



St. Louis

Child Development Center

A program of Catholic Charities

PARENT HANDBOOK

Center Hours

6:30am-5:30pm

Monday through Friday

2016

ST. LOUIS CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

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Emergency Cell # 423-5813

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WELCOME TO OUR CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

The staff and administration welcome you to our program and hope you will be happy that you selected us to care for your child. This handbook is designed to assist you in understanding the program and policies of our center. Both home and center have important functions to serve in educating and caring for your child. Guiding the development of a child is a cooperative endeavor. In order to provide the most supportive and responsive environment for your child it is important to have open communication between you and our staff.

After your child's transition to the center, it is important to take time regularly to let us know how you feel he/she is doing and what we can do to make your child's experience at the center meet their needs. You are always welcome to visit in your child's room. Please contact your child's teacher or the Director with any questions, concerns, or suggestions you have regarding our program.

COA-NATIONALLY ACCREDITED

The Council On Accreditation is a national accreditor of programs serving infants, toddlers preschool and school-age children. It provides objective and reliable verification that a program is providing high quality child care services. The COA accreditation process involves a detailed review and analysis of an organization or program's administrative functions and service delivery practices. All are measured against international standards of best practice. These standards emphasize services that are accessible, appropriate, based in the community, coordinated, culturally competent, evidence-based, individualized, outcomes-oriented, provided by a skilled and supported workforce, respectful of individual rights, strengths-based, supportive of partnership, child and family focused, treat all people with dignity, involve family and provider collaboration, and address child outcomes. As such, consumers, board members, funders, regulators and staff can have confidence in the credibility, integrity and achievement of the organization or program. COA is recognized by the State of Maine as a equal accreditation body to NAEYC. **Research Note:** *Research has shown that high quality early childhood education can have a positive impact on the development, academic achievement, and safety of children.*

In addition, the State of Maine has issued the center a "Level 4 Certificate of Quality" which is the highest level. The Quality Certificate entitles families to a State tax credit. Please see the Front Office for more details.

MISSION STATEMENT

The center is committed to partnering with families to provide care and early intervention programs for young children, in a learning environment that is; developmentally appropriate, nurturing and safe. We strive to foster the development of socialization skills, independence, a positive self-image, and promote the joy of life-long learning, through our relationships with children, parents, colleagues and the community.

PHILOSOPHY OF CARE

- Each child is special: an individual to be cherished and cared for.
- All children are capable of being loved.
- Children feel good about themselves when they succeed.
- All areas of a child's growth and development are important and must be honored.
- Children learn best through play and interacting with other children in a safe, nurturing environment.
- Children learn important lessons from watching adults. The staff working with the children must always be aware that they are role models for children and must present themselves in a positive manner.
- Praise and positive reinforcement will always work better than punishment in helping children shape their behaviors.
- All materials, curriculum, and strategies must be developmentally appropriate, and tailored to a child's individual needs.

The best place for a child with special needs is with other children, with supports in place to assist the child in meeting developmentally appropriate expectations

SERVICES

The center, as one program of Catholic Charities Maine, believes that the family is the cornerstone of a child's life. The services provided through this program are dedicated to supporting the child and the family in a variety of ways that include:

- The provisions of child care to enable parents to work, attend school, and/or participate in job training.
- The provision of developmentally appropriate learning experiences that meet the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional needs of children.
- Providing a warm and welcoming environment that makes children feel secure and encourages parental involvement.

All of the services provided at center are strictly non-sectarian. The program provides no religious education, and has no requirements concerning religious matters for either staff or clients. The center does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, physical or mental disability, ancestry or national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, veteran status or any other legally protected status in admission, access, treatment or employment in its programs or activities.

Interpreter Services: Interpreter services are provided for families with limited English proficiency (LEP). This service is offered in compliance with the Civil Rights Act – Title VI. Because so many different languages are spoken in our community, we are unable to have all of our paperwork translated into so many different languages. Interpreters will be provided to facilitate communication, fill out forms, have forms translated, or for a variety of other reasons. Our goal is to provide language services to every family.

Note: Families often express concern about their children learning English while retaining or continuing to acquire their home language. At the center, we strongly encourage you to use your native language with your child at home. Current research shows that very young children acquire language in the context of a relationship, and that children do best if they hear a single language from a single adult. The teachers speak English with the children at the center, and your child will acquire English through his/her experiences with the other children and teachers.

Child Screening Services: With parent permission, all children are screened using the Ages and Stages screening tool within 60 days of enrollment in the program. This provides the classroom teachers and parents with information regarding important developmental milestones for young children and assist with developing appropriate goals for the child. The screening may also identify children that could benefit from a referral for additional early intervention services. Referrals for early intervention may include speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, counseling, or educational services (developmental therapy). Screening children helps children receive services earlier and prepare them for school. Parents are encouraged to share information with their child's teacher to help complete the screening.

