



# WHSCDA, Inc. Parent Handbook

## Toddler Program

401.765.8730

[whscda.org](http://whscda.org)



## WHSCDA, Inc. Parent Handbook

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Dear Families,

Welcome to WOONSOCKET HEAD START CHILD DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION, Inc.! This handbook is designed to share some important information with you about the philosophy, goals, and policies of the center. Please take the time to read this booklet thoroughly to gain a better understanding of our program.

The center is licensed by the Department of Children, Youth, and Families and approved by the Department of Education to service the following age groups:

	Age	Group Size	Adult to Child Ratio
Infants (Highland Park only)	6 weeks to 18 months	Maximum 8	1:4
Toddlers (Highland Park only)	18 months to 3 years	Maximum 12	1:6
Preschool	3 years to 5 years	Maximum 20	1:10
RI PreK Serving Woonsocket Residents (Park Square Center only)	4 years must be 5 years old by September 1 of the following school year	Maximum 18	1:9

The classrooms for each age group are staffed by professionally trained early childhood teachers. Each room has been specifically designed and equipped for the ages of the children in attendance.

The philosophy of WHSCDA, Inc. concerning optimum care in a group setting is consistent with that of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). We strongly believe in the concept of developmentally appropriate practice: designing the program to meet the needs of each individual child according to their age, providing a safe, nurturing environment, which promotes physical, social, emotional, and intellectual growth. A key element to our programs is that of success. We give children many opportunities to be successful throughout their day, always focusing on their positive experiences. This way, children develop a sense of self-esteem and self-worth necessary to attempt more challenging tasks.

Finally is our philosophy concerning the role of parents and family. We believe that parents are experts on their own children and the most influential teachers that their children will have throughout their lives. Therefore, to have a program without a strong home to center linkage fails to provide the best experience for the child. WHSCDA, Inc. strongly encourages parents to become active participants in our program by contributing their knowledge, time, and support during this important stage in their child's life.

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

- \* Center is open from 7:00 AM to 5:30 PM
- \* Center is open year-round
- \* Children receive breakfast, lunch, and nutritious snack
- \* Please bring a change of clothes for your child (remember to label all possessions!)
- \* No toys or food should be brought to the center, as we provide appropriate toys, activities, and nutritious foods
- \* Children taking a nap will need a blanket and pillow
- \* Children should dress for outdoor activities (hats, boots, mittens, snow pants for winter)
- \* Please notify the center when your child will be absent
- \* Please check your child's cubby daily for items that need to be brought home
- \* Please check the Parent Bulletin Board, located in your child's classroom, daily for notices and other important information

## **TODDLER PROGRAM**

The Toddler program provides children with a warm nurturing environment. Qualified staff support children's growth in physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development with love, guidance, and understanding. The center is a safe, enjoyable place to learn while having fun.

### Philosophy, Goals and Objectives

The goal for this age group is to provide a safe, secure, and healthy environment. The program is designed to continue to foster a sense of trust in children, which began in infancy, and to meet autonomous drives of the toddler. The program's philosophy of learning follows Piaget's theories of development, which promotes learning through sensorimotor experiences. Each child is recognized as being unique in his/her development and *The Creative Curriculum Continuum for Infants and Toddlers* is used as a guide.

### Physical Development

Children will be given ample space indoors and outdoors to walk, run and climb. They will gain confidence in using these large muscle skills while enjoying many activities. Small motor development will also be enhanced through use of eating utensils, toys such as large puzzles, blocks and pegs, and art activities that include painting and scribbling with crayons.

To promote physical growth, the center will provide a nutritionally sound menu for breakfast, lunch, and snacks. Meals are designed and prepared especially for this age group by a consulting nutritionist. We feel that it is never too early to build healthy eating habits in children as the basis to good health.

### Social and Emotional Development

Children will be given the opportunity throughout the day to make choices appropriate to their age level. In addition, they are encouraged to do many things independently: help to feed and dress themselves, wash their hands, clean-up around the room, hang up their coats, etc. Accomplishing these self-help tasks provides the toddler with a sense of independence, which they so strongly desire.

Group care situations are sometimes difficult initially for toddlers because of "egocentricity": they all see themselves as the most important person in the world. Sharing and waiting their turn are two very difficult (sometimes impossible!) tasks for toddlers causing them much frustration. To minimize this frustration in a group setting, the center will keep the staff / child ratio as low as possible while providing enough materials and equipment to minimize the need to share. In these ways, children can develop positive social skills with adults and peers, and adjust comfortably to group care.

### Intellectual Development

The focus of the cognitive development of toddlers is language acquisition. Children will be learning to use language to communicate their thoughts, to name objects and pictures, and to make conversation with adults and other children.

