**Little Lakers Child Care Center**
**Parent Handbook**

Mission Statement: “The mission of the Little Lakers Child Care Center (LLCCC) is to foster age-appropriate learning and provide exceptional child care in a safe, nurturing environment.”

**Licensing:**

We provide enhanced childcare for children ages 6 weeks to the first day of Kindergarten. We are licensed through the State of Minnesota Department of Human Services, Child Care Licensing (651-431-6500). We are licensed to serve up to 84 children (16 infants, 28 toddlers, and 40 preschoolers). Our hours are Monday through Friday 6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

**Child Care Program Plan**:

You can request a copy from your child’s teacher or from our office staff.

**Philosophical basis:**

Little Lakers Child Care Center operates under the knowledge that each parent is the expert on his or her child. With that in mind, we want to partner with you in providing care for your child and to ensure that it is in a manner acceptable to you. To this end, please inform staff whenever you have a question, concern, comment, or request pertaining to your child’s time here. We welcome input from parents and will make every effort to accommodate your wishes and/or explain our rationale behind a particular policy. We use the method of “redirection” to navigate children, as individuals or groups, away from problems toward constructive activity to reduce conflict. Please refer to our Behavior Guidance Policies for in-depth explanations of the methods we use when working with the children.

**Safety & Courtesy:**

**Doors:** We want to prevent children from getting their fingers pinched in the doors. We ask that you open and close the doors for your children in our center. Always look through windows before opening any door and look behind you before closing any doors. Please remind your child(ren) that “Little Lakers Child Care Center, grown-ups open doors.”

**Outdoors:** We play outdoors as much as possible as the fresh air and exercise is so important for all of us! Please bring appropriate outdoor clothing for your children and put their names on them. Talk to the Director if you need assistance with clothing items.

**Holidays:** We are licensed to be open Monday through Friday 6:00 a.m. to 6:00p.m. We are closed on and do not bill for the following holidays:

* New Year’s Day – January 1st
* Good Friday – Friday before Easter (This day will be used for deep cleaning of the center.)
* Memorial Day – Last Monday in May
* Independence Day – July 4th
* Labor Day – First Monday in September
* Thanksgiving Day – Fourth Thursday of November
* Black Friday – Day after Thanksgiving (This day will be used for deep cleaning of the center.)
* Christmas Eve – December 24th
* Christmas Day – December 25th

When one of the listed holidays falls on a Saturday, the preceding Friday shall be a holiday. When the holiday falls on a Sunday, the following Monday shall be a holiday.

**Weather Policy:** Little Lakers Child Care Center will follow the LCWM school district winter weather policy with the following modifications:

* + When LCWM is 2 hours late, Little Lakers will open 1 hour late (7:00am)
	+ When LCWM closes early, Little Lakers will close 2 hours early (4:00pm)
	+ When LCWM is closed for the day, Little Lakers will open one hour late and close two hours early (Center hours will be 7:00am-4:00pm). However, Little Lakers could close for the day if we felt it was unsafe for staff for travel to or from the center. You will be notified in advance either way.
	+ If the highways around Lake Crystal are scheduled to close, Little Lakers will close 1 hour before the highways do.

Any announcement for closing will be done as soon as possible and will be done through brightwheel’s text messaging and alert options. We will also call parents/guardians if we are to close early when your child is already here.

**Billing:** You may pay fees bi-weekly by checking account or credit card via the brightwheel app. You can select the dates payments can be made throughout the month for your convenience. The center will schedule your payments to be automatically withdrawn on the dates you select. It is your responsibility to change your billing methods if your card expires.

**Pick-up:** Please pick up your child at the time you are scheduled to pick up as we plan staffing according to the children’s schedules. Please call if you will be late picking up your child. If you don’t pick up your child at the arranged time and we have not heard from you by 6:00 p.m. and we cannot reach your emergency numbers, we will call the police to come for your child. Please make sure both your phone numbers and your emergency contact numbers are kept up-to-date and notify us immediately of any phone number/address changes. It is recommended that at least one emergency contact is within 50 miles of the center. It is extremely important in the case of an emergency situation involving your child that we have a fast, reliable way of reaching you, so let us know of the most effective way to get ahold of you when necessary (cell vs. work phone, for example, or Grandparents’ or neighbors’ numbers).

**Visiting:** Families of enrolled children are welcome to visit or call at any time during hours of operation. If you ever have concerns or questions about something at our program, we encourage you to discuss it with us.

**Enhanced Programs**: We provide enhanced programming to support families. We offer referrals for parents to needed resources, assist parents in acquiring basic needs assistance, and advocate for parents when needed. Children are cared for in a warm, loving and educational environment that includes qualified teachers, assistant teachers, and aides. We provide quality, individualized attention for each child. We make every effort to work with parents and children who have special needs. Please talk to someone in the office if you have any needs, concerns, or questions regarding your child or otherwise—we are here to help!