Child Assessment Services: Children attending the center shall be involved in an ongoing assessment process which is based on the Maine Early Learning Guidelines or a recognized evidence based assessment tool. Assessment information will be kept confidential and not released without signed parental permission. The assessment shall include, but is not limited to: anecdotal records; rating scales; checklists; work samples; informal notes; and observations. The assessment will be conducted in order to compile a portfolio for each child and to assist in planning activities for the classroom. Teachers will compile assessment data 4 times per year (Nov., Feb., May, Aug.) and offer parent conferences 2 times per year. Families will be asked to contribute to the assessment and portfolio contents. The contents of the portfolio shall always be made available to the children and their families and may be reviewed during conferences.

ATTENDENCE

In order for your child to receive the maximum benefit from the program and participate in the daily routine we request that your child arrive by 9:00 AM. If your child will be late or absent for the day please contact the office. Attendance is tracked daily and the reason for the absence is also noted. The center accepts a variety of child care vouchers: DHHS Child Care Voucher, ASPIRE and Transitional Vouchers. When a child care is being subsidized by one of these vouchers, we are required to report absences to the funding agency. If absences are excessive, the subsidy may be cancelled. If a child is ill or away on vacation, we ask that parents call us in the morning or prior to going on vacation, to let us know that the child will not be attending: this will be considered an EXCUSED ABSENCE. However, if a parent doesn't call and the child does not attend on a scheduled day, this will be consider an UNEXCUSED ABSENCE. We must report more than 2 unexcused absences or 10 excused absences/month to ASPIRE and the DHHS voucher agency.

DROP OFF AND PICKUP

Parents are responsible for their child/children at drop-off and pick-up. Upon entry and exit of the building children must be accompanied by an adult. When entering the building parents are responsible for placing the child's belongings in their cubby, escorting the child to the classroom or playground, and checking in with a staff member-please make sure a staff person **actually sees you** when dropping off and picking up your child. Checking in with a staff member also ensures that any information regarding your child's day or other correspondence for the family reaches you promptly. Your child's hours of attendance are recorded at both drop-off and pick-up times. Each child has emergency contact information both in the Office and in the classroom. This information contains the list of people who are authorized to pick-up your child. We will not let children go with unauthorized people. Until we get to know everyone who may pick-up a child, we will ask to see a picture ID, such as a Drivers License. Changes to the pick-up permission list must be made in writing, please see someone in the office for the form. In case of an emergency you can call the center and give permission for someone, not on the pick-up list, to pick-up. Please stop in the office the next day to sign the phone message.

. (Note: A parent can give permission for a minor (12 years of age or older) to drop-off and pick-up their child/children. The parent will need to fill out and sign a Parent Permission Form-Transfer of Care To/From a Minor).

Late Fee Policy:

The Center has the following late fee policy:

1. Children who are not picked up by 5:30 pm will be assessed a fee of \$10.00 for any part of the first 15 minutes and \$5.00 for each fifteen minute interval after.
2. These fees are in addition to regular weekly fees.
3. Payment for all late fees is expected by Friday of the week the fee was incurred.

Staff members are only scheduled until 5:30 PM. and have other commitments at the end of the day. You are expected to pick-up your child no later than the time that was agreed upon and documented on your enrollment agreement. If this time needs to be modified,

please see the Office Manager or Director. Repeated late pick-ups will result in a written notice and/or meeting with the Director and if not remedied will result in termination.

TRANSPORTATION

The center does not provide transportation. It is the responsibility of the parent to arrange for transportation to and from the program. **Please never leave a child unattended in your vehicle when picking up or dropping off your child.** If your child receives transportation services, it is your responsibility to contact the transportation provider to cancel transportation if your child will be absent.

SECURITY

The center has a security system. All doors to the center are locked, with the exception of the door to the playground. Each family is given a security code, which allows access to the building during hours of operation. **Please do not share your code.** We can give additional family members their own code. People who occasionally pick-up children can ring the doorbell, and after showing proper ID, will be let into the building. Please do not enter the building when staff members are not present, as it sets off the security alarm.

Confidentiality and Security of Files: Information about children in our care or formerly in our care and services that were provided to them by the program shall be kept confidential. Disclosure will be granted with written authorization from a child's legal guardian, except as otherwise specified by law. Information about children in our care or formerly in our care shall be shared with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). All special education services provided by the Center are considered to be "protected health information" and are covered under the rules of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). All children's records will be kept in locked files in a secure location.

HEALTH

. **Personal Hygiene:** The center supports personal hygiene by helping children learn proper hand-washing and how to brush their teeth. Children brush their teeth daily. Staff, visitors, and children wash their hands after coming in contact with bodily fluids such as mucus, blood & vomit including after blowing nose and coughing on hands, after handling pets or animals or any materials such as sand, dirt, or surfaces that may be contaminated by contact with animals, before attending to wounds, before meals and snack, after toileting & diapering, before handling foods, before assisting with tooth brushing, after water play, and when moving to another group that includes contact with Toddlers. Staff will also wash their hands before & after administering medication, after assisting a child with toileting, and after handling garbage or cleaning.

