

Nia Infant , Toddler, and Child  
Development Center  
Early Head Start / Child Care Partnership



“Young Minds Strengthened Through Faith and Knowledge”

## Parent Handbook

2007 Helm Ave  
North Charleston, SC 29405  
843-746-9377 - office      843-746-9337 - fax  
niaitcdc@yahoo.com      www.niachildcare.com

### ***STATEMENT OF PURPOSE***

This center is designed to meet the needs of infants and toddler age children. We will emphasize mental, physical, emotional, spiritual, and social growth. We will focus our attention and concern in the direction of helping to mold and nurture our children to become healthy and educated in every phase of life. As we attempt to pursue our goals and objectives in educating and planning for our children's future, we will respect the input and ideas from our parents, church, and community.

Dear Parents,

I want to thank you for considering Nia Infant, Toddler, and Child Development Center / Early Head Start Child Care Partnership for your childcare needs. We offer a loving, safe, and educational environment for your child to grow, learn and play.

I can understand how difficult it can be for parents to balance all of their commitments and responsibilities in their lives. For this reason, I strive to offer a program that will enrich your child's development while putting your mind at ease.

I will do my best to assist your child in developing important values such as: good manners, caring, sharing, patience, responsibility, as well as communication and teamwork. I believe that children learn best through play, and we will implement these important values throughout our day.

It is my goal to offer your family the quality childcare experience you deserve. Please feel free to openly discuss any problems or concerns you may have at anytime. An open and honest relationship is the key to a happy childcare experience for everyone involved.

Please help me keep the center in a professional manner by carefully reading through the parent handbook and filling out all the necessary forms. It is very important that you are aware of all of my policies, as I want you to make your decision about childcare based on the terms for which I will provide care.

Again thank you for considering Nia Infant, Toddler, and Child Development Center. I look forward to providing your child with the best possible care.

For the love of our children,

Sara Nesbit, CEO

## ***PHILOSOPHY***

Nia Infant, Toddler, and Child Development Center welcomes families of all faith's, creeds, and ethnic origins to its programs. This center's programs arise from a common desire for excellence in meeting the needs of the children and their families for nurturing, growth, relationships, and understanding.

While Nia Infant, Toddler, and Child Development Center has programs which are individualized in their goals and objectives, each one has its specific aim within the context of these principles.

### **WE BELIEVE**

- That the home is the most important factor in a child's development. We will always strive to support and complement the family in order to promote healthy development in the children and their parents.
- The dignity and worth of a child is important.
- That loving, trusting, and respecting each child makes that child capable of loving, trusting, and respecting others.
- Each child should or will be helped to have a positive self image.
- It is important to meet the needs for each child for social, physical, emotional and intellectual growth.
- The needs of children change as they grow; that programs must respond in content and structure by using the best techniques in human development.
- The children deserve a loving, safe, and nurturing environment which promotes their natural curiosity and desire to learn.
- The children deserve to have teachers that are capable and caring and whose values enable them to be excellent role models.
- Children will be accepted regardless of race, creed, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

We value the significance that it is important for a child to have experiences by him/her self and with other children and adults in a safe, positive, accepting atmosphere where he/she can explore the limits of his/her environment and his/her individual abilities. Our philosophy encompasses the belief that parents are vital in the classroom. In addition, parents create the spirit and feeling of school in general. If we have an impersonal feeling –“It's THEIR school” rather than “It's OUR school” – then the school will be impersonal because it reflects the attitudes of the people involved. If parents feel irritation about bringing their children to school, that becomes part of the subtle fiber of the school spirit also. To be sure that positive, accepting atmosphere is the basis of our philosophy, we must first strive for the personal “OUR school” feeling.

We believe in the value of human diversity and the fair treatment of all people. It must be our number one goal to provide the kind of environment and the kind of influences that encourage children to be creative, independent, responsible, fully functioning, and self directed adults who can make decisions for themselves. Secondly, we as adults must strive to continue learning and growing in our relationships with others so we may nurture a peaceful environment and surround the children with warmth, understanding, and giving.

**Our Values and Beliefs about Children Are Deeply Rooted in the History of Early Childhood Education.**

***WE BELIEVE THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A BAD CHILD.***

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

The goal of this child development center is to help each child develop a positive self concept by providing a supportive, comfortable, and accepting atmosphere. The curriculum, staff, their approaches, and overall values interweave to create this atmosphere. Using an evidence based and developmentally appropriate curriculum in our classrooms we create an atmosphere that is:

**Nurturing:** The program is built around love, caring, and warmth, which is vital to the happiness of the children. Activities are offered to enhance tactile, auditory, and motor skills.

