PARENT HANDBOOK FOR ST. JOSEPH’S HILL LUTHERAN CHURCH DAY CARE CENTER

## ***Mission Statement***

 *St. Joseph’s childcare center is a non-profit, Christian centered program, stressing the development of the whole child. We believe parents and teachers are partners in the child’s care and education. Within this partnership, the goals for social, emotional, spiritual, cognitive, and physical development are met through a wide variety of activities and community resources. Programs will be designed to meet the developmental level of each individual child.*

*Licensure*

*St. Joseph’s (Hill) Lutheran Daycare Center is licensed by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services and participates in Pennsylvania Keystone Stars; a quality initiative for Early Childhood Education.*

# **Enrollment**

* Our enrollment at St. Joseph’s Day Care is available to children from 6 weeks to age 15.
* Parents are required pay an initial $50 non-refundable registration fee.
* Annual re-registration of $20 per child / or $30 per family is collected each spring.
* Initial enrollment is contingent upon receipt of a completed Emergency Contact form, Financial Agreement, Child Health Assessment, signed Parent Handbook receipt and registration fee. Parents are required to notify day care center immediately, should any of the information collected at the time of enrollment or any time thereafter change.
* All custodial parents and/or legal guardians are required to sign a financial fee agreement prior to enrollment of their child in St. Joseph’s (Hill) Lutheran Daycare Center.
* Enrollment shall be granted without regard to a parent’s or child’s race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, or disability.

###### Operating Hours

6:30 am – 6:00 pm Monday – Friday

Preschool & Playgroup hours from 9:00 am – 11:30 pm

The Center will be closed on:

July 4, 2017 (Independence Day)

September 4, 2017 (Labor Day holiday)

November 23, 2017 (Thanksgiving Day)

November 24, 2017 (Thanksgiving holiday)

December 25, 2017 (Christmas Day)

December 26, 2017 (Christmas holiday)

January 1, 2018 (New Year’s holiday)

March 30, 2018 (Good Friday)

May 28, 2018 (Memorial Day holiday)

###### Tuition

1. A **$50.00 registration** fee per child is required prior to enrollment.

Annually, a **$20 re-registration fee** per child / or $30 for two or more children.

1. Payments are due in advance on Monday for the current week, and/or bi-weekly and monthly in advance.
2. Children attending over the summer will be charged daycare rates.
3. Parents are responsible for paying the tuition rate for which your child(ren) is registered unless the hours increase into the next payment category. You will then be responsible for the higher rate. There is no discount for a decrease in hours unless it is a permanent change and a two-week notice is given.
4. If payment is outstanding beyond two weeks, your child’s continued care may be jeopardized until the balance has been paid and/or arrangements have been made with the office for a payment plan. Without explanation, a $5 late fee will be charged each week payment is not received.
5. The center offers a $5.00 per week sibling discount for each additional child enrolled. The center offers a 10% discount to members of St. Joseph’s (Hill) Lutheran Church. Preschool and Playgroup families are not eligible for a discount.
6. To maintain proper staff to child ratios, children must be picked-up at their registered pick-up time. Pre-approval for early drop off or late pick-up is required.
7. The center closes at 6:00 pm. A fee of $10.00 will be charged for every ten minutes your child is picked up after 6:00 pm. These fees are to be paid at the time your child is picked up, or no later than the next week’s tuition payment.
8. Unexplained absenteeism of more than two weeks may result in dismissal of your child. Re-registration will then be necessary for re-enrollment and subject to availability for care.
9. No credit is given for illness, snow days, holidays or suspension, you are responsible for full payment for your registered hours, due to the fact that your child has a “space” reserved in our program.
10. “Hold Space Fee”: In the event that your child is absent for a period of time that exceeds 4 weeks, and the absence has been authorized by the Childcare Advisory Board, a monthly fee of $10.00 will be charged to maintain registration. “Hold Space Fees” can be established for special circumstances as approved by the Childcare Advisory Board.
11. In the event that you are delinquent in your payments and legal action is necessary. This includes, but is not limited to, civil suit cases, lawyer fees, court fees and collection fees. It is the family’s financial responsibility for all fees incurred to St. Joseph’s (Hill) Lutheran Church Day Care Center.