The caregivers promote language development while talking to children, asking questions, describing actions, reading books, and singing songs.

Children will also be given the opportunity to develop problem-solving skills. By exploring their surroundings with their senses, children learn about how things work and what causes many things to happen. This is the beginning stage in building the memory skills in young children, which are essential for further learning.

## Toilet Training

Toilet training is an important developmental milestone in the later toddler stage. Cooperation and good communication between parent and caregiver is essential to make this experience positive and successful for the child. In determining a child's readiness for toilet training, the following guidelines are helpful:

1. Child's diapers stay dry for a long period
2. Child shows interest in sitting on the toilet
3. Child asks for diaper to be changed
4. Child can follow simple directions and can indicate when he/she needs to use the toilet

We do not believe that a child can be forced into toilet training. Careful observation of the child will indicate when he or she is ready to begin. The training process at the center will be positive and supportive. Children will not be punished or shamed for accidents or refusal to use the toilet. Rather, they will be praised for their efforts. It is very important that toilet training is consistent between home and center. A plan will be developed between parent and caregiver to ensure this consistency.

## **COMPONENTS OF CURRICULUM – TODDLER**

### *Creative Curriculum Continuum for Infants and Toddlers*

The curriculum components, listed by area and followed by objectives, support the goals of our Toddler program and ensure that all domains of development are addressed.

#### I. To learn about themselves:

- A. To feel valued and attached to others
- B. To feel competent and proud about what they can do
- C. To assert their independence

#### II. To learn about their feelings:

- A. To communicate a broad range of emotions through gestures, sounds, and eventually words
- B. To express their feelings in appropriate ways

#### III. To learn about others:

- A. To develop trusting relationships with nurturing adults
- B. To show interest in peers
- C. To demonstrate caring and cooperation
- D. To try out roles and relationships through imitation and pretend play

#### IV. To learn about communication:

- A. To express needs and thoughts without using words
- B. To identify with a home language
- C. To respond to verbal and non-verbal commands
- D. To communicate through language

#### V. To learn about moving and doing:

- A. To develop gross motor skills
- B. To develop fine motor skills
- C. To coordinate eye and hand movements
- D. To develop self-help skills

VI. To acquire thinking skills:

- A. To gain an understanding of basic concepts and relationships
- B. To apply knowledge to new situations
- C. To develop strategies for solving problems

**TODDLER DAILY SCHEDULE**

7:00 AM - 8:45 AM	Greet parents and children Help children and parents say good-bye Encourage children to explore the environment and materials in their own way Invite children to participate in adult-directed activity such as a simple lotto/match game
8:45 AM - 9:00 AM	Clean-up and prepare for breakfast (diapering, toileting, hand-washing) Children help to set tables
9:00 AM - 9:30 AM	Breakfast Clean tables Wash hands
9:30 AM - 9:45 AM	Brush teeth Clean-up
9:45 AM - 10:15 AM	Outdoor play - a number of large muscle activities are available in the playground
10:15 AM - 11:30 AM	Indoor activity - children explore a variety of materials in the classroom environment, adults encourage child-initiated play and offer teacher-directed activities
11:30 AM - 11:45 AM	Clean-up and prepare for lunch (diapering, toileting, hand-washing) Storytime Children help to set tables
11:45 AM - 12:15 PM	Lunch Clean tables Wash hands
12:15 PM - 12:30 PM	Help children prepare for nap (diapering, toileting, hand-washing)
12:30 PM - 2:30 PM	Nap
2:30 PM - 3:00 PM	Wake-up and cuddle time (diapering, toileting, hand-washing) Prepare for snack
3:00 PM - 3:30 PM	Snack Clean tables Wash hands
3:30 PM - 5:30 PM	Play indoors and outside - read stories, quiet play such as table art or toys, Help parents and children reunite and leave for home

## WHSCDA, Inc. CHILD CARE PROGRAM INFORMATION

### CHANGE IN AGE GROUP

Infants who have reached 18 months of age transition to Toddlers and toddlers who have turned 3 years move to Preschool. A child's transition depends on availability of space, the time of year, and the individual needs of the child.

Classroom teachers will make the parent aware of the move in advance and discuss any problems or questions the parent may have. In addition, teachers will prepare the child for the move and accompany him or her to the new room. A conference time will be scheduled for the parent to meet with the new teacher to discuss the child's interests, needs, and to familiarize the parent with the program.

### SCREENINGS

In order to evaluate your child's physical and intellectual growth, our center offers many types of screenings. Throughout the school year, we conduct vision, hearing, height, weight, blood pressure, speech, social/emotional and developmental screens on children 3 years and older.

