

Themba PARENTS' MANUAL

2022-2023

Updated - Jul 19, 2022

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WELCOME!

Thank you for choosing
Themba Creative Learning Center LLC.

Our commitment and goal are to provide high-quality care for children in a safe, secure, and positive environment.

Our vision is to be the most sought childcare center for providing quality childcare services to children ages six weeks-12 years old. We will provide our parents with an exceptional experience from Beginning to End. By doing so, we will maintain an environment that exceeds our families' expectations; hire professional, friendly staff that is knowledgeable and experienced in the childcare field.

Themba strives to prepare children for a life of learning through many enriching developmental, social, educational, physical, and emotional opportunities.

We provide quality child care within a developmentally appropriate program. We operate year-round, Monday through Friday, from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

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A Nationally Accredited Center

INTRODUCTION TO THEMBA

Philosophy and Goals

Our goal is to provide a safe, clean, healthy, and loving environment. We believe that your child is a unique and valuable treasure. At Themba Creative Learning Center, our experienced staff provides the opportunity for your child to grow, learn, and realize his or her fullest potential. Each child is accepted as a very special individual, having a unique timetable for growing and learning.

We believe that children should be provided with an environment in which they can explore, wonder, create, investigate, ask questions and enjoy the world in which they live. Your child's cognitive, emotional, physical, and social potential will fulfill your fondest hopes. Our staff consists of warm, kind, caring individuals who are committed to your child's superior growth.

Our Mission

Themba strives to provide children with many enriching opportunities, with a core focus on social, educational, physical, and emotional development. As a partner with our parents, this multifaceted approach is a continuation of the great work they (the parents) do outside of our care. We strive to provide our families with a high-quality experience by maintaining the NAC accreditation, which provides the framework for us to implement a highly qualified childcare facility.

Non Discrimination Policy

Themba affords equal opportunity to all employees and prospective families, regardless of family structure, socioeconomic status, race, religion, cultural background, gender, abilities, or preferred language are invited to be included in all aspects of the program, including volunteer opportunities.

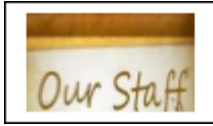
Remember we are here to assist you in the care of your child so that you can attend to your workday with comfort and security, knowing your child is being nurtured, developmentally challenged, and enjoying the companionship of friends in a safe and loving environment.



Thank you for allowing Themba to serve your family!!

Community Resource and Referrals

THEMBA maintains a current listing of resources and referrals, both public and private, in the areas of child health/development, family child care providers, parenting seminars, and specialists in various areas relating to family, child health, and welfare. These specialists are available on a consulting basis to families. Please contact the Center Director for more information.



Admission Requirements

The following conditions must be met for admission to Themba:

Confirm that the child is between six weeks and 12 years of age.

Schedule a tour of the facility with the director in order to review policies and procedures.

Schedule a day for your child to visit the classroom and friends.

Pay registration and fees, which are nonrefundable.

Submit completed documents that are included in the registration package.

Provide a completed health certificate (immunization (shot) record and a record of a physical examination) signed by a physician. This document must be updated at least annually.

Agree to pay tuition as required and late fees when applicable.

Schedule an orientation meeting with the director after submitting proper paperwork. Please be prepared to review all submitted documents for at least 45 minutes with the director.

Complaint Procedures

All complaints from a parent or employee are taken seriously. The following measures will be taken to address complaints:

The individual making the complaint is required to submit the complaint in writing so it can be documented and addressed.

A meeting will be scheduled (either face-to-face or via telephone conference) to follow up on the complaint to determine the severity.

Depending on the severity of the complaint, either a meeting between the parties involved will be scheduled to address the concerns, or it will be immediately reported to MSDE/Licensing Childcare Officials.

Any relevant information, including a plan of action resulting from a meeting or other actions taken by governing agencies, will be documented in the file of each of the parties involved.

Anti- Idling

It is the policy of Themba Creative Learning Center that drivers of any vehicle belonging to the business, employees, and customers of product delivery companies turn off vehicle engines when a vehicle will be stopped for more than 30 seconds, except when in traffic. The policy is in place for the safety of everyone, and it helps cut down on adding more pollution to the universe.

WHAT THEMBA OFFERS

Themba's Staff

THEMBA strives to recruit dedicated, caring professionals who support our philosophy and program. All staff must meet the requirements for certification as child care providers in a group setting and also must participate in ongoing staff development programs, classroom meetings, and outside continuing education seminars.

All staff members must provide a criminal history record/background check in order to be cleared through licensing.

Our Center has a Director and/or Assistant Director available to assist children, teachers, and parents at any time. THEMBA meets or exceeds State-required child/staff ratios in all classrooms. All staff members are trained in pediatric CPR and First Aid soon after they are hired.

