

A CHILD'S PLACE LEARNING CENTER,  
INC.

# PARENT HANDBOOK

September 1, 2019



# A CHILD'S PLACE LEARNING CENTER, INC.

## PARENT HANDBOOK

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Revised September 1, 2019

## **Our Mission Statement**

A Child's Place Learning Center, Inc. strives to provide a loving, nurturing and creative environment for all children. We provide a curriculum that encompasses all aspects of a child's development. We encourage and support each child's potential to become life-long learners not only for the benefit of the child but also the family. Our program is unique in that we respect everyone's individual contribution to our community. We embrace Inclusion and Diversity and strive to ensure that children and families from all Special Populations feel welcome, safe and included within our community.

## **Our Ethical Statement**

Childhood is a unique and valuable part in a person's life cycle. It is A Child's Place Learning Center's responsibility to provide a safe and nurturing place for children. We are committed to support the development of children, to respect their individual differences, to help them learn to live and to work cooperatively. ACP will promote health, self-awareness, competence, self-worth, and resiliency to all children who are a part of our Center.

Families are a primary importance in a child's development. A child's family and the staff of A Child's Place have a common interest in the child's welfare, so we recognize the responsibility of bringing about collaboration between the home and our Center in ways that enhance each child's development. We will continually strive to maintain the highest level of trust that the families have given us in the care and moral upbringing of their children.

In a caring, cooperative work place, human dignity is respected, professional satisfaction is promoted, and positive relationships are modeled. Based upon our core values, our primary responsibility in this area is to establish and maintain settings and relationships that support productive work and meet the professional needs of our staff.

Early childhood programs operate within a context of an immediate community made up of families and other organizations concerned with children's welfare. Our responsibilities to the community are to provide programs that meet its needs and to cooperate with agencies and professions that share a responsibility for children. A Child's Place understands that society as a whole has a measure of responsibility for the welfare and protection of children, and because of our specialized expertise in child development we acknowledge our obligation to serve as a voice for children everywhere.



## **DAILY SCHEDULE**

- 6:30 a.m. The Center is open and the children may have breakfast (if provided by the parent). Children have an opportunity for free play in the classroom centers.
- 8:00 a.m. All children participate in classroom cleanup and transition for outside play (weather permitting). A variety of large and small motor activities are available.
- 9:00 a.m. Outside bell is rung and children help to put toys and activities away. All children are encouraged to participate in the large group exercise/stretch instruction.
- 9:05 a.m. Children go to his or her classroom and wash hands.
- Class Time consists of snack, circle time, center play, art projects, science experiments, cooking projects, potty training and music and movement. A weekly or monthly calendar is provided listing concepts, themes, and activities planned.
- 9:10 a.m. Circle Time
- 9:25 a.m. Children wash hands and have snack.
- 9:40 a.m. Center Play/Class Activities
- 11:00 a.m. Room 1 is dismissed for outdoor play
- 11:15 a.m. Rooms 2 and 3 are dismissed for outdoor play
- 11:30 a.m. Half-day children are picked up
- 11:45 a.m. Outside bell is rung and children help put toys and activities away. The children go to their classrooms, wash hands and have lunch. After lunch children cleanup, go potty and wash hands.
- 12:30 p.m. Children prepare for nap. They rest on cots while soft music plays. Books are available for those children who do not sleep.
- 2:30–2:45 Children help to put bedding away, go potty and wash hands for afternoon snack.
- 3:00 p.m. Snack and outdoor play (weather permitting).
- 3:15 p.m. Teachers are responsible for planning afternoon activities, which include large motor, sensory/science and art. Music plays in the yard for music and movement activities. Afternoon play is a wonderful opportunity for socialization, exploration and problem solving.
- 4:00 p.m. Potty trainers are taken into Room 1 to be changed (as needed).
- 5:15 – on Children help to put toys and activities away and either participate in large group activities such as races or games or go inside to read books, do art or have free play in the classroom centers.

**CHILDREN ARE PICKED UP PRIOR TO 6:00 p.m. THE CENTER IS CLOSED AT 6:00 p.m.**

## **PROGRAM GOALS FOR CHILDREN**

- Each child will develop a disposition for lifelong learning.
- Each child will be empowered to construct knowledge about his or her world.
- Each child will develop the ability to solve problems individually and as a member of a group.
- Each child will develop self-esteem by meeting appropriate challenges.
- Each child will develop positive, collaborative relationships with his or her families and with the adults and children at A Child's Place.
- Each child will attain the highest level of independence that is appropriate for his or her age and development.
- Each child will develop physically, cognitively, socially, emotionally and creatively.

## **PROGRAM GOALS FOR FAMILIES**

- Families will be active participants in his or her child's care and education.
- Families will develop collaborative relationships with his or her child and the staff at A Child's Place.
- Families will be able to leave his or her child at ACP with the knowledge that the child's physical and developmental needs are being met in a caring, nurturing environment.
- Families will have the opportunity to gain knowledge and support regarding child development and parenting.
- Families will have the opportunity to meet and develop relationships with other families.
- Families will have a variety of resources available to them.

### ***Anti-Bias Education for Young Children and Ourselves***

**(Identity)** Each child will demonstrate self-awareness, confidence, family pride, and positive social/group identities.

**(Diversity)** Each child will express comfort and joy with human diversity, accurate language for human differences, and deep, caring human connections.

**(Justice)** Each child will increasingly recognize unfairness (injustice), have language to describe unfairness, and understand that unfairness hurts.

**(Activism)** Each child will demonstrate a sense of empowerment and the skills to act, with others or alone, against prejudice and/or discriminatory actions."

Derman-Sparks & Edwards (2010)

# **PHILOSOPHY**

**At A CHILD'S PLACE LEARNING CENTER, INC.**, we believe each child is a unique individual and we strive to provide a loving, nurturing, and creative environment for all children. We are sensitive to their social, emotional, cognitive and physical needs and our focus is on developmentally appropriate practices that revolve around the process of learning. ACP aligns our curriculum to the California Preschool Learning Foundations which "outline key knowledge and skills that most children can achieve when provided with the kinds of interactions, instruction, and environments that research has shown to promote early learning and development" (California Department of Education, 2015).

We focus on an Inquiry Approach to Learning curriculum that highlights the children's interests and goals. We encourage not just learning, but the love and fun of learning to ensure each child's readiness for future academic and life success. Teaching social skills is an important component of our program. Combs and Slaby define social skills "as the ability to interact with others in a given social context in specific ways that are socially acceptable or valued and at the same time personally beneficial, mutually beneficial, or beneficial primarily to others" (1977, p. 162).

The children's progress is assessed twice each year. Information is gathered through observations, anecdotal notes and "are developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive, tied to children's daily activities, supported by professional development, inclusive of families, and connected to specific, beneficial purposes" (National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2009).

We provide an environment that is safe, clean, healthy, and child friendly. Classrooms are arranged to offer challenging play and learning choices at a variety of developmental levels to meet the needs of the whole child. The learning centers that we set up in each classroom, allow the children the opportunity to explore, to experience and most importantly...to succeed!

One strength of ACP is the quality and experience of our staff and their dedication to the children. We support our teachers with training, resources and the freedom to create a unique learning environment. We provide many opportunities for the teachers to share ideas and grow professionally. Our teachers create a caring yet structured atmosphere that fosters each child's creativity, confidence and positive self-image.

A Child's Place is a Full Inclusion Preschool. This means that we accept children and families from special populations (those with developmental disabilities, those that require incidental medical services, and those from diverse communities). Research states that "high quality early childhood programs form the necessary structural base for high quality inclusive programs; thus, all children benefit from them. The parents of children without disabilities whose children participate in inclusive programs often report beneficial changes in their children's confidence, self-esteem, and understanding of diversity" (Odom & Beckham, 2002, p. 156).

ACP staff will ensure that the interactions between all students are positive and supportive, therefore creating a true community of learners.

We believe an emphasis on self-help skills and reinforcing home/family standards and values will help your child meet any new challenges he or she will undertake in an elementary school setting and in life!!

We practice positive methods of discipline. We establish consistent and appropriate boundaries to help children function in their world. Our programs are designed to help children develop a sense of independence and responsibility. We strive to strengthen each child's own cultural identity, while instilling a respect for others.

Parents are the most significant adults in a child's life. Our goal is to create mutual respect between parents and teachers – a partnership for the benefit of the child. We encourage daily communication between parents and Center staff. Our doors are open to parents at all times!

