St. Joseph's Childcare Center

Parent Handbook

St. Joseph's Childcare Center

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Tampa, FL 33607

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OUR MISSION

To provide an innovative, safe and nurturing environment every day for the children in our care, while offering peace of mind to their parents and a tangible return on the investment to our clients.

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Today Care
Children's Center

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the St. Joseph's Childcare Center, a center serving the families of employees of St. Joseph's Hospital, affiliates and the community. The St. Joseph's Childcare Center is operated by TodayCare Children's Centers; a company that specializes in the development and management of employer-sponsored childcare programs.

TodayCare Children's Centers, in conjunction with the center staff, has developed a program to meet your needs as working parents and the developmental needs of your children. Because St. Joseph's Hospital financially supports the center, we can offer a high-quality childcare program that is affordable and convenient to you as you work at St. Joseph's Hospital or its Affiliates.

The Parent Handbook is intended to provide helpful information about the philosophy and operational policies of the Center, and lay out the changes due to the Covid-19 pandemic situation, which is unprecedented and constantly evolving, so all changes included in this handbook will remain as the "new normal" until further notice. We will make sure that all changes are realistic and feasible for staff and children by following Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines as well as those put forth by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP).

Our goal is to provide children with a safe, fun and nurturing environment in which they may grow and learn.

We hope this handbook will be useful to you as you prepare to enter your child in the program. Center management is available to answer any questions you may have about the program.

Thank you for sharing your child with us.

Sincerely,

Judy Simpson,
Pres/COO

Yey Guzman,
Center Director

Who We Are...

St. Joseph's Child Care Center is part of **TodayCare Children's Centers,** a privately held corporation headquartered in St. Louis, MO. Formed in 1998 by a group of physicians as Get Well Centers.

The focus was on developing a model program to serve mildly ill children for the families of key employers in and around Nashville. The Get Well Center in Nashville opened in April 1999.

In June 2000 this program expanded to include back up, or drop-in childcare, under the trade name "TodayCare." After successfully demonstrating the capability to operate a model mildly ill and back-up program, the company expanded its services in 2001 to include managing full-service childcare programs in conjunction with providing either mildly ill or back-up childcare. We officially changed our name to TodayCare Children's Centers in 2002.

TodayCare's goal is to become a national company offering a full range of innovative and flexible childcare services to employers. To accomplish this goal, in 2001 TodayCare recruited a management team with a proven track record in developing and managing quality childcare programs for many different industries and clients. They are leading the national expansion of the company in providing a full range of childcare services for clients interested in a personalized solution to their employees' childcare needs.

Our senior management team has worked in the early childhood field for over fifty years combined, with over half of that time in the employer-sponsored field. They bring expertise in managing contract services and delivering the highest quality programs in the childcare industry.

TodayCare Children's Centers Program Philosophy

The purpose of TodayCare Children's Centers is to provide employers, their employees, and their employees' children with childcare solutions which:

- Meet the developmental needs of children.
- Meet the work and family needs of working parents.
- Address the management and productivity concerns of the employer.

We believe the concerns of employees and employers can best be addressed when the care and development needs of the children are met.

We believe in a family approach to childcare. We recognize and respect parents as the most important influence in the lives of children. It is our aim to work closely with parents as we assist in the care of their children. Parents have the right and responsibility to share in decisions about their children's care and development. We know that supporting the family is critical to the effectiveness of our work.

Childhood is a special time. The first five years of life are referred to as the "critical learning period." Children learn through play, through exploration of the environment, and through interaction with others.

We value each child as an individual, with his or her own needs and interests. Development takes place in an orderly sequence, and we respect each child's individual developmental timing. TodayCare Children's Centers curriculum features special activities designed by our child life specialist to foster each child's optimum potential.

A child's development is multifaceted and includes social, emotional, physical and intellectual development. The interactions and activities at TodayCare Children's Centers are geared toward fostering in each child a positive self-concept and self-esteem. A child must feel emotionally safe before he or she can learn and grow effectively.

TodayCare Children's Centers do not believe in or practice corporal punishment or other frightening and humiliating discipline techniques. At those times when a child needs guidance from inappropriate behavior, redirection or natural consequences are used. Positive behavior is always rewarded after any guidance technique is used.

We believe the childcare center staff is one of the most important factors determining a quality experience for children and families, so we employ only the best and brightest child development professionals. We value experience in-group care of young children and formal child development training. Each staff member must be a caring, nurturing individual and must complete TodayCare Children's Centers" own training series prior to their actual involvement with children in our programs. The staff is supervised daily and evaluated regularly. Nurturing and caring staff is even more important in a back up care environment. It is important that each child who visits our center become comfortable in the environment. Staff members receive a great deal of support for the important work they do, which keeps staff turnover very low.

We believe the environment is critical to quality childcare. Besides a healthy, safe environment, we strive to create a happy environment as well. We have incorporated special design features and equipment to complement our curriculum goals and activities. Above all, we believe that environment should feel good to all those involved. We try to maintain a caring atmosphere that helps children and families feel supported by the center in their daily lives.

Our goal for each center is to provide services that reflect this philosophy and which follow NAEYC national accreditation standards for quality childcare programs.

Infant Program ...

Infancy is the time when trust, self-worth, and independence/dependence are established. Our priority with each baby in our infant rooms is to provide a safe, nurturing environment. Each infant is assigned a primary caregiver to promote bonding and foster communication with each parent.

The chosen caregivers are warm, nurturing individuals with experience in caring for young babies. All caregivers go through an extensive training program that includes principles of child development, TodayCare policies and practices, and proper techniques in caring for infants in a group setting.

Toddler Program ...

Toddlers are moving towards increased autonomy as new skills emerge. They enjoy constant movement as well as new activities and challenges. A consistent schedule, nurturing and patient teachers, and a safe environment rich in activities are keys to successful toddler programs. Promoting language development, learning self-help skills, developing inner controls and positive social skills are the goals for the toddler years.

TodayCare Children's Centers uses the guidelines defined in **Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs** (published by NAEYC) and **The Creative Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers** as the basis for its infant and toddler caregiver/teacher orientation and training program.

Preschool Program ...

Preschoolers are independent, active and eager learners. Research clearly shows that preschoolers learn best by "doing," or through interactive play in an environment that is rich in experiences and exploratory opportunities. Our primary curriculum and training tool for the preschool classroom is **The Creative Curriculum for Preschool**. This curriculum validates what current theory understands as appropriate practice in early childhood learning.

Each day has a schedule that includes group times (circle time, story time, etc.) as well as center time or child choice time. Teachers are trained to look for the "teachable moments" as they move through the schedule of activities. They serve as facilitators, constantly interacting and encouraging children's interests and explorations, supporting learning through encouraging language development, mathematical reasoning, and scientific thought.

ENROLLMENT

Eligibility

Enrollment is open in the following categories:

- A **Team Member family includes one parent** employed by St. Joseph's Hospital, St. Joseph's Children's Hospital, St. Joseph's Women's Hospital, St. Joseph's Home Health Department, Diagnostic Center, or Same Day Surgery Center, who also lives in the same household as the enrolled child.

- An **Affiliate family includes one parent** employed by Health Point Management, South Florida Baptist Hospital, John Knox Village or Team Members of St. Anthony's Health Care or Morton Plant Mease Health Care Centers who also lives in the same household as the enrolled child.

- **A Community family** is a customer not employed by any of the agencies listed above. Community spaces are only available from 6:30 am to 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday attendance.

Before enrolling any new child for the first time, parents or guardians must schedule an appointment with the Director or Assistant Director for a tour. We believe this provides both the parent and the Administration the opportunity to clearly convey their expectations about St Joseph's Child Care Center and go through our enrollment package one-on-one. Upon the decision to enroll your child, parents or guardians will be provided with an application, tuition and financial agreement, all health and emergency forms, as well as a copy of our handbook.

Enrollment is confirmed by submitting the enrollment fee, and completion of enrollment forms. If there is a waiting list for the age group in which you require care, enrollment will be offered to the parent with the earliest date of application (the date the Center receives the application). However, priority will be given to children whose siblings already are enrolled at the Center. Full time children have priority over part time and drop-ins.

Baycare Team Members will always have priority of enrollment, then Affiliates and finally the community parents.

St Joseph's Child Care Center will offer full-time and part-time care for all children except infants and 1 year olds.

Nondiscrimination Policy

Admissions to St Joseph's Child Care Center will not be denied on the basis of race, color, religious belief, national origin, disability, gender, or any other legally protected category. Nor shall any child be subjected to discrimination or excluded from participation in any program or activity.

Children with special needs will be accepted as long as we can fully meet the child's needs and the needs of the group with reasonable accommodations. In all cases, they must be able to participate and substantially benefit from our program without risk to themselves or other children.

Enrollment and Registration Procedures

Upon acceptance of an enrollment offer, parents will complete a registration packet to provide the following information that will help us help your child adjust to out-of-home care:

- Enrollment Registration Application*
- Child's Current Physical Examination * {HRS Form # 3040) Child's Current Immunization Record * (HRS Form # 680 or #681) Emergency Contact Information Form
- Parental Childcare Agreement Form* Allergy Alert Form*
- Authorization to Release Information/Photograph Payroll Deduction Authorization form (If Applicable)
- Enrollment fee

(*Required by the Hillsborough County Childcare Licensing Program, which monitors and licenses childcare centers.)

