

PARENT HANDBOOK



THE PARENT'S CHOICE LEARNING CENTER

2633 Executive Place

Biloxi, MS 39531

(228) 388-6891

WELCOME

TO

THE PARENT'S CHOICE LEARNING CENTER

We are pleased to welcome you to The Parent's Choice family. We consider it a privilege to serve you and your child. Please feel free to come by or telephone us at any time. We hope you will find our center to be an environment in which your child can grow, blossom, and enjoy the excitement, wonder and joys of being a child.

Our primary goal is to provide a safe nurturing environment while promoting the physical, social, emotional and intellectual development of young children. We believe that play is essential for young children to learn and grow.

Here at The Parent's Choice Learning Center, we only hire qualified, and caring teachers that will help provide a healthy, safe and happy environment for your child.

We welcome family involvement and ask for your support and advice in helping us meet the needs of your child. Here at The Parent's Choice Learning Center, we consider each family and child that we serve **FAMILY. WELCOME TO OUR FAMILY.**

Sincerely,

Anna-Carol Howell

Owner

OUR PHILOSOPHY

Choosing the right childcare setting for your child is very important. The Parent's Choice Learning Center aims to be much more than a childcare center. We want to provide and model the best in early childhood conditions while nurturing all our children's needs. As early childhood educators, we strive to offer a developmentally appropriate and stimulating curriculum in a classroom setting that provides the warmth and security of a child's home. Your child will encounter an exciting environment that is full of materials to manipulate. We also allow creative play and opportunities to create and explore with paint, clay and other media.

We believe that play is essential to the young child. Through play, young children learn to make sense of their physical, social and cultural environment. Children develop an enthusiasm for learning, cooperation, creative thinking and problem-solving skills through play situations that are carefully structured by experienced teachers. We encourage children to express their feeling such as sadness, fear, love, anger and happiness. We believe the development of these skills will assist children in their future education and help form peer relationships with confidence.

Here at The Parent's Choice Learning Center, we are family. We encourage you to visit any time and please feel free to join us for field trips and special family events.

FEES AND FINANCES

REGISTRATION---Upon enrollment of your child, The Parent's Choice Learning Center requires a registration fee. This fee covers supplies and materials. This charge renews each August.

TUITION---Weekly tuition is due on **FRIDAY** by **6:00 PM** for the upcoming week. Any tuition left unpaid at **10:00 AM** on **Monday** will have an added **\$10.00 LATE FEE**. Each day that tuition is left unpaid an additional **\$10.00 LATE FEE WILL BE ADDED**. Children **WILL NOT** be allowed to attend if tuition is **2 weeks** past due. **WE DO NOT OFFER PART-TIME RATES**.

VACATION OR ABSENCES---The Parent's Choice Learning Center has an unlimited vacation or absence policy. In order to reserve your child's place at The Parent's Choice Learning Center for an absence of one week or more, you are required to pay one-half of the weekly tuition rate for each week of absence. Enrollment will be automatically discontinued if the fee is left unpaid. **A FULL WEEK'S TUITION IS CHARGED DURING A WEEK IF YOUR CHILD ATTENDS ANY PORTION OF THAT WEEK**.

RETURNED CHECKS---A fee of \$40.00 will be charged for a returned check and The Parent's Choice Learning Center will have the right to refuse any further payment by check.

NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL---The Parent's Choice Learning Center requires you to give the center a 2-week notice of your intention to withdraw your child. If you are unable to give the proper notice, you will then be required to pay a NO NOTICE FEE that is equal to 1 week of tuition.

LATE PICK UP FEE---Any child picked up after 6:00 PM will be charged \$1.00 per minute. If you are continually late picking up your child, you will be asked to withdraw your child. We understand that emergencies arise, and this will be handled case by case.

CURRENT FEE SCHEDULE

REGISTRATION:

First Child...\$75.00

Second Child...\$125.00

Third Child...\$175.00

WEEKLY TUITION RATES:

Infants (6 weeks – 12 months)

Toddlers (12 – 24 months)

Twos

Pre-K 3 (3 – 4 years)

Pre-K 4 (4 – 5 years)

School-agers (5 - until upper Elementary entry)

Please see a Center Director for more information. School age children will have additional fees added when school is closed. Please see a Center Director for more information.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The Parent's Choice Learning Center is open Monday through Friday 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM.

HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

The center is closed: New Year's Day, Mardi Gras Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

If the holiday falls on a weekend, we will close either the Friday before or the Monday after the holiday. Our tuition rates are figured on a weekly basis. A full week's tuition is charged during the holiday week if your child attends any portion of the week.

DROP OFF AND PICK UP PROCEDURES

Children must be walked into the center by an adult. You are required by The Parent's Choice Learning Center AND Mississippi State Department of Health to sign your child IN AND OUT EACH DAY. The Sign In/Out Book is located on the desk in the office. You are then required to personally escort your child to his/her teacher in the classroom. Children are only released to parents or guardians with legal custody or persons over the age of 18 who have been listed on the enrollment form and with proper ID.

Please notify the office when someone else will be picking up your child.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WILL A CHILD BE RELEASED TO A PERSON NOT LIST ON THE PICKUP LIST UNLESS THE STAFF HAS BEEN INFORMED IN WRITING. A valid Photo ID will be required for identification.

In matters of custody between parents, if BOTH parents are listed on the enrollment form, BOTH will be allowed to pick the child up. A certified copy (with raised seal) of an order from a court of competent jurisdiction will be needed to revoke a parent's right to pick the child. If a new custody order is issued or if a restraining order has been issued against either parent, this information will need to be presented to The Parent's Choice Learning Center and placed in the child's file. This information is kept confidential, and its sole purpose is for the safety and well-being of the child. It is the policy of The Parent's Choice Learning Center to remain neutral in all custody matters and the center will not serve as a visitation site.

ALL visitors must first check in at the office, inform Director of their visit. They will then be escorted through the center. Adult visitors must assume full responsibility for the supervision of children they bring into the center, who are not enrolled in our center. The Parent's Choice staff will be responsible only for our regularly enrolled children.

ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

A personal conference with a parent or guardian is necessary. The following requirements are to be met **BEFORE** your child will be accepted at the center:

1. Read and sign the policies carefully.
2. Complete the registration papers.
3. Provide an Immunization Compliance Form (121 form)
4. Pay all applicable fees.

ALL INFORMATION WILL BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL.

PROGRAM GOALS

The Parent's Choice Learning Center strives to give each child individual attention as well as group activities. We emphasize the development of motor skills and encourage a child's natural curiosity and imagination through educational games, physical activities, and creative play. Playground equipment, toys, games, books, and music are provided. We provide care for children from families with various backgrounds and beliefs. We do not teach religious doctrine at our center. We do teach love, caring and respect for others no matter what their religious affiliation. Neither prayer nor mealtime grace is required of children in our care.

COMBINING CLASSES

All children arriving before 8:00 AM and leaving after 5:00 PM will not be with their teacher all day. Our staff comes in and out at different times because we are open 12 hours each day. We will be glad to explain our AM and PM combining schedule, just drop by the office.

ILLNESS/ACCIDENTS/EMERGENCY CARE

Sick children may NOT be brought to the center for care. Should your child become ill at the center you will be called, and you will be required to pick up your sick child within 1 hour.

EXCLUSION GUIDELINES FOR ILL CHILDREN:

- Fever of 101 or greater
- Diarrhea (3 or more loose stools)
- Severe coughing
- Tearing, irritation, and redness of eyelid lining followed by swelling and discharge of pus (Conjunctivitis, also called pink eye)
- Unusual spots or rashes
- Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing
- Infected areas of skin with crusty, bright yellow, dry or gummy areas
- Vomiting
- Unusual behavior (crankiness, crying more than usual, obvious general discomfort)
- Sever itching of body or scalp

PLEASE SEE COVID ILLNESS POLICY ATTACHED AT THE END.

MEDICATION

Medication will be given under the following conditions:

1. He or She must be completely free of fever and symptoms listed above.
2. Your child must feel well enough to be at school and participate in group activities.
3. You must sign your child's FULL name, your FULL name, and the beginning and ending date on the medicine permission form. The medicine permission form can be filled out for the week (Monday through Friday).
Medicine permission slips and the medicine are to be given to the cook.
4. All medication is to be left with the cook each morning. NEVER leave it on the desk or in the child's bag.
5. The medicine must be in the original container, with the child's first and last name on the bottle along with the time to be administered.

