

CUDDLE CARE INC PARENT'S HANDBOOK

CUDDLE CARE INC MISSION STATEMENT:

The goal of the center is to provide training and nurturing to give children tools for a head start in education. CCC provides a secure environment where children can learn to trust other adults and children. Activities are planned each day to help children solve problems, express their ideas, and learn about the real world; all crucial skills in preparing for school and life. At CCC we develop a partnership between teacher and parent to promote the healthy development of each child. CCC supports parents by allowing them to attend their jobs without having to worry about their children's care.

STATEMENT OF SERVICES:

CUDDLE CARE INC is a year-round program that offers all day care for children ages 6 weeks to 6 years. Our daily activities and program consists of a flexible schedule that has been created to provide diversity and challenge for children in all age groups. We offer a structured program for children of all ages that include a year-round curriculum. Our activities include school readiness skills, arts and crafts, games, music, outdoor play, and story time. We offer a Full-Time contract, which is for children present at the center over 6 hours per day, and we offer a Part Time contract, which is for children present at the center for less than 6 hours per day.

HOURS AND DAYS:

CUDDLE CARE INC is open from 6am to 6pm, Monday through Friday. Holiday list is attached

SNOW DAYS:

CUDDLE CARE INC will make every effort to remain open during the snow and ice.

OTHER CLOSURES: We will be closed the entire, week between Christmas and New Years and the Friday prior to Labor Day. We may also do a half day prior to extended leaves. These days will be decided in January of each year and will be posted for your convenience. You will be charged at the regular rate for the weeks these days fall.

STATE LICENSING

We understand the importance of keeping strict compliance with the state licensing regulations to ensure a quality environment for your children. Cuddle Care Inc complies with the applicable state licensing regulations and policies. These requirements cover staff qualifications, facility, playground, health and safety guidelines, and child/staff ratios.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

Enrollment in our program is open to all families of our community. We operate on a non-discriminatory basis. No one shall be excluded from any of our programs because of race, color, religion, disability, sex, or national origin. Only the child(ren)'s parent or legal guardian may enroll a child(ren) (Proof of custody may be required). All forms provided to you upon enrollment must be completed before your child may attend CUDDLE CARE INC. All requested personal information is kept confidential. Parent is being required to update all emergency data as needed, name, and date, including address, home, cell, and work numbers and individuals authorized to pick up your child. Current immunization information must be submitted to the center upon enrollment, and all immunizations must be current. CUDDLE CARE INC must be informed of any custody situation in advance and will request that the proper paperwork be in the child(ren)'s file. Parents will be required to comply with all state regulations and center rules as set forth in this Parent's Handbook.

ADMISSION AND WITHDRAWAL:

Parents wishing to enroll their children in the center are encouraged to set up an appointment with the center office to come and tour the center and meet the director and their children's Lead Teacher. (Tours are scheduled at the parent's convenience, however, due to rest time and other challenges in our schedule we encourage tours to be scheduled between 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Monday through Friday). The purpose of the informal tour is to answer any questions you might have concerning our policies and procedures and make you aware of the flexible schedule of your child(ren)s average day. At this time, we will give you a copy of the parent's handbook and any forms necessary to enroll your child(ren) in the center. All children shall be considered continuously enrolled from the time of enrollment until they are formally withdrawn according to the procedure outlined in the section "VACATIONS, ABSENCES, AND WITHDRAWAL FROM THE CENTER"

FINANCIAL CONTRACTS & DEPOSITS:

Upon deciding that CUDDLE CARE INC is the place for your child(ren), you will be asked to fill out a "Financial Contract and pay a non-refundable deposit. This deposit consists of a registration fee. At this time, you and the center will agree, upon the date your child(ren) will start. Prior to your first day you must bring your child's(ren's) enrollment packet(s) (one for each child) along with the following for verification: Birth certificate, and shot records. Parents are required to notify the center prior to their child(ren) withdrawing including withdrawing from being on the guaranteed start list. For more information see the "VACATIONS, ABSENCES, AND WITHDRAWAL FROM THE CENTER" section on page E-16 for more details.

PAPERWORK, FORMS, and ANNUAL RENEWAL:

The state requires us to have current and updated information on each child in our center. This is also for your safety. As mentioned above, we require all forms to be filled out on each child prior to their initial attendance at Cuddle Care Inc. Also, each year in June we will have you renew and refresh all your paper work and all forms. There will be a deadline given for compliance to this requirement and a fine may be charged if the new paperwork is not turned in on time. Failure to renew and refresh paperwork does not constitute withdrawal from the program and fees will continue to accrue according to the newest published rates including all overdue payment convenience fees and all other fees due. Annual registration fees and annual material fees will also be added each year at this same time. If Cuddle Care Inc is penalized or fined for incomplete information on one of our admissions forms or for failure to update/renew this information due to a parent's neglect, that fine will be passed on to the client responsible including an additional \$50 administration fee.

DROP-OFF:

Parents must accompany their child(ren) into the CUDDLE CARE INC area every morning and SIGN their child(ren) in immediately after dropping their child(ren) off in the appropriate room. Children will not be permitted in the building prior to opening hours. The SIGN IN SHEET is in the front of each building. The children are not allowed to come into the CUDDLE CARE INC area alone or to sign themselves in unless prior written permission has been given by the parent and approved by the Director. This is for their protection in case of a fire or other emergency. We require that all children have direct contact with a person upon arrival for early detection of apparent illness, communicable disease, or unusual condition or behavior which may adversely affect the child or the group. If any of these things are determined, the child must go home immediately.