**Health**: All children must have an updated immunization record and healthcare summary on file. The Healthcare Summary is due within 30 days of enrollment and an immunization record is due at the time of enrollment. We have a nurse who reviews all of the children’s health records for accuracy, looks to ensure that each child’s immunization records and health care summary are current, and assists us in developing individual healthcare plans when necessary. In the event that a child’s healthcare summary or immunization records are not up-to-date, that child may not be allowed to return until the necessary paperwork is received.

**Accident Reports:** We make every effort and precaution to keep all children safe while they are at Little Lakers Child Care Center. However, in the course of a hard day of playing and having fun, children sometimes get injured. If this happens staff will call you immediately if the injury seems to require medical attention. Otherwise staff will complete an Accident Report that details what happened, where it happened, and how the injury was treated, and ask you to sign it when you arrive at pick-up time. Signing an Accident Report merely acknowledges that we informed you of the incident. You may still follow up any questions/concerns with teachers, office personnel, or the director at any time.

**Illness:** We follow the State of Minnesota licensing guidelines (Rule 3) regarding attendance of children who are sick. If your child exhibits any of the following symptoms you will be called immediately to pick him or her up, and they may be separated from the group in a cozy area until a care-giver arrives. Children with the following symptoms/illnesses are not allowed to be at the center due to the risk of infection to staff and other children:

- chicken pox
- vomiting two or more times in one day
- three or more loose stools in one day
- pus draining from the eye
- bacterial infection such as strep or impetigo
- unexplained tiredness
- lice, ringworm, pinworm, or scabies
- a 100 degree Fahrenheit axillary (under the armpit) or higher temperature before fever reducing medication is given. (Unless there is documentation from the patient’s medical provider that the fever is due to a non-contagious condition.)
- undiagnosed rash
- significant respiratory distress
- appears uncomfortable and cannot participate in programming

Your child will be allowed to attend childcare again once Little Lakers Child Care Center has received a doctor’s note that he or she has been treated and is okay to be in the center (for contagious illnesses) and/or the symptoms (such as fever or diarrhea) have been gone for at least 24 hours. Thank you ahead of time for your understanding regarding this policy. If your child has been diagnosed with a contagious disease, please alert us as soon as possible. If your child is exposed to a contagious illness while at the center, a sign will be posted alerting you. Please note: If your child is too sick to play outside, please keep your child home. Our program includes outdoor play year round.

**Administration of medicine**
In order for Little Lakers Child Care Center to administer medicine, the condition and treatment must be listed on the child’s ICCP form and a medication administration form must accompany it. On the medication administration form, administration of medicine is recorded with the child’s name, name of the medicine, date, time, dosage, and the name and signature of the person who dispensed the medicine. Little Lakers will not administer medicine, whether OTC or prescription, without a completed medication administration form and a doctor’s note (for prescription medications). All medication will be locked away and kept out of the reach of any children in your child’s classroom.

The Center will administer diapering products, sunscreen lotions, and insect repellents according to the manufacturer’s instructions when written permission from the child’s parent is obtained and the original bottle has the expiration date and child’s first and last name on it. Repellents, lotions, and diaper rash control products will be stored according to directions on the original container and so that they are inaccessible to children. Products will not be used after its expiration date. Little Lakers will provide sunscreen and insect repellent, but parents are to provide any diapering products. Diapering products will be labeled with your child’s first and last name.

**First Aid, Emergency, and Safety Policies and Procedures**

If your child ever requires medical attention or first aid, you will be notified immediately by phone and/or a written accident report (for this reason we MUST have current family phone numbers!). If First Aid is required a First Aid-certified staff person will administer the care necessary. In an emergency situation staff will call 911 and notify caregivers immediately.
The child care facility has written policies governing emergencies, accidents, and injuries. Written records are kept about incidents, emergencies, accidents, and injuries that have occurred. All staff will have CPR and First Aid training, initial training on site specific emergency procedures, and in-service training surrounding health and safety topics periodically throughout the year.

A first aid kit is available in each room of the center and portable kits are available for when groups go off- site or outdoors. The first aid kits contain sterile bandages, band-aids, sterile compresses, scissors, ice packs, thermometer, adhesive tape, and a first aid manual. Battery operated flashlights and portable radios are also available in case of emergency.