Each year during the month of October, you must re-register your child/(ren), which includes filing out a new enrollment packet to ensure that all information is up to date and signing that you have received a new copy of the parent handbook, and Distracted Adult and Flu Brochures.

To ensure that our computerized records remain up-to-date, parents must advise the Center of any changes to the following information:

- Contact Information.
- Allergy Alert Information.
- Names of persons authorized to pick up your child in the event you are detained
- Names of authorized persons to be contacted in the event your child becomes ill or injured.
- Changes to your child's schedule.
- Any information that would help your child's teacher provides the best care possible for your child.

Orientation Tours

Due to COVID-19 pandemic, we are not doing walk-in tours. However, since no one knows more about the children we care for than their parents do, once we offer a spot, we schedule an orientation tour with each parent to obtain important information that will help us best care for your child. During the tour, you will spend time with your child's primary teacher, tour the facility, complete any necessary paperwork, and review Center procedures.

Please be candid regarding your expectations and provide as much information as possible about your child that will help us meet his or her needs. Your input is both welcome and vital.

Waiting List

When the Center reaches maximum capacity enrollment for each age group, we will implement a waiting list. Applications for enrollment will be placed in the order that they were received. If the child has a birthday, he or she will be transferred to the next classroom's waiting list in the same date that you put yourself in the waiting list first. This means that your placement position could change.

St. Joseph's Child Care Center doesn't warranty a spot for the sibling of your enrolled child at the time you need it, due to space restrictions.

Priority will be given according to the following criteria:

- St. Joseph's Team Members will receive priority on the waiting list.
- Affiliates (other Bay Care Network facilities, etc.) will receive second priority.
- Community families will receive third priority.

Within each of these priority groups, priority enrollment will be granted on the following criteria:

- 1st - Siblings of children already enrolled.
- 2nd - Full time care needed.
- 3rd - Part-time care needed.

When a space becomes available, the Center will notify you, after which you will have 24 hours to respond, and 48 hours to complete enrollment. If you cannot complete enrollment within 48 hours, you may opt to pay the enrollment fee and the appropriate weekly tuition rate to guarantee the space. If you decline an offer of enrollment, you will be removed from the waiting list, and another enrollment application with a new inquiry date will be required if you are still interested in enrolling your child at another date.

LEVELS OF CARE

The Center offers many levels of care to meet the diverse childcare needs of parents.

- Full time care (up to 50 hours of care weekly).
- Part-time care (up to 24 hours of care weekly).
- Back-up/drop-in care (up to 12 hours in one day), **only when the space is available**.

Full Time

- Full-time care is defined according to your work schedule.
- 4-5 days/8 hour shifts. Care cannot be extended beyond 50 hours a week.

Or

- 3 days/12 hour shifts. Care cannot be extended beyond 50 hours a week.

Part-Time

For Baycare and Affiliates children, our part-time scheduling is as follows:

- 3 days per week at 8-hour shifts or
- 2 days per week at 12-hour shifts.

For Community children, our part-time scheduling is as follows:

- 3 days per week at 8-hour shift.

Part time is offered only if there is availability in the center. Part time is set days each week. If you use days other than those scheduled, they will be considered "drop in" and you must call to determine if space is available and pay the daily drop-in fee for that day. At the time the center becomes full and full time spaces are needed, part time families will be given the option of converting to full time status or relinquishing the space. There is no family discount for part time enrollees.

Drop In/Back Up Care

Children are not accepted at school during the time period between 11:00a.m. and 2:30p.m. If you have an appointment and your child is not going to be able to come to school by 11:00a.m., please keep your child with you until 2:30p.m., which is the time that your child can be accepted again.

"Temporary" or "emergency care" is arranged for all parents based on space availability. You should call ahead for reservations, but you also may inquire about same day availability. **Children must be pre-registered, have a signed part time policy statement** and have all health records up-to-date to participate in the Drop In/Back-Up Care program. If you expect to use this service, please ensure you have completed this requirement in advance. This is only available to children ages two years and older. The enrollment fee per child/per year is required to enroll in this program.

This service is only for healthy children. We don't have special accommodations for sick children.

TUITION, FEES & DISCOUNTS

Enrollment and Registration Fees

A $85.00 non-refundable enrollment fee is due upon enrollment. In addition, an annual non-refundable re-enrollment fee is due by October 1 every year, unless your child was enrolled in June or after, in which case the re-enrollment fee will not be changed until the following year.

Tuition Fees and Payment Policies

Payment is due weekly on Monday morning when you drop off your child, or the first day the service is provided if your child is absent on Monday, whichever applies. **A fee of $10 per day, per**

child, will be assessed for all payments received later than Monday.

If your child is absent during the entire week and we don't receive the payment by Friday, you will be charge $50.00 dollars late fee, per child, on the following Monday, and an additional $10.00 late fee, per child, each additional day.

The charge for community parents after 6:00 p.m. is $20.00 flat fee, per child, until 6:30 PM. After 6:30 PM the late pick-up charge $2.00 per minute, per child, in addition to the previous $20.00.

Team members and affiliates will be charged at the rate of $2 per minute, per child, after 8:00 p.m.

The School Readiness and VPK programs don't pay tuition if the children are absent for more than three (3) days in the month, without a doctor's note or any other documentation that justify the absences. Therefore, parents that fail to provide us with the proper documentation will be responsible to pay the fees not paid by the programs.

Parents will be charged the full tuition amount on the weeks that the VPK program does not run (Thanksgiving week, Winter/Christmas break and Spring break). St. Joseph's Child Care Center will waive the fees for the other days that the VPK program is not running.

All tuition is due regardless of sickness, behavioral/disciplinary removal, vacations, weather-related closings, or holidays (including Thanksgiving, Christmas, Spring Break and COVID related closings).

If you need to terminate your child's enrollment, a two weeks' notice must be given to the Center Director in writing via email or letter; otherwise you will continue to be charged your weekly tuition. No reimbursement of tuition will be granted.

A fee of $35.00 is charged for returned checks. Checks or money order are to be made payable to TodayCare Children's Center. Payroll deduction and auto pay is optional unless we receive two NSF checks. If that is the case, you will be required to use payroll deduction or auto pay. Payroll deduction covers tuition for the week you receive your St. Joseph's paycheck and the previous week. Payroll deductions are implemented at the start of a payroll cycle only. Therefore, any charges incurred prior to the payroll period must be paid by check, cash or money order.

Sibling Discount

Parents with more than one child enrolled in the Center will receive a sibling discount for each additional child after the first enrolled. The discount is $5.00 per week of the youngest child's tuition.

Payment Methods

Payment for full or part-time care will be made by payroll deduction, auto pay, cash, check or money order. Tuition is collected 52 weeks of the year. There are no reductions for vacations, absences, etc.

Tax Statements

Each year we provide a statement of the amount you paid the previous year for childcare, upon request. This is a **free service** to our clients whose accounts are current. Any delinquent accounts will be gladly accommodated as soon as your account is current with us. We are required by the Internal Revenue Service to provide you with our name and federal identification number. These are posted in the front office lobby.

ABSENCES, WITHDRAWALS AND TRANSITIONS

Vacation and Absence Policy

The center budgets for tuition on a year-round basis; therefore there is no reduction for holidays, absences, or vacations. Center costs continue for these days, and you must keep your child's tuition payments current in order to hold your child's space for your return after an absence. If you choose to withdraw your child due to an extended absence, we cannot hold your space. Your child will be placed on the waiting list according to the date of notification of intent to withdraw.

Termination of Childcare

Please provide at least two weeks written notice (four weeks, if possible) of your intent to withdraw your child from the Center. If timely notification is not received, a fee equal to the rate for two weeks of care will be assessed. If you notify us of intent to withdraw, and another parent has paid the registration fee for that space, you cannot rescind your date of withdrawal.

The Center may require parents to withdraw their children when:

- Parents abuse the Policies & Procedures of the Center i.e., failure to pick up an ill child within one hour of time notified, negligence in updating medical records, or failure to pay all tuition and late fees, etc.
- The child's physician recommends withdrawal.
- Parents are unwilling to cooperate with the Center staff in the best interest of the child as determined by the Director and the Administrative staff member.
- After repeated attempts to correct inappropriate behavior, a child continues to disrupt the learning process of the group and/or poses risk of harm to self or others.
- The child purposely and maliciously damages Center property.
- The child is verbally abusive including repeated use of inappropriate and offensive language.
- Other circumstances deemed justified by the Center Director.

If withdrawal is deemed necessary due to one of the reasons listed above, the Center Director will provide parents a two weeks' notice of termination of care whenever possible, except in instances of involuntary dismissal of a St. Joseph's Hospital employee and/or a child has damaged

center property, hurt another child or a staff member.

When a St. Joseph's Hospital team member leaves employment with the hospital, they may be subject to withdrawal from the center. Team Resources will make that decision. If they are allowed to continue enrollment in the center, they must immediately begin paying the Community rate.

Transition to a New Classroom

Children will be transitioned to the next class after their birthday, **only** when they are developmentally ready. During the transition week the tuition fee will remain the same.

The transition period is as follow:

Monday:	9:00 am – 11:00 am
Tuesday:	9:00 am – 11:00 am
Wednesday:	9:00 am – 11:00 am
Thursday:	9:00 am – Pick up
Friday:	9:00 am – Pick up

The children's teacher will bring them to their new classroom at the time of transition each day for the week. Parents will drop off their child in the current class during the transition period, and then to the new class the following Monday. The tuition fee will change effective that week.