PICK-UP:

All children must be picked up and signed out by an adult and/or person approved by the parent and the center. All children must be signed out before being picked up from their classroom. Anyone, including all parents, who are to be allowed to pick the child up, must be listed on the Pick-up Permission Cards or be approved in writing by a parent. In an emergency, parents may call the center and give verbal approval of an alternate individual. However, this is strongly discouraged. The center reserves the right to not allow any individual onto Cuddle Care Inc property for drop-off or pick-up if they have created a problem. Anyone not recognized by sight will be asked for a picture ID. In the event anyone out of the ordinary is to pick-up the child, please alert the office prior to that time. This is in addition to them being on the Pick-up Permission Card or approval as stated above. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the office and make changes on this form whenever necessary. This form is re-done annually.

PARKING POLICY:

Cuddle Care Inc has a drop-off area by the doors to each building. Due to the limit of the number of vehicles that may be in this area, please park in one of the parking spaces if you anticipate you will be in the building longer than 5-10 minutes. We strongly urge you to turn your car off and lock it when you come in to drop-off or pick-up your child(ren). CUDDLE CARE INC is not responsible for items lost or stolen from cars or from the parking lot or facility.

PICK-UP PERMISSION CARDS:

All persons authorized to pick a child up from the center must be listed on the PICK-UP PERMISSION FORM. To avoid confusion, it is the responsibility of the parent signing the child into our center to properly fill out all forms. In a custody situation the parent signing the child into our center takes full responsibility to ensure that this is in accordance with their specific court agreement, which must be attached to the enrollment forms if the PICK-UP PERMISSION CARDS suggest any limitation of rights. If a parent who is not listed, or who believes the information given to us was inaccurate, contests the authorization details they must first offer proof that they are indeed the legal parent or guardian and have legal rights to pick the child up. We then will require lawyers for both sides to be contacted and both attorneys will be requested to give us documentation as to the individuals approved for pick-up. The center reserves the right to not allow any individual onto our property for drop-off or pick-up if they have created a problem.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL CONSENT FORM:

This form will give us your consent to call an ambulance or your child's doctor or dentist if he/she needs emergency care. Please list your child's doctor, dentist, and the hospital you would prefer. Also, please list phone numbers, addresses, and additional emergency numbers of contacts. It is strongly suggested that all emergency contacts all be listed on your Pick-up Permission form. If your child has any allergies or is on any medications, please include this information on the form as well as filling out one of the food or non-food allergy forms. These forms will be re-done annually. Immunization cards need to be presented on or before the first day the child attends the center. A photo copy of these will be kept on file. When your child receives additional immunizations, you are required to bring your immunization card back in for us to take a current photo copy of it so that we can up-date your file. Whenever any information on this card changes – it is your responsibility to notify us and up-date or re-do this form.

INFORMATION CHANGE

Parents are to notify the center of any change in home or work phone numbers and addresses. This is for your safety so that we may reach you in an emergency. The center requires that someone listed on the Pick-Up Permission form of each child be available within thirty (30) minutes notice to come and pick up a sick child or a child that CUDDLE CARE INC has determined needs to go home. It is required that all changes of phone numbers, places of employment, residence changes or changes in pick-up information be turned into the office immediately. Please give the Director written notice of the change as soon as possible.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS:

All children enrolled must have their immunization records up-to-date or provide an exemption declaration of facts. The child's immunization record must be provided by the parent and all information must be current. The parent shall also provide proof of this with a form signed by a health care provider. This form will state that the child has received all current, age-appropriate immunizations. Parent's wishing to take a religious exemption must contact the office to find out the proper procedure for providing a declaration of facts of such a religious opposition.

MEDICATION:

Cuddle Care has a no medication administering policy.

ALLERGIES:

We must be aware of any food or other known allergies that affect your child. If your child has any known food allergies, you will need to fill out an "Allergy/Food Exemption Medical Statement" (form on page Z-21). This allows us to alert all our staff to be on guard of their allergy. The Allergy/Food Exemption Statement must be turned into our office as soon as this allergy has been identified. This form must be updated annually. We also need to be aware of any Non-Food allergies that can affect your child. If your child has any Non-food allergies you will need to fill out a "Non-Food Allergy Medical Statement" (form on page Z-22) which must be turned in to our office as soon as this allergy has been identified. This form must be updated annually.

ILLNESS AND CONTINUED HEALTH:

These guidelines are for the welfare of all our children. To provide a safe and healthy we rely on our parents to monitor their children with these guidelines in mind. Outdoor play is essential to your child's development. We feel that if your child is too sick to play outdoors then they are too sick for group care. A child that is ill or has a temperature of 101 degrees or above should be kept at home. All children shall have direct contact with a staff member upon arrival for early detection of apparent illness, communicable disease, or unusual condition or behavior, see the Drop-Off section above. A child that is too ill to remain in the center shall be supervised and cared for until the child can be cared for elsewhere. The child will be sent home if he/she is running a temperature of over 101 degrees, if he/she is vomiting or has diarrhea, or if it is suspected that he/she has a contagious disease. In the event you are called to come pick up an ill child, you must pick your child up within 30 minutes, or overtime rates will apply. If a child needs to be sent home and their parents are unreachable, we will call the emergency contacts listed on the Pick-up Permission Card. If no one is available by contact \$3 per minute, per child will be enforced. The center reserves the right to request the child to see a physician or have a physician's note prior to returning. For further clarification refer to the F-Section of this manual for our full "First Aid/Medication Policy" and our "Guidelines: When A Child Can Return."