ACP is proud to be included in the QualityStartOC program. QualityStart OC (2015) recognizes that we:

Play a vital role not only in the lives of the children in your care, but in the Orange County community as a whole. Parents trust you to care for, nurture, and teach their children in their first years. Research has proven that these early years are critical to a child's future success and well-being. QualityStart OC recognizes the important role you play in the community.

**A CHILD'S PLACE LEARNING CENTER, INC.**, values people: the children in our care, their parents and our staff. We continually work to earn the trust placed in us. We will provide the best early childhood education and care possible.





# **WELCOME**

Welcome to A Child's Place Learning Center!! We hope your entire family will enjoy the Center and the friends you will all make here. This handbook has been written to describe our program, goals, policies and the myriad of practical details that go into making each school day as happy and successful as possible. Please review it and keep it for reference, as it will answer many of your questions.

In order for your child to receive the utmost benefit from our program, your input and involvement are important. Parents are encouraged to be an active participant in our program by volunteering in our fundraising activities, joining the Parent Committee or helping to plan events for our children and families. Ask the Director or teachers on how you can support your child's classroom and the Center.

## **YOUR FIRST DAY**

As the parent of a young child, you may experience some difficulty leaving your child in someone else's care. To help you and your child make a smooth adjustment to the Center, a visit to meet the teachers is suggested before your child starts in our program. This first contact with his or her class teachers will increase your child's confidence and interest and help to make your child's first day go smoothly. Every child is different and will transition on his or her own time line. We respect and support every child's unique means of adjustment.

## **PRESCHOOL: WHAT TO EXPECT**

Based on our experience and the advice of experts, (all, some, none) of the children at our preschool will experience (none, some, all) of the following. All are normal behaviors.

- Your child may become overly tired and irritable on preschool days. This may cause him or her to be overactive and noisy. This new experience is very stimulating.
- Your normally outgoing child may be very quiet at school or vice versa. Accept this and let him or her enter at his or her own pace. Many young children prefer to watch first before entering play or a group.
- Your child may do things at home for him or herself that they will not do at school or vice versa, like dressing self or cleaning up.
- Your child may pick up behavior or language you dislike. This can happen anywhere, not just in school. Relax and do not make a huge issue over it.

- Your child will not necessarily ‘play together’ with other children. He or she may play alone or along side others, and may quickly go from one activity to another, spending little time with any.
- Your child may come home spotted with paint, dusted in glitter, or covered in wood chips but glowing with wonder over his or her experiences. Don’t scold, threaten or bribe.
- Don’t expect your child to be equally happy everyday. We all have ups and downs. Part of preschool is learning about life and accepting the challenges and successes they experience.
- Do not always expect your child to learn facts or complete songs, or bring home a finished product suitable for framing. He or she is learning skills, increasing coordination and developing happy, well-adjusted attitudes towards others and life.

## **AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM**

Our after-school program is for school-age children up to the age of six. Children are bussed from area schools. Our focus is on providing a safe environment where children can strengthen their social skills. We provide opportunities for physical activities as well as quiet play. School age children are welcome to attend a full day on days that the elementary school is closed PROVIDING there is space available. If there is no space to attend the morning program, you can still bring your child at their normal arrival time. There will be an extra charge for attending full days. Please refer to the Tuition Payment Schedule and Policies for more information. If you are interested in utilizing this service, please contact the Director for additional information.

## **AGES AND STAGES QUESTIONNAIRES**

Upon enrollment and at the beginning of each new school year, parents will be asked to complete an Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) and an Ages and Stages Questionnaire – Social Emotional (ASQ-SE) for their child’s current age. The ASQ and ASQ-SE are parent-reported screening tools that address five developmental areas: communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving and personal-social. The results of these questionnaires will assist our classroom teachers in planning the curriculum ensuring that it encompasses the needs and goals of all the children. The results will also provide additional feedback and information that would be incorporated into our assessment methods.

Having parents complete the developmental questionnaires enhances the accuracy of the screening by tapping into the parent’s in-depth knowledge of their child. It is important that A Child’s Place partners with our families in the assessment process so we may continue to provide the very best in early childhood education and care.

The ASQ and ASQ-SE are versatile, flexible and designed to be administered at home by a parent. Children are tested in an environment that is comfortable for him or her at a time that is convenient for the parents. The activities that are part of the ASQ allow the children to play, move about and practice daily life skills.

The questionnaire should take between 10 – 15 minutes to complete and then returned to your child's teacher. It will be scored and kept on file for curriculum planning and the preparation of our own Semi-Annual Student Assessments. All information and results will be kept confidential for ACP's use only.

## **ANTI-BIAS/MULTICULTURAL POLICY**

An important part of our program is to teach children to question discrimination, prejudice and stereotypes while increasing respect and understanding for others. We include a culturally diverse philosophy with a variety of classroom materials. Our staff is trained to be culturally sensitive when interacting with children and families within our program. Since we are a non-denominational center, children will be encouraged to discuss with their parents' questions that involve opinions on personal or religious beliefs.

## **BINDERS**

Upon enrollment, parents will provide a three-ring binder for their child. This will serve as a place to save many different items that have been collected during the time your child is with us. Some of which may include; photographs taken of your child, artwork done, notations made by the teachers, funny quotes and dictations. These are kept in the child's classroom. Please feel free to look through them or even take them home to share with others for a few days but remember to return them so we may continue adding memories.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

We love birthday celebrations! Your child will be in for a special day! He or she will wear a birthday crown and pass out treats (if supplied by the parents). Suggestions for treats include: cookies (not chocolate), fruit, or other healthy items. Snacks that are shared must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers. Please schedule this through the office. We must take into consideration other children who may have dietary restrictions. Remember our no chocolate, low sugar policy.

Often, parents wish to celebrate by scheduling an event such as a bounce house. Please check with the office prior to booking this. For safety reasons parents are asked not to include balloons, party favors or hard candy since these can present a choking hazard. Candles are strictly prohibited. We will strive to make your child's special day as memorable as possible.

## **BLACK MAIL BOX/COMMUNICATION**

Each child has a file folder located in the black mailbox. Items for the parents that will be put into this folder include: Scholastic book orders, receipts, special notices and any other important information you should have. The black box will always be located next to the Sign-In/Out clipboard. Please check it daily.

There is a Parent Board (updated each month) on the table in the front yard along with Parent Information Boards in each classroom with pertinent information regarding your child's program.

Email will be used to communicate classroom information such as the curriculum calendars or updates including the monthly newsletter. We will also use email to remind parents and families of upcoming events or other important information pertaining to the Center. Feel free to contact the Owner or Director with any questions or concerns at: [acpoffice@acplearningcenter.com](mailto:acpoffice@acplearningcenter.com) or [darcie@acplearningcenter.com](mailto:darcie@acplearningcenter.com)

Please 'like' us on our Facebook page (Facebook.com/acp92627) and check out our website at [acplearningcenter.com](http://acplearningcenter.com)

## **BOOK ORDERS**

Each month an order form will be placed in your black box mail file. Book orders are due by the date on the order form. Please make out a separate check payable to SCHOLASTIC BOOKS and submit it to us with your order. Families also have the option of ordering on-line; please refer to the information provided with the book order forms. We hope you will participate in this important program. There is a wonderful variety of high-quality books available. Reading to your child is a marvelously beneficial experience!

## **CAR SEAT LAW**

Effective January 1, 2017, California State law requires that children under two (2) years old must be rear-facing unless they weigh 40 pounds or more, or are 40 inches tall or more. Children under the age of eight (8) years must be correctly restrained in a child safety seat or booster seat in the back seat of the car. Children age eight (8) or older, or who are 4'9" or taller, may use the vehicle seat belt if it fits properly with the lap belt low on the hips, touching the upper thighs, and the shoulder belt crossing the center of the chest. If children are not tall enough for proper belt fit, they must ride in a booster or car seat. The staff of A Child's Place is mandated by law to contact Child Protective Services and the local Police authorities of any person not complying with this law. <https://www.chp.ca.gov/programs-services/programs/child-safety-seats>

## **CELL PHONES**

Cell phones are **NOT** allowed in the Center. Please refrain from talking on your cell phone while delivering or picking up your child. Your child deserves your full attention during these important transitions plus the teachers may need to communicate with you.

## **CENTER EVALUATION**

Parents will be given the opportunity on an annual basis to evaluate the Center; our program and our ability to meet your needs. These evaluations are very important to us. Please take the time to fill it in when it is received and remember that all comments are confidential.