Screenings are designed to measure a child's strengths and identify areas in which there may be a potential for learning difficulties. All screening information is confidential and is only shared with you, the parent. If your child is not able to complete all the required screenings, or has difficulty with one or more of them, he or she will be re-screened at a later time.

If, after two attempts, the difficulty still exists or there is evidence indicating a possible issue, you are advised to refer your child to a professional for further testing.

#### Explanation of Screenings

- \* *Vision screening* checks your child's eyesight.
- \* *Hearing screening* checks your child's ability to hear sounds.
- \* *Height and weight measures* evaluate your child's physical growth.
- \* *Blood Pressure (BP)* evaluates your child's heart and blood vessel functions.
- \* *Developmental screens* are completed using a tool called the ESI-R (Early Screening Inventory-Revised), which evaluates *speech, language, fine and gross motor, and cognitive skills*. This screening will occur within 45 days from your child's first day of enrollment.
- \* The *DECA* (Devereux Early Childhood Assessment) is an assessment used to measure your child's protective factors (coping skills) which are related to social and emotional development. Protective factors help your child to manage feelings of anger and stress so he or she can be successful. The DECA measures the protective factors of Attachment, Initiative, and Self Control, as well as any Behavior Concerns you may have about your child. Because school and home are both places where children develop these protective

factors, you and your child's teacher complete separate DECA's (parents upon enrollment; teachers during the 4<sup>th</sup> week of care), then results are compared and discussed.

- \* *Child Outreach* screening is a free service offered to all children 3 to 5 years old by your local school district in partnership with the Rhode Island Department of Education. This screening provides information about your child's development and resources that are available within your community as well as identifying children who may need further assessment, intervention and/or services at an early age in order to prevent the occurrence of more severe problems later. All children entering Kindergarten must be screened by Child Outreach.

## **FAMILY ENGAGEMENT**

- \* Parents are a very important part of our program. We believe that education needs to involve parents on many levels in order to provide quality programming. In the early years, it is very important that parents and teachers work together in educating your child. Always remember you, as the parent, are the first and most influential teacher of your child and by working together, we can ensure a successful program.
- \* A pre-enrollment conference will be scheduled with your child's caregiver. This meeting is designed to begin a rapport between you and the teacher and provides the teacher with some insights on your child as well as home culture and beliefs. This information helps the teacher plan a curriculum that celebrates the cultural differences and similarities of the children in the classroom.
- \* Conferences with your child's teacher are scheduled periodically throughout the year (November/ December; February/ March; and May/ June) for the purpose of reviewing the developmental summary and shared goal setting. Additional conferences may be requested on an as needed basis by the parent or teacher.
- \* Monthly newsletters will keep you informed of classroom / center program planning, special activities, and information on child development, health, nutrition, guidance and discipline, curriculum, and home activities.
- \* Parent Resource Center: Parent educational videos, children's videos, and books are available for you to take home and enjoy with your child.
- \* Parent / staff member trainings are scheduled throughout the year. These meetings are designed to enhance our knowledge on topics such as Health and Safety, Child Development, Nutrition Needs of Young Children, Guidance and Discipline, and Appropriate Developmental Practices.
- \* Each room has a Parent Area where you will find a posted summary of the day's activities, special events, and messages. We hope you find the information helpful in understanding the program and becoming more knowledgeable about the classroom.
- \* Parents are always welcome to spend time with their children in the center. Feel free to come in during the day to get a first-hand look at the center in action. You can expect to see the children very busy with many activities. You may come right in and join the activity or you may discreetly observe your child in his/her play. If it is difficult for you to visit the center because of your work schedule, come in during your lunch break and eat with your child. Or, in the case of younger children, you may wish to schedule a feeding during this time.



- \* Parents will be asked to assist us in evaluating our program each year.
- \* Parents are invited to serve on the WHSCDA Parent Committee. This committee is made up of parent volunteers who meet to develop specific recommendations to improve the quality of care for our children and families.
- \* You can designate your United Way charitable contribution to go to WHSCDA! Many employers encourage their employees to participate in this annual fundraising activity, and you, your friends, and family members can choose us as the recipient of your contribution. Simply put our name in the write-in portion of the pledge form. There is a space about ¾ of the way down the form that says Optional. Beside it, write in WHSCDA.
- \* In the summer of 2007, a parent established *The Highland Park Children’s Center Teacher’s Fund*. She wanted a tangible way to express her appreciation to the staff members for being such an important part of the lives of her family. Through her efforts, several families added to the fund. In sharing her touching, thoughtful words with our families, we strive to continue the fund. This has been our promise. Her sentiments are below:  
*“The object of education is to prepare the young to educate themselves throughout their lives.” Robert M. Hutchins* If this is the case, then the children who have had the opportunity to spend time with the teachers at Highland Park Children’s Center are prepared to become lifetime learners! For our children, all three, who have spent more than 5 years each at the center, we know they are eager learners. We also know that they have learned a number of skills and developed character traits that will serve them well in the coming years.

