



**Stars Learning Day Care Center
2140 Verdun Dr.
Miami Beach, FL 33141
305-864-0819**

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WELCOME

We are pleased that you have chosen Stars Learning Daycare Center as your “partner” in the care and education of your child. Our families are made up of University and Community College graduates, students, and community members. Like you, we are interested in your child’s whole development. Our commitment is to provide you and your child with the best in child care and education. This handbook is given to all parents at the time of enrollment of their child in the child care center, and is designed to acquaint you with our policies and procedures. In addition to our policies, we are licensed by the state of Florida and abide by state rules and regulations.

Stars Learning Daycare Center is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution. Qualified students with physical or documented learning disabilities have the right to free accommodation to ensure equal access to education opportunities at Stars Learning Daycare Center.

I. Center Mission Statement

Through a quality program, Stars Learning Daycare Center will provide care and education based on best practices.

II. Center Philosophy

We believe in the development of the whole child. Our curriculum is designed to focus on the creative, emotional, intellectual, physical, and social growth of each individual. The purpose of our approach is to foster competency in the young child. While the emphasis is on children, family involvement is encouraged and supported.



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We have several goals for children.

- to be competent and confident in their abilities
- to be self-directed in a constructive, creative manner
- to be successful in future educational experiences
- to develop a love for learning and the ability to know how to learn
- to develop self-control and a sense of right and wrong
- to feel good about who they are
- to learn cooperation with other children as well as adults
- to reach their full potential in emotional, intellectual, physical and social development

Principles of Child Development and Learning

- Domains of children's development – creative, emotional, intellectual, physical, and social are closely related. Development in one domain influences and is influenced by development in other domains.
- Development occurs in a relatively orderly sequence, with later abilities, skills, and knowledge building on those already acquired.
- Development proceeds at varying rates from child to child as well as unevenly within different areas of each child's functioning.
- Early experiences have both cumulative and delayed effects on each child's development; optimal periods exist for certain types of development and learning.
- Development proceeds in predictable directions toward greater complexity, organization and internalization.
- Development and learning occur in and are influenced by multiple cultural and social contexts.
- Children are active learners, drawing on direct physical and social experiences as well as culturally transmitted knowledge to construct their own understandings of the world around them.
- Play is an important vehicle for children as well as a reflection of children's development.
- Development advances when children have opportunities to practice newly acquired skills.
- Children demonstrate different modes of knowing and



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learning and different ways of representing what they know.

- Children develop and learn best in the context of a community where they are safe and valued, and their physical needs are met.
- Parents are a child's first teacher and an important influence in their life.

III. Policies and Procedures

Registration

A non-refundable enrollment fee of \$70 per child is due at the time of registration. The first week's tuition and a one-week tuition deposit (to be used the week prior to disenrollment) are also due with the registration fee. These fees must be paid and required documentation turned into the office prior to your child's starting date.

Documentation Required For Your Child's Records

- A completed registration packet.
- An immunization record, complete with the Doctor's name.
- A Physical Form from your Doctor.
- Authorization for pick-up/emergency cards.
- A copy of any court orders regarding child custody/visitation issues.

Programming

The center is open Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Our full day program is from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., half-day a.m. from 6:30 a.m. to 11:00 am and half-day p.m. from 02:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. The part-time programs consist of two full days a week.

Late Fees

Parents must adhere to the hours of their child's scheduled time block. For morning, afternoon, and full day sessions a fee of \$1.00/minute, per child, will be charged for late pick-ups. This is necessary because of staffing ratios, which must be strictly followed. A late notice statement will be completed and added to the next billing statement. The clock in the front office is our time clock.



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If we are unable to contact a parent or guardian within 30 minutes of the centers closure at 6:00 p.m., we will notify the Dade County Police Department. At 45 minutes past closure we will contact the Dade County Police Department and Child Protection Services.

Stars Learning Daycare Center follows the closing procedures of Miami Dade County Public Schools. If the public schools are closed due to severe weather, the center will also be closed. Please listen to local radio and television broadcasts for this information. Payment is not exempt due to weather closure.

Tuition Rates

Tuition rates are subject to review and change each year. See brochure for current rates.

Payments

Stars Learning Daycare Center is unable to accept credit card payments. Only checks and money orders and cash are accepted. Please make checks or money orders payable to “Stars Learning Daycare Center” and hand to the person in charge at the office. Do not leave your payment in your child’s book bag. Please put your child’s name on your payment.

Please Note: There is a \$25 charge for returned checks. This transaction needs to be taken care of at the Office.

You may choose to pay for weeks in advanced or one week at a time. Payment must be made prior to 10:00 a.m. on Mondays. A receipt will be created reflecting the weeks covered by payment. A past due balance will be assessed a 5% late payment charge. Any outstanding balance equal to two weeks of your child’s tuition will result in disenrollment. The Director and Office Manager may consider special payment arrangements on a case-by-case basis.

As your child’s legal guardian it is your responsibility to work out payment arrangements with an estranged spouse, relative or other entity.

Refunds

No refunds in tuition are made for absences.



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Orientation

Before your child starts care, you and the assigned Head Teacher will meet to discuss your child's classroom policies and procedures.

Attendance/Cancellations

Please notify your Teacher or the Office Manager if your child will be absent on a scheduled day of attendance. We do worry. If circumstances cause you to withdraw your child, you must submit a written notice of your exit date to the office two weeks prior to your child's last day of care. Your one-week deposit will be used for final billing.