Food : Good nutrition is the foundation of a healthy, happy child. Candy, gum, soda, etc. are bad for teeth and destroy the appetite for more nutritious food. We prefer that children not bring sweets with them to the center. Please do not bring in food products such as;

chocolate milk, donuts, danish, etc. These items not only do not fit our nutritional philosophy of the 5210 Program. but they also hurt the feelings of other children who do not have such a snack. You are welcome to bring in food products such as: 100% juice, fruit, toast, or dry cereal. Food brought from home must be in a container labeled with the child's name and the date. To keep foods cold, please add an ice pack to their container. For celebrations, we discourage bringing in the traditional sweets such as cake and ice cream. Instead we suggest that parents bring in healthy options such as fruit, yogurt parfaits, or other items that are low in sugar, fat and sodium. Please check with the classroom teacher before bringing in any special food items for the class.

Toileting & Diapering: Teachers work closely with families to coordinate a toileting plan for each child. It is in the child's best interest if the toileting plan is followed consistently both at home and school. Diapers & pull-ups will be checked at least every 2 hours when children are awake and when they awaken. Soiled and wet diapers will be changed as soon as detected. Please make sure your child has enough extra clothing in their cubby for accidents. Parents are required to supply diaper/pull-ups. Licensing regulations require that staff **do not** clean or rinse soiled clothing or diapers. Soiled clothing (and medically necessary cloth diapers) will be immediately placed in a plastic bag to be sent home that day. Note: If cloth diapers must be used, the diaper will have an absorbent inner lining completely contained within an outer covering made of waterproof material that prevents the escape of urine & feces. Both the diaper & outer covering will be changed as a single unit.

Napping: All children will have a scheduled nap/rest time, as required by our licensing regulations. Cots and/or mats will be provided by the Center, and assigned specifically to one child. Parents are requested to provide a blanket and pillow for their child. All bedding needs to be brought home weekly for laundering.

Clothing: Children need to be dressed for indoor/outdoor play when they come to the Center. The children spend time outdoors every day (weather permitting). All children need to have appropriate clothing for outside play including snow pants, boots, hats, mittens, and warm winter jackets from the months of November to mid April. This clothing is required for cold and windy weather not just snow that can occur during these months.

Every child must have at least one extra complete change of clothing including underwear, socks, pants and shirt in their back-pack. Extra clothing is needed due to accidents, water play, or wetness from rain, mud or snow.

The center keeps a limited supply of clothing available for an emergency. At the end of the day if your child is wearing clothing please launder and return it the following day. This will ensure that we will have clean extra clothes for the children who need them.

Children are discouraged from wearing boots in the classroom. Please bring in a pair of sneakers or other shoes to wear in the classroom during the winter months. Any clothing that could be a safety hazard is discouraged.

Please label all clothing and belongings. This will assure that your child's lost or mixed up belongings will be returned when located.

Pet Policy: Pets are not allowed in the facility or on facility grounds without permission from the Director. Pets such as ferrets, turtles, iguanas, lizards, birds of the parrot family are prohibited at the center due to risk of salmonella. Any other wild or dangerous animals are also prohibited due to the risk of injury. All pets at the center or visiting the program must be in good health, free of disease, fully immunized, maintained on a flea, tick and worm control program, and be suitable for contact with children. A certificate from a veterinarian shall be provided or on file stating that the pet meets these conditions before visiting the program. Teachers supervise all contact & interactions with animals. Children with allergies to animals will not be exposed to pets. All hands will be washed after handling pets or animals or any materials such as sand, dirt, or surfaces that may be contaminated by contact with animals.

Health & Safety Training: All full time staff working directly with children are required to receive pediatric C.P.R. and First Aid certification. There must always be present a staff member in the center who is currently certified in first aid and CPR. Full time staff also receives annual training regarding the safe handling of Blood Borne Pathogens.

Immunizations: All children are required to have a Certificate of Immunization that illustrates a child's immunization status within 30 days of enrollment as required by the State of Maine's Rules for the Licensing of Child Care Facilities. This information will be kept in the child's file. If parents object to immunizations due to philosophical or religious beliefs, a written statement to that effect must be provided by the parent to be included in the child's record. (Note: A refusal to vaccinate form is available)

Health Policy: Sick children must be cared for at home. Your child cannot attend the center if he/she has had a fever, vomiting, diarrhea, draining from eyes and/or ears or an unidentified rash, with fever or behavior change. If your child becomes ill while attending the program and is determined to be too ill to be in our care you will be contacted and requested to pick your child up as soon as possible. If your child continues to have any of the above symptoms at bed time, they need to be kept out of child care the following day (note: your child must be symptom free *without* medication). The decision to send a child home rests with classroom staff, in consultation with the Director/designee.

