

WESTCHESTER TREMONT  
DAY CARE CENTER, Inc.

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# PARENT HANDBOOK

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**Westchester Tremont Day Care Center, Inc.**  
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## WELCOME LETTER TO PARENTS

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Westchester Tremont Day Care Center, Inc. It is a pleasure to extend our Early Childhood program to you and your child/ren and have you as a member of our community. We hope that our relationship will be a very positive one.

Our staff and teachers are devoted to improving the lives of others through education and our program is based on the belief that young children, regardless of background and abilities, can be nurtured and challenged in an atmosphere that encourages, respects and fosters curiosity, spontaneity, skill development, self expression, responsibility and the development of a positive self image. We are dedicated to helping your child grow and develop to their full potential according to their own special learning styles, interests, and personalities. We believe each child is unique and our goal is for all children to develop at their own rate.

Through play, your child will learn new concepts and understandings. The arrangements of each room, choice of materials, and classroom management provide ongoing opportunities for children to play with a purpose. Our performance standards are structured to:

- Convey the importance of developing the whole child in all domains of learning – social, emotional, creative expression, physical and cognitive development
- Facilitate learning experiences that are engaging, interactive and challenging
- Provide a guide for the implementation of a child-centered curriculum that grows out of a teacher's ongoing observations and assessments
- Promote a safe, nurturing learning environment for all children

We feel strongly that open communication between parents and staff members is essential to fully meeting your child's needs. Please read this Parent Handbook very carefully as it is your guideline for our Center policies.

If you have questions – never hesitate to ask for clarification.

On behalf of all staff at Westchester Tremont Day Care Center, Inc., thank you for entrusting your child/ren to our care!

Respectfully,

Marie J Milillo,

Educational Director

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## **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION STATEMENT**

Westchester Tremont Day Care Center, Inc. is open to all children, regardless of race, religion, creed, color, sex, or national origin or ancestry.

## **HISTORY**

WTDC, located in the Parkchester section of the Bronx, began in 1967 as a one room endeavor initiated by Westchester United Methodist Church. After realizing the extraordinary need for childcare in this Bronx area, the church hired a director and added additional rooms. For over four decades, WTDC has responsibly served childcare needs by providing sound, nurturing and quality daycare for young children. Today, WTDC is both a fully funded Family Day Care and Group Day Care, serving 90 children between the ages of 2.9 and 6.0 years. Our Center has two (2) three-year old programs and three (3) four-year old, Universal Pre-K programs.

We serve children and families primarily in the Parkchester and East Tremont area of the Bronx. The Bronx as a whole is greatly underserved in childcare options. Statistics from a recent Census shows that 8.2% of Bronx residents have children under 5 years old, as compared to the NYC percentage of 6.5%. Statistics also show that the poverty level has dropped to 27.5% from 42.8% in the Bronx and more families are working and in need of child care as a result of governmental welfare reforms. Moreover, most ACS daycare centers are located in the south Bronx, leaving a gap in available programs in our neighborhood.

The Bronx is also home to a large number of immigrant families. According to a recent census, 29% of the Bronx is foreign born, as compared to 20.4% citywide; 57% of Bronx residents primarily speak a language other than English as compared to 28% citywide. Parkchester and the East Bronx is a vibrant community that has always attracted new immigrants. It boasts a dynamic mix of African American, Eastern European, Indian, Pakistani, Arab, and Latino residents. Many of these new immigrants seek ways in which they can begin their own business while relying on the guidance and expertise of a network provider such as Westchester Tremont Day Care Center, Inc. With our strong commitment to diversity, WTDC seeks to bridge the mosaic and provide supportive and nurturing childcare to families in this area, thus improving community relations and understanding.

WTDC provides a developmentally appropriate program by involving parents in planning for their children's education, evaluating the children's progress, and creating an individualized curriculum based on the children's holistic needs and developmental levels. With an emphasis on the cultural and linguistic needs of the children in the community, the children are offered a variety of materials and opportunities to explore and experiment their unique learning styles and interests.

In Fall 2005, WTDC was awarded a Universal Pre-Kindergarten contract by the Department of Education. This ongoing partnership with DOE's Early Childhood Program has positively impacted our Center's overall learning program by boosting the expectations of our 4-year old learners, enhancing learning standards already in place and ensuring that curriculum, instruction and activities are appropriate for 4-year olds as they move toward becoming self-assured and independent. We are very proud of this program and place great emphasis on Language and Literacy Development.

Studies indicate that children are better socialized, better equipped to learn in different circumstances, and have more confidence in themselves when exposed to a quality pre-school learning environment. Parents and teachers have reported that children trained at WTDC are easily qualified to enter school and show better coping skills. Thank you for choosing WTDC for your child's early learning experience and for being a significant part of our history.

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of Westchester Tremont Day Care Center, Inc. shall be to:

- Encourage, plan, organize, develop, establish, operate and maintain a quality childcare and early childhood education program that will benefit the child, the parent and the community.
- Play a role in citywide day care matters, particularly with regard to expansion and improvement of the program.
- Seek to constantly improve services and keep them relevant to the needs of the community.

## **GOALS**

### For the Child

- To provide a program and enriched environment that addresses the physical, cognitive, social, emotional, language and literacy skill development of each child.
- To provide opportunities for meaningful play based on the child's individual needs, interests, handicaps and abilities and to build the foundations for future adult learners.
- To provide opportunities for the development of group and social skills while cherishing individual and cultural differences.

