

Bright Start Learning Center

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This center is privately owned and operated as a local Johnstown Daycare and Learning Center. It is licensed by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services and approved to provide Childcare services. We provide care and learning opportunities designed for children age six weeks thru the 5th grade of school from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday thru Friday. Our Director, Lacey, provides daily management of our Center.

We welcome you to Bright Start Learning Center. This handbook contains information regarding the daycare program. It is important that you read this handbook and keep it handy while your child is enrolled. It will answer many of the questions you have about our programs

Note - "Center" or "BSLC" may be used throughout the handbook when referring to the Bright Start Learning Center.

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE

We desire to provide a caring and loving environment that is sensitive to the needs of children. Using age appropriate curriculum and activities we provide varied learning experiences that build progressively as your child continues to grow and acquire new concepts and skills.

LICENSING INFORMATION

This center is licensed to operate by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. A copy of our license is available on the Parent Information Board outside the Center office. The following items are available at the Center Office:

- The inspection reports for the current licensing period
- The forms and evaluation forms from the Departments that inspect our center (Health, Building and Fire Departments)
- The laws and licensing rules governing child day care

At the end of this handbook, you will find an attachment called Center Parent Information about licensing and other valuable information.

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

Each member of our staff is qualified and competent to care for each child, per the child's needs. By ODJFS rule 5101:2-12-28, staff members are required to complete training in early childhood education and early childhood development, as well as CPR, Child Abuse Recognition, First Aid and Communicable Disease. In addition, our staff must complete a background check thru the BCI and/or FBI.

CENTER OPERATIONS

ADMISSIONS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

To enroll at Bright Start Learning Center, an interested parent/guardian should contact the center to discuss the philosophy, policies and procedures of the program. The parent/guardian will be given a tour of the facility and will discuss the specific program their child will be attending.

At the time of the tour, the parent/guardian will receive an enrollment packet. The enrollment forms in this packet, along with a \$50/child deposit (maximum of \$100/family), must be completed and returned – then an enrollment date will be confirmed for the child. The enrollment packet includes forms to provide basic child and family information. For the safety of your child, any change to this information during your child's attendance at the center should be communicated to the office immediately so that current information is always on file.

Important: Health information for your child is required for Infant – Preschool age children. This includes a current Shot Record and a Medical Form signed by a physician or certified nurse practitioner. We require that this Medical information be updated annually.

Important: If you have elected NOT to have your child immunized, you must complete the lower section of the Medical Form listing immunizations declined, add your signature as well as the signature of the physician or certified nurse practitioner for your child to be enrolled.

Important: One other requirement for enrollment is that you give BSLC permission to seek emergency assistance and/or transportation for your child in the case of a serious illness or injury that requires emergency treatment. A staff member will always be with your child until you arrive, and we will be in regular contact with you throughout the situation. This authorization is on page 3 of the Child Enrollment and Health Information Form in your enrollment packet.

Bright Start Learning Center will not discriminate in the enrollment of children based on race, color, religion, sex, disability or national origin.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Center hours are 6:00 am – 6:00 pm, Monday – Friday, except the following holidays:

New Year's Eve and New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the day after, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, as well as 2 professional development days. Exact dates will be posted in advance.

We realize that when the weather turns bad, you will still need to work. Therefore, we will always do our best to remain open during inclement weather. Our guidelines are as follows:

Level 1 and Level 2 emergency - we will be open when these emergencies are issued. We are always conscious of the road conditions, wanting to be sure that our employees can safely drive to the center. Therefore, hours of operation may be adjusted in these conditions.

Level 3 emergency - we will always close when a Level 3 emergency is issued.

We will post notices on Channel 4, 6 or 10 closing lists when we determine it will be necessary to close. Please be sure to look in the list for Licking County Schools and Child Care Centers. The listing will typically be "Bright Start – Johnstown"

STAFF/CHILD RATIOS

The center will not exceed the state staff/child ratios and small group sizes for each age group.

Age	Staff / Child Ratio	Maximum Group Size
Infant (6 wks to 12 mo)	1:5 or 2:12	12
Infant (12 mo to 18 mo)	1:6 or 2:12	12
Toddler (18 mo to 30 mo)	1:7	14
Toddler (30 mo to 36 mo)	1:8	16
Preschool (3 yrs)	1:12	24
Preschool (4 & 5-yrs not in Kin)	1:14	28
School age (eligible for school)	1:18	36

Ratios for toddlers and preschoolers may be doubled for 2 hours at naptime if all children are resting quietly on their cots and enough staff are in the building to meet the regular required staff/child ratio if there is an emergency. You will also notice staff/child ratio signs posted at each classroom entrance.