**Flexible:** When planning weekly schedules the interest and needs of the children are considered and activities are adjusted accordingly.

**Nonjudgmental:** Staff members recognize and respect individual differences and understand that their value system may vary from those of the families with whom they work with. Multicultural and non bias activities are part of the program.

**Noncompetitive:** Children are helped to feel successful because of their own accomplishments, not because of the difficulties experienced by other children.

**Professional:** The quality and success of this program is built on well trained professional staff members. Our staff adjusts the overall curriculum and daily routines to meet individual needs of your children.

## **OUR PROGRAM**

The children are introduced to a balanced program of interactions with friends in both teacher-directed and child-directed experiences. The daily schedule involves free choice of time spent in the learning centers, group times for creative movement, music, storytelling, and dramatization. In house field trips are also part of the children's experiences.

The program we pursue is geared towards helping children develop habits of observation, questioning, and listening. It gives every child an awareness of their own feelings and their right to express those feelings, sometimes channeling them into more appropriate means of expression. The children learn they are free to make choices as long as they stay within the limits of consideration for other people and things. Children are treasured for their uniqueness and individuality and are encouraged in self-expression. Such an open-minded program prepares children to utilize their intellectual and creative abilities for future learning tasks.

Our program is child-centered and based upon the beliefs that play is the best way for children to learn. Our approach is individualized to meet each child's needs and interests. Each classroom is organized with centers for creative art, literature, science, pre-math, dramatic play, cognitive, and small motor development. These centers encourage reenactment of life's roles. The environment is planned to stimulate imagination, creativity, socialization, exploration, and discovery, while challenging the use of muscles for important body development. Our curriculum is bias-free and developmentally based, focusing on the individual child's social, emotional, and intellectual needs.

Our professional staff encourages exploration and growth in a well equipped environment that is stimulating, safe, consistent, and nurturing. We strive to enhance each child's natural curiosity and love of learning. Nia Infant, Toddler & Child Development Center provides opportunity for each child to master tasks that are appropriate to his/her individual level of development.

We are committed to working closely with parents toward the welfare of the whole family. Parents are welcome to visit the school at any time, both prior to enrolling and during the child's time at school. Nia Infant, Toddler & Child Development Center encourages children to choose freely from wide range of play and learning experiences, and in doing so, help them to recognize, understand, and express their own emotions as well as to sympathize with the emotions of others.

The variety of experiences include opportunities for creative self-expression through the medium of dance, musical rhythms, and art; development of manipulative skills and motor coordination through carpentry, puzzles, blocks, bikes, and climbing equipment; the increase of knowledge through excursions, cooking, and science activities; the development of concepts through exposure to materials which stimulate basic awareness' growth of language skills through stories, songs, and dramatic play; relaxation through water play and other quiet activities.

## ***CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT***

**BY LAW, this center is MANDATED to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect. Please understand that we are not required to bring our suspicions to the parent before we report.**

## ***ADMISSION PROCEDURES AND REQUIREMENTS:***

Enrollment Requirements: Once a family is accepted by EHS/CCP to attend our center, a completed enrollment packet is mandatory for admission. A current South Carolina Immunization record, completed health statement from your child's doctor, and copy of a valid state ID of parent/guardian. If your child is under 12 months old, we will also need a medical statement completed by your child's doctor.

Ages Served: We accept applicants with children ages 6 weeks old through 2 years old. As long as we can meet the needs of the family and the requirements for our regulations and licensing, we will do our best to accommodate all families interested in care at our center.

Hours of Operation: The center is open: 6:30 am - 5:30 pm Monday - Friday

Fees: Parents are responsible for any Copayment billed by SC ABC Voucher Program on a weekly basis and the same rules apply for late fees due. Full time childcare rate is based on ten (9) hours or less per day between the hours of 6:30 am and 5:30 pm, Monday through Friday. We ask that children are picked up by the end of 9 hours and/or the close of the business day (5:30pm). There will be a late pick up fee charged if your child is picked up after 5:30 pm. It will be due on Monday of the following week.