### For the Parents

- To provide quality child care while parents pursue their studies, careers and related activities.
- To provide opportunities to grow in the understanding of child development through day-to-day contact with center staff, and through parent conferences, workshops and other activities.
- To provide opportunities to meet and interact with other parents and teachers who share a common interest in pre-school children.

### For the Community

- To help meet the need for quality childcare in the community.
- To provide opportunities for student teachers, work-study students, and volunteers to study child development.
- To contribute to the wholesome growth and development of the future citizens of society.

## **LICENSE**

Westchester Tremont Day Care Center, Inc. is licensed by the New York (DOH) Department of Health. We are obligated to maintain standards related to our facility, staff, health and safety procedures, nutrition, adult to child ratio and record keeping. Rigid enforcement of State and City health, fire, and licensing standards are in the best interest of all children.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

### Governance

Westchester Tremont Day Care Center, Inc. is an ACD, non-profit entity that is governed by a Board of Directors, whose members volunteer their services. The Board is an employer of all staff and is responsible for the enactment and enforcement of these policies in keeping with the Center's purpose and goals.

### Adoption of Policies

These personnel policies have been approved and adopted by the Board of Directors of Westchester Tremont Day Care Center, Inc. However, they are subject to regular review, amendment, or modification based upon changing needs and decisions of the Board in accordance with relevant law and public policy. The Center will provide all employees, upon hire, with a copy of these policies and any amendments hereto.

### Relationship to Municipal Agencies

The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Bureau of Day Care licenses our Center. In addition, the program is administered under regulations and guidelines of other relevant funding sources.

### Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is the employer of all staff and is responsible for the enactment and enforcement of these policies in keeping with the Center's purpose and goals.

### Director

The Director of the Center is responsible for the overall administration and supervision of the Center's services, program and personnel and reports directly to the Board of Directors. She/He is additionally responsible for the enactment and enforcement of these policies in keeping with the Center's purpose and goals.

### Staff

The staff consists of permanent full-time and part-time teachers, assistant teachers, teacher aides, administrative assistants, bookkeepers, cooks, custodial employees, substitute teachers and any other support personnel deemed necessary and employed by the Center.

## **PHILOSOPHY AND STANDARDS**

Westchester Tremont Day Care Center, Inc. is an early childhood center and instructional facility available to preschool children of the Westchester/Tremont area and surrounding community whose primary goal is to provide a stimulating learning experience for all children in an open environment. Our program is designed to facilitate each child's physical, social, emotional, cognitive, language and literacy development with an emphasis on fostering a positive self-concept.

The Child Care Center provides a developmentally appropriate program by involving parents in planning for their children, evaluating children's developmental progress and employing multi-cultural and anti-bias programs. Each day at the Child Care Center there are both individual and small group activities. The children, using a variety of materials, are entitled to explore and experiment in accordance with their unique learning styles and interests. The purpose of all these exercises is to create an atmosphere of self-respect and self-discipline and also provide numerous opportunities for the teacher to guide the youngsters as they learn to make their own choices and decisions. The staff respects and appreciates individual differences and, through example, encourages the children to do likewise. Because of this respect for each child's unique pattern of growth, the staff tries to avoid thinking about and evaluating the children in terms of standardized norms of achievement.

Play, the universal language of childhood, is used at the Center to foster the growth of elementary concepts of time, space, number, and color. Games, painting, construction, modeling, dance, outdoor play, and music are used to sharpen cognitive and perceptual processes, as well as to allow children to interact well with others. While a variety of activities are always available, the center recognizes the need of young children to develop a sense of competency and mastery through repeated exposure to selected activities.

Based on the premise that the primary impetus for development is the child's active interchange with the environment, our program provides a rich environment and maximizes learning through responsive instructional techniques. We are more than just a baby-sitting service for your children. From the child's point of view, there are many places to go, meaningful things to do within the program environment, and there are qualified staff offering supervision, help and support on a continuous basis.

Emphasis is placed on incorporating an integrated service system addressing educational, health, nutritional and social service needs of families. Our Center offers many opportunities for family involvement and we foster a very positive two-generational dynamic that benefits children and parents. Ongoing opportunities for family participation are available and we support an "open door" policy whereby parents are always welcome to visit and observe their child at any time throughout the day.

At Westchester Tremont Day Care Center, Inc. we implement The Creative Curriculum ® for preschoolers and are entirely dedicated to the belief that your child is the hope of our future and deserves to become an outstanding citizen of tomorrow.

## **ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES**

- Westchester Tremont Day Care Center, Inc. admits children from the ages of 2.9 years old without regard to race, religion, creed, color, sex, national origin, or ancestry. Enrollment procedures are as follows:
- A child may be between 6 weeks to 12 years old to be eligible for Family Day Care
- A child must be at least 2.9 years old and **MUST** be potty trained to be admitted into our Group Day Care
- Children in a 3-year-old class will not be allowed to advance into the 4-year-old Universal Pre-K Program during the school year (September through June).
- A child must be between 48 and 60 months to be admitted into our Universal Pre-K Program.
- If a child intends to enroll in Kindergarten before the standard age of five, and if the parent can provide written verification by the school system that the child will be attending Kindergarten the following school year, then the child may be enrolled in the 4-year-old class.
- Classes are filled on a first-come/first-served basis according to the date of application, completed application forms and authorization by ACS.
- If classes are filled when a parent registers, the child will be put on a waiting list to fill vacancies as they occur. As vacancies occur during the year, they are filled from the waiting list, or from new registrations, according to the above procedures and confirmation by ACS.