## **CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT**

Section 11166 of the Penal Code requires any childcare custodian who has knowledge of or observes a child in his or her professional capacity or within the scope of his or her employment, whom he or she knows or reasonably suspects has been the victim of child abuse or neglect, to report the known or suspected instance of child abuse to the Director or Child Protective Services immediately.

Should you have difficulty in providing for your child's emotional, physical needs or safety, you are encouraged to ask for help. Contact the Director for local community resources that can offer assistance.

## **CHILDREN WITH VARYING NEEDS & ABILITIES**

A Child's Place Learning Center is committed to serving children with varying needs and abilities. ACP complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 along with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

A Child's Place Learning Center will provide reasonable accommodation to children with varying needs (physical, behavioral, cognitive, etc.) Close communication with the parents is essential to providing quality care.

If the child has already been evaluated by his or her school district, Regional Center or a private agency, we will work with those agencies to implement the child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or agency goals that have been developed. Parents are required to submit to ACP the child's most recent IEP, and keep ACP updated on progress and/or changes.

ACP recognizes that some children may have developmental or behavioral challenges. Our goal is to help every child be successful. If we feel a child should be evaluated so that he or she can receive early intervention services, we will make those recommendations to the parents.

A Child's Place will not discriminate against children with special needs. We will admit any child with varying needs and abilities on a trial basis of one (1) month, after which we will require a conference with the parent(s). At this conference, we will assess whether ACP is able to meet the child's needs within our current staffing patterns. We will give the parents the time and assistance needed to find more appropriate care if we are unable to meet those needs.

We understand that some children may require special one-on-one support during the day. If you want to have a therapist or Behavioral Interventionist (BI) work with your child, please discuss this possibility with the Inclusion Director or Owner. We make decisions on whether or not to allow these arrangements on a case-by-case basis because we can only allow a limited number of these personnel at our center at one time. We require background clearance, proof of immunizations and emergency information on all individuals working with the child. A Child's Place has an Inclusion Policy Handbook that lists specific requirements along with rules, regulations and expectations for outside agencies to ensure that all parties collaborate effectively in the best interest of the child. Please note that any outside personnel are not included in our Center ratio and are never left alone with the children in our care.

If any staff member participates in providing information or documentation for a child's upcoming Individualized Education Program (IEP), the parent's account may be charged a reasonable fee to compensate for the staff member's time in gathering and/or preparing the information. If ACP ever provides any type of information for an IEP, a representative from ACP will attend any and all IEP meetings. The parent's account may be charged a reason fee to compensate for the staff member's time along with the cost of any substitute that is required. The Director will advise of these charges at the time the IEP meeting is set.

## **CHRONIC DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR**

We will make every effort to work with the parents of children having difficulties in childcare. We are here to serve and protect all of our children. Children displaying chronic disruptive behavior which has been determined to be upsetting to the physical or emotional well-being of another child, children or staff may require the following actions:

- Initial Consultation

The Owner or Director may require the parent(s) of any child, attending A Child's Place, to meet for a conference. The problem will be defined on paper. Goals will be established and the parent(s) will be involved in creating approaches towards solving the problem.

- Second Consultation

If the initial plan for helping the child fails, the parents will again be required to meet with the Owner or Director. Documentation will be reviewed and another attempt will be made to identify the problem, outline new approaches to the problem, and discuss the consequences if progress is not apparent.

- Suspension/Expulsion

When the previous attempts have been followed and no progress has been made towards solving the problem, the child may be suspended from the Center indefinitely. The Owner or Director may immediately suspend a child anytime he or she exhibits a behavior, which is harmful to him or herself or others. A parent may be called from work at anytime when the child exhibits uncontrollable behavior that cannot be modified by ACP staff. That parent may be asked to take the child home immediately. Suspensions from the program may vary from a few hours to an indefinite period.

## **CLOTHING AND SUPPLIES**

Parents of Potty Trainers in Room One (2 – 3 years) must provide an adequate supply of commercially available disposable diapers and/or Velcro pull-ups and diaper wipes for any child not yet fully toilet trained. If the child has a medical reason that prevents the use of disposable diapers or pull-ups, documentation of the medical reason by the child's health provider must be given. Parents should also provide two (2) complete changes of clothing\* and appropriate outdoor wear.

Parents of children in Room Two (3 – 4 years) and children in Room Three (4 – 5 years) should provide a change of clothing\* and appropriate outdoor clothing.

\* A complete change of clothing includes a shirt, pants, underwear, socks and a light jacket. Label your child's clothing to avoid confusion and dress the children in play clothes suitable for the weather. Recognize that when children play, they get messy. Provide us with one set of extra clothes in the event a change is required.

Periodically go through your child's cubby and replace clothing with appropriate sizes.

We enjoy helping your child become independent. One training opportunity is potty time. If your child comes dressed in an outfit that zippers or buttons down the back, has a belt or is a one-piece romper, it can be frustrating. Please dress him or her in easy-on, easy-off clothing. We enjoy seeing those big smiles and confident looks that say "I did it by myself!"

If your child comes home in clothing borrowed from ACP, please wash and return it the next day.

# **CONFIDENTIALITY**

California Community Care Licensing (CCL) Regulations for Child Care Centers require that licensed providers ensure the confidentiality of all records pertaining to enrolled children (CCL, 2002).

Information relating to any enrolled child at ACP is confidential and will not be released unless a parent or legal guardian provides written authorization. This includes, all observations, assessments, screenings, illness and injuries along with all registration paperwork. An exception will be made in the event of suspected child abuse or neglect. Any such suspicion will be reported to the Director for immediate investigation and action with the proper authorities. Confidential records are maintained in a locked, filing system accessible to the Director, staff and the Department of Social Services – Community Care Licensing.

To ensure the health and safety along with implementation of specific goals for children with special needs, teachers, program staff and outside support teams may discuss and share information regarding the child providing the parent has completed the 'Authorization for the Release of Information' Form which gives permission for specific ACP staff to speak with designated outside personnel.

# **COURT ORDERS AND CUSTODY**

A Child's Place recognizes that in most situations both parents have a legal right to be a part of his or her child's life. In the event of a parent's divorce or separation, ACP will not prohibit parents from accessing records, participating in conferences or attending activities unless a court order states otherwise. It is our policy to remain neutral regarding custody issues or other legal matters. Please do not ask teachers or staff for verbal or written statements regarding these issues.

If pursuant to a court order one parent has been given the legal right to child custody or visitation, and such custody or visitation determines which parent may pick up her/his child who participates in our program, OR if one parent has been restrained by a court order from visitation or has been ordered to stay away from said child, A Child's Place requires the following:

1. A letter from the custodial parent stating that the non-custodial parent is not allowed to pick up the child.
2. A Certified Copy, with an original signature and certified seal of the current court order, and which states the rights or restraints ordered, must be filed with the Director.
3. If a later court order is issued changing the terms of the original court order, it will not be honored until it is filed as the more recent certified order, with verification that a fee was paid for filing at the County Courthouse.
4. ACP will not accept information regarding the validity of orders over the telephone. Only written instruction will be accepted regarding a court order.



5. Visitation with the non-custodial parent will not be permitted to take place at the Center.

In the case of divorce or child support matters, sign in and out sheets will only be released by a court subpoena. A reasonable length of time (minimum ten (10) working days) to process the request must be given, as each sign in and out sheet must be blacked out, for confidentiality, except for the requested child's information.

ACP will charge the account of the parent requesting the records the following fees: \$ 0.25 a page for documents photocopied (if 8.5 x 14 or smaller) and \$ 7.50 per quarter hour of time, per person, for pulling, preparing and copying the records plus the postage cost, if these are mailed.

If any of the staff are subpoenaed to testify in a court matter, ACP will charge the account of the parent requesting the subpoena a reasonable fee to compensate for the staff member's time along with the cost of any substitute teacher that is required. The Director will advise of these charges at the time the subpoena is received.

## **CRAFTS AND ART WORK**

Almost everything your child does during the day represents a learning experience. The act of making a craft is such a wonderful way for your child to express him or herself. We often do sensory projects that are messy, so please dress your child appropriately. Sometimes he or she will bring home artwork or crafts. At other times, the 'finished product' will be saved as part of a larger project, posted on the classroom wall or kept for his or her binder. We encourage you to engage your child in discussion about the 'work' he or she did. It's a fun way to bond and it's also fun to remake the projects at home.

