

Four Mile Childcare Parent Handbook

Little Rams Childcare

June 1st, 2024 Edition



Mission

Our mission is to help families take their next steps toward Christ by providing a safe, healthy, and joyful place for their children to develop intellectually, emotionally, physically, socially, and spiritually. We employ a staff that is committed to providing an atmosphere that fosters a love for Jesus, kindness, respect, empathy for others, and love for one another.

Philosophy

1. We want our children to know who God is and to be immersed in His love.
2. We want our children to learn how to pray and to know Truth as it is found in the pages of Scripture.
3. We want our children to develop both social and soft skills.
4. We expect our staff to have a passion for teaching children and helping them mature. We expect our staff to demonstrate Christian values when interacting with children and their parents.

Statement of Beliefs

1. We believe that our primary function is to share God's love with our childcare families through a loving, accepting environment and by modeling Christ in all relationships.
2. We value each child as a gift of God, unique in personality, temperament, and style, and believe in responding to these individual differences through appropriate expectations, words, and actions.
3. We encourage children to express their God-given creativity through their own expression in art, music, movement, athletics, writing, and drama.
4. We want children to be immersed in the love of God; to learn the ways He has taught us; to learn to pray; and to learn to incorporate their faith into their everyday lives.
5. We believe that discipline is not synonymous with punishment. Rather, discipline is a training process that involves choices, time, patience, consistent guidance, and learning.

Standards of Operation

Four Mile Childcare (FMCC), established in 2007, is a nonprofit childcare center and early learning program. FMCC advertises in the public media to make openings known to all. Admissions, the provision of services, and referrals shall be made without regard to race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, national origin, age, or gender. FMCC will accept children with special needs and will work with each child's personal/individual caretakers and therapists to properly care for all children enrolled. FMCC promotes inclusion and supports children with disabilities being enrolled alongside peers without disabilities in the same classrooms. We support the right of every young child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of society.

Equal Opportunity

Four Mile Childcare is an equal opportunity employer. We do not discriminate based on race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, national origin, age, or gender in our hiring and employment of staff. We do require, however, that all employees fully support and contribute to the atmosphere, curriculum, and ethics that we profess as a Christian organization.

Definition of Service

Little Rams Childcare offers the following services:

1. Quality childcare for children from 6 weeks old to 13 years of age.
2. Hours of operation are 6:30 am to 5:30 pm.
3. Part-Day is defined as up to 5 hours. For School-Age Students, Part-Day is defined as either before school or after school.
4. Full-Day is defined as 5 or more hours. For School-Age Students, Full-Day is defined as both before and after school.
5. Little Rams Childcare will seek to fill as many spots as possible. In general, priority will be given to those who register for the greatest number of hours per week. Other priority will be given as published on our website.
6. All applications should be made through the following link (<https://www.fourmile.org/childcare/>). You will be notified of availability within a week. Updates to your status will be sent out monthly.
7. There are 26 defined payment periods in a year. Payments will be processed in advance on the Friday before each 2-week payment cycle. All payments must be made by bank-direct electronic ACH transfer or credit card. All credit card fees are the customer's responsibility.
8. There will be a \$50 fee for all returned ACH transfers or credit card rejections. Returned ACH transfers occur when there are insufficient funds in the account. Any returned ACH transfer or credit card rejection also requires a face-to-face meeting with the childcare Business Manager.
9. There is a \$100 fee due at registration. The fee will be applied to your 6th 2-week payment.
10. Terms of Agreement with each family will be reviewed before each fall, spring, and summer session. Any adjustments to the terms must be discussed in advance with the childcare director.
11. Parents will be required to provide specific drop-off and pick-up times. A \$25 early drop-off/late pick-up fee will be processed for the first 15 minutes, and an additional \$50 for each 15-minute increment before or after the agreed upon time. Parents must contact Little Rams Childcare in cases of unanticipated late pickups. Early drop-offs must be approved at least 24 hours in advance to allow for staffing accommodation and cannot be guaranteed.
12. Up to one week during the summer months (Jun-Aug) may be taken by each child without payment. Notification must be made a month in advance for all summer vacation weeks.
13. Little Rams Childcare will be closed on the following days: Good Friday, Easter Monday, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, 4th of July, 2nd Friday in August In-Service, Labor Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Thursday and Friday, and December 23rd-January 2nd. There is no discount on tuition for sick days, absences, or days we are closed. The last 2-week billing period of the year will not be charged to families to offset these days off throughout the year. Days are subject to change but will be determined at the start of each school year.
14. Families who do not require childcare for a temporary period may reserve their spot by paying \$150 a month for up to 3 months.