To prevent injuries, classroom environments will be checked daily.
\*Adult scissors are not to be in reach of the children or left on tables/counters. They need to be stored in an upper cabinet. They should be supervised with kid-safe scissors.
\*When picking up a child, staff will lift children under the shoulders or on the sides of their body. Children should never be picked up or swung by the arms or wrists/hands.
\*Many doors located in the center are kept closed in order to avoid finger pinching. Children and parents are reminded that “open doors is a teacher job”. When children are congregated by a door, staff will be in charge of operating the door and will pay close attention to each child’s whereabouts. Lower cabinet doors in areas when children play will be locked so that they do not pinch their fingers. All volunteers are trained to watch all directions when opening or closing a door.
\*When children are on the changing table being changed, staff must keep one hand on the child at all times to avoid a fall. Staff are never to leave a child alone on a changing table for any reason.

To prevent **burns**, no candles or other materials with flames will be allowed in classrooms. Glue guns are not allowed to be used in the classrooms. Any hot food served to the children will be cooled to an appropriate temperature on their plates or bowls. Containers that arrive hot from the kitchen will be kept away from the children when plates are being dished up. Hot food will be transferred into other serving dishes to keep the children safe when needed. **Staff will not have hot beverages in the classrooms, no matter what kind of container.** Hot food/beverages consumed by staff will be kept in the office/teacher workroom on the counter pushed as far back as possible so the children are not able to reach it. Never leave your hot food or beverage unattended. In the infant room a bottle warmer will be used to defrost breast milk or warm a bottle. The bottle warmer is set in the corner and secured firmly to prevent tipping. Children are not allowed in staff member’s arms when near or using the bottle warmer to heat or check a bottle. The Director’s office and the teacher workroom will not be accessible to children. Outlets will be shielded when not in use. All water temperatures for children will not exceed 120 degrees.

To prevent **poisoning**, all hazardous materials, including cleaning solutions, will be kept out-of-reach of children and in a room that is not accessible to the children. If a child ingests any kind of poison, staff will immediately contact poison control at 1-800-222-1222. This number will be posted in each classroom.

To prevent **choking**, all hazardous materials, such as balloons, will be kept out of the classroom and out-of-reach of children. Toys will be inspected regularly to ensure there are no broken pieces. All toys will be verified to be age-appropriate and contain no pieces small enough to choke on before being introduced to the classroom.

To prevent **suffocation,** all hazardous materials, such as plastic bags, will be kept out of the classroom and out-of-reach of children.
To prevent **traffic accidents**, children will be supervised near the parking lots.

To prevent **pedestrian accidents**, children will hold hands with an adult/hold a ring on a rope or ride in a stroller or wagon. When parents are dropping off or picking up their child, they will be expected to walk the child into and out from the center.

To prevent accidents related to **allergies,** parents are required to submit all enrollment paperwork prior to each child’s first day. Any allergies must be indicated on the forms and verbal communication of the allergy is encouraged. All staff will be informed of the allergy, and signs will be posted near the area where food is served

**Staff:** We are staffed by a program director, and many talented teachers, assistant teachers, aides, and volunteers. All staff members working in the center have Sudden Unexpected Infant Death and Abusive Head Trauma training. At least one staff person trained in First Aid and CPR will be in the building at all times and will use his or her skills when necessary.

Volunteers: Volunteers may be in the classrooms with the children. They will always be under the supervision of our staff members. They will not make bottles or diaper/toilet the children.

**Photos:** We occasionally participate in research, university education projects or public relations activities which may include photos/videos of the children, activities or observations. A “photograph and video recording consent release form” is completed in the enrollment packet for Little Lakers Early Learning Center purposes.

**Field Trips:** You will receive advanced notice of any field trips the class is planning on taking. A field trip consent form will be provided for each field trip and parents must return the written permission form in order for the child to attend the field trip.

**Meals:** We provide healthy meals and snacks for the children in our care. Nutrition is so important. We try to limit sugar intake. Meals are posted on the school website. We provide breakfasts, hot/cold lunches and afternoon snacks. If you would like to bring in treats for your child’s class, for birthdays or otherwise, they must be store-bought and nut or peanut butter free because of health policies. Little Lakers Learning Center is partially reimbursed for food based on families’ incomes by the Child and Adult Care Food Program. You will be asked to fill out their family information form once a year. This information is kept confidential.

**Standard/Full Civil Rights Statement**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\_filing\_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845- 6136 (Spanish).

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

**Conferences:** Parent/teacher conferences will be offered every six months for each child in the center. These conferences will pertain to the child’s developmental progress. All classrooms use The Creative Curriculum Assessment which measures the social-emotional, fine and gross motor, language, and cognitive areas of development. In addition to bi-annual conferences, transitional conferences will be held when a child moves to a new classroom. Additional conferences or meetings may be requested by either teachers or parents if either party has concerns they would like to discuss.