*At the advent of leaving Highland Park after a total of 7 years, we began thinking about ways in which we could honor the teachers and caregivers who invested so much care, love, and understanding in our children. As we prepared for the end of the summer, we were informed that we could use our deposit for the last week of school. At that moment, we had an idea. If we could take our deposit and donate to a fund that would be dedicated to the teachers, this might be the perfect way to create a legacy of thanks to those that give so much. After a discussion with Karen Bouchard, Executive Director, she agreed to establish a fund, which would be dedicated to the teachers, for their use (school supplies, books, professional development etc.).*

*With the fund in place, other families can choose to make a donation or dedicate their deposit upon leaving the center. Our family’s goal was to establish a long-term way in which we would be able to say thanks and to value the caregivers and teachers at Highland Park.*

If you are interested in contributing, please contact the Child Care Coordinator. As the Fund will remain in place, contributing in future years will be an option available to every family, alumni and all! *Since Highland Park Children’s Center is a non-profit center, donations to the HPCC Teacher’s Fund can be deducted as a charitable donation.*

## **VOLUNTEERING**

Parents are encouraged to participate in their child’s education by volunteering as much as possible. Our parents are a valuable resource to the program:

- \* in the classroom
- \* sharing a skill/talent
- \* fundraising
- \* serving on a committee
- \* repairing toys/equipment
- \* participating in workshops and events

Our goal is to provide you with opportunities to participate so that you gain:

- \* skills
- \* knowledge
- \* added self-confidence

- \* a bigger support network
- \* FUN! NEW IDEAS! NEW FRIENDS!

## QUESTIONS/CONCERNS

If you have any questions or concerns, we urge you to discuss them directly with your child's teacher. The teacher is the individual who knows your child best, and for whom establishing effective two-way communication with you is critical to effectively caring for your child. If an issue concerning your child's care, or about a policy or procedure arises, please consult with the teacher first. You will usually find a quick explanation or a satisfactory resolution to the problem in this manner. If you are not comfortable with the response you receive from the teacher, however, we ask you to do the following:

- If after speaking with your child's teacher about a concern/issue, you feel you need additional clarification or assistance, you may contact the Child Care Coordinator at 401.769.1850 or email [childcarecoordinator@whscda.org](mailto:childcarecoordinator@whscda.org).
- If after speaking with the Child Care Coordinator about a concern/issue, you are still not satisfied, you may contact the Executive Director at 401.769.1850 or email [executivedirector@whscda.org](mailto:executivedirector@whscda.org).

## WHSCDA, Inc. CHILD CARE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Woonsocket Head Start Child Development Association, Inc. operates child care programs for children from six weeks to five years of age in multiple locations. Our programs meet and exceed educational requirements established by the Rhode Island Department of Education. Our teachers are trained in Early Childhood Education and in developmentally appropriate practices for children. The attached policies and procedures enable us to deliver quality programs to you and your children through best child care practices. Please take the time to read and understand them.

## MEAL AND NUTRITION POLICY

Unlike many child care centers, this agency operates a food service program for the children. The menus are planned by a nutritionist to meet USDA Child Care Food Program standards. By providing children with breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack, they receive 2/3 of their daily nutrition requirements here at the center.

- \* Children are served breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack. A special menu has been developed for each age group, taking into consideration the eating abilities, likes/ dislikes, and nutritional requirements. Additionally, if there are medical/religious reasons why children cannot have a certain food, substitutions may be provided following a consultation with the Dietitian. All meals and snacks are well balanced and nutritionally sound. The center provides eating and drinking utensils: spoons, bowls, no-spill cups, etc. All utensils are sterilized in the dishwasher after each use.
- \* Mealtimes are relaxed, enjoyable times for children. Teachers sit at the table with the children, assisting them and conversing with them throughout the meal. Mealtimes are ideal for building independence in children. Children assist in washing and setting tables and in the clean-up process once the meal is finished. Children participate in the mealtime routines: serving themselves, pouring their own milk and juice. All these tasks give children a sense of self-importance and competence.