Compliments, comments, or concerns relating to Teachers should, if possible, be addressed directly to the Teacher. The Center Director should also be informed regarding positive and negative staff performance. Parents are encouraged to visit and actively participate in their child's classroom.

Our Curriculum

THEMBA has chosen The Investigator's Club for our children who are Preschoolers, an award-winning research-supported curriculum to use in your child's classroom. Each Learning Scope and Sequence model for full-day care provides visual, auditory, tactile, fine/gross motor skills, emotional, social, and intellectual stimulation. The program promotes STEM, creativity, family involvement, and the whole child's development. Daily experiences capture and support the learning of important skills and concepts.

THEMBA strives to reach a balance between "academic" structure and creative social interaction. A mix of quiet and active play takes into account that the children are participating in group activities all day.

The program aims to encourage children to make simple and appropriate choices emphasizing planning, working, and evaluating, which establishes personal responsibility. The teacher's questions and suggestions set the stage for key experiences stimulating the child's thinking, language, and social development. For further information about the curriculum, check out www.investigatorclub.com.

Our goal is to provide **infants** with a safe, nurturing environment encouraging exploration and discovery along with time for listening to music and stories. A wide variety of age-appropriate toys are available to stimulate cognition, social interaction, and large and small muscle control. A soft mat or climbing area where children can interact with each other and staff members also allows children to practice rolling, climbing, jumping safely, and sitting up or standing. Infants and toddlers will be taken outside daily for play on the playground or for walks in strollers, weather permitting. The "Healthy Beginning" Curriculum is used as an additional resource in our infant classroom. For additional information, please check out www.marylandhealthybeginning.org.



Zoo-Phonics - A curriculum-based reading and spelling program that teaches children English language fundamentals. Zoo-Phonics exceeds state standards!! Our children will learn the sounds of the alphabet in TWO WEEKS! Our children are reading, spelling, and writing faster than we ever expected!

Information regarding specific programming and special activities is sent to parents each month in the Parent Newsletter and Tadpoles.

Hours of Operation

THEMBA is open between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. We ask that children arrive by 10:00 a.m. so that they may have a smooth transition into the day's activities. No morning snack will be served to children arriving later than 10:00 a.m.. If your child is arriving late due to a doctor's appointment, please call the center and give his/her approximate time of arrival; children will not be admitted during nap time 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m. We highly recommend that parents schedule doctor's appointments during the early morning hours so that the child can return to school by 1:00 p.m. No child may be at the Center prior to opening time or after closing time, and **any child may only be at the center for a maximum of 9 hours.**

No child will be admitted after 10:00 a.m. without a doctor's note.

NOTE:

If a child is administered shots during a doctor's visit, the child may NOT return to school due to potential complications from the shot and/or fever-like symptoms associated with the medicine that could cause the child to be irritated and uncomfortable.

Center Closings

THEMBA is Closed on **All** Federal Holidays and 2-3 Days for professional development.

In addition:

The day before Thanksgiving and the day after Thanksgiving
Christmas Eve Until January 3rd

Please see an updated closing schedule that's outlined in the Registration Package.

About Religious Holidays: Themba is not a religious school. Therefore, we do not single out any one holiday to celebrate in order to respect the differences between our various community religious practices.

Themba **does** celebrate the different cultures represented at **THEMBA**. Please feel welcome to bring in special foods, traditions, etc., to help us celebrate and teach our children about other cultural traditions. Let us know if there are other traditional festivals that you celebrate so the Center can participate in observing them with your child. Our annual Multicultural week is held in March.

Teachers participate in two professional development training days during the year. Dates will be announced as much in advance as possible. The center is closed for teachers' participation and all training activities. Tuition is not discounted or refunded for these training days.

Inclement/Emergency Closings

Sometimes Themba must close because of emergencies or inclement weather. Themba will follow PG County Schools Inclement weather closings. Please watch the local NEWS for updates. Tuition fees are still due during an emergency and/or inclement weather closings. Refunds or credits will not be given.

If snow or ice develops during the day, after the children have arrived, and there is an accumulation of two inches or more, the center will close early to permit staff to get home before they are stranded. Please plan ahead for such emergencies. The child(ren) must be picked up no later than two hours after notification.

Birthdays and Celebrations

THEMBA celebrates birthdays and other parties during afternoon snacks in the child's classroom. The party must be planned and approved by your child's teacher. Please fill out a birthday request form and submit it to the teacher no later than seven days prior to the party. Please pay close attention to the healthy food guidelines for parties. Birthday celebrations are from 3:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m. only.

