24 hours. If they have any type of accident/incident that results in a bruise, cut, or scrape (anything that leaves a mark), our teachers will fill out an incident report form and present it to you to sign. Parents may request a copy of the signed report. If your child receives a head injury, a staff member will contact the parent in regards to the injury based on the staff members discretion.

17. Medications

Medication includes both prescription and non-prescription medicines; taken by mouth, inhaled, injected, applied as drops to the eyes or nose, or applied to the skin. No medication, cream or materials for administering medication can be kept in the child's cubbies, diaper bags or backpacks. All components are to be labeled with the child's name and to be given to staff to put in medicine drawer in the kitchen,

When parent or guardian requests that medication be administered at the Center, the following policy applies. Medication must be in the original, labeled, Doctor's prescribed bottle. Over-the-counter medication may only be administered if we receive a signed authorization with the following information: child's name, name of medication, date and dosage. Parent/guardian must fill out and sign a medication form authorizing Crossroads Learning Center Staff to authorize the medication.

18. Emergency Procedures

Inclement Weather

On a rare occasion, our Center may be closed due to inclement weather. If the decision to close is made, parents will be notified through email and our Facebook Page and Group.

FIRE EMERGENCY

1. Fire drills will be held quarterly for the entire center. All fire drills will be documented in the fire drill log which will be kept available at the facility.
2. Immediately upon discovery of any kind of fire in the building, or to initiate a fire drill, the fire alarm (i.e. smoke detector) will be sounded. NOTE: The fire alarm in this building is not monitored by the fire department. It is strictly a local alarm only. The fire department must be summoned by telephone.
3. Upon hearing the fire alarm, staff members will immediately react as follows:

All infants & non-mobile toddlers (with and w/o special needs) will be placed in the Evacuation Cribs and pushed by the Lead Teacher. Older, mobile children will be instructed to keep quiet and form a single file line, holding hands with the child immediately in front and the child immediately behind. Any older children with special needs will hold the hand of the teacher, if mobile, and be pushed in their wheelchair if non-mobile.

THE TEACHER in charge of the class will immediately take the children, along with the daily attendance log, out through the closest approved exit. Our designated meeting place will be the Gazebo, behind the building. Although this is a good distance from the building, if it becomes necessary to move farther away due to excessive heat, fire department activities or any other reason, all children will be moved to the relocation site. Once at the designated meeting place, the teacher will instruct the children to sit down quietly and proceed to take roll using the daily attendance log. If any child is unaccounted for, the fire department personnel must be advised of this immediately upon their arrival. STAFF MEMBERS SHALL NOT LEAVE THE REST OF THE CHILDREN UNATTENDED FOR ANY REASON. RE-ENTERING A BURNING BUILDING IS STRONGLY DISCOURAGED.

The teacher will reassure the children and make every effort to maintain good composure at all times. Do not separate the children. Keep them all together and stay with them at all times. Do not release children to anyone other than their parents or other designated guardian as outlined in their enrollment forms.

AID # 1 Will immediately call 911 and report the fire.

Our exact address is:
144 Schroeder Park Dr.
Howell, MI 48843
(517) 258-9290

Relocation Site:
The Eagles Club
141 Schroeder Park Dr.
Howell, MI 48843

Nearest cross street is D-19, just south of I-96. We are located on the south side of Schroeder Park Dr., across from The Eagles Club. After contacting the fire department, AID #1 will commence checking the facility for any children that might have hidden or have been inadvertently left behind. Once the facility has been checked or conditions warrant your immediate evacuation, proceed to the designated meeting place and assist the Teacher in keeping all children reassured, calm and quiet.

Once AID #1 rejoins the class, TEACHER will post a message to our Facebook Group to notify parents and use the classroom book to begin calling parents.

TORNADO

This facility takes every potential emergency situation very seriously. These procedures have been established and must be adhered to in every instance of tornado watches or tornado warnings. All staff members must become familiar with these procedures. Tornado drills must be held at least twice during the months of April – October.

TORNADO WATCH

Upon learning of a tornado watch in the area, the Teacher will immediately turn on the radio to a local weather station. The weather conditions will be monitored until such time as the facility is closed and all children have left with their parents or the weather watch is canceled.