Maximum group size is defined by the number of children in one group that may be cared for at any time. Limitations do not include naptime, lunch time, outdoor play or special activities.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Your child must be clocked in and out daily using the computer check-in system provided at the entrance to the center. We request that each child be taken directly to his/her classroom. In addition to the log generated by the check-in computer, each teacher keeps a class list to mark your child's arrival and departure. Please make sure the teacher responsible for your child knows that he/she has arrived or is leaving.

Children will only be released to their parents/guardians or persons who have been authorized, in writing, on the appropriate paperwork in your child's file. Changes in authorization must be done in writing and submitted in advance to the center office. The center staff is authorized to ask for identification should there be any question concerning who is picking up your child.

If an "unauthorized" person arrives to pick up your child, the child will not be released immediately. The Director will be notified, who will then call the parent/guardian to determine if the child should be released to the person. Remember, if there are issues involving custody, it is imperative that we know who can legally pick up your child. Supplying us with a copy of the divorce or custody papers gives us that information.

State Assisted Families Note – If you are receiving tuition assistance thru Ohio Job and Family Services, you must also clock in and out using the state’s check-in system (called TAP) at the center entrance. This is how payments for the state’s portion of your tuition is determined and processed. Failure to regularly check in and out of this system will result in termination of services for your children.

SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN

Infants/Toddlers/Preschool: (6 weeks – age 5) At no time will a child be left unattended. Staff will always supervise children, including naptime. If a child becomes ill, they may be isolated in a section of the room not in use, but within the sight and hearing of a staff member.

School Age Children: (grades K – 5) School age children will always be supervised in the classroom, playground, and on the bus. We do permit school age children to run errands inside the building (delivering or picking up items at another classroom, the office or kitchen). They will always be within hearing distance of center staff. Their teacher will also check on them regularly until they return to their classroom.

PARENT PARTICIPATION AND VISITATION GUIDELINES

We have an open-door policy at our center. Parents are encouraged to participate whenever possible in the activities of the center; field trips, class parties, and special events or simply a visit to join the daily fun during their scheduled class time.

For our infants, we know that breastfeeding is a choice for several mom’s. If this would be your desire, you are welcome to come to the center and breastfeed your infant in our crib room.

Our teachers also welcome parents to come to help with classroom craft projects or to share about your job. If interested in offering to assist in this area, please discuss with your child’s teacher to arrange an appropriate time.

Teachers are available to discuss a child’s progress or needs at any time. However, due to staff responsibilities and schedules, parents are asked to make appointments with staff when it is necessary to engage in any lengthy conversations. Teachers want to be able to focus on you and your child at these times.

Please feel free to bring concerns to our attention as they occur. Often, they can be addressed when they are little problems, before they grow into bigger problems. Staff fully realize that you are trusting us with your children and we want our relationship to be a good one.

A daily schedule is posted in your child’s classroom, and you may also ask for a copy at the center office. Please consider the group’s schedule when dropping in.

FOR SECURITY PURPOSES, ALL PARENTS COMING TO VISIT DURING CLASS TIME ARE ASKED TO CHECK IN AT THE CENTER OFFICE BEFORE PROCEEDING TO THE CLASSROOM.

PROGRAM AND CURRICULUM

YOUR CHILD'S FIRST DAY!

A list of items you will need to provide for your child is below. We ask that you bring these items on your child's first day at the center. We will provide a cubby or basket location for these items to be kept at the center. Please check these clothing items periodically to assure that they do fit and are season – appropriate. Should we need to change your child, we will send home the dirty clothing and you will need to replace the extra set of clothes the next day that your child attends. For daily attire, we recommend weather appropriate comfortable clothing and closed toe shoes so that the children can run, jump and just plain have fun.

For Children age 5 and under (not in school):

- 2 sets of changes of clothing in a Ziploc bag (shirt, pants, underwear and socks)
- Blanket for rest period (you may place in a pillowcase labeled with your child's name for ease of storing and carrying). We request that this blanket be taken home each Friday for laundering and returned the next week.

Infants/Toddlers - additional items that may be needed:

- Diapers – minimum of 5/day (diapers are changed at least every 2 hours)
- Wipes
- Formula – we provide Similac or a similar generic brand. If you desire another type/brand for your child, you will need to provide that.

All Children – we recommend that you provide a **backpack** for your child to carry back and forth. This will make life simpler when taking home clothes and daily crafts and table work. Your child's daily work and notes from the teacher or center staff will be placed in their cubby/basket each day. Please be sure to gather these items on a regular basis.

Please be sure all coats, jackets, clothing and blankets being left at the center are labeled with the child's name on them.

SAMPLE CLASS SCHEDULES

Included here are typical daily schedules for each age group. The daily schedules are flexible enough to adapt when necessary but structured enough to provide predictability for the children. The specific schedule for your child's class will be posted in their classroom. We want them to view the center as a safe place where they know what to expect and when to expect it.