15. All prices include a morning and afternoon snack. Lunch is to be provided by parents, unless otherwise noted. Hot items must be packed in a thermos and cold items will be stored in a refrigerator. All food items must be labeled with the child's first and last names.
16. The childcare may also close in case of an emergency where the children's safety may be in danger. All closing alerts and information will be communicated to families via Procure.

Program Goals: Infants

1. To provide a safe and nurturing environment where infants are encouraged to grow.
2. To make sure each infant's unique intellectual, emotional, physical, and spiritual needs are met.
3. To provide infants with age-appropriate opportunities for social interaction in a Christ-focused environment.
4. To offer activities that stimulate the senses recognizing that infants learn using their eyes, ears, fingers, and sense of taste and smell.
5. To organize the care of infants such that it prioritizes one-on-one time.
6. To seek as much consistency as possible regarding sleeping and eating for infants between their time at home and at childcare.
7. To provide ample opportunities for infants to develop their fine and gross motor skills using indoor and outdoor activities.
8. To facilitate effective communication between teachers, parents, and staff members.
9. To report to parents daily the specifics of the child's day via Procure.
10. To establish a system that is used to evaluate and observe the children throughout the year by using Child Service Reports and Ages and Stages Questionnaires on a bi-annual basis.
11. To provide routine periodic evaluations of infants to their parents.
12. To establish a system to transition infants to the young toddler area at the appropriate time and support long-term teacher/child relationships by encouraging teachers to visit all classrooms.
13. To coordinate daily schedules with parents based on the needs of each child and update schedules per the child's evolving needs.
14. Daily schedules are posted in each classroom and are available upon request.
15. To implement all rules and regulations set forth by the Office of Child Development and Early Learning.

Program Goals: Younger and Older Toddlers

1. To provide a safe and nurturing environment where toddlers can grow in their relationship with Christ.
2. To make sure each child's unique intellectual, emotional, physical, and spiritual needs are met.
3. To provide each child with age-appropriate opportunities for social interaction in a Christ-focused environment.
4. To foster a Christian atmosphere that encourages respect for one another and respect for equipment.

5. To provide a wide variety of age-appropriate activities that introduce children to daily prayer, Bible stories, communication skills, circle time, art, science, social studies, language, cooking, drama, large motor skills, music, and movement.
6. To develop self-help skills that create a feeling of independence and confidence in each child. These self-help skills include but are not limited to toilet training, dressing oneself, and having children participate in certain clean up tasks throughout the day.
7. To provide ample opportunities for children to develop their fine and gross motor skills using indoor and outdoor activities.
8. To facilitate effective communication between teachers, parents, children, and staff members.
9. To report to parents daily the specifics of the child's day via Procure.
10. To establish a system that is used to evaluate and observe the children throughout the year by using Child Service Reports and Ages and Stages Questionnaires on a bi-annual basis.
11. To provide routine periodic evaluations of children to their parents.
12. To establish a system to transition young toddlers to the older toddler area and older toddlers to preschool at the appropriate time and support long-term teacher/child relationships by encouraging teachers to visit all classrooms.
13. Daily schedules are posted in each classroom and are available upon request.
14. To implement all rules and regulations set forth by the Office of Child Development and Early Learning.

Program Goals: Preschool

1. To provide a safe and nurturing environment where young children can grow in their relationship with Christ.
2. To ensure each child's unique intellectual, emotional, physical, and spiritual needs are met.
3. To provide each child with age-appropriate opportunities for social interaction in a Christ-focused environment.
4. To foster a Christian atmosphere that encourages respect for one another and respect for equipment.
5. To provide a wide variety of age-appropriate activities that introduce children to daily prayer, Bible stories, communication skills, circle time, art, science, social studies, language, cooking, drama, large motor skills, music, and movement.
6. To develop self-help skills to create a feeling of independence and confidence in each child. These self-help skills include but are not limited to toilet training, dressing oneself, and having children participate in certain clean up tasks throughout the day.
7. To build each child's self-confidence and sense of self-worth by allowing them to make choices (within safe and appropriate limits) and to build successful experiences.
8. To provide an atmosphere that fosters each child's motivation to discover and explore, teaching them independence by understanding how and where to find solutions.
9. To provide a wide variety of activities that are established as part of a routine that fosters cooperative play. The curricular and spiritual area of the routine involve: daily prayer, table prayers,

bible stories and biblical based learning units, art, math, science, cooking, music and movement, dramatic play, and language arts.