IN CASE OF ACCIDENTS

We take every precaution to make sure that your child is safe. That includes a comprehensive safety awareness program, as well as frequent inspections and maintenance of the building, playground and equipment. But because children will be children, accidents may happen. When they do occur and we feel medical attention is needed, we will call you or your designated contact. We recommend you call your health insurance company for reimbursement of the

related medical cost. Our center does carry liability insurance.

ALLERGIES

To make sure we are doing our best to care for your child, we ask you to alert us of any allergy problems your child might have. Doing so will help us take the right precautions to protect your child's health. The Parent's Choice Learning Center has an allergy list that is posted in each classroom and in the kitchen.

BITING

Biting usually occurs at a specific developmental period in a child's life. It is an age/ stage related occurrence and generally happens during the Toddler years.

WHY CHILDREN BITE

1. Toddlers are **ORAL** beings and put everything into their mouths.
2. At this stage in their development toddlers do not have the ability to discriminate between animate and inanimate objects.
3. Toddlers may bite for the **ATTENTION** that they receive.
4. Too many children in a close proximity may cause a toddler to bite.
5. Most toddlers need a certain amount of space around them and their toys and do not welcome another child's intrusion. The toddler may bite to stop a child from

taking his or her toys or to maintain their personal territory.

6. Many toddlers begin when they are teething as this helps to relieve the uncomfortable feeling of new teeth erupting.
7. Toddlers have not developed social skills nor yet learned self-control. Biting may occur as an immediate reaction to a problem with another child, as toddlers cannot verbalize their problems.

TECHNIQUES THE PARENT'S CHOICE LEARNING CENTER USES TO PREVENT BITING:

1. Group size in the toddler room is kept as low as possible.
2. We supply numerous appropriate toys on which children can bite.
3. We will attach a teether in a safe manner to a frequent biter's clothing and encourage him to bite it.
4. We will work with our toddlers to teach them the words to express their frustrations.
5. Teachers will remain near child and do their best to intervene if a situation occurs.

WHAT THE PARENT'S CHOICE LEARNING CENTER WILL NOT DO AFTER A BITING INCIDENT:

1. The child will not be physically punished in any way, nor will we bite the child back.
2. We will not put anything into the child's mouth.

3. We will not withdraw food or love or keep child in isolation.
4. Due to confidentiality, we cannot reveal the name of the biter or the biter's victim to parents.

WHAT THE PARENT'S CHOICE LEARNING CENTER WILL DO AFTER A BITING INCIDENT:

1. We will focus our attention on the victim, not the biter.
2. The bite will be cleaned with antiseptic and an ice pack will be applied to help relieve any pain.
3. The teacher will show the biter how to gently stroke the victim, so both children will learn appropriate ways to touch and relate to each other.
4. An incident/ accident report will be filled out on each bite. Each parent will sign their own separate form. A copy will be given to the parent and a copy will remain in the child's file.
5. We will work with the biter and parents to help move the child out of this stage. However, if the biting continues the child will be disenrolled.

REST PERIODS

After hours of exciting, educational and fun activities your child needs to rest. The State of Mississippi has established a 2-hour rest period for pre-schools. This is from 12:00 to 2:00. We provide the cot. You will need to bring in a blanket. The blanket needs to be labeled with your child's name and it must be small enough to fit in your child's cubby.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Children are always learning. Therefore, we consider the outdoors an extension of the classroom. Outdoor spaces and equipment are designed for active play and exploration that provide your child with good exercise, fresh air and different learning activities. Even when we go outside, supervision is still a priority. Please note, sunscreen or sunblock must be authorized and provided by the parent. All children will play outside at least 60 minutes each morning and afternoon, **WEATHER PERMITTING.**

POTTY TRAINING

To get over this difficult phase in development, **TEAMWORK IS THE KEY.** Therefore, we will make every effort to coordinate our program with the one you start at home. In addition, we will not start any toilet training until you decide the time is right. Most children start around the age of two. When you do decide, we ask you to supply us with at least 2 complete changes of clothing (including socks) and an ample number of disposable diapers and training pants for each day your child attends. If your child has just started toilet training, he or she may still wear a diaper at rest time.

FOOD FOR INFANTS

Infants should bring all baby food, mild fruit juice etc. Milk and juice must be prepared at home and sent in bottles. Each bottle should have only enough contents for one feeding. We cannot save formula from one feeding to the next. Any unused bottles must be carried home and either used at home or discarded. We will label each bottle with the child's name and the date each day. **NO GLASS BOTTLES.** Baby food must be brought in unopened and labeled.