**Educational Methods:** All of our staff members work hard to further each child’s developmental progress. The Creative Curriculum that we use is designed to provide children opportunities to increase their language, cognitive, fine and gross motor and social-emotional skills. We provide plenty of opportunities for children to increase their knowledge and try out their new skills. Children are never shamed or punished for not making developmental progress in an area.

**Field Trips:** You will receive advanced notice of any field trips the class is planning on taking. A field trip consent form will be provided for each field trip and parents must return the written permission form in order for the child to attend the field trip.

**Public Relations**: A permission form will be given to parents for each occasion of research, experimental procedure, or public relations activity which may involve their child. A child must have a completed written parental permission form in order to participate in such events.

**Behavior Guidance:** The Little Lakers Child Care Center is dedicated to providing nurturing, stimulating care to every child and family we serve. To meet this goal, we have instituted the following general behavior guidance policies and procedures for the safety of the children and our staff members.

1. Ensure that each child is provided with a positive model of acceptable behavior;

2. Be tailored to the developmental level of the children that the center is licensed to serve;

3. Redirect children and groups away from problems towards constructive activity in order to reduce conflict;

4. Teach children how to use acceptable alternatives to problem behavior in order to reduce conflict;

5. Protect the safety of children and staff person; and

6. Provide immediate and directly related consequences for a child’s unacceptable behavior.

**Specific methods for behavior guidance are as follows:**

**Redirection:** Redirection is the number one tool of the staff at Little Lakers Child Care Center. Use redirection to navigate children, as individuals or groups, away from problems toward constructive activity in order to reduce conflict. *Example: The four children in your group have just come inside from playing in the cold, and are still crying. Redirect their attention by saying, “Should we sing a song? What song would you like to sing?” and beginning a song.*

**Focus on the positive:** Acceptable alternatives must be given to a child acting in an objectionable manner in order to reduce conflict. Try to avoid telling children what not to do, and instead focus on what they should be doing*. Example: “Feet on the floor” rather than “Don’t climb on the table.”*

**Language:** Use appropriate language at all times around the children. Try to be aware of how your words would sound to a parent or outside observer if they happened to walk in, and be sensitive to different levels of acceptability in different households. *Example: One mom asked us not to use the word “hate” (as in, “I hate it when my socks are wet!”) around her child, as she did not want it to be a common part of his vocabulary.*

**Keep up-to-date:** Please check with the teachers at the beginning of the week to learn the curriculum plans so you can highlight the theme for the week in your interactions with the children. Also ask about any new individual behavioral plans for children that you need to be aware of for behavior guidance and consistency. *Example: If a child has been using swear words, ask the teacher what the behavior plan is so you know how to appropriately respond when he/she is in your care.*

**Physical altercations:** If a child is hurting another child, separate them momentarily and tell the child what the inappropriate action was, why it was not ok, and what they can do instead. Help the child empathize with the hurt child. Never use words that shame or blame children for their actions. Let the children know you disapprove of the behavior, not of them. *Example: “Ouch! Hitting hurts! Use your words to tell your friend you want the toy back. Look — our friend is sad. See his tears? I’m going to give him a hug to help him feel better. Please use gentle hands with our friends.”*

**Developmental levels:** Be aware of the developmental-levels of the classroom you are working in, and what is appropriate to expect from a child in that particular age-range. *Example: Use shorter, easier - to - understand sentences with toddlers than you would with preschoolers.*

**Group activities:** Children are strongly encouraged, but not required, to participate in group activities. If a child is playing contentedly on his or her own and does not want to join in, simply keep inviting him or her to join at intervals throughout the activity. The two exceptions are mealtimes and outside times. Children need to come to the table for meals, although we do not force them to eat. It is up to the teacher’s discretion how long children need to sit at the table, and whether or not children have to go outside with everyone else.

**Teachable moments:** Use every moment as a teaching moment. This includes, but is not limited to, transitioning up and down the stairs, getting snow gear on to go outside, mealtimes, times when the children have to wait, bathroom time, going on walks, etc. *Example: “Can you guys count the stairs with me as we go down them? One, two, three, four, five! Nice job!”*

**Self-reliance:** Encourage children to be as self-reliant as possible. Assist them when they need help, but take the time to show them how to do things and let them try to do it on their own. *Example: Use the time getting ready to go outside as a teaching moment by encouraging children to put on their own boots/coats/hats and allowing them the time to try to do it for themselves.*

**Child interactions:** Play with the children! Remain on their level as much as possible, and interact with them. Be aware that commands from across the room are rarely listened-to, so be prepared to walk over to the child and help if you are asking him or her to do something. *Example: You just asked a child to pick up the cars he’s playing with across the room, and he hasn’t. Say, “Should we sing the clean - up song while we pick up the cars? Here, I’ll come over and help you find the right bucket for them.”*

**Have a plan:** Know your plan whenever you are in the classroom. Even if it is just “guided exploration” time, give the children a couple activities to choose from and join them in play.