10. To develop a system that promotes kindergarten readiness and enables the children to be ready to enter the school system. This system may include proper handwriting skills; alphabet and number recognition; creative arts and crafts; games; stories; phonics; easy reading skills; field trips; food preparation; science and nature activities; exposure to shapes and colors; and celebrations of birthdays and holidays.
11. To provide ample opportunities for children to develop their fine and gross motor skills using indoor and outdoor activities.
12. To facilitate effective communication between teachers, parents, children, and staff members.
13. To report to parents daily the specifics of the child's day via Procure.
14. To establish a system that is used to evaluate and observe the children throughout the year by using Child Service Reports and Ages and Stages Questionnaires on a bi-annual basis.
15. To provide routine periodic evaluations of children to their parents.
16. To establish a system to transition preschoolers to our school-age program at the appropriate time and support long-term teacher/child relationships by encouraging teachers to visit all classrooms.
17. Daily schedules are posted in each classroom and available upon request.
18. To implement all rules and regulations set forth by the Office of Child Development and Early Learning.

Program Goals: School Age

1. To provide a safe and nurturing environment where young children can grow in their relationship with Christ.
2. To make sure each child's unique intellectual, emotional, physical, and spiritual needs are met.
3. To provide each child with age-appropriate opportunities for social interaction in a Christ-focused environment.
4. To foster a Christian atmosphere that encourages respect for one another and respect for equipment.
5. To provide a wide variety of age-appropriate activities that introduce children to daily prayer, Bible stories, communication skills, circle time, art, science, social studies, language, cooking, drama, large motor skills, music, and movement.
6. To develop self-help skills to create a feeling of independence and confidence in each child.
7. To build each child's self-confidence and sense of self-worth by allowing them to make choices (within safe and appropriate limits) and to build successful experiences.
8. To provide an atmosphere that fosters each child's motivation to discover and explore, teaching them independence by understanding HOW and WHERE, to find solutions.
9. To provide an environment where the child will develop an enthusiasm for learning, exploring, and creativity using constructive play activities in the areas of art, drama, literature, cooking, music and movement, social science, large motor, science, manipulative, multicultural, health and safety activities.

10. To provide ample opportunities for children to develop their fine and gross motor skills using indoor and outdoor activities.
11. To facilitate effective communication between teachers, parents, children, and staff members.
12. To report to parents daily the specifics of the child's day as needed.
13. To establish a system that is used to evaluate and observe the children throughout the year by using Child Service Reports and Developmental Checklist for Ages 5-12 on a bi-annual basis.
14. To provide routine periodic evaluations of children to their parents.
15. To provide a procedure for students transitioning out of childcare due to maximum age stipulations by using the "On My Own and OK" program.
16. Daily schedules are posted in each classroom and available upon request.
17. To implement all rules and regulations set forth by the Office of Child Development and Early Learning.

Admissions

Applicants must come to Little Rams Childcare for a personal tour of our facility and an opportunity to meet with the director and/or staff. Parents and children are asked at this time to observe our daily activities. If the terms of enrollment are accepted, the process of admission will begin.

Parental Responsibilities

A. Provide necessary information required by the State of PA, Office of Child Development and Early Learning.

1. Childcare Application Form upon admission.
2. Emergency Contact / Parental Consent Form—must be updated once in a 6-month period or as soon as there is a change in the information.
3. Child Health Report—Initial health report must be provided upon admission then:
 - a. a semi-annual physical from birth until 24 months and immunization report
 - b. a yearly physical from 24 month to 6 years of age and immunization report
 - c. a yearly copy of immunizations after 6 years of age
4. Agreement signed by the business manager and parent stating amount of fee and date on which to pay; services provided; child's arrival and departure times; persons designated by parent to whom the child may be released as specified in Emergency Contact / Parental Consent Form; date of child's admission.
5. Medication log as needed (see Medications page).
6. A copy of the child's IEP/IFSP, if applicable. This helps our staff make changes to their plans and teaching strategies to best help a child's learning experience. Teachers will also attend IEP meetings when possible/necessary so that we are aware of a child's learning needs.
7. Any other forms deemed necessary by Little Rams Childcare (photo release, etc.).