Late Fees: Parents are expected to pick up their children no later than five minutes before closing time. If a child isn't picked up by closing time, the parent/guardian and all emergency contacts will be called. A charge of \$1.00 per minute, starting 5 minutes after center's closing time. Time will be based on the center's clock. If a child is not picked up by 30 minutes after the Center's closing time and staff is unable to contact parent/guardian or emergency contacts, the child will be considered abandoned and the Charleston County Police Department will be contacted. ***Parents who repeatedly fail to comply with the policies put in place will be asked to find alternative care for their child/children.***

Sign in/out: Our center has a computerized attendance sign in/out sheet for each class. When you drop off your child in the morning, please sign them in on the tablet at the front desk of each building. Your child's teacher will sign them in on the individual classroom tracking sheet. Children are tracked visually throughout the day. Once their teacher visually sees them as they enter and leave designated areas throughout the day, they are checked off with time and date. At the end of the day, please sign out your child on the tablet and the teacher in your child's classroom will sign them out on their classroom tracking sheet as they go home.

Please make sure you allow yourself extra time to sign your child in and out in the morning and evenings. This policy allows the staff to keep track of the children at all times. In the event of an emergency, it is essential for our staff to have an accurate count of how many children are in their care and where they are at a moments notice.

## ***CENTER CLOSINGS AND HOLIDAYS***

Anytime the center is scheduled to close, announcement will be posted on the building doors, on social media and through text message prior to the day of closing.

Holidays: The center will be closed various days throughout the school year to celebrate holidays. Please see the school calendar for an updated closing list.

Closings: In addition to holidays, the center is closed for Professional Development Days. Those days will be announced 2 weeks in advance, if they are not listed on the school calendar.

Inclement Weather Closing: The center will follow any decision made by Charleston County School District closings for inclement weather. We will try our best to notify parents through text messaging, phone calls, and social media. In the rare event that it is not notified by any means, please follow CCSD. All attempts will be made to have current notifications for our parents and staff.

**Please note that copayments are billed when the center is closed. Payment is expected as scheduled upon return.**

## ***EMERGENCIES***

MEDICAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES: In the event of an emergency, a member of our administration team will try to contact you and your child's physician. If your child's physician cannot be reached or there is not a regular pediatrician for your child, an administrator will make all attempts to contact you or anyone of your Responsible Parties if time permits before treatment. If necessary, your child will be transported to the nearest preferred hospital. A member of our administration team will accompany your child and stay with him/her until a parent or approved emergency contact arrives. Our staff will administer CPR and / or first aid until proper medical personnel arrives.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES: If the center must be evacuated, the students will be taken to 2004 or 2007 Helm Avenue. In the event that neither building is safe, we will evacuate to Captain D's restaurant, 4008 Rivers Ave, North Charleston, SC 29405. You will receive a call from administration once the children are secure and safe.

EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION: By signing the contract and enrollment form you are giving your child permission to be transported as needed in case of an emergency only and allowing them to participate in all activities at the daycare.

## ***SICK / ILLNESS POLICY***

*Our policy is that your child must remain free of illness for 24 hours before returning to the center, and South Carolina Department of Health Control agrees with this policy. This means that if your child is picked up at 1:00 pm., but still has a fever*

at 5:30 p.m. or later, he/she cannot return to the center the next day. The 24 hours begins when your child's fever has broken without medication and less than 100 degrees f.

**Sick Children:** It is normal for a child to be sick 5-10 times a year. Attendance at a child care facility may expose a child to the risk of acquiring infectious diseases for several reasons. Young children readily exchange fluids and frequently are not able to perform the correct hand hygiene or cough etiquette. Many common infections encountered in a child care center are transmitted by direct or indirect contact. If a child displays any symptoms that DHEC has stated to be a possible contagious illness, your child will be sent home. We are concerned about the health of every child in our program. To keep all children as healthy as possible, we ask you to keep children at home if there are any signs of:

***Fever, Pain, Frequent Coughing, Signs of Conjunctivitis, Vomiting, Diarrhea, Excessive Nasal Discharge***

In addition, to the above symptoms, you must also follow the guidelines of the exclusions forms. If a child displays any of these symptoms at school we will call you to pick the child up. We do not provide services for sick children. Parents please have a plan in place. When called, you or an alternate emergency person is expected to pick your child up immediately. **There are no exceptions to this rule.** This is to protect the health of your child, his/her classmates and our staff. We appreciate your cooperation in the matter.

Contagious diseases must be reported to the school by the parent as soon as the illness has been diagnosed, so that other parents may be notified of the exposure. It is your responsibility to notify the center if your child has a communicable disease, such as; measles, mumps, chicken pox, head lice, etc. A child may be readmitted without a statement from a physician only if the child had been absent for a period of time equal to the longest incubation period of the disease as specified by the Department of Health and Social Services.

When a potentially contagious illness occurs, notes will be sent home to parents of children who may have been exposed and/or notices will be posted on the front door. An information sheet for the illness will be available in the office.

After your child has been ill, it is important to adhere to the following guidelines when determining whether or not your child is ready to return to school:

- Mood, appetite, behavior and activity are again normal.
- No fever for 24 hours or more without medication
- Antibiotics if prescribed have been used for a full 24 hours.
- Vomiting, diarrhea cleared for 24 hours
- Frequent coughing, excessive nasal discharge resolved

***If you child cannot complete their normal daily activities, including going outside, please keep them home.***

Children that have been out for 5 days will require a doctor's note in order to return to school. We advise that you make a plan for such emergencies. You must read and sign the criteria for excluding an ill or infected child from our program. The Director will explain any information that you do not understand.

**Allergies:** For the safety of your child, please notify our staff of any allergies or concerns to medicine, food type, pollen, dust that you child may have.

**Minor Injuries:** Minor injuries will be treated with soap, water, ice, and Band-Aids. Should there be a serious accident, parents or others persons listed on emergency form will be contacted. If no one can be reached, we will call the physician you have listed.

**Immunizations and Health Records:** Medical and emergency information forms must be kept on file before your child can enter school. All immunizations must be kept current and the SC Certificate of

Immunizations has to be submitted to the center. A child will not be admitted to the center if Immunizations are not current by recommendations of DHEC Daycare Guidelines. If a child has an outdated immunization record while enrolled, we reserve the right to disenroll that child from the center. Once disenrolled from the program, there is no guarantee that your slot will be available for reenrollment.

### ***IS IT A COLD, THE FLU OR AN ALLERGY?***

<b>Symptoms</b>	<b>Cold</b>	<b>Flu</b>	<b>Airborne Allergy</b>
<b>Fever</b>	Rare	Usual, high (100-102 °F), sometimes higher, especially in young children); lasts 3-4 days	Never
<b>Headache</b>	Uncommon	Common	Uncommon
<b>General Aches, Pains</b>	Slight	Usual; often severe	Never
<b>Fatigue, Weakness</b>	Sometimes	Usual, can last up to 3 weeks	Sometimes
<b>Extreme Exhaustion</b>	Never	Usual, at the beginning of the illness	Never
<b>Stuffy, Runny Nose</b>	Common	Sometimes	Common
<b>Sneezing</b>	Usual	Sometimes	Usual
<b>Sore Throat</b>	Common	Sometimes	Sometimes
<b>Cough</b>	Common	Common, can become severe	Sometimes
<b>Chest Discomfort</b>	Mild to moderate	Common	Rare, except for those with allergic asthma
<b>Prevention</b>	Wash your hands often. Avoid close contact with anyone who has a cold.	Get the flu vaccine each year. Wash your hands often. Avoid close contact with anyone who has the flu.	Avoid allergens, such as pollen, house dust mites, mold, pet dander, cockroaches.
<b>Complications</b>	Sinus infection middle ear infection, asthma	Bronchitis, pneumonia; can be life-threatening	Sinus infection, middle ear infection, asthma

### ***MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION POLICY***

At times, your child(ren) in our child care center may need to take medications during the hours we provide care for them. Before agreeing to give any medication, whether prescription or over-the-counter, we have to obtain written permission your child’s physician.

#### **MEDICATIONS**

1. When possible, medications should be given by parents/guardians before or after center hours. Any

medication to be given during the school day, including over the counter medication, **must** be accompanied by a completed Doctor's Order from a health care practitioner who is recognized by SC's Dept of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation as authorized to prescribe medications. The parent/guardian portion of the form must also be completed.

2. Nia Infant Toddler and Child Development Center EHS/CCP and its employees reserve the right to refuse to honor medication requests that are not consistent with professional standards and/or deemed unsafe for the school setting. If this occurs, alternatives for meeting the student's needs will be discussed.
3. Requests from parent/guardians for administration of herbal/alternative medicinal products, "off-label" or investigational medications will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Please allow 24 – 48 hours for a final answer for this procedure.

### **PROCEDURES**

1. Medical procedures require receipt of the completed Doctor's Order and necessary equipment for the procedure. The Doctor's Order must be completed by a health care practitioner who is recognized by SC's Dept of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation as authorized to prescribe medical procedures. The parent/guardian portion of the form must also be completed.
2. Administration or trained staff will administer the medication to your child the exact way it is stated on the medication form.

### **PARENT RESPONSIBILITY**

1. Deliver the completed Doctor's Order along with medication in the original labeled prescription container and/or proper equipment for medical procedure to the school. The form can be faxed to the center by the doctor's office at 843-746-9337.
2. Inform the school of any changes in the student's health condition, medical procedure or medication.
3. Update Nia Infant Toddler and Child Development Center EHS/CCP forms annually or when there is any change in the medication or medical procedure.
4. Pick up any unused medication or medical supplies within one week of discontinuation or last day for students, whichever comes first, after which medications will be disposed of.
5. Provide no more than a thirty (30) day supply of medication to the school.

### **SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITY**

1. Receive and review completed Doctor's Order along with medication (properly labeled/original container) and/or appropriate medical equipment.
2. Safely assist students with medication or performance of medical procedure according to Nia Infant Toddler and Child Development Center EHS/CCP Medication Administration Policy.
3. Communicate with the parent any problems or issues relating to administering medication or medical procedures.
4. Destroy medicine according to policy one week after discontinuance of medication or at the end of the school year, if not reclaimed by parents.

## ***HEALTHY PRACTICES***

Hand Washing: Frequent hand washing with soap and running water is necessary to prevent the spread of disease. We ask that everyone upon entering any of the buildings, please wash their hands before any interaction with other children and/or adults. Children and adults will wash their hands before preparing or eating snack, before and after water play, after handling animals, toileting, coughing, and

wiping noses. Set a good example and teach children how to clean their hands. preparing or eating snack, before and after water play, after handling animals, toileting, coughing, and wiping noses. Set a good example and teach children how to clean their hands.

Sanitization: Toys and surfaces for all ages are sanitized with a DHEC approved solution of bleach and water throughout the day. In the infant rooms, as the babies put toys in and out of their mouths, they are replaced with a new sanitized toy. All classroom small toys are rotated out mid day in the infant room. Cribs are sanitized nightly and mats after each use. Every child will have their own crib or mat in for the duration they are in each classroom. In the toddler and preschool classrooms, toys are sanitized throughout the day

Diapering procedures: The children are diapered as needed and checked every 2 hours at most. Gloves and a new cover for the changing table are used for **EVERY** change. The changing table is cleaned with soap and water then sanitized with bleach solution, children and teachers hands are washed **EVERY** time a child is changed. Children are not allowed to be left alone in the diapering area.

Potty-Training: Like learning to sit up, crawl and walk, potty training is a skill that your child must learn. Before mastering this skill, there are certain other skills and abilities that must be in place before learning can begin. Remember, age is not the most important factor. The key to potty training success is starting when your child is interested, willing, and physically able to. Potty training a child who attends daycare requires a team effort. Often, it is the very fact that a child is around other kids in underwear in a care setting that serves to motivate a young child to use the potty.

Parents and teachers should discuss and agree on the planned potty training process. A consistent approach and common encouragement techniques can minimize confusion of a child during this time, and help to set the environment for a successful transition to becoming a big kid!

## ***SUPPLIES***

*Our center provides: formula, jar food, diapers, pull-ups, and wipes for every child. If your child is allergic to the brand of items we provide, we will adjust for your child with a doctor's note.*

**Below is a list of basic supplies for each classroom. Please see your child teacher for a more individualized list.**

### INFANT & TODDLER SUPPLIES

- 2 complete changes of weather appropriate clothing-labeled. We will not be responsible for unlabeled clothes.
- Favorite toy/blanket, optional-labeled, the center will not responsible for toys.
- If your child has a pacifier, please note we can not use pacifier clips or pacifiers that have a handle to them. The only type pacifier that we can use are the hospital issued ones or one without a hook to it. This is a regulation enforced from DSS.

### TWO YEAR OLD SUPPLIES

- 2 complete changes of weather appropriate clothing-labeled. We will not be responsible for unlabeled clothes.
- Favorite toy/blanket, optional-labeled, the center will not responsible for toys.

## ***FOOD SERVICE***

Each day we provide 2 nutritious and well balanced meals and 1 snack. This service follows the guidelines

of the SC DSS Child Care and Adult Care Food Program. Milk is served with all the meals and some snacks, and water is offered throughout the day. We also provide baby food for infants. We have Menus available for your viewing in every classroom. It will inform you of the different types of food we serve throughout the week. The meals and snacks for each week constantly vary in order to ensure the children receive a well-balanced diet. The children are offered the food, but they will not be forced to eat. It is our goal to offer nutritious meals and snacks to the children in our care, as nutrition is a vital part of a child's health. Children need to eat well-balanced meals in order to meet his or her daily energy needs and to help them build a strong body and mind. We know that the good food habits a child develops will help them prevent cavities, iron deficiency anemia, and obesity, etc. - all common nutritional problems in young children.

**Most meals are served in family style setting with at least 1 teacher sitting with them at the table.**

#### Meal Times

Breakfast is served from 6:30 a.m. to 8:45 a.m.

Lunch is served from 11:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. (infant & toddlers)

11:30 a.m. to 12:15 (2 yr. old)

Afternoon snack is served at 2:00 p.m.

Special Diets: If your child has any particular dietary needs resulting from being a vegetarian, vegan, or having allergies, religious beliefs, or non religious beliefs, etc., we must be informed, and when applicable given a doctor's note stating to the fact. At that time it will be determined if your child can participate in the dietary requirements of the CACFP Program. However, if a viable solution can not be reached between parent, provider, and the CACFP Program with regards to their rules and regulations, then all of the child's meals and snacks may have to be provided by the parent.

Outside Food: **We ask that NO outside food be brought into the center without special permission.** This is to ensure that the children are receiving a healthy diet and it doesn't endanger the children with allergies. If you child comes in the center with food or snacks from home, we will ask you to take it with you or it will be taken away from your child and put in their cubby until you pick he/she up.

## ***DRESS CODE***

NIA ITCDC has an uniform option for children enrolled. It includes khaki /black colored pants and a school shirt. The school shirt can be purchased in the school office for \$10 each. Although we discourage, when your child cannot wear the uniform, he/she should dress comfortably, simply, and suitably for the weather. We do engage in a number of "messy" activities that, despite smocks, can get clothes dirty. We do not want to inhibit the children unnecessarily, so we ask you to send them in the school uniform that they can play in without hesitation. Remember children will be playing outdoors. Dress in layers on cold days! An extra set of clothing well labeled including underwear, socks, pants, and shirt must be left at school permanently in case of accidents. An extra sweater or jacket at school is also recommended since the temperature often changes noticeably.

**Please label all clothing with a permanent pen/ marker with your child's name.**

Shoes: For your child's safety, we ask that all children wear shoes if they are walking and/or above 1 years old. We ask that closed-toe shoes be worn for your child's comfort. We expect your child to be running and playing throughout the day and want them to do it comfortably and safely. Our playground

has woodchips and closed-toe shoes are the better option than sandals in warm weather months.

Hair and Beads: Barrettes and Beads are not to be worn in for children 2 and under. They can become a choking hazard. Please be aware that if your child has beads in their hair you will be asked to remove them before you leave or they can return to school.

Jewelry: **Nia ITCDC will not be responsible for any jewelry worn by your child that may get misplaced!**

As a safety precaution, hoop or dangling earrings are not to be worn; a child may pull the earrings.

Toys and Personal Items: Each child has a specially marked "cubby" for jackets, extra clothes, nap blankets and most treasured art projects. Please check your child's cubby each day to take home items that need not remain at school. **We ask that any personal items be kept at home. Toys brought from home will be placed in their child's cubby until it is time to go home. Nia ITCDC is not responsible for broken toys.**

## ***PROGRAM***

Attending Day Care - What to Expect: Based on our experience and the advice of experts, (all, some, none) of the children in our preschool will experience (none, some, all) of the following. Either way, it is all normal behaviors:

- Your child may become overly tired and irritable on preschool days. This may cause him/her to be overactive and noisy. This new experience is very stimulating. Give him/her a snack or lunch and a quiet time or nap.
- Your child may act very differently on the days you work at school. He/she may exhibit very negative behavior. Do not be embarrassed or push him/her away. Give him/her the attention he/she needs. It is very hard for him/her to share you with so many others.
- Your normally outgoing child may be very quiet at school or vice versa.
- Accept this and let him/she enter at his/her own pace. Many young children prefer to watch first before entering play or a group.
- Your child may do things at home for himself /herself that he/she will not so at school or vice versa, like dressing himself /herself.
- Your child may pick up behavior or language you dislike. This can happen anywhere, not just in school. Relax and do not make an issue of it.
- Your child will not necessarily "play together" with other children. He/she will play alone or alongside others. He/she may go quickly from one activity to another, spending little time with any.
- Your child may come home spotted with paint or grass stains but glowing with wonder over his/her experiences. Do not scold, threaten or bribe.
- Your child may suddenly not want to come to school or will want you to stay. Look for reasons. Talk with the teacher. Do not scold, threaten, or bribe.
- Do not expect your child to be equally happy every day, We all have ups and downs.
- Part of preschool is learning about life and to accept its ups and downs.
- Do not always expect your child to learn facts or complete songs, or bring home a finished product suitable for framing. He/she is learning skills, developing coordination and developing happy, well-adjusted attitudes towards others and life.
- Parents--expect to watch your own child and be mostly concerned for him/she at first. But learn to look at and be interested and concerned for the other children, and their growth and development.
- It is normal for a child to be sick 5-10 times a year while in group care.

Infant Schedule: The infant schedule is based on their routine and what you do at home with your child. You will receive a questionnaire about your child's routine. Please fill it out and return it to your child's teacher. This will be very helpful for the teachers in your child's classroom.

Toddler Schedule: The toddlers schedule is based on their routine, what you do at home with your child, and slowly working them into a schedule. You will receive a questionnaire about your child's routine. Please fill it out and return it to your child's teacher. This will be very helpful for the teachers in your child's classroom.

Please keep in mind for all ages that we have an evidence based and developmentally appropriate curriculum and children are continuously learning through play during the day.

Outdoor Activities: Our outdoor activities will include using the playground equipment in the playground, riding toys and playing organized games. Children, no matter the age, will NOT be allowed outside to play unsupervised. SC DSS Licensing requires that every child go outside for a specific amount of time per day, weather permitting. **During the summer, please know that your child will be outside if the temperature is not above 90 degrees. During the winter, children will go outside if the temperature is below 15 degrees.** If your child is too sick to play outside he is too sick to attend child care. If your child is not appropriately clothed for the weather, you will be required to return to child care with the correct attire. Please be sure your child is prepared to start the day.

### ***OPEN DOOR POLICY***

Our center has an open-door policy unless court order stipulates otherwise. This means parents can visit their children in our facilities any time they wish. Drop in visits are welcome and encouraged. We do ask parents who plan to visit their children frequently to follow the classroom routine, to avoid disturbing classroom schedules and activities. We also ask that visits are respectful of the other children in care, we suggest short visits. This will ensure that the students are not distracted from their learning activities and classroom rules. Please keep in mind this may confuse your child when you leave without them, if they are suffering from separation anxiety. Please be sure to sign in as a visitor if that is what you are doing. All visitors will have to sign in at the office. If it is naptime, we ask that you please schedule your visit before and during those times. Please keep in mind that visits during naptime can be disruptive for all the children. Please talk to the provider beforehand.

There are special events where parents are encouraged to come and have snack or read with their child. Volunteering is also another great way to get acquainted with your child's friends and staff.

### ***RELEASE OF CHILDREN***

Parents **must** list on the child's enrollment form the names of **all** persons who are permitted to pick up their child. We require parents to notify us in writing if someone else will be picking up the child. Each child may be released only to the child's parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) to take the child from the center and to assume responsibility for the child in an emergency if the parent(s) cannot be reached.

In a rare emergency, arrangements can be made verbally. If the person picking up the child is not known to the teacher, information about the person must be provided, including the following: name, phone number,

and physical description. The person picking up must also know the family “code word” that is on the enrollment form. This person will be required to show picture ID.

[If a non-custodial parent has been denied access or granted limited access to a child by a court order, the center shall secure documentation to that effect, maintain a copy on file, and comply with the terms of the court order.](#)

[Our policy insists any person picking up your child must be over the age of 18, authorized to take the child from the facility, and have a proper car seat if transporting by vehicle. We are mandated to report, and it is illegal in South Carolina for children to ride with no car seat.](#)

### **Unauthorized Pick-Up**

If an unauthorized person arrives to pick up a child, the child will remain under the supervision of the teacher at the center. The teacher will speak to the individual and explain the policy that no child will be released without written authorization from the parent or guardian.

If difficulties arise, all reasonable efforts will be made us to ensure the safety of the child and the other children. If necessary the police will be called for assistance.

### **Impaired Person Pickup**

If the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) appears to be physically and/or emotionally impaired to the extent that, in the judgment of the director and/or staff member, the child would be placed at risk of harm if released to such an individual, the center shall ensure that:

- The child may not be released to such an impaired individual;
- Staff members attempt to contact the child’s other parent or an alternative person(s) authorized by the parent(s)

## ***CHILD CAR SEAT LAWS IN SOUTH CAROLINA AS OF MAY 2017***

While riding in a vehicle, children under 8 years old need to be properly restrained by an approved child safety seat. However, additional conditions apply:

- Children under 2 years old must be in a rear-facing child safety seat in a rear passenger seat of the vehicle unless the child exceeds the manufacturer's weight or height limits.
- Children 2 years old and over must be in a forward-facing child safety seat in a rear passenger seat until they exceed the manufacturer's weight and height limits.
- Children at least 4 years old, must be in a belt-positioning booster seat in a rear passenger seat. Booster seats are required to use a lap and shoulder strap.
- Children at least 8 years old or those at least 57 inches tall can use a seatbelt if:
  - oThe shoulder belt crosses the child's chest and not their head or neck.
  - oThe lap belt fits across the child's hips and thighs and not across their stomach.

The child is able to sit, without slouching, straight against the seat back with their knees bent over the seat edge. All children under 8 years old must be in a rear passenger seat unless all rear seats are occupied by children under 8 years old or the vehicle does not have rear seats. Any child in the front passenger seat must be in the appropriate child safety seat for their age.

To ensure a safety seat has been properly installed, visit an Office of Highway Safety fitting station. For more information, call (877) 349-7187.

## ***TRACKING OF CHILDREN***

Our Center has a digital master attendance sign in/out system for each class. When you drop off your child in the morning, please sign them in on tablet provided by the door of each building. If the system is down, please use the master sign in/ out sheet below the tablet. Your child's teacher will sign them in on the individual classroom sign in sheet. Throughout the day your child's teacher's will keep track of the class by signing the children into and out of the room and building for outdoor play on the classroom tracking sheet. Children are tracked through sight and sound throughout the day. Once their teacher visually sees them, as they enter and leave designated areas throughout the day, they are checked off with time and date. At the end of the day, please sign out your child on the tablet provided and the teacher in your child's classroom will sign them out as they go home.

Please make sure you allow yourself extra take the time to sign your child in and out in the morning and evenings. This policy allows the staff to keep track of the children at all times. In the event of an emergency, it is essential for our staff to have an accurate count of how many children are in their care and where they are at a moment's notice.

**The center does not provide care for mildly ill children. We do not do any provisional hire.**

## ***CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY***

Employees of the Nia Infant Toddler and Child Development Center are bound by the following rules of confidentiality:

- Employees will refrain from discussing issues involving relationships with children and parents.
- Employees will not discuss issues involving children or parents outside of the CDC Programs and only on as "as needed" basis (i.e. between Teacher and Care Provider; Assistant Director, or Director).
- Confidentiality must be maintained in all training sessions, whether inside or outside of the CDC Program as outlined above.
- Employees will not use the name of the children or parents when discussing any issues involving the CDC Program except with those individual listed above.
- Employees will refrain from discussing salary.

Employees will refrain from discussing center services and all of Nia's information with those that is not employed by Nia.

Records of all children and staff are confidential and only administration team and referral agencies may have access to the information provided. Files are kept in the office in a locked file. The only person that had access to the keys are the administration team. A file may not leave the Director's office without approval. Privacy must be maintained when discussions are held between parents and staff about problems and concerns regarding specific children. A staff member may be dismissed for discussing a child's record outside of the school. Family code words always must be used. The code words are on the emergency sheets in the red binder. It is the teacher's responsibility to keep the code words current and notify the director of any changes or information given to them by the parent.

## ***SIGNED POLICIES***

- ◇ DSS form 2900
- ◇ Enrollment Application
- ◇ Payment Agreement
- ◇ Emergency Medical Release
- ◇ Release of Children
- ◇ Sick/Illness Policy
- ◇ Confidentiality
- ◇ Open Door/ Tracking Policy
- ◇ Medication Administration Policy
- ◇ Child Medical Statement (to be completed by child physician, if applicable)
- ◇ Discipline Policy
- ◇ Nutrition Policy
- ◇ Physical Activity Policy
- ◇ Acceptance of Policies
- ◇ CACFP Infant statement ( if applicable)
- ◇ CACFP Free and reduced meal application
- ◇ Authorization for intervention, therapy, and extra curriculum activities ( if applicable)

This handbook was on updated 6.1.18.