Specific Readmission Guidelines:

Chicken Pox	May readmit when fever free and all sores have dried and crusted – usually 6-7 days after rash first appears.
Conjunctivitis	May readmit when there is no longer any discharge from the eye.
Rash	When accompanied by fever or behavior change, may readmit with physician's written assurances that symptoms are not contagious.
Open Sores	If open sores have drainage, child may return after treatment has begun– lesions should be covered if possible.

Head Lice	Parent/guardian of affected child will be notified. Child can return once treatment has been given. When child returns a head check must be performed by center staff, prior to the parent leaving. If child still has live lice or a significant amount of nits, the child will not be allowed to return.
Ringworm	May readmit after anti-fungal treatment is started – lesions should be covered if possible.
Scabies	May readmit after anti-parasitic treatment has been completed.
Strep Throat	May re-admit 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has been started and when temperature has been normal for 24 hours.

In some cases we may require a doctor's certification in order for your child to return to the program.

Staff will provide information to families both verbally and in writing about any unusual level or type of communicable disease. When children are ill, it is helpful for parents to share the symptoms with staff, to support the process of minimizing the spread of illness.

Allergies: Parents must inform the center of any and all allergies or special medical conditions affecting their children. The center will honor these needs upon receipt of proper documentation from a physician. Children's allergies will be posted in the child's room with parental permission. Parents complete a permission form for allergy posting as well as allowing the information to be shared with food preparation personnel.

Children with special health care needs, food allergies or special nutrition needs, must have an individual care plan or instructions provided by the child's health care provider, to instruct teachers how to handle the child's specific needs. This plan will be placed in the child's file. Any strategies for dealing with a child's allergic reaction must be discussed with all staff who have contact with the child.

Medication: The dispensing of medication is a serious matter. Staff may administer medication to children in the program only under the following conditions:

1. Only medications prescribed by a physician and in the original medicine container with a written, signed and dated request from the parent or legal guardian will be administered.
2. If a child is receiving a prescribed daily medication it must be provided to the center by the parent or legal guardian or the child will not be allowed to remain at the center until another supply is provided.
3. Proof of the physician's prescription may be a pharmacy label on the original container or a signed note from the physician.

4. No “non-prescription” medications will be administered to a child without a physician’s order and a written, signed and dated parental permission naming the medication and dosage frequency.
5. No injected medications may be administered by child care staff, except pre-packaged emergency medications (e.g. bee sting kits, Epipens) specifically prescribed by a physician for a life threatening condition which has been documented in the child's file.
6. The medication permission form will indicate the name of the child, name of the medication, amount to be administered, method of administration, frequency and times for administration, possible side effects, and any special instructions.
7. All medications will be stored in a locked secure area.
8. All medications administered shall be recorded on the child's medication log. The log will indicate the name of the medication, amount dispensed, by what method, time, date, and the signature of the administrator of the medication.
9. All documentation regarding the administration of medication will be retained and placed in the child’s file.

CHILD-RELATED EMERGENCIES

If a child receives a serious injury, the staff on site will determine the level of need, and take one or more of the following courses of action.

1. The parent will be notified and asked to pick the child up and make arrangements for the appropriate treatment. Staff can, if appropriate, require a note from the parent, documenting that the child was seen and treated before the child is re-admitted.
2. Staff will call 911, requesting an ambulance come to the center to treat and transport a child (if necessary) to the emergency room. The parent will be immediately contacted to inform them of what has happened (all parent numbers, along with emergency back up numbers and "permission to treat" signatures are on file in the main office and in the classroom).
3. If a parent cannot be reached, we will try contacting the emergency people the parent has listed on their application form.

To make this work the following practices will be followed:

- Emergency information will be maintained and updated as needed. Parents must notify the Office immediately and update the Emergency Form noting any change in their emergency contact data.

- All staff will know the location of the emergency information. Copies of the emergency forms will be kept in the child's file in the office and another copy in the classroom.
- Childcare staff will take the sign-in sheets and the emergency forms with them on all field trips.
- Per State Licensing: There must be present at all times a staff member in each child care facility who is currently certified in first aid and infant, child and adult CPR.
- Each room will have a fully stocked first aid kit.
- The first aid kit will be available at all times, including indoors, on the playground, and on field trips.
- An Incident/accident Report will be completed by a staff member whenever a child is injured in the program and the parent should be made aware of the event. The parent acknowledges the report by signing and dating it as does the staff person making out the report. The parent will receive the signed report and a copy is placed in the child's file. Note: If the child needed to seek medical or dental services, the report shall go to the Director to review and follow-up with if necessary.

SAFETY OF CHILDREN

Child Supervision: The children enrolled at the center are supervised by sight and sound at all times. Children will not be sent indoors or outdoors, without a staff person present. Staff will avoid situations where they are alone with one child.

Field Trips: A Field Trip Permission form must be signed by the parent/guardian for any trip off Center grounds. A field trip is determined to be any time a group of children leave the grounds for a specific destination. All field trips are local walking trips. Teachers take emergency contact information for children with them, and carry a first-aid kit & cell-phone in case of emergency.