Positive Guidance

We use positive guidance, redirection, and encouragement, for example:

"It works best if".... instead of "Don't do it that way."

"You can do it....You did that well."

When people hear demands, they react by resisting, no matter what their age. Adults often call this behavior in children "not listening." Instead of demanding, we frame all requirements as requests or suggestions:

"Wouldn't that work better if...."

"How about trying it another way....let's think about what will work." "Would you help us clean up....we need you!"

"Why don't you and (friend) try doing this another way."

Just as we don't have "bad" children, we do not have "bad" behaviors! Sometimes behaviors "work" or "don't work"; when a child's behavior does not work, there are consequences. Make sure the child understands the consequences, but do not use the consequence as a threat: "if you can't stop running, you will have to take a seat for five minutes and read a book." We give children choices and leave it up to them. Making choices empowers them!

Choosing behaviors that work gets recognition and encouragement; behaviors that don't work have other consequences.

A consequence may be a rest period away from the activity, going to the office, or even withdrawal from the Center. Consequences are not punishments. Consequences flow naturally from choices. We want children to learn to choose for themselves to do what "works" because they see that it really works, not just to avoid being "bad" or to be "good."

Field Trips

Providing children enhance monthly 'themes' with opportunities for outside experiences. Field trips are scheduled approximately three per year, considering the group's age and developmental readiness. Some field trips are scheduled "in-house," and the program comes to the center. The classroom monthly calendar will note **Field Trip Days** for your information. Parents are always welcome and encouraged to participate in trips!



Because a field trip is the day's scheduled activity, and all teachers are required to participate in the field trip for safety and security reasons, care will not be available at the Center for a child who does not attend the field trip. You may choose not to participate in a field trip and may have to make alternate arrangements for your child during that time. Parents are requested to participate one time per "semester" on field trips.

Field Trip costs such as bus transportation, entrance fees, etc., are the responsibility of the parents. Information regarding cost, transportation arrangements, date, location, and activity will be sent home to parents on the permission form. This form must be completed and all fees paid before the day of the field trip for your child to participate. Tuition is not discounted if you choose for your child not to participate in a field trip. All preschoolers ages (3's-4's) are expected to attend the field trips. If the parent decides that the child can't attend, Themba does not have alternative care, whereas all teachers will be chaperoning the children on the trip.

Parent as a Chaperon - Themba may request that a parent be present for the field trip if the child's teacher deems it to be necessary for a successful field trip experience for the child and his/her classmate. The parent will be **REQUIRED** to be a chaperon in such a case.

Field Trip Permission Policy

Parents must return a separate signed permission form for each trip. Forms are provided by the Center prior to each trip. If a signed permission form is not on file at the Center on the scheduled field trip day, your child will not be allowed to go. If you are not available to sign the permission or to pick up your child, and no alternate care arrangement has been made, the Center will contact the next person on the Emergency Contact Form to pick up your child for the period of time covering the field trip.

Car Seats

On any trip in which a parent drives their own or other children, car seats must be provided for any child four years of age or younger and/or under forty pounds. Parents will be asked to leave car seats at the Center on any day on which a field trip is planned and parents are driving.

When parents drive children other than their own, permission forms and waivers must be signed and filed at the center for each child.

Snacks and Lunch

THEMBA provides breakfast snacks, afternoon snacks, and milk daily. Breakfast is generally between 7:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m., and lunch is at 12:00 p.m. Snack is at 3:15 p.m.

Lunch is catered daily through Smart Lunches Foods Company for our older infants through preschoolers. All lunch provided is USDA-approved. Menus are posted across from the parent board in the main hallway. Please inform the staff if your child has any known food allergies or dietary restrictions. We will post a list in each classroom and in the kitchen at all times. Parents must provide a milk substitute if the child has a milk allergy.



If parents wish to bring in school lunch, we strongly encourage parents to use a thermos to keep food hot and an ice pack to keep food cold. Teachers will not warm up food in the microwave. Please pack nutritional lunches and snacks to help promote healthy eating. Please stop by the office if you didn't receive a list of healthy choices.

Parents must place lunch boxes in their child's cubby with everything labeled inside the box.

PARENTS' ROLES

THEMBA believes that the parent is the child's first teacher; therefore, we respect the parent's role and influence they have. We strive to work in partnership with the home by strongly encouraging parental involvement in our center. Daily communication is most important to both parents and teachers. If you don't have time to speak with the teacher or director, please send an email or drop a note in the suggestion box. We encourage all parents to sign up to become a Parent Partner, an initiative that started in 2013.

Open-Door Policy

THEMBA has an open-door policy at all times.

Parents may visit the Center at any time to observe, evaluate and assist! Parent volunteers are especially welcome on field trips!