## **CUBBIES**

An individual cubby is assigned to each child. It is important to keep a complete change of clothing with each piece labeled with the child's name. This is a safe place for his or her 'nap friend' or 'blanky'

Parents are strongly discouraged from bringing in expensive or treasured toys from home. To avoid hurt feelings, breakage or loss of children's treasures, we need your cooperation. Children may bring in small stuffed animals or other comfort objects for use at naptime. The older children may also bring in a 'special' toy from home on Share Day. These objects should be taken to the office in the morning and taken home that same day. Please do not bring in candy, gum, money, balloons, or any small item that can present a choking hazard. At no time are children permitted to bring in toys associated with violence including toy guns, knives, swords, etc.

# **CURRICULUM**

We recognize each child's individual social, emotional, cognitive and physical needs and our focus is on developmentally appropriate practices that revolve around the process of learning. ACP aligns our curriculum to the California Preschool Learning Foundations which "outline key knowledge and skills that most children can achieve when provided with the kinds of interactions, instruction, and environments that research has shown to promote early learning and development" (California Department of Education, 2015).

We focus on an Inquiry Approach to Learning curriculum that highlights the children's interests and goals. We encourage not just learning, but the love and fun of learning to ensure each child's readiness for future academic and life success. Teaching social skills is an important component of our program. Combs and Slaby define social skills "as the ability to interact with others in a given social context in specific ways that are socially acceptable or valued and at the same time personally beneficial, mutually beneficial, or beneficial primarily to others" (1977, p. 162).

ACP's curriculum focuses on all the developmental areas including: social and emotional, conceptual, language and pre-reading skills, math concepts, large motor development, visual and small motor development and science concepts.

When planning the curriculum, the teachers take into consideration each child's individual development. The experiences at ACP are designed for individual children, small groups and combined groups based on the objectives and goals planned for each child. The children learn, thrive and acquire skills and concepts through developmentally appropriate practices.

The teachers create an environment that fosters independence and exploration through play. The curriculum consists of a balance between child initiated and teacher-facilitated activities; along with embracing an emergent approach to teaching and learning. Children have the opportunity to learn from the teacher, the classroom environment, and each other.

Each classroom has its own curriculum goals that will be shared with each family upon enrollment and when the child moves into the next class. These goals are incorporated into the curriculum and the Semi-Annual Child Assessments done for each student.

# **DISCHARGE POLICY**

A Child's Place Learning Center reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of a child for any of the following reasons:

- Written withdrawal from ACP by the parent or guardian.
- Non-payment or excessive late payments of tuition and/or fees.

- If the Owner and/or Director feel that the child's behavior or actions have an adverse or dangerous affect on other children or staff members.
- Failure to complete required paperwork in a timely manner.
- Repeated late pick-up.
- Not observing the rules of the Center as outlined in the Admissions Agreement, Tuition Payment Schedule and Policies and/or this Parent Handbook.
- If, in the opinion of the Owner and/or Director, ACP is unable to reasonably meet the developmental or special needs of a child.
- If, in the opinion of the Owner and/or Director, ACP is unable to meet the needs of the parent or guardian and/or the family.
- Physical and/or verbal abuse of staff or children by parent or child.
- ACP terminates the program the child is in.

## **DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE**

At A Child's Place Learning Center, the term guidance is used for several reasons. It is a positive term and implies working WITH the child to develop internal control of his or her behavior. Our goal is to encourage the children to become creative, independent, and responsible and socially mature human beings. This involves learning to make responsible choices and accepting the consequences of such choices. The teachers assist the development of self-control and social skills by supporting the children in the following ways:

1. Environment – A place designed for children. The furniture is child-sized, with lots of hands-on experiences.
2. Logical Rules – Such as 'keeping our hands to ourselves' and 'taking care of the learning environment'. The children help create these rules for his or her classroom and the reasons why such rules are needed are discussed.
3. Curriculum – Is developmentally appropriate based on the children's interests and level of development.
4. Positive Behavior – We reinforce the behaviors we encourage. "Catch the child making good choices".
5. Redirection – Often engaging a child in another activity can eliminate a potential difficulty. We might ask a child to help us or have him or her go to a different area to play.
6. Positive Reminder – Telling the child what we want him or her to do rather than using 'no' or 'don't'. Such phrases as "Walking feet in the classroom" instead of "No running" focuses on the positive behavior we are seeking.

7. Natural Consequences – Using and allowing the reasonable natural consequence (such as: losing a turn with a toy that was thrown) for behaviors when possible.
8. Involving the Child – Encouraging the child to participate in the conflict resolution or behavior management process. This allows for the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
9. Thinking Time – Occasionally a child needs to be removed from the situation for a brief time allowing them ‘relax their body ‘or ‘take a break’, and consider an alternate behavior. Once he or she is ready – we encourage them to ‘try again’.

Any on-going situations will be discussed with the parents to ensure a cooperative approach. Please feel free to discuss any questions or concerns you may have.

**NOTE:** Corporal punishment will not be tolerated. This is defined as the use of negative physical touching, (spanking, slapping, pinching, etc.). No unusual punishment will be allowed, such as humiliation, ridicule, threat or coercion.

## **DROP OFF**

- Please encourage your child to walk from the car into the building themselves while holding hands in the parking lot.
- Allow him or her to carry in some of their own belongings. This helps to foster a sense of independence (even with our youngest friends)
- **Do Not** leave your car running.
- **Do Not** leave children in a car alone (it is against California Law to leave a child under the age of six (6) years old unattended)
- Park in designated areas only and within the individual parking space lines.
- Please do not ‘visit’ with others in the parking lot and chat. We have limited spots and must keep the traffic flowing at our busy times each day.

Our motto at drop off is ‘the shorter the goodbye – the shorter the cry’. We know from experience that after your child has been here a few times, the ‘fuss’ will be less, if at all.

Please sign in (full legal and legible signature – no initials) to verify your child’s arrival time and to ensure that your child will be accounted for. Sign in/out sheets are used for roll call, as well as accountability in case of an emergency.

Have your child wash his or her hands (stay with him or her – children are not to be left alone anywhere on the Center property) and take him or her into the class or the back-play yard. Please make sure a teacher is aware of your child's arrival.

We request that your child arrive at least 15 minutes before the morning bell is rung (check daily schedule included in registration packet and Parent Handbook for this time) in order for your child to fully benefit from the program.

## **EMERGENCY PLANS**

It is conceivable that your child may be with us during a disaster such as an earthquake. We have worked closely with the Red Cross and other agencies to create the best disaster plans for our facility. Since children may be in our care for up to five (5) days after a disaster, we have emergency supplies, first aid materials, tools, food and water. Parents are to purchase an Emergency Survival Kit for each child upon registration with the Center. Please keep a minimum of one (1) full change of clothes in your child's cubby.

Staff is mandated to stay with and meet the physical and emotional needs of the children. Our emergency care and disaster action plan is posted in each classroom.

In case of an evacuation, the location will be posted on the gate and/or doors and parents/guardians will be notified by text, email or phone.

We urge each family to plan what you will do if a disaster strikes during the day when you are separated at work, school, etc. You will find helpful information on the Internet.

### **DO NOT CALL THE CENTER**

Should the telephones be working, we will need to keep them clear for  
Emergency calls only.

A Child's Place reserves the right to close with or without notice in extreme weather or any other unexpected situation when necessary. Every attempt will be made to notify parents when an unexpected closure takes place. Parents and/or an emergency contact will be expected to make every effort to pick up their child as soon as possible.

## **ENROLLMENT CRITERIA**

A CHILD'S PLACE LEARNING CENTER, INC., welcomes all children between the ages of two (2) to six (6) years of age who meet the following enrollment criteria:

No child may be accepted unless the Center has been furnished with the following forms required per our policy and the Department of Social Services – Community Care Licensing:

Admissions Agreement  
Consent for Medical  
Emergency Forms  
Enrollment Application  
Parent Directory  
Preadmission Health History  
Photo Consent

Parent's Rights  
Personal Rights  
Physician's Report  
Record of Immunizations  
Sun Screen Authorization  
Tuition Schedule and Agreement  
Parent Questionnaire

We will not violate our license by continuing service for children without these completed forms.

By signing the enrollment forms, the enrolling parent or legal guardian is certifying that he or she has legal physical custody and authority for the child.

It is very important that you notify the Center if there is a change in any of the information requested on the enrollment application and/or emergency forms. If we are not kept current, we may not be able to reach you in the event of an illness or emergency. Please keep the Center informed as to your current daytime telephone number.

A Child's Place Learning Center does not discriminate on the basis of gender, gender expression, race, color, religion, ethnicity, national origin or any special needs. If, however, the nature of a child's special need requires unique therapy and/or staffing, the child will not be enrolled until special arrangements can be made.