Infants will **NOT** transition to the Young Toddlers Classroom, until they are able to stand by themselves, and begin taking steps. Two year old children will **NOT** transition to the Young Pre-K Classroom, until they are potty trained.

OPERATING PROCEDURES

Hours of Operation

The Center is open Monday - Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. for team members and affiliates, and 6:30 to 6:00 p.m. for community parents 52 weeks per year, with the exception of established holidays.

Center Holidays

- Christmas Day
- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day

If a Holiday falls on a Saturday or a Sunday the center will close on either the Friday before or the Monday after the Holiday as decided by center management prior to the holiday. Parents will be notified accordingly.

There could be special days in which the Center might closed at 2:00p.m. such as Christmas Eve, New Year's Eve (if they fall on a week day), Good Friday or hurricane warning. If that is the case, the parents will be notified prior to the day, unless it is an emergency.

Please make arrangements to pick up your child before closing time. If you are going to be late due to unforeseen difficulties, please notify the Center as soon as possible. A back-up system for pick-up is recommended and very useful during those times when you get detained. Be sure to notify the Center in writing in advance of anyone authorized to pick up your child.

Extended care is available for community families until 6:30 pm daily for an additional cost of $20.00 rate per day/per child (this is a flat fee regardless the amount of time the child is in our care during those first 30 minutes). After 6:30 pm a flat rate of late pick-up fee of $2.00 per minute/per child will be charged automatically to your account.

Baycare team members or affiliates will be charged a late pick up fee of $2 per minute per child, if you pick up your child(ren) beyond the stated closing time (8:00 PM). We appreciate our teachers who work later shifts and intend for them to go home at their scheduled time.

All late pick-up fees are due the following day prior to dropping your child off at the center.

Weekly Care Schedule

Each week it is important to sign up for the hours you need to use the center. All children, regardless of FT/PT status must sign up every Monday for the following week. The Center uses this information to create a staffing pattern to meet our low child-teacher ratios and maintain accreditation quality standards.

Security

The Center is protected by a security access system. Upon enrollment, you will receive instructions on your child in/out at the front desk. All persons picking up and dropping off must sign in the enrollment book on the front counter for safety and accountability.

Parents who have children enrolled in the VPK and School Readiness program are also required to sign those books at pick up and drop off time every day.

All hospital team members and affiliate's badges will be given security access. Parents who do not work at St. Joseph's will need to ring the doorbell for access. Please review and inform anyone you authorize to pick up children about the following rules, which are designed to ensure the safety of all the children in the Center.

All children must be signed in and out in the sign-in book. All parties that you have authorized to pick up your child will need to sign the book or books, and clock the child in or out.

- **All persons entering the Center may be asked to show photo identification.**

- **Always notify the Center in advance and in writing if an adult who is not on our pick-up list is to pick up your child. Include the adult's name and address as shown on their Identification and the date and time the adult will pick up your child.**

- **All persons (other than the parent/guardian) authorized to pick up your child will be asked to check the child out in the office before picking up the child. They will be required to show their driver's license if the management doesn't know them.**

- **Whenever exiting or entering the building if you do NOT know the person behind you, DO NOT LET THEM ENTER. Close the door and let them ring the bell. This protects all children from potential harm.**

Keep your child's emergency information up-to-date and let the Center know if your daytime phone number has changed, even if it is a temporary change.

If an unauthorized person attempts to pick up your child, you will be called. If this person acts suspiciously or is hostile, Security will be called. No child will be released to an unauthorized person without written parental or guardian consent.

In the case of separated or divorced parents, the law stipulates we cannot determine which parent may pick up the child. We must release children to either parent regardless of which parent has enrolled the child unless the custodial, enrolling parent has a court order. Copies of court orders must remain in the child's file at the Center. Please inform the Center about any problems related to the custody of your child.

Children will not be released from the premises without an adult escort. Do not send an older sibling in to pick up your child in your place, unless that sibling is 18 years old or older, and is authorized **in writing** to pick up your child.

Safety and Emergency Procedures

We do everything possible to minimize accidents through various safety programs, facility inspections, routine maintenance and consistent policies and procedures. We will provide you with written documentation in the event your child is injured while in the Center's care.

Emergency drills for evacuation and severe weather are conducted monthly and plans are posted in each classroom of the Center. In the event of a sudden storm or emergency that prevents you from getting to the Center, an authorize person should pick up your child. In the unlikely event the Center is damaged and declared unsafe, you will be contacted immediately and evacuation plans will be put in place to enlist the appropriate professional authorities (fire, police, medical) and move the children to safety where they will await your immediate arrival.

Smoking

St. Joseph's Hospital is a Tobacco-Free Campus. Smoking is prohibited on the hospital grounds at all times. Additionally, Hillsborough County Childcare Licensing prohibits Tobacco use in the Center and on the grounds at all times. For the safety of the children, please refrain from tossing cigarette or cigar butts on the grounds or in the parking lot.

Parking

Parking is available in front of the childcare facility along the circular driveway. Please pull all the way forward when you are pulling in to make room for other families dropping off. Also, do not park on the left side of the driveway as that blocks others from exiting the center drop-off area.

Licensing and Accreditation

St. Joseph's Childcare Center complies with city and state, health, fire and building regulations and adheres to State of Florida and national accreditation standards for room and playground space, staff to child ratios, and program equipment and learning materials. Licensed by the Hillsborough County Childcare Licensing Program and the Department of Child and Families, the Center follows accreditation standards for early childhood programs as identified by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Parent's Role

A parent's role in quality child care is vital:

- Inquire about the qualifications and experience of child care staff, as well as staff turnover.
- Know the facility's policies and procedures.
- Communicate directly with caregivers.
- Visit and observe the facility.
- Participate in special activities, meetings, and conferences.
- Talk to your child about their daily experiences in child care.
- Arrange alternate care for your child when they are sick.
- Familiarize yourself with the child care standards used to license the child care facility.

Quality Child Care

Quality child care offers healthy, social, and educational experiences under qualified supervision in a safe, nurturing, and stimulating environment. Children in these settings participate in daily, age-appropriate activities that help develop essential skills, build independence and instill self-respect. When evaluating the quality of a child care setting, you should consider the facility's quality indicators related to activities, caregivers, and environment.

Quality Activities

- Activities are children initiated and teacher faciliated.
- Activities include social exchanges with all children.

Quality Caregivers

- Caregivers are friendly and eager to care for children.
- Caregivers accept family cultural and ethnic differences.

Quality Environments

- Environments are clean, safe, inviting, confortable, and child-friendly.
- Environments provide easy access to age-appropriate toys.

www.myflfamilies.com/childcare

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

For additional information, please visit www.myflfamilies.com/childcare or contact your local licensing office.

This brochure was created by the Department of Children and Families in consultation with the Department of Health.

KNOW YOUR CHILD CARE FACILITY

Know Your Child Care Facility - General Requirements

Every licensed child care facility must meet the minimum state child care licensing standards pursuant to s. 402.305, F.S., and ch. 65C-22, F.A.C., which include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Valid license posted for parents to see.
- All staff appropriately screened.
- Maintain appropriate transportation practices (if transportation is provided).
- Provide parents with written disciplinary and expulsion practices used by the facility.
- Provide access to the facility during normal hours of operation.
- Maintain minimum staff-to-child ratios.

Health Related Requirements

Emergency procedures that include:

- Posting Florida Abuse Hotline number along with other emergency numbers.
- Staff trained in first aid and pediatric cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) on the premises at all times.
- Fully stocked first aid kit.
- A working fire extinguisher and documented monthly fire drills with children and staff.
- Medication and hazardous materials are inaccessible and out of children's reach.

Ratios

Age of Child	Child: Teacher Ratio
Infant	4:1
1 year old	6:1
2 year old	11:1
3 year old	15:1
4 year old	20:1
5 year old and up	25:1

Training Requirements

- 40-hour introductory child care training.
- 10-hour in-service training annually.
- 0.5 continuing education unit of approved training or 5 clock hours of training in early literacy and language development.
- Director Credential for all facility directors.

Food and Nutrition

Post a meal and snack menu that provides daily nutritional needs of the children (if meals are provided).

Record Keeping

Maintain accurate records that include:

- Children's health exam/immunization record.
- Medication records.
- Enrollment information.
- Personnel records.
- Daily attendance.
- Accidents and incidents.
- Parental permission for field trips and administration of medications.

Physical Environment

- Maintain sufficient usable indoor floor space for playing, working, and napping.
- Provide space that is clean and free of litter and other hazards.
- Provide sufficient outdoor play area.
- Maintain sufficient lighting and inside temperatures.
- Equipped with age and developmentally appropriate toys.
- Provide appropriate bathroom facilities and other furnishings.
- Provide isolation area for children who become ill.
- Practice proper hand washing, toileting, and diapering activities.