Vacation and Holidays

All full-time children will be awarded a one-week "vacation" after one year of enrollment has been accrued. Vacations will be granted the day after your one-year anniversary date. Vacations must be used in one-week intervals before the next anniversary date. Your child may not attend the center during his/her vacation week. Vacations cannot be carried over to the next year. Please notify the Office Manager in writing one week prior to your free "vacation week".

The center will be closed in observance of the following holidays: Labor Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day and following Friday, Christmas Eve at 12 a.m., Christmas Day, New Year's Eve at 12 a.m., New Year's Day. Tuition is not reduced for holidays.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The ADA is a federal civil rights law that went into effect in 1992. The Act states that people with disabilities are entitled to equal rights in employment, state and local public services, and public accommodations such as preschools, child care centers, and family child care homes. ADA presents an exciting opportunity to plan for and include children with disabilities in early childhood settings. Children and families benefit from inclusion. Children with disabilities share learning opportunities with their peers. Inclusion also fosters caring attitudes and teaches children about interdependence and understanding for human differences. For early childhood professionals it is an extension of continuing efforts to meet the individual needs of each child and family.



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Mandated Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse and/or Neglect

Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. The employees of Stars Learning Day Care Center are considered mandated reporters, under this law. They are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior or condition prior to making a report. Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. We at Stars Learning Day Care Center take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities. The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children.

As mandated reporters, the staff of Stars Learning Day Care Center cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in “good faith.”

Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the child’s body
- Severe verbal reprimands
- Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, season
- Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (e.g. car seats, seat belts, etc.)
- Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol
- Not providing appropriate meals including a drink for your child
- Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time
- Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child
- Sending a sick child to school over medicated to hide symptoms, which would typically require the child to be kept at home until symptoms subside.
- Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation



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IV. Authorized Persons

Emergency Contact Information

Each parent must have on file a list of names and phone numbers of emergency contacts. The emergency contacts are persons in the area who are authorized by the parent(s) to pick up and/or care for the child in case of illness or emergency when the parent cannot be reached. Please be sure the persons whose names you give are aware that they have been listed for this purpose and that staff members will ask for identification of any person with whom they are not familiar. In the case of legal issues, the registered parent must indicate who has legal custody and who may pick up the child on the enrollment form. We assume no liability if not properly advised. If you won't be at the number you have listed to contact you during your child's day at school, leave a note with a staff member and/or on the sign-in sheet with the number at which you can be reached. Whenever there are changes to be made, it is your responsibility to update the emergency cards located in the center's front office and your child's classroom. Written authorization is required for changes in this respect.

Children will only be released to persons whose name appears on the emergency cards.

Special Circumstances

If a staff member suspects that the person picking up the child is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, the child will not be released. Another person authorized to pick up the child will be called. The safety and well-being of the children in our care is of primary importance. If any child care staff believes that an adult who is picking up a child is not in a condition to drive or adequately care for the child's safety, the staff will not release the child to the adult until the child's safety is assured. Staff will offer to call a cab for the person or call another authorized adult to assist in picking up the child. Determining whether or not to release a child in this situation is difficult for the parent, the child, and the staff member. The Police will be contacted to assist us in any decisions we make.



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V. Daily Routines



Clothing and Personal Belongings

We ask that all clothing be appropriate for child care. We do many fun and messy activities. Although children always have access to smocks and are asked to wear them for messy types of activities, there may be mishaps. We don't want to ruin anything that is special to you or your child. We ask that you leave at least one complete outfit for your child here at school. Because children grow so fast, it is important to check the fit and weather appropriateness of these extra clothes from time to time. **Always label everything with your child's name.**

We recommend that your child **does not** bring any type of jewelry to the center. Children can be careless and the daycare is not liable for any loss or damaged to the jewelry.

Communication

The parent bulletin boards contain items pertaining to fundraisers, conferences, parent involvement, and many other items we feel may be of interest to you. Every other month, a center newsletter will be published and placed in your parent file folder. Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled each semester; however, you can request a parent-teacher conference at any time. Your child will be administered the ASQ Screening once a year. This tool along with observation and portfolio collection will be used to guide your child's development. Information collected will be available to parents upon request and for use at conference time.

Cubbies

Your child will have a cubby at school for storing personal belongings. Some children may have to share their cubby with another child. Throughout the week your child will bring work samples from class. Please make sure to check his/her book bag for samples of art, classwork, home learning assignments, notes from the teacher, and other items.



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Discipline

Children are taught the importance of being a friend and treating others with care and respect. It is our belief that the goal of discipline is to help young children gain inner self-control so they become aware of what is acceptable behavior. If unacceptable behavior is displayed, we explain why the behavior is inappropriate. If the behavior continues, the child will be directed to another activity. A child continuing to have difficulty will be removed from the activity for a short period of time in order to regain his/her self-control. The general rule for “time out” is one minute per year of age, up to five minutes maximum. Time out is used as a skill building tool, not punishment. If you see a problem or have witnessed a situation you do not understand, please see a Head Teacher right away.

We try to foresee and prevent problems by structuring an appropriate environment and setting basic limits. These limits are mainly for reasons of safety and respect for oneself, for others, and for property. These limits are explained or shown to a child at the outset in terms that s/he can understand. Negative “attention seeking” behavior is ignored if at all possible. Discipline shall be fair, reasonable, consistent, and related to the individual behavior. Children are not spanked.

As your partner in caring for your child, it is important that good communication exist between the home and our center. If your child is experiencing a change in the home environment that may result in changes in behavior, it is important for you to notify your teacher. Your teacher will keep you informed of any behavioral concerns that may occur with your child at the center. Every effort will be made to resolve any problem that may occur.