St. Joseph’s (Hill) Lutheran Church Day Care Center accepts childcare subsidies.

Please see Director, Robin Schmale, for more information. Contact number: Berks CCIS- 610-987-2247

 Montgomery CCIS-1-800-257-3038

**Payments:** Tuition payments should be placed in the metal box on the wall, at the log in table. Cash, check, or money order is acceptable for tuition. Receipts will be given for tuition payments made by cash. Your canceled check will serve as your receipt for payments made by check. If additional flex saving receipt is needed, contact the office. There will be a $20.00 fee charged for tuition checks returned by the bank (additional fees may occur). In the event of a returned check, the center will not re-deposit it. Parents will be responsible for re-issuing a second check or remitting payment by cash or money order.

Tuition does not include fees for field trips.

**Family Vacations**

**Vacations will be based on the contract year June 3, 2017 through June 1, 2018**

**Families that are enrolled for 52 weeks per year are eligble for 2 weeks unpaid if your child is not in attendance at the center. Families that are enrolled “Only” the school year, or “Only” the Summer are eligible for 1 week that your child is not in attendance. A week is defined as your regular one week schedule.**

* + **Summer and School Year enrollment - eligible for 2 weeks of vacation**
	+ **Summer Only or School Year Only enrollment –eligible for 1 week vacation**

 **Sign-Up Policy**

Sign Up Dates, when the center has a lower enrollment, the office requests that you let us know if you need care. A class list will be put at the log in table to be marked. The Preschool and Playgroup will not be held on these days.

**Sign-up Dates:** October 9, 2017 (Columbus Day)

November 27, 2017 (Monday after Thanksgiving)

December 27, 28, 29, 2017 (week between Christmas and New Year)

January 15, 2018 (Martin Luther King Day)

February 19, 2018 (Presidents Day)

April 2, 2018 (Easter Monday)

###### Arrival Procedures

Upon arrival at the Center, the parents or the adult dropping the child off must sign the child into care on the Procare computer system (or clipboard) located inside the day care entrance. Please escort your child to their designated classroom. Parents are requested to help children put away their outerwear and prepare for the day.

It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to make sure their child(ren) wash their hands using the proper hand washing technique before going to the classroom each day. This policy assists us in preventing the spread of germs

and allergens.

**Meals & Snacks**

 If your child(ren) arrives prior to 8:00 a.m., you may provide breakfast for the child to eat at the center. The parents are responsible to provide a nutritious lunch daily. Each classroom has a microwave to warm your child’s meals. Refrigeration for lunch bags (marked with child’s name) is available in the church pantry.

 The center provides AM and PM snacks. A snack schedule is posted on the bulletin board. Donations and special treats are always appreciated. **AS A BENEFIT TO OUR PARENTS, THE CENTER PROVIDES MILK, JUICE AND WATER TO ALL THE CHILDREN.**

###### Pick-Up Procedures

Children are required to be picked-up at their scheduled pick-up time. Parents or other authorized adults are required to sign their child out of care on the Procare computer system (or clipboard) located inside the day care entrance. Once a parent signs their child out, the parent is then solely responsible for supervising their child while on agency premises. The parent should not allow a child to wander through the hallways, bathrooms, other classrooms, and/or playground. Parents are requested to handle all business issues prior to signing out their child.

Parents should take home all papers in the child’s cubby or school bag each day.

###### Parental Access to Children

The Center has an “open door” policy and parents are welcomed, unannounced at any time to visit with their child.

Parents must notify the staff of visitors or alternate pick up and drop off persons.

In cases where the child is the subject of a court order (e.g., custody order, restraining order, or protection from abuse order) the center must be provided with a copy of the most recent order. In the absence of a court order on file in the center, **both** parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. The center will contact the local police should a threating situation occur on site.