Newborn Infants will be allowed to eat, and sleep as needed until old enough to join in on the scheduled activities.

SAMPLE CLASS SCHEDULES

TIME	INFANT 6 WKS -14 MONTHS	TODDLER 14 – 36 MONTHS	PRESCHOOL 3 – 5 YEARS
6:00 – 8:00	Arrivals, Free Play Breakfast Served 7-8	Arrivals, Table Top Activity Breakfast Served 7-8	Arrivals, Table Top Activity Breakfast Served 7-8
8:00 – 8:30	Clean Up of Breakfast and Play Activities	Clean Up of Breakfast and Play Activities	Clean Up of Breakfast and Play Activities
8:30 – 9:00	Diaper Changes	Circle Time	Circle Time
9:00 – 9:30	Storytime	Themed Craft Project	Themed Learning Centers
9:30 – 10:00	Music and / or Art	Outside Play	Themed Craft Project
10:00 – 10:30	Outside Play	Themed Learning Centers	Outside Play
10:30 – 11:00	Lunch	Conclude Act & Wash Up	Inside Play, then Wash up
11:00 – 11:30	Diaper Changes	Lunch & Clean Up	Lunch & Clean Up
11:30 – 12:00	Quiet Play & Prep for Naps	Cot Set-up/ Teacher Read	Cot Set-up/Silent Reading
12:00 – 2:00	Nap Time	Nap Time	Nap Time
2:00 – 2:30	Afternoon Snack Served	Afternoon Snack Served	Afternoon Snack Served
2:30 – 3:00	Finger Plays	Outside Play	Group Activity
3:00 – 3:30	Outside Play	Afternoon Story Time	Outside Play
3:30 – 4:00	Small Group Activities	Finger Plays, Games, Music	Story Time
4:30 – 6:30	Free Choice Children Departing	Table Top Toys Children Departing	Puzzles/Games Children Departing

TIME	SCHOOL AGE (SUMMER)	SCHOOL AGE (SCHOOL YEAR)
6:00 – 8:00	Arrivals, Table Top Activities Breakfast Served 7 -8	Arrivals, Table Top Activities Breakfast Served 7 -8
8:00 – 8:30	Play Continues	Outside Play Leave for School
8:30 – 9:00	Daily Theme Presentation	
9:00 – 9:30	Outside Play	
9:30 – 11:00	AM Curriculum Studies	
11:00 – 11:30	Theme Activity	
11:30 – 12:00	Lunch & Clean-Up	
12:00 – 12:30	Silent Reading/Library	
12:30 – 1:00	Puzzles, Board Games	
1:00 – 2:00	PM Curriculum Studies	
2:00 – 3:00	Music / Creative Art	
3:00 - 3:30	Snack Served	
3:30 – 4:00	Outside Play	Snack Outside Play Homework
4:00 – 4:30	Group Activity/Craft	Silent Reading
4:30 – 5:00	Table Top Activities	Themed Activity
5:00 – 6:30	Puzzles, Board Games Children Departing	Puzzles, Board Games Children Departing

Note – These schedules are samples only. Each teacher adjusts to reflect their daily plans.

CURRICULUM

We will provide a caring and nurturing environment, while being sensitive to the needs of your child. Our curriculum is aimed to provide developmentally appropriate learning experiences that build progressively as the children discover and acquire new concepts and skills in the areas of cognitive, physical and social development.

The entire center uses the same general theme for curriculum and learning times. The monthly themes will be made available to you.

Our curriculum is designed to take an active approach to learning. We will strive to make learning fun and exciting because we believe this enhances the learning experiences. Social and communication skills will be an integral part of the classroom routines as well. Our teachers will be working hard to provide a variety of activities, materials and learning experiences that introduce, reinforce and extend desired skills and concepts at all levels.

We focus on six major areas in our learning time for our Toddler and Preschool students. Some examples of basic concepts associated with the six areas of focus are listed below.

Basic Readiness

Name
Address
Phone number
Birthday
Colors
Shapes
Alphabet skills
Numerals
Counting
Using art materials
Problem solving

Fine Motor

Manipulate writing,
drawing and coloring
tools
Scissor skills
Gluing
Block play
Puzzles
Using manipulatives
Dressing skills
Writing and drawing
skills

Reading

Book knowledge
Print knowledge
Letters
Characters
Recalling details
Sequencing
Retelling
Predicting
Basic comprehension
Finger plays and rhymes

Math

Colors
Shapes
Numerals
Counting
Positions
Ordering
Comparing
Patterning
Opposites
Problem solving

Gross Motor

Walking
Running
Jumping
Skipping
Climbing
Balancing
Coordination
Using a ball

Social Development

Manners
Sharing
Turn taking
Cooperative play
Following directions
Carrying on a
conversation
Organization skills
Basic hygiene skills
Respect
Encourage to try new
things

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

It is our desire that this programming will prepare the children for Kindergarten; that they will master all the skills mentioned above before that exciting time of Preschool completion arrives. It all starts with the very basic skills they learn as Toddlers at home or in our center and we build on that each year with new age appropriate skills. In our 3-year old and 4-year old classes, an assessment will be completed in the fall at the beginning of the school year and in the spring, which will be shared with you. If you have any concerns, please feel free to talk with your child's teacher or with our Center Director.