Parents may call the Center during the day to ask how their child is doing, but please remember that teachers are busy in the classrooms. The Director will check on the child and report back. Teachers are available to speak directly with parents from 1:00-3:00 p.m. daily.

Parents are encouraged to attend Back to School Night held in October. This is an opportunity to meet your child's teachers at the beginning of each new school year. Special programming at Back to the School Night gives parents a chance to experience their child's day!

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher Conferences will occur twice a year, usually in November and April. You may also provide a request in writing to the director requesting a meeting with the classroom teacher at any time during the hours of 1 pm-3 pm. These are "progress reports" for both parent and teacher to discuss your child's developmental progress and any other situations regarding your child. Again, this is a good opportunity to develop a working relationship with your child's teacher.

Parents' Responsibilities

Parents are responsible for dressing children appropriately for the season and weather.

THEMBA will make sure all children are comfortably dressed at all times, and in particular, dressed warmly during cold weather when outside.

Coats, hats, and mittens will be put on children before going out in cold weather; however, children sometimes discard heavier clothing as they play and get overheated. Teachers supervising children outdoors will make every effort to make sure children are appropriately dressed at all times.

All personal clothing must be clearly labeled to avoid loss.

Teachers are not responsible for identifying clothing that is not labeled.

Children grow rapidly, and clothing provided at the time of enrollment may soon be outgrown. Please provide current sizes as necessary. The following items of clothing should be at the Center for your child's use: undershirt, shirt, underpants, pants or shorts, socks, and shoes. These additional clothing items should be labeled and brought in when indicated by staff or indicated on the calendar:

- Bathing suit, towel, sandals
- Raingear
- Snowsuit and snow boots
- Extra hat and mittens

Children go outside during the winter unless the temperature is below 30° F. The Center Director determines whether children and staff will have an outdoor play. The Office of Childcare requires that all children are to go outside unless directed by a doctor.

The following personal items are also required and must be labeled:

- 2-3 cot sheets - **crib size only**
- Light cover - crib size only
- All Bedding must be in a zipped lock bag. Plastic bags are not allowed.

These items used during nap/rest times will be sent home weekly on Friday for washing; please return them each Monday morning. Personal articles such as stuffed animals, special blankets, etc., should be clearly labeled.

Due to sanitary precautions, pacifiers and/or bottles are not allowed in classrooms other than the infant/toddler rooms. Sleeping bags or pillows are also not allowed.

Please note: If your child does not have a clean cot sheet, light cover, and an extra change of clothing, you will be asked to bring in the required items or pick up your child immediately. Failure to do so will result in charge of \$10.00. This charge will be used to purchase a replacement cot sheet for your child.

Custody Concerns

Issues relating to child custody, separation and/or divorce, or other personal issues are between the parties involved and should not involve the School or its personnel. The School does not enforce custody agreements or facilitate supervised visitation. Teachers and administrators need to be focused on the children at the school rather than the outside personal issues of the families. If the Administration judges that a family's personal situation becomes or threatens to become a problem, this is grounds for immediate termination of enrollment. While we sympathize with families wrestling with these types of issues, the School needs clear "all or nothing" directions regarding who is allowed to pick up children. For example, "only mom is allowed to pick up," "only dad or dad's mother are allowed to pick up," or "both parents are allowed to pick up." If there is a custody arrangement regarding different parents picking up on certain days, and the wrong parent picks up, this is an issue to be taken up with a lawyer or the Court, not with the School. A child may not return to Themba after a parent removes the child for visitation purposes.

Drop-Off/Pick-Up Procedures & Procure Management System

Your child must be signed in and out of the center by using our computerized childcare system, "Procure." Each child is assigned a child identification number (CIN). Parents must enter this CIN into the keypad daily to admit and pick up their child. (Teachers will also sign children in by using the "Tadpoles" app in the classroom.) The parent, guardian, or a designated adult are the only ones allowed to pick up your child. They must accompany your child to and from their classrooms. If you have information for your child's teacher, you are encouraged to write it in the parent communication log.

Your child will not be released to a person not previously authorized by a parent to pick up a child. We must have written or verbal authorization for changes, and if the parent has not notified us of the change, the child will not be released until we have spoken with the parent and received proper authorization. In addition to the above authorization, picture identification must be shown to the center staff to release a child safely.

If your child is brought to or picked up from the Center by a private bus, transport service, school bus or taxi service, friend or relative, the person responsible for bringing your child must walk your child into or out of the building and classroom and sign your child in or out through our Procure System. Please give them your access code.