Alcohol and Illegal Substances: The center prohibits the use of alcohol, illegal substances or unauthorized potentially toxic substances. This policy extends to any center-sponsored event. If a parent/guardian arrives to pick up her/his child and appears intoxicated or under the influence and exhibits behavior such as slurred or incoherent speech, difficulty walking, or other unusual behaviors that may indicate use of drugs and/or alcohol, staff may request the parent or guardian to seek an alternative form of transportation. The local police will be contacted to intervene if necessary. Safety of the children is our utmost concern.

Smoking Policy: The center (building & grounds) by State Licensing Regulations has to be "Smoke Free". Smoking is not allowed in the building, playground, parking lot, entrances or walkways. Individuals who do smoke must do so off grounds.

Fire Arms: firearms, pellet or BB guns (loaded or unloaded) in the center, parking lot, or on facility grounds. This policy extends to any center-sponsored event.

Fire Drills: Fire drills are conducted year-round on a monthly basis so the children will know what to expect in the event of a fire. The facility complies with State and local fire regulations and is inspected bi-annually by the State Fire Marshall's Office. Each room has two fire exits, and staff is well rehearsed in the procedures to follow in the event of a fire or building evacuation.

Mandated Reporting: Under Maine state law, the center is considered a "mandated reporter" of potential child abuse and neglect. This means that staff, like all doctors, hospital personnel, public school teachers and any other child day care in the state, is required to report any evidence that might be the result of child abuse or neglect to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

The decision on whether or not the evidence we report should lead to an investigation by the child protective unit, is made by the Maine Department of Human Services. In the event that a child is interviewed by DHHS, parents are contacted prior to this occurrence by DHHS personnel.

Center childcare staff will not:

1. Interview any children
2. Ask "leading questions" of any children
3. Do any form of investigation
4. Pre-judge any children or families

We will act as advocates for children and families whenever appropriate. It is not the intent of this law to require facilities, like the center, to act as police or investigators. It is, instead, an attempt to protect those children who are truly endangered.

In an effort to insure the safety and security of the children attending Catholic Charities Maine Child Development Centers, we are designated as Sex Offender Restricted Zones. This means that; All persons convicted of qualifying sexual offense(s) under Maine State law (17-A MRSAS261) called "**An Act to Prohibit Unauthorized Contact of Persons Convicted of Sex Offenses against Persons under 14 Years of Age with Persons under 14 Years of Age**", are prohibited from having direct or indirect contact with a child under the age of 14 on the property of Catholic Charities Maine where children under the age of 14 receive services. This includes, but is not limited to, CCM Child Development Centers & Child Residential Programs.

Because of this law we need parents to notify us immediately if any one on their child's pick-up list has been convicted of any such crime. If so, they will no longer be allowed to pick-up a child from our center. Please also be aware that you may not send a person convicted of such a crime to pick-up a child even on a one-time basis.

CURRICULUM RELATED

The center uses The Maine Early Childhood Learning Guidelines for children as the blueprint for planning and implementing a developmentally appropriate program. Each classroom emphasize creative expression and problem solving, while maintaining a balance of teacher-planned activities and those that emerge from the child's individual interest, abilities, goals and objectives. The Early Childhood Learning Guidelines focus on 4 major areas of development including Social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language. The curriculum emerges from the classroom environment. For example, the dramatic play area affords opportunity for socialization and language development. Blocks are wonderful for exploration of relative size and shape (geometric relationship) as well as fine motor manipulation. Music and movement offer opportunities for socialization, body kinesthetic, pitch and rhythm awareness and appreciation of cultures. Activities like painting or working with play dough develops interest, fine motor skills, socialization, and sensitivity to color, shape, and form. The Early Childhood Learning Guidelines are integrated, overlapping, and are supported by research about how children grow and learn.

We believe that children learn best:

- by supporting children in the context of their family and community
- by having educated teachers who understand child development and how children grow and learn at the preschool stage
- by having sensitive teachers who are knowledgeable about individual learning styles of children
- by having an organized learning environment with a variety of age appropriate materials
- by having a planned daily schedule that includes large blocks of purposeful play that is facilitated by highly intentional teaching practices
- by having planned experiences that promote active thinking and experimenting

Holidays/Celebrations, Culture, and Language: Holidays and celebrations are viewed as an important part of family life. We also acknowledge and respect diversity. We welcome families from different cultures and all faiths. At the center we strive to find a balanced approach to holidays without exaggerating the experience or ignoring it. Curriculum will not be holiday driven but will recognize individual similarities and celebrate individual differences. Some examples may be to group holiday celebrations according to the seasons and look for parallels across cultures, set holiday activities in the context of people's daily lives and beliefs, and connect them to specific children, families, and staff. The center also welcomes families to share their special family traditions with the Center. Please share with your teacher if your family speaks a language other than English or has traditions or cultural experiences that could be shared with your child's class. The program welcomes diversity and the opportunity to learn and build on our understanding of other cultures, family structure, ability, language, age, and gender in non-stereotypical ways. The more teachers know about what is unique and special about you and your child, the better they will be able to help your child grow and learn.