LEARNING CENTERS

We do incorporate the use of learning centers into our weekly schedule. Some examples of centers used would be:

- Blocks and Transportation
- Book/Reading center
- Dramatic play
- Dress up center
- Math manipulatives
- Puzzle table
- Science and nature table
- Sensory table
- Small motor manipulatives
- Writing/Drawing center

OUTDOOR PLAY

Research has shown that children stay healthier when they have daily outdoor play. Outdoor play will be included in our program daily in suitable weather for the children. Suitable weather is defined as not raining, or with high winds, where the temperature is not below 32° F or above 95° F (wind chill and heat index will be factored in as well). If outdoor play is not possible, large muscle play will be held indoors with activities such as exercises, dancing, etc.

WATER ACTIVITIES

During the summer the toddler and preschool children may have opportunity for some water activities. These may include squirt bottles, water table or small wading pools. The wading pools will not have a water depth of more than 8 inches. These pools are sanitized after use. The children will always be supervised, and state ratios will be maintained.

The children participating in our school age summer programming will have opportunity for swimming trips to Johnstown Skate and Swim Center and/or nearby water parks. The children will always be supervised, and state ratios will be maintained by our staff. In addition, the water park(s) we visit will have certified lifeguards on duty. These swimming opportunities will be planned, and separate permission forms will be required for your child to participate.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips for the Preschool children will be walking trips near the center. They will visit the Johnstown Library and take walks near-by. You will sign a permission form at the time of enrollment accepting or denying permission for your child to participate in these trips. Parents will be notified in advance should the opportunity arise for an off-site field trip for this age group and separate permissions forms will be required for your child to participate.

Field Trips for the school age children may be planned during extended school year breaks and always during our summer program. Parents will be notified in advance of these trips and the costs associated with them. A separate permission form will be required for your child to participate.

The children will always be supervised for these water activities and field trips and state ratios and proper head counts of children will be maintained.

DAILY MEALS

Our center participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and provides breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack as part of your weekly tuition. A morning snack may be provided for our children under 2 years of age. Our monthly menu is posted in the center lobby and on our website.

Serving times are as follows:

Breakfast – served between 7:00 – 8:00 am. If your child will arrive after 8:00 am, please be sure they have eaten before they arrive at the center.

Lunch – served between 10:45 – 11:45.

Afternoon Snack – served about 2:30 pm for toddler and preschool children, after their naps. School age children receive their snack when they arrive at the center after school.

Our cook prepares and provides the meals following the child nutrition guidelines established in the CACFP program. Because the center does provide these meals, we request that you do not bring any outside food or drink into the center. (Please see the next page for our guidelines for Birthday Celebrations). By reducing the food being brought into the center, we can further protect our children who have severe allergies to different food products.

Food Supplements or Modified Diets – If your child requires a food supplement or a modified diet, please discuss these needs with our director. She will be happy to work with you in completing the necessary forms required by the state for any dietary modification for your child. Please be aware that a physician's signature may be required.

As a participant in the Federal Child and Adult Food Program (CACFP) we adhere to the following requirements:

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religious creed, disability, age, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a complainant should complete a [Form AD 3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#) (PDF, 462 KB), which can be obtained online, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA.

TRANSITIONS

As your child grows and matures, he or she will experience many transitions. We strive to make these transitions as stress-free as possible for both you and your child. You will be notified in advance of any transitions taking place that involve your child.

Transitioning into our center:

- Parents visit Center and pick up Enrollment Packet.
- Parents complete and return Packet with enrollment fee; start date is established.
- Parents (and child) may schedule a classroom visit prior to the first day if so desired.
- Parents bring their child on the first day – some parents choose to stay a while in the classroom and others drop off and leave. We encourage you to call and check on your child during that first day if you would like.

Transitioning from one classroom to another classroom:

- Parents are notified in writing of any changes in primary classroom for their child. To make these changes as easy as possible for your child, the current classroom and new classroom teachers will work together to devise a visitation schedule for your child so that they will not be a stranger when they officially move. The Transition Agreement that you receive will list the classroom information and the time frame for the classroom visits and move to the new room.

Transitioning into Kindergarten:

- Throughout the year the teachers work on kindergarten readiness skills with their preschool children
- At the end of the school year, we have a celebration for preschool friends who will be attending Kindergarten the next school year.

Transitioning away from the Center/Program:

- When Teachers know in advance that one of their class members will be leaving the class or our center, she will share with the class during circle time that one of their friends will be leaving.
- Parents may bring in a special treat with the class as a way of saying good-bye to their friends.

BIRTHDAYS

If you would like to celebrate your child's birthday at the center, please discuss plans with your child's teacher in advance. Birthday treats for the class are permitted, and we appreciate when you send in healthy treats for the celebration. **Note – The most common food allergy is Nuts. Please check with our Director prior to bringing in treats to determine if there is a nut allergy or any other food allergies that should be taken into consideration when preparing your snack. We appreciate your cooperation for the safety of all children.**

To prevent hurt feelings, please do not send party invitations to school unless you are inviting the whole class. To invite only a few students, please mail the invitation directly to their home. The office can assist with home addresses if needed.

CENTER POLICIES & PROCEDURES

ATTENDANCE

Please contact the center office by 9:00 am if your child will not be in attendance on a regularly scheduled day. This assists us in staffing and lunch preparation. Ph: 740-967-8454.

TUITION

Tuition is billed weekly (typically on Monday) for your child's care. It is expected that payments will be made at the beginning of each week. Bi-weekly payment arrangements or monthly payment arrangements are acceptable and should also be paid in advance of services. Please talk with our Center Director If you desire payment arrangements other than weekly. Tuition is due each week regardless of attendance, except for pre-arranged vacation weeks.

VACATION – FULL TUITION PAY FAMILIES

- Each child is allotted up to 3 vacation weeks per year – child will be absent from the center; your tuition will be credited when notice as outlined below is given
- Vacation time is on a calendar year basis from January 1 – December 31
- Vacation time cannot be accumulated from year to year
- Vacation time must be taken a full week at a time
(a week would be based on your normal weekly schedule)
- Please notify the Director in writing (forms are available from office) at least 2 weeks in advance when you are planning to take your vacation week so that accurate records may be kept, and your account credited. Advance notice also helps us to plan for possible changes in staffing when children are absent.

VACATION – STATE TUITION ASSISTED FAMILIES

- Each child is allotted vacation days/weeks per year based on the State Agency guidelines. Our Director will work with you on submitting these absent days to the State.
- Please notify the Director in writing (forms are available from office) at least 2 weeks in advance when you are planning to take a full week of vacation so that accurate records may be kept, and your absences properly submitted to the State Agency.

BUS TRANSPORTATION (Grades K – 5)

Transportation to and from the local elementary schools is provided daily for a small fee (see Rate Schedule). If your school age child will not be following his/her normal schedule to be dropped off at school or picked up after school by our bus, we require that you notify the center by 8:05 am for morning drop off and by 2:45 pm for afternoon pickup.

If your child does not arrive at the center prior to 8:05 am and we have not heard from you, we will assume that you are providing transportation for your child that morning.

For afternoon pickup at the schools - If your child does not get on the bus as scheduled, our bus drivers will contact the school staff prior to leaving the school to confirm whether the child is still in/at the school. If the child is not located at the school, our bus driver will be in contact with the center before leaving the school to determine if any additional information is available. If no additional information is available, the Bus will return to the Center and the center director or person in charge will proceed to call family members in the order designated on the center authorization forms to locate the child.

Our bus drivers take seriously the commitment for safe transportation of your children and delays of trying to locate a child are difficult on everyone. Your phone call makes it easier for all concerned.

LATE PICKUP

Our center closes promptly at 6:00 pm. It is important that you notify the office if you are going to be late and your anticipated arrival time. We strongly encourage you to have a back-up plan in place for another person to pick your child if you regularly get off work near our closing time.

MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM TIMES OF SERVICE

- Our Center will provide service for families 2 – 5 days per week.
- Our **minimum hours** of service per week are 10 hours/week. Your **minimum tuition fee** is for 2 days per week regardless of attendance at the center.
- Our **maximum hours** of service are 50 hours/week. There is **no automatic fee for service overage**, but please be aware that fees may be charged in ½ hour increments when we determine that abuse of the maximum hours of service is occurring. You will be notified of this charge at the time it is billed.
- To determine service overages, we will generate a weekly report which details total hours of service and is based on the check in/check out times.

ABSENCE

If your child will be out due to illness or vacation more than 1 day, please let us know. Lack of attendance or notification for over a week may result in disenrollment.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

If your child needs to leave the center for an extended period for any reason, please see the Director to discuss options regarding tuition relief, holding your child's "spot" or withdrawal. The best option will be determined on a case by case basis.

WITHDRAWAL

When a family desires to withdraw their child(ren) from the Center, it is expected and appreciated for the family to give us a two-week written notice prior to withdrawal. This gives us opportunity to contact families who would be on our wait list and get them enrolled in a timely manner. Tuition charges will cease on the last day of service when 2 weeks' notice is given. When timely notice is not given, you will be charged one additional week of tuition.

DISENROLLMENT

Although not a common occurrence, there are a few situations that BSLC will need to disenroll a child. We will have given you multiple reminders, so it will not be a surprise when we reach this point. You will be given a minimum of 2 days' notice. If it is a discipline issue where we feel there is a danger to others in the center, the termination will be immediate.

- Failure to pay your tuition on a regular basis.
- Failure to regularly check your child in and out in the state TAP attendance system which records the times of service for your children and generates the payment for your childcare.
- Discipline issues that have not been resolved after multiple parent/teacher conferences.
- Absences of 2 week or more without notification to the center.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND/OR VIDEOS

Children are often photographed during spontaneous occasions and field trips. If you do not want your child's photograph taken you must notify us in writing. Photographs taken may be posted at the center featuring an activity or field trip, used in publications or materials related to the center or on our website.

TREASURES AND POSSESSIONS

Sometimes children feel they need to bring special toys or newfound treasures to use as a "bridge" between home and daycare/school. If needed, we will work with you and your child to make it a positive experience. However, our experience has shown us that often

toys from home create problems at daycare/school. Generally, we request you keep personal belongings and toys at home unless the teacher has scheduled a "share" day.

Each child will be provided with their own coat hook and "cubby" or "basket" to place personal belongings (including back packs), during their hours at the center. **Bright Start will not be responsible for personal items that are brought to the center that are lost or broken.**

Important...there are four (4) things we feel strongly must remain at home:

Toy guns, gum, candy, money

COURT ORDERS AND CUSTODY PAPERS

If there are custody issues involved with your child, you must provide the center with court papers indicating who has permission to pick up the child. The center may not deny a parent access to their child without proper documentation.

COURT APPEARANCES

If a staff member is subpoenaed to court to testify, it is expected that the party for which the subpoena was issued will pay a flat fee of \$50 to assist in covering the travel costs of that staff member as well as the wages for the time away from the center. It is expected that we will need to provide a substitute in the staff member's absence. This amount must be paid to the center prior to the court appearance.

GUIDANCE POLICY (DISCIPLINE)

We strive to present a positive and caring attitude toward the children enrolled in our program. Our belief is that many discipline problems can be avoided through proper management of the classroom environment. We work hard to offer interesting and challenging learning activities and experiences in the daily curriculum.

We want the children to develop self-control, self-confidence, and a sensitivity in their interactions with others. These characteristics will be of assistance in maintaining order in the classroom, preventing injuries, and ensuring a child's activities are not infringing on the rights of others. The following strategies are used to guide the children's behavior:

- Focusing on the child's behavior, rather than on the child
- Reinforcing appropriate behavior
- Observing children consistently trying to anticipate potential difficulties
- Establishing eye contact and calling the child by name to gain a child's attention
- Remaining near the child in situations where he/she may be losing self-control
- Modeling problem solving skills
- Offering choices and/or Re-directing

If these strategies fail, the child will be removed from the situation in a way that ensures that the “time out” is a positive learning experience.

- Prior to the use of “time out” for the child, the teacher will explain what it means and what it involves
- The “time out” place will be located within the play area, where they can still be supervised, but far enough from the activity
- The child will be allowed to help to determine when he/she can return to the activity and participate in an appropriate manner
- For preschool age children, the “time out” period will be no more than one minute per year of age, to a maximum of five (5) minutes
- Appropriate or acceptable behavior of the child following “time out” will receive praise

If a child loses control and could possibly injure himself or herself or others, the child will be held and helped to sooth themselves until self-control is gained.

We do not practice or allow the following behaviors:

- Corporal punishment such as shoving, hitting, shaking or spanking
- Verbal punishment involving teasing, name calling, ridiculing
- Harsh, belittling or degrading treatment
- Confinement, unsupervised separation from others, physical restraint as punishment
- Depriving children of meals, snacks, rest or necessary use of the toilet as punishment

Parents will be contacted if none of the above procedures are found to be effective discipline for the child. A meeting with the Parents, the Child’s Teacher and the Center Director will be held to determine a new plan of action for discipline for the child.

PARKING

Please use caution when driving thru and parking in our parking lot. We share our parking lot with the Johnstown Library so there is potential for many children and adults to be walking near the driveway. Please follow the designated entrance and exit pattern.

Please do not leave children unattended in your car.

Please do not leave purses in parked cars. We are not responsible for any loss or damage while in our parking lot. **DO NOT LEAVE YOUR CAR ENGINE RUNNING WHEN DROPPING OFF OR PICKING UP CHILDREN.**

SAFETY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The safety and general well-being of your child is a priority at our center. All our staff receive training in First Aid, CPR, Communicable Disease and Child Abuse and are also trained to be alert to other possible dangers to the children. Some specific policies and procedures we follow are:

- No child is to be left unsupervised by staff or parents while at the center.
- There will be no running in the building except for the directed physical activity in a classroom.
- Safety precautions have been established to provide for the safe arrival and departure of your child to and from the center. Parents/Guardians will use their numerical code to check in and check out at the check-in computer in the center lobby each time. Detailed and specific policies regarding check-in and check-out, and authorized pick-up persons may be read on page 3 of this handbook.
- All visitors must check in at the office prior to entering the building.
- Emergency transportation forms and health records are required for all children. An authorization form will also be required for children in need of special procedures or precautions due to health or handicapping conditions.
- If an accident occurs or the emergency transportation of a child occurs, an incident report will be completed by the center as prescribed by Ohio Law. The parent or guardian will be contacted. A copy of the incident report will be kept in the child's file with signatures from the Supervising staff member, Center Director and parent included. A copy will be available for the parent/guardian too.
- A phone is available in each classroom for teacher use in the case of emergency
- Fire and weather emergency plans are posted in each classroom which include evacuation diagrams and specific procedures for that classroom.
- Monthly fire drills will be held. A record of dates and times are posted near the office.
- Tornado drills will be held during the spring months. A record of dates and times are posted near the office.
- Lockdown drills will be held quarterly. A record of dates and times are posted near the office.
- The use of aerosol spray products is prohibited when the children are present at the center.
- All staff members are mandated reporters of child abuse. If staff have suspicions that a child is being abused or neglected, they **MUST** make a report to the local Children's Services Agency.
- In case of fire, the center will be evacuated, and the Director will notify the proper authorities.

ACCIDENTS AND EMERGENCIES

In the case of a minor accident or injury, the staff will administer basic first aid and TLC. If the injury (or illness) would be more serious, first aid will be administered, and the parents will be contacted immediately to assist in deciding an appropriate course of action. If any injury (or illness) is life threatening, the EMS will be contacted, parents will be notified, and a staff member will accompany the child to the hospital with all available health records and stay with them until the parent(s) arrive. Staff may not transport children in their vehicles; only parents or EMS will transport.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN

While the need to evacuate will be rare, we do want to prepare the children for these events. As mentioned earlier, we do conduct monthly fire drills and periodic tornado drills, so they become familiar with the process. Should we need to evacuate the building due to an emergency, our emergency destinations are listed below:

- 1 – Grassy area of the playground all the way to the fence near the dumpster.
- 2 - Mary Babcock Library which is located across the parking lot west of our center
- 3 – Parking lot or grassy area of the Leafy Dell apartment complex across the street.

In the case of an emergency evacuation, the following actions would be taken:

- Teacher will take attendance roster, first aid kit and emergency contact information for children.
- Teacher will account for all children with a name to face check off.
- We will follow instructions from the emergency personnel (if present) as to whether to stay in that location or proceed to a secondary evacuation location.
- Parents will be notified as soon as possible.
- A sign will be posted on the front door of the center indicating that we have been evacuated and where the children may be picked up.
- An incident report will be completed and provided to parents.

Should there ever be a threat of violence, we will secure children in the safest location in the building away from windows and doors. We will take the attendance roster with us and contact 911/Police.

Should there be a loss of power, heat or water, we will contact the appropriate utility company to assess the expected time of outage. We will evaluate factors such as safety, temperature, daylight hours, refrigeration requirements and the ability to follow sanitary hygiene practices. If the Director or designee makes the determination after review of these factors that the center needs to be closed, parents will be notified as soon as possible.

RESOLVING CONCERNS

We want your child's time at Bright Start to be a memorable one. Please let us know of any concerns you may have regarding your child or our program. It is much easier to resolve if you bring them to us as they occur. We will make every effort to correct what is necessary so that your child may have a happy learning experience.

If parents/guardians do have concerns or questions at any time, it is recommended that you speak with the child's teacher first. If additional assistance or ideas seem helpful, you and the teacher may also set up a meeting time with the Director. Staff members fully realize that you are trusting us with your precious little ones, and we want our relationship to be a good one.

MANAGEMENT OF ILLNESS

Bright Start Learning Center provides children with a clean and healthy environment. However, we realize that children become ill from time to time. If this is your child's first group care experience, it is possible they may experience more frequent illnesses at the beginning before their immune system becomes more active. We observe all children as they enter the program daily to quickly assess their general health.

We ask that you not bring a sick child of any age to the center for care. We do not offer "sick" child care and will contact you to return to pick them up. In addition, we do not offer service for school age children who are absent from school. We strongly recommend you have a backup care plan in place for your child if you are not able to take time off from work/school in these situations.

A person trained in First Aid will always be readily available when the center is in operation.

A child with any of the signs or symptoms of illness listed below in the "management of communicable disease" chart (licensing rule 5101:2-12-33) will be immediately isolated and discharged to the parent or another authorized person. This chart is also available for your convenience in the office hallway.

If your child would be diagnosed with a communicable disease as listed below, please notify the center asap. We will notify the parents of other children in the classroom who may have been in contact with your child by posting a Communicable Disease Notice. No names will be used in this communication.

MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CHART

- Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound.
- Diarrhea (three or more abnormally loose stools within a 24-hour period).
- Difficult or rapid breathing.
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Redness of the eye or eyelid, thick and purulent (pus) discharge, matted eyelashes, burning, itching or eye pain.
- Temperature of at least 100°F, taken by the axillary method (armpit), when in combination with any other sign or symptom of illness. Normal axillary temperature is between 96.6° F and 98° F.
- Untreated infected skin patches, unusual spots or rashes.
- Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool.
- Vomiting
- Unexplained body rash

- Sore throat or difficulty swallowing
- Stiff neck
- Evidence of untreated lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestations. A child must remain out of the center until he/she is found to be completely free of lice and nits. The child must be inspected by the Director or her designee before returning to the classroom.

Any child demonstrating signs of illness not listed above will be isolated and carefully observed for symptoms. If a child does not feel well enough to participate in center activities, the parent will be notified, and arrangements will be made with them for pick-up of the child.

A child that is isolated will always be supervised and will be made comfortable on an available cot until the parent or authorized person arrives to pick up the child. The child may return to the center when all symptoms, including fever, have been gone for 24 hours. If they are not symptom free a doctor's note will be required stating that the child is not contagious.

When the children are exposed to a communicable disease, a notice will be posted in the office hallway and on the classroom door.

If a child is brought to the office and shows no signs of illness but claims to be feeling bad or appears to be feeling ill, the parent/guardian will be notified.

MEDICATIONS

The center will administer medication to a child only after the parent completes a Request for Medication Form. All proper sections must be completed, and the medication handed to the Director. Medication will be stored in a designated area in the office inaccessible to children. Medication may not be stored in a child's cubby or book bag. The only exception to this requirement is for school age children that require the immediate use of an inhaler for a medical condition. Parents must sign a release form stating that they are permitting their child to have access at all times to the inhaler. The child must keep the inhaler on his/her person at all times. Anytime the child is unable to maintain control of the inhaler it must be handed directly to the staff member responsible for the child.

Prescription medications must be in their original container and administered in accordance to instructions on the label. Over the counter medications must also be administered in accordance to label instructions. If parents request any different dosages or uses, a physician must provide written instructions on the Request for Medication Form. Over the counter medications will not be administered for more than three days without instructions from a physician.

ALLERGIES

Forms are available and will need to be completed if your child has allergies that require monitoring and intervention in case of an allergic reaction. A master list of the students with these types of allergies is kept in the office. Each teacher has a list for the students in their care. We are continually aware of the children with allergies in our center.

Although we will use our best efforts, we cannot guarantee that other parents or children will be as conscientious, therefore we cannot guarantee your child will not come in contact with an item that may affect them while they are at the center.

CENTER PARENT INFORMATION

The center is licensed to operate legally by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. This license is posted in noticeable place for review.

A toll-free telephone number is listed on the center's license and may be used to report a suspected violation of the licensing law or administrative rules. The licensing rules governing child care are available for review at the center.

The center director and each employee of the center is required, under Section 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code, to report their suspicions of child abuse or child neglect to the local public children's services agency.

Any parent, custodian, or guardian of a child in the facility shall be permitted unlimited access to the center during all hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided by the center or evaluating the premises. Upon entering the premises, the parent, or guardian shall notify the Center director of his/her presence.

The Center Director's hours of availability and child/staff ratios are posted in a noticeable place in the center for review.

The licensing record, including licensing, inspection reports, complaint investigation reports, and evaluation forms from the building and fire departments is available for review upon request from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

It is unlawful for the facility to discriminate in the enrollment of children upon the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, or disability in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 104 Stat. 32, 42, U.S.C. 12101 et seq.

For more information about child care licensing requirements as well as how to apply for child care assistance, Medicaid health screenings and early intervention services for your child, please visit <http://jfs.ohio.gov/cdc/families.stm>

**THIS INFORMATION MUST BE GIVEN IN WRITING TO ALL PARENTS, GUARDIANS, AND
EMPLOYEES AS REQUIRED BY THE OHIO ADMINISTRATIVE CODE.**

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