To report suspected or actual cases of child abuse or neglect, call the Florida Abuse Hotline 1.800.962.2873

STAFF

Teacher/Child Ratio

Group	Age	Teacher/Child Ratio	Group Size	Total spaces in each age group
Infant	6 wks-l yr	1:4	8	16
Young Toddler	1-2 yrs	l:6	12	24
Older Toddler	2-3 yrs	1:10	20	20
Young Pre-K	3-4 yrs	1:15	25	25
Older PreK	4-5 yrs	1:20	25	25
VPK Program	4 yrs.	1:11	20	20

Director's Role

The Director is responsible for the overall administration of the Center. The Director of St. Joseph's Childcare Center is Yey Guzman. She can be contacted by email at geisha.guzman@baycare.com, and by phone at (813) 870-4182.

Assistant Director's Role

The Assistant Director is responsible for the overall administration of the Center in the Director's absence. The Assistant Director of St. Joseph's Childcare Center is Nathalie Jabouin. She can be contacted at nathalie.jabouin@baycare.com, and by phone at (813) 870-4182.

Teacher's Role

To teach effectively, teachers must consider the dynamics and needs of the group as well as individual characteristics and needs of each child. Teachers use their understanding of child development to create the learning environment, plan activities, establish schedules and work with children individually and in small groups. Our philosophy encourages teachers to respect and value the differences among children with regard to their cultural and ethnic backgrounds, abilities, temperaments and gender. In order to assess each child's interests and abilities, we provide a variety of activities, thereby allowing children to make choices. This is an important step toward promoting positive behavior.

CURRICULUM

Overview

As defined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, "Curriculum is an organized framework that delineates the content that children are to learn, the processes through which children achieve identified curricular goals, what teachers do to help children achieve these goals and the context in which teaching and learning occur." We take this definition one

step further in that we believe everything we do in the classroom and on the playground is learning and thus part of our curriculum. Every contact we have with a child is an opportunity for learning. Though we have lesson plans and daily activities, curriculum cannot be just what is planned or taken from a book. We believe children learn from meaningful experiences that occur often and are relevant to their lives. NAEYC calls this a "developmentally appropriate curriculum." The curriculum that is used throughout the center is Creative Curriculum.

Classroom Assignment

The Director will assign each child to a classroom and a group. The assignments are based on a number of factors such as teacher's schedules, current assignments, which teacher's skills would best meet your child's needs, child age, etc. Each teacher is responsible for a particular group of children within a classroom. The teacher will work closely with you and with your child. The teacher observes and records information about the children in their primary group.

Recommended Dress

Busy, creative, learning and play can be messy regardless of the age of the child. We use washable paints and smocks to cover clothing, but we cannot guarantee spills and stains will be avoided. Please dress your child in clothing that is washable, durable and labeled with permanent marker. If you notify us when you have a special appointment after the childcare day, the teacher will be happy to change your child prior to pick up.

Closed toed shoes must be worn in school. For your child's safety, we recommend sturdy shoes, such as tennis shoes. **Thongs, sandals, crocs, and jellies or smooth soled shoes are not permitted.** Water shoes may be brought for "water play days". Teachers will assist children in changing into these for the water experience.

Parents are responsible to maintain labeled changing clothes placed inside a Ziploc bag at all times, as well as multiple underwear for children that are being potty trained. St. Joseph's Child Care Center will NOT provide changing clothes for children. If your child has an "accident" and doesn't have changing clothes, you will be responsible to bring extra clothes or pick up your child immediately.

Drawstring, Jewelry, and other articles hung around the neck.

Children are not permitted to wear any shirts, jackets, sweatshirts, jewelry or article that is tied around the neck. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure compliance with this safety policy by sending children to the Center with appropriate clothing. Hooded drawstring clothing presents a major safety hazard for children. The cord can become caught while a child is climbing, sliding or engaged in other active play and result in choking or other serious injury. The same risk is associated with necklaces, lockets, keys or other articles hung around the neck.

Discipline

Each staff member recognizes that children are at different stages of their development and in learning self-discipline. Teachers use discipline in a consistent manner, based on the understanding of the individual needs and development of the child. Positive techniques of guidance that include anticipation and elimination of potential problems, redirection, modeling, natural and logical consequences, and encouragement of appropriate behavior will be used throughout the day to minimize behavior problems in the classroom. Clear limits are set and followed consistently in the classroom with the needs and developmental capabilities of the children in mind.

Teachers provide opportunities for the development of social skills that include helping, negotiating, cooperating, talking about feelings and solving interpersonal problems. Children are encouraged to evaluate a problem and come up with possible solutions with the help of the teachers, if needed.

Corporal punishment is unacceptable as a means of discipline by any staff member. Children will not be punished by spanking or other corporal punishment or be subjected to cruel or severe punishment, humiliation or verbal abuse. Children will not be deprived of meals, or rest as a form of punishment. Children will not be punished for soiling, wetting or not using the toilet.

We believe it is our responsibility to provide children with positive guidance and in our experience, most children will respond well to our approach. In the event a child does not respond, we will notify the parents and work closely with them to develop a plan to help the child gain self-control and a positive attitude toward his peers and teachers.

Rest time

Rest time or naptime is a very important part of your child's day. It provides needed rest and relaxation, a time for reflection on the day's activities and recharging batteries for more fun later in the day. Each child is furnished a place and designated time to rest each day. Please let your child's caregiver know about any factors that may affect your child's rest schedule, such as a late bedtime or early awakening.

Children need routines in order to function effectively in a group setting, and that includes sticking to a regular bedtime and wake up time as much as possible. Because of this, children **are not accepted** at school during the time period between 11:00a.m. to 2:30p.m. If you have an appointment and your child is not able to come to school by 11:00a.m., please keep your child with you until 2:30p.m., which is the time that your child can be accepted again.

Please do not ask us to keep your child awake during rest time. Licensing requires that all preschool children have a rest time, and be allowed to nap if needed.

- **Infants**: Staff members communicate regularly with parents of infants to determine current nap schedule. Daily reports include number and length of naps during the day. Cribs and sheets are provided.

- **Toddlers**: Typically, this age group is ready to begin a schedule of one nap per day. Our scheduled rest time is after lunch. Toddlers begin to use cots instead of cribs.

- **Preschool**: Once children have rested for at least one hour and it is determined that they are not sleepy, preschool children are offered a choice of quiet activities. Cots and sheets are provided.

Children may bring a naptime blanket that, he/she finds comforting at rest time. This item must be small enough to be stored in your child's cubby in a bag. **Parents are expected to take their child's blanket home each Friday to wash it.**

Outdoors Play

Children need fresh air and exercise, so we provide outdoor time for children every day, twice a day, weather permitting. Please ensure that you check weather conditions and send appropriate outdoor wear (i.e. long sleeve tops, long pants, jackets, etc.). A medical permission form must be completed before we can apply sunscreen to your child.

It is our policy that if a child is too sick to go outdoors, the child is too sick to be at the Center. We cannot honor requests to keep a child inside while his or her class is outdoors. However, teachers will monitor conditions and limit the time children are outside to ensure they are comfortable.

Birthday Celebrations

Please check with your child's teacher to discuss plans for celebrating your child's birthday at the Center. Celebrations are typically held in the afternoon after rest time. At no time can Latex balloons be brought to the Center because of the danger they present to children when broken. Mylar balloons are acceptable.

If you want to provide a treat, it must be store bought, in the original container, and should **never** contain anything with any type of nuts. This is a **nut free** environment, and we might have children with severe allergy reactions to this product.

Arrival and Departure Procedures

Our facility is operational from 6:00am – 8:00pm, Monday through Friday for Baycare employees and affiliates, and 6:30am - 6:00pm for community parents.

Parents have to sign the attendance sheet at arrival and departure EVERY DAY. This is a Licensing requirement.

Parents who have children enrolled in the VPK and School Readiness program **MUST** sign in and out their children every day, using their full signature. At the end of the month, the parent that signed the application for those programs have to sign the attendance sheet.

It is mandatory to send these attendance sheets to the VPK and School Readiness office for accountability. A parent that fails to provide proper documentation to justify absentees will be responsible to pay the fees not paid by the programs.

Children will NOT be accepted in school from 11:00a.m. to 2:30p.m. (including infants). If you have an appointment and your child is not able to come to school by 11:00a.m., please keep your child with you until 2:30p.m., which is the time that your child can be accepted again.

Drop-Off Procedures

At the moment, adults and school age children are allowed to get into our building without masks. Before you enter the hallway, you are **required** to use the hand sanitizer station, and wash your hands immediately upon entering your child's classroom.

Parents dropping off infants **MUST** wear shoe coverings and take off their shoes before entering their child's classroom. Your child should be taken out of the car seat before entering. If you want to leave your car seat, it will be placed in the closet between both infant room classrooms. It is your responsibility to label your car seat with your name or child's name, to avoid confusion.

If the hospital or CDC changes the Covid-19 protocols again, you will bring your child into our lobby (just inside the first set of doors), and all adults and children over the age of 5 will be REQUIRED to wear face covers. In that case, our check-in staff will do a visual assessment before allowing you into our lobby. You and your child(ren) will get your temperature taken and logged. If it is below 100.4F, you will be allowed to bring your child(ren) to the hallway, outside the correspondent classroom.

We will also ask that the designated drop-off and pick up person not be a "vulnerable" person (older person such as grandparent or person with a serious underlying medical condition).

Pick-Up Procedures

Anyone entering the lobby to pick up their child must wear a face covering/mask, if the hospital or CDC changes the Covid-19 protocols.

Parents picking up infants **MUST** wear shoe coverings or take off their shoes before entering their child's classroom.