TORNADO WARNING

Should weather conditions deteriorate and a tornado warning is issued, the Teacher will immediately initiate the following procedures, which must be followed without delay.

1. Inform each class via two-way radio to commence emergency tornado procedures.
2. Upon hearing this, staff members will immediately react as follows:

THE TEACHERS will place all infants, including special needs, in Evacuation Cribs and instruct all older children to keep quiet and form a single file line. Any older children with special needs will hold the hand of the teacher, if mobile, and be pushed in their wheelchair if non-mobile. The teacher will take all of the children, and the daily attendance log, to the Toddler Room. Once in this area, the children will be instructed to sit down in the corner with legs crossed. They will be instructed to keep calm and

quiet while the teacher takes roll. The children will remain in this area until such time as the tornado warning is canceled.

Do not separate the children. Keep them all together and stay with them at all times. Do not release the children to anyone other than their parents or other designated guardian as outlined in their enrollment forms.

AID #1 Immediately upon hearing of commencement of emergency tornado procedures, AID #1 will begin a systematic search of the facility to make certain that all children will go to the designated location.

The systematic search of the facility will include lavatories, closets, under desks, etc., where a frightened child might have hidden.

Once the search is completed, or conditions warrant taking immediate shelter, AID #1 will proceed to the designated location, the Toddler Room, and assist the teacher in keeping the children reassured, calm and quiet.

In the event it becomes necessary to relocate after a tornado, the teachers and children will proceed to the relocation site:

The Eagles Club
141 Schroeder Park Dr.
Howell, MI 48843

Medical Emergency

In the event of an accident or an injury in the classroom or playground, the following procedure is to be used:

1. A staff member trained and certified in CPR/First Aid will administer emergency first aid.
2. If the first aid provider believes the student needs further medical evaluation the following is to take place.

If it is Life Threatening

- a. Call 911
- b. Notify parent/guardian.

- c. Notify director immediately.
- d. Complete incident report.

If it is Not Life Threatening

- a. Notify parent immediately.
- b. Describe completely the nature of the injury.
- c. First aid provider may make treatment recommendation to parent
- d. Director shall be notified immediately.
- e. Incident report is to be completed.

Dental Emergencies

The following guidelines are to be used in case of a dental emergency.

Knocked Out Tooth

- a. Control bleeding by having student bite down on rolled gauze pad.
- b. Find the tooth.
- c. Pick up by biting surface, not root.
- d. Place in closed container of milk (or water).
- e. Notify parent.
- f. Parent should check with dentist to determine necessary treatment.
- g. Incident report must be completed.

Broken, Chipped or Dislodged Tooth

- a. Notify parent immediately.
- b. If tooth is broken or badly chipped it may be extremely painful for child. Ice pack on cheek may help.
- c. Student must see dentist as soon as possible.
- d. Parent should call dentist and transport child. If no transportation is available, we will transport.
- e. Incident report must be completed.

SERIOUS ACCIDENT OR ILLNESS

In the event that any child is seriously injured or becomes seriously ill while in attendance at the facility, the following procedures will be followed:

THE TEACHER will remain with the sick or injured child. Emergency first aid is to be administered as necessary:

- A. Ensure and maintain an open airway.
- B. Control any bleeding with direct pressure.
- C. Ensure proper circulation as necessary (CPR).

Reassure the child and keep him calm and quiet until the emergency medical personnel take over the child's care.

If the Teacher has to accompany the child to the hospital, Aid # 1 will remain in charge of the class and will assist Aid # 2 with the remaining children until the Teacher can return.

AID # 1 Will immediately call 911 and report the emergency, if it is life threatening.

Our exact address is:

**144 Schroeder Park Dr.
Howell, MI 48843
(517) 258-9290**

Nearest cross street is D-19, just south of I-96. We are located on the south side of Schroeder Park Dr., across from The Eagles Club.

Once the proper emergency medical personnel have been contacted, the Director and the parents of the sick or injured child must be immediately notified. (See child's enrollment form for proper emergency contacts and telephone numbers). If conditions do not warrant immediate notification of emergency personnel, the Director will be contacted immediately and notified of the situation. The Director will then call the parents and notify them or designate a teacher to do so.