Physical Activity Policy: Children will engage in physical activity for a minimum of 60-90minutes each day.

- Children will spend at least 30 minutes outside each morning and afternoon session daily, unless it is raining heavily, or there is a weather advisory; such as extreme heat/humidity or a cold advisory.
- In the event of inclement weather teachers will provide physical activity time in the classroom.
- Teacher-led physical activity breaks will be provided throughout the day.
- Active play time is never withheld as a punishment.
- At least one teacher will join the children in active play every day.
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Passive Media Policy

- Passive media (television & videos) are used only as infrequent events, rather than regular, daily routines. Screen time should not exceed more than 30 minutes per week.
- Programs are previewed by a staff member prior to use to assure they are educational and age appropriate.
- Accommodations will be made to insure that another option for activity is available.
- No child is required to view the program.
- Teachers discuss what is viewed with the children to develop critical viewing skills.
- Passive media is never allowed during any snack or meal time.
- There will be no screen time for children under the age of 2 years.
- Computer screen time is limited to no more than 15 minutes per day, with no more than 2 turns per week.

Child Guidance and Discipline

All children need a safe and comfortable place to learn. Guidance occurs constantly and consistently throughout the day. Throughout the day teachers will take opportunities to teach children the skills of cooperation, team work, using words to communicate needs, taking turns, controlling physical impulses, expressing emotions in ways that do not hurt others, persistence & problem solving. These skills are best taught in the context of the days activities. Interaction with children attending the center is an opportunity for the staff to nurture and teach. It is the responsibility of all adults employed and/or associated with the program to model positive interactions for all children in our care. Teachers are a secure base of support for children, they respond promptly and appropriately (taking children's level of development into consideration) to children's; positive initiations, negative emotions, and feelings of hurt and fear by providing comfort, support, and assistance. Teachers encourage children's expression of all types of emotions, with responses that are appropriate to the individual child and situation. Teachers never use physical punishment, threats, derogatory remarks, or withhold food as a form of discipline. Children are supported as they practice the skills of entering and sustaining play, resolving conflicts, as well as problem solving, and dealing with their own emotions and the

emotions of others. Teachers do this by helping children to identify feelings, describe problems, and by offering alternative solutions. Logical consequences, such as “you will not be ready to go outside with your friends until you put your coat on”, and redirection, such as, “if you continue throwing sand you will be done playing in the sand table”, are used.

Behavior Policy: The behavior expected of all children attending any program operated by the center will be consistent with conduct expected by the community. Behavior considered appropriate for public schools, in family settings and the community will provide the basis for requirements concerning the conduct of children attending the center. Specific attention will be paid to the child’s developmental level in setting behavioral expectations. Expectations for each child will be based on the child’s developmental age, needs, and abilities.

When behaviors are of concern, a teacher will observe and document behaviors and the circumstances to identify events, activities, interactions, and other contextual factors that may predict and/or contribute to the behaviors. The teacher will then try other teaching strategies, make environmental or activity modifications to support appropriate behavior. Teachers will work with the family to develop a plan of support for the child that supports inclusion and success.

All behavioral management interventions will be based on effective practices to help a child develop self-esteem, empathy, self-control, friendliness, cooperation, and respect to assist them to get along with others and to resolve conflicts. All interventions will be employed on a continuum from least restrictive to most restrictive. All staff must employ least restrictive measures before employing more restrictive measures.

No specific intervention is prescribed for a particular incident. All interventions are to be formulated based on individual variables affecting the child. No corporal punishment is allowed.

Restraint is an extreme intervention and will only be used by a trained staff person when all other options have failed and the child is a danger to himself/herself or others. Restraint is to be used only after all reasonable options have been pursued. If a child is restrained a Behavioral Intervention Form is to be filled out as soon as possible but no later than the end of the employee’s shift on the day that the restraint was used. The Incident Reporting Form will be submitted to the Director and reviewed with the parent.

Steps in addressing behavioral needs:

- When a child is acting out to a degree that his/her safety is a concern, or the behavior is placing staff or other children at risk, the parent will be contacted. If the situation is critical, the parent will be asked to take the child home. Depending on the severity of the behavior, the parent can be asked to not have the child attend the center until support services and a behavioral plan are put into place. Exclusion could be an option. If so, the Exclusion Policy will be followed.

- If the behavior continues the parent will be requested to meet with the classroom teacher and to develop a behavior plan. The behavior plan will be implemented and all staff will be made aware of the steps outlined in the plan.
- If the behavior continues, after the behavior plan has been implemented, a meeting between the parent, teacher and a program administrator will be scheduled. All avenues to support the child will be discussed, which will include the topic: Is this the right placement to meet the child's needs?
- If all these steps have been followed and the unsafe behavior continues, the child might be asked to be excluded from the center. The final decision to exclude the child will be made by the Director-following the Exclusion Policy procedures.