Visitors

Outside programming will still be suspended as part of the Covid-19 protocol for preschool children (such as vision screening, enrichment activities, etc.), until it is considered safe to reactivate these activities. Children who receive therapies or outside services may continue if the special teacher/therapist/outside resource passes screening procedures and follows established protocols consistent with the full-time caregivers/staff.

Since visitors will not be allowed in the classrooms until further notice, special

teacher/therapist/outside resources will be offer the teacher's lounge to carry with their service.

Enrichment Activities/Special Events

The enrichment activities or special events/gatherings will be limited for now. However, we will be able to do some outdoor activities such as Earth Day planting, parades and fall festival, as long as the parents come to the playground through the gate.

VPK graduation will be held in the VPK classroom. Due to the available space, Fire Marshall and Licensing protocols, **only two family members** will be allowed to attend. Thank you in advance for respecting our guidelines. You may film and/or face time the ceremony in order to share it with other family members.

NUTRITION

Meals and Snacks

The Center offers breakfast, lunch, two snacks and dinner per day for non-infant children as part of the weekly tuition, and following the CDC guidelines. These meals meet the minimum daily nutritional requirements. Menus are planned in consideration of the Accreditation Standards and the American Heart Association. The menus are posted in the office lobby, and in every classroom. Children show individual preferences for certain foods and even go on food jags. However, research shows that children will meet their physiological needs if offered a wide variety of appealing foods over time. Please do not be concerned if your child doesn't eat at a certain time.

Breakfast is served from 7:00 AM to 8:00 AM; morning snack is served at 9:00, lunch between 11:00-11: 30, and mid-afternoon snack between 2:30 and 3:00. This food is provided as part of your tuition. If you arrive after 8:00 AM, please serve your child breakfast at home. **We will not serve breakfast to your child after 8:00 AM.**

Dinner is provided to all children who remain at the center after 6:30 PM. The charge for community parents after 6:00 p.m. is $20.00 flat fee, per child, until 6:30 PM. After 6:30 PM the late pick-up charge for each child is $2.00/minute.

We do not accept lunch boxes from home because of a lack of space, time required to heat food, and to avoid conflicts with others, unless the child has a special diet prescribed by his or her doctor. In this case, a doctor's prescription is required and the nutrition guidelines should be followed (see page #27).

Food Allergies

We are an entirely **nut-free** facility. If your child has an allergy to any foods, please be sure that it has been indicated in your child's paperwork and put in writing. This should be given to the teacher **AND** director. All allergies will be posted in the classrooms and the kitchen.

We will not provide a special milk for children that are lactose intolerant, but, since serving milk

with the meals is a requirement, parents are responsible to provide a bottle of special milk for their child. This milk will be kept in the kitchen's freezer.

Infant Feeding

We feed infants on their own individual schedule based on the child's needs and as per Hillsborough County Childcare Licensing Standards. For children six weeks to 12 months, parents must provide food and formula. All bottles and food items must be labeled and have lids. Cereal is not permitted in bottles, by licensing regulations.

The Center will provide meals to infants that are starting to eat regular food, as long as we have authorization from the parents.

Nursing mothers should coordinate the baby's nursing schedule with the caregiver in order to facilitate the baby's and mother's needs. Nursing mothers also may provide supplemental bottles.

A private nursing facility is located between our two infant rooms. Nursing mothers must wash hands upon arrival and wear foot coverings or take out their shoes during the entirety of their time in the Infant Room classrooms.

Special Dietary Requirements

If your child requires a special diet for medical, religious or cultural reasons, please inform the Center, and provide us with an official documentation to justify the need. **Only in those cases parents may send a sack lunch as an option for any meal**, but there is not reduction in tuition. This sack lunch foods should not need pre-heating or refrigeration, since we do not have space available in our refrigerator or time to heat it up. Food provided by parents must meet NAEYC and childcare licensing standards. Please see the list of acceptable/unacceptable foods below.

You may be required to provide meals and snacks, depending on the circumstances. You are welcome to take your child away from the Center for lunch. Please notify the teacher in advance if you wish to do that.

Nutrition Guidelines

NAEYC standards require that our curriculum include teaching children healthy eating habits. Studies show that after eating sugar a child's immune system drops immediately, making them more susceptible to airborne germs. In order to keep children healthy we enforce the following nutritional guidelines for bringing breakfast snacks or lunch. Foods must be easy to swallow.

Acceptable Foods	**Unacceptable Foods**
Fresh/Dried Fruit	Soda
Cooked/Raw Vegetables	Raw Carrots (For Toddlers)
{Sliced, Cut Lengthwise)	Chips, Cheese Doodles, Doritos, etc.
Cheese Slices or Sticks	Candy (Gummy Bears, Hard Candy,)

Pretzels (Broken For Toddlers)
Granola Bars
Variety of Sliced Breads
Muffins
Bagels
Wholesome Cereal (Non-Sugary)

Sugary Cereal
Doughnuts
Raisins (For Toddlers)
Nuts (For Toddlers)
Whole Grapes
Items Containing Chocolate

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Medication

Often medicine can be prescribed for morning and evening doses versus several times per day, thereby avoiding the need to administer medication at the Center. We prefer that you discuss this with your physician and make arrangements accordingly if possible.

However, if necessary, management can administer medicine under the following guidelines:

- **Medication will be administered one time per day per child only.** Medicine will be given as your physician prescribes and will be administered by management. Please ask your physician to prescribe accordingly. Management is not always available several times per day and consequently it is easy to miss a dose. This policy will assure the consistency of administering medicine to all the children who need it.

- We cannot administer any type of medication without a physician's current prescription (or written prescription approval by health personnel for non-prescription drugs with specific dosage) and a signed Medication Authorization form to be completed by the parent. Forms are available in the office lobby.

- **Medication must be provided in the original container and labeled with the child's name, date, directions, and physician's name.** The Center will not administer medication after the expiration date nor will we administer medication to a child that was prescribed for another child.

- **Never leave medication in your child's diaper bag or backpack.** All medication needs to be left with Center management to be handed to your child's teacher upon entering your child's classroom. If medication is not to stay at the center, it is the parent's responsibility to remember to take medications home with the child at pick up time.

- **Upon enrollment please discuss any allergies/medical conditions your child has with center management and note them in "allergy/medical condition list" section of the enrollment packet.** It is the parents' responsibility to keep us informed of changes in their child's health. Any medications your child may need upon an allergic reaction will be stored in a labeled container at front desk.

Extra Hygiene Measures and Procedures

- Handwashing: As soon as students, parents and staff arrive to the classroom, they will wash their hands properly. Hands will also be washed throughout the day and more frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Hand sanitizer will be used for our older classes when soap and water is not available. Sanitizing stations are located throughout our facility.

- Sanitizing/Disinfecting: All hard surfaces will be wiped down throughout the day, before and after use as well as at the end of each day. Any toys that go into a child's mouth will be put into the disinfecting process like usual. All surfaces and toys will be sprayed prior to leaving the room throughout the day.

- Mask wearing: St. Joseph's Child Care Center will follow the hospital's guidelines regarding the use of masks and other pandemic protocols. If the hospital establish the use of masks again, parents, school-age siblings and teachers will be required to wear masks at all times while in the building. Staff will not have to wear masks while eating in the center.

- Social distancing: Each class is considered a "family". Each "family" will socially distance from other "families" to ensure safety. Classes will not intermix and will be with the same teachers as much as possible. Staff will take their breaks outside of classrooms while keeping socially distant to the best of their abilities.

Personal Belongings

Children may not bring in any personal belongings aside from what is approved. No toys or personal items, other than a small napping blanket and extra clothes from home will be permitted at this time. Bedding will be sent home on the last day of each week, and it is **mandatory** that bedding be laundered before returning the next week.

Diapers, wipes, and diaper rash creams should be labeled with the name of the child. Jackets and extra clothing should be labeled with the name of the child using a permanent marker on the tags. Extra clothing should be placed in a Ziploc bag, with the name of the child as well.

ILLNESS AND INJURY

If your child becomes ill or injured during the day, you (or a person you authorized in writing) will be notified and must pick the child up **within one hour**. Your prompt response is important to your child's health and well-being and that of all the children enrolled in the Center. In extreme emergencies, immediate treatment will be administered as determined by emergency medical personnel, and you will be responsible for the full payment of any and all medical fees incurred. Please be sure all emergency numbers are up to date at all times.

Health Care Policies

We understand that it is difficult for a parent to leave or miss work. Therefore, it is suggested that alternative arrangements be made for occasions when children must remain at home or be

picked up due to illness. If your child has any of the following conditions or symptoms, we will contact you to pick up your child from the center (**within ONE HOUR**) in order to prevent contagion of other children and staff, and to provide comfort to your child.

Exclusion Criteria

We cannot accept a child in care who exhibits any of the following symptoms:

- Fever … Temperature of 100.0. Teething is not an exception, as teething fevers are low grade (below 100.0). Parents may not administer any fever suppressant that would mask a symptom of contagion. Fever is a sign of infection and a doctor must see the child.

- Children with fever of 101.0 or above must leave the center and may not return until they have been fever free for at least a 24 hour period without fever suppressant medication.

- Vomiting … 2 episodes. If the child has a major episode or is experiencing other symptoms such as fever, lack of energy or is complaining about stomach pain, the child will need to be pick up within **one hour** of parent being notified. Vomiting does NOT have to be accompanied by a fever.