## **REQUIRED DOCUMENTS**

The following documents **MUST** be completed, signed and filed with the Center for your child to retain active enrollment status. No child will be permitted to begin attending until all required documents are on file. *NOTE: It is the parent's responsibility to keep these forms updated.*

- Enrollment Form
- Policy Statement Form
- Emergency / Authorization Pick-up Form
- Health / Medical Form – must be signed and dated by a physician
- Updated Immunization Form
- Income Verification
- CACFP Meals Application
- Photo Release Form
- Consent Form for Child's participation in Center Activities

## REQUIREMENTS FOR CHILD CARE SERVICE

Our Center is ACS approved. We accept ACS vouchers and ACS clientele, HRA vouchers and a limited number of private pay children. In order to be enrolled in our Center, the following steps need happen:

- Complete a FREE application
- Provide proof of an active case with ACS / HRA for childcare reimbursement to the Center.
- Comply with the Center's required documentation
- Comply with all Center regulations as set forth by the Department of Health (DOH), specifically:
  - Updated immunizations
  - Updated physical forms completed and signed by a certified physician
- All payments (parent contribution and private payments) MUST be submitted by cash, check, or money order (payable to "Westchester Tremont Day Care Center, Inc.") on the first Monday of each week. Advance payments are welcome and accepted.
- There is a \$50 fee for any check that bounces and the Center will no longer accept checks from that party as a form of payment should this occur.
- Chronic late payment or no payment is subject to disenrollment.

*Note: When a family has a religious belief for not immunizing their child, the parent is to address a letter the Director of the Center. The statement from the parent is an expression of their sincere and genuine religious beliefs which prohibit the immunization of their child. It is the individual school / child care center that decides to accept or reject the request for a religious exemption and under the law may request supporting documents. Public Health Law 2164 does not allow for a philosophical exemption. The child must still have a physical examination for admittance to a child care center. The statement from the parent may be attached to the medical form and all health records are to be kept confidential.*

## DAYS AND HOURS OF OPERATION

WTDCC is open Monday through Friday from 8:00AM till 6:00PM.

Breakfast starts being served at 8:30AM and stops being served at 9:15AM. This allows children to finish eating and ensures appropriate clean up by 9:30AM, at which time our learning program begins.

Children enrolled in our full-day program MUST be in their assigned classroom by 9:30AM and picked up no later than 5:45PM, allowing for proper shut down procedures by 6:00PM at which time the Center closes and is alarmed for security purposes.

A financial penalty / late fee will be incurred for late pick-ups at the rate of \$1.00 per minute. If excessive late pick-up occurs, the child is subject to disenrollment.

## ATTENDANCE

It is very important for your child to maintain a regular pattern of attendance so that s/he will benefit from the full program. Extended absence for eleven (11) consecutive days will result in disenrollment from the Center and a new application for admission must be made. Your child's name will be placed on the wait list and re-enrollment is subject to availability of space and new approval of payment.

All absences must be reported:

- If your child will be absent for medical reasons for three (3) consecutive days, you must bring a doctor's statement before your child may return to school.
- If your child is going on an extended vacation it is important that you inform the Director.

## WITHDRAWAL

We require advance notice of your child's withdrawal. This provides an opportunity to notify another family to utilize that space. We will make every effort to assist a child needing an alternate placement.

If the parent does not want to use the services of our Center any longer, the parent must:

- Notify the Director one week before child's last day.
- Notify your sponsoring agency immediately after services have ended. They will assist with alternative placement if necessary.

## DELIVERY / PICK-UP OF CHILDREN

It is important that your child's day begins and ends on a positive note. The following list outlines protocol for arrival and pick-up of children and ensures the integrity of our program.

- All children are expected to arrive at the Center no later than 9:30 AM.
- Each day upon entering the Center, parent or legal guardian must sign child in using attendance log provided in child's classroom. Make sure to let the teacher know that your child has arrived.
- Many children enjoy it when their parents spend a few moments in the classroom when they arrive at the center.
- Upon leaving with your child at the end of the day, you must sign your child out.
- At pick-up time, feel free to come into the classroom and ask your child's teacher about their day.
- Parents are responsible for their own children upon their arrival into the classroom and at the end of the day.
- **Never leave your child in a classroom without a teacher!**

- If there is an emergency and you need to arrive late, please call and inform the main office. Your child's teacher will be notified if late arrival is approved. Staff is authorized to send home any children who arrive late without approval.
- Teachers will release a child only to the parent or someone authorized by the Parent. Under no circumstances will your child be permitted to leave with anyone other than those persons designated on the *Pick-Up Authorization Form*. Anyone picking up a child may be asked for a photo ID.
- All escorts must be 16 years of age or older.
- Please make every effort to have your child picked up on time.
- Parents must call the center as soon as possible to notify the teachers of unavoidable/unanticipated lateness (train delay, over time, etc.) and must make alternative arrangements for an emergency escort to pick up your child.
- Although the center is open from 8:00am to 6:00 p.m., each child's hours of care are based on the individual needs of the family. Please let your child's teacher know your required hours of need for care.
- There will be an overtime fee of \$1.00 per minute / per child for children not picked up at their regular dismissal time.
- Consistent lateness will be cause to ask you to withdraw your child from the Center.

## **INTAKE, ADJUSTMENT, TRANSITION**

The first day at the Center is a big step for your child. Your child's first few days are very important because becoming adjusted to a school environment is a new experience. You will have a sense of relief knowing that your child is well taken care of and receiving an excellent early childhood education. This will enable you to successfully accomplish the goals you have set for yourself.