GENERAL POLICIES

Diapers and Toilet Training

THEMBA accepts children in diapers and cooperates with parents when toilet training begins. Parents should involve the staff in the decision to begin toilet training. Since children spend most of their day at the Center, staff may have some concerns and suggestions regarding the readiness and the method of training to be used.

It is important that toilet training be a pleasant, non-stressful, successful experience for the child, parent(s), and staff. Themba will provide your child with diapers and wipes through our Cuties Program.

Toilet Training

When you or your child's primary caregiver see signs of readiness for toilet training, we will discuss the subject and agree on a mutually acceptable time to begin. It is our experience and belief that training usually proceeds smoothly for most children if not started too soon and if treated lightly. Accidents are part of the process and will be handled casually. During this process, please ensure that your child has plenty of extra pull-ups, training pants, clothes, socks, etc.

Personal Objects and Toys

Children **may not** bring toys or other special items from home unless it is specifically for a "Show and Tell Day." Toys from home create tensions when owners are unable to share, and/or toys become lost or broken. On "Show and Tell Day," special items will be stored in your child's cubby or with the teacher until your child leaves.

Mandatory Uniform Policy: Ages 2-4 years - Monday-Friday

Navy blue dress, skirt, sweater, or Bottoms (no jeans)

Powder Blue, Navy Blue, or White Collared shirt (No Tees Please)

All Black Shoes Only

No open-toed shoes **

** If your child is not in uniform, you will be asked to pick your child up or bring the proper clothes to the center in a timely manner.

** Children do not wear uniforms during the summer months (June - August).

Biting Policy

Children often bite, particularly prior to developing large vocabulary skills. The frustration of not being understood or of being provoked by another child often manifests itself in aggressive behaviors. - especially in children under the age of three.

Because of health and safety concerns, children who bite will be removed from the group for a short period of time immediately after the biting incident. Parents of both children (the biter and the one bitten) will be notified. Teachers will observe the child(ren) involved closely and implement developmentally-appropriate practices to redirect aggressive behaviors. If three incidents do occur within a short period of time, the child may be moved to another classroom, or enrollment may be terminated at the discretion of the Center Director. Parents will be notified of all incidents and will be given every opportunity to work with the teachers and Center Director to prevent other biting incidents.

Discipline Policy/Positive Guidance

Our primary responsibility is always the health and safety of the children and staff at the center. Staff members will use positive methods of discipline, which encourage self-control, self-direction, self-reliance, self-esteem, and cooperation.

This policy applies to all children enrolled at **THEMBA**. Children's feelings about themselves and their self-worth are a reflection of adults' expectations, attitudes, feelings, and behavior toward children. Teachers must provide a caring, supportive, structured environment, allowing children some responsibility for the daily program with established boundaries for acceptable and unacceptable social behavior.

No child may hit or harm another child intentionally or not. Incidents of repeated biting or hitting by children will be discussed with parents. Parents will be notified if their child has been injured and will be given a copy of a written Incident Report, copies of which will also be kept on file at the Center.

Classroom policies regarding behavior will be developmentally appropriate for each age group. Children unable to meet all classroom behavioral objectives will be encouraged to meet as many as possible with continued encouragement and support from the teachers.

Negative behavior will be noted and discouraged using various techniques appropriate to the child's and group's developmental and social needs. These techniques may include but are not limited to the following: verbal signals, forms of time out, removal of the child from certain activity areas, loss of privileges, and in the most extreme cases, removal to the Director's office.

Parents will be informed at all times of any behaviors that persist or are detrimental to the child or group. Parents and teachers may initiate conferences at any time to discuss concerns. Parents should view these conferences as opportunities for concerned, caring, supportive dialogue.

Enrollment at **THEMBA** may be suspended or terminated at the request of the Director due to continued inappropriate or negative behavior by the child. Persistent negative behavior may indicate a child is unable to adjust to the program and/or is developmentally unready to accept responsibility for behavior. Every attempt will be made to prevent termination.

However, in some instances, it may be the only recourse.

No staff member may discipline a child by slapping, hitting, spanking, or using abusive language. Any staff member who violates this policy is subject to immediate dismissal. Our goal is positive reinforcement of positive behavior.

Team Themba is trained on how to identify Child abuse and Neglect. We have mandated reporters to CPS and the office of child care regardless of who the abuser is.

Health and Developmental Screening

All children must receive routine health care professionals to detect developmental concerns. Teachers will use a tool to screen children to determine if there are any delays. Teachers will focus on how the child speaks, learns, behaves, and moves.

Safe Sleep Practices

Babies are put on their backs to sleep. We keep soft bedding such as blankets, pillows, and other soft objects out of the baby's sleep area.