Severe Behavior

Young children can present challenging behavior as they learn to interact appropriately in the educational setting. Stars Learning Daycare Center is committed to using positive guidance strategies when teaching young children how to manage their own behavior.

Developmentally appropriate guidance and classroom management promotes positive social skills, fosters mutual respect, strengthens self-esteem, and supports a safe environment. However, at times some children will exhibit severe behaviors that cannot be managed within the classroom setting. Severe behavior is defined as:



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Danger to self or others (examples include but are not limited to : head banging, excessive biting that breaks the skin, hitting, hair pulling, using objects to inflict bodily harm, etc.) and/or Disruptive behavior that creates chronic interference to classroom activities (examples include but are not limited to: tantrums, screaming, foul language, severe or chronic non-compliance or defiance.)

The Center has developed procedures to deal with such cases of severe behavior. In these situations, the parents will be contacted. The parents will need to meet with the teacher and/or the director to discuss the situation and appropriate measures. Behavior that is chronically unacceptable may be an indicator that further support or assessment is needed. This support may include a referral process for further assessment and additional outside services. If the Center's procedures for dealing with severe behavior problems do not result in the restoration of an acceptable and safe educational environment, the Center Director reserves the right to temporarily or permanently remove a child from the Center.

Hygiene

Children will be encouraged to learn good hygiene habits. Children will be guided by teachers to wash hands with soap and water before and after meals and snacks, after using the toilet, and before engaging in any cooking activity or water play.



Outdoor Play

Please bring appropriate clothing for the weather (i.e., sweatshirt, jacket, gloves, and hat). **Please remember to label all clothing.** Unless the weather is extremely severe, we will go outside for much needed fresh air and large motor play. If your child is too ill to go outside, s/he should be kept home.

Rest Time

- The children have a rest period each day.
- Infants 6 weeks to 18 months nap on their own schedules. Crib sheets are provided.



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- Toddlers 18 to 36 months have a routine that is followed. Cots are provided.
- Preschoolers 3 years to 5 years have a routine that is followed. Cots are provided.
- To protect your child's health, sheets are laundered each week. Cots are sanitized regularly. Parents should provide a familiar cuddly blanket to help soothe a restless body. Please label the blanket and remember to take it home at the end of the week for cleaning.



Lunch/Snacks

Stars Learning Daycare Center provides its student body with a healthy meal program on a daily basis. Each day, the center furnishes infant, toddler, preschool and kindergarten children with breakfast, lunch and a snack cooked on the premises. Menus are posted in the bulletin board. Arrangements may be made with your teacher if you would like to provide a snack for a birthday party or special event. Special snacks provided by you must be store purchased or made here at the center. Milk must be offered to all children as mandated by the Florida Department of Education Nutrition Education Program. Children with a dairy/milk allergy must have on file a written exclusion from their physician.

Toys

We ask that all toys with the exception of a soft sleepy time toy or toys for sharing days stay at home. This assures they will not be lost or broken while at school. Any toys that are brought to school will remain in the child's cubby until pick up time.

VI. Arrival and Departure Adjustment

Arrival

The center opens at 6:30 a.m. each morning. We encourage children to arrive by 8:00 a.m. so they may fully participate in the morning activities. Parents **must always** accompany their children **in** and **out** of the center. Upon your child's arrival and departure, please be sure a staff member in the office is aware that you are present and are either dropping off or taking your child



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home. Share information that will help teachers with your child; in turn they will share information about your child's day. According to Florida Child Care Licensing regulations, you must sign in your child using your full name, time of arrival, and time of departure. For the safety of your child and in the case of an emergency, please be sure to follow this regulation.

Guidelines for a Smooth Separation

When you arrive at the center, plan to spend a few minutes with your child. A teacher will be there to greet you, especially if you and your child are new to the center. Sometimes children need to share this time with parents before they can try it on their own. When they think parents are anxious, children sometimes feel they have to cling all the more. When you leave, be sure to say good-bye, then follow through and leave. Continually returning makes it more difficult for the child and parent to separate.

When you depart, your child may cry and protest. This protest is what psychologists call separation distress. It is part of the normal developmental process of establishing an independent and autonomous existence, separate and apart from parents. The intensity of a child's distress seems to depend mainly on the child's personality and temperament. It also depends on the way teachers handle the anxiety and the way in which parents leave. Children may show this kind of behavior at the initial separation. As they become familiar with the teachers in the classroom their protest will taper off. If you are experiencing difficulties in this area, please let one of the teachers know. If you feel a need to insure your child's adjustment, please feel free to observe your child and his/her interactions in the classroom.

Please note that Star Learning Daycare Center has an open door visitation policy for parents. However, there may be occasions when seeing your child is a disruption to other children; please remember to consider the needs of others.

Departure

Parents sometimes find it difficult to get their child to leave at the end of the day. It is important for the parent not to feel rejected or unneeded when this happens. In fact, the child may be feeling more secure with a parent present, and may feel freer to participate in activities with other children. If possible, it is helpful for the parent to come into the room and tell the child that they will be leaving soon. However, if a speedy exit is necessary, tell the child that it is time to go and stick to the decision. Our teachers will support you by telling your child it is time to go. If you have questions, teachers are able to help with



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this process. Take the time to stay with your child at the center when time permits.

VII. Health Issues

No-Smoking Policy

This is a non-smoking facility. No smoking is permitted inside the building at any time. Smoking is also prohibited within 50 feet outside of center.