For both parents and children, new school experiences can be a time of varying emotions. A room filled with toys, paints, blocks, and other stimulating materials can be thrilling. Leaving a parent for the first time can be unsettling to a child. Seeing your child grow and change can be poignant for a parent. Certainly these feelings are natural and understandable. WTDCC wants to ensure that the first few weeks go as smoothly as possible.

For some children, coming to school will be easy; there won't be difficulty and the process will seem quite natural. In fact, we expect this of most children who have been in day care. For others, particularly the younger children, school may be their first real separation from home. Like other separations, this one will benefit from some preparation that all of us -- parent, child and school make together. It is important to believe that you are placing your child with people whom you trust. **This is the time to relay your good feelings about school to your child, not your concerns.** Save your questions for the teachers and Director.

## THE PROCESS OF ADJUSTMENT

Sometimes it is especially hard for children (usually when they are under 4) to leave their parents. Very young children can only understand things that they can actually see or feel. When you are not there, they don't realize that you are coming back. The only way they learn to deal with this is by repeating the process of having you drop them off at school in the morning and having you return for them in the afternoon. This development of trust takes time, but eventually children will overcome their fears.

The schedule the child follows for the first days of adjustment is as follows:

Day One: The child stays in the classroom from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 PM. with a parent or other adult that the child is comfortable with. That person will stay with the child until he/she is comfortable with the setting and then leave the classroom and wait in the lobby until dismissal.

Day Two: The child arrives by 9:00AM. You may leave if your child is doing well, however, you must be available if your child needs you. The child stays for their planned hours. This schedule may be modified to suit your child's needs. Your child's adjustment period may be extended or shortened at the discretion of your child's teacher. Remember, some children require a longer adjustment period.

## TRANSITION SUGGESTIONS

Children need time to get used to their new surroundings, and feel comfortable without your presence. Start to prepare your child for school a while before he/she begins. Tell the child what he/she will be doing in the classroom, and even bring the child to see the school and meet the teacher.

You will be staying with your child for school at first. You will sit with your child and participate in games and different activities and routines for the first few days. DON'T INSIST, if your child does not want to participate. The teacher will know when the child is ready.

Do not leave a classroom without telling your child, unless the teacher suggests you do so. It is upsetting at first for the child to look up and find you gone. Children want to join in the fun, but do not want their parents to leave. So, for a while, they will keep one eye on the activities and one eye on you.

Making the first days easier might include giving your child something of yours to keep during school hours. Bringing an item from home, such as a family photograph or clothing, is a concrete way for your child to keep a part of you close by while the two of you are apart. Also, your child can bring a special possession to school, such as a blanket or a toy eventually to be kept safe in a cubby where it can be peeked at (or snuggled) every now and then.

This will help the child make a connection with you and home. (The item from home may be brought during the transition period only, and only if you find it extremely necessary). Be sure the teacher knows the item belongs to your child.

## **DISENROLLMENT**

*For the integrity and safety of our Center, we reserve the right to disenroll children and or families for the following reasons:*

- Chronic late payment or no payment of program fees
- Re-determination obligations are not met
- Required documentation not received
- Lack of parental cooperation with Center policies and staff
- Excessive, physically aggressive behavior by any child e.g. biting, hitting, spitting
- Three or more incidents of improper hygiene e.g. lice, scabies, or impetigo occurrences
- Complete disregard for closing times
- Verbal or physical abuse of staff or children
- Persistent unacceptable behavior
- It is determined that a child is not adjusting to the program
- Any other reason deemed dangerous by our attorney

## **MOVING UP AND MOVING ON**

When children move from one class to the next, the center has a transition plan that helps children become familiar with the new classroom, teachers, and children before they officially begin. The transition plan allows flexibility so that we may best meet the developmental needs of each child. Your child's teacher or center director will provide more details about classroom transitions when your child is ready to be moved to the next classroom.

Children in our program are considered for moving on according to their developmental abilities and maturation levels as well as program eligibility requirements and space availability in the next classroom. Our procedures help provide a consistent environment for the children, allowing the teachers to effectively plan age-appropriate learning experiences and encouraging the children to establish long-term social relationships.

## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Westchester Tremont Day Care Center, Inc. tries to address many of the needs of its children, but this goal cannot be achieved without parent participation. Parent involvement is considered an integral part of daily life at the Center. Parents and teachers interact by sharing their observations, immediate concerns, and long-range goals. Parents are encouraged to contribute to the program by sharing their expertise and talking to the children about their work, cultural practices etc. A parent teacher partnership such as this significantly enhances each child's overall growth and development.

We believe in parent involvement and strengthening the family relationship. Therefore, it *is important* that all parents participate in parent workshops, parent/teacher meetings, meetings with the Director and Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) meetings.

Parents are always welcomed at the Center to observe and participate in classrooms and are encouraged to spend time at the Center as special events take place or as special needs arise.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Open and frequent communication between parents and teachers will help your child have a positive early learning experience. We hope that you will feel free to talk to the director or your child's teacher when matters of concern present themselves. Brief conversations with your child's teacher when dropping your child off or during pick-up may be held but not encouraged. This distraction will prevent our teachers from giving your children their undivided attention. Individual conferences may be scheduled at your request.

In addition, a parent's informational bulletin board containing current information about the center and other topics of general interest to parents is provided and parent/teacher conferences will be made available semi-annually to keep you informed of your child's progress at the center.