EXCLUSION POLICY

The safety of the children and staff is our primary concern. Some children have difficulty in large groups of peers and need smaller child care groupings than are available at St. Louis. When children present special needs beyond our normal capacity for caring, we will make every accommodation for the child and family. However, if a child has sufficient issues: behavioral, medical or developmental, which prevents us from keeping that child or other children safe, we may need to exclude the child from the program. This decision rests with the Site Director (along with the second administrator-if present) of the center and the classroom Lead Teacher.

PROCEDURE

Prior to excluding a child enrolled in the program, the following procedure must be followed:

1. The Lead Teacher will bring any and all concerns for a child's safety and/or the safety of other children and/or staff to the attention of the Site Director (along with the second administrator-if present) Documentation through the use of Incident reports will be used to support all concerns.
2. The Site Director will make an assessment of the situation. The Site Director (along with the second administrator-if present) and the Lead Teacher, will determine and document:
 - a. The severity of the child's behavior
 - b. Any evaluations/assessments needed or already conducted.
 - c. Any contributing factors to the child's behavior (either home based or program based).
 - d. Any adaptive programming available for the child in question.
 - e. Any support/interventions in place for the child and/or the family
3. The parent will be consulted early in the process. If exclusion is a possible outcome for the child, the parent should know early on that this is a possibility.
4. If exclusion is the only option to guarantee the child or other children's safety, the Site Director will consult with Catholic Charities Maine's Director of Quality and

Compliance prior to the final decision to exclude. The timing of the exclusion will be the decision of the Site Director.

5. Whenever possible, the Site Director or the second administrator will counsel the parent as to alternative child care placements available.
6. If returning to the center is a future option, this decision will be made by the Site Director.

Parents

Parent Involvement: Parents are encouraged and welcomed to get involved with the program. There will be various opportunities for parents to participate in classroom and center wide activities over the course of the year. We encourage parents to visit their child's classroom and share areas of expertise with the children. Parents are invited to let the child's teacher know about their special talents, interests, hobbies, and cultural heritage as opportunities to provide enrichment activities in the classroom. Parents are welcome to eat meals with their child and are always welcome to assist on local walking field trips.

Parents are strongly encouraged to ask questions about their child's educational/enrichment activities. Teachers welcome input into how each child learns and takes parental comments and concerns as important information to make the child's and center's programming better. Teachers need as much information as possible from parents as they are the expert about their child.

Parents are welcome to use the lounge for relaxing and chatting with staff and other families. The Parent Bulletin Board allows us to share information and community events with you.

The center has an advisory group. The focus of this committee will be to provide a parental voice to center offerings for enrichment at the center that involve both the children and their parents. It also is a sounding board to discuss and update policies and procedures directly associated with the center.

Conferences / Parent Communication: In the fall and spring, classroom teachers conduct parent/teacher conferences concerning each child's progress. This gives the teacher and the family a chance to discuss any needs, difficulties, or concerns. These conferences are held at times to meet both parent and teacher convenience. Additional conferences may be scheduled when either parent or teacher feels it is necessary or a child enrolls after the fall conference date.

It is important that communication remains open between home and school. We communicate with parents on a regular basis by:

- posting weekly curriculum planning/events on the parent bulletin board.

- displaying and documenting children’s work and photographs of them working in the classroom, with descriptions of the process and learning involved.
- informal communication in the morning or at the end of the day about the child’s work, activities, play, or interactions.
- written communication such as letters/newsletters describing upcoming classroom events, field trips, or activities or letters related to behavior observations and/or behavior plans related to the Behavior Policy.
- Daily notes for children who are younger than preschool age.

Program Evaluation: Parents will be asked to fill out a program survey annually. The information provided by this survey will assist us to evaluate the quality of services being provided and to ensure the Center is meeting the needs of the children and families. Results of the survey will be shared in writing with all families. The results of the surveys along with other data collected will be used to make recommendations for program changes and sustaining and improving quality.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

As a Program of Catholic Charities Maine, the center subscribes to the Agency’s policy and procedure on client grievance.

The center believes in rights of clients to participate actively in their own plans of care, including the right to question how the care is being provided. Grievances from clients are regarded as important, and sincere attempts will be made to mutually resolve any and all grievances in a fair, open and honest fashion.

Note: Please see the Director of the center to voice your grievance or to provide a written grievance. The Director will notify the Office of Quality & Compliance of the grievance to assure that policies and procedures are being followed appropriately.

MAINE CHILD CARE LICENSING

To ask questions about the rules for the Licensing of Child Care Facilities or to report a licensing violation, please call: (207) 287-9300 or 1-800-791-4080.

Policies and Procedures Specific to the St. Louis Child Development Center

The Building:

St. Louis is a state of the art facility. It also is a beautiful and welcoming center with well landscaped surroundings and easy parking accommodations for all parents and visitors. The building passes all the safety and health codes as a State of Maine licensed child care center.