Sick Child Policy

For the safety and health of all our children and teachers, sick children need to be at home. Please do not send your child to school if s/he has had any of the following described conditions during the previous 24 hours. Also be advised, if your child exhibits any of the following signs while at school, s/he will be isolated immediately and you will be contacted to come pick up your child. When you have been contacted because of illness, please pick up your child within the hour. It is very important you have alternative care for your child when s/he is sick. We know it can be a very frustrating time when a child is sent home because of illness. No tuition adjustment will be made for absences due to illness.



Medical Conditions

- Diarrhea (2 or more loose stools).
- Difficulty or rapid breathing.
- Asthma or severe upper respiratory infection unless parent provides evidence that child is under physician's care.
- Vomited within last 6 hours.
- Yellowish skin or eyes.
- A temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher and/or has had a fever during the previous 24 hours.
- Mucus with green or yellow color, unless child has been on antibiotic therapy for 24 hours.
- Undiagnosed rash.
- Sore throat.
- Severe cough.



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- Chicken pox, pertussis, measles, mumps, rubella, impetigo, diphtheria or herpes simplex.
- Untreated scabies, tinea corporis or capitis (ring worm).
- An ear infection, unless provided notification that child is under physician's care.
- Untreated head lice.
- Pinkeye.

Please notify the school at once if your child has been exposed to a communicable disease (See Appendix B – Communicable Diseases, pages 19-20).

Medications

All medications must have a doctor's prescription to administer, including over-the-counter medication. If your child needs to have medication administered during school hours, each day the parent will need to complete a medication authorization form indicating dosage and times of administration. Please bring the appropriate measuring utensils for administering the medication as sharing may promote the spread of infectious disease. The medication must be plainly labeled, contain the name of the child for whom it is prescribed, dates to be administered, and expiration date. Tylenol is an oral medication and must also have a doctor's prescription.

Common uses for Tylenol for young infants and toddlers are teething and immunization discomfort. Please make sure your doctor's note states that we may administer the medication, the proper dosage, and indicate for what reason this medication is being used. We are unable to take phone calls from your doctor's office. For licensing purposes, medication administered to a child must be in writing. Tylenol will not be used at the center for reducing a fever. Also, please do not give Tylenol to your child before entering the center. This only serves to mask the problem and leaves the illness untreated. Please notify the staff of any medical conditions (allergies, etc.) that will require special considerations in the classroom.

Pedialite is the only medication/medical conditions policy exception, but no more than 8 oz. will be given without a written physician note, and given only if the child exhibits signs of dehydration due to diarrhea or other illness. No medication is to be left in lunches. Please store all medication in the appropriate lock box and fill out a medication form. A classified staff member



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or the Director will administer all medication. **Please Note:** All unused or expired medication must be removed from the center by the child's parent.

Prevention

- Because young children are vulnerable to infectious diseases, we encourage you as the parent to be aware of our health policies as stated. Prevention of illnesses or contagious diseases is critical. We encourage you to:
- Do a brief assessment of your child's health each morning. Please do not bring a sick child to the center.
- Provide disposable as opposed to cloth diapers.
- Provide disposable wipes.
- Be aware that low-grade fevers may be associated with an infection or illness, and not "just teething".
- Keep front office and classroom emergency cards up-to-date.
- Dress your child appropriately – according to weather, etc.
- Be aware that on short notice you may have to pick up your child due to illness.

Sanitation Procedures

Parents must supply disposable diapers and wipes. Changing areas have running water and are disinfected after each use. Teachers wear a fresh glove each time they change a child's diaper. Every precaution is made to keep the diaper changing areas as germ free as possible.

Licensing regulations are adhered to in all areas of sanitation procedures. Our current Child Care License is posted in the front office. The Health Inspection Certificate is posted in the bulletin board.

Injuries

The staff makes every effort to ensure the safety of your child. Unfortunately, accidents do occur. As a partner in the care of your child, we realize that you will want to be aware of your child's injuries or illnesses that occur at the center. In order to keep you informed, we will provide you with an Accident and Incident Report for each occurrence. In case of a serious injury, we will make every attempt to contact you for instructions. If we cannot reach you, we will call the person you have indicated on the emergency card to make medical emergency decisions about your child. Please keep all these numbers updated. Your signed emergency medical release will also assist us in obtaining prompt medical attention. A staff member will stay with your child until your arrival.



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Staff will not administer medical treatment, other than emergency first aid. All staff will be provided with CPR and First Aid Training.



VIII. Drills and Evacuations

Fire Drills

Emergency fire drills are held monthly to acquaint your child with evacuation procedures. This may make quite an impression on your child the first time a drill is held, but your child will soon become accustomed to it and know just what to do. Our center is equipped with a fire alarm system, and fire extinguishers are placed throughout the building. The Fire Marshall Inspection Certificate is posted in the front office.

Bomb Threats/Burglary/Gun Shots

In case of any of these situations, the centers contacts 911, locks doors, cuts power and gathers at the lockdown area. There are drills that take place for these situations.

Flood/Hurricane/Tornado

Center has emergency shelter areas; like closets, bathrooms, hallways and sit on floor while covering heads. There are drills that take place for these situations.



IX. Programs

Stars Learning Daycare Center adopted the “Creative Curriculum” to guide the educational, emotional and behavioral progress of or children. If you have questions about any of these programs, you are welcome to ask a Head Teacher or the Director.