B. Drop-off and Pick-up: We encourage you to come to our center to observe our daily activities and get your child assimilated to the daily routine in advance of admission. The following are a few rules implemented to ensure the safety of the children in our care.

1. Drop-off:

- a. Parents must walk their child or children into childcare according to state law.
- b. Parents must walk their child or children into their assigned room and make sure that they are comfortable before they leave. Our staff is more than willing to help with any separation anxiety. This policy applies to school-age students as well.
- c. Parents must inform the director and staff of any changes in their child's routine.
- d. At no time should a car be left running while unattended and children should not be left in the car unattended.
- e. All vehicles must abide the 5 MPH speed limit.

2. Pick-Up

- a. Parents must come into the building and to their child's assigned room for pick up according to state law.
- b. In an emergency, if someone other than a designated person is picking up your child, the office must be informed of this in person by phone or via Procure. The alternate pick-up person must bring a photo ID and must be at least 16 years of age.
- c. The parent or designated pick-up person is responsible for making sure that all the child's belongings go home with him or her each night.
- d. If applicable, the parent or designated pick-up person must have an approved child safety seat or booster seat in their vehicle according to state law.
- e. At no time should a car be left running while unattended and children should not be left in the car unattended.
- f. All vehicles must abide the 5 MPH speed limit.

C. Dress

1. All children should bring an extra set of clothes in case of a spill or accident. This includes socks, shoes, and outerwear.
2. All extra clothing articles must be labeled with their first and last name. No initials please.
3. Children should be dressed for play every day. We will do our best to avoid stains, but children will be doing art projects and playing outside on a consistent basis.
4. Please avoid having your child wear sandals or 'flipflops' to childcare. Closed-toe shoes are the safest for playing outside or taking walks.
5. Please dress your child according to the weather and have your child's extra clothes coincide with the season as well.
6. If your child has an accident or needs a change of clothing and none are available, childcare will provide what is needed. Parents are asked to launder and return items within one week.
7. The childcare will not assume responsibility for any damaged, stained, lost or stolen clothing items brought to the childcare.

D. Toys and Other Items from Home

1. Blankets and small pillows are encouraged for naptime for children 12 months old and older, but all items must fit neatly into your child's cubby. A small stuffed animal or comfort item may be provided for naptime. All items must be labeled with your child's first and last name.
2. Please do not bring toys from home unless at the teacher's request (ex-Show and Tell).
3. No bicycles, tricycles, skateboards, scooters, or trampolines are allowed on the premises.
4. No electronic devices will be permitted unless at the teacher's request, except for school age students.

E. Health Information

1. Childcare staff are certified in Pediatric First Aid and CPR.
2. Your child should remain at home if:
 - a. He/she has a communicable disease that has not been treated.
 - b. He/she has vomiting or diarrhea which is not controllable.
 - c. He/she has a fever above 100.4. A child cannot return to childcare until they are fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medications.
3. Parents must notify the childcare staff if a child is not attending due to any illness.
4. The childcare has the right to deny acceptance of any child whom the administrative staff deems too ill to attend on any given day or to request that a child be removed from the childcare if the child is determined too ill to remain.
5. We use *Caring for Our Children* (www.cfoc@nrc.org) to establish policies and practices regarding care plans for children with special needs, asthma, medical needs, food allergies, and medications.
6. We ask that you please notify the childcare of any changes in your child's schedule as soon as possible. This includes our school age students. Your child's safety is important to us, and we need to know when they will not be attending.