- Diarrhea … 2 episodes OR uncontrolled diarrhea (stool runs out of diaper or underwear, or child is unable to get to the toilet on time repeatedly), the child will need to be pick up within **one hour** of parent being notified. Diarrhea does NOT have to be accompanied by a fever. Diarrhea is defined as "loose watery stools".

- Any skin rash, lesion, or wound with bleeding or oozing of clear fluid or pus.

- Conjunctivitis, also called "pink eye", itchy or red eyes, and eyes with white or yellow discharge.

- Mouth sores with drooling.

- Any condition preventing the child from participating comfortably in usual program activities.

- Difficult or rapid breathing or sever wheezing.

- A stiff neck.

- Any illness or condition requiring one-on-one care (including watching a sleeping child).

- Scabies, head lice or other infestations.

- Constant, uncontrolled nasal discharge or constant uncontrolled productive cough (raising phlegm).

- Unusually dark urine and/or gray white stool and yellowish skin or eyes.

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- Mouth sores with drooling.

- Any condition preventing the child from participating comfortably in usual program activities.

- Difficult or rapid breathing or sever wheezing.

- A stiff neck.

- Any illness or condition requiring one-on-one care (including watching a sleeping child).

- Scabies, head lice or other infestations.

- Constant, uncontrolled nasal discharge or constant uncontrolled productive cough (raising phlegm).

- Unusually dark urine and/or gray white stool and yellowish skin or eyes.

- Any contagious illness that is reportable to the Department of Public Health.

When a child goes home with any of the above symptoms, a doctor (other than the parent, if the parent is a healthcare professional) **must** signed a note in a paper with a letterhead from his or her office, specifying clearly that the child is not contagious. This note must be received by management, BEFORE the child can return to school. This might be done in person, by FAX or email.

If the child is sent home with Conjunctivitis ("pink eye"), itchy or red eyes, or eyes with white or yellow discharge, the child will ONLY be allowed to come back with a negative Covid test and a doctor's note since these are symptoms of the new Omicron variant.

Admission/Exclusion Due to COVID-19 Protocol

According to CDC guidelines, teachers, parents and school-age siblings **must wear** masks at all times while in the building, if the hospital re-establish that rule again.

The guidance below is based on recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and Florida Department of Health (DOH). Due the evolving nature of the pandemic, some helpful links can be found here:

CDC: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html

DOH: http://www.floridahealth.gov/

When Your Child Need to Stay Home

- **If your child, you, OR someone in your household, OR a close contact** is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath, Conjunctivitis, itchy or red eyes).

- **If your child, you, OR someone in your house has COVID-19** and has symptoms, such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath.

- **If your child, you, OR someone in your household, OR a close contact** tests positive for COVID-19 and does NOT have symptoms (asymptomatic).

- **If your child, you, OR someone in your household, OR a close contact** is PENDING a COVID-19 test result.

- **If your child, you, OR someone in your household, OR a close contact have tested negative for COVID-19,** but are experiencing symptoms (such as fever, cough, shortness of breath, Conjunctivitis, itchy or red eyes), or have developed symptoms since receiving your test results.

- **If your child, you, OR someone in your household, OR a close contact have tested negative for COVID-19,** and have no symptoms, but it has been less than 7 days since your last known exposure to COVID-19.

- Children who are obviously ill with fever, diarrhea, vomiting, green-runny nose, pus/oozing eyes, disease or condition (i.e.- ringworm, head lice, chicken pox, measles, mumps, pink eye, fever over 100 degrees, etc.) will not be admitted to the program. It is a danger to other children and staff members at our facility.

If you have any doubts about your child's health, please call us at 813-870-4182 to be sure they may attend. If your child appears to be sick or has any of the above while at school, we will notify the parent or guardian immediately, and it is necessary that the child be picked up within **one hour** of notification.

Returning to the Center After Illness (non COVID-19 related)

After a child was excluded for any of the above reasons, in order to return to the program the following conditions must be met:

- A child must be symptom free from all fever (without fever suppressant medication), vomiting and diarrhea for a full 24-hour period. Children must provide a doctor's note on letterhead to be permitted back to St Joseph's Child Care Center if barred due to illness. The doctor's note must confirm that the child or staff member can return to school because what they have is no longer contagious.

- Any child prescribed an antibiotic for a current bacterial infection must take the prescription for a full 24 hours before returning.

- A child must be able to participate comfortably in all usual program activities, including outdoor time.

- The child must be free of open, oozing skin conditions unless {1} a doctor signs a note stating that the condition is not contagious; and {2} the involved area can be covered by a bandage without seepage or drainage through the bandage.

- A child excluded because of lice, scabies, or other infestation may return 24 hours after treatment is begun with a note from a doctor (other than the parent, if the parent is a health care professional) stating that the child is larvae/nit free.

- If the child sent home with Conjunctivitis ("pink eye"), itchy or red eyes, or eyes with white or yellow discharge, provides a negative Covid test, and has being given medication during 48 hours.

If a child was excluded because of a reportable contagious illness, a doctor (other than the parent, if the parent is a healthcare professional) must signed a note in a paper with a letterhead from his or her office, specifying clearly that the child is not contagious. This note must be received by management, BEFORE the child can return to school. This might be done in person, by FAX or email.

For the health and well-being of the other children who are enrolled at the center, it is every parent/guardian's responsibility to notify the center that their child has been diagnosed with a contagious disease, such as lice, scabies, rosella, chickenpox, conjunctivitis, etc. Confidentiality

of the name of the reporting family will be maintained. Once the center is given notice we will within 24 hours notify all the families in the center that a case of a contagious disease has been reported.

Anytime a health care provider for problems or illness evaluates your child, please bring a copy of the diagnosis with recommendations concerning care to the Center to be included in your child's folder. In some cases, a physician's release will be required for your child to return to the Center. The final decision whether to exclude a child from the program is made by childcare center management.

*(These Health Care Policies were written with the guidance of the Infection Control Department of St. Joseph's Hospital and the Hillsborough County Health Department.)

Returning to the Center After COVID-19/pandemic Illness

For confirmed positive cases of COVID-19:

Children can return 10 days from symptom onset, AND 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications AND other COVID-19 symptoms are improving.

For presumed exposure to cases of COVID-19:

Children need to stay home for 10 days after your last contact with a person who has COVID-19, following latest CDC guidelines on ending home quarantine, for unvaccinated children.

Some Frequently Asked Questions

1. *My child and/or I tested positive for COVID-19, but did not experience symptoms...*
   You child can return after 10 days have passed since your positive test results were received and as long as the above pandemic metrics are met.

2. *My child and/or I tested positive for COVID-19, with no symptoms, but then started experiencing symptoms...*
   You child can return after 10 days have passed since your positive test results were received and as long as the above pandemic metrics are met.

3. *My child and/or I tested negative for COVID-19, can my child return to school?*
   Negative tests only indicate infection was not present at the time of the test, or you may have tested too early. Negative tests do not indicate you will not get sick, or will not pass the virus to others. Follow CDC metrics for ending home isolation (**10 days** after exposure) AND consult with your medical provider or the local Department of Health.

4. *My child and/or I tested negative for COVID-19, and we are not experiencing symptoms...* *
   Per CDC guidance, quarantine may be permitted to end for asymptomatic individuals OR persons who receive a negative COVID-19 test as long as:

   - The test was obtained no sooner than 5 days after exposure.

- If you remain symptom free for no less than 7 days after a negative test result.
- If you remain symptom free 10 days from the date of exposure.

5. *My child and/or I was in close contact with someone who just tested positive for COVID-19...*
   If your child and/or you were in close contact with a member of your household, or a close contact, within 48 hours of them becoming symptomatic, or receiving a positive test result, you should quarantine at home for 10 days after the date of last exposure to the positive COVID-19 case.

   The CDC recommends waiting at least 5-7 days after the date of last exposure to a positive COVID-19 case to get tested for COVID-19.
   If you and/or your child become symptomatic within those 10 days, or get a test and receive a positive result, follow the guidelines for positive COVID-19 cases.

6. *My child and/or I was around a close contact of someone who tested positive for COVID-19...*

   Per CDC guidelines, closely monitor yourself and/or your child for symptoms of COVID-19. You do not need to self-quarantine unless you develop symptoms or if the person identified as a "close contact" develops COVID-19.

*These guidelines are based on simple COVID-19 exposure limited to one-on-one infections, not complex ongoing exposures (such as multiple household members who cannot self-isolate from each other). Additional quarantine measures may be necessary and TodayCare will work with the local Department of Health to treat these instances on a case-by-case basis.

Reporting COVID-19 Exposure

We ask that all parents let us know of any potential exposure immediately.

A *potential exposure* means being a household contact or having close contact within 6 feet of an individual with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 for at least 15 minutes.

The *timeframe* for having contact with an individual includes the period of 48 hours before the individual became symptomatic, or received a positive COVID-19 test result.

If there is a positive case of COVID-19 in a child or an adult who has been present in the child care center, we will inform the Hillsborough County Department of Health and parents with children enrolled at the center.

If there is a positive case of COVID-19 in a household member OR close contact of a child or adult who has been present in the child care center, we will inform the Hillsborough County Department of Health as well as parents with children enrolled at the center.

Daily Admission Screenings

As daily health checks are conducted (temperature and verbal questioning), if any student exhibits a temperature and/or has any signs/symptoms of illness or has been around anyone with signs of illness, they will not be allowed to enter the Center.