Social Media

Teachers or Parents are not allowed to post or repost Themba's posts on social media. The owner is the only person who will post pictures for marketing purposes only. Parents will give directory permission in writing to post pictures or videos of the child. The post will not identify the child's name.

Technology Usage

Children are not allowed to bring in any electronic devices. Teachers are not allowed to have cell phones out during the instructional time. All classrooms and hallways are recorded 24hrs for security purposes. Teachers do not use technology in the infant - two's classrooms. If technology is used, which is highly unlikely, the teachers will preview it first before showing it in educational shows.

Transition Planning

Parents receive a formal notice before their child moves to the next classroom. The parent will meet with the new and old teachers to discuss the transition process, which will take place over two weeks. Children are not moved without their parent's permission.

Prohibited of drugs, smoking, and firearms

Themba is a drug-free, smoke-free, and firearm-free community. If anyone violates this policy, they will be excluded from returning to the grounds of the center.

ILLNESS OR EMERGENCY

Illness, Accidents, Emergency Care, Sick Child Policy

THEMBA is not licensed or responsible for the care of sick children.

Children in this age group are highly susceptible to illness and infection. Please be considerate of other children, teachers, and most importantly, your own child's need to recover completely before returning him/her to the Center.

If your child becomes ill during the day with a fever of 101 degrees or appears ill upon arrival, you will be required to pick him/her up immediately. If you are unable to pick up your child within one hour, the next person on the Emergency Contact Form will be called. Emergency cards must be kept current with business phone numbers and emergency contacts. Your child will be taken to the Director's office, where a cot is available for resting, pending a parent's arrival.

Common Indicators of Illness:

Green, runny mucus from the nose, ears, or eyes is generally a common indicator of infection. If your child is congested, coughing, and generally not feeling well, he/she will not benefit from being at the Center. We realize that children may retain a "runny nose" longer than the actual virus. Please take into consideration your child's general condition before bringing or returning him/her to the Center. The child may not return without a physician's note.

Vomiting may or may not be illness-related. Please note your child's general condition, and if there are two or more episodes of vomiting in a one-hour period, a "stomach virus" or influenza ("flu") may be present. We require that you keep your child home for 24 hours after the last episode. Parents will be called to pick up their child immediately if a child vomits two or more times at the Center. Diarrhea may or may not be illness-related. Help avoid the unnecessary spread of infection by keeping your child home for 24 hours after the last episode.

If a child develops diarrhea at the Center (3 runny stools within a one-hour period), parents will be called to pick up their child immediately. Ear infections are not contagious, but the virus or bacteria *causing* the inner ear blockage is infectious. We require that you keep your child home for 24 hours after diagnosis to allow the medication to take effect.

Pink eye is **highly** contagious to those coming in contact with the infected person. Children diagnosed with pink eye **must** stay home for a full 24 hours (1 full day) after diagnosis to allow the medication to take effect.

If a child has been diagnosed with the "Hand, Foot and Mouth" virus, we ask parents to keep their child out for five days. This is a common virus similar to the chickenpox virus for young children.

Please give your child the prescribed medication as indicated until finished. We can give medication only if a medication administration form is on file.

Our goal is to avoid a series of needless infections that may be caused by allowing a sick child to remain at the Center. We are aware that a sick child can pose many concerns and problems for working parents, and we may be able to offer suggestions for alternative care in an emergency situation. Your child will be cared for in the parent lounge away from other children while waiting for pickup. We will make sure your child is as comfortable as possible.

Please note that tuition is not refunded/discounted if your child is absent due to illness.

Readmission after Illness

THERE MUST BE NO VISIBLE SIGNS OF SICKNESS WHEN YOUR CHILD RETURNS TO THE CENTER.

Return after absence due to illness requires a parent's written statement or a physician's note for the child to return, indicating



your child is free of illness or is taking medication and can participate in the program's activities.

Children may not return until free of vomiting/diarrhea/fever for a 24-hour period or have been on prescribed medication for a 24-hour period.

If your child is not attending due to illness, please call the Center to let them know your child will not be at the Center that day. Children will not be admitted after a doctor's appointment during nap time between 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m.

Medication

Medication may be administered to children in the Center only upon the written order of a licensed physician. Themba does not administer the initial dosage of medication except with a licensed health care professional's written permission for life-threatening situations. A Physician's Medication Order Form supplied by the Center shall be completed for each medication prescribed. A record of medication dispensed to a child during care is recorded on the Child's Personal Record. Only the Director or authorized teachers are permitted to administer medication and maintain medication records. Please provide a medication spoon or dropper so that the correct amount of medication is given. Medication must not be expired and bear the name of the child to whom it is given. The parent's instructions must be consistent with the medication's labeling, including the medication name, dosage, route, time and date medication is to be given, and special instructions for monitoring. All children have been monitored post administration of medication.