F. Medication

1. Parents are required to complete a Medicine Request Form if they desire to have medications given to their child. A form can be dated or valid for one year.
2. Parents must provide directions for physician prescribed medications on a medicine form.
3. All medications must be in their original containers and clearly marked with the child's first and last name.
4. Medication must be given to your child's teacher. All medication will be secured in a locked cabinet unless it must be refrigerated.
5. Over the counter or non-prescription medications require a Medicine Request Form as well. This includes items such as lip balm, cough drops or throat lozenges.
6. Parents will be notified before any type of over-the-counter medication is administered.

7. Reasonable accommodations will be made to any medication request made by parents or guardians.
8. Any items that are labeled “Keep out of reach of children” cannot be kept in a child’s diaper bag or backpack, including but not limited to hand sanitizer and lip balms.

Our Approach

A. You are welcome here! We encourage family input. Little Rams Childcare promotes positive, effective, and open communication. Therefore, we have an “open door” policy, where parents have the right to free and full access to their child. Parents are encouraged to visit the school, their child’s class, and/or the administration at any time. Ensuring positive, effective, and open communication is an essential component of our childcare. It is our goal to provide your family with the best experience possible. To do this, it is important that we receive feedback from our families. Do you have a compliment or concern? Please talk to our business manager or our on-site directors.

B. We Promise to:

1. ensure the safety and well-being of your child.
2. foster and grow your child’s relationship with Christ in a warm and nurturing environment.
3. provide each child an environment that will stimulate effective cognitive, communicative, perceptual, physical, and social development.
4. help develop each child’s personal spiritual growth through positive interactions with their peers and elders.
5. help your child develop a positive attitude toward themselves and others, by providing a supportive social and emotional atmosphere.
6. help your child develop basic skills in reading readiness, ABC’s, numbers, shapes, and problem solving.
7. help your child develop positive feelings towards school and a learning environment.
8. give your child the opportunity to succeed in activities within the program.
9. create a learning environment conducive to your child growing physically, intellectually, socially, and emotionally.
10. provide activities that are stimulating and comfortable, and integrate education in the areas of cognition, perception, and problem solving.
11. enhance the understanding and role of parents in influencing their child’s education.
12. develop a program that builds self-image, individual spirituality, individual strength and acceptance of self and others.
13. provide opportunities for teachers/caregivers and parents to work toward becoming partners concerning the growth and development of the children in our care.
14. seek outside help for our teachers/caregivers, children, and families whenever there is need.
15. share or transfer records, with your written permission, when your child transitions to another educational setting or transfers to another childcare facility.

Emergency Plan

Evacuation Information: Our emergency plan provides for responses to all types of emergencies.

Depending on the circumstances of the emergency, we will use one of the following protective actions:

1. In-place sheltering: Sudden occurrences, weather or hazardous materials related, may dictate that taking cover inside the building is the best immediate response. Should this be the case, children will be relocated to the Multi-Purpose Room.
2. Evacuation: Total evacuation of the facility may become necessary if there is a danger in the area. In this case, children will be taken to a relocation facility located at Four Mile Church, 6078 Tuscarawas Road or Canon-McMillan High School, 314 Elm Street Ext, Canonsburg, PA 15317. If it ever becomes necessary to relocate, a sign will be posted on the door stating which facility we have gone to. If you are not sure how to get there, please ask for directions before there is an emergency.
3. Modified Operation: May include cancellation/postponement or rescheduling of normal activities. These actions are normally taken in case of a winter storm or building problems (such as utility disruptions) that make it unsafe for children but may be necessary in a variety of situations.

All emergency correspondence is done via Procare. All parents/guardians are invited at the time of enrollment to subscribe to this software platform used by Four Mile Childcare for all communication needs, including attendance, billing, and daily reports.

The form designating persons who may pick up your child is our Emergency Contact/Parental Consent Form that is reviewed by parents every six months. This form is used every time your child is released. Even in the event of an emergency, please ensure that only those people you list on the form try to pick up your child.

Daily Checklists

A. Infant Room

1. Diapers: Parents will provide diapers, but may leave a daily, weekly, or monthly supply.
2. Diaper Rash Ointment: Parents must provide for each child. Medication Form must be on file.
3. Formula, breast milk, or milk: depending on what your child drinks.
4. Bottles or a sippy cup (or both).
5. At least one complete change of clothes (appropriate for current weather conditions).
6. Spare pacifier if your child uses one.
7. Crib-sized sheet or bed roll if your child is napping on a mat.
8. Any comfort item that your child (over the age of 12 months) may want to sleep with at naptime. Children under the age of 12 months are not permitted to have any items in their crib.
9. Your child's schedule, in writing, so that we may learn their routine.
10. Any food or snacks that you believe your child will want throughout the day.
11. Infant fever reducer: Parents must provide for individual children. Medication Form must be on file.