It will be the responsibility of Aid # 1 to make certain that all emergency medical personnel are properly directed to the injured or sick child.

If the Teacher has to accompany the child to the hospital, Aid # 1 will remain in charge of the class and will be assisted by Aid # 2 with the remaining children until the Teacher can return. It will be the responsibility of Aid #1 & Aid #2 to reassure the children and keep them occupied until the teacher can return.

19. General Safety Rules

For the protection and safety of children and staff, the following rules are designed to prevent accidents and injuries. Compliance with these rules will be mandatory.

- a. All spilled liquids must be wiped up immediately.
- b. Any defective equipment or play units should be removed and then reported to the Director.

- c. Machines or equipment shall not be operated until you have received proper instructions on their operation.
- d. Lifting: attempting to lift or push an object that is too heavy must be avoided. You must contact another adult when help is needed to move a heavy object.
- e. Materials and equipment will be kept in their designated places. Materials will not be stored against doors or exits or fire extinguishers.
- f. Trash and scrap will be thrown in proper waste containers.
- g. Every day, employees will be responsible to clean center and make sure that all materials and equipment are properly stored.
- h. Precautions will be observed at CLC to prevent contact with blood or potentially infectious materials. All staff members are required to complete Blood borne Pathogens Training. Latex gloves are available and are to be used. They are to be disposed of in plastic bags.
- i. The Director will ensure that adequate supplies, sanitary conditions, and universal precautions are being maintained.

20. Re-enrollment

As part of CLC's commitment to maintain quality, we do require all families to update their files annually and pay the re-enrollment fee. This means that all forms, including physicals, health appraisals, immunization records, and other required licensing forms are review and updated annually. The re-enrollment fee is \$30.00 and is due by Labor Day of each school year.

21. Pesticide Control

The management of Crossroads Learning Center is committed to providing a safe environment to all of the children in our care. The Crossroads Church has a company come out in between the months of April-September as needed and spray for pesticides to help prevent the exposure of our staff and children to pesticides. Due to the safety of the children in our care, when the premises is sprayed for pesticide control, it will be done after hours when children are not in attendance. Parents will receive notification when the premises will be getting sprayed for pesticides.

22. Reporting to Protective Services

CLC is mandated by Michigan Law, Act No. 238, governing all child care programs to report any suspected abuse or neglect of children in their care.

CLC Infant/Toddler

Policies and Procedures

Classroom Composition and Staffing

There is 1 Infant/Toddler classroom. The classroom is staffed with a full-time Lead Caregiver and/or Assistant Caregiver under the direction of our Program Director. CLC is committed to providing high quality care with skilled and educated professional staff.

Continuity of Care and Primary Care giving

Continuity of care is the high-quality practice of having Caregivers and children stay together, rather than children changing Caregivers and groups of peers frequently. Because learning occurs simultaneously with emotional attachment, it is best for young children to have a stable caregiver throughout their early years. All the children in our center will have a Primary Caregiver. The primary-caregiver system ensures that every child has a "special" person and that each parent has a primary contact. Either the Lead Caregiver or the Program Director will be your child's primary. The primary caregiver forms a caring, nurturing, and responsive relationship with your child. In the center, she will be the "expert" on your child knowing pertinent information like your child's individual schedule, developmental abilities and special needs, sleeping needs, and individual interests. Having a primary caregiver gives children a secure base. They learn to trust someone familiar who will care for them as they explore and who will be there to comfort them when they are tired, upset, or frightened. Their relationship with a primary caregiver helps children feel secure enough to relate to other adults in the child care setting. However, "primary" does not mean exclusive. Children should not become totally dependent on the presence of one person. The other staff in the center will develop a warm relationship with your child and have caring and learning interactions as your child explores the learning environment.

Parent Concerns

As a child care center, we are a community of children, parents, and staff all interacting and sharing our lives together. In a community, people work closely together and hopefully interactions are positive, helpful, kind, and understanding. Yet it is to be expected that from time to time people will experience some conflict, some concerns, and some difficulties. We recognize that parenting is one of the most difficult, intense and rewarding experiences in your life. We want you to share your thoughts, hopes, and dreams for your child. You want what is best for your child and we know it is your job to advocate and protect your child.