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Infant - 6 weeks to 18 months

- The infant program provides a loving and nurturing environment for 6-week to 18- month-old children. This full-time program allows staff to help children develop a sense of security with their environment.
- Our goals in the infant program include care, education and love.
- We provide gentle care to meet the daily needs of diapering, feeding, and sleeping. By earnestly working to meet the infant's basic needs, we create a healthy and safe environment.
- We offer many different activities to enhance the infant's educational experience. Infants learn to explore in a safe and loving environment, at their own pace and in their own way.
- The love we provide for the children is conducive to emotional and physical security. We hold, rock, and spend one-on-one time interacting with the children.

Children learn through active involvement in play. We provide experiences that allow children to succeed. Children develop their senses and skills through exploring and playing. The essence of quality care for infants and young toddlers depends on the intimacy a caregiver develops in the relationship with a child. Working towards understanding and generously meeting infants needs provides the best care possible for infants. Teamwork between home and the infant room is vitally important. The needs of infants are ever changing, which means communication among adults is the best way to support each child's care and education. Our promise to you and your infant is to provide quality care, education, and love. We also make the transition to the toddler area easier on the children by initiating the bonding process early. A shared group playtime with toddlers and new teachers alleviates the stress of separation from the infant area.

Toddler – 18 to 36 months

This program is designed to accommodate the development of self-help skills needed for children 18 months to 3 years. The children are introduced to new and exciting sensory experiences. A consistent program of developmentally



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appropriate activities helps to nurture a positive “can-do” attitude.

Teachers in the toddler area believe in the right of every child to a safe, nurturing, supportive environment where children can reach their full potential. Our goal is to facilitate the growth of each child through a carefully planned curriculum encouraging children in each area of development. Cognitive, emotional, physical, and social domains are developed using hands-on experiences and sensory activities focusing on the process, not the end result. Each child is allowed to progress at his/her own rate in a developmentally appropriate environment based on best practices.

The program provides a well-balanced curriculum that includes teacher and child- initiated activities, large and small groups, active and quiet times, indoor and outdoor play, fine and gross motor fun, individual and group needs, and structured and unstructured activities.

Children are allowed to choose from activities in various learning centers: art, blocks, dramatic play, language arts, manipulatives, music, reading, and sensory play. The child’s ability to choose activities fosters a positive outlook toward the learning process. During this time of constant growth and exploration by busy toddlers, we encourage a “can do” attitude to promote many self-help skills and develop a healthy self-concept. Washing hands, participating in toy cleanup, clearing their table space after eating, and potty learning are a few of the self-help skills we work on daily.

Since we believe that the child care center is an extension of the home, it is crucial that parents are closely involved in our program. The transition from home to school has remarkable results when all parties have an open communication system. A child’s self-esteem and happiness are greatly enhanced when the care and education provided by parents and teachers are a team effort. Through the diversity of our program it is our hope that the children will value the uniqueness of the people around them as they meet the day to day challenges of life.

Preschool – 3 to 5 years

This program offers a variety of hands-on activities and experiences. Through play, children age three to five create, explore, and pretend. Planned activities and consistent daily schedules are balanced with free time to create a developmentally appropriate setting that enhances the preschooler’s love of learning.



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The purpose of the preschool is to provide a safe and caring environment for children, while meeting their individual creative, emotional, intellectual, physical, and social needs. We believe this development happens by creating a warm and trusting atmosphere where children can establish a sense of security through a combination of hands-on experiences and active involvement in play. We also believe in making every effort to involve parents in the education of their children. A child's self-esteem is to be valued and enhanced. We therefore use positive guidance techniques and look for the strengths in all children. We promote play as an important avenue for learning and enjoyment. Through play children discover, pretend, test, classify, organize and interact with others. Play calls for imagination, initiative, and purpose.

We acknowledge the importance of a child's unique and intrinsic sense of wonder. We therefore provide a variety of hands-on activities and experiences to encourage exploration, manipulation, problem-solving, and sharing. We believe in offering choices for children, giving them a sense of empowerment and self-control. This is accomplished by balancing structured and unstructured daily activities, and offering individual, small and large group interactions.

Most importantly, we believe in and respect a child's right to be a child. We encourage discovery, fun, laughter, and success.

Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK)

VPK Highlights

- High quality educational program with a focus on early literacy skills.
- Free for all children who live in Florida and are 4-years-old on or before September 1st of the program year.
- www.Brightbeginningsfl.org includes information and materials about VPK readiness designed specifically for parents.

VPK Program Options: Parents may select one program for their child:

- VPK School-Year Program
 - 540 instructional hours
- VPK Summer Program
 - 300 instructional hours during



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Kindergarten – 5 to 6 years

Kindergarten is a full-time program. We follow the Florida Standards. Our Florida certified kindergarten program is for children five years of age by September 30 of their kindergarten year. An experienced kindergarten teacher will articulate with the Miami Dade County School District's traditional school year calendar. The kindergarten program will be offered from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

The kindergarten program seeks to facilitate a joyful beginning to lifelong learning. This means encouraging children to be creative and active explorers who are not afraid to think their own thoughts and to try out their ideas. Our goal is to help children become independent, self-confident, inquisitive learners. We are teaching children how to learn, not just in kindergarten, but for a lifetime. We are allowing them to learn through play at their own pace and in the ways that are best for each child. We help children develop good habits and attitudes, particularly a positive sense of self. This positive sense of self is part of the strong foundation needed to tackle life's experiences.

Our hands-on, activity-based curriculum is designed to enhance the creative, emotional, intellectual, physical, and social development of the child.