ACCIDENT REPORTS:

Safety is a top priority of CUDDLE CARE INC. Yet, there are times when a child will have an accident/ incident between your child and another child. If the accident/incident requires "more than a hug and a kiss," our teachers will complete a report for you detailing what happened and the nature of the injuries. If any first aid is administered, the treatment will be described to you. A copy of this accident report, signed by the teacher in charge at the time of the accident, will be filed with the Director's office. We ask that you sign the copy provided to you and return it to the Director's office to confirm that you were notified of your child's injury. This system is aimed at ensuring communication at all levels and can be a very good way to be certain trivial things are not forgotten in a hasty departure. If your child happens to be injured by another child, we ask you to please respect the child's privacy by not asking us to reveal the name of the child. It not only puts our staff in an awkward situation but could cause a confrontation between our families. We will handle all behavior problems in a professional and appropriate way.

CHILDREN REQUIRING SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS:

CUDDLE CARE INC complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other applicable regulations pertaining to providing services to individuals with disabilities. We desire to make special accommodations for children who require such accommodations, provided it is within our power and authority to do so. Accommodation can be a specific treatment prescribed by a professional or a parent, or a modification of equipment, or removal of physical barriers. The accommodation shall be recorded in the child's file. Whenever we deem it appropriate to the needs of the child to have a child with special needs in our center, the entire staff must follow the reasonable accommodations we have made for that child. Any questions about the accommodations of the child should be referred to the leadership staff.

DISCIPLINE:

At CUDDLE CARE INC the staff are trained in using positive reinforcement as a means of discipline. Our goal is to find solutions and to provide the very best environment for your child. We have a detailed Discipline policy. These policies begin on page E-18.

TOILET TRAINING

Toilet training is best accomplished with the cooperation of teachers, parents, and children. Children learn toileting skills through consistent positive encouragement from adults and home and at the center.

Toilet Training usually begins around 2 years of age. When a child shows an interest in toilet training, the parents and teachers should complete a Potty Training Contract that describes how they will cooperate to encourage toilet training. This form is available from the director. This plan is commitment to work with the child in a consistent manner; it is not a timeline for completing toilet training. This contract will be kept on file.

Each child will begin at a different time and progress at a different rate. The staff will provide documentation of your child's progress each day. The director and staff are available as a resource to answer any questions about your child's toilet training progress at CUDDLE CARE INC. Several complete changes of clothes should be kept on-center during this process.

TOYS:

CUDDLE CARE INC has a wide variety of toys, games, and other resources to offer children during center time. Preschool classes will have show and tell related to the week's lesson. Personal toys are not permitted in the center, as they can cause disputes and can be broken or lost. The exception to this is show-and-tell or sleep-toys which should be labeled with the child's name. CUDDLE CARE INC is not responsible for stolen, lost, or broken toys or clothing.

Do not bring toy guns, war toys or other toys of destruction.

CLOTHING:

We encourage the children to dress for play and comfort as the seasons change. Because our program is based on play and exploration your child WILL get dirty!! Children will have opportunities for outdoor play twice a day weather permitting. Children will go outside if the temperature is above 32 degrees or below 100 degrees with the wind chill and heat index taken in to consideration. It is required that you bring one set of extra clothes for your child in case of a spill or accident. We have some extra clothes available, but we may not have the item your child needs in his/her size. If your child comes home in center clothes, please wash the clothes, and return them within one week. **It is strongly suggested that all clothing brought or worn to the center have the child's name on it.**

DIAPERS:

Please provide diapers. All items must be labeled with the child's first and last name. You can bring a package of diapers to leave at the center. You will be notified when your child is running low on diapers. If you run out of diapers we will provide them to you automatically for a fee of \$2 per diaper. If you have any questions, please check with the office.

CURRICULUM:

Children learn by doing. They learn through play, experimentation, exploration, and testing. Learning should be a joyful, natural experience. We have chosen a curriculum based on the developmental needs of the children each the room and to foster individual growth through opportunities for exploration. 90% of brain growth occurs from zero to 5 years old. Each class's lesson plans and your child's class flexible schedule are posted on the parent's board in your child's room. We incorporate current trends in Early Childhood and School Age Education and then structure this curriculum to meet the needs of most of the children in the group. Our curriculum, although it will vary depending on age, is guided by the following underlying principals: CREATIVE CURRICULUM (TEACHING STRATEGIES GOLD).

- Children learn through dynamic investigation
- Children instigate their own learning
- Learning comes from open-ended experiences
- Adults are facilitators of children's learning

INFANT CURRICULUM:

We will keep your child on his/her daily schedule as much as possible. During the day, we will do activities with your child to help them develop their social, emotional, cognitive, language and physical skills. These activities may include, playing with toys, art, pretending, enjoying stories and books, discovering sand and water, music, and exploring outdoors.

PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM:

The preschool curriculum will cover the following areas:

Movement and Coordination

- Physical attention and relaxation
- Gross motor skills
- Eye-hand, and eye-foot coordination
- Group games
- Creative movement

Autonomy and Social Skills

- Sense of self and personal responsibility
- Working in group setting

Work Habits

- Memory Skills/
- Following directions
- Task persistence and completion

Language

- Oral language
- Nursery rhymes, poems, finger plays/songs
- Emerging literacy skills

Mathematics

- Patterns and classifications
- Geometry
- Measurement
- Numbers and numbers sense

- Basic Addition and subtraction
- Money

Orientation in time and space

- Vocabulary
- Measure of time
- Passage of time (past, present, future)
- Actual and represented space
- Simple maps
- Basic geographical concepts

Science

- Human, animal, and plant characteristics
- Physical elements (water, air, and light)
- Tools

Music

- Attend to different sounds
- Imitate and produce sounds
- Listen and sing
- Listen and move

Visual arts

- Attend to visual detail
- Creating art
- Looking at and talking about art

DAILY SCHEDULE:

Although your child's schedule varies day to day, a typical flow of a day's activities is below.

Activity Time: All centers open 4 hours per day. Activities specific to the weekly theme are presented along with basic activities such as puzzles, table manipulatives, dramatic play, blocks, etc.

Group Time: Group times are child-centered participative sessions. The planned group activities include reading, music, movement, finger plays, discussion, dramatization, games, and experience stories.

Outdoor time: The playground is an extension of the classroom. Children can participate in an activity of their own choosing. Inclement weather, extraordinary events, or celebrations will occasionally affect the scheduling of outdoor time.

Snacks and Meal Time: Staff sits with children while they are eating, encouraging, and participating in quiet conversation.

Rest Time: Children are given the opportunity to nap or rest each day.

Specific activities vary based on age, all are posted weekly in each room.

CLASS DIVISIONS AND CLASS SIZE:

We endeavor to have a challenging and appropriate atmosphere for children of all ages. Homeroom class divisions are based upon three issues. These are: the individual developmental needs of each child, state set student to teacher ratios, and the overall enrolment management plan of the center. Children not yet in school are divided into classes by age since this usually keeps them with children in their own developmental level and keeps our age-based student to teacher ratios easy to calculate. In most cases it is our target to have children together with the children with whom they will be attending Kindergarten.

STUDENT TO TEACHER RATIOS:

Student to teacher ratios are based upon guidelines set by STATE law. The following chart shows the maximum ratios that we observe.

| Age of children | Number of Students | Per teacher | Group Max |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|-------------|-----------|
| Infants | 4 | 1 | 8 |
| Toddlers 12-30 months | 5 | 1 | 12 |
| 2-Year-Olds | 8 | 1 | 14 |
| 3-Year-Olds | 10 | 1 | 20 |
| 4-Year-Olds | 10 | 1 | 20 |
| 3-5's | 10 | 1 | 20 |
| 5-Year-Olds Not School Aged | 16 | 1 | 20 |
| 4 & 5's | 16 | 1 | 20 |
| School-Age Children | 20 | 1 | 20 |

In addition to the teacher to child ratios each group also has a group maximum. We meet or beat these ratios and minimums always.

MIXED-AGE GROUPING

Our program encourages times for mix-age grouping of children to provide a rich learning environment that recognizes that all children are unique and develop at their own pace and according to their individual interests and abilities. In times of the day where mixed-age grouping is implemented, children who are at least one year apart in age are sometimes placed in the same classroom. Our teachers and staff are educated in mixed-age grouping to help ensure it is implemented with the utmost focus on the child's development and safety. Mixed-age grouping is an effective tool in child development providing many benefits including:

- Older children learn to be helpful, patient, and tolerant, while developing increased confidence in their own skills and abilities.
- Younger children can learn more advanced cognitive and socialization skills from the older children.
- Individual differences in development are better accommodated.
- Children are challenged to think about problems in a more creative and flexible way as they observe children of different ages approaching problems differently than they do.

TRANSITION PLAN

Cuddle Care Inc will create an individualized TRANSITION PLAN to help children that are about to transition from one class to the next. This is to help the children become familiar with the new program, teachers, and children. It also allows the new teachers to get to know the individual needs of each child prior to the transition of an entire class group or several children together. The plan allows flexibility for us to best meet the needs of each child. Each child's individual need is different therefore the TRANSITION PLAN may vary quite a bit from child to child. Your child's teacher or the director will provide more details about transitioning when your child will move to another classroom. CHILDREN SHALL ONLY BE COMBINED FOR THE 1ST AND LAST HOUR OF THE DAY.

OUR STAFF:

At CUDDLE CARE INC we strive to provide nurturing, quality care in a highly interactive learning environment. Our friendly qualified staff is an integral part of providing this environment. Our current staff has had

- A detailed interview and screening process.
- Approval by the state of STATE through a background analysis that cross references state and federal criminal records as well as child abuse reporting records to ensure that each employee has a background that is clear.
- State CPR and first aid requirements fulfilled

We believe firmly in training and continued education for all our employees and staff. Each has qualified themselves to work with your children by attending specific training classes and often college level courses to learn about early education and the needs of children. We emphasize training and encourage all our employees to exceed the state minimum number of clock hours of training required to be qualified to continue to work in an early education setting.