We, as a staff, will make mistakes, create misunderstandings, and occasionally miscommunicate. When these mistakes occur, we want for you to tell us. As a staff it is our goal to offer your family the best in child care services possible. In order to meet our goal, we need your input, your suggestions, your questions, and concerns.

When you have a concern, please remember.....

- Caregivers want the parents to feel very satisfied with the care their child is receiving.
- Talk to the Caregivers directly whenever possible. If you feel comfortable, ask your child's caregiver first about any concern. Caregivers prefer that you talk with them directly, but they do understand if you would prefer to talk with the director.
- REALIZE that if you have a concern with a caregiver, the director will need to investigate and talk with the caregiver directly about your concern and deal with the issue in a straightforward manner so the caregiver can improve her performance and/or correct any mistakes or misunderstandings.
- Consider using the "once is OK" rule. With minor issues, allow staff to make a mistake once or twice, but when it becomes a pattern, it is definitely a time to bring it to their attention.
- On the other hand, don't allow concerns to build up. As concerns occur, share them with the Caregivers. It is disturbing to find out "later" that a parent had a number of concerns and never expressed them.
- Sometimes we cannot make changes you may request due to other restrictions, but we ALWAYS want to hear your suggestions. We promise to consider them seriously and respond to you in a timely manner.

Daily Schedules

The daily schedule for the children is a guide. It provides a framework for planning and organizing the daily routine and play activities for the children. The daily routines for children may be a little different based on the age of your child. Infants follow their own biological needs. They are fed, changed, and nap when they need it. Toddlers are changed/taken to the toilet before transitions in the day and as needed. Adjustments to the schedule are made as your child gets older and his/her needs change. You may also notice that as your child gets older, s/he may alter her/his own schedule to fit in with the group. Some common changes you may notice in your child's behavior after enrollment in any group care situation include altered sleep/wake patterns (staying awake for longer hours or napping more frequently for short periods of time) or changes in appetite.

The daily schedule posted in each room is an outline of a typical day with the infants and toddlers. Keep in mind again that, if needed, the schedule will include children's individual needs based on their age. This is a sample that includes the different types of components to the daily schedule.

Infant Meal Time

Young infants will be fed according to their own schedule. As they grow and start eating solid foods, their eating needs will change and the eating times will be adjusted toward the group schedule. Parents are responsible for all aspects of bottle preparation. As your infant grows and becomes more adept at eating, s/he will be using their fingers for eating "finger-foods" and working on using infant utensils. As infants gradually start to eat cereals, jarred foods, and table foods, parents will inform the Caregivers in the classroom as to what their child can eat. It is recommended that infants try new foods at home first, then parents can add the new food to the classroom list.

If your infant (eating table food) or toddler should have food allergy or food intolerance, please notify your child's Caregiver immediately. **When a child has an allergy or an intolerance it is the parent's responsibility to provide an appropriate food substitute.**

Bottles

Parents of bottle-fed babies will need to **provide labeled bottles, with the child's full first and last name and the full date, filled with prepared formula, nipples, and lids.** If you are breast feeding your child, all breast milk must be dated and have your child's name on it. Contents remaining in any bottle must be discarded one hour after the start of the feeding time. All bottles will be stored in the refrigerator. Parents are responsible for taking all bottles home each day. No bottles will be served with cereal or any other food product in them without written parental permission. Mothers are welcome to come and breastfeed their infants at any time. If a parent chooses, they are welcome to use the infant room at any time. Bottles are not heated in the microwave, as this will produce "hot spots" in the formula or breast milk, and are warmed by a bottle warmer.

Older Infant and Young Toddler Meals

When providing jar baby food, the jar **must be labeled with the child's full first and last name and the full date that the food is to be given.** Food from baby food jars will be placed in a separate container for feedings. Opened jars will be refrigerated and kept for no more than 24 hours from opening. Dates on all foods will be checked before serving. When toddlers transition from jarred food, they will qualify for our regular meal/snack service (see General Policies and Procedures.)