- **Emotional:** to help children develop self-confidence, independence, self-control, and a positive attitude toward life.
- **Intellectual:** to help children become confident learners by providing opportunities to experience success and develop learning skills through problem solving, asking questions, and using words to describe their ideas, observations, and feelings.
- **Physical:** to help children increase their large and small muscle skills and develop confidence in what their bodies can do.
- **Social:** to help children feel comfortable in school, build trust in a new learning environment, develop friendships, and feel they are a part of the group.

The kindergarten activities planned for children, the selection of materials, the daily schedule, and the way we talk with children are designed to accomplish the goals of our program and give children a successful start in school and the road to life-long learning.



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Programs available to aid with Tuition

School Readiness Program

- The School Readiness program offers financial assistance to eligible families to help pay for child care, and provides safe, quality child care for children at risk of neglect or abuse.
- 1-866-357-3239 (Toll-free Family Line)
- www.FloridaEarlyLearning.com

Step Up for Students

- Florida's K-12 scholarship program offers low-income families the ability to choose the school that best meets their child's needs. Families who qualify for the free or reduced-priced school lunch program, children who are in foster care or who are homeless, could be eligible.
- 1-877-735-7837 (Toll-free)
- www.StepUpForStudents.org

Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK)

- A free voluntary educational program designed to prepare 4-year-olds for kindergarten and build the foundation for their educational success.
- 1-866-447-1159 (Toll-free)
- www.FloridaEarlyLearning.com

Transitions

Upon completion of one program, the child is gradually introduced into the next age group. A meeting between the new Head Teacher and parents will help facilitate a smooth transition for all.

Videos in the Classroom

Videos are occasionally shown in the classroom to educationally enhance the early childhood experience. Occasionally, videos are shown for entertainment purposes, but these are age-and group-appropriate. The quality, quantity, and purpose of videos shown to children are important considerations in a group care setting. When a child brings in a video to have shown to the other children, there is much we need to consider. Does it have educational relevance? Is it appropriate for the group of children (too long, scary, etc.)? Does it contain some material other parents may find objectionable? Parents



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can help us in this effort by letting their children know parents need to talk with Head Teachers about bringing videos into the classroom.

Our guidelines are as follows: The use of media such as television, films, and videotapes is limited to developmentally appropriate programming that has been previewed by adults prior to use. Another option for activity is always available; no child is required to view the program. Staff discusses what is viewed with children to develop critical viewing skills. Media are used as special events, rather than as part of the daily routine. Television, videotape, and other forms of media have the potential to be effective educational tools for children. Media will be used constructively to expand children's knowledge.

X. Collaborations

The Center has professional collaborations with a variety of area agencies. These partnerships are developed to support our program as well as provide services to the community.

Citrus

The goals of the EIP program are:

- To increase the number of child care options available to families of children with disabilities in the community.
- To provide early intervention services to children with disabilities in natural settings, alongside typically developing peers.
- To recruit and train child care providers to include children with disabilities in their child care settings.

Student Employees

Students enrolled at colleges to obtain their childcare requirements have the opportunity to work in various classrooms with us. We are excited to employ these students at the center as caregivers, office help and assistants.



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XI. Parent Involvement Program

Parent involvement at the center is one of the most important components of the program. We feel that parents and teachers working together facilitate learning and role modeling for children. We also feel that parents' involvement in their child's program is crucial for success.

We have several goals for parents.

- To feel good about their role as parents.
- To gain insight into the behavior of children in general and their child in particular.
- To provide an atmosphere of acceptance, caring, and support where parents and teachers work as partners in the care and education for children.

Parent Hours

Parents have many opportunities to become involved at the center. The variety of involvement options allows single-parent families and working parents to participate even when they are unable to spend time at the center. Our parent involvement activities are fun and informative. There are a variety of ways for you to participate in your child's care and education. The following are some examples:

- Workdays - clean up, painting, and maintenance of the school.
- Fundraisers – garage sales, bake sales, carnival, etc.
- Any hours spent in the classroom interacting with children.
- Work on projects at home for the school – repairing books, cutting out art activities, making flannel stories, sewing, etc.
- Attending parent workshops given by the center.
- Assisting on field trips with the children.
- Requested materials for the school. Please check with Head Teachers for needed materials.

Your ideas are appreciated.



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XII. Special Events

Birthdays

- Birthdays may be celebrated at the center. Please contact your child's Head Teacher.
- The center can provide a list of birthday ideas regarding food. For health regulations, it is required that all food be store bought or made at the center. Food may not be prepared at home.

Holiday Celebrations

Holidays represent opportunities for young children to learn about the celebrations various cultures observe. Certain holidays are recognized in the preschool classrooms in ways that are consistent with the individual program's curriculum and the age of the children.

Examples include (but are not limited to) Halloween, Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas, and Easter. The center staff, however, recognizes, understand, and value other holidays which reflect the cultural diversity represented among our families. Teachers encourage all parents to propose the observance of additional holidays that reflect their family background and traditions. Such celebrations represent unique opportunities for children to experience and understand various cultural heritages.



Transportation/Field Trips

We do not provide transportation to and from school. For special field trips, transportation may be arranged. Parents will be notified prior to any field trips. Parental permission is required before children may be transported on a field trip. Parents may be requested to join a field trip event. Please watch for special event information.

Thank you for choosing the Stars Learning Day Care Center. You and your child are important to us; please let us know if we may help you.



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XIII. Appendix A

Section 26–IMMUNIZATION AND HEALTH OF CHILDREN

All children who attend Florida schools (public or private) are required to be immunized in order to protect themselves and other children from potentially harmful and even fatal, vaccine-preventable diseases in accordance with Chapter 1003.22(4), Florida Statutes (FS), and Chapter 64D-3.046, Florida Administrative Code (FAC).

