



# **Staff Manual Policies and Procedures**

*Dear Staff,*

The management team of Themba Creative Learning Center LLC sends out a warm welcome to you as a staff member of our team! Whether you are a new employee, or have been with us for some time, you are our most important and valued assets. We hope you feel comfortable with your working environment and with the people you have to work with everyday. We thank you for your sincere dedication and your outward love for children!

You have been selected to continue to work at Themba because we believe that you are willing to embrace the companies vision and mission statement by providing quality childcare services to our families every time they walk through the front door. Your enthusiasm, care and sense of professionalism will continue to help produce the best childcare program in PG County.

This handbook will support you in how to do daily activities with the children in a way that is consistent with our philosophy. We will help you be with children in a way that allows you to create learning opportunities and at the same time build and promote their self-esteem. The secret is to have joyful, loving and respectful interactions with children no matter what their behavior may be.

We are looking forward to an exciting year of new experiences and lots of fun!!

Share your passion for children and your rewards will be many!

Sincerely

Jameela Allen  
President  
2015-2016

## **Non Discrimination Policy**

Our center is open to all children and families of race, creed or nationality. We provide service to all children from six(6) weeks through twelve (12) years of age. Themba affords equal opportunity to all employees and families without regard to hiring, enrollment, termination, race, color, or origin or other criteria protected by law.

## Personnel Policies

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### ***General Conduct***

*Come to the Center every day to have fun and be a role model! You are the Professional!*

### ***Presentation***

You are part of a professional team, each of whom is an adult role model for young children. .

### ***Dress Code***

- Black Easy Fit Khaki Pants Only, Red Themba Logo Polo Shirt. ( NO spandex pants, sweats, or stretchy material)
- Black shoes only!!
- Black or Navy Blue Cardigan must be worn all year round during power hours and during tours.
- **Long (natural or false) fingernails** are not permitted. These are a health and safety hazard for the children. Finger nail polish must be conservative no loud colors..
- Shoes must be worn at all times. Wear comfortable shoes that allow you to walk, run, skip or jump with the children. Open-toed and high-heeled shoes are not allowed as they are a potential hazard to your safety when walking, running, skipping or jumping with the children . Uniforms must be pressed. Hair must be pushed back if hair is shoulder length. Braids may not be bulky and past shoulders. Braids must be able to be put up in a neat pony tail.
- **Tattoos and body piercings must be covered up or removed.**
- Staff members dressed inappropriately will be sent home at the Director's discretion.

***Remember: while you are in the Center, present yourself in the way you dress.***

***Your language and behavior are a positive role model for the children, parents and other staff.***

### ***Cell Phones***

***Staff CANNOT bring in their personal cell phones into the classrooms.***

Your primary responsibility and attention must be with the children in your care. If you need to be reached, please make sure the Director knows you are waiting for an important call. Messages will be forwarded to you in a timely manner. unless it is an emergency.

Any staff disregarding this policy may be placed on immediate probation or terminated.

### ***Smoking, Gum Chewing and Drinks***

### **THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER IS A SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT**

Smoking is not permitted in the building, on the playground or grounds of the Center.

Soft drink bottles or cans and hot drinks are allowed in the kitchen area only, ***not in the classrooms. There should be no personal items in the classrooms. Please hang coats in designated areas.***

### ***Arrival at the Center/Breaks/Tardiness***

Each morning, allow enough time to check in with the Director in charge, sign in/clock in and prepare your classroom and/or materials. You must clock in and out each day in order to be paid for the hours worked. If you are asked to stay longer than your scheduled hours by a supervisor, the Director must initial your time card. Extended time will not be paid without a Director's initials.

Breaks are scheduled so that all staff have an opportunity to rest/refresh, eat lunch, etc. Please be considerate of your colleagues. Do not return late to the Center from a scheduled break. If it is noted on your time card that you have been late more than twice in a payroll period, written disciplinary action will be taken. Staff are required to clock in/out for breaks. Failure to do so without permission will result in 1 hour deducted off that day's time.

You must eat lunch in your classroom, staff lounge or in the B/A room. This is not an opportunity to visit other classrooms or staff working with children.

The office of childcare does not allow staff to leave the premises during lunch breaks. You may get a copy of the written policy from the office.

## E-Mail And Internet Use

Employees are not permitted to utilize Center computers or internet access for personal reasons, including email, web surfing, and other activities not related to the Center.

The use of Center computers to access pornographic websites, send emails of an explicit or sexual nature, or develop online relations of a similar nature is strictly prohibited.

In the event that the Center provides online accounts to employees, such accounts will be reserved for Center-related use only, and all passwords to those accounts will be available to the Director.

In addition, two specific policies address the increasing influence of online interactions:

### *Social Media:*

The posting of confidential and identifying information about the children, parents, or staff at the Center on social media (e.g., Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, etc.) is strictly prohibited. In no way does Themba Creative Learning Center wish to abridge the rights of its employees to engage in critical commentary and observations that may relate to the Center and its operations; however, when such commentary and observations occur within a public forum and contain confidential information, it may result in disciplinary action for the employee. The posting of non-confidential information (promotional materials and the like) shall be restricted to official channels of communication (the THEMBA CLC website/Facebook page, etc.) unless prior written approval from the Director has been obtained.

### *Pictures:*

As with the use of social media, the publication of photos from the Center, whether online or otherwise, is generally prohibited without prior approval from the Director. In general, approval will usually be granted for pictures which advance the Center's mission, demonstrate the educational achievements of the Center or the children in our care, or which otherwise portray the Center's positive contributions to the community. Staff may take pictures of the activities in their classrooms to share with the families of the children in our care, as appropriate (to document a child's progress, etc.). As mentioned previously, some families have chosen to restrict photograph permissions, and it is expected that all employees will abide by those wishes. These restrictions will be noted in the classroom binder.

## ***Absences and Lateness Policy***

To request time off, fill out a Day Off Request Form with the date and time you will be absent and submit to the Director at least 2 weeks in advance. Staff members must be able to schedule an appropriate substitute, or the Director must have time to schedule a substitute, or you may not be able to take the time off.

If you are going to be absent or late due to a sudden illness or emergency, call the Center Director PERSONALLY and notify her as soon as possible. You may not leave a message on the answering machine or speak to another staff member. Do not call director after 10pm.

## ***Home Telephone***

It is extremely important for the Center to be able to reach you after hours. The Center **MUST HAVE** a working phone number. All staff must complete and maintain a correct and current ***Emergency Contact Form for Staff***.

## ***Telephone Use***

The Director, Director Designate or other assigned staff member in the office may answer incoming calls.

If you are asked to answer a call, take a complete message on the form provided, and make sure your colleague receives it. Refer inquiries about the Center to the Director do not give quotes over the phone. .

Staff may not use the phone for personal use during program time. If you have an incoming call during your shift, the office will take a message. ***If it is an emergency you will be contacted immediately. You may use the office phone during your break-time for no more than 5 minutes at a time.***

## ***Meetings and Workshops***

Staff are required to attend all staff meetings and workshops. Some may occur after working hours. You will be given enough notice and information regarding these. Meetings.

## ***Confidentiality***

Do not discuss a child's problem, behavior, parents' or parental behavior, co-workers behavior except in a conference with appropriate personnel.

Do not inform parents of any behavior problems with children without first discussing concerns with the Director. A breach of confidentiality can result in immediate termination of employment.

## ***Staff/Parent Complaints, Compliments or Suggestions***

Suggestions and complaints are opportunities to put in corrections and raise the quality of our service. If a staff member or parents have suggestions, compliments or complaints, make sure the Director is aware of them as soon as possible. We value parent's concerns as a better way to serve families. We also highly value staff concerns. We invite you to communicate!

## **Orientation for New Staff**

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**The following must be in the employee file at all times:**

- Proof of Age
- Employment/Experience Verification
- Finger Print Card
- High School Diploma, College Transcripts, Training Certificate
- Release of Information (notarized)
- Medical Report
- Receipt of Employee Handbook
- Individual Personnel Information
- Signed Orientation
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**During the orientation the employee will be shown the following:**

- Location of telephone and emergency numbers
- Location of each child's emergency form
- Center's emergency evacuation procedures
- First Aid and CPR qualified staff
- Staff in charge in the absence of the Director
- Handwashing Procedures
- Center's discipline policy
- Procedures for reporting child Abuse and Neglect
- Signs and Symptoms of Child Abuse
- Blood borne Pathogens standard precautions
- Current edition of MSDE Licensing Branch Regulations
- Tour of Center

**You will also be discussing the following:**

- Staff responsibility
- Program Philosophy
- Personnel Policies
- Playground Policies
- Continued Education Training
- Curriculum

At the conclusion of the orientation, the employee will be asked to sign a letter acknowledging participation in the orientation program and an understanding of all requirements and responsibilities associated with employment at Themba Creative Learning Center. This is a requirement of the Child Care Administration regulations regarding child care centers and staff.

All new staff must complete 12hours of an early childhood course within the first 90days of hire and must complete or have a current Pediatric First Aid/CPR Certificate on file within 30days of hire. If these requirements are not completed within the allotted time frame you may be asked to not return back to Themba.

## **Pay Roll Procedures**

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Payroll is bi-weekly. If payroll occurs on a Saturday, checks will be given out at 5:00pm on Friday. If your shift ends before 5:00pm, you may receive your check as you leave. If payroll occurs on a Sunday, checks will be given out at 5:00pm on Monday. If payroll occurs on a holiday weekend or midweek, checks will be given out the day before the holiday. **All staff must sign up for direct deposit.**

## **Salaries**

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Employee salaries and raises are determined primarily by the Director, with guidance from the Corporate Office, and depend on qualifications, experience, references, ongoing evaluations and performance criteria as outlined in this manual. Salary rates and increases are strictly confidential between the staff member and the Director.

Initial salaries will be based on position assignment, training and experience. Raises will be based on a percentage basis including reviews of performance, length of employment and promotion, if any. Yearly evaluations completed on the anniversary start date of regular employment will include any salary increase if merited. Raises are subject to corporate office approval.

Assistant staff members are paid on an hourly basis determined by the hours scheduled for the sign in/out sheet or time clock provided. Assistant staff are paid only for hours actually worked at the Center, unless the Center Director has approved, in writing, work time scheduled after the regular work day or on a weekend.

No teacher or assistant may work over 40 hours per week except at the request of the Director/Director Designate or Corporate Office. The Corporate Office must approve extra hours.

### ***Evaluation Schedule***

New teachers and assistants must participate in a mandatory Orientation Training. Thereafter, evaluations will occur quarterly based on the Classroom Management Checklist. At one year of employment, the Director will determine how well the employee is maintaining policies and procedures, and the curriculum guide, as well as general performance, team work and attitude. This will determine merit raises and any changes in position. Teachers and assistants will also complete an annual self-evaluation and, with the Director, set personal goals for the next year.

### ***Resignation***

If you are resigning, please notify the Director in writing two weeks before your last day.

## **Benefits**

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- **Social Security and Worker's Compensation**

Employer contributions to Social Security will be made for all employees. In addition, social security taxes will be withheld from all regular salaries, as required by law.

Themba Creative Learning Center will also provide Worker's Compensation Insurance, as required by law. This insurance only covers accidents or injuries while performing duties associated with employment at Themba Creative Learning Center either on the premises of the Center, or on a field trip.

***Any injury must be reported immediately to the Center Director and documented in writing with supporting information from a physician.***

This information will be kept in a file in the Center Director's office. Any claims filed will be done with the knowledge of the Center Director and the Corporate Office.

- **Maryland State Child Care Resource Center Membership**

Themba Creative Learning Center pays for all Senior Staff members to participate and enjoy membership at the Maryland State Childcare Resource Center.

- **Birthday Leave**

Themba Creative Learning Center appreciates its employees! We encourage employees to ask for a paid leave day during their birthday month or actual birthday which will be given depending on staff/child ratios and determined by the Director. (after one year of employment)

## **Employees with Children**

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Themba Creative Learning Center does not allow employees to enroll their child at the center.

## **Employee Leave**

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All full time senior staff may have leave time available to them under the following conditions:

1. Prior to the completion of a year at Themba, no leave time is earned or given to any staff member. If time off is taken, it is taken without pay.

2. All regular full time employees who have satisfactorily completed a year are eligible for leave time. Leave time (*vacation/sick/personal*) is earned during the first year of employment based on the date of employment. This amounts to: 3.3 hours per month for a total of 5 full days at the end of one year for senior staff. Days accrued during the year may be taken, or may be saved up to take a longer leave only within the year period.

3. **Year 1:** 3.3 hours accrued per month which cannot be used until the 90 day probationary period is completed satisfactorily, equal to 5 leave days within the first 12 months.

**Years 2-3:** 4 hours accrued per month equal to 6 days

**Years 4-5:** 5.3 hours accrued per month equal to 8 days

**5 years +:** 6.67 hours accrued per month equal to 10 days

**Leave time is capped at 10 days/2 weeks for all staff members.**

4. Any more time taken over the allotted days results in a day(s) without pay and will be deducted from the staff member's paycheck. Staff may choose to take a day without pay.

5. Two weeks *written* notice must be given, with written approval granted from the Center Director for any time off requested. This is required, and in the best interests of the children and program, and in order to schedule a qualified substitute. The Center Director will consider all requests, however, in the best interests of the Center's programming, some requests may be denied. The employee must remind the director of leave requested at least 48hrs prior to the requested day off just in case the director didn't sign off on request. All leave slips must be copied, the original copy must be given to the director.

6. Staff illness, emergencies or family illness/emergencies must be called into the Center Director no less than three (3) hours before the scheduled shift in order to find appropriate substitute coverage. Staff members requesting leave for these reasons, may be required to come in for a portion of the day until a substitute is available.

***Staff/child ratios must be in compliance at all times.***

**Holiday Pay:** In order to get paid for the holiday, you must have worked the day before and the day after the holiday. Only Senior Staff is eligible after working for Themba for 1yr. (If the director schedules a staff development/meeting on a holiday, the SS staff must be present for the meeting, in order to get holiday pay) All other staff must attend the staff meeting with out pay.

7. Staff members are responsible for leaving appropriate lesson plans and notifying the Center Director so that substitutes can adhere to the program.

## **Personnel Records**

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The Center Director will maintain a confidential personnel file with records of each employee's application form, references, resume, transcripts, health information, assignments, continuing education certificates, evaluations, leave time and any other pertinent information. An employee may request the opportunity to review his/her own personnel file at any time in the Director's office. No file may be removed from the Director's office. No staff member, except the Center Director and Corporate Officers, have the right to view another staff member's personnel file.

## **Staff Positions**

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All staff are employed in order to fulfill the requirements of the Child Care Administration staff/child ratios and to maintain the level of quality care and programming indicated in Themba's philosophy. Employees employed will meet, as a minimum, the criteria indicated in the CCA regulations for Senior Staff/Lead Teachers within the first year of employment.

### ***Teacher and Assistant positions***

Staff job descriptions are available in the Center Director's office. Each employee will receive a copy to keep in his/her personnel file outlining the responsibilities and duties of his/her position.



### ***Daily Hours***

All employees are expected to be regular in attendance and to report to work promptly. Employees are expected to be in their classroom ready to greet children and parents at the start of the day. Materials should be ready and a daily lesson plan should be posted a minimum of five minutes before their scheduled work day begins. This facilitates interaction between team members to insure a smooth transition between shifts. Any employee who does not comply with this policy will be placed on probationary status. Any late arrivals during the probationary period may result in immediate dismissal.

- Staff patterns will be designed by the Center Director to provide appropriate child/staff ratios during all hours of operation in compliance with CCA Regulations; at times fulfilling these requirements in another classroom.
- All full time regular employees are assigned a nine (9) hour work day with a one (1) hour break at a time designated by the Center Director on the staffing pattern. The one hour break is not paid time.
- Employees are required to clock in/out using procare's time clock.. If procare is down, please sign in by using the staff's tablet located in the office.
- Clocking in for someone else will result in immediate termination of employment.

### ***Required Attendance at Center Events***

- All employees will be required to participate in, at least four Center activities/events/training per year that occur after the work day is finished. These could be day, evening or weekend activities. Employees will be given at least a two week notice in order to plan for and to attend the event.
- There will be no exceptions made for Back to the Center Night , Parent Conferences and or training activities. Employees are expected to participate professionally in these events.
- All staff that are a level 2 and above must attend the annual Childcare Conference.

## ***Meetings, Conferences and Training***

- All employees of THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER must attend a ***Mandatory Orientation Training*** within the first three months of employment. This training occurs on a Saturday from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Sufficient notice will be given to make child care arrangements, change other work schedules, etc. No excuses are accepted, and failure to attend may result in dismissal. ***No children are allowed to attend staff training.***
- Employees are required to participate in and attend all regularly scheduled Center meetings. These are generally held in the evening immediately after the Center closes or on Saturday morning.
- Employees are required to attend and participate in all in-service training programs provided by THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER during break time.
- Continued training will be offered and provided to employees either through THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER or through other training organizations. Employees should notify the Center Director of any other training opportunities available. Subsidies or assistance in tuition for training may be available to most regular full time employees.
- All senior staff employees must meet within the first year of employment and thereafter maintain the Maryland State Child Care Credential at the following levels:
  - Level 2: submitted within the 90 day probationary period and continuously maintained as a minimum credential.
  - Level 3: requires 18 clock hours of continuing education within a year period based on the time at which the original credential was received.
  - Levels 4–5–6: requires 24 hours of continuing education.
- First Aid and CPR training is offered yearly. Teachers will be reimbursed for the cost of the class, up to \$25 per person, after obtaining the certificate and bringing it in to the Director. A current/valid copy must be in the employee's file at all times. All employees are required to maintain certification. Assistants are required to obtain as a minimum a Level 2 Child Care Credential within the first year of employment which requires 12 hours of continuing education or obtain a Level 3 Child Care Credential which requires 18 hours of continuing education. Senior Staff members are eligible for up to \$50 per year in continuing education funds. Assistants are eligible for \$25 per year in continuing education funds after 1 yr of service.

## ***Center Hygiene***

All employees must be aware of the need for frequent hand washing when working with young children. Hands must be washed after every diaper change, or when assisting a child in the toilet. Hands must be washed at any time another person's bodily fluids come into contact with a staff member.

- Latex gloves should be used at all times when assisting children with diapering or toileting, any time first aid is being administered, and any other time when bodily fluids may be in contact between people.
- Diapers should be disposed of after placing in a sealed plastic bag in the appropriate container. These containers will be emptied several times daily by the designated employee. Children's soiled clothing cannot be rinsed out by staff. It must be placed as is in a sealed plastic bag and put in the child's cubby to be taken home that evening.
- Toilets and bathroom floor must be cleaned and sanitized twice per day, after morning and afternoon use.
- Disposable plates, cups, napkins and eating utensils are provided for one time use only and should be disposed of immediately after use in the appropriate container. Disposables must be stored in a ***closed*** container.
- Any food not finished by the child during lunch must be properly sealed and put back into the lunch box to return home. This food must not be given again to the child at afternoon snack.
- Toys and other equipment such as cots must be routinely cleaned. Cleaning of equipment and toys should occur daily during nap time, and at a minimum, should be washed weekly, particularly toys used by infants and toddlers.
- Infants/toddlers hands and faces must be wiped after diapering.

## ***Housekeeping***

- Each employee is expected to assist in the maintenance of a clean and healthy environment. This includes routine daily cleaning of each classroom. Employees are responsible for the appearance and cleanliness of their assigned classrooms and to assist in the normal maintenance of the outdoor facility.
- Inventories of each classroom's equipment will be maintained and kept current by the center director and lead staff assigned to that classroom. Classroom inventories are to be completed each June listing all equipment in the classroom, replacement/repair needs and priority needs.
- It is the employee's responsibility to maintain equipment when in normal use. However, some equipment may be damaged by child misuse. When an employee can clearly document how equipment was damaged, with all precautions taken, the replacement of such equipment will be the responsibility of the child's parent(s).
- Employees must notify the Center Director immediately when equipment is damaged or broken by a child.
- **Employees may not sit on any equipment** such as tables, soft areas and cabinets used by children in the classroom.

## **Observed Holidays**

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A calendar indicating the dates of the holidays when THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER is closed will be issued at the beginning of each school year for staff/parent information.

### **Holidays observed are:**

Labor Day  
Thanksgiving Day  
Friday after Thanksgiving - Staff Appreciation Day!  
Christmas Eve - Centers close  
Christmas Day  
New Year's Eve - Centers close at 3:00 pm  
New Year's Day  
Martin Luther King Day  
President's Day  
Veteran's Day  
Memorial Day  
Independence Day

### **Other Center Closing Days are:**

Professional Training Day in April or May (date determined by MSCCA Annual Conference)  
End of Summer Clean-Up Day in August (date determined by end of summer camp and beginning of school)

Assistant staff, part-time staff, substitute staff and any other non-regular staff member are paid on an hourly basis only, and only for the hours actually worked as indicated on the time clock record.

### ***Employee's Clock In/Out Record/Illness Procedures***

- Clocking in and out to verify assigned work schedules and break times is essential. This is the only record of your attendance and hours. Times must be clearly and accurately written, and only by the actual staff member.
- If the time sheets are consistently NOT correct due to staff not clocking in, hours not shown will not be paid.
- Staff can only clock in for their own in/out schedule.
- The Center Director has the authority to ask a staff member to go home for being late.
- If a staff member becomes ill prior to the scheduled work day, it is the responsibility of that staff member to call the Center Director or designate at least six (6) hours, but no less than three (3) hours prior to their scheduled work shift. Written verification of illness and doctor's notes will be placed in the staff member's file.

Not calling in, consistent absences or sick calls will result in a counseling session and possible probationary status or dismissal if occurring more than twice in any pay period.

If a staff member does not call in, appear for a scheduled shift or otherwise does not notify the Center Director of absences on two occasions, it is assumed that the staff member has resigned from the position and is no longer employed by THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER. The Center Director will inform the Corporate Office of the resignation. The final paycheck will reflect any hours correctly signed in/out and may be picked up at the Center Office by the staff member, once the staff member has returned any materials, equipment, records, or keys belonging to THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER.

**Nine absences and/or late arrivals within a 2 month period** will result in an employee being put back on a 90 day probationary period. No leave time is earned during probationary periods.

## **Staff Disciplinary Procedures**

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The performance and professional conduct of all employees of THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER must be compatible with all policy and procedures as discussed in this employee manual. Initiation of necessary and appropriate disciplinary actions with respect to an employee's performance or conduct is within the authority and responsibility of the Center Director.

There are three types of disciplinary actions:

1. **Verbal warnings** - given by the employee's immediate supervisor or center director specifying performance or conduct not in compliance with standards outlined in this manual. Employees are advised that lack of correction will lead to further disciplinary action. A counseling letter will be placed in the employee's file indicating the type of verbal warning given.
2. **Written warnings** - with specific incidents noted and disciplinary action taken by the center director. Such action may be in the form of a probationary period, at the end of which time a short evaluation by the Director will take place. The evaluation must be attached to the warning. Written warnings are kept in the staff member's personnel file.
3. **Probation**—Any employee receiving two written warnings must be placed on probation when there is a third incident. The probationary period can last from two (2) weeks up to one month (31 days) in length, during which time the employee must comply with any action plan as noted in the written warning. Any violation of the probation requirements will result in an immediate dismissal. **Leave Time can not be earned during probation.**
4. Dismissal occurs only when it is considered warranted by circumstances determined by the center director to have immediate negative repercussions on children or staff. While dismissal will ordinarily be preceded by a warning or probationary period, dismissal may occur prior to any warning or probation in the event of a substantial violation of law, licensing regulations or company policy which endangers a child, staff member or parent.

***Employment is at will and does not constitute a contractual agreement between  
THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER and the staff member.***

**At any time an employee does not meet the standard of the policies stated in this manual, and/or endangers the health and safety of the children or other staff, the director may terminate his/her employment.**

Center directors must discuss proposed dismissals with Corporate Officers prior to terminating a staff member. All documentation must be available in writing for corporate officers to review.

### ***Employee Evaluations/Provisional Period***

Each new employee will participate in an initial evaluation conference with the Center Director at the end of the 30/60/ and 90 day probationary period of employment. Issues or concerns by either party may be discussed then. The Center Director will either offer regular employment, extend the probationary period another two weeks, or withdraw the offer of employment. When all conditions of employment are satisfactorily met, a letter of employment is signed and regular employment with all attendant benefits begins.

Thereafter, yearly evaluations conferences with the Director will occur on the anniversary date of regular employment. These conferences will be based on a compilation of monthly reviews that the Director maintains. Yearly salary increases based on several factors, including, but not limited to, performance and merit occur at that time. Position changes also based on performance, merit and Center needs are discussed and offered at that time.

### ***Employee Counseling***

Counseling conferences may be requested at any time by the center director if an employee is not performing assigned duties, not being responsible or is demonstrating a problem in attitude affecting the program, children, parents or other staff members. Written documentation of such conferences will be maintained in the employee's file.

A counseling conference may also be requested of the center director by any employee to clarify any procedures, policies or classroom responsibilities.

## ***Employee Resignations***

Notice of intent to resign a staff position for any reason, other than disciplinary actions, must be submitted in writing to the center director at least two (2) weeks in advance of the staff member's final date of employment.

Any accrued vacation/sick/personal leave for which the employee is eligible may be taken at that time, if agreed to by the center director. Upon written resignation, the employee will participate in a final evaluation conference with the Center Director. The center director will notify families enrolled at THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER of any staff resignations and/or dismissals in writing at the appropriate time.

***No employee may issue any letters to families regarding his or her resignation or dismissal***

THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER reserves the right to terminate immediately the employment of any employee who acts in a manner deemed to be detrimental to the health, safety, physical or mental well being of any child or fellow staff or parent by the director or administration. If the staff's employment is terminated for any reason by the center, all unused personal and vacation days are automatically forfeited.

In the event the center director must dismiss staff members due to lack of work, no advance notice is necessary. The letter of employment states..."employment is at will and does not constitute a contractual agreement..." The Center Director will make every effort to offer alternate employment such as reduced hours and/or employment at another Center operated by THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER. The center director must provide corporate officers with all documentation in writing supporting staff termination.

It is assumed that a staff member absent for three (3) days of a scheduled shift who has not called in directly to the center director to explain absence has resigned from employment.

## ***Return of THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER property***

All center keys, equipment, materials, supplies, books, etc. in the staff member's possession must be returned to the center director prior to the staff member's final day, or the final paycheck will contain a deduction, determined by the center director, for the cost of replacing such keys, equipment, materials, supplies, books, etc.

## ***Employee's Manual***

THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER Employee's Manual is reviewed periodically by the corporate officers and management team, and is subject to change at any time without notice. If changes are made, employees will be notified at a regular Center meeting and will be given an addendum to add to their copy of the Manual.

Employees are expected to read the Employee's Manual on line during the first week of hire.

## ***Employees must sign off on the following:***

- All CCA documentation
- First Aid/CPR procedures
- Fire Drill/Evacuation Procedures
- Sign In/Out procedures for children and staff
- Acceptance of the employee manual and all requirements contained herein.
- Employee manual assessment
- Child Abuse and Neglect Requirements
- Blood Borne Pathogens Requirement
- Licensing Standards
- Emergency Procedures

## **Note to Employees:**

You are encouraged to comment and review all the materials given to you that allow you to best serve the children and families in your care.

- Suggestions that enhance and enrich the program in general or a classroom in particular should be made to the center director in writing by the employee.
- Suggestions that promote the general well-being of all staff members or families at THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER should also be made in writing to the director.

Staff meetings are an opportunity to solicit these types of suggestions from staff members. Please feel free to speak up in a positive and constructive manner during staff meetings. Otherwise, please take the time to request a meeting with the center director to discuss any concerns, policy/procedure questions, children's issues, programming, etc. that needs clarification so that you can assist THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER in providing a high quality child care program.

## **Employee Management**

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### ***Evaluations***

Staff will be continuously evaluated by the Center Director in that any time the Center Director is observing staff, positive reinforcement of professional behavior or disciplinary procedures may be discussed. There is a formal process for staff evaluation that occurs yearly on the anniversary date of the staff member's regular hire date which occurs at the conclusion of the probationary (90 day) period.

A Director who routinely visits classroom, completes the classroom observation tool for staff and maintains correct files on staff issues will be able to complete the Employee Evaluation Form to the benefit of the employee and Center. This is particularly important when working with a "marginal" staff member who has routinely/consistently been disciplined for non-performance of the position, or other violations of the Employee Manual.

Documentation of all incidents must be on file, clearly and specifically written and should have the employee's signature as having received the disciplinary notice.

### ***Disciplinary Procedures***

Directors must document any disciplinary procedures initiated against any staff member for violations of:

- (1) Child Care Administration Regulations
- (2) Health and Safety Regulations
- (3) THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER Employee Manual

Any employee receiving a written disciplinary action is required to sign the form indicating receipt of a **Disciplinary Action Form**. This is both to acknowledge proper procedure and to protect both parties....it does not mean that by signing the staff member agrees with the action. (see following page for example of **Disciplinary Action Form**.)

### ***Reimbursement for Classroom Purchases***

Teachers will be reimbursed for approved purchases of up to \$20 monthly for classroom materials upon delivery of a store receipt to the Center Director. Teachers are expected to submit a request for additional supplies by the first of each month. The Director will obtain the approved materials or sign/authorize for reimbursement when a receipt is presented.

***The Center Director must approve the materials prior to purchase.***

### ***Grievance Policy***

Any staff member, who is not the lead classroom teacher, with a concern about some aspect of classroom operations or policy should first discuss the matter with the lead classroom teacher. If the lead teacher can not resolve the concern independently and to the satisfaction of the staff member, within 24 hours the lead teacher or the staff member may verbally bring the matter to the attention of the Ass. Director. If the Ass. Director is unable to arrive at a solution satisfactory to those involved, within 24 hours the Ass. Director will verbally bring the matter to the attention of the Director. If the lead teacher has a concern, he/she may go directly to the Ass. Director to try to resolve any issues.

A grievance may be filed in writing followed by an appointment to review the grievance. At any time during the above process, a grievance may be filed in writing, and submitted to the appropriate individual in the designated chain of command. This will be followed by an appointment to review the grievance within seven working days by the lead classroom teacher, Ass. Director, and or/Director as appropriate. The Director's action regarding the grievance is final.

## Sample Disciplinary Action Form

This is a sample form of a disciplinary action to be taken against an employee not complying with a specific requirement of the Employee's Manual, CCA Regulations or Health and Safety regulations. Always use letterhead.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

From: Center Director

To: Staff Member

Re: (the reason)

Please note that you are:

**(1) verbally warned** (simply note that a counseling session occurred with the staff member regarding the incident)

**(2) written up** (specifically detail the incident that occurred and why it is a violation of any of the requirements of the position. State the corrective action to be taken and give the time frame for correction.

**(3) placed on 2 week probationary status** (same as above and including the two-week time frame for correction and or termination of employment if any aspect of the position requirements are not met during this time frame.

You have been counseled and the following steps must be taken within time frame given.

Corrective Action:

**State the corrective action to be taken** \_\_\_\_\_ in order for you to remain employed at THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER.

This is the **first** \_\_\_\_\_; **second** \_\_\_\_\_; **third** \_\_\_\_\_ disciplinary action taken against you.

I understand this notification and have received it on date \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Staff Member Signature**

Given by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Center Director Signature and date**

## Classroom Management Checklist—Page 1

Classroom Inspection Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Employee(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Classroom Name/Room Number \_\_\_\_\_ Evaluated by \_\_\_\_\_

This inspection checklist is to be used to evaluate individual employee and their ability to manage and follow policies/procedures, the Curriculum Guide, as well as determine how the classroom and equipment are being used. This evaluation will occur quarterly, and will assist the Director in evaluating employees.

Yes No

- ☐ ☐ **1. Proper supervision:**  
*Indoor:* Employee are engaged with children, activities are properly presented, tone of voice is appropriate to children and other employees.  
*Outdoor:* Employees are actively engaged in outdoor play with children, are actively supervising children on play equipment, and are playing games with children.
- ☐ ☐ **2. Staff ratios maintained:**  
Employees in classroom are aware of number of children in classroom at all times, when staff breaks occur and how to maintain ratios.
- ☐ ☐ **3. Attendance is taken Everyday:**  
Children's sign in/out sheets are always available and accessible to parents, correct as to week and date, and properly filled out and updated if children are absent.
- ☐ ☐ **4. Uniform:**  
Uniform is clean and pressed and shoes worn are to facilitate interactions with children.
- ☐ ☐ **5. Monthly Calendar/ Lesson Plan/What We Are Doing is Posted:**  
Plans are clearly posted where parents can see it, with all lesson plans marked during each day's activity times.
- ☐ ☐ **6. Appropriate Number of Clothes are stored for Children:**  
Children's Bins are complete with extra clothes
- ☐ ☐ **7. Emergency Info:**  
Clearly posted in classroom: Emergency Plan, Allergies List, Medication Order Form (must be appropriately up dated as necessary) and Medication stored correctly. Medications given by the appropriate person on schedule and noted on form correctly.
- ☐ ☐ **8. Employees interacting with children:**  
Talking with children appropriately, asking questions, developing conversations or facilitating during center activity times or during employee-directed activity. Tone is loving and gentle.
- ☐ ☐ **9. Employees eating with children:**  
During snack times/lunch time, Employees are sitting at tables with children; modeling appropriate table behavior having conversations about healthy eating.
- ☐ ☐ **10. Music**  
Appropriate child-oriented music is played at different times of the day for various activities; nap time music is always quiet, soft and either classical or lullaby-type.

**Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



## Classroom Management Checklist—Page 2

Classroom Inspection Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Employee(s) \_\_\_\_\_

**Yes No**

☐ ☐ **11. Transition time activities:**

Children not left "waiting" for activity to begin....songs, exercise, other transition games occurring along with proper preparation. Materials are ready and available to children with minimum "down" time.

**12. Hand washing:**

☐ ☐ **Employees are supervising children's correct hand washing and are washing their own hands:**

Before meals, after art, after bathrooms with soap and water

**13. Diapering/toileting procedures:**

☐ ☐ Approved method of diapering followed at all times. Gloves worn when diapering/toileting a child.

**14. Tables, chairs wiped clean:**

☐ ☐ After all meals and after art activities.

**15. Room arrangement:**

☐ ☐ Room is appropriately arranged for children's age and development, art supplies available and accessible; attractively decorated; both parent and kid-friendly.

**16. Damaged toys removed:**

☐ ☐ Any toy that is not complete or is broken, immediately removed, pieces given to Director, and if possible replaced.

**17. Cubbies:**

☐ ☐ Correctly marked with child's name and photo and periodically cleaned out so that appropriate clothing for child is available, art work is sent home at end of each week, parent info is taken home.

**18. Supplies:**

☐ ☐ **Classroom:** Sufficient art supplies in classroom at all times, neatly stored in appropriate container or storage area; puzzles, toys, dramatic play, science, music etc are in sufficient quantity.

**Disposables:** Sufficient supplies in classroom at all times, neatly stored in appropriate container or storage area; plates, cups, utensils, napkins, sponges, brooms/mops, cleaning materials, etc.

**19. Cots:**

☐ ☐ Stacked correctly, labeled with child's name, disinfected weekly. Cot sheets/blankets correctly stored.

**20. Naptime Cots:**

☐ ☐ Correctly spaced in classroom.

**21. Cleaning Supplies:**

☐ ☐ Kept out of children's reach at all times, correctly labeled, used only when children not in classroom.

**22. Classroom cleaning:**

☐ ☐ Room is "picked up" after morning activities, prepared for lunch appropriately and cleaned after lunch with floors being swept of food/trash, bathrooms disinfected after morning use and afternoon nap use. Classroom is left neat and orderly, ready for the next day's activities.

**Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_

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# Themba Creative Learning Center

## Employee Performance Evaluation

### Rating Scale

- 4 Outstanding - Consistently reflects superior performance
- 3 Above Average - Exceeds requirements of position
- 2 Effective - Meets requirements of position
- 1 Unsatisfactory - Unacceptable performance, many be put on probationary status

### *Classroom Management and Program Implementation*

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Calendars and Newsletter materials turned in to Director on or before due date and implemented on a timely basis.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Gathers materials and supplies in advance for the activities of the day.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Execution of written lesson plans
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Plans a variety of age appropriate activities which reflect the written themes/goals of the week/month (including field trips, guest/special events planned and organized.

### *Room Arrangement & Organization*

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Seasonal/Holiday room decorations each month
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Room Bulletin Boards according to themes/seasons changed at least once a month.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Cleanliness and neatness of rooms.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Classroom is organized and clutter-free.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Learning Centers are appropriately organized and clearly defined and labeled areas (including house-keeping/dramatic play, music/art, blocks, manipulatives, library and math/science.

	Hands-On Activities	Theme/Curriculum Enrichment	Weekly Usage
Housekeeping/Dramatic Play Area			
Music Area			
Art Area			
Science Area			
Block Area			
Library Area			
Manipulatives Area			

(2)  
Employee Evaluation

\_\_\_\_\_6. Evidence of Employee-made games and materials.

\_\_\_\_\_7. Management style for monitoring children in areas.

\_\_\_\_\_8. Parent Information: Necessary information posted includes daily schedule, daily summary, monthly calendar, incident reports completed, medication forms completed, field trips posted, special events and announcements posted, individual daily reports completed, children's observation completed and files up-to-date.

***Accountability***

\_\_\_\_\_1. Prompt in arriving for work (Prompt is defined as signing in at least 5 minutes before shift begins.

\_\_\_\_\_2. Absenteeism is no greater than 5% per month; anything over 5% needs to be verified by a doctor. If called out sick is due to sick children, anything over your base 5% needs to be verified by a doctor.

\_\_\_\_\_3. All personnel requirements are up-to-date, including in-service training, CPR and First Aid.

\_\_\_\_\_4. Dressed in accordance with the dress code as written in the Staff Manual.

\_\_\_\_\_5. Uses paid time wisely and in the best interest of children (example: rubs children's backs at naptime prior to working on lesson plans).

\_\_\_\_\_6. Completes all records as required, including attendance forms, incident reports and sign-in/out sheets.

\_\_\_\_\_7. Is knowledgeable on emergency procedure policies, including major accident and fire procedures, pick up and release procedures.

\_\_\_\_\_8. Is knowledgeable and understands Child Care Administration Regulations COMAR .07.04.02

***Communication and Discipline***

\_\_\_\_\_1. Parents are kept well-informed through Parent Bulletin Boards, daily/weekly reports and newsletter information.

\_\_\_\_\_2. Positive communication is always used in daily dialogue with parents, children and other colleagues.

\_\_\_\_\_3. Positive discipline is adhered to in the classroom, procedures which are outlined in the Staff Handbook, and Parent Manual.

\_\_\_\_\_4. Classroom control is maintained throughout the day.

\_\_\_\_\_4. Confidentiality maintained.

(3)  
Employee Evaluation

***Staff Meetings***

\_\_\_\_\_1. Attends any schedule staff meeting with no greater than 5% absenteeism ( less than 1 meeting missed).

\_\_\_\_\_2. Participates in classroom meetings with other staff to "brainstorm" ideas for curriculum, etc.

\_\_\_\_\_3. Attends Parent Conferences, bi-annual center-wide programs or other meetings as outlined in the Staff Manual. A minimum of 4 per year.

***Training***

\_\_\_\_\_1. Maintains the required hours of training each employment year.

\_\_\_\_\_2. Participates in all appropriate training provided by THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER

\_\_\_\_\_3. Attends the annual MSCCA Conference

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TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL ACHIEVED POINTS \_\_\_\_\_

SCORE (%)

90 - 100% = Outstanding job performance

80 - 89% = Above average job performance

70 - 79% = Average job performance

60 - 69% = Below average job performance

***Evaluator Comments***

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***Personal Goals for the next year:***

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# THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER/Job Descriptions

## Professional Standards and Responsibilities

### ***CENTER DIRECTOR/MANAGER***

The position of Director/Manager will be filled by individuals who have met all the requirements needed for Head Teacher/Senior Staff and will also include responsibility for planning and supervising the program, staff, parents and children and operating the Center in accordance with applicable state regulations.

This person (if not the licensee) is deemed the agent of **THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER**. The Director/Manager is employed by **THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER** and is held accountable to same. **THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER** is responsible for informing the Director about any philosophy, procedures, policies and budgetary matters as pertain to the functioning of the Center. All Corporate regulations, management guidelines and format will be given to the Director in a Director's Manual in addition to the Staff Manual.

### ***Qualifications***

It is preferred that the Director hold a degree in Early Childhood Education, Child Development or other related field with concentration on children ages 0-12 years of age. It is desirable for the Director to have coursework in administration, supervision and business or experience in same. The Director must have a minimum of 2 years experience in an early childhood setting. The candidate must meet all Child Care Administration requirements.

### ***Responsibilities***

These include, but are not limited, to the following:

- ☺ supervise the business and financial affairs of the Center, maintain policies and procedures for effective management
- ☺ maintain the necessary and appropriate records for children and staff
- ☺ maintain the Center in conformance with state regulations, including application of all yearly licenses and inspections
- ☺ assist the Corporate office in the development of policies/procedures for effective management
- ☺ recruit, train, supervise, evaluate and terminate personnel as necessary; conduct regular staff meetings
- ☺ recruit families for enrollment, maintain a waiting list
- ☺ market outside the Center to residential, business, educational/religious and appropriate medical communities in the area, neighboring businesses and any other opportunities providing visibility and name recognition for the Center
- ☺ supervise the planning and implementation of the curriculum as per policies and philosophy
- ☺ preparation of all corporate reports with timely reporting to Corporate office
- ☺ purchase, maintain inventory, and supervise use of all supplies, equipment and materials
- ☺ maintain the physical facility, including snow removal, lawn care, plumbing, electrical, janitorial and handyman services

The Director will assume the day-to-day management of the Center after signing the letter of employment. An appropriate training period will be offered. The Director will have a 45 day probationary period, at which time, an evaluation will be conducted by the Corporate office. Upon satisfactory completion of the evaluation, the Director will assume regular full time employment with all benefits commensurate with the position and will become responsible for the daily management of the Center.

### ***Resignation/Termination***

A Corporate Officer or Center Director may terminate employment at any time and without notice. Employment is at will, and does not constitute a contractual agreement between the employee and **THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER**. Criteria for such termination is based on severe violations of any state regulations, or company policy affecting the safety and welfare of the children or staff, or failure to manage the Center according to policies and procedures as outlined in the Director's Manual.

# THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER

## Professional Standards and Responsibilities

### ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/SENIOR STAFF

The person in this position will be responsible for assisting the Director and acting as Director designate in the Director's absence, as well as having senior staff responsibilities, as necessary. This staff member may have part-time responsibilities in each area with time allocated away from the classroom in order to perform various assigned tasks or functions as the Assistant Director. The candidate must meet all Child Care Administration requirements.

The Assistant Director will assume the following responsibilities after successfully completing an orientation and training program of up to 30 days. The Center Director will evaluate the candidate at the end of the 30 day training period. If the candidate does not meet the criteria necessary to assume the new responsibilities, a 30 day probationary period will be in effect. At that time, the position offered to the candidate will be awarded or the offer will be rescinded and the candidate will maintain senior staff responsibilities only.

Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ☺ function as Director Designate at any time the Director is not present at the Center
- ☺ function as staff liaison to the Director as needed
- ☺ assist in the development of effective management practices and program development
- ☺ assist in personnel management and training, including staff meetings, orientation, and supervision of staff
- ☺ assist in the development of parent programs as needed
- ☺ assist in the marketing of the Center, including tours and phone calls requesting information
- ☺ assist in the business management of the Center; collection of tuition, bank deposits, maintain files and records
- ☺ assist in the purchase of food, equipment and supplies and maintain inventory

### Resignation/Termination

A Corporate Officer or a Center Director may terminate employment at any time and without notice. Employment is at will, and does not constitute a contractual agreement between the employee and **THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER**. Criteria for such termination is based on severe violations of any state regulations, or company policy affecting the safety and welfare of the children or staff, or failure to manage the Center according to policies and procedures as outlined in the Director's Manual.

Notice of resignation for any reason must be given two weeks prior to the last working day in writing to the Center Director.

# THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER/Job Descriptions

## Professional Standards and Responsibilities

### SENIOR STAFF/HEAD TEACHER

The person selected for this position will be responsible for the general supervision and management of a class of up to 30 children between the ages of 0-12. This person may also be designated to assume the duties of the Director at times when the Director or Assistant Director is not present. The candidate must meet all Child Care Administration requirements.

Senior staff/head teachers must hold a certificate or degree in compliance with requirements of the Child Care Administration and have one years experience in an early childhood setting. Senior staff/head teachers must be sensitive, mature individuals who are able to relate well to children and adults and must have the personality and ability to provide leadership and stability for program continuity.

#### Responsibilities

Senior staff/head teachers are responsible for the following:

- ☺ planning, supervising and implementing **THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER** curriculum and program in the classroom
- ☺ providing for individualized programming for each child in the group
- ☺ understanding and considering the individual child in relation to his/her cultural and socio-economic background
- ☺ treating each child with dignity and respect
- ☺ helping each child become aware of his/her role as an integral member of a group
- ☺ being responsible for the ordered arrangement, appearance, decor and learning environment of the classroom
- ☺ assisting the Director (or designate) in describing the program to visitors and potential enrollees
- ☺ assisting the Director (or designate) in supervising assistant staff , maintaining positive staff relationships
- ☺ assisting the Director (or designate) in teacher-training activities, teaching demonstration and staff evaluations
- ☺ assisting the Director (or designate) in parent-teacher conferences
- ☺ attend all staff meetings and required or recommended staff training programs

#### Resignation/Termination

A Corporate Officer, or a Center Director may terminate employment at any time and without notice. Employment is at will, and does not constitute a contractual agreement between the employee and **THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER**. Criteria for such termination is based on severe violations of any state regulations, or company policy affecting the safety and welfare of the children or staff, or failure to manage the Center according to policies and procedures as outlined in the Director's Manual.

Notice of resignation for any reason must be given two weeks prior to the last working day in writing to the Center Director.

Any monies due the Company for training, workshops (First Aid/CPR), uniform, criminal background check or for any other reason will be deducted from the final paycheck if employee resigns within one year of employment.

All keys, Center equipment or supplies and materials that the employee has in her/his possession must be returned to the Center Director on the employee's last day. The final paycheck may be withheld until keys, equipment, supplies/ materials have been returned.

# THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER

## Professional Standards and Responsibilities

### GROUP LEADER

The person selected for this position will be responsible for the general supervision and management of a classroom of up to 30 children ages 6-12. This candidate must meet all Child Care Administration requirements.

#### Responsibilities

The group leader is responsible for the following:

- ☺ planning the daily program for school-age children
- ☺ prepare the learning environment, maintaining classroom materials and supplies
- ☺ supervising and maintaining the daily program with other staff members
- ☺ maintain general housekeeping tasks in the classroom
- ☺ maintaining professional attitudes and behavior at all times
- ☺ treating all children with dignity and respect
- ☺ attending all staff meetings and required or recommended training programs
- ☺ participating in appropriate parent-teacher conferences
- ☺ participating in all appropriate Center programs
- ☺ General housekeeping duties

#### Resignation/Termination

A Corporate Officer or Center Director may terminate employment at any time and without notice. Employment is at will, and does not constitute a contractual agreement between the employee and **THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER**. Criteria for such termination is based on severe violations of any state regulations, or company policy affecting the safety and welfare of the children or staff, or failure to manage the Center according to policies and procedures as outlined in the Director's Manual.

Notice of resignation for any reason must be given two weeks prior to the last working day in writing to the Center Director.

If written notice of resignation is received at least two (2) weeks prior to the last working day, an employee may take unused vacation time (if the Center Director approves) or may be paid for earned but unused vacation time.

In the event of termination or failure to give two (2) weeks notice, all unused vacation time is forfeited.



## ASSISTANT SENIOR STAFF/Job Descriptions

The person selected for this position will be responsible for assisting the Senior Staff/Head Teacher in the general supervision and management of a class of up to 30 children ages 0-12.

This person must be in the process of completing any state required educational certificate or degree, as well as required experience in the classroom. The candidate must meet all Child Care Administration requirements.

### Responsibilities

The assistant senior staff member is responsible for the following:

- ☺ assist in planning the daily program under supervision of the senior staff/head teacher
- ☺ assist in preparing the learning environment, maintaining classroom materials and supplies
- ☺ supervising and maintaining the daily program when senior staff is not present
- ☺ assisting with general housekeeping tasks in the classroom
- ☺ maintaining professional attitudes and behavior at all times
- ☺ treating all children with dignity and respect
- ☺ attending all staff meetings and required or recommended training programs
- ☺ participating in appropriate parent-teacher conferences
- ☺ participating in all appropriate Center programs

## ASSISTANT

The person selected for this position will be responsible for assisting a Senior Staff/Head Teacher or Assistant Senior Staff member in the general supervision and management of a classroom of up to 30 children ages 0-12. The assistant must meet all Child Care Administration requirements. An assistant staff member can not be solely responsible for any group of children at any time and must be under direct supervision of an appropriate senior staff member at all times.

### Responsibilities

- ☺ assist in the planning and implementation of the daily program under supervision of senior staff member
- ☺ assist in the planning and preparing of the learning environment
- ☺ assisting with general housekeeping tasks in the classroom
- ☺ treating each child with dignity and respect
- ☺ maintaining a professional attitude and behavior at all times
- ☺ attending all staff meetings and recommended training programs

## VOLUNTEER

Any person not employed by **THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER** who routinely and consistently performs various tasks or functions at the Center is a volunteer. This person may volunteer in the office or in the classroom. Any volunteer must meet Child Care Administration requirements regarding age, health and fingerprint checks. The Center Director may develop a roster of volunteers from parent lists or from other sources, such as high school child development classes. These volunteers must be supervised at all times and may never be left solely responsible for a child or group of children.

## Resignation/Termination

The Corporate officer may terminate employment at any time and without notice. Employment is at will, and does not constitute a contractual agreement between the employee and **THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER**. Criteria for such termination is based on severe violations of any state regulations, or company policy affecting the safety and welfare of the children or staff, or failure to manage the Center according to policies and procedures as outlined in the Director's Manual.

Notice of resignation for any reason must be given two weeks prior to the last working day in writing to the Center Director or to the Corporate Officers.

# THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER

## Professional Standards and Responsibilities

### ***Regional Manager***

This position is a corporate-level management position to be filled either by a person who has been trained and recruited internally or has been recruited into the company.

The Regional Manager is employed by **THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER** and is held accountable to same. **THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER** is responsible for informing the Regional Manager about any philosophy, procedures, policies and budgetary matters as pertain to the functioning of all Centers and Company operations. .

### ***Qualifications***

It is preferred that the Regional Manager hold a degree in Early Childhood Education, Child Development or other related field with concentration on children ages 0-12 years of age, or be Director-qualified as per Child Care Administration regulations. It is desirable for the Regional Manager have coursework in administration, supervision, public relations, marketing or documented experience in same.

### ***Daily Hours***

It is expected that the Regional Manager will either maintain office hours at the corporate office 8 hours daily, schedule to be determined; or the same when at Center locations. Scheduled visits or assigned hours at individual centers should be determined with the President and Director of Operations. Time accountability is maintained by informing the corporate office of weekly schedule, days off, sick leave and vacation leave.

### ***Corporate Responsibilities/Presence***

The Regional Manager must maintain a professional demeanor and appearance at all times. This position must positively reflect and maintain the professional standards of the THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER . Philosophy, policies and procedures must be adhered to and maintained. When at individual Center locations, the Regional Manager has an opportunity to both mentor, assist and guide Center Directors while promoting and modeling a positive and professional work ethic to all staff.

### ***Responsibilities***

These include, but are not limited, to the following:

- ☺ assist the Corporate office in the development of policies/procedures for effective management
- ☺ assist in the supervision, planning and implementation of the curriculum as per policies and philosophy
- ☺ assist in the recruitment, training, supervision, and evaluation of personnel as necessary, and as requested by the Corporate Office;
- ☺ purchase, maintain inventory, and supervise use of all required supplies, equipment and materials
- ☺ conduct regular staff meetings at each Center to inform, train and supervise Center Directors and staff regarding educational curriculum, corporate policies/procedures, regulatory requirements and marketing and public relations programs.
- ☺ develop, implement and supervise recruitment of families for enrollment; supervise the Potential Enrollment Contact Binder at each Center
- ☺ develop, implement and supervise the marketing and public relations program at all Centers, maintain policies and procedures for effective management of such programs with timely reporting to Corporate office
- ☺ develop, implement and supervise special marketing programs for target populations such as: kindergarten, summer camp, school-age and infant care
- ☺ develop, implement and supervise Parent's programs for special event days such as Mother's Day, Father's Day, Community Fairs, Open House for Prospective Enrollments, etc.

The Regional Manager will assume the day-to-day management of such programs after signing a letter of employment. An appropriate training period will be offered, provided by the President, and Vice-President. This period will be used to familiarize the Regional Manager with the philosophy, curriculum and company procedures. The Regional Manager will have a 90 day probationary period, at which time, an evaluation will be conducted by the Corporate office. Upon satisfactory completion of the evaluation, the Regional Manager will assume regular full time employment with all benefits commensurate with the position.

## ***Equipment***

If there is an equipment or supply need, it is your responsibility to inform the Director. No purchases for equipment or supplies can be made without prior authorization. If a staff member is authorized to purchase an item and uses personal funds, a receipt must be provided for reimbursement to be made.....

***No receipt, no reimbursement, no exception.***

## ***General Guidelines***

These areas are to be defined in each classroom with appropriate quantity, variety and design; safe, and clean with open shelves accessible to children.

- |                                  |                          |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Language Arts/Writing/Reading | 5. Blocks/Transportation |
| 2. Manipulatives/Games           | 6. Dramatic Play         |
| 3. Art                           | 7. Music/Listening       |
| 4. Science/Math                  | 8. Movement              |

## ***Dividing the Room***

The classroom is divided into several distinct areas or interest centers.

- Boundaries are well-defined by low shelves, stable screens, or walls with openings, so that children and adults can look into the areas.
- Each area has adequate amount of space for children and their use of materials.
- Tables are incorporated into the work areas.
- Work areas are not cluttered with unnecessary furniture or materials.
- Traffic flow permits children to work without interruption.
- The noisier areas are not close to the quieter areas.
- Some work areas are set up outside in warm climates or seasons.

## Lesson Plans

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Your lesson plans are a primary source of communication to the parent informing them of the quality of the program. The Center Director will guide you as to when lesson plans are due and where to post them once they have been approved. If you need assistance with lesson planning, collaborate with another teacher in the same age group, or request a mentor of a more experienced teacher. Always ask the Director for feedback. The Center Director will provide you with constructive, positive feedback or suggestions for improving and learning how to develop lesson plans.

### *Things to include in Lesson Plans*

The following are items that must be included in your lesson plans:

- Can a parent tell what your theme is by looking at your lesson plan?
- Does your lesson plan include literacy? Include writing, reading, word play, labeling, great books and great activities! Read books pertaining to the theme/curriculum. Story times, flannel boards, Author/book days relating to the themes. Do you read your books more than once? Act out stories....make them come alive!
- Have you included math, science, small motor skills, large motor skills, afternoon activities, names of stories, records, tapes and videos?
- Does your lesson plan include plenty of social skills work reinforcing our philosophy about sharing, teamwork, acknowledgement, requests, invitations and love?
- Adding science....you do not need to be a scientist to create wonderful science activities! Cooking and measurement, math, examination, magnifying glasses and bug viewers are great science activities. Science can be used as an activity center during center play time.
- Curriculum movies/videos versus videos for entertainment. Ask "Why is this movie pertinent to the theme?" Check around for great videos. All videos (even those sent in by parents!) must be approved by the Center Director.
- Guest Speakers: include who they are and what they do....community helpers etc.
- Open-ended, creative and appropriate art projects related to your theme. No teacher made, store-purchased dittos or pre-cut shapes can be used. Art can be used as an activity center during center play time and should always be accessible and available to children.
- Create something new and exciting in your Dramatic Play Area. Use your imagination! When learning about community helpers, create a "small-town shopping area" with a grocery, vet office, business office, post office or fire station.
- Include titles of music selections of these are special children's cassettes/CD's. Parents appreciate knowing what their child enjoys listening to. Quiet classical or children's lullaby music is used at nap-time. Other good opportunities to use music are during morning choice times, center time, and outdoor play time. All music must be child oriented. No adult music can be played at any time.

### *Remember:*

**Choice guarantees interest:** When children are interested in something, they are more likely to learn new things and to remain actively involved in a task.

**Children gain self-confidence:** They discover that they can plan and complete things and that there are no rights and wrongs, just problems to be solved.

**Children gain independence—they become decision makers and problem solvers:** They learn not to rely too much on others to tell them how, when or why.

### *Creating a Great Lesson Plan*

- Plan ahead, review the curriculum guide, look through materials available to you, choose something that interests you!
- Brainstorm ideas with your "team". Your team can be composed of other teachers with same age classrooms or people you enjoy working with. List ideas of things you would like to do with your children. Anything goes, you can pick and choose later.
- Categorize into lesson plan. Art, science and small motor areas. Choose days to cover certain topics.
- Transfer ideas to Lesson Plan Sheet. Add detail and descriptions. Write neatly, decorate with stickers, pictures or drawings. Color code skills; blue for literacy, green for science, red for cooking, etc.

### *Follow-Up by Center Director*

Your Center Director will review, discuss alternatives, give suggestions, ask you to expand ideas, help other teachers if they are having trouble developing their own plans and finally, approve your plans. Once your Lesson Plan has been approved, display it appropriately.

Display your lesson plan on the first of each month. Follow through with your ideas and stick to the program.

- Note any changes and alternative activities on your "**What We Did Today**" or right on your lesson plan.

## **Positive Discipline**

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THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER strongly believes that children learn by actively participating and watching what is going on around them. You, as role models, must provide positive and respectful interactions with each other, with parents and with children. **See Discipline Policy**

An atmosphere of support, respect and unconditional love with careful safety limits allows children to fully participate in the many learning possibilities we provide and may develop independence and confidence in themselves.

If you are ever unclear about how to use our philosophy, guidelines, or training information in your classroom in any instance, please consult with the Director right away. Remember, learning how to work with children effectively is an ongoing process.

### ***Guidelines for Adult Speaking and Interactions with Children***

Children treated with love and respect get the message that they are worthwhile. Don't yell, use voice commands, or requests from a distance when dealing with a child. Be with the child and speak to him/her personally and individually using a low tone of voice. Young children pay more attention to your tone than your words. Your body posture and facial expressions communicate too—be warm, even when you are dealing with behavior that doesn't work....especially with those behaviors that don't work!

- Never humiliate, frighten, or use physical/verbal/emotional punishment for any reason.
- Limits and rules and be set with positive encouragement and acknowledgement.
- Don't guide or direct children with dominating, loud, adult voices unless necessary (as in emergency).
- Never physically pick up, or move children from one place to another except in an emergency.
- If you need assistance with removal of a child, please ask the office for assistance.

## **Positive Guidance**

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- Use *positive guidance and redirection and encouragement*:  
"It works best if"....instead of "Don't do it that way"  
"You can do it....You did that well" Instead of competition and comparison.
- When people hear demands, they react by resisting, no matter what their age. Adults often call this behavior in children "not listening". Frame all requirements as requests or suggestions:
- "Wouldn't that work better if...."
  - "How about trying it another way....let's think 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 be in time-out".

Give children choices and leave it up to them. Making choices gives them power! 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, a "time-out", 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".

## **Continuing behaviors that don't work**

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We do not greet the parent each evening with "Your child did it again today," or "we had another bad day."

Inform the Director if a child continuously engages in a behavior that does not work. Ask the Director to observe the child in the classroom to help you redirect the child's behavior. If the behavior continues, the Director may notify the parent.

Behavioral training of any kind is first and foremost the responsibility of the parents. In the case of specific behaviors that don't work at the Center, that are too disruptive or a potential danger to the other children. We ask the parent to get in charge of the behavior, even if the child only displays the behavior at the Center.

Socialization in a way that empowers and promotes self-control rather than merely controls the child is the goal for our pre-school age children.

## Politeness

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Although one of our goals for children is ultimately polite expression, we never demand "please", "thank you", or "I'm sorry" from young children. We want a child to focus on what he needs or wants, not on a magic word that makes everything ok.

When helping a child verbalize needs, wants, likes or dislikes, model what to say, but never insist on polite words. If you are respectful and polite with the child, he/she will learn from your example. Remember: children learn a tremendous amount from positive role models.

## Acknowledging positive behaviors

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Have very short, positive interactions with children about behaviors that don't work, not more than 30-60 seconds. Don't ask young children "why". It does not work to have long "why" or "why not" conversations with preschoolers.

- Pay more attention to behaviors that work! Find time to acknowledge children every day for helping, for behaviors that work.

## Tone of Voice

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To human beings, especially young children, the tone of voice you use is much more important than you think, often more important than the words since it is the *tone* that drives behavior.

We sometimes speak to children in a manner and with a tone of voice that we would not use with a friend. If we make a practice to listen to ourselves we can soon discover the amount of disrespect we show our children. We are prone to talk down to them, to say things in a insincere or false way or to speak in away to get cooperation.

If we speak to our children as we do our best friends, the message young children get is that we respect them, we love them absolutely, that they are great, even when engaging in behavior that doesn't work. Don't forget, even great people do behaviors that don't work sometimes.

- The secret to remember: Give children choices while using a low tone of voice. This gives them a chance to learn to be responsible for their own behavior instead of just submitting to adult control.
- *The only worthwhile discipline is self-discipline.* Look for opportunities to let children make choices.

## **Discipline Policy**

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This policy applies to all programs and all children enrolled at THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER Early Learning Centers. Children's feelings about themselves and their self-worth are a reflection of adult's expectations, attitudes and feelings towards children. Staff members must provide a caring, supportive, structured and positive environment.

1. No child may, intentionally or unintentionally, harm another child. Careful supervision of children by staff members is required at all times. Incidents of repeated biting or hitting by children will be discussed with parents. Parents will be notified if their child has been injured. Incident reports must be completed immediately, signed by the supervising staff member and Director, and kept on file in the Director's office.
2. Classroom policies regarding behavior will be developmentally appropriate for each age group. Staff members will inform parents of behavioral expectations.
3. Children unable to meet all classroom behavioral objectives will be encouraged to meet as many as possible with continued support from staff members.
4. Negative behaviors will be noted and discouraged using various techniques appropriate to the developmental and social needs of the child and group. These techniques may include, but are not limited to: verbal signals, such as "I like you, but I don't like the way you are treating the toys right now," forms of time out, removal of the child from certain activity areas, loss of privileges, and in the most extreme cases, removal of the child to the Director's office.
5. Parents will be informed at all times of any behaviors that persist or are detrimental to the child or group. Staff members may initiate conferences at any time to discuss concerns. Parents should view these conferences as opportunities for concerned, supportive caring dialogue.
6. Enrollment at THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER may be terminated at the request of the Director due to continued negative behavior by the child. Persistent negative behaviors may indicate a child unable to adjust to the program, and/or is developmentally not ready to accept responsibility for behavior. Every attempt will be made to prevent termination.
7. No staff member may discipline a child by verbal abuse, withholding food, slapping, hitting or spanking. (COMAR 10.05.01.46) Any staff member violating this policy is subject to immediate dismissal.

## Children's Bill of Rights and Responsibilities

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### I HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE HAPPY

I have the right to be happy and to be treated with warmth and compassion. Adults will look out for my welfare, and no one will laugh at me or hurt my feelings.

*It is my responsibility to learn to treat others like a friend.*

### I HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE ACCEPTED

I have the right to be my own unique self. No one will treat me unfairly because I am black or white, thin or fat, short or tall, girl or boy.

*It is my responsibility to learn to treat others the way I like to be treated.*

### I HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE SAFE

I have a right to feel safe and comfortable. No one will hit me, kick me, push me, pinch me, hurt me or threaten me.

*It is my responsibility to learn to play safely with others.*

### I HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE HEAR AND BE HEARD

I have a right to listen and be listened to. No one will yell, scream, shout or make loud noises in this room. I will be free to express my feelings and opinions without being interrupted or insulted.

*It is my responsibility to learn to listen courteously to others.*

### I HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE RESPECTED

Everyone has a right to feel important. No one has the right to feel that their ideas and actions are the only ones that matter.

*It is my responsibility to respect the rights of others by learning to share, take turns and cooperate.*

### I HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE CHALLENGED

I have a right to develop new skills and abilities at my own pace. I will be introduced to activities that help me change, grow and learn new skills.

*It is my responsibility to try new things so I can know the satisfaction that comes with reaching a goal.*

### I HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE SUCCESSFUL

I have a right to feel good about myself and what I can accomplish. I will be given many opportunities to practice what I have learned without fear of failure. I will be encouraged, guided and praised for my efforts.

*It is my responsibility to learn to appreciate the successes of others so we can all learn from one another.*



## Health and Safety Procedures

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### ***Daily Activities***

#### ***Attendance and Signing Children In/Out***

- Each child **MUST** be signed in by the parent as he/she arrives each day and signed out at departure. It is very important that the sign in/out sheets be absolutely accurate at all times of the day.
- Respectfully remind parents if you notice that they forget to sign in or out. If a parent does not sign their child in or out, please do so right away.
- Notify the Director of parents who consistently do not sign in/out. The Director will speak with them regarding this requirement.

#### ***Accident Reports/Records***

Whenever a child is injured in any way, especially if he/she bumps his/her head, requires first aid, observation of shows a physical mark such as a scratch, bruise or bite, fill out an ***Injury Incident Report and Log*** and *notify the Director immediately*. The Director must receive the Incident/Injury Report to read. It then goes into the child's folder for the parent to sign at pickup time. Signed forms are then copied, one given to the parent, one kept in the child's file in the office.

Once the Director has been informed of the incident, the parent may be called by either the Teacher in the classroom or by the Director.

The following information must be included in the ***Injury Incident Report and Log***:

Date	Child's Name	Time of Injury	Description of Injury	First Aid Administered	Name of Staff	Parents Called
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#### ***Child Abuse Reporting***

As required by law, any time that an employee has reason to believe that a child is being abused by someone outside of the Center; the staff member must bring this information immediately to the attention of the Director and Corporate Office. Appropriate steps will be taken immediately to insure the safety and welfare of the child.

#### ***Medications***

When parents bring in medication to be administered during the day, the parent must also provide a signed Medication Administration Form as required by CCA. The form must be complete with the following:

- name of medication
- times to be given
- dosage
- dates to be administered
- doctor's signature or if non-prescription, parent's signature
- medications must be in their original containers

Non-prescription medication must be labeled with the child's name, dosage and expiration date.

Employees will then put the physician's or non-prescription medication in the **locked medication box** in the appropriate refrigerator. Lead teachers must inform the Director of any medications to be administered on any day. A ***Medications Today*** folder must be available in each classroom to keep forms in and in order to verify when meds were given. This log must be filled out completely whenever a child is given medication. (see Medication Log Addendum) employee filling out the log cannot tear out pages from the log or skip lines. Please be responsible when filling out the information. Write clearly and legibly.

Only Designated teachers may administer medication. Assistants are not allowed to give medications at any time. Follow instructions carefully when administering medication. When complete, write the date, time, dosage, medication and your name on the back side of the form. If you forget or are late in giving the medication, be sure the Director is notified immediately. Return the medication to the medication box and lock it.

Completed Medication Administration Forms are to be handed in to the office to be filed in the child's folder.

*If you have any uncertainty or questions regarding medications, see the Director immediately.*

## Allergies

All staff must be aware of children's allergies. An Allergy List must be current and posted in each room. Parents must supply the Center with information from their pediatrician regarding allergies, and treatment procedures.

## First Aid Kit

A fully supplied First Aid Kit is available in the Center Director's Office for minor cuts and abrasions.

## Daily Health Checks

*Children who are ill may not remain in the classroom.*

Sickness and disease can be easily spread from child to child. The best way to stop the spread of disease is to follow proper hand-washing techniques. Use soap and warm water...Wash often!

## Health Check Procedure

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In order to support parents in keeping their children healthy, THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER will do two "Health Checks" per day. The first is done as children arrive in the morning as part of each morning greeting. The second is done as children get up from nap in the afternoon.

- As each child arrives in the morning (or gets up from nap), greet him/her warmly.
- Make eye contact.
- Look for symptoms such as glazed eyes, runny green mucous from the nose, coughing or uncharacteristic complaints.
- Feel the forehead of any child who has any symptoms of illness or who was out sick the day before. If he/she feels warm, take his/her temperature with a thermometer in the office.
- If you are uncertain about a child's health status, always consult the Director.
- Any child who has diarrhea or fever, or is too uncomfortable to fully participate in activities should be brought to

Date	Name of Child	Classroom	Illness noted	Time when parent called	Time when parent picked up
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the office. The **director will** call the parent to notify them and to determine when the child will go home.

- All known incidents of illness and communicable disease occurring in the Center must be recorded in a *Illness Log* even if the child did not become sick at the Center.
- The Illness/Communicable Disease Log must be filled out completely with the following information:

## Common Indicators of Illness

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- Green, runny mucous from the nose, ears or eyes is generally a common indicator of infection. If the 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 the child's general condition before bringing or returning to the Center. The child may not return without a physician's note, appropriate medication and signed medication administration form.
- Vomiting may or may not be illness related. Please note the child's general condition, and if there are two or more episodes of vomiting in a one hour period, a stomach "virus" or "flu" may be present. Please keep the child home for approximately 24 hours after the last episode. If a child vomits two or more times at the Center, parents will be called to pick up their child.
- Diarrhea may or may not be illness related. Help avoid unnecessary spread of infection by keeping the child home for approximately 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.
- Ear infections are not contagious, but the 'virus' or cold causing the inner ear blockage is infectious. Please keep the child home for 24 hours after diagnosis and for 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 day) after diagnosis and for medication to take effect.

Our goal is to avoid a series of needless infections, 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. Employees must consult with the Director at any time that a child becomes ill and parents must be called.

(See Illness/Communicable Disease Log)

## Fire Drill Procedures and Log

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### Fire Drills

The Center will have both announced and unannounced Fire Drills as required by CCA. Please review the procedure:

- Class sign in/out sheets must be accurate at all times.
- When the fire alarm sounds, pick up the sign in/out clipboard and have children line up at the door calmly and quickly.
- Do not have them get coats or toys.
- As you begin exiting, count heads, and have the Assistant Teachers check bathrooms and room.
- Walk children out to designated area for your class. Keep your group together and apart from others.
- **Only** if this is a planned drill, teachers (not children) may go back into the building and pick up children's coats if needed.
- The Director will let you know when to return to your class.
- Conduct a Fire Drill as if it were a real emergency.
- Know the location of Fire Extinguishers.
- After a Fire Drill, you should have a circle time with the children to acknowledge how well they worked together, to talk about the noise, and why Fire Drills are important.

See attached form #I-A. This log must be maintained accurately and routinely each month. The Fire Drills should occur at different times of the day between the following hours:

7:00 am and 10:59 am

11:00 am and 1:59 pm

2:00 pm and 6:00 pm

Staff will not always be told in advance when a Fire Drill will occur. The Director, Assistant Director or Director Designate will initiate a Fire Drill at least once per month. Proper evacuation for child safety is the focus of these drills. All employees should exit from the classroom using the posted exit route. One teacher should lead the children with all emergency cards in her/his possession. The other teacher assigned should be in the rear of the group. This teacher is responsible for checking bathrooms in the classroom and confirming that no child has been left in the classroom, turning off lights and closing the door. Both teachers must count the total number of children signed into the classroom when they reach the specified evacuation site. Each classroom will be assigned a specific area to go to when evacuating the building.

### Fire Drill Log

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#### SAMPLE LOG

Date	Time	Total # of Children	# of Staff	Evacuation Time	Comments

## **Center Maintenance and Cleaning**

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### ***Center Hygiene***

- All employees must be aware of the need for frequent handwashing when working with young children.
- Hands must be washed after every diaper change, or when assisting a child in the toilet. Hands must be washed at any time another person's bodily fluids come into contact with a staff member. Latex gloves should be used at all times when assisting children with diapering or toileting, any time first aid is being administered, and any other time when bodily fluids may be in contact between people.
- Diapers should be disposed of after placing in a sealed plastic bag in the appropriate container. These containers will be emptied daily by the designated employee.
- Children's soiled clothing cannot be rinsed out by staff. It must be placed as is in a sealed plastic bag and put in the child's cubby to be taken home that evening.
- Disposable plates, cups, napkins and eating utensils are provided for one time use only and should be disposed of immediately after use in the appropriate container. Disposable items must be stored in a lidded closed plastic container and labeled appropriately.
- Toys and other equipment such as cots must be routinely cleaned. Cleaning of equipment and toys should occur daily during naptime, and at a minimum, should be washed weekly.
- Toys used by infants and toddlers each day must be sanitized at the end of each day using the approved cleanser.

### ***Housekeeping***

Each employee is expected to assist in the maintenance of a clean and healthy environment.

- This includes routine daily cleaning of each classroom which is to be done by both teacher and assistant.
- Employees are responsible for the appearance and cleanliness of their assigned classrooms and to assist in the normal maintenance of the outdoor facility.
- Inventories of each classroom's equipment will be maintained and kept current by the Center Director and Lead teacher assigned to that classroom. Classroom inventories are to be completed each June listing all equipment in the classroom, replacement/repair needs and priority needs.
- It is the teacher's responsibility to maintain equipment when in normal use. However, some equipment may be damaged by child misuse. When employees can clearly document how equipment was damaged, with all precautions taken, the replacement of such equipment will be the responsibility of the child's parent(s).
- Teachers must notify the Center Director immediately when equipment is damaged or broken by a child.

### ***Mops***

- Rinse mops and mop bucket thoroughly after each use. Hang mops to allow to dry. Don't forget to empty the bucket.

### ***Disinfecting Solution***

- Use an approved disinfecting solution on tables and chairs after lunch and morning and afternoon snack each day.
- Replenish the solution as needed from materials in kitchen
- All spray bottles must be labeled with contents and kept out of reach of children at all times.
- Use disinfecting solution in bathrooms after lunch.
- Mist cots with disinfectant every Friday after naps.
- Do not spray cleaning solutions near children.
- Label and date solutions

## **THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

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### ***General Building Impressions***

The presentation of the building, the grounds, the playground, the rooms, administrative areas and hallways is the first impression a visitor to our Center(s) will get.

We endeavor to maintain an excellent presentation in all these areas, at all times as a statement of our commitment to quality.

The following guidelines have been established to help you know how to maintain our environment:

- No scotch tape, duct tape or masking tape on the carpet, unless it is taken up at the end of the day.
- Painting the walls in the classrooms must be pre-approved by the Director or Corporate Office.
- Help keep hallways clean, tidy and picked up.
- It is your responsibility to keep storage areas neat, organized, as well as stocked for your use.
- Always carry trash bags, do not drag them through the halls.
- Trash must be taken out of the building; twice per day for diaper bags and each evening for all other trash.

### ***Storage and Selection of Materials***

Follow these guidelines for storage of materials:

- Shelves, drawers and containers are labeled using objects, pictures, photographs or outlines of contents.
- Materials that are to be used by children must be within easy reach of children—for example: paper, crayons, markers, paint and brushes, etc.
- Children are permitted to use all materials within their sight and reach.
- Materials are stored in the area where they are used...such as art supplies on the art cart, Legos in containers near the Lego area, blocks in the block area.

### ***Selection Guidelines:***

- An adequate amount and variety of materials are in each area. Please share materials with other classrooms and take care with others' materials.
- Each area has unstructured materials that be used in many ways.  
For example: Poker chips can be used for counting, stacking, matching, sorting, representing food or money.
- There is a wide enough selection of materials for children to do things in a variety of ways. For example: children can fasten things with glue, paste, tape, stapler, paper clips, string or rubber bands; children can make a house with blocks, paper, wood, play dough, paint.
- There are enough materials in each area for several children to work simultaneously.
- There are materials that can be manipulated and actively explored in each area.
- There are materials that can be used for pretending or making representations in each area.
- There are many "real life" objects (plants, animals, real utensils, tools, and instruments) for children to explore in each area.
- There are culturally relevant materials in each area.

### ***Children's Storage and Display Space***

Bulletin board display space is provided for children's work. All art work done by children that is relevant to season, theme or activity should be displayed promptly and attractively. As much as possible, display areas are at children's eye level.

Individual storage spaces are provided for each child to store personal belongings. These areas must be labeled with the child's name and photo, placed so that young children can use them independently.

### ***Staff Board***

The Staff Information Board in each room should include the following:

- Allergies list
- Medications to be given (must be updated daily or weekly)
- First Aid list
- Sealed zip-lock bag containing emergency cards for each child enrolled in the classroom.

### ***Parent Board***

The Parent Information Board in each room should include the following:

- Some form of AM or PM Parent communication...."what we did this morning, this afternoon, all day."
- Special articles of interest pertaining to child development, the classroom's activities, found items, fun notes.
- Daily schedule.
- Monthly calendar with complete lesson plans, activities and themes for each week.
- Special activities schedule.

It may also include menu, center newsletter, reminders to parents regarding field trips, permission forms, party sign-up sheets, birthday information, special notes of upcoming events.

### ***Other Bulletin Boards***

The other bulletin boards in the classroom are to display children's work. Projects should be displayed neatly, with children's names and labeled. Art work or special displays should be removed after 2 weeks.

### ***Classroom Management***

THEMBA CREATIVE LEARNING CENTER maintains a core calendar and curriculum that does have flexibility and space for individual/center creativity.

The monthly calendar will explore an over-all theme with weekly subtopics that tie together concepts, holidays, music, literature, art, science/math and language in ways that enhance the overall development of the children.

The Center Director is responsible for orienting and teaching all new staff members to develop monthly calendars, using lesson plans and themes based on the core curriculum.

- All classroom calendars will be submitted for review to the Center Director by the responsible teacher; due on the 20th of each month for the following month.

Each classroom team leader is responsible for coordinating and developing weekly activities that are age appropriate and enhance all the cognitive, social, emotional and physical aspects of the program. Teachers should individualize the program outlines to meet the needs of the children in their care, and be as creative as possible within the framework provided.

## ***Classroom Management***

You are responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the equipment in the assigned classroom.

- Cleaning of tables and chairs and cots is required after each usage with the approved cleaning bleach/water solution.
- Weekly cleaning of some of the equipment, such as plates/utensils in dramatic play areas is required, along with any other toys/ equipment that are used.

## ***Supplies***

Supplies such as disposable one-time-use items must be stored as required by Child Care Administration. Employees responsible for maintaining adequate supplies in the classroom at all times. Replenishing supplies may be done from 1-3pm or before/after your classroom time.

## ***Inventory***

Monthly, quarterly and yearly inventories of supplies will be made, either by team leaders in each classroom or by designated employee. Yearly inventory of all equipment, books, tape recorders, toys, and supplies will be made during the summer months.

## ***Playground Management***

The playground is a continuation of the indoor classroom and provides staff with resources for enriching the daily program.

Children need to exercise large muscles daily with both free play outside and with structured teacher-directed activities and games. Child Care Administration regulations require children to participate in outdoor play twice daily for about 30-45 minutes each time. Daily programming must allow for this time. In cases of extreme weather conditions, children will not go outside. The Center Director will determine this and notify staff.

- Staff/Child ratios apply at all times, whether children are indoors or outdoors. Staff are required to comply with the stated ratios at all times.
- A weekly outdoor safety inspection must be done and maintained in a log kept in the Director's Office. All staff will be assigned this task on a rotating basis.
- ***Employees may not sit during outdoor play time, either by themselves or with other staff or engage in personal conversations with other staff members. Outdoor equipment must be monitored at all times by staff.***
- ***Outdoor play time is not break time for staff.***

## ***Playground Clean-up***

- Playground clean-up, make sure all balls and bikes are in the designated areas.
- While on the playground, tidy up any papers, trash, etc., that you may see. If you do an art project outside, please make sure all materials and supplies have been taken in and the area is clean. Have children help by learning how to pick up after themselves.

## **Classroom Management Checklist**

The checklist has been developed to give staff an opportunity to always understand the requirements of classroom management and management expectations as described in the job description.

Each classroom will be evaluated at least once per month at various times during the day in order to observe different activities as they occur. These evaluations will be used as a constructive, positive, and interactive management tool allowing staff to continuously upgrade their performance and work environment.

When used as a disciplinary evaluation tool, an action plan will be developed so that the employees understands and agrees to the expectations for performance within the job description.

## **Centers/Areas**

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Each classroom should have at least these areas defined in the room and in use for children with appropriate quantity, variety and design; safe, clean with open shelves accessible to children: Dramatic Play Area, Block/Transportation Area, Science/Math Area, Art, Books/Writing, Music/Listening, Games/Manipulatives.

The classroom is divided into several distinct areas or interest centers:

- Boundaries are well-defined by low shelves, stable screens, or walls with openings, so that children and adults can look into the areas.
- Each area has adequate amount of space for children and their use of materials/.
- Tables are incorporated into the work areas.
- Work areas are not cluttered with unnecessary furniture or materials.
- Traffic flow permit children to work without interruption.
- The noisier areas are not close to the quieter areas.
- Some work areas are set up outside in warm climates/seasons.

### ***Block Area***

The block area includes an ample supply of the following kinds of materials:

- Building materials.
- Theme-oriented materials for pretending and play that are changed frequently.

### ***Dramatic Play***

The dramatic play area includes an ample supply of the following kinds of materials:

- Kitchen equipment for manipulating, sorting, filling and emptying.
- Materials for dramatic play, lots of clothes with an unbreakable mirror.
- Pretend items to vary play.
- May include other items like office supplies, veterinary supplies or restaurant supplies.

### ***Art Area***

The art area includes an ample supply of the following kinds of materials:

- Paper of different sizes, textures, colors.
- Materials for mixing and painting.
- Materials for making three-dimensional representations.
- Materials for making two-dimensional representations.
- A variety of work surfaces such as tables, easels, smooth floors.
- A workable system for smock storage and a place for drying pictures.
- Space is provided to store projects in progress.
- Teachers introduce art area materials gradually.
- Teachers keep the supply of expendable art area materials constant.

### ***Book/Writing***

The quiet area includes an ample supply of theme-related materials.

- Books that are periodically changed according to theme or season.
- Pillows
- A small table for writing stories or workable system for dictating stories created by children.

### ***Music/Listening Area***

The music/listening area includes the following:

- Space for movement.
- A variety of instruments: triangles, bells, sand blocks, xylophone, tambourines, drums, etc.
- A simple record player and/or cassette tape recorder.
- Records and/or tapes.
- Radio
- 4-6 headphones with tape player



### ***Sand and Water Area***

The sand and water area includes the following:

- An appropriate sand/water vessel.
- A cleanable floor surface....never put sand/water tables or toys on top of carpeted areas.
- Materials and tools for pouring, scooping, digging, filling and emptying, and theme-related items added as needed.
- Additional sand-like materials for variety such as beans, styrofoam bits etc, in the age-appropriate classrooms.
- The area is moved outside when possible.

### ***Animal/Plant and Science Area***

The animal/plant and science area includes the following:

- Friendly animals: earthworms, ants, caterpillars, tadpoles, fish, guinea pigs, rabbits, hamsters, etc. If you are not sure, please check with the Center Director before accepting an animal or purchasing one.
- Appropriate cages with locks and food.
- Easily cared-for plants that are non-toxic, allergic or poisonous to children.
- Appropriate pictures or posters with labels of science-related topics such as body parts, maps, globes, etc.
- Seeds and other materials (carrot-tops, pineapple tops, plant cuttings such as potatoes) children can use to plant.
- Pots, potting soil, watering equipment.
- Rocks, magnets, scales, magnifying glass.

### ***Construction (optional)***

The construction/transportation area includes the following:

- A sturdy work area that can accommodate at least 4 children.
- Basic tools—hammers, 1 6 inch saw, screwdrivers, pliers, C-clamps, vises, hand drill and/ brace and bit.
- Wood and wood scraps in a variety of sizes.
- A variety of supplies: nails, screws, nuts, bolts, washers, sandpaper.
- Art and "found" materials to use in conjunction with traditional construction materials: glue, wire, pipe cleaners, rubber bands, cardboard, styrofoam, bottle caps, jars and jar lids, etc.
- The area is placed away from the traffic flow in the classroom.

## Parts of Your Day

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### *Opening and Greeting*

Greet ALL parents and children when they enter the classroom! Greet each parent and child every morning with a warm "good morning" and smile. That's two greeting per family, the parent and the child. Don't forget, greeting sets the tone for the day.

Be sure everyday that an accurate, updated sing-in sheet and pen are on the parent clipboard and the clipboard is in easy sight and reach to parents. Gently remind parents to sign in. Check sign-in sheet several times during the morning. Give parents any messages or make any requests, such as returning field trip permission forms, bring in fresh change of clothes, etc.

Invite each children into an activity. Encourage participation and separation from parents. Have several activities set up for the children as they arrive. Art activities, music, puzzles are good early arrival. Float from one activity to another, giving encouragement and feedback to the children in each area regularly.

Under no circumstances should you be reading, eating breakfast, or working on some project when there are any children in the room—your job is to be with the children and the parents.

### *Morning Exploration, Discovery and Centers*

Goals for morning choices (6:30-9:00am) Morning snacks are served between 6:30am-9:00am, if children arrive after 9:00am, they are not served snack.

Choices work best on tables or in clearly designated areas. Change choices every day. Offer children variety to keep them interested. Allow children to choose for themselves where they want to be. It's great to greet kids at the door, and as they put their coats/bags away, let them know what is open. Let children know that it doesn't work to pull out "unopen" choices or play in undesignated areas. The choices you set out are fun!! The kids will have fun—you have fun too!

### *Morning Activity Ideas*

Water colors	Flannel characters	Sound bingo
Grocery Store (role playing)	Chalk drawings	Number bingo
Cheerio necklaces	Coloring with crayons	nuts and bolts
Alphabet match-up	Finger paint	Pick-up sticks
Pencils and paper	Sewing cards	Craft stick art
Pattern blocks	Dominoes	Letter collage
Dinosaur templates	Playdoh	Popcorn art
Waffle blocks	Puppets	Potato/fruit/vegetable prints
Butcher paper (make a mural)	Goop	Unifix cubes
Listening Center	Marble painting	Paper dolls
Cut from magazines	Coloring with markers	Legos
Cut out shapes	Office/school (role playing)	Sort buttons
Cut out from wallpaper samples	Medical center	Sponge painting
Tracing	Housekeeping	
Stencils	Math/alphabet games	

### *Morning Circle*

Includes calendar, weather, helpers, good morning songs and creative cans. A brief introduction to the day (10-15 minutes in length). Have some special activity related to theme. This should be listed so that parents may contribute if possible. May include games, fingerplays, music, dance, large muscle movement, stories. Make this as entertaining as possible...something different can make a difference.

***Remember to have fun, be alive and enthusiastic while leading circle!***

### ***Morning circle (continued)***

Adjust length of circle time to age group; never let circle go too long. Watch the children to see if they are losing interest.

Prepare for circle time, write it down, have all your props ready! Integrate themes, holidays, special events, field trips, seasons, etc., into circle time activities. Have assistants model circle participation with lots of enthusiasm, keeping an eye on children and helping leader with behaviors that are not working so leader does not have to stop circle. Use lots of visual aids...provide a mixed bag of activities; songs, fingerplays, flannel board stories, body movement, academic/cognitive activities, language activities. Have a framework of old and new activities, songs, etc. Make sure children have opportunity to "recall" favorite songs and to gradually learn new ones. Start with the same "opening song" for awhile...stop using it before the children get tired of it. Change tempo throughout circle time and make each day slightly different. Keep a brisk pace...circle time should be exciting, notice the response of the children. Creatively direct children to the next activity.

### ***Learning Centers***

During Circle Time, notify the children of what centers will be available. These should be related to the main theme. For instance, if the theme for the week is "zoo animals" - the centers would be as follows:

- Animal cookie cutters and Play dough
- Animal Sound Bingo
- Oatmeal table with large animals
- Art—making and painting animal puppets
- Science—outdoor observations of animals

### ***Successful Centers***

Successful centers relate to the theme, use a wide variety of interesting materials, vary daily and use active learning techniques. Above all, don't give children a chance to get bored!

Use the following guidelines for center *beginning, middle and end* when managing any group activity such as water coloring, building with blocks, and story writing.

#### ***The Beginning of Center Time:***

- Establish some centers that children can enjoy without assistance from a teacher.
- have all necessary materials ready to go.
- tell the group about what they will be doing and how it relates to the theme.
- let the children begin.

#### ***The Middle of Center Time:***

- Watch each child and listen.
- each child may approach the activity differently or may do something different with the materials. Support and encourage difference.
- "Float" from child to child to observe and converse. Be at eye level with each child. Don't be quick to "correct" use your imagination and let them use theirs.
- Let the children converse with each other. Promote group problem solving (don't have all the answers yourself!)
- Don't be too quick to help. It's ok for a child to do a project at his own level, not someone else's.
- Make it his project—*allow him/her to make mistakes and learn from them!*
- Draw attention to what individual children are doing so that new possibilities are shared.
- Add new materials to children who are ahead of the group before they lose interest. Not all children will get the same amount accomplished.
- Sit with a group of children, do the activity yourself and have a blast doing it!

#### ***The End of Center Time:***

- Give a 5 minute warning before ending centers.
- Have children participate in clean-up time, but don't force.
- Give each child a chance to say something about his work, but don't push her to do so. You can do this in small group time or a re-call circle.

### *Clean-Up Time*

- Clean-up time is a learning opportunity for children. Invite children to participate in the care and maintenance of their room. Children should not be forced to clean up or punished for not cleaning up. During circle time ask children how they would like to clean-up after they are finished with their projects. This gives them an opportunity to verbalize their feelings about cleaning-up, to visualize how they would do it, and gives them responsibility that they have chosen.
- *Have fun at this time!* Be enthusiastic! Clean-up games, songs, special music and chants encourage children to participate and set a cooperative tone.
- As clean-up time approaches, give children a five minute warning before they must stop their current activity. Set an egg timer so that they become aware of how time passes.
- *Be clear about the clean-up requests.* If necessary state specifically, "Susie will clean-up the construction paper scraps she cut at the art table."
- **Model** for children at clean-up time. All staff should participate in clean-up until it is done.
- Acknowledge and thank each child for their participation - no matter how little they did. You could even make up a name song or chant thanking each that would bring closure to center time and clean-up and get the children ready for the next activity.

### ***Suggestions:***

- Listen to music while putting away materials. Tell the children to listen for something specific.
- Group the children in teams to be responsible for different centers in the room.
- Construct a "Helpers Chart" listing the clean-up responsibilities.
- Sing while putting away materials or cleaning-up.
- Write words to familiar tunes. Example: (to Mary had a Little Lamb)  
It is time to cleanup  
To cleanup, to cleanup.  
It is time to cleanup  
Put your work away.

This transition time period requires children to use memory and recall; to know where to put materials. It also encourages pride in the environment and develop skills in accepting responsibility. Talk to the children about what they are doing, encourage children who are not as capable as others, who forget where things go, or who get "tired" of cleaning-up. Acknowledge everyone's participation. Exclaim how nice the room looks when everyone is done.

## **Use of the Bathroom**

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*Use of the bathroom is a major learning opportunity for preschoolers. Give lots of encouragement for attempting and learning good bath room habits; especially for younger children. Be sure to supervise use of the bathroom; always be aware of who is in the bathroom.*

- Be sure to include regular trips to the bathroom in your daily routine/schedule. These should be spaced about 45 minutes apart for young children and up to 1 1/2 hours-2 hours apart for older children. Anytime a child indicates he/she needs to use the bathroom, you should immediately attend to that child.
- Children must be supervised. The bathroom can be a very inviting place to play and may then become dangerous.  
Note: When only one child needs to go, allow one at a time to use the bathroom, and always know who is there.
- Monitor and coach children on appropriate bathroom use, amount of toilet paper, etc. Acknowledge and encourage each child for doing well in the bathroom!
- Include hand washing after using the toilet, and also prior to eating.
- Always remind the children to flush!

## **Naptime**

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- Begin to set the tone for nap time during lunch and outdoor play (if it occurs). Ask children, "Who is going to have a great nap?"
- Set the tone for a quiet, relaxing rest period by turning off lights, whispering to other staff and children, playing soft restful music.
- Children rest on labeled cots at their assigned places.
- For the first 30 minutes or so, all teachers should "tuck-in" and say "good nap" to the children encouraging children to relax and settle down, while soft music plays.
- Keep the tone in the room conducive to napping throughout the entire rest time, do not talk loudly to other teachers and especially important, do not yell across the room to a rambunctious child.
- *Children are not required to sleep.* They should be encourage to be on their cot and quiet. After a certain amount of time (appropriate to their age) provide a quiet alternative to non-sleeping children. Quiet nap activities may include books on their cots, crayons and paper, activity books, puzzles.
- At the end of nap time, stack cots neatly making sure all linens are put away in the child's bag.

### **Other Ideas**

- Tell children to imagine they are tired puppies or kittens—yawn, stretch and roll on the floor, then to curl up on their cots. Then have them be very still while you slowly count to 50.
- Listen to quiet lullaby-type music. Identify various instruments. Have the children listen for those instruments.
- Repeat rhymes: (Example)

It know it's best to take a rest  
I have a little key  
I lock my lips  
Pull down my shades (close eyes)  
I can not talk or see.

- Select a quiet-type poetry book and read one or several poem each day.

## **After Naptime**

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- The day is not yet over! All children must use the toilet after naps, handwashing and getting shoes, etc put back on.
- Afternoon snack should be served immediately after naps.
- Any time a birthday party is scheduled, remind parents to bring in birthday cake or treats for afternoon snack only.

While the afternoon "curriculum" is somewhat more relaxed than the morning, it is equally important to maintain control and to guide children in appropriate learning experiences. A short circle-time may work very well for older children to discuss what the afternoon activities will be. Younger children may be able to discuss the same during snack time. Staff should model appropriate eating/table manners during snack time also, as well as helping to lead the conversations.

Staff may decide to have several learning centers open, may allow children to finish art projects that were started during the morning.

## **Afternoon Outdoor Play**

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Outdoor play time is an important part of the afternoon activities. Unless the weather does not allow it, all children should play outdoors each afternoon.

- School-age children should be allowed to immediately go outside to play after arriving.
- Preschoolers should play outside after snack while it is still warmer and when there is more light.

## **End of the Day**

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Near the end of the day, check children for dirty faces or clothes and clean them off. Gather art projects that are ready to go home and put them in the children's cubbies.

- Always greet parent with eye contact and a warm smile when they arrive to pick up their child.
- Children should be engaged in some sort of structured activity, even as we move toward the end of the day.
- Remind parents to sign their child out.
- Deliver any message and say something to parents about the day. If a parent asks you about his/her child's behavior during the day, say something positive and encouraging first, then if there is a negative, state it factually, and end with another positive.
- Offer a "good-bye" hug to each child as they leave.

## **"What We Did Today" Reports**

Our "What We Did Today" reports encourages and support parents in taking some moments to be with their children and find out about their day. It also informs parents about their child's program. It is necessary that teachers write this report daily and post it on the Parent Info Bulletin Board.

Infant/Toddler Reports are individualized and placed in the infant/toddler's log book in the cubbie each afternoon. Parents can review it each evening, write notes to teachers in it and maintain communication with their child's primary care person.

Preschool classrooms will have a Parent Info Bulletin Board near the children's cubbies so that parents can review the days activities while collecting their child's things.

The information should include:

Snack info (unless otherwise posted on the snack menu)

Circle time—any new songs that were learned—include words so that parents can also learn them

Special activities—art projects, science activity, cooking, etc.

Anything unusual that children commented on during outdoor play—did someone see an orange butterfly?

Naptime— did everyone had a good rest?

Afternoon activities in general

Enrichment activities (if any) —who was present: Computer Tots, Dance, Sports Fit, etc.

These reports are not lengthy. During naptime, write notes about the specific activities that occurred in your room during the morning. Make sure you add some info about the afternoon activities as they occur. One or two sentences on each area above is sufficient to give parents an idea of what went on during the day; and allows them to participate in their child's day by giving them the ability to converse with their child on the way home about those activities.

## **Closing Teacher's Classroom Responsibilities**

- Complete Classroom Closing Checklist for your room. Don't forget how you leave things is how your morning partners find them! Show them you care!
- Write any notes needed for the next morning's teacher about any of the following:
  - children's health or injuries
  - upsets or behavioral patterns of individual children
  - anything parents said that you think morning teacher should know about
  - anything else you would like morning teacher to know about
- Remember that your pride in your work as a Professional Early Childhood Educator shows in the way you maintain your environment. Be proud of your work, you work hard each day to provide all children with a safe, nurturing and challenging environment.

## Field Trips

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Well planned field trips add exciting learning possibilities for the children and employees. We will design and set-up field trips to coordinate with the curriculum. Field trips are planned on a yearly basis on the following schedule:

April through October—Field trips outside the Centers

November through March—F.R.I.E.N.D.S. Program, field trips inside the Centers

Beginning with a trip to a zoo in April, field trips will enhance the summer curriculum and provide a different environment for the children on monthly basis.

All information about field trips will be provided to each teacher for every child in the classroom.

Permission forms, admission fees, bus costs, etc., will be included for parents in the field trip permission form that must be completely filled out, signed and all monies paid in order for children to participate.

There is no alternative care provided for preschool or school-age children not participating in a field trip.

Parents must participate in one field trip per year (each parent) as per the enrollment agreement.

Each senior staff member in each classroom must carry a fanny pack with the daily attendance sheet, each child's emergency card, basic first aid kit, and emergency phone numbers, bus company numbers, and cell numbers for the corporate office.

### ***Mandatory Field Trip Safety Procedure***

The following ***Field Trip Safety Procedure*** is **mandatory** and must be followed when taking children on field trips.

1. Each Center must have one person designated to be in charge of the field trip. This must be a Lead Teacher.
2. Be sure that every adult accompanying the field trip knows who the CPR/First Aid certified staff members are.
3. Before leaving the classroom, be sure children have been encouraged to use the bathroom.
4. Children must have a name tag attached to their clothes

Review the following safety procedures with the children before the field trip. Start working with children several days before the trip. Explain the trip, how everyone is getting there, what will be seen, and the following:

- Keep your seat belt buckled until the bus driver says it is ok to unbuckle.
- Use inside voices during the bus ride.
- Sit facing the front of the bus.
- Keep your hands to yourself.
- Have the children line up being sure one teacher leads them and one teacher "brings up the rear".
- Count heads on the bus, write total on the attendance sheet, and count again when getting off the bus.
- Upon arrival, one teacher gets off the bus first to help children unload and to supervise. Another teacher or parents checks the bus for children and any other necessary items.
- Invite parents to assist you by giving them specific tasks; such as: please hold Tommy's hand, please take these children to the bathroom, help unpack lunches, etc.
- After field trip is completed, count heads again while loading children back onto the bus, count again as they unload at the Center.
- Make sure bus is checked by bus driver for children and any items left behind.
- Make sure parents are thanked for volunteering with the field trip. Make up a thank-you song that children can sing.
- ***If any kind of emergency occurs while on the field trip, call the center or corporate office immediately!***

# Field Trip Safety Check List

Today's date:     /     /     

Staff Person in Charge: \_\_\_\_\_

CPR/First Aid Staff: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of children attending: \_\_\_\_\_ Absent: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents/Volunteers Attending: \_\_\_\_\_

Check off each item when completed: Attach your field trip attendance checklist and turn everything into the office after the trip.

- ☐ Bus arriving on time.
- ☐ Children given the opportunity to use the bathroom.
- ☐ Children wearing tee-shirts and name tags.
- ☐ Parents and other adult chaperons clear about responsibilities and groups.
- ☐ Safety rules reviewed with children.
- ☐ Attendance sheet checked on leaving.
- ☐ Emergency fannypack with Staff Person in Charge, including all emergency cards, basic first aid and phone numbers for center and corporate office.
- ☐ Heads counted upon arrival at destination.
- ☐ Heads counted and attendance sheet checked before leaving trip site.
- ☐ Attendance checked upon arriving at Center.
- ☐ Children given the opportunity to thank parents/volunteers for helping.

Please comment on the operation of the field trip.

☐ Was this a valuable learning experience for the children? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

☐ Were details coordinated correctly. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

☐ Was the bus on time, the driver courteous? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

☐ Did parents/volunteers enjoy the trip? Were they helpful? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

☐ Would you recommend this trip again? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Employee's Signature

Date



## Transitions

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(reprinted: *Make it a Time of Learning for Children*, by Betty Ruth Baker, Assistant Professor of Curriculum and Instruction, Director of Early Childhood Education, Baylor University, Waco, Texas.)

Young people spend much of their day in transitions, passing from one place or activity to another. Care givers can use this time for planned activities which reinforce learning.

The first major transition occurs when children come from home to the child care center. There are periods when children move from place to place in the classroom as well as throughout the building. There are times when children complete activities before others and there are times when the group must prepare for a new activity. Too often during these times young children are told to "Sit down, be quiet, and wait," rather than shown how to use the time effectively.

Transition activities are teaching techniques and are used to prepare children to relax, to listen, to sit down, to move from place to place and activity to activity with ease while providing an opportunity to think and reason, to apply and reinforce concepts, and to learn. Transition activities differ from regular activities in purpose, length and planning. If planning is adequate children will move with ease through the routine.

The best transition activities may come from the ideas generated from a lesson or other activities. These activities usually require simple or easily available materials or no materials at all. They may be active or quiet and teacher directed or independent. Transition activities should be selected according to the developmental characteristics, needs, and interests of the children to provide optimum learning.

### *Ideas for moving children from place to place:*

- Direct children to walk like animals—bears, elephants, etc.
- Have children pretend to wear invisible shoes or moccasins and to walk as quietly as possible.
- Tell children to pretend to be birds or butterflies.
- Have children form a line with each child a passenger in an airplane. The leader is the pilot.
- Have children form a train line with you as the engine. Assign the last child to be the caboose to turn the light off in the room and close the door as you leave.
- Turn a jump rope into a worm or caterpillar by attaching a head to one end and a tail to the other. Children form the body and legs by holding on to the rope with one hand.
- Holidays can provide ideas for transition. Have children move like ghosts, bats, witches, turkeys, reindeer, Santa's elves, snowflakes, and bunnies.

## **Guidelines for Playground Supervision**

Playground time is one of the best opportunities for staff to assist the children in learning teamwork, cooperative play and consideration of others. It is also a time to support children in many large motor development activities such as running, climbing and catching, and balancing on a balance beam. Staff should organize structured play activities on the playground several times a week as an important part of curriculum as well as schedule supervised free play.

Playground time is also a great opportunity to support children in personal safety habits such as safe play on equipment. The playground is where most children's accidents at the Center occur. Be alert at all times and think safety first! Make sure all children are dressed properly according to prevailing weather conditions, make sure shoelaces are tied, shoe-buckles fastened, and that there are no potential hazards from loose clothing or untied straps/ties that could cause a child injury.

### ***Following are basic guidelines for employees to maximize children's safety on the playground:***

- Employees must work as a team on the playground. Staff-child ratios must be maintained at all times.
- Always notice where other staff are: divide up the playground and be apart from each other to supervise the whole area during free play. If you are doing a structured activity or game, one staff member leads the activity, while the others supervise any other children or groups for safety.
- Be in communication with other staff—if one must leave the playground with a child, notify the others.
- Employees should make certain areas of the playground or certain piece of equipment "off limits" for children during any playground time if they feel appropriate supervision is not possible, such as if one staff take a child inside, and there is only one other employees left on the playground for short time.
- Employees should "spot" and be positioned by any equipment over four feet high.
- If a child from another group is hurt on a piece of equipment which you are spotting, replace yourself in the spotting position—or have all the children leave the equipment—and bring the children to his/her teacher for attention and treatment.
- Always fill out an incident/injury report for any injuries on the playground.
- No child should be place on a piece of equipment which he/she has not mastered climbing up/down.
- Ask the children to assist you in returning the sandbox toys to the sandboxes and/or the tricycle shed before leaving the playground if your group is the last one out.
- Tricycles are to be used on cement areas only.
- Always make sure children are using equipment correctly.

### ***The following activities do not work on the playground are not to be permitted:***

- Throwing and/or playing with sticks, rocks, or other potentially dangerous debris.
- Do not allow children to throw sand, dirt, pebbles, grass, leaves, etc. at each other or just up in the air.
- Climbing on any of the playground fences.
- Riding bikes off the paved areas.
- Leaving the playground without an adult.
- Walking up sliding boards, or having more than one child on a sliding board at one time.
- Pushing, hitting, or otherwise harming other children.

## Types of Play

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Children's play may move from one type into another type quickly without warning. You may observe associative play that turns into strictly parallel play for all those involved. There are some other fine lines separating the types of play from each other. The types of play are indicative, during the preschool years, of social participation and maturation.

Remember that types are not necessarily *stages of play*. The very young preschooler probably won't engage in associative or cooperative, but this doesn't mean that the older preschooler is limited to just associative or cooperative. They quite often engage in solitary play also.

Recognizing and identifying these types of play are difficult and take several observations to really perceive the qualities of each type.

***Unoccupied Behavior:*** The child apparently is not playing at all, at least not in the usual sense, but occupies him/herself with watching anything which happens to be of momentary interest. Where there is nothing exciting taking place, he/she plays with his/her own body, getting on and off chairs, just stands around, follows the teacher, or sits in one spot glancing around the room.

***Solitary Play:*** The child plays alone and independently with *toys that are different* from those used by the children within speaking distance and *makes no effort* to get close to or speak with the other children. The child's interest is centered upon his/her own activity, and he/she pursues it without reference to what others are doing.

***Onlooker Behavior:*** The child spends a lot of his/her time watching the other play. He/she often talks to the playing children, asks questions, or gives suggestions, but does not enter into the play him/herself. He/she stands or sits within speaking distance of the groups so that he/she can see and hear all that is taking place. Thus, he/she differs from the unoccupied child, who notices anything that happens to be exciting and is not especially interested in groups of children.

***Parallel Play:*** The child plays independently, but the *activity he/she chooses naturally brings him/her among other children*. He/she plays with toys which are like those which the other children are using, but he/she plays with the toys as he/she sees fit and does not try to influence the activity of the children nearby. Thus, he/she plays *beside* rather than with the other children.

***Associative Play:*** The child plays with other children. They are borrowing and lending play materials; following one another with trains and wagons; mild attempts to control which children may or may not play in the groups. All engage in similar if not identical activity; there is no division of labor and no organization of activity. Each child acts as he/she wishes, does not subordinate his/her interests in the group.

***Cooperative or Organized Play:*** The child plays in a group that is organized for the purpose of making some material product, of striving to attain some competitive goal, of dramatizing situations of adult or group life, or of playing formal games. The control of the group situation is in the hands of one or two members, who direct the activity of the others. The goals as well as the method of attaining it necessitates a division of labor, the taking of different roles by the various group members, and the organization of activity so that the efforts of one child are supplemented by those of another.

## Developmental Stages

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Children develop at different rates of speed. The following are general guidelines to early human development.

### Two Year Olds

Two-year olds are very busy! The world is so large....so full of fascinating things to touch, and see, and taste, and smell and try for the first time! The child care center is a friendly, safe and healthy place where the two-year old can begin to learn what the world is like. A full day program is, however, tiring; and a two-year old needs attention to individual needs.

#### What are two-year olds like?

They are bigger than they were last year!

They often want what they want immediately.....  
no waiting!

They are vigorous, enthusiastic and energetic  
Every procedure has to be a ritual...just like yesterday!

They are outgrowing some of their baby ways.

They play *among* a group, but not yet *with* them

They are suspicious of new situations.

They tire very easily and then miss mommy

They have difficulty in making up their mind

Around two and a half they become very independent  
(the terrible twos!)

They are not yet able to share

They say "no"! Whenever they have the chance

They dawdle....everything takes much longer!

By the time they are three, they are calmer, happier and more flexible

#### What can two-year olds do?

They can move quickly and without help

They are losing their "toddler" walk

They run, but aren't ready for rapid starts/stops

They can go up and down stairs alone, holding on to the rail or wall and linger to mark time on each step

They can climb and push and pull and dig and carry

They express their happiness by smiling, jumping up and down, clapping their hands and screeching

They are becoming better at holding a spoon and can hold and drink from their cup with real confidence

They can push a chair and climb up on it to reach a high shelf

They can stay dry for longer periods, they are learning to use the toilet; are sometimes very upset by an accident

#### Common characteristics of two-year old speech language:

They understand more than they can express

They put two or three words together: "Mommy go bye-bye", "I (me) do it", "Mine!" "See Daddy coming"

Sometimes their language is hard for adults to understand

They can use materials in an exploratory fashion—purely for the joy of experimenting

They can hit or bite or cry when they are angry. They need understanding more than punishment.

#### What are two-year olds needs?

Warm,, loving attentive adults who are with them each day and who can understand, help and guide them

Adults who know how difficult it is to make a choice—who say, "Now it's time to..." instead of "Do you want to..."  
when there really is no choice.

Adults who stoop down to a two-year old's level to talk to them.

Adults who approach them individually or hold their hand to catch their attention—shouting across the room is  
loud and scary.

Adults who speak slowly and use words that are easily understood, such as "Where does your coat go?"

"Its time to..." "Let's do something together."

Adults who understand that a tired, cranky, whiny two-year old may not feel well, or they may miss their mommy  
and daddy very much.

Nourishing food and frequent periods of rest and quiet throughout the day.

Small groups.

A routine of activities that they can count on from day to day.

Enough time to complete a task, head a command, do it themselves.

Time to explore, to experiment or just watch—this is how they learn and develop.

To learn to trust adults.

Sometimes a familiar toy from home to carry around or keep nearby.

Many chances for success to promote confidence.

Parents must tell the children when they are leaving and when they are coming back. Don't try to "fool" them.

### **Three-Year Olds**

Three-year olds are interested in people and things and ideas. They are really growing up now. They are no longer a "toddler" - yet they need to act like one *occasionally*. They no longer play all by themselves, but they need to do so *occasionally*. Know and accept them as three-year olds and don't rush them into being an age which they are not.

### **What is a Three-Year Old like?**

They want to please. They are more cooperative than they were at two; they understand words better, and you can explain things to them.

They are developing independence, like to try new ways of doing things. They can say "I can do it myself".

They are "jet propelled" - full of energy and enthusiasm.

Understanding is easier—dressing is harder.

They still dawdle too, and resent being hurried.

They enjoy helping YOU. It makes them feel important. They need this now.

They suck their thumb sometimes.

They are even starting to take turns, to share.

They are becoming aware of themselves as an individual - and aware of others.

But they consider themselves great artists—they make not want to share one piece of paper.

Their family is their main interest, but all people are important to them. He/She loves companionship and making friends...they may even have a "best friend".

They usually announce when they must go to the toilet, but they can take care of themselves and are starting to be dry at night also. Of course, there are still "accidents".

They love to laugh; they want you to laugh with them.

But they also cry and hit out to stand up for their rights they are just beginning to "argue with words".

Sometimes they are fearful of an unfamiliar object, a noise, the dark, a new experience.

A few other children are fun to play with, for a short time. But when difficulties arise, they return to play by themselves.

They are really not ready for much whole group participation.

However, they are curious! They ask, "why, when, what"? They test, they touch, they watch...and so they learn!

### **What can Three-Year Olds Do?**

They walk, run, jump and gallop.

They can (generally) use a tricycle now.

They are still scribbling, but it's becoming more controlled. Sometimes they tell you what it is...but the next minute it may be something else.

They know (most) color difference.

They sing, and sometimes on pitch.

They can accept simple responsibilities, such as pouring from a pitcher using two hands.

They can catch a large ball—about one time out of three.

They are ready to respond when you talk to them—they "learn to listen" and "listen to learn".

They speak in sentences; talk to themselves. Most words you will understand, some you won't.

They can feed themselves pretty well but there are still many spills, and they like playing in the food.

It is hard for them to "stay at the table".

They use the floor to play on; tables and three-year olds do not mix well.

They help put away toys now—if adults help too!

### What are Three-Year Olds Needs?

Watchful adults who can create an orderly environment, free from accident hazards.  
A gradual introduction to a group—a visit before regular attendance, mom staying close by if necessary.  
Plenty of space to wander and explore—with adults close at hand.  
Plenty of time to learn on their own, to follow through with their own ideas.  
Plenty of materials with which to experiment and learn to understand their environment.  
Very short story and group times.  
Someone to laugh with.  
An affectionate adult to console them when they cry.  
A nap.  
Nourishing meals and snacks to meet their growth needs.  
An adult to offer help when help is needed.  
Comfort for their fears. Tears are soon replaced by interest and curiosity.  
Help in answering their questions; by conversations, observations, nearby trips and simple books.  
Adults who use clear, simple speech with them...language ability is developing rapidly now.  
A feeling of importance—of being worthwhile.  
Encourage—don't every shame them.  
Require only what really matters.  
Be consistent.  
Provide continued opportunities for success.

### What do they use for work and play?

**Housemaking Play:** child sized stove, refrigerator, doll bed, etc.; plus all of the equipment for a lively housekeeping corner.

**Dramatic Play:** Their interests are centered on family and occupations—dress-up costumes for indoors and out. cars, airplanes, trucks, boats, trains, a digging area with things to play and dig with, water play of all kinds, outdoor equipment to encourage imagination, learning and skills such as a homemade tent, large boxes, long boards.

**Blocks:** You will notice that a three-year old lines up blocks rather than building them high. This is the beginning of buildings taking form. Their unlimited imagination may turn a block into a doll, a train, a piece of food.

**Musical Activities:** They start to sing, dance joyfully, use instruments, sometimes for one minute, sometimes for thirty minutes

**Books and Stories:** Simple picture books about familiar things. They will ask you to read them again and again.

**Art Experiences:** Wet clay and dough; to manipulate, to pat, dig holes in with fingers, to squeeze—maybe to make balls and snakes. Cutting—they are starting to do. Pasting, crayoning, hammering and nailing. Painting—you will notice large blobs of color. They are more interested in trying out materials than in making any thing specific.

**Puzzles and Games:** Keep them simple and sturdy.

**Science Experiences:** They love to examine bugs, worms, seeds, flowers. They love to watch and help care for pets. They still love to jump in leaves and play in water...this is learning too.

**Large Muscle Play:** More thing to pull and push, to carry around, to crawl through. Things to ride and load. Some rocking, some climbing, and plenty of space for running, jumping and building.

## **Four AND Five Year Olds**

There's not a chance in the world that you can overlook the four-year old in your Center! They are the busiest, the noisiest, most active children anywhere. They talk the most and sing the loudest. They are really ready for group life, they are ready for the companionship of their own age, they are ready (almost aching) to use those big muscles for running, jumping, climbing and pushing.

Sometimes they are very hard to understand—one minute they are the blustering, self-confident people of the world, and the next minute they are crushed, dejected and "babyish" because someone ignored them or forgot to praise their latest project.

### **What are Four-Year Olds Like?**

They are exuberant, enthusiastic and sometimes exasperating; they tend to go out of bounds in all areas.

They "show-off".

They run, they do not walk.

They want far more independence than they can really handle.

They are testing their whole world and the people in it to see how much they can control.

They are beginning to go beyond the confines of their backyard for friends and adventures.

They are bossy.

They are interested in adults and all of their activities.

They are beginning to know about themselves as separate people, apart from their family.

They are not as strong as they look; they tire easily and still need an afternoon nap.

They set up small social groups which keep others out.

They are fascinated with words—the sound of them and their effect upon others. The experiment with "naughty" words as well as poetry, silly words and reiteration of phrases and idioms.

They love loud noises if they make them, but become frightened of sirens, bells and whistles that are unexpected.

They are beginning to plan their work and play and often know what they are going to do before they start, but the goal may change before they finish the task.

Their small muscles still lag behind the large ones in development and coordination.

They are beginning to understand "yesterday" "today" and "tomorrow" - but other designations of time are still vague.

About 4 1/2 they are starting to understand about "real" and "pretend".

They are developing a sense of humor—they love to hear and tell silly stories, and are delighted when you "get the joke".

They exhibit behavior such as name-calling, boasting, tattling, verbal and physical arguing.

### **What can Four-Five Year Olds Do?**

They can TALK and TALK and TALK; and they need a chance to do so.

They can dress themselves if they have plenty of time, but they still have trouble with shoes.

They can run and jump with real dexterity and daring.

They are willing to try new foods if they are interesting and attractively served.

They can count four or more objects and touch them at the same time.

They love to ask endless detailed questions. Often they are not really interested in detailed answers.

They can be comfortable with a group of children for most of the day.

They sometimes tell an adult about their art work. Usually it looks like something to them.

They can chat during meals and eat at the same time.

They can carry on long, involved conversations, but rarely stick to the subject.

They can put their materials away by themselves but do a better job with adult help and encouragement.

They can run short errands if the directions are simple.

They have a hard time stopping activities in the middle, they want to finish.

## What are Their Needs?

They need other children their own age to play with, talk with, learn with.

They need independence equal to their abilities, with firm and definite limits surrounding this independence.

They need adults who:

know how to guide a four-year old in learning at a four-year old level.

help them if they are afraid of the dark, afraid of dogs, afraid of some people.

can divert their "out-of-bounds" behavior into constructive channels without punishing.

can interpret the actions and intentions of one child to another.

tell them when to stop and rest.

They need simple, direct and honest answers to their questions.

They need praise for their efforts and success in their endeavors.

They need routines that they can count on, but flexible schedules to allow for sudden enthusiasms.

They need careful supervision of their health and safety, because this is an "accident-prone" stage. Tired children are doubly susceptible.

They need first-hand experiences in touching, tasting, seeing, hearing and smelling.

They need a variety of materials that allow for experimentation and manipulation.

They need the freedom of outdoor play without the restriction of organized games.

They need plenty of time to complete activities without rushing—whether they are eating, dressing, building or painting.

## What does a Four-Five Year Old use for Work and Play?

They use all the materials they enjoyed when they were a three-year old. Now they use them with renewed vigor and a sense of imagination and creativity that shows an added year of growth and learning.

**Homemaking Play Materials:** the sink, stove, refrigerator, dolls/doll beds, etc., plus a mirror, clothes line and clothes pins, dress-up clothes for boys and girls.

**Dramatic Play Materials:** sand with spoons, shovels, buckets, trucks. Water with funnels, sieves, small boats, pitcher, straws, soap flakes. Typewriter—a real one. Store-keeping equipment—a cash register, play money, cans/boxes.

Tricycles, wagons, boxes, for outdoors. Lengths of hose for playing "firefighter" and "gas station".

**Literature Materials:** Records/cassettes of activity and for listening. Rhythm instruments—bought and made.

**Blocks:** More variety in shape and size. Accessories- colored cube-blocks, realistic figures of animals and people, small cars, trucks, airplanes.

**Science Materials:** Aquarium, bird feeder, cages, boxes and jars for animals and insect pets. Magnets with accessories. Magnifying glass. Prism. Seeds and bulbs. Thermometer.

**Carpentry Materials:** Work bench, real tools (child sized!), soft wood, nails, screws, etc.