The older infants will be sitting at small table with chairs and toddlers will be at tables to eat their meals. Children in the toddler room will be using sippy cups or regular cups and using utensils. It is our

goal to work cooperatively with the families and their child's routine; however, bottles are not the common practice as the toddlers get older. The children have access to tap water in the Toddler room at any time of the day.

Sleeping

Infants nap according to their own schedules. If an infant should fall asleep while being rocked, or taken for walk in a stroller, they will be put in their cribs to continue their sleep. As your child grows and matures, cot sleeping will be encouraged. This will assist especially in the transition from the Infant room to the Toddler room when that time comes. Toddlers also will nap on a cot. All the bedding for infants and toddlers is provided by the center and is washed weekly. Cribs are sanitized weekly with a bleach water solution. Cots are sanitized daily with a bleach water solution.

Safe Sleeping Practices

The infants at CLC are provided with a firm, tight-fitting mattress in a crib that meets current safety standards. There will be no pillows, bumpers, comforters, or other fluffy products in the crib. Two children are never sharing a crib at the same time. The above practices are supported by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.

We understand that practices may be different at home and that some children have unique situations, however, we must follow licensing guidelines and adhere to the above stated policies. It may or may not be difficult for some children to adjust if they are used to sleeping in a different position or with a parent/sibling.

Diapering

Parents are responsible to **provide disposable diapers** for children in the Infant and Toddler program. Your child will be changed at regular intervals throughout the day and as needed. Store-bought wipes are used when changing your child; we will use plain water and wash cloths for children with a diaper rash, upon parental request. Feel free to bring in Desitin or any other cream if you would like it to be applied to your child's rash that is **labeled with first and last name**. We will not apply baby powder on the infants. The use of powder has been linked to childhood asthma and other respiratory difficulties. The following diapering procedure is posted and strictly followed at our center:

- a. Get out all materials before you begin (clean diaper, wipes, cream).
- b. Put on disposable gloves.
- c. Place the child on the changing pad and remove the dirty diaper. Keep one hand on the child at all times.
- d. Clean the child with a wipe. Apply diaper cream, if necessary.

- e. Re-diaper the child and remove him/her from changing pad.
- f. Place the diaper in a plastic bag and place in diaper container.
- g. Spray the changing pad with the provided cleaning solution. Wipe clean. Place cleaning solution out of reach of children.
- h. Dispose of gloves.
- i. WASH YOUR HANDS and CHILD'S HANDS

What to Bring

Clothing/Seasonal Items

Active and sometimes messy play is going to be a part of your child's day. It is recommended that children wear comfortable, washable play clothes that are easy to move around in and okay if something spills on it! Children must be dressed in clothing and not just wearing a diaper and/or Onesie. Parents are asked to bring a complete change of labeled clothing, including socks, onesies, shirts, pants, shorts, etc. to be left at school. If clothing items are not labeled it makes it extremely difficult to remember which items of clothing go to which children. It is also a good idea to keep a light sweater or sweatshirt in your child's cubby in case it feels a little chilly that day. For older infants who are walking, it is helpful if parents keep a clean pair of shoes here at the center for your child to wear in the classroom.

Children who are enrolled in the warmer months should also bring a hat and sunscreen. Sunscreen will not be applied to infants under 6 months. If you want your child to have sunscreen applied before reaching 6 months of age a doctor's note must be provided to the center stating your child can have sunscreen applied to him/her.

Children who are enrolled in the colder, winter months must be properly dressed to go outside. Toddlers need to have clothing appropriate for playing on the playground (boots, snow pants, hats, scarf, and waterproof mittens).

Other Items

If your child uses a pacifier, parents are asked to provide a labeled one. Children in the Infant room who use pacifiers will have them on an as-needed basis throughout their day. Children in the Toddler room who use them will have a pacifier only at nap time. Toddlers will not be allowed to walk around the classroom with a pacifier during the day for the following reasons: it is not healthy for a child to pick up a pacifier off the floor once dropped and put back into their mouth; another child may put someone else's pacifier in their mouth; it is difficult to understand a child who is trying to talk with one in his/her mouth; and, their muscles in their mouth and tongue need to learn how to work when they talk without a pacifier in it.

If your toddler has a special item to sleep with, like a small stuffed animal or small blanket, please label it and your child will have it during nap. At times a new child may have a hard time transitioning;

we try and work with the families in helping this adjustment to be less stressful. A toddler bringing a comfort item to help him or her transition into child care is certainly welcome. Eventually, your child will not feel the need for it at school and will have formed positive relationships with his Caregivers. We view transitional comfort items as something that will benefit the child in helping him/her feel secure in this new environment.

Parent Involvement

Home-School Communication

Children will have a cubby and a parent pocket assigned to them. Cubbies will hold a child's outdoor clothing, bags, or other personal items. Newsletters, notes from your child's Caregiver, and other pertinent information are placed in their cubby.

Daily Verbal Communication – We encourage parents to talk with their child's Caregiver at drop-off and/or at pick-up. It is important for the Caregiver to know information about your child, like how they slept last night, when they ate last, if they have any medicine, if they are teething, etc. The sharing of this information is important to best meet your child's needs.

In the infant/toddler room there are daily information sheets that communicate to parents the diaper changes, nap times, and feeding times/food eaten/amounts of all the children. For bottle fed babies it will also indicate how many ounces were eaten at that time.

Monthly Newsletters – A monthly newsletter is provided to parents sharing information on child development topics, curriculum, policies, and other announcements.

Parent Visits

Parents are welcome at any time to come and visit their child. For mothers who are breast feeding, the infant room provides a comfortable and peaceful area to enjoy that feeding time. For some children, particularly toddlers, multiple separations from the parent during the day may make the transition to CLC more difficult. If you find that your visits are more upsetting to the child than consoling, you may want to reconsider intermittent visits.

Separation

Separation can be stressful for parents as well as children. We are here to help in this sometimes difficult, but very common, developmental process.

Sometimes children are upset during their first few weeks and some do not express anxiety until a few weeks alter, when they feel comfortable enough to do so. This is completely understandable

because they are in a new environment with people they do not yet know. It will take time for them to develop bonds and relationships with the Caregivers and children in their room. Please know that we will comfort and reassure your child. The Caregivers will acknowledge and talk about his/her feelings and we will need you to do the same. Keep in mind that children are very sensitive to the feelings of their parents so if you do not feel good about leaving your child at the Center, they will not feel good about it either. Please talk to your child in a positive way.

When you leave your child, please do not “sneak out.” Make the “good-bye” and hug something s/he can count on, even if it brings tears at first. When it is time for you to leave the classroom, after you say your good-byes, make the departure definite. Linger can make a child unsure of what is expected of him/her. It is helpful when parents develop a routine (leave after reading a book together, greeting the Caregiver, etc.) Consistency is the key. Over time your child will become accustomed to this routine and learn that you always come back when you say you will. Together, we will successfully work through this most important developmental process.

Curriculum Planning for Infants and Toddlers

During the first two years of life, children are working on acquiring a sense of trustworthiness of oneself and others. This is the sense of safety and security that comes from responsive and predictable care from familiar others to whom the child is attached. In the toddler years, a strong sense of autonomy is building. This comes from being treated as an individual and being allowed opportunities for independence.

When children feel the sense of independence, power, and competence, they can step out into the world and be active learners and problem solvers. Young children need a safe environment full of opportunities to explore and have fun. They need to be able to see, touch, feel, and move.

The curriculum for the infants and toddlers involves everything that happens to the child throughout the day. Responsive care giving is the key component to setting up a safe and secure environment and trusting relationships. Everything that a child experiences is a learning opportunity. For example, diaper changes are perfect opportunities for learning experiences: language, singing gently to a child; showing gentle touches; letting the child know that this is not a hurried or rushed experience and that they are valued and precious individuals; gently moving their legs in a bicycle motion stimulating movement or having them reach and grasp for an object. Throughout the day, Caregivers will take advantage of these care giving experiences that are so important in the early years of life and turn them into meaningful and positive experiences for a child’s healthy development.

Along with the individual care giving moments, Caregivers will also plan and organize their environments to provide experiences which enhance motor development – reaching, grasping, crawling in and out, throwing, pulling; cognitive development – object permanence, cause and effect experiences, language, listening and responding to sounds and voices, and problem solving; social development – playing among others, positive peer interactions, and expressing emotions towards others.

Planning for infants and toddlers may not necessarily involve "lessons" but rather opportunities for experiences that as individuals they can make the most out of. When teachers organize materials for the room, they take into account children's individual differences along with their knowledge child development. Planning is based on observations of the children using their interests, their new skills, and their reactions to materials. As the children grow and change, the Caregivers change the classroom environment. They may put out more challenging climbing equipment or add a building area with different toys. The classroom may look very different at the end of a semester than it did at the beginning!

Health Related Issues and Illness

Group care poses many different and new situations that children are exposed to on a daily basis. One thing they are typically exposed to is different types of illness. As a general center policy, we do not refuse mildly ill children. Children may have a cough or a snuffle and still attend our center. It is common for infants and toddlers to frequently get sick in group care. Perhaps you will see a runny nose lasting a long time or you find yourself visiting the pediatrician every few weeks during those colder months. Children this young have not yet built up their natural antibodies for fighting off viruses and bacteria that invade their little bodies. Young children's immune systems are immature, making them less resilient to illness.

Healthy Practices

Hand washing

At CLC, we are firm in the belief of healthy practices. Hand washing is one of the best ways to cut down on the transmission of germs. Caregivers in the classrooms follow proper hand washing techniques through out the day – including but not limited to: before and after eating or handling food; before and after feeding a child; before and after diapering; after handling or cleaning body fluids - after wiping noses, mouths, bottoms, sores; after outdoor activities; upon entering the classroom. Children as well engage in many hand washings throughout the day. In the Infant/Toddler room, the children have a sink to turn water on and off – reducing the spread of germs from child to child.

General Disinfecting

Toys that have been mouthed in the Infant and Toddler classrooms are disinfected every day throughout the day. Caregivers often will place a toy into a container after a child has mouthed it to be cleaned in the next batch. At the end of the day, other equipment and materials will be cleaned as well. The diaper changing area is disinfected after each use. A bleach solution is used for general disinfecting and the infant room has a dishwasher for sanitizing.

Fresh Air/Outdoor Play

CLC is aired frequently; particularly during the colder months with warm, stale heated air warming the center. The children play outdoors daily weather permitting. Fresh air in the colder months does not cause or promote illness; it actually facilitates good health. Cold air is not related to making a child sick. If a child is in attendance during the outdoor time, we assume they are healthy enough to then go outside with the rest of the children. All children in attendance during their classroom's outdoor play time will be going outside unless otherwise instructed by parents.

Toddlers will be going outside unless it is raining; the heat index is over 100, and on winter days when the wind chill is below 10 degrees. Taking the children outside is considered healthy practice in a quality child care program. Of course the infants and sometimes toddlers are not as mobile and free to move and play outside as the preschoolers are. Taking them on short walks in the buggies and providing them with fresh air and sunshine is what they need to get.

Laundering/Sleeping Materials

The bedding on the cribs and cots are washed every week. When illnesses are prevalent, laundering happens even more often. After every sheet change, the cots or crib mattresses are disinfected. The infant soft toys are able to be washed as much as needed to prevent the spread of germs.

Immunizations

All children entering group care should be immunized against disease at appropriate ages as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Children must have a medical exam and immunizations in place prior to the first day of attendance at CLC.

Immunizations happen on a regular basis during the first year of life. It is understandable that there are sometimes side-effects resulting from these, a couple being pain and/or a mild fever. If accompanied by a doctor's note, we can administer an over-the-counter pain reliever brought in by you after your child's immunizations indicating that is specifically for the relief of pain due to immunizations. We cannot administer medication as a fever-reducer. The center's policy for any child being sent home for a fever is 100 degrees or above. Typically, immunizations do not create high fevers; however, if your child does have this high of a fever, regardless of it being the result of immunizations or an illness, parents will be notified to come and pick up their child. Children cannot return to Crossroads until they are fever free for 24 hours.

Closing Statement

We appreciate suggestions and comments you may have about our Center. **PLEASE KEEP THIS COPY OF OUR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND REFERENCE THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.** THANK YOU.

Brianna Keeney, Program Director
Crossroads Learning Center
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