## **PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Skills are developed which are vital to the learning process and activities at the center are designed to foster the growth of each child. As a parent you should be aware of your child's growth process while they are attending our center. Parent/teacher conferences are held regularly throughout the academic year to give you important information. Check the Center's calendar for these dates and be sure to schedule an appointment with your child's teacher during conference weeks.

## **KEEPING THE CENTER INFORMED**

Upon registration, you completed a series of enrollment/intake forms. We rely on this information to reach you in the event of an emergency and for our staff to meet the specific needs of your child and family. It is inevitable that this information will change with time; therefore, it is up to you to keep our files up to date. Please take the time to write us a note with any new information as the need arises. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

## **HEALTH GUIDELINES**

The Department of Health (DOH) requires that a current doctor-completed **Medical Form** and parent/guardian completed **Emergency Contact Form MUST be on file in the Center's office.** It is important that the health and medical sections of the child's admission form are fully completed and clearly state any medical conditions, allergies, and medications.

**Keeping these records up to date, as changes occur, is the parent's responsibility and failure to do so may cause your child to be terminated from our program.**

**The individuals named on the Emergency Contact Form MUST have current and active phone contact numbers and be able to respond for necessary pick-up of your ill or injured child.**

Think carefully of your choices when supplying Emergency Contact information.

**It is imperative that we are able to reach you while your child is in our care!**

You will be notified immediately if your child becomes ill or injured while at the Center. If you cannot be reached, we will call an emergency contact that is listed on your Emergency Contact Form.

**For the health and safety of your child, it is important that you pick up your ill or injured child at the time you are notified.**

If necessary, your child will be taken to the nearest hospital (usually Westchester Square) and you will be expected to meet up with your child at the hospital. Before leaving for the hospital, the Administrative Staff pulls your child's health record, which is required to have current medical history – again... Your Responsibility!

## **FAMILY CONTACT & POLICY ON NOTIFYING PARENTS OF CHILDREN'S INJURIES**

Westchester Tremont Day Care Center, Inc. maintains current contact information on each child actively enrolled in our Center.

We provide a written plan describing the medical and health policies and procedures, which are explained to all Center personnel.

We additionally provide an appropriate instruction to enable staff to observe symptoms of illness in the children, which might require medical care.

Arrangements are in place for the care of any child who has or develops symptoms of illness or is injured and includes notification of the child's parents, guardians, or other persons having legal custody, and provision for medical care or first aid.

If the child should have or develops symptoms of illness, s/he will be provided with a place to rest quietly under observation until s/he is seen by a physician or removed from the day care center.

In the event of an accident or illness requiring immediate care, the Director of the Center or other person in charge will be responsible for securing such care and notifying the parent, guardian, or person having legal custody of the child.

## **INFECTIOUS DISEASE CONTROL**

One of our goals at the Child Care Center is to limit the transmission of infections and to provide a healthy, safe environment for your children. We need your help to accomplish this. Specific guidelines on health and illness at the Child Care Center have been written and are used by our staff to assess a sick child at the school. If your child cannot participate fully in the indoor and outdoor activities, please do not bring him/her to the Center.

To reduce the spread of many illnesses, please keep your child home if s/he is experiencing the following:

Fever: One degree higher than normal may indicate illness. Please do not send a child with a fever to school. Children may return to the Center after being free of fever for 24 hours without Tylenol and or other such products.

Change in behavior: May be an increase or decrease. This is often the first symptom we see: be alert to your child's unspoken symptoms. Keep in mind the full daily schedule the children follow.

Pain: This includes muscle or body aches that may be indications requiring special diagnosis.

Conjunctivitis or pink eye: Children with red, itchy, draining or crusty eyes may have conjunctivitis. Children may return to the center after 24 hours of successful antibiotic therapy. A doctor's clearance note is required for the child to return.

Vomiting and or diarrhea: Your child may return to the center 24 hours after all symptoms are gone.

Lice/Hair infestations: Children may return to the Center after receiving a specified shampoo treatment and all signs of eggs are gone.

Unfamiliar Rashes or Ringworm: Children may return to the Center with a doctor's statement. This is not an option.

Respiratory Symptoms: Sneezing, watery eyes, runny nose with green or yellow discharge, cough with mucous secretion. Any discharge other than clear is usually a sign of infection.

Asthma: If your child is asthmatic and shows signs of difficulty breathing, wheezing, or shortness of breath, follow your doctor's directions for treating the symptoms. If he/she does not recover enough to be able to participate in the childcare program, please keep your child home. If your child recovers, bring him/her to the Center. Tell your child's teacher about the attack, your treatment, and how well your child is doing. **Be prepared to pick up your child early, if he/she shows signs of distressed breathing.**

Drainage: of any type from eyes, ears, wounds, etc.

Use these as a guide in assessing whether your child is able to attend the Center. If you have reservations, it is best not to send him/her. We work very hard to limit the transmission of infection, but sooner or later all children get sick; it is inevitable. Children typically will get sick, whether or not they are in day care. In a Child Care Center, diseases can spread easily because large numbers of children from different families spend hours together in one place every day. The special problems of the day care staff involve keeping one child's illness from spreading through the Center to the other children, their families and the staff. This dilemma causes changes in plans and expectations, and makes life complicated, especially for working parents. The best way to be prepared for these unavoidable sicknesses is to plan ahead.

If it is difficult for you to take time away from school or work, find an alternative caregiver. This might be a relative, neighbor, friend, or other dependable adult you could call when your child is too sick to be at the Child Care Center. It is extremely important that the individuals named on the Emergency Contact Form have current and active phone contact numbers and are able to respond for necessary pick-up of your ill or injured child. **Think carefully of your choices when supplying Emergency Contact information.**

If you work during the day, find out your employer's sick leave policies.