###### Transportation Policy for School Aged Children

**Oley Valley School:** Children will be picked up and dropped off by the district bus in the church parking lot and escorted to and from the building by staff.

**Boyertown School District**: The center will provide transportation to and from Earl Elementary School. A fee of $10.00 per week per child will be charged to transport children one-way. A fee of $15.00 per week per child will be charged to transport children two-ways. Transportation fees will be adjusted if additional costs are incurred.

Parents will be contacted if the center is unable to provide transportation due to inclement weather

**Notification of Absences**

Parents are requested to inform the Center if there child will not be at the center on a scheduled day. In the event that your child is absent due to a contagious disease, a signed statement from the child’s physician stating the child is no longer contagious is required for your child to return to the Center.

**Inclement Weather**

In the event of an emergency closing and/or inclement weather, parents may call the Center’s answering machine by 5:45 a.m. for information. Parents may also check Channel 69 News or wfmz.com/stormcenter for information.

**Parent – Teacher Partnership**

 The day care staff utilizes various developmental tools in implementing a program for your child. These tools include but are not limited to; Creative Curriculum, Ages and Stages, the Pennsylvania Learning Standards, observations, assessments, and information provided by the child’s family. Resources are available on topics of social & emotional, mental health, early childhood education, health & wellness, and medical services; to parents and staff.

.**Curriculum Statement**

It is our philosophy that children learn through play. Our classes provide a variety of planned hands-on activities which are developmentally appropriate. The center has adopted the researched based Creative Curriculum and utilizes the PA Learning Standards as a framework.

 Goals for individual children will be determined through the use of daily observations, progress reports, the screening tool Ages & Stages, and conferences with parents. **Parent conferences are offered twice a year**. Through this parent and staff partnership, activities are presented to support the child both at home, and in the center, to achieve predetermined goals. Individual needs will be reflected in staff’s weekly lesson plans. All key learning areas of development will be integrated throughout the day. A well planned environment including defined interest areas will aid in promoting learning.

 Teachers will use play, hands on activities, a whole language approach, fine & gross motor activities, literacy, and language development while planning with intention to help each child learn and grow. When planning for the environment and developing lesson plans, teachers will use observations, assessment, Creative Curriculum, research and the Pa Learning Standards as resources. The Environmental Rating Scale may also be used to enhance the interest areas in a child’s classroom**.** Staff training is offered monthly to compliment the professional development of the teachers.

###### Field Trips

The center frequently supplements the in-class curriculum with off premise field trips. Parents are required to give written permission for their child to attend all field trips. If parents wish to attend the trip with their child, they should discuss attending with the classroom teacher.

If your child is not scheduled to attend on the day of a field trip, your child will be permitted to attend if required ratios can be maintained and there is transportation available. Payment for the additional hours, as well as the cost of the trip and signed permission slip will be due prior to the trip. Families have the option of meeting the group at the trip location and supervising their child without additional cost.

**School Aged Summer Field Trips:**

Field trips will be scheduled primarily on a Tuesday (or Wednesday) for school-aged children beginning the week of June 20, 2017 through August 15, 2017 **Tuition cost of care for 2017:**

 Over 26 hours per week……………$ 150.00 per week

 16-25 hours per week………………$ 130.00 per week

 Up to 15 hours per week……………..…. $ 90 per week

* **One Day Schedule / Field Trip ONLY ……$55.00 per day**
* **Admission fees (ticket cost) will be charged for individual trips**

###### Guidelines for Disciplining Children

The following discipline guidelines are implemented at the center:

 Understanding child development for each age group and having an “overabundance of patience”, and gentle reminders will teach the children through positive reinforcement and guided self-control. A developmentally appropriate environment will be achieved by explaining classroom rules to the children in a simple, loving manner. Cooperation and partnering with families for the goal of self- discipline is the ultimate desired outcome for each and every child.

* Disciplinary methods will not humiliate, shame, or frighten the child.
* Redirection and substitution will be used, as well as the use of praise and positive reinforcement to help obtain a more positive behavior.
* Aggressive physical behavior directed at teachers or children is unacceptable. Teachers will intervene immediately when a child becomes physically aggressive.
* Severe discipline problems will be referred to the Director.
* Use of time-out will be used as a last resort and a quiet activity will be provided in order to help the child regain composure. The period of time spent in time-out should coincide with the child’s age in minutes. A child younger than 18 months will not be put in time-out, but redirected to another activity. After time-out the staff member will discuss with the child the reason for discipline.

 Parents may be required to meet with the teachers and or administration if approved behavior management strategies are not effective. Together, the parent and teacher/administration would devise a written plan of action including a time frame for improvement. Part of the written plan may include requiring the parents to seek support services to assist teachers in managing the child’s behavior. The written plan will be sent to the Day Care Administrative Board for review and/or recommendations. The center reserves the right to dismiss a child; if they pose a safety threat to themselves, classmates, or teachers.

**Public Media**

 Parents should refrain from posting pictures taken at the center **of other children** on public media.

###### Health Policy

 The Department of Public Welfare requires a current health form to be completed by a physician within 60 days of enrollment and kept on file at the center. Updated health forms (according to the schedule below) must be returned within 30 days. Pick up a form from the bulletin board each time you go for a well check.

 **Form Schedule:**

* Infants: 6, 9, 12 and 15 months of age
* Toddlers: 18 and 24 months of age
* Preschoolers: age 3 & 4
* School Age: Kindergarten health form or upon enrollment if first grade and older.

**Conditions of Exclusions** - When a child becomes ill at the center, but does not require immediate medical care, the child’s teacher and/or director will determine if the:

* Illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities.
* Illness results in a need for care that is greater than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children.
* Illness poses a risk of spread of disease to others.

**A parent will be contacted to discuss the concern and arrangement made for exclusion from their classroom.**

# **Additional Conditions Requiring Temporary Exclusion** -Temporary exclusion is recommended when the child has any of the following conditions, unless a health professional determines the child’s condition does not require exclusion:

* Appears severely ill.
* Fever (temperature over 101° orally, 102° rectally or 100° axillary), unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficult breathing or other signs or symptoms (e.g. Sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea). Fevers 101° or higher, readmission after 24 hours fever free.
* Diarrhea, if not contained in diaper or causes soiled clothing or 2 or more diarrhea stools.
* Blood in stools.
* Vomiting more than 2 times in the previous 24 hours, unless the vomiting is determined to be caused by a non-communicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration.
* Mouth sores with drooling.
* Unexplained rash with fever or behavioral changes.
* “Pink eye” or conjunctivitis with white or yellow discharge, (often with matted eyelids after sleep), the child must have at least 3 doses of medication to return to the center.
* Tuberculosis.
* Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has been started.
* Streptococcal pharyngitis, until 24 hours after treatment has been started.
* Head lice until free of all nits.
* Scabies, until free of all mites.
* Chicken Pox, until all lesions have dried or crusted.
* Pertussis, until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment.
* Mumps, until 5 days after the onset of parotid gland swelling.
* Measles, until 4 days after the onset of rash.
* Rubella, until 6 days after rash appears.
* Hepatitis A viral infection, until 1 week after the onset of illness.

**PARENT PICK UP: In the event of illness while at the center, the parent/guardian will be notified and the child must be picked up as soon as possible. A child that is not picked up within the hour, a $10.00 per hour sick fee will be charged.** **If the parents/guardians cannot be reached, the emergency contact list will be called.**

**Information: The center will keep a symptom record on an ill child (by the child’s teacher) to share with the parent/guardian at pick-up time and this information can be shared with the family’s health care provider.**

MEDICATION POLICY

 St. Joseph’s staff will administer medication to children **with written approval of the parent and an order from a health** **provider for a specific child and a specific condition.** Please follow the procedures below.

# Non Prescription Medications

1. The first dose of medication for the day should be given at home.
2. The medication must be in the original container.
3. The container must be labeled with the child’s first and last name.
4. Instructions including the dose, time to be given, method to be administered, and duration of administration will be provided in writing or dictated over the phone from a health care provider.
5. The parent completes a medication log.
6. Medication will not be used beyond the date of expiration on the container or beyond any expiration of the instructions provided by the physician.

# Prescription Medications

1. The first dose of medication for the day should be given at home.
2. The medication must be in the original, child resistant container that is labeled by a pharmacist.
3. The parent completes a medication log.
4. Medication will not be used beyond the date of expiration on the container or beyond any expiration of the instructions provided by the physician.

# Recurring Problems/Emergency Situations/Chronic Conditions

1. Follow the instructions for non-prescription or prescription medications.
2. Additional required information: how often the medication may be given; the conditions for use; and any precautions to follow.
3. The physician must renew instructions and permission annually.
4. The parent completes a medication log.
5. Medication will not be used beyond the date of expiration on the container or beyond any expiration of the instructions provided by the physician.

**An authorized member of St. Joseph’s staff will administer medication only if the parent or legal guardian has provided written consent. This medication must be in its original container labeled with the child’s first and last name. The center must have on file the written or telephone instructions of a licensed clinician to administer the specific medication**.

**Infant Sleep Position**

 The Department of Public Welfare requires that facilities comply with the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendation on infant sleep position relating to SIDS prevention. All infants must be placed on their backs to sleep unless there is a signed note from the child’s pediatrician indicating otherwise.

Records Transfer

 St. Joseph’s Day Care Center will transfer your child’s records to another educational setting upon the parent/guardian’s completion of an Authorization for Release of Information Form. These forms are available upon request in the Day Care Office.

Emergency Policy

The following information is our emergency policy. Safety is a priority for the children attending St. Joseph’s Day Care Center. Our Emergency Plan provides for response to all types of emergencies. Depending on the circumstance of the emergency, we will use one of the following protective actions:

* *Immediate evacuation* Students are evacuated to a safe area on the grounds of the facility in the event of a fire, etc.
* *In-place sheltering* Sudden occurrences, weather or hazardous materials related, may dictate that taking cover inside the building is the best immediate response.
* *Evacuation* Total evacuation of the facility may become necessary if there is a danger in the area. In this case, children will be taken to Earl Township Fire Company. A sign will be posted on St. Joseph’s (Hill) Lutheran Church’s front door informing parents that we have relocated.
* *Modified Operation,* May include cancellation/postponement or rescheduling of normal activities. These actions are normally taken in case of a winter storm or building problems (such as utility disruptions) that make it unsafe for children.
* *Communication to parents* Parents will be notified of the emergency by telephone, email or text in a timely manner using the numbers provided on the Emergency Contact Form. The parents will be given information on the emergency situation. As soon as the emergency situation has ended, parents will be notified by telephone with information on how to reunite with their children. If the child’s parents cannot be reached, a person on the Emergency Contact Form list will be contacted.

Please listen to a message posted on our answering machine for announcements relating to any of the emergency actions listed above. In order to assure the safety of your children and our staff, I ask your understanding and cooperation. Should you have additional questions regarding our emergency operating procedures

contact Robin Schmale.

**Mandated Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse and/or Neglect**

Under the Child Protective Services Act, the employees of St. Joseph’s (Hill) Lutheran Church Daycare Center are considered mandated reporters. Mandated reporters are required to report any **suspicion** of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities.

**Periodically, additional Information and addendums may be added to the parent Handbook.**

**PARENT HANDBOOK**

**St. Joseph’s (Hill) Lutheran Church**

**Day Care Center**

**244 Koch Rd**

**Boyertown PA 19512**

**Ph. (610) 367-1980 fax (610) 369-0912**

**hillchurch@ptd.net**