If you are leading a group, find out from the teacher if there are any activities the children should be doing, any diapers that need to be done, etc. Always be aware of that week’s theme so you can highlight it in your play with the children in your group.

**Follow-through:** Whenever you give a child an expectation, such as “bring your cup to the bucket please,” be prepared to follow-through on it if the child refuses. Remain calm and kind, but for consistency’s sake stay firm even if they protest. *Example: “Books are for reading, not throwing, so please go pick your book up.” The child ignores Teacher and walks to the hallway door saying “hallway,” so Teacher goes to her and says, “As soon as you pick up your book we can go to the hallway. Would you like me to help you?” and takes child by the hand over to the book.*

**Give choices:** Give children choices whenever possible to give them chances to have control over their own persons, just make sure they are acceptable choices so a power-struggle does not ensue. *Example: It’s time to go potty! Would you like Teacher Anna or Teacher John to bring you?” Here, the child is going potty with either choice, but they get to pick which teacher brings them so they can maintain a sense of control.*

**Specific encouragements:** Encourage children as much as possible using specific language and examples so that they are aware of the behaviors/actions you want them to be doing. *Example: Say, “You did a great job using your crayon to draw lines on your paper!” rather than an abstract, “Nice job, guys!”*

**Singing/reading:** Never underestimate the power of songs and books. These are often great ways to calm down and get control of an individual child or a large group because it distracts them from their distress and redirects them to think about something else. In addition, these are the building blocks of language and literacy for children, and so should be used often throughout the day. *Example: Group of four kids are waiting for the cots to be ready so they can lay down for nap, and are growing tired and cranky. Announce, “It’s story time! Let’s clean up so we can read!” and assist the children in gathering to read a group story together.*

**Schedule changes:** Give children a heads-up about what’s next in the schedule, and give them a few-minutes warning before it is time to clean-up and head to the next activity so they can be prepared. *Example: “In two minutes it will be your turn to go potty.”*

**Control Your Reactions:** Respond to children calmly and matter-of-factly when they are behaving in an unacceptable manner and you need to redirect them. As hard as it can be, do not react with anger, a loud voice, or in a “large” way, as this may encourage children to repeat the behavior to get attention. *Example: In a calm, firm voice, “We roll balls inside. When we go outside you can throw it. Here, sit with me and we can roll it back and forth together.”*

**Emotions:** Allow children to feel their emotions. Give the child a word for their emotion, such as “sad” or “mad,” and assist them in working through it. *Example: child is sad that Mom just left. “You’re crying! Are you sad? Mom had to go to work, but she’ll be back after nap. She misses you too. Should we draw a card to give to Mom when she comes to pick you up?”* -- feel free to talk the children through your own emotions so they can see how it’s done, and use the time to help promote empathy*. Example: Ouch! My finger got pinched in the door! It makes me really sad when that happens. Does anyone want to give me a hug to help me feel better?*

**Modeling:** Model appropriate behavior for children at all times. This includes:
 --mealtimes: encourage children to try everything on their plate by acting excited yourself about what is offered. Use mealtimes as teachable moments. *Example: “Look! I found a round, green pea! Can anyone else find a round, green pea?”*
--bathroom time: ask every child if they would like to sit on the potty, but NEVER force them. You can read them a bathroom book (if they want) to reinforce concepts and “time” their sit on the potty. You can reward a child anytime she or he sits by giving a sticker and tallying it on a potty sheet. Encourage the children to pull up their own pants and underwear, wipe themselves (**check** to make sure they were thorough!), put on shoes, etc. *Always make a child’s body/bodily functions seem “normal” rather than “gross,” in or out of the bathroom — this includes the language you use for body parts, bowl movements, smells, etc.*
--relationships: model positive social interactions with children, parents, and staff. *Example: take a moment to happily greet every child and family when they arrive to make them feel welcome and ease the transition to school, as well as to discuss the child’s day with his/her caregiver at pick - up and ease the transition to home.*

**When guiding a child’s behavior do not:**
-ask children “why” they did it when they do something unacceptable*. Instead, simply tell them what they can do and redirect to another activity.*
-force children to say they are “sorry” after hurting another friend. *Instead, help them learn how they should behave by encouraging “gentle touches” and promoting empathy by discussing how their friend feels after being hurt.*
-ask children “would you want me to bite/hit/hurt you?” as a way to make them feel bad for hurting a friend. *Instead, tell them to be gentle and discuss how their friend feels after being hurt.*

**Behavior Guidance Policies – (subpart 2)**

**Persistent Unacceptable Behavior**

No one plan will work for every child in every situation. Staff needs to be sensitive to the circumstances of each case, such as the child’s temperament, the child’s family situation, if the child is sick, tired, hungry, frustrated, teething, etc, and brainstorm to come up with an appropriate, tailored response to each individual situation.