Children are admitted on a space available basis. A waiting list is maintained in the Office and will be used when an opening presents itself.

## **FUND RAISERS**

From time to time, we will have a fundraiser. This helps to enhance the overall program through the purchase of equipment, materials, books for our library, and staff trainings. We encourage your participation but we recognize your other obligations.

## **GRIEVANCES**

In the case of grievances, effective communication with the proper parties involved can resolve many issues that arise. We ask that parents follow the organizational structure of the Center by first discussing matters with your child's teacher, then the Director and then, if necessary, the Owner of the Center.

It is our hope that this will help to expedite and clarify situations so that they do not linger and create further misunderstandings. It is our objective to make sure your child's experience at A Child's Place is the best possible. We wish for all of our families to be pleased with their decision on choosing ACP. The Center expects all parties involved to conduct themselves according to the highest ethical standards.

# **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Since the health of your child and all other children in the Center is one of our main concerns, the following guidelines have been created. We appreciate your cooperation in complying with them. Children who are ill will NOT be accepted at the Center. If a child should become ill during the day he or she will need to go home. In all cases, the Center reserves the right to send home a child with suspicious or prolonged symptoms. It will be the responsibility of the Owner, Director or Designated Responsible staff member to make that determination based on her best judgment.

When a child is absent due to illness, the parent is asked to notify the Center as early as possible in the day. Please notify the Office immediately if your child has a communicable disease.

Please contact the Office if your child has a broken bone, sprain or other injury that may limit his or her participation at ACP. A physician's note will be required stating the child may attend along with any restrictions or activities the child should avoid.

If your child has had any surgery, including the insertion of ear tubes, a physician's release will be required listing any restrictions or activities the child should avoid.

There will be no deduction/reductions of tuition or trading of days due to a child becoming ill and missing any part of his or her regularly scheduled attendance.

California State law prohibits smoking at all early childcare centers, playgrounds and parking lots.

Your child must remain where the teachers are when you come to pick up. Children are not allowed to run through the class to the front yard or gate when he or she sees you. You must come to where he or she is and sign the child out at that time. Our parking lot can be a busy place at certain times of the day. Please help us in providing a safe environment. We offer the following tips and ask for your cooperation:

- Drive slowly in the parking lot
- Park in designated parking stalls
- Upon arrival and pick up, please turn off your car.
- Do not leave children alone in parked cars
- Hold your child's hand in the parking lot
- Make sure your child does not run ahead of or behind you
- Close the gate ensuring it is latched securely
- Yelling, hitting or using offensive language is not permitted by any parents, staff or children

## **HOLIDAYS**

A Child's Place Learning Center takes a total of eleven (11) paid holidays during the school year (September through August). We will observe the following holidays:

Labor Day	President's Day
Thanksgiving (two days)	Memorial Day
Christmas (two days)	Independence Day
New Year's Day	*To Be Announced

- We reserve the right to announce thirty - (30) days in advance, two (2) additional days during the year.

There will be no deduction or reduction of tuition or trading of days due to A Child's Place being closed because of observed holidays.

ACP serves children and families from a variety of cultural backgrounds and traditions. Holidays can vary for different ethnic and cultural groups and are celebrated in accordance with the unique cultural traditions. ACP respects the diversity that is represented among all of our children and families. Our teachers pay close attention to the things that interest the children and are important in his or her young life. For this reason – we cannot ignore holidays. The children will be encouraged to talk about the holidays that his or her family celebrates.

## **HOURS OF OPERATION**

A Child's Place Learning Center is open year-round, Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. A two-week notice will be given in the event ACP closes early for a special occasion, holiday or staff in-service.

Children who attend for the morning half-day program may be here from 8:00 until 11:30 a.m. Late pick up fees will be charged for any child picked up after 11:30 a.m.

Children who attend full days should not be at the Center for more that 10 hours per day. Additional fees may be charged for any child that attends more than 10 hours per day.

A Child's Place Learning Center closes at 6:00 p.m. (this is determined by ACP clocks). Children must be picked up, signed out, all belongings gathered and have left the property and parking lot before 6:00 p.m. so the teachers may finish their workday. If any of these steps take longer than our 6:00 p.m. closing time – a late pickup charge will be added to your account.



# **ILLNESS/SICKNESS POLICY**

Children first enrolled in an early education setting experience high rates of illness. Research shows that those children will acquire a strengthened immune system and experience less illness throughout the elementary school years as opposed to children who did not attend preschool.

A Child's Place promotes a healthy environment and works to prevent the spread of illness and disease in several ways:

- Staff and children wash hands throughout the day, especially before handling food, eating and after using the bathroom
- Staff is trained in Preventative Health Practices and implement Universal Precautions as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
- Classrooms, toys and equipment are regularly cleaned and disinfected.
- Children with communicable diseases or illness are excluded from the Center.

In the event that any one of the following occurs, we ask that you keep your child at home:

- A rash of any kind until diagnosed, treated or declared harmless by physician
- Early colds (coughing and sneezing), very bad colds with purulent discharge
- Difficulty breathing, respiratory illnesses
- Lethargy, persistent crying and/or irritability
- Diarrhea or vomiting within 24 hours before attending the Center
- Red, runny or matting eyes – symptoms of pink eye (conjunctivitis) – please call your doctor
- Bronchitis – (if your child is coughing frequently)
- Head Lice – hair must be free of live lice and most dead nits (eggs). The child will be checked by trained staff upon his or her return
- A temperature of 100 F (or more) or any fever accompanied by:
  - A deep cough
  - Earache or draining ear
  - Spasms of cough
  - Sore throat

We are a Center for “Healthy” children. A child who is not well does not benefit from our program and can adversely affect the health of the other children. If you have any doubts about your child's health, please keep your child home and contact the child's health care provider.

In the event your child becomes sick while at the Center, you will be promptly notified. We expect that you will come to the Center as quickly as possible to take your child home. There will be no deduction/reductions of tuition or trading of days due to a child becoming ill and missing any part of his or her regularly scheduled attendance.

<b>ILLNESS</b>	<b>MAY RETURN BACK TO SCHOOL SETTING</b>
Chicken Pox (Varicella)	24 hours after the blisters have crusted over
Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye) Bacterial or Viral	24 hours after treatment has begun
Diarrhea (Gastroenteritis)	24 hours after last loose stool or after one normal bowel movement
Fever	24 hours fever-free without the use of fever reducing medicines
Head Lice (Pediculosis)	24 hours after treatment has begun and nits are gone and the home environment has been treated
Hepatitis A	At least seven (7) days after onset of jaundice
Impetigo	24 hours after treatment has begun
Measles (Rubeola)	At least four (4) days after therapy has started
Meningitis (Bacterial)	24 hours after treatment has begun
Mumps	14 days after swelling begins
Pinworms	After treatment is complete and the home environment has been treated
Pneumonia	Upon receipt of written note from physician
Ringworm (Tinea)	24 hours after treatment has begun
Salmonellosis	24 hours after last loose stool or after one normal bowel movement
Scabies	24 hours after treatment has begun
Strep Throat	48 hours after treatment has begun
Vomiting	24 hours after last episode
Whooping Cough (Pertussis)	At least seven (7) days after therapy has started

If your child has a contagious illness, you are required to contact the Center immediately so we may notify other parents. Your child's name will remain confidential.

A Child's Place staff may request a written release from your child's doctor if a health concern remains unresolved.

# **IMMUNIZATIONS**

California immunization requirements for children between the age of two years through five years attending A Child's Place are as follows:

- Three (3) Polio
- Four (4) DTaP (Diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis combined vaccine)
- Three (3) Hep B (Hepatitis B vaccine)
- One (1) MMR \* (Measles, mumps and rubella combined vaccine)
- One (1) Hib \* (*Haemophilus influenzae* type b vaccine; required only for children up to 4 years 6 months)
- One (1) Varicella \*\* (Chickenpox vaccine)

\* On or after first birthday

\*\* If a child had the chickenpox disease and this is indicated on the Physician's Report and/or Immunization Record by the child's doctor, they meet the requirement.

## Exemption to Immunization Requirements Permitted by California Law:

- Medical Exemption  
A licensed physician (MD or DO) who feels a vaccine is not indicated for a student because of medical reasons should submit to the school (via the patient's family as needed) a written statement documenting the medical reasons for the exemption. A form that can assist in this process is available to physicians. The school will place a completed statement in the student's file

# **INCIDENTAL MEDICAL SERVICES**

A Child's Place Learning Center, Inc. (Licensee), will provide incidental medical services to children enrolled at the Center providing the Center can meet the child's needs at the time of admission and throughout the child's attendance at A Child's Place.

Types of incidental medical services that may be provided include: Blood-Glucose Monitoring for Diabetic Children; Administering Insulin by Injection or Pump; Administering Anti-Seizure Medication; Administering Inhaled Medication; EpiPen JR. and EpiPen; Glucagon Administration; Gastrostomy Tube Care; Emptying an Ileostomy Bag; and any other incidental medical services contingent upon approval from the Department of Social Services – Community Care Licensing.

Incidental medical services may be provided only when the child's parent or authorized representative (any person or entity authorized by law to act on behalf of any child such as, but not limited to, a minor's parent, a legal guardian, a conservator or a public placement agency), has provided written authorization and obtained written instructions from the child's physician.

The licensee obtains express written consent from the child's parent/authorized representative to permit the licensee or designated responsible staff member to carry out the physician's medical orders for a specified child.

The licensee has obtained from the child's parent/authorized representative a copy of a written medical order prescribed by the child's physician. The medical orders will include:

- A description of the incidental medical service needed, including identification of any equipment and supplies required.
- A statement by the child's licensed physician that the medical orders can be safely performed by a layperson.
- Description from the child's licensed physician of the training required of the facility licensee or designated responsible staff to carry out the physician's medical orders for a specified child and whether the training can only be provided by a licensed medical professional.
- If the medical orders include the administration of medication by the licensee or designated responsible staff, the physician's orders shall include the name of the medication; the proper dosage; the method of administration; the time schedules by which the medication is to be administered; and a description of any potential side effects and the expected protocol, which may include how long the child may need to be under direct observation following administration of the medication, whether the child should rest and when the child may return to normal activities.

The licensee will be responsible to ensure the following:

- Provide a locked storage cupboard and/or refrigerator, located in the Office, to store all medication, equipment and supplies.
- The facility has obtained from the parent/authorized representative of the child the medication, equipment, and supplies necessary to carry out the medical orders of the child's physician.
- The licensee or a designated responsible staff member who carry out the medical orders prescribed by the child's licensed physician will not in any way assume to practice as a professional, registered, graduate or trained nurse.

- The licensee or a designated responsible staff member who has been trained to carry out the physician's medical orders will be onsite or present at all times when the child is in care.
- The licensee or a designated responsible staff member is to gather all medication, equipment, and supplies to transport with the children in case relocation of the children is necessary due to a disaster.
- In the case of a field trip, a designated responsible staff member and/or the child's parent/authorized representative will accompany the child. The child's medication, equipment and supplies will be brought along in the classroom's emergency backpack.
- The licensee or designated responsible staff members who are to carry out the physician's medical orders have completed the training indicated by the child's physician. This training may be provided by the child's parent/authorized representative or medical personnel depending on the physician's orders.
- The licensee or designated responsible staff members who are to carry out the physician's medical orders shall comply with proper safety precautions, such as, wearing gloves during any procedure that involves potential exposure to blood or body fluids, performing hand hygiene immediately after removal and disposal of gloves, and disposal of used instruments in approved containers.

#### Facility Record Keeping and Notification

- Maintain a written record of when the medical orders have been performed, including if medications have been administered and inform the parent/authorized representative of each occurrence when the medical orders have been carried out. In the case of an emergency, the child's parent/authorized representative will be contacted immediately by telephone to the number that is indicated on the medical orders/emergency contact card.
- Maintain, in the child's file, a copy of the parent/authorized representative written authorization.
- Maintain, in the child's file, a copy of the written medical orders of the physician.
- Maintain, in personnel files, a copy of the written verification that the licensee and designated responsible staff have completed the training required by the physician's medical orders.
- The Department of Social Services – Community Care Licensing is to be notified if any serious incidents occur per the timeframe dictated by DSS.

# **LICENSES**

A Child's Place Learning Center, Inc. is licensed by the State of California, Department of Social Services - Community Care Licensing – Child Care Department. We serve children from the age of two (2) years to six (6) years of age. Our License Number is 304370800.

## **MEALS AND SNACKS**

Children who arrive early in the morning are welcome to bring in breakfast. He or she must be finished eating and cleaned up by 8:00 a.m. If the child arrives with breakfast after 7:45 a.m. we will offer it at snack time.

A Child's Place Learning Center provides a nutritious snack from at least two (2) of the basic food groups each morning and afternoon. A variety of foods are offered to the children in an effort to increase his or her awareness of different, healthy 'grow' foods and to represent different ethnic and cultural groups. We provide 100% juice but also encourage the children to drink plenty of water throughout the day. A snack menu is posted each month for your review.

This is the age to teach children about nutrition and healthy foods. Our Center policy is no candy, gum, soda or chocolate and very low sugar. If a child has an item that is inappropriate, it will be sent home as an 'at home treat' with a note explaining why.

We strongly encourage families to send lunches that contain the following:

- A protein food such as: meat, fish, egg, legumes, nut spread or cheese
- Bread or bread alternative, whole grain or enriched
- A dairy product (or comparable if lactose intolerant)
- Fresh fruits and/or vegetables ('Fresh IS Best')

Some lunch suggestions are:

Hard-boiled eggs	Cottage cheese	Brown/white rice
Pasta	Macaroni and cheese	Pancakes
Bagel and cream cheese	Hummus and pita	Soup
Grilled cheese sandwich	Tuna salad	Egg salad
Cheese and crackers	Beans and rice	Yogurt
English muffin pizza	Quesadillas	Leftovers

We are happy to warm up any items that you would like to send for lunch. Due to time limitations, please do not send in any frozen or 'instant cook' meals. Make sure any items to warm up are in containers that are microwave safe. A small icepack is required in your child's lunch box to ensure food is kept chilled until lunchtime. Please make sure your child's name is labeled on the lunch box and all containers you wish to keep.

It is the policy of A Child's Place to require children under the age of four to have hot dogs, grapes, cherry tomatoes or carrots cut into the appropriate size (hotdogs and carrots cut into strips and grapes and tomatoes cut into halves). ACP will not serve any type of nut or popcorn to children under the age of four. All of these foods can present choking concerns for young children. If these foods are included in the child's lunch, it will be sent home with a note explaining why.

We encourage the children to eat his or her main course (sandwich, warm-up, etc.) first. Then he or she may have the fruit, yogurt, cookies and finally, chips. It is our policy to send the uneaten portion of the lunch home. This lets you know what and how much your child has eaten.

At both snack time and lunch, the children sit at a table with his or her teachers. Sitting together allows the teachers to promote conversation and model manners. The children are encouraged to serve themselves (when possible) and help clean up after.

A Child's Place protects children with food allergies from contact with the problem food. It is critical for us to know if your child has any food allergies or dietary restrictions.

If your child has a food allergy or is on a special diet, parents are required to provide the appropriate snacks each day. Allergy/Food Restriction lists are posted in each classroom and where snacks are prepared as a visual reminder for all who interact with your child.

## **MEDICATION POLICIES**

Medications (both prescription and non-prescription) may be given only upon written instructions and authorization from the parent and directions from the child's physician. Prescription medications must be in the original container and labeled with the child's complete name, medication name, recommended dosage, time intervals for administration, method of administration, expiration date and the prescriber's name, license number and phone number.

Non-prescription medications (over-the-counter) must be in the original container and labeled with the child's name and accompanied by the written instructions for administration from the child's physician. Such medications will be stored according to the instructions on the label, kept beyond the reach of children and returned to the parent when no longer needed.

If a child develops symptoms which indicate a need for over-the-counter medication (i.e. Tylenol or Motrin) while in care at the Center, such medication may be given under oral instructions from the parent for that day only. This would only be given on an

emergency basis, while waiting for the parent to pick up the child. The Director or Designated Responsible staff will document that the parent gave verbal approval. Topical ointments may be applied as needed for protection against diaper rash under written parental instructions.

\* Request to Give Medication forms are available from the office. Please turn completed form and medication in to the office. Medications are stored out of the reach of children in locked containers. These forms will be maintained and reviewed by the Owner and/or Director. DO NOT put any medications in your child's lunch box or cubby!!

Any staff that administer medication to the children has been trained in the Six Rights of Medication Administration. The Six Rights are:

- The Right CHILD
- The Right MEDICATION
- The Right DOSE
- The Right ROUTE
- The Right TIME
- The Right DOCUMENTATION

We require that you inform us if your child is on any prescribed or over-the-counter medication while attending the Center, even if we are not administering any to the child during his or her stay with us. Some medications may cause drowsiness and interfere with a child's ability to participate in the daily activities. If your child becomes lethargic or falls asleep during class time, we may call you to come and pick him or her up.

## **MINOR INJURIES AT SCHOOL**

Children are active! Unfortunately, they may experience some bumps and scrapes. If your child is hurt while at the Center, a staff member will let you know, either in person or via the 'Boo-Boo Report' (which will be placed in the child's Black Mail Box file). This report will list the details of the injury, how it happened and what actions the staff took. All staff is certified in CPR and First Aid and there are First Aid supplies in each classroom, the play yard and Office.

If your child was injured at home, please advise the teachers and/or Director. If the injury required a doctor's visit, ACP may request a note from the physician stating that your child is able to attend school along with any restrictions that must be followed.

If your child should require medical attention beyond First Aid, a staff member will contact the parents immediately and call for emergency medical help (9-1-1), if appropriate.

If ACP staff is unable to reach the parents or guardians, individuals listed on the Emergency Card will be contacted. Current contact information for all listed on the Emergency Card is critical – please update this information as needed.



## **NEWSLETTERS**

Each month a newsletter is provided which shares information and Center up-dates. These are distributed via email to all email addresses provided by the parent. Please be sure that you review the newsletter, as it is a key method of communicating upcoming events and important information to the families.

## **NON-BIAS STATEMENT**

A Child's Place Learning Center does not discriminate on the basis of gender, ethnic group identification, race, ancestry, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, color, mental, physical or health disability, in determining which children or families are served.

## **OPEN DOOR POLICY**

Any parent has the right to inspect the Center at any time. We request that you check in with the Office prior to visiting the classroom. We encourage parents to visit and be involved in our program.

## **PARENT COMMITTEE**

Our Parent Committee is a group of parent volunteers who help to plan fundraisers, family activities and may be asked to provide feedback on program planning. Please see the Director if you are interested in participating.

## **PARENT PARTICIPATION**

A Child's Place Learning Center, Inc. is committed to working with families. We strongly encourage families to participate in every aspect of their child's program. **Parents are welcome to visit the Center anytime.** Our main focus is your child. If you have any concerns or questions, please contact the Owner or Director at (949) 646-4318 or email at: [darcie@acplearningcenter.com](mailto:darcie@acplearningcenter.com) or [acpoffice@acplearningcenter.com](mailto:acpoffice@acplearningcenter.com)

It is vitally important that you, as parents or guardians, communicate your needs and desires regarding your child's development openly and honestly with your child's teachers or the Director. You are encouraged to discuss any developmental milestones you have encountered and share any other information that may be appropriate. We do ask that for any lengthy conversations needed with the teachers, a conference time be scheduled. Our staff has responsibilities to the other children at the Center and may not have the time to go into a detailed discussion.

**Communication** – Parents need to communicate pertinent information with the Center. This should include such things as illnesses, changes in sleeping and eating habits, teething, changes in home situations, over-the counter and prescription medications the child is taking and so forth. It is also critical to communicate with the office any change in address, phone numbers and/or emergency contact information. A Child's Place strives to accommodate any language needs of the families we serve. Please ask the Director if you need assistance translating any Center information.

**Donations** – As your child develops cognitively and physically, please consider whether books, toys or outgrown clothes may be appropriate for use in our Center. If we are unable to use them, we will donate them to an organization that helps families and young children.

**Parent Concerns** – If you have any problems or concerns about our operations or your child's progress, please contact the Owner or Director immediately. Your concern is our concern.

## **PETS**

We know how exciting it is for a child to want to share a special pet. Please understand that we must take strong precautions in allowing this as some children may have allergies or fears to certain animals. We also must consider that no matter how gentle your pet may be - being surrounded by many small, excited children may be overwhelming to the animal. Please check with the Director before bringing any pet to the Center. *Note: This policy does not apply to trained service dogs. They are working dogs and have been trained for this purpose.*

## **PICK UP**

Sign your child out with your (full legal and legible signature – not initials) on the sign-out sheet. We must be able to read the name of the person who has picked up your child. Half-day children must be picked up by 11:30 a.m. Full day children must be picked up by 6:00 p.m. The late pick up fee is posted and also included in the Admissions Agreement. This fee compensates the staff for staying with your child. If you will be late in arriving, please call this helps to minimize unnecessary concerns. Please pick up any items in the Black Mail Box, your child's art file and his or her cubby.

Staff members are responsible for the children in their care. Staff may be unable to leave the group of children to assist you in gathering your child's things or discuss any concerns at length. Do not allow your child to go into the classrooms or front yard alone.

No person other than those listed on the pick-up authorization form will be allowed to pick up your child. We require that anyone designated by the parent be a minimum of 16 years old. If you will not be picking up your child, call so that we may be ready.

Please inform those persons picking up your child that he or she will need to provide valid photo identification.

In the case of a separation or divorce, the parent maintaining custody will be asked to submit in writing when the visiting parent may pick up the child.

No child will be permitted to leave the premises without a proper car or booster seat.

No changes to the pick-up authorization form will be accepted by phone.

If a child is left at the Center after hours with no notification from the parent, the Center staff will attempt to locate by telephone the parent or other adults listed on the Identification and Emergency Information form. The staff shall make a reasonable effort to reach the parent or guardian.

If the parent, guardian or another responsible adult cannot be reached after a reasonable amount of time, the Orange County Department of Social Services shall be notified by the Director or Designated Responsible staff and his or her directions will be followed. ACP staff will supervise the child until a resolution of the situation is made with the Department of Social Services.

### **NO CHILD WILL BE RELEASED TO AN ADULT SUSPECTED OF BEING UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL OR DRUGS**

If an angry or hostile situation occurs, ACP reserves the right to contact local authorities to assist our staff in protecting the child, other children and themselves.

A Child's Place Learning Center closes at 6:00 p.m. (this is determined by ACP clocks). Children must be picked up, signed out, all belongings gathered and have left the property and parking lot before 6:00 p.m. so the teachers may finish their workday. If any of these steps take longer than our 6:00 p.m. closing time – a late pickup charge will be added to your account.

## **QUALITYSTART OC**

A Child's Place is proud to be a part of the QualityStart OC program. This is a community partnership, led by the Orange County Department of Education, focused on raising the quality of early learning programs across the county. QualityStart OC focuses on four key areas:

**Raising community awareness** on the importance of investing in high quality early learning, so all Orange County's children have a strong start.

**Supporting parents** who are looking for early learning experiences for their children by providing them a directory of resources, local programs, quality rating scores, and information on how to choose a quality program.

**Supporting educators and care providers** who are seeking to improve the quality of their programs. This includes the QualityStart OC Network that provides training and assistance to all types of early learning programs throughout the county.

**Operating the Quality Rating & Improvement System (QRIS) Pilot Project:** QualityStars which is funded through the Federal Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant, QualityStart OC's QRIS sets standards for quality and rates programs on a five-star scale, while providing resources to support continuous quality improvement (such as coaching, training and technical assistance).

## **REST TIME**

Rest or quiet time is important for a child's health and well-being. Such time also allows a child to 're-energize' and develop self-control. This time is scheduled between the hours of 12:30 and 2:45 p.m.

The Center supplies a cot for each child. Parents are required to provide a crib sheet or beach towel and a small crib-size blanket for your child. If you wish to include a pillow, it must be very small since our storage space is limited. These items must be stored in a pillowcase. Please make sure your child's name is clearly marked on each item. If it is not, ACP staff will write your child's name on each piece of bedding. The bedding needs to be laundered each week. If any bedding is not taken home, A Child's Place will launder it and your account will be charged a fee.

## **SEMI-ANNUAL CHILD ASSESSMENTS**

Twice a year, your child's teachers will complete a formal assessment on your child. The teachers use a variety of assessment methods to support the children's learning, including observations, anecdotal notes, recordkeeping and child development portfolios. The assessment is very comprehensive and includes observations in all the developmental areas such as: cognitive, social/emotional, language, physical (large and small motor), and self-help skills. This assists the teachers in identifying areas of strength along with areas that require additional support. Individual goals are created and included in the classroom curriculums.

The teachers will make every effort to be sensitive to culture and language when assessing children both formally and informally and when communicating to families. Training will be provided to staff in understanding how to assess in terms of age and developmental level, sensitivity to diversity and for children with special needs. Interaction with the Center's families will be sought to increase understanding of the needs and backgrounds of the children in our care.