12. Your child's first and last name must be on all items, including all food items.
13. Plastic grocery bags are not permitted in childcare areas, including diaper bags.
14. Please do not keep any medication in the diaper bag that you bring to childcare. This includes, but is not limited to, hand sanitizer, diaper creams, lip balm and sunscreen.

B. Toddler Room

1. Diapers: Parents will provide diapers, but may leave a daily, weekly, or monthly supply.
2. Diaper Rash Ointment: Parents must provide for each child. Medication Form must be on file.
3. Sippy cup.
4. At least one complete change of clothes (appropriate for current weather conditions).
5. Crib-sized sheet or bed roll as your child will be napping on a mat (must fit in cubby).
6. A comfort item that your child may want to sleep with at naptime.
7. Fever reducer: Parents must provide for individual children. Medication Form must be on file.
8. Sunscreen: Parents must provide for individual children.
9. Your child's first and last name must be on all items, including all food items.
10. Plastic grocery bags are not permitted in childcare areas, including diaper bags.

C. Preschool Room

1. Diapers: Parents will provide diapers, but may leave a daily, weekly, or monthly supply.
2. At least one complete change of clothes (appropriate for current weather conditions).
3. Crib-sized sheet, bed roll or small blanket as your child will be napping on a mat.
4. A comfort item that your child may want to sleep with at naptime.
5. Fever reducer: Parents must provide for individual children. Medication Form must be on file.
6. Sunscreen: Parents must provide for individual children.
7. A water bottle or spill proof cup for your child to use throughout the day may be provided.
8. Your child's first and last name must be on all items, including all food items.
9. Plastic grocery bags are not permitted in childcare areas.

D. School Age

1. All children should bring an extra set of clothes in case of a spill or accident. This includes socks, shoes, and outerwear.
2. Flip-flops or sandals are not permitted at childcare. They do not offer support for field games and hikes that we may have planned. Flip-flops and sandals are only permissible on water days, but please send a pair of tennis shoes for your child to change into after the activities.
3. Children should be dressed for play every day. We will do our best to avoid stains, but children will be doing art projects and playing outside on a consistent basis.
4. Please dress your child according to the weather and have your child's extra clothes coincide with the season as well.
5. Sunscreen: Parents must provide for individual children.
6. A water bottle for him or her to use throughout the day should be provided.

7. Do not pack lunches that need to be cooked such as Easy Mac, Cup-O-Noodles, etc. Please cook these items at home and provide a thermos.
8. Electronic devices will be allowed provided they are not internet accessible (devices may be on airplane mode). If students are found accessing the internet, texting, photographing, or videoing other students, electronic privileges may be revoked.
9. Notify the staff of all schedule changes, including early pick-up. Please remember that anyone picking up your child must be on the Emergency Contact form.
10. Do NOT leave any child unattended in the building. Parents must walk him or her to their room and accompany them inside at pickup.
11. Vehicles must be parked in a designated parking space; engines must be fully turned off and drivers must obey our 5 MPH speed limit all times while in the parking lot.
12. Plastic grocery bags are not permitted in childcare areas.

Shaken Baby Syndrome (Abusive Head Trauma) Prevention Policy

This policy is designed to prevent the possibility of abusive head trauma during childcare. Abusive head trauma (also referred to as Shaken Baby Syndrome) occurs in infants and young children, whose neck muscles are not well-developed and whose heads are larger relative to their bodies. As a result, they are especially susceptible to head trauma caused by any type of forceful or sudden shaking, with or without blunt impact. Damage can occur in as little as 5 seconds.

Abusive head trauma can occur in children up to 5 years of age; however, infants less than one year are at greater risk of injury. Shaken baby syndrome can lead to serious conditions including: Brain damage, problems with memory and attention, cerebral palsy; blindness or hearing loss; Intellectual, speech, or learning disabilities; and developmental delays.