STAFF AND CLIENT RELATIONSHIPS:

CUDDLE CARE INC considers it inappropriate for parents and clients to solicit our staff to work for them either in their business or homes. We are not legally or financially liable for our employees or any of their actions when they are off the clock or no longer employed by CUDDLE CARE INC. All employees have signed a statement saying that they will not engage in "care for hire" or any employment by or for any past or current client family of CUDDLE CARE INC while currently employed by CUDDLE CARE INC or for eighteen (18) months after their last day of employment. An employee who violates this policy has violated their employment agreement and is subject to termination. It is inappropriate for a client or parent to solicit any employee for any type of work. Clients who violate this policy may be subject to termination of services.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION:

The success of our program is based on establishing a partnership between our parents and our staff. Open and frequent communication will help your child have a positive early learning experience. We will endeavor to keep you informed concerning your child's day and overall development through several written means.

- Monthly parent newsletters to keep you informed as to the overall program.
- Parent Board & Resource Room – updated with current information about CUDDLE CARE INC and curriculum
- Daily written communication in the form of “Daily Report” forms, “Incident/ouch” forms, and classroom memos will be place in the child's “cubby” from time to time.
- Parent/Teacher meetings three times per year
- Parents always have the option of requesting specific parent/teacher interaction to aid in the child's development.

VERBAL COMMUNICATION:

We will endeavor to be communicative during drop-off and pick-up times. However, this is not an appropriate time for extended conversations since the staff members/teachers have responsibilities for all the children in the group. Furthermore, the person caring for your child at the pick-up time may not be the individual who has spent most of the day with your child. This is since many children spend 10 hours a day the center and most of our employees only work 6-8 hours. Since children learn best in the morning, we schedule the teachers who are responsible for most of the class room development for the earlier hours and most of the day. We suggest that you go to your child's “lead” or “primary” teacher to obtain detailed information on your child's general growth and development. You can call to see how your child's day is going or to speak to your child's teacher for more detailed conversation. The best time to call and speak to your child's teacher is during naptime. There is always a member of management available for you to talk to in person or on the phone. You may also use the Payment and Suggestion boxes to leave information for Management, or you can e-mail us at cuddlecare@comcast.net.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT:

We encourage all parents and or guardians to be involved in the activities. We believe that parental participation is key to any successful child care program. Parents should raise children. At CUDDLE CARE INC, we strive to fill the gap created during early separation and educational opportunities and when parents are not available. We welcome parental visits. We have an open-door policy that allows parents access to the center during operating hours. We have enclosed a sample list of some of the opportunities for involvement in our center. Parents are in no way limited to the involvement listed below. Any parent wishing to be involved in another area is strongly encouraged to contact the CUDDLE CARE INC office with their suggestion.

1. Parent Meetings (Usually 2-3 times per year) (Child Care Provided)
2. Fall Open House
3. 3 individual conferences/year
4. Programs and Special activities (Annual School Play, June)
5. Monthly Family Fun Nights
6. Party Day Volunteer
7. Come and eat lunch with your child
8. Classroom Volunteer
9. Send special treats for snack or meals (please notify the teacher a day or two in advance)
10. Help with center Fund Raiser
11. Participation in a parent's group
12. Reverse Field trips (When we bring a “field trip” type activity to our property)
13. Family Resource Library
14. Children's Book and Toy Lending Library
15. Home Visiting (Butterflies/Community Connections)
16. Transportation to and from the center (Community Connections)

We also expect parental involvement in discipline and behavior intervention as outlined in these policies.

POLICY FOR PARENTS WHO CANNOT PARTICIPATE IN SPECIAL EVENTS:

If a parent feels like they would like to be more involved in the center but cannot due to their work schedule, or due to other conflicts, we will help them find a project or area which they can do on their own time. A member of the leadership staff will meet with the parent to find their area of interest. We will offer suggestions to them based on their interests and time. For example, if the parent likes to sew, we may offer to have them make doll clothes or repair mat sheets.

CHILDREN'S BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are special days for children. If you wish to celebrate your child's birthday at CUDDLE CARE INC, please make early arrangements with your child's teacher. Hard or chewy candy and balloons are not permitted because they pose a choking risk. (See "Bringing Food from Home" on the following page for more specifics concerning food snacks brought for parties or to celebrate a child's birthday)

VISITING THE CENTER:

You are welcome to visit your child at the center at any time. We do ask that you check in with the office or sign-in before going to your child's room. It is the responsibility of each employee to make sure any visitor for a child or employee has checked in with the office. If you are coming to eat lunch with your child, please let us know in advance. Persons not listed on the "Pick-Up Permission" Card, will not be allowed to visit your child. In a custody situation, please note that the same procedure will be followed as listed in the Pick-Up section. Parents are encouraged to pre-arrange opportunities to share lunch with their child or visit the class. Extended family members such as grand parents and aunts are also welcoming to visit in certain pre-arranged situations. The custody challenges of our current society demand that we follow strict guidelines in this regard. Feel free to contact a member of the management team if you wish to set up a "visit" from an extended family member.

CLASSIFICATIONS:

Due to strict licensing guidelines and safety issues we require that all individuals on our property be categorized as one of the following:

- 1) A scheduled employee during the regular course of their work day
- 2) A Child who is in our care (all paperwork has been filled-out)
- 3) Parents or others during regular drop-off or pick-up (This to be fifteen (15) minutes)
- 4) Delivery personnel – From a regular or expected company delivering items to the center (should be in eye sight of an employee always and arriving at an expected time)
- 5) Visitor's – Must be approved by the office and should be accompanied by an employee always not to exceed once per month and limited to a maximum of 2 hours
- 6) Volunteers – Anyone who is helping with a class party or in any other capacity or anyone who has been a "visitor" for more than once a month or for over 2 hours.
- 7) An Intruder – the staff will act to notify the proper authorities

Therefore, anyone who is in the building or on the property for an extended period must be considered either a "visitor" a "volunteer" or an "intruder" including parents and employees who are off the clock.

VOLUNTEERS:

Any parent wishing to help chaperone an event must go through our screening process. Volunteers are also welcome in our center. Anyone visiting or volunteering for more than one day per semester must go through a screening process. Our screening process includes, but is not limited to, 1) a signed statement indicating whether or not they have had a conviction of any law in any state, or any record of founded child or dependent abuse in any state; 2) a signed statement indicating whether or not they have a communicable disease or other health concern that could pose a threat to the health, safety or well-being of the children; 3) undergoing a fingerprinting and background check if working or volunteering more than 1 day. 4) a signed statement regarding child abuse 5) going through New Teacher Orientation. Any "visitor" who spends extended periods of time in the center will be considered a volunteer and be required to go through the screening and training listed above.

INTRUDERS:

The safety of the children is our first concern. Although we have an open-door policy and welcome parents to visit their children we also have a commitment to the parents of the other children in the program. Since we cannot attest to the background of anyone that has not gone through our screening process we also cannot allow parents to spend extended periods of time in our facility without requiring them to fulfill certain screening and training requirements. These are set by state law and our policies. Any individual who does not submit to our safety policies concerning "Visitors" and "Volunteers" must be considered an intruder and steps will be taken according to the "Intruder" portion of our "Safety and Evacuation" policies.

MEALS AND SNACKS:

Our meal and snack service consist of a breakfast, morning snack, a hot lunch, and a PM snack. All food served will be nutritious and healthy. Each child will be encouraged to eat what is prepared and to try additional items as introduced. Please alert our staff of any food allergies or food restrictions as we want to accommodate and respect individual preferences.

FOOD FOR INFANTS AND CRAWLERS:

Parents must provide formula/ liquid/ milk for children in the Infant room, if your child does not take the formula provided by the school. The Infant room is equipped with a bottle warmer and refrigerators. All bottles are required to have a sticker with the child's name and DATE. Please be certain to inform staff in the classroom the type of formula your child is using, and any other facts regarding diet. Do not bring baby food. Breast milk must be handled in a manner consistent with universal precautions. Please clearly identify all breast milk with the child's name and the date.

BRINGING FOOD FROM HOME:

Breakfast and lunch should not be brought from home. We participate in the Federal Food Program. The center will provide these meals for the children. Prepackaged snacks may be brought from home for birthdays and parties, however they must meet nutritional guidelines. (Please notify the child's teacher prior to bringing special treats.) Fruit Snacks, veggie trays, graham crackers, jello cups, sherbet. **ONLY HEALTHY SNACKS ARE ALLOWED!**

PORTRAITS AND PICTURES:

We offer school pictures two times a year, in the spring and fall. The fall photos usually include two sittings per child and should be delivered in time for use as holiday gifts. The spring portraits include one sitting and a complete class portrait. You will receive proofs before purchasing. In addition, we may take pictures of the children playing or for use on their cubbies or for use with a project or we may need pictures of children for promotional use. There is a "Photo Release form" (page Z-14) with your paperwork giving us permission to take your child's picture or include them in short video footage.

REGISTRATION AND MATERIALS FEES:

There is a registration fee due prior to the child's first day at CUDDLE CARE INC. These fees are due upon initial enrollment annually each June. These fees shall suffice for that "School Year's" materials fee provided the child remains continuously enrolled in the program. Children who pull out of the program for a specified or un-specified length of time will be required to pay a re-registration fee as well as an additional materials fee upon returning. The exception to this will be children who physically pull out of the program but whose parents continue to pay their full weekly fees to retain the spot in our program. Children who attend in a "Drop In" fashion who pay the "Drop In" rate will be considered as continuously enrolled for that school year and will only be required to pay one registration and one material fee provided they continue to fit the definition of this program.

CUDDLE CARE WEEKLY TUITION RATES ARE THE SAME AS FUNDING PROVIDED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES. SEE THE ATTACHED CHILD CARE PAYMENT RATE DOCUMENT.

WEEKLY TUITION FEES:

It is our philosophy that clients are paying for the spot their child will take in our center. This is not based upon attendance but on a set weekly or monthly fee that is due regardless of the attendance habits of the child who has the spot. Our fee structure is based upon a weekly fee that is set by the contract which is signed by the parent upon enrolling the child(ren) in the program. These contracts may be adjusted from time to time as needed with a two-week notice of intent to change services. This to be allowed at the discretion of the management based on space availability. Contracts are re-done annually prior to the first of June. Since the weekly set fees remain the same, no bill will be given to remind you of these fees. A monthly statement of activity will be sent out usually prior to the 15th of each month. Add on fees may occur.

PAYMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

Weekly fees are due in advance on Monday. There will be a \$35.00 overdue payment convenience fee added if the account is not paid by the close of business on Tuesday. Failure to pay on time may result in termination of services. No account will ever be allowed to carry a balance unless the Director has approved arrangements. There will be a \$50.00 fee added on all returned checks. After two NSF checks are received by the center, payment will be required by cashiers check or money order. Fees for two weeks will be added if a two-week written notice is not given prior to your child leaving the center. Clients may pay by check, cashiers check, credit card or Money Order. All payments will be **payable to: CUDDLE CARE INC.**

All co-payment is due on the first of the month. If not paid on the 2nd, on the morning of the 3rd a \$35 late fee will be added to your co-payment. Payment not paid by the 5th will result in your child being dismissed from the school.

Payments may be given directly to the director or may be placed in the payment box located outside the office. No Cash payments will be accepted. All tuition is non-refundable except for prepaid tuition that is over-and-above any additional charges, including the two weeks notice. All clients will pay the last weeks fees in advance. This will also be adjusted annually or as the contracted rates change. See the REFUNDS policy below. Registration fees are non-refundable. CUDDLE CARE INC may seek collection of fees due and clients may be required to pay a two-week termination fee, and any collection costs and attorney's fees incurred by CUDDLE CARE INC to collect this amount. If CUDDLE CARE, INC elects, it may immediately terminate all services provided by it including but not limited to the immediate dismissal of the children from its facility.

ACTION FOR CHILDREN/ STATE PAID TUITION CLIENTS:

CUDDLE CARE INC is authorized to receive payments from Action for Children and other Federal/State daycare assistance programs. If you qualify for free or reduced meals at a public school, you might be eligible to receive help through ACTION FOR CHILDREN. Our participation in this program in no way limits our freedom or right to set and enforce the policies listed in this handbook. Clients wishing to use ACTION FOR CHILDREN assistance must make these arrangements on their own and list us as their ACTION FOR CHILDREN Childcare provider. You may enroll in the program as an ACTION FOR CHILDREN client once the office has received a letter of authorization from ACTION FOR CHILDREN or a phone call from the Action for Children case worker, establishing your eligibility in our program. Clients wishing to transfer from a private pay client to a ACTION FOR CHILDREN client must come to the office and fill out a ACTION FOR CHILDREN Start Agreement. The annual registration fee and material fee is the responsibility of the client and not that of ACTION FOR CHILDREN.

CUDDLE CARE INC also requires that all ACTION FOR CHILDREN clients pay for any absence above 3 per month. ACTION FOR CHILDREN clients will be allowed to be absent for one vacation week each year (September through August) without being charged the weekly fee if it is pre-approved through the office at least one week prior. ACTION FOR CHILDREN clients may also be required to pay the difference between our private pay rates and the rates that ACTION FOR CHILDREN has established. Refer to the ACTION FOR CHILDREN Start Agreement for clarification concerning these issues.

ACTION FOR CHILDREN clients may also have a monthly co-payment that is set by ACTION FOR CHILDREN. This is based upon family income. CUDDLE CARE INC requires that all ACTION FOR CHILDREN co-payments be made monthly on the first day of the month. CUDDLE CARE INC does the book keeping on ACTION FOR CHILDREN accounts once per month after the service has occurred. All PAYMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES listed above for self billed clients will also apply to ACTION FOR CHILDREN clients. It is the responsibility of each ACTION FOR CHILDREN Client to ensure that they have no balance when the previous months fees and co-payments are added on the account. Failure to do so will result in a late payment fee. Failure to make co-payment amounts will void your contract with ACTION FOR CHILDREN whether you stay at CUDDLE CARE INC or move on to another center.

DISCOUNTS:

CUDDLE CARE INC is pleased to offer the following discounts: 1) 3% discount for accounts that pay for the entire month in advance by the 3rd of each month. 2) 5% discount to all clients who work for companies that have 5 or more families currently enrolled in our program with up-to-date accounts. 3) \$5.00 per week discount for each additional sibling currently enrolled full time in the program and are being charged weekly fees.

REFUNDS:

We do not issue refunds. In the event you have over-paid the credit will be applied to your next week's tuition. In the event you have a balance after your child's last day, all applicable fees including the two weeks notice required will be subtracted from any balance prior to a final refund being issued. Checks for this are cut monthly and will be mailed according to our monthly bill payment schedule.

RECEIPTS AND STATEMENTS:

Receipts are available upon request. Annual statements for tax and accounting purposes are available upon request for all accounts with a zero balance.

LATE PICK-UP FEE:

There will be a \$3.00 per minute if pick-up takes place after closing STARTING AT 6:06PM. This fee is non-negotiable and is the responsibility of all clients. Parents, or those picking the children up, are required to call ahead if they feel they are going to be more than 5 minutes late. Parents notified that a child is ill and needs to leave the center for the day a "reasonable period" to pick-up the child or the above "Late Pick-up Fee" will also apply. If no parent or emergency contact can be located within 30 minutes of trying to contact the parent, the "Late Pick-up Fee" will also apply. An attempt will be made to contact individuals on the emergency contact list after children have been left 15 minutes past closing. Children left at the center later than 60 minutes past closing will be considered abandoned and Child Protective Services will be informed.