The staff is skilled at recognizing "danger signs" of child illness and will act as quickly as necessary. Children will be sent home if the noted symptoms pose a risk to other children or to themselves. We have concentrated on the physical set up of our individual rooms (i.e. keeping diapering areas away from eating/food areas). Hand washing is enforced strictly for both staff and children. Hand washing is effective in reducing the spread of intestinal and respiratory infection. Ventilation, heating, and lighting are all factors that are crucial to the control of infections.

**WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP:** Your quick response to our calls about your sick child is important. Follow these guidelines in assessing your child's health before coming to school.

- Keep the staff informed about your child's moods, behaviors, falls, aches, etc. when you drop him/her off. This is helpful in determining changes in a child and noting signs of illness quickly.
- Please notify staff if your child had been taking medications. Some medications may cause symptoms that we would normally relate to illness.
- Reaction to immunizations are not contagious, but children are often listless and uncomfortable enough to warrant sending them home or keeping them at home.
- Familiarize yourself with the Center's health policies.

**CENTER ILLNESS POLICY:**

A CHILD SHALL **NOT ATTEND** IF S/HE:

- Has a temperature of 100 degrees or above.
- Has a communicable disease (rashes, strep throat, pink or yellow eyes).
- Is vomiting or has diarrhea.
- Has a severe whooping or croupy cough.
- Has difficult or rapid breathing.
- Is unable to participate in usual daily activities.

If your child is ill with a contagious disease we must be notified immediately so that other parents whose children may have been exposed may be appropriately alerted. Your child may return to school when the contagious period is over and your child can participate fully in all school activities. In the event of a contagious disease, a doctor's permission note is required to authorize the child's return to the Center.

**A CHILD MAY RETURN WHEN:**

- Fever is absent for 24 hours.
- Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea is absent for 24 hours
- Appropriate stage and time of continuous or communicable disease has passed.
- Child under doctor's care has received MD permission to return.
- Child feels well enough to participate in all activities.

## **MEDICATION POLICY**

Children will NOT be administered any medication, prescription or non-prescription drug or any other remedy or treatment, nor shall special medical procedures be carried out by any of the Westchester Tremont Day Care Center, Inc. Staff.

The parent or legal guardian will need to assume responsibility for the administering of any needed medication around your child's daily attendance.

***NOTE: For any variation of diet, the written order of a physician is necessary***

## **POLICY ON HANDLING BEHAVIOR CONSTRUCTIVELY**

Our policy defines appropriate discipline techniques that will encourage and enable development of self-discipline and self-control. We are committed to providing children and families with learning-oriented childcare in a safe and loving environment. Discipline should not be designed to control children, but to help children learn to control themselves. It means having control of children and teaching the children gradually to take over this control for themselves. Our Center believes that by emphasizing “self-discipline” and “self-control”, children learn to make choices and accept responsibility.

Children need limits so that they feel secure. Staff will combine affection with setting limits. Children need good clear rules for their protection, not to be shamed or punished. The staff take a preventative approach to discipline that teaches children positive behaviors rather than punishing them for misbehaving. Our goal is to provide children with the opportunity and motivation to make choices; learn social skills through gentle, encouraging guidance; and to adapt to routines and simple rules.

Employees are expected to adhere to the following policy, and to report any violation of the policy to their supervisor. **Failure to follow these guidelines may result in discharge.**

- Corporal or physical punishment will never be used to discipline a child. This includes grabbing, pulling or other similar behavior involving use of physical force.
- Set limits or behavior expectations for children that are developmentally appropriate.
- Be consistent in disciplining children (e.g. avoid favoritism and apply consistent discipline for similar actions).

- Endeavor to act with confidence, fairness, and patience when disciplining. Employees will first attempt to redirect a child engaging in inappropriate behavior.
- Praise and encourage good behavior, recognizing that the employee serves as a role model for appropriate actions.
- State suggestions or directions to children in a positive form and give a child a choice only when the employee intends to accept the choice.
- Focus on the child's actions rather than his or her personality and attempt to make the child feel worthwhile and liked.
- Use a kind, firm voice when disciplining a child and use words that will help the child feel confident and reassured.
- Consequences for misbehavior must be immediate, short in duration and related to the act.
- Punishment is appropriate only for repeated misbehavior. Acceptable punishments are removing the child from one play area to another, limiting play privileges, and using "time out" to provide the child an opportunity to think about appropriate behavior. "Time outs" should last no more than one minute per year of age, be located within sight of an adult staff member responsible for the child, and preferably where the child can see other children. Once the "time out" period is completed, the child should be returned to normal activities. "Time out" should be a last resort.
- Punishment will never be associated with food, naps or bathroom procedures. Never withhold food as punishment, nor subject the child to any form of isolation. Punishment shall never endanger the health or safety of the child.
- Attempt to keep acts of misbehavior in perspective. The Center's Director will involve a child's parent in the disciplinary process if, in the opinion of the Director, the behavior is uncontrollable, poses a safety risk or the child repeatedly misbehaves.