There can be no stock or medication of any kind on supply at the Center.

Non-Prescription, over-the-counter (OTC) medication may **not be** given to any child enrolled. This includes eye drops, bug repellents, sunscreen, and other OTC medications. These items may not be administered with or without a doctor's note. Parents are advised to apply any necessary topical medication to their child prior to the school day.

All medications are labeled and stored in locked cabinets, generally in a locked box kept in the Center's refrigerator and given only by trained employees.

Medication Delivered by Epi-Pen, Inhaler, Nebulizer

Parents, guardians, or a licensed health care provider will provide instructions on how to use the device, including signs and symptoms to look out for. All employees assigned to administering the medicine will be given guidance/Training on how to use the device. Documentation must be noted on the medical form the date and time the training took place. Training on how to use and care for the device is given annually to employees who will be administering the medicine.



Emergency Care Procedures

THEMBA provides trained, conscientious and safety-conscious teachers to supervise your child at all times. However, children in a group care setting are exposed to minor injuries such as bumps, scrapes, bruises, and bites. **THEMBA** will attempt to prevent such injuries by always providing safe, developmentally-appropriate equipment and play areas and by always supervising the children.

Should an accident occur involving a head, tooth, eye, back, or bone injury, teachers will provide appropriate emergency care, and the child will be taken immediately to the nearest emergency room by ambulance, accompanied by the teacher or Director. The cost of the ambulance service will be the responsibility of the parents. Each parent will get a copy of the emergency preparedness plan at the time of enrollment.

The Director or designated staff member will contact the parents immediately. As noted on the Emergency Card, we will make every attempt to take the child to the hospital of choice. Parents are responsible for contacting the child's pediatrician or other health providers.

Authorization to Treat a Minor Form

Parents must complete and notarize the "Authorization to Treat a Minor" form provided at enrollment to guarantee treatment in an emergency. If a notarized Authorization Form is not in the Center's file, it is possible that a hospital will refuse treatment until a parent authorizes treatment.

First Aid Information

First Aid by staff will be limited to that necessary to preserve life or prevent further immediate damage, and it will be administered within the boundaries of first aid training. The center has a complete, easily located, and approved First Aid Kit.

Special COVID-19 Supplement

Because of the extraordinary nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, Themba has had to institute new practices and procedures to keep your children and our staff members safe, and we respectfully request your cooperation with the following:

1. **Practice daily self-screening of both yourself and your child(ren);**
 - o Take your child's temperature. Per guidance from the CDC, if it is 100.4 degrees or more, please do not bring him or her in.

Also, watch for the following symptoms:

- | | |
|------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| o Dry cough | o Bluish lips or face |
| o Fever | o Sudden confusion |
| o Trouble breathing | o Loss of smell or taste |
| o Constant pain or pressure in the chest | o Loss of feeling in toes |

If any of those is present, you should NOT bring them to the Center. Instead, you should seek medical attention as soon as possible.

If your child starts to develop any of these symptoms during the day, we will notify you immediately.

2. **Practice social distancing: keep at least six (6) feet between you and other people when you arrive to drop off or pick up your child.** We will make it a point to bring in only one child or children from one family at a time into the Center.

3. If you find that you or your child(ren) are experiencing any of the above symptoms, please do not come to the school. We suggest that you get tested before returning to Themba.
4. **For the safety of all involved**, please heed the directives of the CDC regarding washing hands or using hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol frequently. Also, if you cough or sneeze, do so into the crook of your elbow or a handkerchief or tissue.
5. **If you have any questions** about practices or procedures, please feel free to call us at **301-552-KIDS (5437)** or ask a member of our staff when you are at the Center.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS



After the previous requirements have been met, registration is based on a first-come, first-served basis.

An annual registration fee is payable when you enroll a child and is due each succeeding year he/she is enrolled. Themba operates on a 52-week calendar. If the child is taken out in June and you plan for his or her return, the registration fee is to be paid at the time of re-registration. All registration fees must accompany the registration package prior to enrollment. Tuition and other fees must be current prior to the child's enrollment in the center for the

new school year. Your child care services will be interrupted if tuition and other fees are not paid in a timely manner.

All fees must be paid whether the child is present or not as well as holidays, sick days and vacations. Please be mindful that you are paying to secure the slot.

Tuition is due by the first day of enrollment and payable on Fridays for the week ahead.

All payments are processed only through our automatic Tuition Express Program. We do not accept cash, money orders, or checks.

There will be a \$35.00 charge for returned credit card payments or bad checks. Please give the office a 48-hour notice prior to Friday if the credit card or checking account information needs to be switched out.