- \* Monthly menus are provided to inform you of the food served. The center serves whole milk to children 12 to 24 months and 1% milk in all other classrooms.
- \* We appreciate and understand your desire to make your child's birthday a special event by bringing in birthday cakes or other foods. However, our concern must be for the safety of all our children, therefore we must refuse any food our cooks have not prepared themselves entry into the school. Other non-food party goods, such as birthday hats and plates, may be sent. Check with your child's teacher for other ideas. Our aim for children is to provide them with a healthy diet designed to enhance their physical growth. We introduce a variety of foods to encourage good eating habits. Junk food is not part of the menu and should be avoided.

## **FOOD ALLERGY POLICY**

We realize that as parents, you would like to give your children the best there is. This may include an extra little something at mealtime brought from home to supplement the meals provided by the center. However, because some of the children suffer from food allergies, we are unable to allow parents to bring in any home or commercially made food to school.

There are many children who are allergic to foods such as milk products, eggs, nuts (including peanut butter), fish, strawberries, and even wheat and these are only the most common food allergies! For these children, eating even a small amount of these foods can become a life-threatening experience. If a child were to share a food product with another child in the class who was allergic to that product, a severe reaction could develop.

Cooks and teachers have been informed of all children's food allergies. If even one child in a class is allergic to a certain food, that food is either not served in his or her classroom, or the child will be given a substitute. All food served in the classrooms has been either purchased and/or prepared by our cooks who know all the ingredients in each meal. Knowing meal ingredients will also help us to respond more quickly if a new allergic reaction were to occur in a child.

- \* Before a child enters the program, families are asked about their child's dietary needs, including food allergies and intolerances.
- \* You may ask for food restrictions for medical (allergies/intolerances) reasons, religious reasons, or personal beliefs.
- \* If there a medical reasons why your child cannot have a certain food, you will be referred to the dietician. A consultation for clarification of medical condition(s) and restricted menu item(s) may be arranged per the dietician's discretion.
- \* A note from the pediatrician is required for children with allergies requiring need for possible medication administration with exposure to offending food.
- \* For children with food allergies requiring medication administration, an Individual Health Plan (IHP) is developed by the nurse and kept in the classroom.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

The term "discipline" is intended to mean "teaching, guiding, or in some way helping a child to learn positive values, rules, and patterns of behavior." Children are disciplined when ...they see possible consequences of their actions, alternative

behaviors are proposed, they learn to control themselves. Children who are disciplined....learn to balance their needs with those of other people, feel good about themselves, become increasingly independent.

- \* Staff members serve as a positive role model for children in care and establish strong, nurturing relationships with each child.
- \* Staff members use positive methods in guiding children back on task, encourage appropriate behavior, and set clear limits and rules that children can understand.
  
- \* Staff members match their expectations with children's developing abilities and capabilities.
- \* Staff members praise children's accomplishments as well as their attempts at tasks.
- \* Staff members use positive, firm limit setting in situations where a child's safety is at stake.
- \* Staff members assist children by redirecting them from inappropriate actions to more favorable activities.
- \* Staff members do not hit children or engage in any form of corporal punishment.
- \* Children are not subjected to cruel or severe punishment, humiliation, or verbal abuse.
- \* Children are not deprived of meals, snacks or outdoor time as a form of discipline.
- \* Children are not punished for soiling or wetting.

#### **MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS AND IMMUNIZATIONS POLICY**

Prior to admission, all children must show proof of having had a physical examination by a licensed health professional and must be up-to-date on all required immunizations. The physical exam must have been performed within 6 months of enrollment. Proof of lead and anemia testing is also required.

As we are mandated to track the health status of all children who attend our facility, we request that you submit proof of yearly medical exams, lead and anemia testing, and any additional immunizations given to your child. If your pediatrician does not feel yearly lead testing is warranted, we will request you have him or her sign a lead testing waiver.

#### **ILLNESS POLICY**

If your child is ill, he or she should not attend child care. Your child will need extra rest and attention best provided at home. Keeping your sick child at home also reduces the spread of contagious illnesses in the classroom.

If you think your child is ill, but feels he or she is able to attend care, please inform a staff member of any signs and symptoms your child has exhibited; she can help you decide whether or not your child should stay. If your child becomes too ill to participate in classroom activities, a staff member will call and ask that you come pick-up your child from care. If a child has been prescribed antibiotics, he or she may return to child care only after having taken the antibiotic for at least 24 hours.

A child who gives any evidence of suspicious symptoms of a possible contagious disease will be isolated from the other children and you will be called to take your child home. However, in many cases, the decision to exclude is based on the comfort of the child. Children are not excluded from care for a common cold unless they are too ill to participate in normal activities.