## **REPORTING CHILD ABUSE AND MALTREATMENT**

State Law requires that our Child Care Center must report any suspected incidents of possible child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities. Our Center provides an annual training workshop for parents and legal guardians on the Prevention, Identification and Reporting of Child Abuse and Maltreatment of Children (CAM). Check our Annual Calendar for the date and make every effort to attend this training. A Certificate of Participation will be awarded to all participants. *NOTE: All Westchester Tremont Day Care Center Staff are required to have CAM Training and Certification; all must be fingerprinted by the Department of Investigation and all must have State Register Clearance regarding any previous history of child abuse or maltreatment.*

## **CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS**

Confidentiality is an obligation imposed by statute in accordance with NYS law. Westchester Tremont Day Care Center, Inc. assumes an obligation to keep in confidence all that pertains to the children under our care and their families. Every staff member employed in any capacity within this Center shares this responsibility. Confidential information or data will not be discussed or divulged within the Center or outside, except when necessary in the performance of duties.

## **MEALS AND SNACKS**

Children's nutritional needs must be met for them to maintain a high level of interest and energy throughout the day. Any meals or snacks provided by the Child Care Center will be of the quality and in the quantity specified by the Child Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Menus are prepared and displayed each week informing parents of what their child was served. We encourage the selection of foods that reflect the cultural and ethnic diversity of the children in our center.

Please do not bring your child to the center with meals from outside the center. If you would like your child to have breakfast, please have him/her at the center between 8:30 and 9:15 AM. If you arrive after that time, your child will miss breakfast.

Important: Please indicate any special dietary needs on your child's Admission Application form. Your doctor must indicate any dietary restrictions or allergies on your child's medical form.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

Birthdays are special days for children. We enjoy being a part of your child's birthday celebrations and like to recognize birthdays at the Center. If you wish to celebrate your child's birthday at the Center, please make early arrangements with your child's teacher. Typically, a celebration will be scheduled following naptime and becomes part of the afternoon snack for your child's class.

## **CLOTHING**

The most appropriate clothes for the school day are easy fitting, easy dressing, and comfortable, washable, play clothes. Please provide long pants in cold weather, and shoes that are good for running and climbing.

Emergency Clothing: On the first day, please bring a complete set of extra clothes to school so your child will have something to change into in case of "accidents" or "spills". All emergency clothing must be labeled with first and last name of child. Mark all clothing with indelible ink or name labels.

We encourage children to take care of their clothing. The center cannot be responsible for lost, stained or soiled clothing. Children should not wear or bring valuable jewelry or money to the center.

\*Note\* During the winter, we take the children out to play in the snow. Please send your child with snow pants, boots, hat, mittens and a warm jacket. The extra clothes are important in case clothing gets wet.

## **PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

Children are required to leave jewelry, toys, food, gum, pets and money at home. We take no responsibility for lost or stolen items and are committed to ensuring safety for all children.

The learning materials at Westchester Tremont Day Care Center, Inc. are shared by all of the children as part of the learning experience. We furnish an ample supply of toys, equipment, materials and food for the day.

On special "Show & Tell" days, however, children are allowed to bring in something to share with the class. Please label everything. War toys are not allowed (i.e. guns, knives, swords)

## **LOST AND FOUND**

If your child is missing anything, please inquire at the reception desk or with your child's classroom teacher. Remember to label everything. It is much easier to return a lost item if it is labeled with the owner's name. Unclaimed items are given to charity after a reasonable length of time. We will not replace or reimburse for any lost or stolen items.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips may be scheduled during the year to enhance the learning experiences of our children. All field trips are grounded in developmentally appropriate educational practice and may include neighborhood outings and/or special trips to places and events that typically a child would not experience in his/her day-to day home environment. Annually, our preschooler's visit the local Police and/or Fire House as part of neighborhood outings and often, we will bring entertainment for the children to the Center such as Musicals, Puppet Shows, Holiday Musicals, etc.. For a child to participate in outside field trips, they must have a signed field trip permission form on file. In addition, the parent or legal guardian must sign a permission slip in order for a child to participate for each specific field trip.

All trips with the exception of neighborhood walks require advance preparation and transportation by bus. Neighborhood walks do not require specific permission slips as they are covered by the parent's signing of the Center's Policy Statement, which states: "I hereby consent that my child, (NAME) shall engage in any and all activities at the Westchester Tremont Day Care Center, Inc."

The Center ensures that children are constantly under teacher and/or chaperone's surveillance and are never left unattended. Proper adult to child ratio is maintained at all times and during field trips:

- Preschool adult: child ratio is at least 1:5
- All ratios conform to the NYC Health Code Article 47:17

As part of any field trip, staff adheres to the following guidelines:

- Pre-visit the site to check suitability.
- Have each parent sign a permission slip.
- Recruit parents as volunteer chaperones (as necessary).
- Assign each adult a small group, and make sure all groups stick together.
- Pair the children and remind them to tell an adult when they don't have a partner.
- Pin a nametag on the child that only includes the Center's Program name and phone number.
- Bring along a first aid kit.
- Bring along a cell phone or change for the pay phone.
- Bring along family emergency contact information.
- Conduct a head count each time there is a change of location e.g. from the center onto the bus, from the bus to the parking lot, etc.
- Schedule times for rests, bathroom or refreshment breaks.
- Go slow, enjoy each exhibit, avoiding rushing to "see it all."

## **HOLIDAYS**

The center will be closed in recognition for various holidays throughout the year. Holiday closings are as follows:

- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- New Years Eve
- New Year's Day
- Martin L. King Day
- President's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day

Notice of special events and Center activities will be provided throughout the year. In the event our annual calendar needs to be altered, all parents and legal guardians will be informed within adequate time so that alternative childcare arrangements may be made.