Fee Structure and Payment Plan

In order to either place your child on a waiting list or to reserve your child's place in a classroom, a two-week deposit may be required to hold your child's slot. This deposit guarantees placement within a one to Two-month time frame, depending on classroom availability. The deposit goes towards the first two weeks of enrollment. If you are returning to Themba from the previous school year, you are required to Re-Register your child for the Fall during the summer months.

Tuition at **THEMBA** is based on the child's enrollment schedule. **THEMBA** offers full-time/full day care - Monday through Friday, as well as some part-time schedules for our threes/fours classroom. Please request a current enrollment and tuition schedule from the Center Director. Tuition is due according to the following schedule:

Weekly Payment: due by noon on Friday for the current week.

Part-time Enrollment: due by the first day of the child's enrollment schedule.
(Monday/Wed/Fri. or Tuesday/Thurs.)

A late fee of **\$10.00 per school day** will be charged every day by noon if your week's tuition is not paid by the due date as required in the enrollment agreement. The due date for tuition is **Friday**. Your grace period is **Monday by noon**. If the Center has not received your tuition by the due date for your weekly tuition (or by the fifth calendar day of the month for monthly tuition), the Center may refuse to admit your child to the Center until you pay the amount due. The Center also reserves the right to terminate your child's enrollment for non-payment. If **Themba CLC** has to take collection action to collect unpaid fees, you will be responsible for all accrued late charges and for reasonable collection costs, including attorney's fees.

Parents will be notified of any tuition increase at least 30 days and no more than three months in advance.

Tuition does include the following:

Required instructional materials for Infant-Kindergarten (Investigator's Club), Diaper/Wipes, Hot/Cold breakfast, Afternoon Snack, Milk, Hot Catered Lunch.
(Food will be provided to infants at 12 months.)

Tuition does not include the following:

Field trip fees and bus transportation, Tissues for Nose
Optional enrichment programs are offered through Themba. (Yoga, Spanish, Chess, Mandarin, Soccer, Science, Dance, Engineering for Kids, Art Club, Martial Arts).

No refunds or discounts are **made on tuition for absences of any kind**, including those due to illness, holidays, vacation, snow days, or Center closings, as listed in this Parent Handbook. The registration fee and the deposit to hold a slot are nonrefundable.
For families with two children, **THEMBA** offers a 10% reduction in the cost of the lower full-time tuition. A 5% discount is offered on the lower part-time tuition for families with two children enrolled, either both part-time or one full-time and one part-time.
All tuition must be paid prior to services being rendered.

Withdrawal/Dismissal Procedures

You must give the Center Director at least one month's notice in writing if you wish to withdraw your child from the Center. If you do not give such notice, you will still be responsible for your entire last 30-days' tuition.

Enrollment Deposit

Any registration enrollment deposit will apply to your child's first two weeks of tuition.

Enrollment Agreement Forms

Please review and ask any questions at the time of enrollment. You are responsible for any part of the enrollment agreement which you have signed and agreed to, including Health Inventory, Immunization Record, Emergency Card Information, Authorization to Treat a Minor, Current Address and Phone Numbers for Home and Business, Emergency Contact Form, Custody or Visitation Agreements, Field Trip Permission Forms, and all Financial Responsibilities.

Late Pick-Up Policy

If your child is picked up after the scheduled closing time of 5:30 p.m., you will owe a late fee of \$15.00 for up to the first 5 minutes and \$1.00 for each additional minute. These late pick-up penalties must be paid immediately to the staff attending to your child. If your child is picked up more than thirty (30) minutes late two (2) or more times in any thirty (30)-day period, the Center may terminate your child's enrollment. If you need services longer than 9 hours a day, there is a \$35.00 per week fee for longer hours.

Damage to Center Property

Parents are responsible for any damage to Center property or equipment caused by themselves or their child. Parents must reimburse the Center for the damage if these costs exceed the enrollment deposit.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

No Hair Beads for girls due to beads being a choking hazard.

No Cell Phone Zone when entering the building - applicable to everyone.

Holding The Door - Please **do not hold the door open** for anyone behind you; the person must log in with their own code to get inside the building to ensure security for all.

9-hour Rule - Children are only allowed a maximum of 9 hours per day at Themba. Parents will have to pay an additional fee for longer hours.

Shots - Children may not return to Themba after receiving shots.

Nap Time - Children may not enter the building during the hours of 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. We highly recommend that parents schedule doctor's appointments during the early morning hours so that the child can return to school by 1 p.m.

Inclement Weather - Themba follows PG County Public Schools Inclement Weather Closings. Check the local NEWS for guidance.

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