Parents will be encouraged to report illness within their household, children, and themselves during drop-off symptom screening to help inform decisions related to site closure. Absences among children will be monitored according to CDC guidance.

If a child becomes ill at home, or any family member tests positive for COVID-19, or has been exposed to someone with COVID-19 symptoms or a confirmed or suspected case, they should not come to school and must notify school officials.

If a child becomes ill at school with symptoms such as fever, cough or shortness of breath at school, he or she will be isolated and informed to go home or to healthcare facility depending on how severe their symptoms are and follow CDC guidance for caring for oneself and others who are sick. Families of children will be notified immediately to pick up their child within **one hour**. They must remain at home until the COVID-19 test results are received.

Teachers, parents and school-age siblings must wear masks at all times while in the building.

Closing Procedures for the Center Due to COVID-19 Exposure

The Center may be closed [for up to 10 days] if there is a laboratory confirmed COVID-19 case or probable case who was present in the child care program building within 48 hours prior to developing COVID-19 symptoms, and had close, prolonged contact, as defined by the CDC, with program staff and/or children.

In some circumstances, it is possible that individual classrooms or families will be able to quarantine, and the Center can avoid a full closure.

During the closure, the specific classroom/s or parts of the building will be detail cleaned and sanitized before staff and/or children return.

Children and staff affected by a childcare program closure due to a COVID-19 case or probable case should quarantine at home for a minimum of 10 days per CDC guidelines and monitor their health.

Center closures during the pandemic may or may not affect tuition responsibilities.

What is the influenza (flu) virus?

Influenza ("the flu") is caused by a virus which infects the nose, throat, and lungs. According to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the flu is more dangerous than the common cold for children. Unlike the common cold, the flu can cause severe illness and life threatening complications in many people. Children under 5 who have the flu commonly need medical care. Severe flu complications are most common in children younger than 2 years old. Flu season can begin as early as October and last as late as May.

How can I tell if my child has a cold,or the flu?

Most people with the flu feel tired and have fever, headache, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, and sore muscles. Some people, especially children, may also have stomach problems and diarrhea. Because the flu and colds have similar symptoms, it can be difficult to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone. In general, the flu is worse than the common cold, and symptoms such as fever, body aches, extreme tiredness, and dry cough are more common and intense. People with colds are more likely to have a runny or stuffy nose. Colds generally do not result in serious health problems, such as pneumonia, bacterial infections, or hospitalizations.

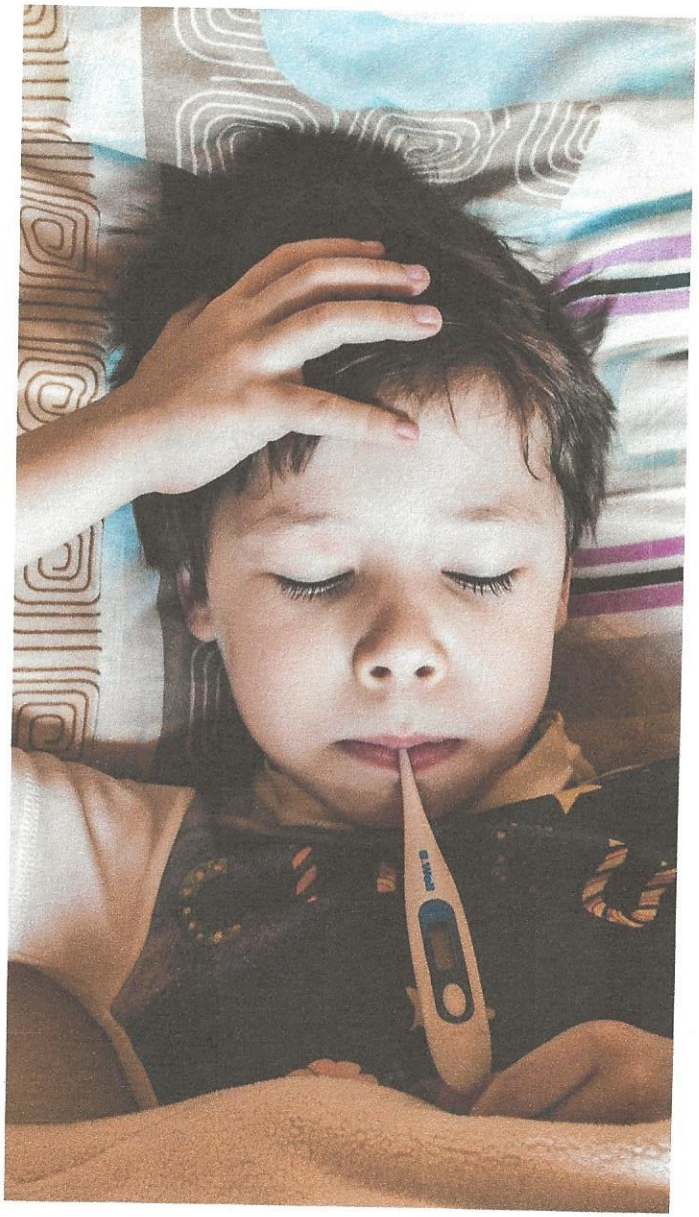
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

For additional information, please visit www.myflfamilies.com/childcare or contact your local licensing office.

This brochure was created by the Department of Children and Families in consultation with the Department of Health.

THE FLU

A Guide for Parents



What should I do if my child gets sick?

Consult your doctor and make sure your child gets plenty of rest and drinks a lot of fluids. Never give aspirin or medicine that has aspirin in it to children or teenagers who may have the flu.

Call or take your child to a doctor right away if your child:

- Has a high fever or fever that lasts a long time
- Has trouble breathing or breathes fast
- Has skin that looks blue
- Is not drinking enough
- Seems confused, will not wake up, does not want to be held, or has seizures (uncontrolled shaking)
- Gets better but then worse again
- Has other conditions (like heart or lung disease, diabetes) that get worse

How can I protect my child from the flu?

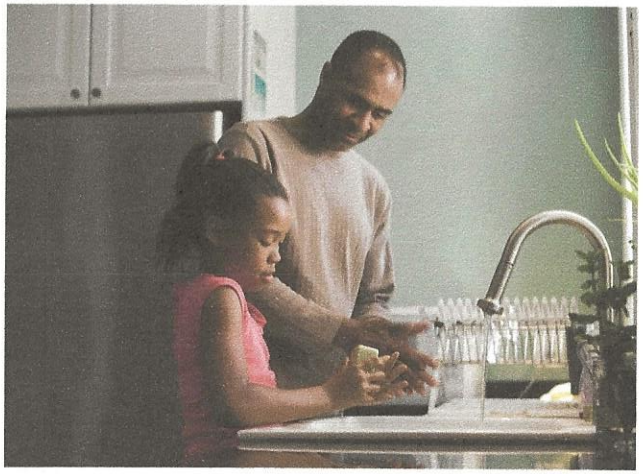
A flu vaccine is the best way to protect against the flu. Because the flu virus changes year to year, annual vaccination against the flu is recommended. The CDC recommends that all children from the ages of 6 months up to their 19th birthday receive a flu vaccine every fall or winter (children receiving a vaccine for the first time require two doses). You also can protect your child by receiving a flu vaccine yourself.

What can I do to prevent the spread of germs?

The main way that the flu spreads is in respiratory droplets from coughing and sneezing. This can happen when droplets from a cough or sneeze of an infected person are propelled through the air and infect someone nearby. Though much less frequent, the flu may also spread through indirect contact with contaminated hands and articles soiled with nose and throat secretions.

To prevent the spread of germs:

- Wash hands often with soap and water.
- Cover mouth/nose during coughs and sneezes. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands.
- Limit contact with people who show signs of illness.
- Keep hands away from the face. Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.



When should my child stay home from child care?

A person may be contagious and able to spread the virus from 1 day before showing symptoms to up to 5 days after getting sick. The time frame could be longer in children and in people who don't fight disease well (people with weakened immune systems). When sick, your child should stay at home to rest and to avoid giving the flu to other children and should not return to child care or other group settings until his or her temperature has been normal and has been sign and symptom free for a period of 24 hours.

During the 2009 legislative session, a new law was passed that requires child care facilities, family day care homes and large family child care homes provide parents with information detailing the causes, symptoms, and transmission of the influenza virus (the flu) every year during August and September.

For additional helpful information about the dangers of the flu and how to protect your child, visit: www.cdc.gov/flu/ or www.immunizeflorida.org/

SEVERE WEATHER/HURRICANE

In case of a severe weather warning and Hillsborough County Schools close, childcare will notify the parents to be reachable, in case they need to pick up their children. If during the day the tropical storm is upgraded into a category one hurricane, the administration will notify the parents to pick up their children. Should this occur, a prompt response from parents would be greatly appreciate to avoid danger for our families and staff.

A sign will be posted on the front door if the school is forced to close due to a hurricane warning.