Children’s Health Requirements.

- The child care facility is responsible for obtaining for each child in care a current, complete and properly executed “Student Health Examination form DH 3040” (June 2002), which is incorporated herein by reference and may be obtained from the local county health department, from the parent or legal guardian or a signed statement by authorized professionals that indicates the results of the components of the Student Health Examination form are included in the health examination. The Student Health Examination shall be completed by a person given statutory authority to perform health examinations.
- The Student Health Examination or the signed statement is valid for two years from the date the physical was performed. An up-to-date version must be on file for as long as the child is enrolled at the facility.
- The child care facility is responsible for obtaining for each child in care a current, complete and properly executed Florida Certification of Immunization form Part A-1, B, or C, DH 680 (July 2010) or the Religious Exemption from Immunization form, DH 681 (July 2008), which are incorporated herein by reference, from the custodial parent or legal guardian. DH Form 680 and DH Form 681 may be obtained from the local county health department. Immunizations received out-of-state are acceptable; however immunizations must be documented on the Florida Certification of Immunization form and must be signed by a physician practicing in the State of Florida. Specific immunization requirements are included and detailed in the most current edition of the “Immunization Guidelines-Florida Schools, Child Care Facilities and Family Day Care Homes” as promulgated by the Florida Department of Health.
- If the custodial parents or legal guardians fail to provide the documentation required in paragraph (a) or (c) above within 30 days of enrollment, the facility shall not allow the child to remain in the



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program.

- School-aged children attending public or non-public schools are not required to have student health examination and immunization records on file at the child care facility as such records are on file at the school where the child is enrolled.
- If the custodial parents or legal guardians need assistance concerning these requirements, the facility shall refer them to the Department of Health or to the child's physician.
- Medical records in this section are the property of the custodial parent or legal guardian and must be returned to them when the child withdraws from the facility. The medical records are transferable if the child attends another facility.

XIV. Appendix B

Communicable Disease Information

Chicken Pox

- Symptoms: Sudden onset of mild fever, sometimes vomiting. Eruption appears within 24 hours in the form of small blisters on body, face and forehead. There may be a few skin lesions or many. Do not give aspirin.
- Incubation Period: 13 to 21 days.
- Isolation of Case: Until 7 days after appearance of skin rash. Highly contagious. After all sores have dried & crusted (usually 6 days).

German Measles (Rubella)

- Symptoms: Mild illness. Rash resembles (but less red than) measles or scarlet fever. Swelling of lymph glands behind ear and neck.
- Incubation Period: 14 to 21 days.
- Isolation of Case: 5-7 days after onset of rash.

Measles (Rubeola)

- Symptoms: Cold, runny nose, redness of eyes, sensitivity to light, coughs or fever. This is the most infectious stage of the disease. After 3 days, a dark rash appears, first behind the ears, then on neck and face, becoming generalized.
- Incubation Period: 10 to 12 days.



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- Isolation of Case: 4 days from appearance of rash.

Mumps

- Symptoms: Swelling and pain in one or both glands, fever 101 to 104 degrees, headache, earache, sore throat, pain when swallowing, tiredness, muscle & joint aches, poor appetite and vomiting.
- Incubation Period: 16 to 18 days.
- Isolation of Case: 4 days after onset of symptoms.

Whooping Cough (Pertussis)

- Symptoms: Cough, which develops into sharp, rapid, repetitive coughing. Extremely contagious; may be quite severe.
- Incubation Period: 7 to 10 days (usually not exceeding 21 days).
- Isolation of Case: Up to 14 days after treatment begins.

Roseola

- Symptoms: High fever followed by rash 12-24 hours after fever has gone. Rare before 6 months and after 3 years.
- Incubation Period: Not known (Estimated 5-15 days).
- Isolation of Case: None.

Fifth Disease (“Slapped Cheek” Fever)

- Symptoms: On the face, rash is intensely red with a slapped cheek appearance. Face rash fades and a pink lace-like rash appears on arms, legs, and trunk. No itching; no blisters.
- Incubation Period: 4 to 20 days before rash.
- Isolation of Case: No isolation. No treatment.

Strep Infections (Respiratory)

- Symptoms: Headache, vomiting, sore throat, fever (may be high or slight), rash (may appear within 24-48 hours). The rash may be slight or transient or there may be no rash.
- Incubation Period: 1 to 3 days.
- Isolation of Case: 24 hours after start of antibiotics and cessation of fever.

Hepatitis A

- Symptoms: Viral infection of the liver. Symptoms can vary: loss of appetite, nausea, fever, abdominal pain. Transmitted through stool of infected person, contaminated hands, and being swallowed.



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- Incubation Period: 15 to 30 days.
- Isolation of Case: Notify Health Department. Use careful hand washing to prevent spreading. Vaccine now available.

Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis) Bacterial or Viral

- Symptoms: Redness, yellow discharge, swelling of lids. Easily spread to others. Clear discharge may indicate allergies.
- Incubation Period: 24 to 72 hours.
- Isolation of Case: 24 hours after treatment has begun.

Impetigo Contagiosa (Staph or Strep Infection)

- Symptoms: Scattered blistery or pustular lesions, which become crusted. Commonly found on the face, arms, or scattered over the body.
- Incubation Period: Undetermined, but probably 2 to 5 days.
- Isolation of Case: 24 hours after treatment has begun.

Ringworm (Capitis)

- Symptoms: Fungal infection of scalp or body. Flat, spreading, ring-shaped lesions, red on edge and clear in center. When they occur in scalp, hair tends to break off, leaving bald spot.
- Incubation Period: None.
- Isolation of Case: Exclusion until condition is healed or, if single lesion, same as impetigo.