A. Signs and Symptoms

1. Seizures
2. Bruises
3. Lack of appetite, vomiting, or difficulty sucking or swallowing
4. Lack of smiling or vocalizing
5. Rigidity, inability to lift the head
6. Difficulty staying awake, altered consciousness
7. Difficulty breathing, blue color due to lack of oxygen
8. Unequal pupil size, inability to focus the eyes or track movement
9. Irritability

B. Injury Prevention: Infant crying is normal behavior, which improves as a child ages. Caregivers should develop proactive strategies to manage stress levels and appropriate responses to a crying child. This includes being self-aware and noticing when the caregiver may become frustrated or angry. Parents, guardians, caregivers, and coworkers should discuss what calming strategies are successful with a particular child at home or in the center.

C. Emergency Response: If a child presents any of the above symptoms or you suspect a baby has suffered abusive head trauma:

1. Call 9-1-1, call the parent/guardian, and inform your director and regional manager.
2. Report to the appropriate child protective services agency (or law enforcement, if applicable) within 24 hours or less as required by law. <https://www.dontshake.org/>

D. Related Policies and Procedures:

1. Child Abuse/Neglect and Mandated Reporting Policy and Procedure
2. Medical Emergencies - Calling 9-1-1
3. Safe Infant and Toddler Handling Procedure

E. Strategies for Caregivers and Parents: A child is usually shaken out of frustration, often when the child is persistently crying or irritable. A teacher should seek support from a coworker or center management. If a child is inconsolable on a regular basis, the director and regional manager should be notified and determine if the right support is in place for the child and for staff. The following strategies may work some of the time; but sometimes nothing will comfort a crying child.

1. Do the following:
 - a. Hand the child to another caregiver.
 - b. Place the child somewhere safe in the classroom (or home) and call the office (or a neighbor) for support; take deep breaths and count to 10.
 - c. Check to see if the baby's diaper needs changing.
 - d. Give the baby a bottle. If the baby readily takes the bottle, feed slowly, stopping to burp often. **Do not force the baby to eat.**
 - e. Check for signs of illness and call the parent if you suspect the child is sick.
 - f. Give the baby a pacifier.
 - g. Hold the baby close to your body and breathe slowly and calmly.
 - h. Gently rock the baby using slow, rhythmic movements.
 - i. Sing to the baby or play soft, soothing music.
 - j. Use "white noise" or rhythmic sounds that mimic the constant whir of noise in the womb.
 - k. Hold the baby on its side or stomach position to help with digestion.
 - l. **Babies should always be placed on their backs to sleep.**
 - m. Take the baby for a walk indoors or outside for a ride in the stroller.
 - n. Be patient: let the baby cry it out if necessary.

2. Do NOT do the following:
 - a. Shake a child.
 - b. Drop a child.
 - c. Throw a child into the air or into a crib, chair, or car seat.
 - d. Push a child into any object including walls, doors, and furniture.
 - e. Strike a child's head, directly or indirectly.

3. Other Resources for More Information
 - a. Abusive Head Trauma - How to protect Your Baby:
<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages?Abusive-Head-Trauma-Shaken-Baby-Syndrome.aspx>
 - b. National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome: <https://www.dontshake.org/>

Discipline and Guidance Policy

Little Rams Childcare is committed to working with our families to prevent the expulsion of a child. The expulsion policy of FMCC meets guidelines for preventing and severely limiting expulsion and suspension practice in early childhood settings. The goal of this policy is to provide a safe and nurturing environment for children and families that severely limits expulsion, suspension, or other discipline. These measures are to be used only as a last resort in extraordinary circumstances.

A. Possible Cause for Immediate Expulsion

1. Parent threatens physical abuse, verbal abuse or intimidating actions toward staff members or enrolled children.
2. Failure to pay/habitual lateness with payments.
3. Failure to comply with medical/immunization requirements without documented medical or religious exemption, or any other requirements of the DPW.

B. If a behavior is a concern in the classroom, the teacher will begin the following steps for preventing this behavior from occurring:

1. Staff will redirect the child from negative behavior.
2. Staff will reassess the classroom environment, find appropriate activities, and assess supervision.
3. Staff will use positive methods and language while disciplining children.
4. Staff will praise appropriate behavior.
5. Staff will consistently apply consequences for rules.
6. Child will be given verbal warnings.
7. Child will be given time to regain control.