Children will be excluded from child care for the following reasons:

- \* A child is too ill to participate comfortably in classroom activities
- \* An ill child requires more care than staff members are able to provide without risking the health & safety of other children
- \* Fever of 101°F or above
- \* Rash with fever and behavior change
- \* Conjunctivitis
- \* Two or more episodes of vomiting in a 24 hour period
- \* Watery diarrhea
- \* Head lice
- \* Contagious skin diseases
- \* Strep throat
- \* Mouth sores with drooling
- \* Contagious illnesses such as chicken pox, whooping cough, mumps, measles

Staff members are permitted to dispense medication, but only under the following conditions:

- \* The medication has been prescribed by a physician
- \* The medication is in its original container with the pharmacy label attached
- \* The appropriate authorization forms have been signed by the parent and/or the physician
- \* Staff members do not administer medication not prescribed by a physician.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

All staff members have been trained in both Pediatric First Aid and CPR. Medical emergency plans are also in place. In the event of any serious accident or emergency, parents are contacted immediately. Please make sure the information on your child's emergency contact card is current and notify us immediately of any changes in addresses and/or phone numbers.

## **PARENTAL PICK-UP PROCEDURE**

- \* Parents **MUST** come into the center to sign out their child on the Sign-In/ Out sheet.
- \* Children will not be allowed to leave the center with anyone not authorized by the parent.
- \* Authorized persons must be kept current and documented on the child's emergency card.
- \* Please notify us if your child is to be released to someone other than the designated familiar person.

Upon enrollment, all parents or legal guardians are required to select a code by which staff members can positively verify their identity when calling to request release of their child to someone other than the designated proper person(s). The

individual authorized by the parent via telephone call is required to produce proper identification complete with photograph. A child will never be release to an unauthorized individual.

In a continuing effort to be responsible to both children's safety and parents' rights, the following policy has been established regarding children leaving our facilities:

If, for any reason, a center staff member suspects the individual driving a child from the center is impaired by either alcohol or drugs, he or she will be asked to find a suitable alternate driver. If this request is refused, both the local police and the state child protective agency, the Rhode Island Department of Children Youth and Families (DCYF), will be notified immediately.

*Please remember our responsibility is to ensure the safety of children in our care.*

### **CUSTODY OR RESTRAINING ORDERS POLICY**

If there is a current custody or restraining order pertaining to a child in our care, a copy of this document must be given to the agency upon enrollment. If such a court order is obtained subsequent to enrollment, it is your responsibility to provide us with a copy immediately. This agency will comply with and enforce the court order without exception.

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

In any case of suspected child abuse or neglect the following procedure will be followed:

- \* Staff members who suspect abuse and/or neglect, either from observations or from something said by the child or parent, report the incident/case to the agency's Child Abuse and Neglect Coordinator **immediately**.
- \* The agency's Child Abuse and Neglect Coordinator consults with the reporting staff member and other appropriate staff members and will reach a decision about possible reporting (or follow-up).
- \* In cases of reports to DCYF, the Child Abuse and Neglect Coordinator will be responsible. In most cases, parents are informed of concerns and that a report is being made. This is done in a supportive manner where assistance and guidance are offered.

It is important to note that **everyone** in the state of Rhode Island is considered a mandated reporter. This means anyone on our Head Start & Child Care staff who suspect or fear that a child is being abused or neglected have an obligation to call the child abuse hotline if the Child Abuse and Neglect Coordinator does not do so. It is then the states responsibility to determine if, in fact, abuse or neglect has taken place.

A copy of all child abuse/neglect reports are placed in the child's file. Instances of frequent unexplained injuries, and/or consistent signs of improper nurturing (excessive tiredness or illness, poor hygiene, improper clothing, etc.) may be considered a potential neglect/abuse situation which requires a plan for intervention.

## FINANCIAL AGREEMENT POLICIES

Our annual program tuitions are calculated in weekly increments for the convenience of the majority of our parents. However, it is your option to pay on a bi-weekly or monthly schedule, as long as you are paying in advance of receiving services.

At the time of admission, a deposit equal to one week's tuition is required. This fee is non-refundable should you choose not to enroll your child. Once the enrollment process is complete, the deposit will remain in a special deposit account to be used for your last week of care when you have given your written two week notice for discontinuance of care. Should your weekly tuition increase (adding days) you will need to increase your deposit. Failure to provide written notification two weeks in advance will result in the forfeiture of your deposit.

Child Care payments are due in advance of your child's week with us. A late payment fee of \$10 is assessed when the weekly fee due is not received by 12 noon on Monday (or the first day of the week the child attends). If the fee + \$10 are not paid by the end of the day on Monday, then the child may not return to care until the full amount owed is paid.