VACATIONS, ABSENCES AND LEAVING THE CENTER:

Vacations and illnesses will be billed at half the regular rate. We request that all absences be reported to the CUDDLE CARE INC office prior to or the day of the absence. We require a two-week written notice prior to your child leaving the center or a change in your child's contract. Fees for two weeks will be added if a two-week written notice is not given prior to your child leaving the center. Failure to notify the center will cause all fees to continue until written notification is given. When notification is finally given, two additional weeks will be added. This handbook includes a form to use when giving a two-week written notice of leaving the center (page Z-27). The center reserves the right to require the dis-enrollment of a child according to our "Discipline Policy." The center also reserves the right to require the dis-enrollment of any child whose parent and or guardian has become a problem at the center or who has developed and un-cooperative, aggressive, dissatisfied, or angry demeanor towards the center, its policies, or its staff.

QUIET TIME:

It is our philosophy that children under 5 years of age need adequate quiet time and or rest, as a part of their daily routine. Since all the children are constantly engaged in stimulating activity, we require that everyone rest on mats after lunch. Realizing each child's rest needs are different, we try to offer alternative ways of resting by providing soft music, stories, etc. for those who choose not to sleep. Infants' individual schedules will determine when they nap. According to "American Baby" the following chart is a guideline as to the sleep needs of children under 15 years of age:

| Age | Suggested Hours of Sleep | Number of Naps Suggested |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| One Month | 15.50 hours | 3 |
| Three Months | 15.00 hours | 3 |
| Six Months | 14.25 hours | 2 |
| Nine Months | 14.00 hours | 2 |
| One Year | 13.75 hours | 2 |
| Eighteen Months | 13.50 hours | 1 |
| Two Years | 13.00 hours | 1 |
| Three Years | 12.00 hours | 1 |
| Four Years | 11.50 hours | 0-1 |
| Five to Nine Years | 10-11 hours | 0 |
| Ten to Fifteen Years | 9-10 hours | 0 |

We believe that children need a balance of activities that include large motor and active play as well as structured quiet time. Our program includes a quiet time for all children Kindergarten and younger. All children from 1 year of age through pre-K will receive a quiet time each day for a specified length of time. This will be established by their flexible schedule posted in that respective classroom.

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING POLICY:

The State of Illinois requires that CUDDLE CARE INC and all members of child care institutions be on the lookout for, and report to the State and appropriate authorities all suspected cases of abuse to a child.

At CUDDLE CARE INC our center and staff are mandatory reporters of Child Abuse. All incidents or suspected incidents will be turned over directly to the DCFS investigation. We are not allowed to do our own investigation and are required by law to report anything of a suspicious nature. It is advised that clients make the staff aware of any lingering bruising or other visible injury to minimize suspicion of child abuse or endangerment.

The following steps are to be taken if a staff member is suspected of child abuse:

- A staff member who has a situation or investigation pending should immediately notify the Director or most senior leadership staff member in the building.
- The person who suspects abuse should bring it to the attention of the Director or most senior leadership staff member in the building.
- The supervisor will check on the complaint and if they agree that there may be abuse, the supervisor will report the incident to DCFS and our State licensing authority.
- We will then follow their advice regarding whether to suspend the staff member

If a staff member is founded in a case of child abuse, we will take the following steps:

- We will allow the staff member to appeal the decision
- The Director or an appointed member of the leadership staff will meet with the individual to go over the incident and form an opinion as to its validity and/or consequences to the Center and the individual.
- Based on the advice of our licensing agent, we will either suspend the staff member or allow them to continue their job until the appeal is completed.
- The staff member will meet with the Director or an assigned member of the leadership staff during this time and steps will be taken to ensure that there will not be any problems.

If after the appeal the decision is still founded, we will take one of the following steps based on the advice of our licensing agent:

- The staff member will be terminated from their position at the Center, or
- We will inform the parents that we have a staff member who has a founded child abuse on record. We will also let the parents know what the charge was.

TRANSPORTATION POLICY:

Parents are responsible for their child's transportation to the center and for arranging their own car pools. CUDDLE CARE INC will provide transportation for field trips as the opportunities arise. Parents will be notified about field trips in advance and written permission will be obtained. The center complies with all State laws that pertain to motor vehicles as well as transporting children who are enrolled in a licensed child care center. The transportation policy in its entirety is found in section K of this Handbook. Parents will also need to fill out the form on Page Z-13. This form should be re-done annually.

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS:

CUDDLE CARE INC complies with the minimum insurance coverage as suggested by our independent agent. For more information concerning policies and liability see management.

ADDITIONS AND CHANGES:

CUDDLE CARE INC reserves the right to edit or adapt the policies in this handbook as the needs arise. The center will make all changes and additions available at the time these changes are made. Clients and customers will be notified of these changes through the normal written communication system of the center at the time they are made effective.

155 E. 144th Street, Riverdale, IL Cuddle Care Infant Toddler Center
159 E. 144th Street, Riverdale, IL Cuddle Care Child Care Center
4800 S. Lake Park Avenue, Chicago, IL Cuddle Care Academy
13700 S. Stewart Ave, Riverdale, IL, Cuddle Care Scholars (George Patton School District #148)

10/04/2017