FOOD

NO FOOD IS ALLOWED TO BE BROUGHT INTO THE SCHOOL. We serve breakfast at 7:30 AM, a morning snack is served at 9:00 AM, lunch is served between 11:00 and 11:30 AM depending on the child's age. Afternoon snack begins at 2:15 PM and a late afternoon snack is served at 4:00 PM. Menus are posted in the foyer and in the kitchen. Birthday cakes or special day snacks are acceptable. You must have approval from the office to bring in any food.

CLOTHES

Children should wear comfortable play clothes and rubber sole shoes. All children that are walking age are required to wear shoes. No flip-flops, sandals, or jelly shoes please. The children will be going to the bathroom alone, so please have them wear clothes they can manage easily. No belts, overalls, or difficult snaps. Infants and toddlers should bring in several changes of clothes. You are to supply enough diapers or pull-ups to last the entire day. We check and change diapers hourly during your child's awake times. All clothes, hats, coats, sweaters, blankets, bags, etc. should be clearly marked with your child's name.

THINGS FROM HOME

Children should not bring toys, gum, candy or money to school. Sometimes a teacher will ask children to bring in a unit related item. Some classes have "show and tell" and a note will be sent home to advise you which day to send something with your child.

SEVERE WEATHER AND DRILLS

To prepare for fire or severe weather or disaster evacuation, we have regular drills and practices so your child can react in a safe and orderly manner. If an actual emergency requires evacuation of our center, we will notify you as soon as the children are safe. In the event we are told to evacuate the building, our plan is as follows: We will transport all children to Just for Kids Child Development Center located at 1944 Pass Road, Biloxi. The children will be transported in the school van and in teacher's cars. In cases when we close due to severe weather, it will be announced on WLOX television and local radio stations.

PARENT / TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Parents are encouraged to talk to the teachers, but not during class time. The teachers must direct their full attention to the children. Conferences may be made through the office with the teacher and Director present.

Please communicate with us as soon as you have a concern. Misunderstandings and miscommunications do occur and the sooner you discuss them with us, the sooner we can all work to remedy the situation.

Frequently there are factors in any child's life away from school that may affect his or her physical and emotional wellbeing. When these occur, please inform your child's teacher so that they will better understand your child and if necessary, assist him or her in adapting. This information will be with the utmost confidentiality.

HANDWASHING

We want to help teach your child valuable personal skills. That is why we require handwashing before eating, after bathroom visits and at any appropriate time.

DISCIPLINE

Learning self-control is just a normal part of growing up, so The Parent's Choice Learning Center policy is never to embarrass or ridicule a child when he or she misbehaves. Nor do we allow the use of corporal or physical punishment. Instead, we use positive strategies that strengthen the self-esteem of children. Most situations can be handled by redirecting a child to another activity that is more appropriate. This approach is called "positive redirection".

Occasionally, when necessary, we use a procedure called "time-out". Time out is when a child is placed away from an activity but NOT in isolation. This gives the child time to think about their actions before coming back to the group activity. It is a positive form of discipline that teaches appropriate behavior while allowing the child to make the decision to improve their behavior. Time out periods will last no more than one minute for each year of your child's age. If you have any questions concerning our discipline policies, please feel free to stop by the office.

BEHAVIOR ISSUES

We provide childcare and education in a group setting, we are concerned for the welfare and safety of ALL our children and staff. When a particular child OR a parent's behavior threatens the safety of OR becomes disruptive OR abusive towards other children, parents OR staff in the center, we WILL disenroll at will.

This means the family will be dismissed IMMEDIATELY.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER

The Parent's Choice Learning Center is an equal opportunity provider. Applications for enrollment are accepted without regard to race, religion, sex or national origin.

INSURANCE

In case on an accident, all children and employees are covered by liability insurance. Parents will be contacted by the Center Director or other center management personnel if medical attention is required. Children will be taken to the nearest medical facility.

Welcome to The Parent's Choice Learning Center family.

After reading and understanding The Parent's Choice Learning Center's Parent Handbook, please sign below and return the bottom portion of this page for your child's file.

Child's Name: _____

Parent's Signature: _____

Date: _____

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