All assessments are strictly confidential. If the parent, teacher, Director or Owner believes that the child may benefit from an outside agency assessment, referrals and resources would be made available by ACP staff. It is in the best interest of the child to follow through with such an evaluation.

Early detection and intervention of most developmental delays or disorders can make a substantial impact on the child's opportunity for improvement. No records from A Child's Place will be released until the parent or guardian gives written consent.

If there are any issues that need to be discussed, a conference will be requested. Individual parent/teacher conferences are welcome throughout the year and parents are encouraged to request these at any time.

## **SHARE DAYS AND TOYS FROM HOME**

Share Days is a wonderful learning experience for all involved. We enjoy it so! The classroom teachers schedule share days. Ensure that your child's name is on any item used for share. Take any special items to the Office to be kept there until it can be shared.

Guns, swords and toys that could hurt another child are not allowed! These toys will be taken away and put aside until your child is picked up. Cartoon, video-game and/or Super Hero inspired toys often encourage specific sorts of play. This type of toy tends to keep children from open-ended activities, which we offer from the excellent variety of toys and equipment we provide. Help your child to learn to leave these toys at home!

The purpose of sharing is to encourage interest in life, build self-esteem, self-discovery, awareness, social skills, and enhance vocabulary and knowledge. Sharing can be fun and educational for all children.

## **SHOES**

Please, no jellies, sandals, slip-on 'Ballerina' shoes, open-toed shoes or shoes with heels, platform shoes, roller shoes or boots. Wearing these can cause injury and are not suitable for your child's active day at ACP. For his or her protection, children need rubber soled shoes or sneakers. Shoes need to be the appropriate size and socks must be worn. Remember, children love to run, jump and climb and need to wear the appropriate footwear to ensure their safety.

## **SIGN IN AND OUT PROCEDURES**

Per state regulations, parents or guardians are required to sign in and out his or her child (ren) as they enter and exit the Center. These sheets are in specific, designated areas and are used to verify the child's presence in the event of an emergency. All signatures must be **full and legible**.

## **STAFF**

Our Center staff meets the requirements established by the State of California for teaching or aiding in a licensed early childhood education childcare center.

All teachers have completed the required number of college credits in Early Childhood Education and continue formalized training in the Child Development field, through classes and workshops at the college level.

All ACP staff has been fingerprinted and the information is recorded in Sacramento, California. Background checks have been done along with a child abuse index check on each employee. All staff members have had a physical examination, T.B. testing and have provided proof of immunization for measles, pertussis, and influenza. There is always staff available on-site who is CPR and First Aid certified as well as being trained in emergency preparedness.

## **SUNSCREEN**

Please apply sunscreen to your child in the morning before arriving to the Center. ACP staff will re-apply sunscreen of SPF 30 or higher (if needed) later in the day, to your child's exposed skin, including but not limited to the face, tops of ears, and bare shoulders, arms and legs.

ACP must have on file a completed Sun Screen Utilization Permission Form (included in initial Registration packet) before any sunscreen is applied to your child. This form also includes your directives regarding type and application of sunscreen. If your child requires a specific type or brand of sunscreen, you must provide that to his or her teachers. ACP will not apply **spray** sunscreens only lotions.

## **TEACHER DEVELOPMENT DAYS AND IN-SERVICE MEETINGS**

A Child's Place Learning Center will be closed two (2) days each school year. These days will enable the staff to focus on teacher training and class preparations.

ACP will also have up to four (4) Teacher In-service meetings each school year and will close early, at 4:30 p.m. This allows teachers to meet and share information, discuss policies and procedures, and stay current on topics that have to do with quality Early Childcare Education so we can provide best practices to the children and families that we serve. Notice will be given a minimum of fourteen (14) to thirty (30) days in advance so parents can plan accordingly.

The tuition rate remains the same and there are no deductions or reductions of tuition or trading of days for these in-service days.

## **TECHNOLOGY/TELEVISION**

Our teachers have access to advanced technology to create learning environments that stimulate the interests of our students. Each classroom has an iPad and/or laptop that is used to research information on curriculum topics along with providing parents curriculum calendars and other important classroom updates via email. There are computers for the children's use in Rooms Two and Three with only educational games available. While we encourage the learning of technology – we recognize that children may also have access to this outside of our environment so we monitor the children's usage by limiting their computer play with us. After the allotted time is up, the children are free to enjoy the other centers while playing and socializing with their peers without any time constraints imposed.

Television is not regularly used at our Center. Exceptions are made for very short films that relate directly to a topic that has been discussed with the children. On those occasions when there is extremely inclement weather, the teachers will choose to show an educational DVD to the children while the classrooms are being prepared for lunch and nap time.

## **TOILET TRAINING**

We are happy to work with your child to achieve this important milestone when he or she is developmentally ready and interested in the process. We focus on positive reinforcement (e.g. praise, stickers and treasures). It is our desire to work closely with the parents during this time and we will do our best to support your at-home initiatives. Please let us know if you are beginning the process at home, so we can provide consistency between home and the Center. Any clothes that your child wears or has in his or her cubby should be easy to get on and off. Sweat pants or those with an elastic waist are the best. Please make sure that there is sufficient underwear and extra clothes in your child's cubby during this period. Accidents happen – it is a part of the 'training'

Until your child is completely potty trained, you must make sure there are enough commercially available disposable diapers and/or Velcro pull-ups along with diaper wipes in your child's diaper cubby (located in Room 1's bathroom). You are responsible for checking daily to ensure that your child will not run out of diapers or pull-ups. Parents will be charged \$ 1.00 for each diaper the Center needs to use from our emergency supply if his or her child is out of diapers.

If your child has a medical reason that prevents the use of disposable diapers or pull-ups, documentation of the medical reason by the child's health provider must be given.

We consider a child to be completely potty trained when he or she:

- is able to recognize that he or she needs to go to the bathroom
- is able to control bladder and/or bowel movements until getting to the bathroom
- does not need to wear pull-ups during the day (other than nap-time)
- does not need a teacher to remind or assist in any part of the process

## **TUITION**

Upon acceptance, a non-refundable registration fee is required. Please consult with the Director for tuition information. Tuition is due on the first day of attendance. Payment in full is required and this is non-refundable. Please pay by cash or a check made payable to **A CHILD'S PLACE** or **ACP**.

You are welcome to pay semi-annually, monthly or weekly. A discount is available if you choose to pay semi-annually – please see the Director for amounts. A discount is also given for monthly tuition provided that is dated and paid in full before the first of the month. Please deliver your tuition payment to the Center office.

There is an additional charge for children who are still wearing diapers or pull-ups and in the process of toilet training.

A sibling discount is offered for all additional children in the family who attend the Center.

There will be no deduction or reductions of tuition or trading of days due to A Child's Place being closed because of observed holidays, Teacher Development Days or a child becoming ill and missing any part of his or her regularly scheduled attendance.

A late fee will be charged if payment is not received per the Tuition Payment Policies. A returned check fee will be charged for any checks returned by our bank – for any reason. These amounts are posted as well as listed in the Tuition Payment Schedule and Policies. Children may not be permitted to attend the Center if payments are delinquent more than two (2) weeks. This also includes any delinquent miscellaneous fees.

If tuition payments become delinquent, the account may be sent to a collection agency retained by A Child's Place for collection. This decision will be made at the discretion of the Director and/or Owner.



## **VOLUNTEERS AT A CHILD'S PLACE**

Effective September 1, 2016, Senate Bill 792, Immunizations Requirements for Child Care and Preschool Programs went into effect. This law requires all employees and volunteers of licensed early education/child care centers be immunized against influenza, pertussis, and measles. Employees and volunteers must also establish that they are in good health through a public screening that includes a tuberculosis test. A volunteer is considered anyone who has any interactions with the children. This includes any parents who participate in any activities at the Center during business hours.

## **WHO TO CONTACT**

Please contact the Owner or Director at 949) 646-4318 or via e-mail at [darcie@acplearningcenter.com](mailto:darcie@acplearningcenter.com) or [acpoffice@acplearningcenter.com](mailto:acpoffice@acplearningcenter.com) if you have any questions or concerns relating to your child, our programs or any other issues. If necessary, a conference will be scheduled regarding the matter. If it is a concern to you, it is a concern to us.

## **WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURES**

Two (2) weeks written notice is required if you choose to terminate your child's enrollment. Those families giving no notice will be required to pay two (2) weeks tuition.