Our Center will be closed an additional 3 days throughout the year as Professional Development Days for Staff. *Refer to our Center Calendar for these dates.*

## **EMERGENCY CLOSING**

We make every effort to remain open on bad weather days. However, during local emergencies, or snowstorms listen to local radio announcements on WOR-AM or 1010 WINS. The Child Care Center will follow the same emergency closing schedule as the Public Schools in NYC. If Public Schools are closed, we will be closed.

## **FUNDRAISING**

Throughout the year the center will occasionally sponsor fundraising events. Parent's participation is appreciated. The proceeds will be used to benefit the children who attend the program.

## **PARENT REMINDER: *PLEASE REMEMBER TO...***

- Deliver your child to the Center no later than 9:30AM or your child will not be admitted for that day
- Make sure your child has a full change of clothing at all times
- If your child is ill, have arrangements for your child to be picked up immediately.
- Pay your “contribution fee” on time (each Monday for the week) to avoid a late charge for each week your payment is late.
- Keep all telephone numbers and emergency contact information up to date
- Keep all medical information up to date
- Pick up your child on time to avoid the late charge of \$1 per minute/ per child.

## **OBLIGATIONS OF PARENTS AND GUARDIANS**

A parent or guardian shall:

- Furnish requested medical information prior to enrollment
- Furnish names of individuals on the required Emergency Contact / Pick-up Form who have active phone contact numbers and are able to respond for necessary pick-up of your ill or injured child.
- Ensure that the child is dressed appropriately when brought to school
- Notify the Center of the child’s possible exposure to a communicable disease
- Notify the Center if the child is absent
- Participate in parent-teacher conferences

## **TERMINATION OF AGREEMENT**

- The agreement shall be terminated if the Center in its sole and unfettered discretion determines that it is unable to meet the needs of the child
- Failure of the parent or guardian to cooperate with the Center which the Center determines in its sole and unfettered discretion is serious enough to warrant termination
- The parent or guardian allows the account to become delinquent
- *REFER TO SECTION ON DISENROLLMENT*

**The Creative Curriculum® Goals and Objectives At-A-Glance**

Social – Emotional Development	Physical Development	Cognitive Development	Language Development
<p><b>Sense of Self</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Shows ability to adjust to new situations</li> <li>2. Demonstrates appropriate trust in adults</li> <li>3. Recognizes own feelings and manages them appropriately</li> <li>4. Stands up for rights</li> </ol> <p><b>Responsibility for self and others</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Demonstrates self-direction and independence</li> <li>6. Takes responsibility for own well-being</li> <li>7. Respects and cares for classroom environment and materials</li> <li>8. Follows classroom routines</li> <li>9. Follows classroom rules</li> </ol> <p><b>Prosocial Behavior</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. Plays well with other children</li> <li>11. Recognizes the feelings of others and responds appropriately</li> <li>12. Shares and respects the rights of others</li> <li>13. Uses thinking skills to resolve conflicts</li> </ol>	<p><b>Gross Motor</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>14. Demonstrates basic locomotive skills (running, jumping, hopping, galloping)</li> <li>15. Shows balance while moving</li> <li>16. Climbs up and down</li> <li>17. Pedals and steers a tricycle (or other wheeled vehicle)</li> <li>18. Demonstrates throwing, kicking, and catching skills</li> </ol> <p><b>Fine Motor</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>19. Controls small muscles in hand</li> <li>20. Coordinates eye-hand movement</li> <li>21. Uses tools for writing and drawing</li> </ol>	<p><b>Learning and Problem Solving</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>22. Observes Objects and events with curiosity</li> <li>23. Approaches problems flexibly</li> <li>24. Shows persistence in approaching tasks</li> <li>25. Explores cause and effect</li> <li>26. Applies knowledge or experience to a new context</li> </ol> <p><b>Logical Thinking</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>27. Classifies objects</li> <li>28. Compares / measures</li> <li>29. Arranges objects in a series</li> <li>30. Recognizes patterns and can repeat them</li> <li>31. Shows awareness of time concepts and sequence</li> <li>32. Shows awareness of position in space</li> <li>33. Uses one-to-one correspondence</li> <li>34. Uses numbers and counting</li> </ol> <p><b>Representation of Symbolic Thinking</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>35. Takes on pretend roles and situations</li> <li>36. Makes believe with objects</li> <li>37. Makes and interprets representations</li> </ol>	<p><b>Listening and Speaking</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>38. Hears and discriminates the sounds of language</li> <li>39. Expresses self using words and expanded sentences</li> <li>40. Understands and follows oral directions</li> <li>41. Answers questions</li> <li>42. Asks questions</li> <li>43. Actively participates in conversations</li> </ol> <p><b>Reading and Writing</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>44. Enjoys and values reading</li> <li>45. Demonstrates understanding of print concepts</li> <li>46. Demonstrates knowledge of the alphabet</li> <li>47. Uses emerging reading skills to make meaning from print</li> <li>48. Comprehends and interprets meaning from books and other texts</li> <li>49. Understands the purpose of writing</li> <li>50. Writes letters and words</li> </ol>

WESTCHESTER TREMONT DAY CARE CENTER, INC.

**AGREEMENT**

**ACCEPTENCE: Please return this signed and dated page to the Center**

I / We have read and fully understand the contents of the PARENT HANDBOOK.

I / We understand that I/We may be asked to withdraw our child/ren from the Center if we fail to fulfill our responsibilities under this agreement.

I / We agree, therefore, that our signatures below indicate our willingness to fulfill our obligations under the provisions of this agreement and to actively support the philosophy and goals of the Center as well as its program

Child's Name

Child's Name

Child's Name

Name of Parent or Guardian (PRINT)

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date