Special Services:

The center staff works with other agencies and service providers to insure a child's development is progressing to the best of their abilities. We contract with Child Development Service (CDS) to provide Specialized Instruction to children with Individual Education Plans. Our experienced teachers work very closely with all service providers to incorporate children's goals into the classroom.

CACFP Food Program:

The center's nutritional program emphasizes the following: establishing healthy nutritional patterns, exposing children to a variety of foods, increasing awareness of nutritional principles, providing children with experiences that reinforce nutritional principles, and the serving of nutritionally sound meals. We serve a free lunch to all the children. However, parents can choose to provide their own child's lunch, but must do so everyday. Parents are responsible in providing their child with an AM and a PM snack each day. Children 1 year and above will be served 1% low-fat milk during lunch time.

This program is based on United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Guidelines and philosophy of nutrition, as we are a participant in the Child and Adult Food Care Program (CACFP). We provide children with lunch in accordance with the required nutritional guidelines. We are required to have parents complete an updated CACFP enrollment form annually. We post the monthly lunch menu in the glass case next to the parent board in the hallway. If your child has food allergies, please make sure that you communicate your child's dietary needs with the office, who will work with you to accommodate your child's

special needs. We will ask parents to sign a permission form that will allow us to post allergy information in both the kitchen and the child's classroom.

Breakfast Policy: The center does not have adequate staffing coverage to allow children to eat breakfast at the center. The eating of any meal requires a staff person to oversee the child eating (we don't want any child to choke on a food item) and also be responsible for the rest of the children in the classroom. In addition, we have children with food allergies and supervision is needed to assure no other child has access to another child's food. Another issue is that breakfast time can be a time that the children might be outside playing and we can not provide supervision both outside and inside the classroom (if a child was eating breakfast inside). These are all valid reasons why we require that all children eat breakfast at home.

In the event your child doesn't have time to eat breakfast at home, you may pack them a breakfast meal and they will be able to eat it at our normal morning snack time with the other children.

Yearly Holiday Schedule

January	New Year's Day
	Martin Luther King Day
February	Washington's Birthday
April	Patriot's Day
May	Memorial Day
July	Independence Day
September	Labor Day
October	Columbus Day
November	Veteran's Day (<i>a teacher workshop day</i>)
December	Close 5-7 days depending on Christmas to New Year's schedule

Program also closes for 4-5 additional teacher workshop days during the year.

Closings: St. Louis CDC strives to be open every day. The program may close if the Director decides there is the need to insure staff and children's safety. If the Director closes the program, families will be notified of the closing by public announcement by 5:45 am. Public announcements will be aired on WCSH Channel 6. If the center closes early due to inclement weather this also will be aired on WCSH Channel 6 and parents will be called to come pick-up their child. Our decision to close early will be based on the safety of your child and our staff traveling in inclement weather and regional closings in our area. Note: On-line you can setup a text response from Channel 6 so if we close for any reason you will be notified by a text from the station. If you are not bringing your child to the center due to inclement weather, please call the center and let us know.

Emergency and Evacuation Procedures and Plans: St. Louis CDC will be evacuated in the event that there is a fire, bomb threat, flooding, potential flooding or other emergency situation which renders the center harmful or potentially unsafe. All children and staff and other adults will evacuate to Curros (just up the road from the center-heading back towards town-on the left hand side of the road). At that time, all parents will be called to pick up their children immediately. If parents cannot be reached, the designated adults on the emergency form will be contacted. Fire drills will be held monthly, in order to ensure that the center can be evacuated in a timely manner.

The Classroom Staffing and maximum enrollment is as follows:

Classroom	Years	Staff to Child Ratios	Maximum Group Size	Teachers
Infant	6 wks-18 mths	1:4	8	2
Toddler	18 mths-2.5 yrs	1:5	10-12	2-3
Toddler (older)	2.5 yrs-3 years	1:7	14	2
Preschool	3-4 years	1:8	16	2
Preschool	4-5 years	1:8 Max 1:9	16-18	2
School -Age	5-7 years	1:13	26	2
Special Purpose Room AM	3-5 years	1:3	12	4

The Child's Day

6:30AM-8:30AM Children arrive at the program, and are escorted to the appropriate room or playground by parent/guardian. All children are signed in on the sign-in sheets upon arrival.

8:30AM-9:00AM Morning greeting and AM snack

9:15AM-11:45AM Morning Prime Time (including group time, indoor and outdoor play, and any individual therapies).

11:30AM-12:00PM Lunch- times vary depending on classroom

12:00PM-2:00PM Rest Time/quiet time

2:00PM-2:30PM

PM Snack

2:30PM-5:00PM

Afternoon Prime Time (including group time, indoor & outdoor play, special activities)

5:00PM-5:30PM

Clean-up/pick-up time (some classrooms combine)

5:30PM

Center closes promptly; all children leave for the day.

Receipt of Parent Handbook

I have received the 2016 St. Louis Child Development Center Parent Handbook and agree to abide by the policies and procedures contained within.

Child(ren) Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____