YOUR CHILD'S FIRST DAY

What to Bring

There are a number of things you should bring with your child to the Center. Be sure to **label everything** with a permanent marker. These should include:

- Two complete changes of clothes labeled with the child's name (this is needed for all ages) preferably folded and sealed in a gallon sized Ziploc plastic bag.
- Multiple underwear if your child is being potty trained.
- Disposable diapers, pull-ups and training pants as needed. We provide ample storage so you can provide a month's worth of diapers at a time (large diaper packs). We change children at least every two hours as required by Hillsborough County Childcare Licensing, so plan on 6 to 10 diapers for an infant and at least six diapers for toddlers and 2-year-olds, a day.
- Wipes in a large container (if needed) as well as couple week's supply that can be stored at the center along with the child's diaper supply.
- Bottles and formula as needed. Formula must be pre-made in bottles permanently labeled with child's first and last name. Each bottle must be capped and non-breakable.
- Infant baby food if not on table food.
- Small blanket if needed for napping.

What Not to Bring

Please leave toys, food, gum, candy, pets, toy weapons, jewelry and money at home. All children share the learning materials at the Center as part of the learning experience. When children are not concerned about their toys becoming lost or broken, they are able to participate more fully in our educational environment. **We are not responsible for any items lost or broken.**

PAREN TAL INVOLVEMENT

Communication

The supervision of your child's growth is our joint responsibility. We want to know and understand your child, so feel free to discuss with us any problems your child may be experiencing.

Communication between the Center Staff and parents is vitally important. Here's what you can expect from us:

- A parent's bulletin board is available in each classroom.
- Parents may briefly discuss their child's day with the primary teacher during arrival and departure times but are encouraged to call during rest time for lengthier discussions. We request that you respect the children and teachers' interaction time by not calling except at lunch or except in emergency situations.
- Parents can expect written communication on a regular basis (flyers, newsletters, etc.) which are posted in our app and the school's doors.
- Teachers will share daily notes of classroom activities. For the infants we send home a hard copy, and the rest of the school post their daily notes in our app.
- All teachers prepare lesson plans, which are posted in your child's room and our app for your review. Talk with your child each day about his or her experiences.
- Assessments are done twice a year. At Conferences, we will discuss your child's progress, accomplishments and improvements needed at home and at the center. Parents can take comfort in knowing that we will bring to your attention any needs or concerns we may observe in your child. Suggestions for additional screenings, consultations, medical intervention, etc., may be offered for your consideration.

Likewise, we need to hear from you. Be assured that no matter what your concerns are, our staff considers your feedback extremely important and it never will reflect negatively on the type of care your child receives.

Things to Remember

Please remember the following:

- Specific instructions concerning feeding, health, medicine, etc., must be in writing and signed by you.
- When you have questions or concerns, please address them first with your child's teacher. If the teacher's response is unsatisfactory, please contact a member of management. Both are familiar with the activities of your child's area and with the policies and procedures of the company. It usually is best to address your concerns with the Center first because the staff is in the best position to respond immediately. However, the Director can provide you with phone numbers

to reach TodayCare Corporate Management if you feel your needs have not been adequately met.

- Parent surveys are distributed at least once per year in order for us to gather feedback as we begin to develop objectives for the coming year. If you have any questions or suggestions, please notify your child's teacher or a member of management. Open lines of communication will enable us to provide you with the service you expect and value.

Parent Meetings and Visits

We like to have an open door policy at St. Joseph's Childcare Center, welcoming and encouraging parents to visit the Center at any time. However, as long as we are experiencing the pandemic effects, parents and other visitors are asked to limit your time inside the classrooms. We also offer phone conferences.

Parent Advisory Board

The Parent Advisory Board works closely with Center management and teachers to provide feedback on services that meet family needs. It serves as a sounding board for new ideas and services. Each year parent representatives from each classroom serve on this team. If you have concerns, etc. to bring to the Team ask your classroom representative to share these at the next meeting. Volunteers, as needed, form special event committees. If you wish to serve on the Parent Support Team or a special event committee, please notify a member of Center management. The highlights from each monthly meeting are posted on the Parent Board located in the center hallway.

Parent Volunteers

Your participation in the classroom is a special treat for the children and teachers, and we like to invite parents to "help out" whenever their schedule permits. However, due to Covid-19 protocol, we are not allowing visitors in the classroom at the moment.

We may resume this practice in the future, once it is considered safe. When that happens, you may wish to bring a special activity for the children or simply participate in the activities underway, after coordinating these activities with your child's teacher.

Parent Resources

Each classroom has a Parent's Resource binder with activities and ideas developmentally appropriate for your child, to do at home.

Resource books are also available in the Center Parent Library located in the staff room. Parents may feel free to suggest topics they would like to see added to our library.

AMENDMENT OF RULES AND REGULATIONS

The foregoing policies and procedures are not intended to be all-inclusive. We reserve the right to modify, revise, interpret, apply, suspend or discontinue the foregoing policies and procedures and/or the program itself, in whole or in part, in our sole and exclusive discretion. Any verbal or written representation contrary to the content of this guidebook are invalid and should not be relied upon by any user of the St. Joseph's Childcare Center.

SUMMARY

Prior to enrollment the Center will need:

- $85.00 registration fee
- Current Immunization Record (HRS form 690 available from physician)
- Current Physician's Evaluation {HRS form 3040 available from physician)
- Completed Enrollment Application
- Completed Emergency Information Form
- Custody papers, restraining orders, etc., if applicable
- Allergy information, if applicable
- Dietary restrictions, if applicable
- Developmental history

The operating hours of the St. Joseph's Childcare Center are from **6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. for team members and affiliates, and 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. for community parents**, Monday through Friday, 52 weeks per year, except established holidays.

A flat $20.00 late pick up fee, per child, will be charged to c ommunity members after 6:00 p.m., and an additional $2 per minute, per child, after 6:30 p.m.

Team members and affiliates will be charged at the rate of $2 per minute, per child, after 8:00 p.m.

Children will NOT be accepted in school from 11:00a.m. to 2:30p.m., including infants. If you have an appointment and your child is not able to come to school by 11:00a.m., please keep your child with you until 2:30p.m., which is the time that your child can be accepted again.

An annual $85 enrollment fee per child is required at the moment of enrollment and each year after that, and is due October 1.

Parents are responsible for updating immunization and physical forms before they expire as mandated by state regulations.

Parents or authorized adults (18 and older) must check their child in every day via the Daily Attendance log located in the reception area of the Center and then escort the child to his or her classroom. **Written** permission for someone other than a parent or legal guardian to pick up a child is required in advance. At no time will a child be released to an unauthorized individual. Telephone permission are not acceptable.

In case of an emergency, please call the school to ask for a phone number where you can send a text message to authorize somebody to pick up your child, if you cannot send an email to the Director or Assistant Director, or if the emergency occurs after they finished their shift (4:00p.m. for the Director and 5:00p.m. for the Assistant Director).

Tuition payments can be done in cash, money orders, checks, auto pay, and payroll deduction (**only for Team members**). Auto pay and payroll deductions should be authorized by a signed Authorization Form, available from the Center. Parents may not alter the condition of the payroll deduction unless the Center Director has executed a new form. Payroll deductions will be implemented, at the start of a payroll cycle only; therefore any charges incurred prior to the payroll period must be paid by cash, check or money order.

Payment is due weekly on Monday morning when you drop off your child, or the first day the service is provided if your child is absent on Monday, whichever applies. **A fee of $10 per day, per child, will be assessed for all payments received later than Monday.**

If your child is absent during the entire week and we don't receive the payment by Friday, you will be charge $50.00 dollars late fee, per child, on the following Monday, and an additional $10.00 late fee, per child, each additional day.

Parents will be charged the full tuition amount on the weeks that the VPK program does not run (Thanksgiving week, Winter/Christmas break and Spring break). St. Joseph's Child Care Center will waive the fees for the other days that the VPK program is not running.

Parents who have children enrolled in the School Readiness and/or VPK programs and are absent for more than three (3) days in the month, without a doctor's note or any other documentation that justify the absences, will be responsible to pay the fees not paid by the programs.

Cost for returned checks is $35. Nonpayment of more than two weeks will result in your child being discharged from the center and their space being filled.

Parents may voluntarily remove their child from the Center with at least two weeks' notice. If notification is not received, a fee equal to the rate for two-weeks of care may be assessed. There is no discount for absences, illness, vacations, or holidays.

Parents must pick up their child within **ONE HOUR** upon notification that the child is sick or injured. If the child is sent home with Conjunctivitis ("pink eye"), itchy or red eyes, or eyes with white or yellow discharge, the child will **ONLY** be allowed to come back with a negative Covid test and a doctor's note since these are symptoms of the new Omicron variant.

We do not accept lunch boxes from home because of a lack of space, time required to heat food, and to avoid conflicts with others, unless the child has a special diet prescribed by his or her doctor. In this case, a doctor's prescription is required and the nutrition guidelines should be followed (see page #27).

Receipt & Acknowledgement of:

St. Joseph's Child Care Parent Handbook

Please read the following handbook and sign below to indicate your receipt and acknowledgement of your St. Joseph's Child Care Center Parent Handbook.

I have received and read a copy of the "St. Joseph's Child Care Center Parent Handbook". I understand that the policies, rules and programs described in the handbook are subject to change at the sole discretion of St. Joseph's Child Care Center's Administration at any time. I understand that this handbook replaces all previous handbooks.

I understand that my signature below indicates that I have read and understand the above statements and have received a copy of the "St. Joseph's Child Care Center's Parent Handbook". I understand that it is my responsibility to read and abide by the policies and programs described in this handbook.

Parent/Guardian's Printed Name Child's Printed Name

Parent/Guardian's Signature