1. The first step in addressing persistent unacceptable behavior is increasing the amount of individual time, attention, and guidance devoted to that particular child.

2. Staff members should record observations on a form that is accessible for all staff and kept in a location that is confidential. The child’s behavior should be recorded as well as the staff member’s response.

3. A meeting will be held with center staff, director, parents, and other professionals when appropriate to develop a plan. Parents may be asked what types of behaviors they see at home, in the community, at other family member’s homes, etc., and what their methods are for dealing with the problem behavior. The observations and interventions will be shared. The group will brainstorm about possible solutions and create an Individual Childcare Plan. This plan will be shared with other staff members working with the child and kept in a confidential location in the classroom.

4. A referral may be made if necessary and with parental permission.

**Behavior Guidance Policies – (subpart 3)**

**Prohibited Actions**

**DO NOT:** 1. Subject a child to corporal punishment, including but not limited to:

Rough handling
Shaking
Shoving
Slapping
Hair pulling
Kicking

Ear pulling
Biting
Pinching
Hitting
Spanking

2. Subject a child to emotional stress, including but not limited to:

Name calling Making derogatory remarks about a child or child’s family

Ostracism Using language that threatens humiliates, or frightens child

Shaming

3. Separating child from the group as a means of behavior guidance, except within rule requirements.

4. Punish children for lapses in toileting.

5. Withhold food, light, warmth, clothing, or medical care as a punishment for unacceptable behavior.

6. Use physical restraint other than to physically hold a child where containment is necessary to protect a child or others from harm.

7. Use mechanical restraints, such as tying.

**Behavior Guidance Policies – (subpart 4)**

**Separation from the Group**

1. Separations from the group as a form of discipline are never allowed, except within rule requirements. For example, a child may be separated when the child’s behavior threatens the well-being of the child or other children in the program. Separation may occur if the child is behaving in a dangerous manner towards staff, other children, or him/herself and less intrusive methods of guiding the child’s behavior have been tried and were ineffective. Examples of less intrusive methods include redirection or calming down with a book.

2. A child who requires separation from the group must remain within an unenclosed part of the classroom where the child can be continuously seen and heard by a program staff person. If a child is separated it must be documented on the Separation Log and the child’s parents must be notified.

3. The child’s return to the group must be contingent on the child’s stopping or bringing under control the behavior that precipitated the separation.

4. The child must be returned to the group as soon as the behavior that precipitated the separation abates or stops.

5. Children between the ages of six weeks and 16 months must not to be separated from the group as a means of behavior guidance.

**SEPARATION REPORT**

1. If a child is separated from the group three or more times in one day, the child's parent shall be notified and the parent notification shall be indicated on the daily log.

2. If a child is separated five or more times in one week, eight times or more in two weeks, a parent/teacher conference must be held in accordance to procedures outlined in subpart 2 of the behavior guidance policies.

3. If a child is separated five or more times in one week, eight times or more in two weeks, the procedures in for Persistent Unacceptable Behavior must be followed.

**Persistent Unacceptable Behavior:** In the event that a child is having consistent disruptive behavior in their classroom Little Lakers Learning Center teachers and/or office staff will request a meeting with the child’s family to discuss the behavior, share tips, and brainstorm together for ideas to make the situation easier. If the child is continuing the behavior after an appropriate interval of time is given to try the new ideas Little Lakers Child Care Center staff will call another meeting to request permission for a social- emotional health consultant to observe the child in his or her classroom, and then have a meeting following the observation time to discuss the findings with the consultant, teachers, and family. If after another appropriate interval of time to implement the recommended changes the child is still having consistent disruptive behavior Little Lakers Child Care Center staff may make referrals to therapists, family support programs, or a different setting for the child. If families are willing to work with our staff and other professionals to make the situation better, we will make every effort to make it possible for the child to remain at the Little Lakers Learning Center or assist with placement in an appropriate alternative setting.

**Written Reports:** Daily written reports are mead to the parent of an infant or toddler about the child’s food intake, elimination, sleeping patterns, and general behavior. Verbal reports are provided to preschool parents at the end of each day.