Scabies

- Symptoms: Skin infection caused by mites. Spread through direct skin contact and shared bedding. Symptoms include: Itchy bumps, scratch-like lines under skin around hands, wrist, and between fingers.
- Incubation Period: 2 to 6 weeks without previous exposure.
- Isolation of Case: Exclusion until treatment is completed.

Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease (Coxsackie Virus)

- Symptoms: A viral rash. Mild fever, small painful sores in mouth and throat, rash on palms or hands, soles of feet and legs may be noted.
- Incubation Period: 3 - 7 days.
- Isolation of Case: Until temperature normal for 24 hours.

Head Lice (Tinea Corporis)



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- Symptoms: “Itchy scalp” caused by insect (louse). Eggs (nits) appear as tiny gray-white pearls glued to hair, especially around neck and behind ears.
- Incubation Period: Immediate
- Isolation of Case: Exclude until treated with recommended shampoo. Remove all nits before returning to school.

XV. Appendix C

Inclusion/Exclusion/Dismissal of Children

The parent, legal guardian, or other person the parent authorizes shall be notified immediately when a child has any sign or symptom that requires exclusion from the facility. The facility shall ask the parents to consult with the child’s health care provider. The child care provider shall ask the parents to inform them of the advice received from the health care provider. The advice of the child’s health care provider shall be followed by the child care facility. With the exception of head lice for which exclusion at the end of the day is appropriate, a facility shall temporarily exclude a child or send the child home as soon as possible if one or more of the following condition exists:

- The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities as determined by the child care provider;
- The illness results in a greater need for care than the child care staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children as determined by the child care provider;

The child has any of the following conditions:

- Fever, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness until medical professional evaluation finds the child able to be included at the facility;
- Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness until medical professional evaluation find the child able to be included at the facility. Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness shall include: lethargy that is more than expected tiredness, uncontrolled coughing, inexplicable irritability or persistent crying, difficulty breathing, wheezing, or other unusual signs for the child;
- Diarrhea, defined by more watery stools, decreased form of stool that is not associated with changes of diet, and increased frequency of passing stool, that is not contained by the child’s ability to use the



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toilet. Children with diarrheal illness of infectious origin generally may be allowed to return to child care once the diarrhea resolves, except for children with diarrhea caused by Salmonella typhi, Shigella or E. coli 0157:H7. For Salmonella typhi, 3 negative stool cultures are required. For Shigella or E. coli 0157:H7, two negative stool cultures are required. Children whose stools remain loose but who, otherwise, seem well and whose stool cultures are negative need not be excluded. See also Child-Specific Procedures for Enteric (Diarrheal) and Hepatitis A Virus (HAV) Infections, STANDARD 6.023, for additional separation and exclusion information for children with diarrhea; STANDARD 3.0666, on separate care for these children; and STANDARD 3.084 and STANDARD 3.087, on notifying parents;

- Blood in stools not explainable by dietary change, medication, or hard stools
- Vomiting illness (two or more episodes of vomiting in the previous 24 hours) until vomiting resolves or until a health care provider determines that the cause of the vomiting is not contagious and the child is not in danger of dehydration. See also STANDARD 3.066, on separate care for these children;
- Persistent abdominal pain (continues more than 2 hours) or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs or symptoms
- Mouth sores with drooling, unless a health care provider or health department official determines that the child is noninfectious
- Rash with fever or behavior change, until a physician determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease
- Purulent conjunctivitis (defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge), until after treatment has been initiated. In epidemics of nonpurulent pink eye, exclusion shall be required only if the health authority recommends it;
- Pediculosis (head lice), from the end of the day until after the first treatment.
- Scabies, until after treatment has been completed. See STANDARD 6.037;
- Tuberculosis, until a health care provider or health official states that the child is on appropriate therapy and can attend child care.
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated;
- Strep throat or other streptococcal infection, until 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever.



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- Varicella-Zoster (Chickenpox), until all sores have dried and crusted (usually 6 days). See also STANDARD 3.019 and STANDARD 6.020;
- Pertussis, until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment (currently, erythromycin, which is given for 14 consecutive days) has been completed. See STANDARD 6.009 and STANDARD 6.010;
- Mumps, until 9 days after onset of parotid gland swelling;
- Hepatitis A virus, until 1 week after onset of illness, jaundice, or as directed by the health department when passive immunoprophylaxis (currently, immune serum globulin) has been administered to appropriate children and staff members. See STANDARD 6.023 through STANDARD 6.026;
- Measles, until 4 days after onset of rash;
- Rubella, until 6 days after onset of rash;
- Unspecified respiratory tract illness, see STANDARD 6.017;
- Shingles (herpes zoster). See STANDARD 6.020;
- Herpes simplex, see STANDARD 6.018.

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SIGNATURE PAGE

I/We, _____, the parent/guardian(s) of _____, acknowledge that I/We have received a copy of Stars Learning Daycare Center Parent/Guardian Handbook and Information to Parents Document and have been given the opportunity to read the manual and ask questions about and understands the policies contained therein. Furthermore, I/We agree to abide by the policies set forth in the manual.

I/We acknowledge that this Parent/Guardian Handbook is the property of Stars Learning Daycare Center and must be returned to Stars Learning Daycare Center when the aforementioned child is no longer enrolled at Stars Learning Daycare Center.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print Name: _____

Link to the Stars Learning Parent Manual can be found at:
<http://www.starslearning.com>