Full weekly payment is due each week including weeks when the child care center is closed for holidays or when your child is absent due to illness, or another personal reason. No credits are applied for days when the center is closed for any reason. The exception to this is the one vacation week of your choice, which must be taken as a full week, not individual days. New families must be enrolled in care for 5 months before a vacation week of your choice can be used. Vacation week credits are applied once during a 12-month period.

You will be charged a late fee of \$1.00 per minute when your child is not picked up by the center's closing time of 5:30pm. Fees are to be paid directly to the child care provider; there is no grace period. Please provide us with the courtesy of a phone call if you know you will be late. If you are repeatedly late, you will be required to find alternate care for your child.

There is a \$25.00 returned check fee each time we have to redeposit a check.

*Modification of Hours:* When you first enroll your child in our program, we agree to provide care for certain days of the week and hours of the day. If you find that your days/ hours change, you must get prior approval from your child's teacher to see if an accommodation can be made. A new financial agreement indicating your new days/ hours must also be signed.

Our child care program exists to enable you to go to work/ school. If you are not working or in school on a certain day, you will need to talk to your child's teacher about a possible change in the times of care so the necessary accommodations can be made. We will do all we can to support you on these non-work/ school days. Remember to always let us know how to reach you in case of an emergency on these days.

## **HOLIDAY CELEBRATION POLICY**

We have a "holiday free" curriculum to the extent that it is possible while still responding appropriately to the expressed interests of the children. It is absolutely appropriate and desirable to respond to a child's questions about a certain holiday just as we would any other subject; however, we will not initiate discussions or projects that focus on holidays.

What we believe to be reasonable:

- \* We do not want to contribute in any way to the overdone commercialism that has overtaken holidays in general.
- \* Many traditional holiday activities actually interfere with how very young children learn as they are teacher directed and not well integrated into the rest of the curriculum.
- \* We do not want to send children or parents the wrong message by choosing to celebrate certain holidays and not others and there is not enough time to celebrate them all.
- \* We need to steer clear of religious content in our curriculum. Many of the holidays are essentially religious celebrations that have been turned into mass merchandizing opportunities.

## **SNOW POLICY**

If the agency closes or has a delay due to inclement weather, announcements can be seen on local NBC channel 10, registering for text messages/emails at [turnto10.com](http://turnto10.com) and selecting Woonsocket Head Start & Day Care, heard on Woonsocket AM radio stations WNRI 1390/ WOON 1240, or by calling your child's center: Park Square 769.1850 or Highland Park 765.8730.

## **HOLIDAY CLOSINGS**

**January 1<sup>st</sup>**

**Martin Luther King Day**

**Spring Break Day-celebrated on Good Friday**

**Memorial Day**

**July 4<sup>th</sup>**

**Victory Day**

**Labor Day**

**Columbus Day**

**Veterans Day-when it falls during the week**



## Thanksgiving

## Day after Thanksgiving

## Christmas

\*Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve-center closes at 2:00pm

## JEWELRY POLICY

We have observed many children in our care are wearing jewelry, such as earrings, necklaces, bracelets. This is primarily a concern because of the implications for children's safety. Pediatricians and child care workers alike report increased incidences of serious injury when young children wear jewelry. Necklaces can get caught on equipment/ furniture or become tightly twisted around children's necks. Ear lobes can be torn when earrings (especially those that dangle) are grabbed by another child or get caught on something during play. In addition, very young children often put items in their mouths and could easily swallow a small piece of jewelry.

To ensure the safety of all children in our care, **we do not allow children under the age of three to wear jewelry of any kind.** We allow post earrings only (no dangling earrings, no necklaces, etc.) for children age three and older. If a child wears jewelry in violation of this policy, staff members follow up with the parents. ***PLEASE NOTE: Under no circumstances is the agency responsible for any items of jewelry that children bring and/or wear into our centers.***

## PARKING LOT SAFETY PROCEDURES

### Highland Park Children's Center

- \* THE PARKING LOT IS ONE-WAY.
- \* To ensure the safety of everyone, arrows are painted on the driveway indicating the direction of travel. All vehicles must enter and exit the parking lot in the following manner:
  - To enter - use the driveway closest to the staff (right side) parking lot.
  - To exit - use the driveway closest to the traffic lights at the bottom of the hill on Mendon Road.
- \* THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO PARKING IN THE FIRE LANE.
- \* NO DIAGONAL PARKING IS ALLOWED. You will be asked to move your car if you are not parked in an appropriate manner.
- \* The use of the staff parking area is open to parents as well. Please use this area at any time.

### Park Square Children's Center

- \* Parking spaces are located in the front of the building.
- \* To insure the safety of all when leaving the center, we ask that everyone drive around the building to keep the flow of traffic moving, specifically between 8:30am-9:15am.