**Pets:** We occasionally have pets visiting in the center. You will be notified before each visit.

**Waitlist Management Practice and Policies**: Daycare is in high demand across the county. We are here to help! We do our absolute best to accommodate as many families as we can to make the biggest impact possible. Our waitlist management system is an important tool in ensuring a fair and accurate process when determining who to give open spots to. Here’s how it works:

The Little Lakers Child Care Center operate under a priority system for new enrollees. Open spots are sent out via email several times a month to all current families and waitlist families. Once that email is sent, families have 48 hours to reply whether or not they want to contract for the spot. Families are offered contracted spots based on the following descending order of priority:

a. Current families and siblings of current families (based on enrollment date)

b. All Other Waitlist families (based on waitlist date) Placement on the waiting list does not guarantee that a space will be available when you want it, even if you are in a high-priority category. The earlier you apply, and the earlier you enroll (even if you do not need the spot yet) the greater your chances will be to contract for future openings or pick up extra days as they become available. Because of this priority system, an applicant’s place on the waiting list order is not fixed. Within each category, applicants will be offered space in the program on a first-come, first-served basis; nevertheless, regardless of the date of your application, your place on the waitlist may be moved down by an application subsequently submitted by an applicant from a higher-priority category. Once a person from category c starts contracting for an open spot, they become part of category b with an enrollment date as opposed to a waitlist date. On occasion, people from the waitlist may contract spots prior to actually needing them to guarantee a spot will be held and to move up on the priority list. For this reason, any time an email comes out with openings, please respond about your intentions so we know if your needs have changed. If you pass on an opening or do not respond and someone lower then you on the waitlist responds, the spot will go to them. In general, we will not contact you directly about your waitlist status. We therefore strongly encourage you to periodically check your email and respond each time about your needs.

**Nap and Rest Policy – For Parents**

1. Infants at Little Lakers Learning Center nap according to their own internal clocks and are never forced into sleeping. Toddlers and Preschoolers will have quiet rest time after lunch.

2. Confinement limitation: A child who has completed a nap or rested quietly for **30 minutes** is never required to remain on a cot or in a crib or bed.

3. Placement of equipment: Naps and rest are provided in a quiet area that is physically separated from children who are engaged in an activity that will disrupt a napping or resting child. Cribs, cots, and beds must be placed so there are clear aisles and unimpeded access for both adults and children on at least one side of each piece of napping and resting equipment. Cribs, cots, and beds must be placed directly on the floor and must not be stacked when in use.

4. Bedding: separate bedding must be provided for each child in care. Bedding must be washed weekly and when soiled or wet. Blankets must be washed or dry cleaned weekly and when soiled or wet. We will have a washer and dryer onsite for laundry.

5. Crib Standard: A crib must be provided for each infant for which the center is licensed to provide care. The equipment must be of safe and sturdy construction that conforms to federal crib standards under Code of Federal Regulations, title 16, part 1219 for full-sized baby cribs, or part 1220 for non-full-size baby cribs. See Minnesota Statutes, section 245A.146, for additional crib safety standards including routine crib inspection requirements.

6. Reduction of risk of sudden unexpected infant death: Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 245A.1435, the license holder must place each infant to sleep on the infant’s back, unless the license holder has documentation from the infant’s physician directing an alternative sleeping position for the infant. The physician directive must be on a form approved by the commissioner Physician’s Directive for Infant Sleep Position form and must remain on file at the licensed location. An infant who independently rolls onto its stomach after being placed to sleep on its back may be allowed to remain sleeping on its stomach if the infant is at least six months of age or the license holder has a signed statement from the parent indicating that the infant regularly rolls over at home. Parents of infants will be given a form titled “Infant Less than Six Months of Age Regularly Rolling Over” that must be on file to meet this requirement.

7. The license holder must place each infant in a crib on a firm mattress with a fitted sheet that is appropriate to the mattress size that fits tightly on the mattress, and overlaps the underside of the mattress so it cannot be dislodged by pulling on the corner of the sheet with reasonable effort. The license holder must not place anything in the crib with the infant except for the infant’s pacifier as defined in Code of Federal Regulations, title 15, part 1511.

 8. If an infant falls asleep before being placed in a crib, the license holder must move the infant to a crib as soon as practicable and must keep the infant within sight of the license holder until the infant is placed in a crib. When an infant falls asleep while being held, the license holder must consider the supervision needs of other children in care when determining how long to hold the infant before placing the infant in a crib to sleep. The sleeping infant must not be in a position where the airway may be blocked or with anything covering the infant’s face.

9. Placing a swaddled infant down to sleep in a licensed setting is not recommended for an infant of any age and is prohibited for any infant who has begun to roll over independently. However, with the written consent of a parent or guardian according to this paragraph, a license holder may place the infant who has not yet begun to roll over on its own down to sleep in a one-piece sleeper equipped with an attached system that fastens securely only across the upper torso, with no constriction of the hips or legs, to create a swaddle. Prior to any use of swaddling for sleep by a provider licensed under this chapter, the license holder must obtain informed written consent for the use of swaddling from the parent or guardian of the infant on a form approved by the commissioner Parent Consent for Swaddling and prepared in partnership with the Minnesota Sudden Infant Death Center.

**Program Grievance Procedure for Parents**

1. Persons served by Little Lakers Child Care Center, and their authorized representatives, have the right to bring a grievance to the highest level of authority at Little Lakers Learning Center.

2. If a parent/caregiver has a grievance, they should first attempt to address the issue informally with the child’s teacher.

3. If the teacher does not address the issue satisfactorily to the parent, or if the parent does not feel comfortable discussing it with the teacher, the parent should address the issue with the Child Care Director.

4. If the Child Care Director does not address the issue satisfactorily to the parent, or if the parent does not feel comfortable discussing it with them, the parent should address the issue with the Board Chair.

5. If a parent/caregiver ever feels abuse took place at the Little Lakers Child Care Center, they have the right to report it directly to the State Child Care Licensing Department 651-431-6500

**Maltreatment of Minors Mandated Reporting
Policy For DHS Licensed Programs**

**Who Should Report Child Abuse and Neglect**

* Any person may voluntarily report abuse or neglect.
* If you work with children in a licensed facility, you are legally required or mandated to report and cannot shift the responsibility of reporting to your supervisor or to anyone else at your licensed facility.  If you know or have reason to believe a child is being or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years you must immediately (within 24 hours) make a report to an outside agency.

**Where to Report**

* If you know or suspect that a child is in immediate danger, call 911.
* Reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring in a licensed child foster care or family child care facility should be made to county child protection services.
* Reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring in all other facilities licensed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services should be to the Department of Human Services, Licensing Division’s Maltreatment Intake line at (651) 431-6600.
* Reports regarding incidents of suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring within a family or in the community should be made to the local county social services agency at 507- 304 4222 or local law enforcement at 507- 726 2056.
* If your report does not involve possible abuse or neglect, but does involve possible violations of Minnesota Statutes or Rules that govern the facility, you should call the Department of Human Services, Licensing Division at (651) 431-6500.

**What to Report**

* Definitions of maltreatment are contained in the Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Act (Minnesota Statutes, section 626.556) and should be attached to this policy.
* A report to any of the above agencies should contain enough information to identify the child involved, any persons responsible for the abuse or neglect (if known), and the nature and extent of the maltreatment and/or possible licensing violations.  For reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect occurring within a licensed facility, the report should include any actions taken by the facility in response to the incident.
* An oral report of suspected abuse or neglect made to one of the above agencies by a mandated reporter must be followed by a written report to the same agency within 72 hours, exclusive of weekends and holidays.

**Failure to Report**
A mandated reporter who knows or has reason to believe a child is or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused and fails to report is guilty of a misdemeanor.  In addition, a mandated reporter who fails to report maltreatment that is found to be serious or recurring maltreatment may be disqualified from employment in positions allowing direct contact with persons receiving services from programs licensed by the Department of Human Services and by the Minnesota Department of Health, and unlicensed Personal Care Provider Organizations.

**Retaliation Prohibited**
An employer of any mandated reporter shall not retaliate against the mandated reporter for reports made in good faith or against a child with respect to whom the report is made.  The Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Act contains specific provisions regarding civil actions that can be initiated by mandated reporters who believe that retaliation has occurred.

**Internal Review**
When the facility has reason to know that an internal or external report of alleged or suspected maltreatment has been made, the facility must complete an internal review within 30 calendar days and take corrective action, if necessary, to protect the health and safety of children in care.  The internal review must include an evaluation of whether:

(i)  related policies and procedures were followed;

(ii)  the policies and procedures were adequate;

(iii)  there is a need for additional staff training;

(iv)  the reported event is similar to past events with the children or the services involved; and

(v)  there is a need for corrective action by the license holder to protect the health and safety of children in care.

**Primary and Secondary Person or Position to Ensure Internal Reviews are Completed**
The internal review will be completed by the program supervisor.  If this individual is involved in the alleged or suspected maltreatment, the program director will be responsible for completing the internal review.

**Documentation of the Internal Review**
The facility must document completion of the internal review and make internal reviews accessible to the commissioner immediately upon the commissioner’s request.

**Corrective Action Plan**
Based on the results of the internal review, the license holder must develop, document, and implement a corrective action plan designed to correct current lapses and prevent future lapses in performance by individuals or the license holder, if any.