C. If the above steps are taken and the behavior persists, then:

1. Child's disruptive behavior will be documented and maintained in confidentiality.
2. Parent/guardian will be notified verbally.

3. Parent/guardian will be given written copies of the disruptive behaviors.
4. The director, classroom staff and parent/guardian will have a conference to discuss how to promote positive behaviors.
5. FMCC will request assistance from the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) by completing the online form at www.surveymonkey.com/r/PAExpulsionHelp.
6. Families who have concerns about their child's development can still call the CONNECT Helpline at 1-800-692-7288 for information and to connect to Early Intervention Services and Supports.

D. If the remedial actions above have not worked:

1. The child's parent/guardian will be advised verbally, and in writing, about the child's or parent's behavior warranting an expulsion. An expulsion action is meant to be a period of time so that the parent/guardian may work on the child's behavior or to come to an agreement with the center.
2. The parent/guardian will be informed regarding the length of the expulsion period.
3. The parent/guardian will be informed about the expected behavioral changes required for the child or parent to return to the center.
4. The parent/guardian will be given a specific expulsion date that allows them sufficient time to seek alternate childcare (a one-to-two-week notice depending on the risk to other children's welfare or safety).
5. Failure of the child/parent to satisfy the terms of the plan may result in permanent expulsion from the center.

Contact Information

Marcy Helm, Business Manager, Four Mile Church

Cell Phone: 724-312-0580

Four Mile Church Office: 724-495-6520

Email: marcy@fourmile.org

Website: fourmile.org

Becky Reed, Director, Four Mile Childcare, Beaver Campus

Cell Phone: 412-327-5020

Email: becky@fourmile.org

Four Mile Childcare Office: 724-495-6205

Christy Stauffer, Director, Little Rams Childcare, South Side School District Campus

Cell Phone: 412-972-0127

Email: christy@fourmile.org

South Side School District Office: 724-573-9581

Procare: Little Rams Childcare centers use the Procare phone app to communicate with parents. Once we have all required paperwork, parents will receive an electronic invitation for Procare. This phone app allows teachers to update and communicate with parents in real time concerning diaper changes or bathroom breaks, meals, events, photos, etc. Parents can also communicate with teachers via this app.

Other Support Organizations

1. WIDA is a consortium of states dedicated to the design and implementation of high standards and equitable educational opportunities for English language learners. www.wida.us—Tools and support to help educators and multilingual learners succeed.
2. Lifesteps—www.lifesteps.net—Lifesteps helps along life’s journey by offering services such as FREE child developmental and Autism screenings; Early Education Centers for children of every ability; services for adults with disabilities and those with intellectual/developmental disabilities, including Autism, such as Employment Services, Day Programs, Community Homes and Life Sharing/Family Living. Lifesteps provides quality care in a family-focused environment.
3. Office of Child Development and Early Learning - www.dhs.pa.gov/learnaboutdhs/dhsorganization/officeofchilddevelopmentandearlylearning/ - The Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) (a collaborative effort between the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services) is focused on creating opportunities for the commonwealth's youngest citizens to develop and learn to their fullest potential. 1-800-692-7288
4. ELRC—Early Learning Resource Center—www.elrc-csc.org Pennsylvania’s Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) designed ELRCs as a place where families can find high-quality early education opportunities, apply for assistance to help with childcare costs or access other resources that will set them on a path to success. It is also where childcare providers can receive information on improving program quality.
5. IECMH– www.zerotothree.org Infant and early childhood mental health is Early childhood professionals that support all areas of development through their interactions with very young children and families.
6. Pennsylvania WIC- nutrition program for pregnant mothers and Children up to age 5 <https://www.pawic.com/>
7. Early Intervention (BVIU) 2 years and under 724-897-2827
8. Early Intervention (BVIU) 3 – 5 years 724-728-3730 x4103
9. Pennsylvania CHIP health insurance program - <https://www.chipcoverspakids.com/Pages/default.aspx>.
10. Compass— the State of PA's online system that provides many options for finding assistance including childcare subsidy, cash assistance, medical assistance, food stamps and more. <https://www.compass.state.pa.us/compass>.