## **NOTICE OF PRIVACY POLICIES**

### **FOR WOONSOCKET HEAD START**

#### **CHILD DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION, Inc.**

This notice describes how information about your child and family may be used and shared with other agencies, and how you can get access to this information. Please review this policy carefully.

#### **Introduction**

All employees of Woonsocket Head Start Child Development Association (WHSCDA) are committed to protecting all health and personal information about your child and your family. This notice describes the different types of personal information we collect and how and when we would share this information with other agencies. It also describes your rights as they relate to this information.

#### **Understanding Your Child's Health Records and Personal Family Information**

When you apply to enroll your child into a WHSCDA Head Start or Child Care program, health and other personal information is collected. Then, once your child is accepted into a program, an individual record is opened on your child and more personal information is collected. Information included in your child's file includes:

- Results of physical examinations
- Results of blood tests, including, but not limited to, lead and iron levels
- Vaccination (shot) records
- Allergies
- Developmental screening tests for height, weight, vision, hearing, and ability to learn
- Your child and family's medical, nutrition and mental health histories
- Medical treatment and prescription information
- Financial information

- Documents generated by WHSCDA, such as permission forms, family/child reports and assessments, partnership agreements, attendance records, etc.

- Services rendered by WHSCDA personnel

#### **How Your Personal Information Is Used**

The above information is used for the following purposes:

- To ensure your child is up-to-date on all medical exams, vaccinations, and blood tests
- To establish an individual health care plan for your child to deal with medical concerns and allergies while at school/child care
- To establish a nutrition care plan to help you improve your child's eating habits
- To ensure your child has normal physical and emotional development
- To identify and correct any vision or hearing problems
- To identify and address any learning problems
- To determine eligibility for the Head Start program and fee schedule for child care
- To document services rendered to your family by WHSCDA personnel for case management and billing purposes
- For partnership building and goal setting between your family and WHSCDA and/or other collaborating agencies
- To ensure smooth transitions with other agencies in and out of WHSCDA

#### **Your Health and Personal Information Rights**

Your child's record is the property of WHSCDA. However, the information belongs to you, and you have the right to:

- Inspect and copy your child's record by appointment
- Obtain a list of those agencies with which we have shared your personal information
- Request restrictions on the use and sharing of your personal information

- Request that information be communicated by alternate means or to alternative locations
- Refuse authorization to use or disclose information unless that action has already been taken
- Request that information be corrected or added. However, we may deny your request if the information is accurate and complete or was not created by WHSCDA.
- To government agencies when we are legally required to do so. These include, but are not limited to: Department of Health and Human Services, DCYF, and Department of Justice
- To the Police for safety purposes
- For legal proceedings per a valid court order or search warrant

### **WHSCDA Responsibilities**

- Maintain the privacy of your personal information
- Provide you with a copy of this notice explaining the information we collect, maintain and share, and to abide by its terms
- Notify you if we are unable to abide by the terms of this notice
- Notify you if we are not able to agree to requested restrictions
- Attempt to satisfy reasonable requests to restrict, change, or communicate your personal information
- Obtain appropriate releases when required

WHSCDA reserves the right to change our practices, and will mail a revised notice to the address you have given us. Furthermore, we will not use or disclose your personal information without your permission, except as described in this notice. We will also discontinue to use or share information after we have received a written request from you asking that we do so.

### **To Whom WHSCDA May Disclose Your Personal Information**

- To emergency medical personnel in case of a medical emergency with your child
- To health care providers to obtain additional information about a health concern or to seek a referral
- To the RI Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) and other organizations for reimbursement of services
- To the Woonsocket School Department to arrange for services
- To your health insurance plan

**POLICIES STATEMENT**

THE FOLLOWING FORMS MUST BE COMPLETED PRIOR TO ENROLLMENT:

Application

Up-to-Date Immunization and Health Records (Physical)

Emergency Card

Meal Benefit Form

Financial Agreement

Permission for Classroom and Publication Pictures

Policies Statement

I understand Woonsocket Head Start and Child Care can refuse admission until receipt of medical and immunization information required by state law.

I understand each child is admitted on a trial basis. The center reserves the right to request withdrawal of a child if it is felt to be in the best interest of the child and/or the school.

I have received a WHSCDA, Inc. Parent Handbook and all policies have been explained to me.

I understand that failure to abide by the policies may result in termination of services.

I have been given a copy of this statement.

\_\_\_\_\_

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_

DATE

\_\_\_\_\_

STAFF MEMBER SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_

DATE



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PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
STAFF MEMBER SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE