

The Children's Nest Preschool & Daycare



Parent Handbook

Updated: January 2010

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Blacksburg, Va 24060*

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www.childrensnest.com

Dear Parents:

The Children's Nest would like to welcome you and your family to our center. We are delighted that you have chosen our program for your child(ren)'s daycare needs. We would like you and your child(ren) to feel that our staff at The Children's Nest is an extension of your family, and our facility a home for your children while you are at work or school.

One of the main goals of our center is to provide a safe, stimulating, loving, and nurturing environment for the children in some of the following ways:

- Working with the children to positively shape and influence their mental, emotional, and physical development;
- Working with the parents/guardians to provide the best experience for the children in their formative years;
- Helping the children develop the social skills needed to interact not only with children and adults within their own culture, but also with those from diverse cultural backgrounds. These early years at daycare are the first opportunity children have to make friends with those outside of their home.

The Children's Nest staff will encourage each child to try out new ideas at their own stage of development. The children will be provided with safe and exploratory activities that will help them develop both knowledge and self esteem. At our center, we also believe that enhancing the parent and staff relationship will further benefit the child(ren).

Parents/guardians are welcome at our center anytime during the day to visit with their child(ren), or just to observe the activities in which they are participating. I would, in fact, strongly recommend this as a way to observe your child(ren)'s development while they are at our center.

I am looking forward to working with each and every parent and child. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to ease any doubts you may have concerning your child(ren)'s transition into their new environment at The Children's Nest.

This Parent's Handbook will help you become familiar with our center's programs and policies. The Children's Nest is always open to new ideas and suggestions.

In closing, let me say that together, we can provide a happy and healthy environment for your child(ren).

Sincerely yours,

Gulbun Esen

President and Director

HISTORY

Due to a strong interest and the need to establish a new child care facility to serve Blacksburg and its surrounding communities, The Children's Nest Preschool and Daycare Center was founded almost fifteen years ago by a group of parents and myself. After approximately two years of planning and organizing, our dreams finally became a reality. The Children's Nest Preschool and Daycare Center, licensed by the Commonwealth of Virginia, opened to serve Blacksburg and Montgomery County on October 2nd, 1995.

ADMISSION POLICY

Prior to admission to The Children's Nest, it is the policy of our center to set up a personal interview with the parent(s)/guardians(s) of the child(ren) to be enrolled. This allows our potential parents/guardians and child(ren) to have an on-site tour of our facility, meet the teachers and other staff who will be working with the children, get 'hands-on' experience of our Center's environment, and to witness our programs in action. This meeting will also allow parents/guardians and caregivers to exchange necessary information

The parents/guardians are required to complete all of the necessary forms prior to enrolling their child(ren) in our center. A non-refundable registration fee is due before the child(ren) can be officially enrolled in our center. This fee must be paid with the application for enrollment. In addition, a deposit equal to two week's tuition is required for new enrollment. The deposit is not refundable if you decide not to bring your child to The Children's Nest.

The Children's Nest is open to all children, regardless of race, nationality, color, religion, or ethnic origin.

The primary goal of our center is to be accepting of the child(ren), to create a safe, happy, home-like surroundings, and to provide each child with a loving and nurturing environment.

OPERATING HOURS

Our center is open Monday-Friday 6:30 a.m. to 5:45 p.m.

LATE PICK-UP POLICY

- The Children's Nest closes at 5:45 p.m. We require parents to arrive at or before this time.
- A late fee will be charged for each child picked up after our normal operating hours.
- Beginning at 5:45 p.m., the late fee will be charged at a rate of \$1.00 per minute
- The late fee will be added on to your regular billing.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

- State licensing requires that we have two LOCAL emergency contact persons. A full address must be provided for each person.
- In the event that you(parent/guardian) have not arrived by 5:50 p.m., we will call you.
- If you cannot be reached, your emergency contact person(s) will be called.

- If we cannot locate you or your emergency contact person(s) by 7:00 pm, we will contact the proper local authorities.
- If someone other than a parent/guardian will be picking up your child, please make sure to give prior authorization, either verbally or in the form of a note.
- Picture identification will be required of the person who will pick up your child(ren). Your child(ren) WILL NOT be released to anyone without proper authorization from you, the parent(s)/guardian(s). This is necessary for the protection of your children.
- As we realize that emergencies do arise from time to time, please provide the names and phone numbers of as many contact persons as possible.
- In order to prevent your child(ren) from becoming anxious while awaiting your arrival, the staff of The Children's Nest will provide activities such as books, puzzles, and games, to entertain your child.

HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

Our center will be in operation twelve (12) months of the year, with the exception of the following holidays:

- Memorial Day
- Independence Day (Observed)
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

- New Year's Day

There will be no tuition reduction on these holidays (i.e. the full/regular weekly child care fees will be charged when these holidays occur).

TUITION PAYMENT POLICY

- Tuition payments should be paid in advance either weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly. Each plan requires payment between Monday and Wednesday in the week. **If payment is not received by Wednesday of the current week, a \$10.00 late fee will be assessed.**
- Payments may be made by cash, checks, money orders, or certified checks.
- If your check is returned to us (i.e., a bad check due to insufficient funds, or other problems), there will be a charge of \$35.00 for the returned check.
- There will be no fee reduction if your child(ren) misses days at our center.
- For current tuition rates, please check our Tuition Rates Schedule.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

- Upon arrival at the center, please make sure that the teacher in charge is aware that your child(ren) has arrived.
- Your child(ren) should be taken to their assigned rooms where there is a teacher on duty.
- Please do not leave your child(ren) unattended anywhere else on the premises.

SIGN-IN AND SIGN-OUT SHEETS

For the safety of your child(ren) we will have a sign-in and sign-out sheet for parents/guardians to sign when dropping off and picking up the children. It is very important that you remember to sign your child in and out everyday so that our center can keep track of who is dropping off and picking up the children.

TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

The Children's Nest will transport children in kindergarten and older to and from their elementary schools. It is required by law that the children wear their seat belts. The Children's Nest vans and all van drivers are licensed and insured.

Effective July 1, 2007, all children under age eight must be properly restrained in a child safety or booster seat. Violations of this new law could result in a \$50 fine. As a result, with consideration for each child's safety, The Children's Nest will need parents to furnish a safety or booster seat if their child(ren) is under age eight and being transported on our van.

When the children are taken on field trips they will be transported by our center's van. For the safety of the children and the driver, good behavior and conduct is required at all times while riding in the van.

GENERAL TRANSPORTATION RULES

The Children's Nest requires that all children abide by the following transportation rules while riding in our van:

- Seat belts must be worn at all times.

- The driver of the van must not be disturbed/distracted by unruly behavior and noisiness.
- The children must face the front of the van at all times.
- The windows and/or doors must not be touched while the van is in motion.
- When getting off the van, the children must line up in an orderly manner.
- If parents/guardians wish to have our center pick up their schoolers from school, we must be notified by 2:00 p.m. at the latest.

TRANSPORTATION RULES FOR FIELD TRIPS

Before departing from our center, our staff:

1. Will ensure that all doors are locked and seat belts are fastened on the children.
2. Will ensure that all child safety and/or booster seats are also properly secured and fastened.
3. Will make up a list of the children's names and fill out emergency forms.
4. Will check to make sure the first aid kit in the van is restocked.

When field trips are scheduled, we require that parents/guardians give at least one (1) days notice if their child(ren) will not be going on the fieldtrip; if they are allowed to go, the parent/guardian must fill out and sign permission slips and emergency forms and turn them in to the teacher before the day of the fieldtrip.

TRANSPORTATION FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS

1. If there is a delay in the opening of the public schools, we provide transportation of these students from our center to their respective schools.

2. If public schools close at mid-day, we provide transportation of these students to our center from their schools.

FOOD POLICIES

Breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack are provided by The Children's Nest. Our center will have a new menu each month, which will be posted in the front hall. Extra copies will also be available for you to take home. The Virginia Licensing Standards state that '...no food may be brought from home, except in the case of special diets prescribed by a physician [for which a doctor's note will be needed] or in the case of religious requirements.'

On special occasions, (such as birthdays, etc.) you may bring food from home. Before you do so, you must talk with your child(ren)'s teacher, or our office personnel to receive clearance.

Our center will provide good, nutritious meals for your child(ren).

INFANTS

Parents/guardians will provide infant formula or breast milk and baby food for their child(ren), until the child is able to eat the food provided by our center.

All foods and baby bottles must be labeled with your child's name and date. If the baby food jar is opened, you must take it home the same day, or else our center must dispose of it. All bottles must go home every night.

All foods provided from home must be stored in properly sealed containers, and given to our kitchen personnel to put in the refrigerator.

ADJUSTMENT PERIOD IN A NEW ENVIRONMENT

When starting at a new center, there is often an adjustment period that will occur. Rest assured that we at The Children's Nest will comfort your child(ren) in whatever way we can until he/she becomes familiar with his/her new surroundings.

Before your child starts coming to our center, we urge you to talk with your child about his/her new daycare in order to familiarize him/her with this new environment. When dropping off your child, give them a hug and kiss and tell them when you will return to pick them up. This will reassure your child(ren) that they are not being abandoned by their parents/guardians.

CLOTHING

- Dress your child(ren) for comfort and play, according to the weather.
- For safety reasons, flip flops are not permitted.
- Label all clothing and provide a change of clothes in case the outfit they are wearing becomes dirty or wet.
- Make sure your child's clothing is washable; some activities can become quite messy.
- Please check your child's cubby daily for dirty clothes.
- If your child is ready to be (or is already in the process of being) potty trained, bring several pairs of training pants (or underwear) and *at least* 2 sets of clothes.
- If your child is not potty trained, you should provide enough disposable diapers to last for one (1) week.

- During the winter, be sure your child has the following items: coat, hat, mittens (or gloves) and boots.

BEDDING

- Please provide a fitted crib sheet and a small blanket for your child (children in the infant room and schoolers do not need these items). Label both with your child's name.
- The sheet and blanket should be brought in on Monday mornings and taken home on Friday evenings for washing.
- Virginia Licensing requires that the children's sheets and blankets be washed weekly.
- If parents forget to bring in a sheet and blanket for their child(ren) on the first day a child attends the center in a given week, The Children's Nest will provide the child(ren) with a sheet and blanket to use. There will be a \$6.00 fee for this service to cover the expense of excess laundry. This charge will be added to your regular billing.
- If a child's sheet and blanket become soiled or wet and must be sent home during the week for washing, a sheet and blanket must be brought in **the following day** for the child to use. If the child must use Children's Nest sheet or blanket, the \$6.00 fee will apply.

NAP/REST TIME

- Nap/rest time for the children in the toddler, 2's, 3's and Pre-K classes will be from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m.
- In order not to disturb the other children, please pick up or drop off your child either before or after their naptime.
- If your child has an appointment, please make arrangements, in advance, with our office personnel regarding picking up and/or dropping off your child.
- The infants' naptime varies.

HEALTH: PHYSICAL

The state of Virginia requires physical examination of children before they are admitted as follows:

- 6 months of age or younger → 2 months prior to admission
- 7-18 months → 3 months prior to admission
- 19-24 months → 6 months prior to admission
- 2-5 years → 12 months prior to admission
- 6 years and above → 2 years prior to admission

Your child's physical examination records must be turned in to our office on the first day of enrollment, or within one (1) month of enrollment. Your child's immunization records must be handed in to our office prior to enrollment.

The Commonwealth of Virginia requires that immunizations are kept updated. An updated copy of your child's immunization form needs to be given to the office every time that he/she goes to the doctor.

DAILY HEALTH INSPECTION

The children are checked daily by their teachers for fevers, colds, rashes, etc. If your child is sick while at our center, we will contact you immediately. Once we contact you, your child must be picked up as soon as possible to ensure that the other children are not exposed to something that may be contagious. To make sure that your child is not scared, we will comfort your child while we await your arrival.

We understand that you may not be able to pick up your child right away due to your work or other situation. However, if you are unable to pick up your child, please make other arrangements so that your child may be picked up as soon as possible. If someone else, who is not listed on the application form, comes to pick up your child, please remember that we will need written or verbal permission, and that person must provide photo identification when they arrive at our center.

If your child is not going to come to daycare due to illness, please call us as soon as possible to inform us. Let us know if the illness is contagious, so that we can monitor the other children at our center for signs of the illness. We will also do the same by informing you if other children have come down with some contagious illness, so that you can monitor your own child. All confirmed contagious illnesses will be posted on a sign in the room that has been affected.

HEALTH GUIDELINES

- Children are sent home if their temperatures reaches 100 degrees F and they exhibit other signs of illness (i.e. coughing, sneezing, runny nose), or if their temperature reaches 100.5 degrees F (even in the absence of other symptoms).

- If a child is sent home from daycare or public school due to illness, they may not return to daycare the next day. They cannot come back until they have been fever-free for 24 hours.
- Children's temperatures are measured with an under-the-arm thermometer; and our health policies will be administered according *to our thermometer's reading only*.
- If the child has vomited more than 2 times at school, our center will call the parents/guardians.
- Children who have the following diseases: Impetigo, Ring Worm, Scabies, Chicken Pox, Measles, etc. must stay away from school until the scabs are completely dried up, and a note from your physician must be provided.
- Head lice are very contagious. If your child has lice, please use only medicated shampoo until it has all cleared up. Children with head lice may not return to daycare until all of the nits and live bugs are gone.
- Pink Eye: If a child has pink eye they may not return to our center until medication has been administered for at least 24 hours.

MEDICATION

- The Children's Nest will only administer prescription medication, diaper rash ointment, and sunscreen.
- We will not give medication to your child unless the parent/guardian fills out the required medical form. This form must contain the following information: 1) dates the medication is to be administered; 2) the dosage/amount to be given; 3) the number of times the dosage is to be given; 4) the signature of the parent/guardian.

- All medication must be labeled with the name of your child, the date and time the medication is to be given, and the dosage.
- All medication must be in the original container, otherwise we cannot administer the medication, in which case we will contact the parent/guardian.
- Do not add medication to your infant's milk bottle or food.
- All medication forms must be filled out every 10 working days; this form will be kept in your child's file.
- If your child(ren) needs a medication for more than 10 working days, **The Children's Nest** will need your child's physician to fill out a medication form. This policy is in accordance with Virginia Licensing standards. This form will be valid for six months.
- Medication that needs refrigeration will be kept in a refrigerator in the staff room near the front office.
- ALL medication will be kept in a locked area.
- Always take your child's medication home on Fridays, otherwise the medication will be disposed of.
- Parents/Guardians will have to fill out a medication form for diaper rash ointment and/or sunscreen. These forms will be valid for six months.

ACCIDENT POLICY

- In the case of major accidents, we will notify parents/guardians by telephone, and will complete an accident report immediately.
- For the safety and protection of your children, we are insured as required by licensing regulations.

- Our accident report will state the time, place and details of how the accident occurred. Parents must sign all accident reports. Upon your request, a copy of the report will be given to you.

GENERAL REGULATIONS OF THE CHILDREN'S NEST

- Please do not allow your child to bring the following items to our center: money (we cannot not be responsible for keeping track of the children's money), guns, knives, or any other such objects that may promote violent behavior.
- On the Show and Share day designated by your child's teacher, your child will be allowed to bring one of his or her toys from home to share with the other children.
- We are not responsible for the loss or breakage of your child's toys.
- Toys brought to our center on any day, other than Show and Share day, will be kept in our office for safekeeping.
- Proper language must be used at all times at our center. This applies to staff, parents/guardians, and children. Please refrain from using profanity while on the premises of The Children's Nest.

TERMINATION NOTICE

- If you plan to withdraw your child from our center for any reason, we require that two weeks notice be given.
- The parents/guardians are responsible for paying tuition to our center two weeks prior to the child(ren)'s departure.
- Vacation time may NOT be used in the final two weeks.

- In the event that The Children's Nest sees the need to ask the parents/guardians to withdraw their child(ren) from our center, we will also give the parents/guardians two weeks notice to make other arrangements.

VACATIONS

- If your child(ren) is enrolled full-time, or part-time, you may take them out for two week's vacation anytime during the year.
- In order for your child(ren) to be eligible for the two-week's vacation, he/she must be enrolled for at least three months.
- Vacation times are Monday-Friday, September through September.

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE

Behavior guidance (discipline techniques) shall be constructive and redirective in nature. We strive to model respect for adults and children. All discipline techniques shall be fair and consistently applied. In some situations, a 'time-out' period may be necessary. The Children's Nest believes that this 'time-out' period is a time for reflection. Time-out is for a brief period of 1-5 minutes, depending of the child's age, and is always under the supervision of an adult staff member.

If time-out is ineffective with the individual child, we may temporarily separate the child from the group. We encourage children to communicate their feelings and thoughts with words, in a positive way, rather than by any negative physical action.

In the event that a child's behavior becomes a concern to the teacher, a conference may be scheduled with the parents/guardians. This conference would serve as a sounding board to benefit the child. Should The Children's Nest feel that we are

unable to meet the needs of your child, our center will give the parents/guardians two weeks' notice in order to allow the parents/guardians to make other suitable arrangements.

BEHAVIORAL GUIDANCE TECHNIQUES

- Modeling acceptable behavior
- Encouraging children to talk to each other in order to iron out their differences
- Giving the child acceptable/appropriate choices
- Redirecting behavior
- Discipline will be fair and consistent for each child.
- Guide and help children to constructively express their feelings and frustrations to resolve conflict
- There will be no physical punishment or disciplinary action administered to the child.
- There will be no verbal abuse, threats or remarks made to or about the child regarding his/her family, race, religion, cultural background, or any other statement that would frighten or be hurtful to the child.
- The child will never be force-fed or have food withheld from him or her.
- The child will never be forced to nor withheld from taking naps.
- The child will never be punished for toileting accidents.
- The child will never be physically shaken at any time.

PLAYGROUND ACTIVITIES

The Children's Nest is located on 3.3 acres of land. Our playground is totally fenced in to provide a safe environment for the children.

Our center offers a variety of fun and stimulating playground activities. We believe that children learn through play. Outside playtime will be available to the children twice each day, except in inclement weather. The children will have the opportunity to explore our large sandbox, develop, coordinate and strengthen their muscles by running, climbing and sliding, among many other activities.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

While your child is in the Infant or Toddler room, a daily chart will be kept for each individual child. When children enter the preschool program, a daily summary will be posted in each child's room. Daily communication between parents and teachers will also be a vital part of the child's development.

Our program will offer opportunities for a social, emotional, cognitive and physical environment. Our program provides experiences that are developmentally appropriate for the different age groups.

ABUSE AND NEGLECT

In accordance with the law in the Commonwealth of Virginia, incidents of any suspected child abuse or neglect must be immediately reported to the Department of Social Services in the appropriate county.

LICENSING INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

The Commonwealth of Virginia helps assure parents that child day programs are safe. Title 63.1, Chapter 10 of the Code of Virginia gives the Department of Social Services authority to license these programs. While there are some legislative exemptions to licensure, licensed programs include child day centers, family day homes, child day center systems, and family day systems. The state may also voluntarily register family day homes not required to be licensed.

Standards for licensed child day centers address certain health precautions, adequate play space, a ratio of children per staff member, equipment, program, and record keeping. Criminal records checks and specific qualifications for staff and most volunteers working directly with children are also required. Standards require the facility to meet applicable fire, health, and building codes. Compliance with standards is determined by announced and unannounced visits to the program by licensing staff within the Department of Social Services. In addition, parents or other individuals may register a complaint about a program, which will be investigated if it violates a standard. All inspection and violation information will be posted in the front hall.

Three types of licenses may be issued to programs. Conditional licenses may be issued to a new program to allow up to six months for the program to demonstrate compliance with the standards. A regular license is issued when the program

substantially meets the standards for licensure. A provisional license, which cannot exceed six months, is issued when the program is temporarily unable to comply with the standards. Operating without a license when required constitutes a misdemeanor, which, upon conviction, can be punishable by a fine of up to \$100 or imprisonment of up to 12 months or both for each day's violation.

If you would like additional information about the licensing of child day programs or would like to register a complaint, please contact the Regional Office of Social Services closes to you.

Western Licensing Office
Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Social Services
190 Patton Street
Abingdon, Virginia 24210
Phone: (276) 676-5629

INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of inclement weather, The Children's Nest will make every effort to open as soon as possible.

Please watch WSLS and WDBJ for information on closings and delays. All closings and/or delays will also be posted online at www.wdbj7.com and www.wsls.com.

Please note that when there is a delayed opening, breakfast will NOT be served.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The Children's Nest welcomes parent participation! We believe that children, parents, and staff work together to provide the best environment for children! Teachers and parents will have daily communication on how your child's day was. Information will include eating habits and favorite activities. Parents are encouraged to visit, play

musical instruments, or read a story. We also would welcome cooking or cultural experiences. Please talk with your child's teacher.

Handbook updated: January 26th, 2010