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**Daydreams Child Development Center**

**Parent and Student Handbook**

**Philosophy and Goals:**

At Daydreams we believe children are active and complex learners. Providing a stimulating and exciting environment that is nurturing and loving will enhance a child’s development and will support a child’s overall growth. We believe that children need opportunities and adult support to explore and manipulate their environment. Further, children’s individual differences must be recognized and respected. Providing a quality preschool program for young children will support their learning for the future.

At Daydreams we offer developmentally appropriate learning activities that support the social/emotional, physical, and cognitive development of young children. It is our goal to make each child feel worthy and special and to support both the children and their parents as the child enters preschool.

Some examples of the skills that children acquire at the different ages are:

**Ages Birth to 8 months:**

Uses complex reflexes – physical development

Lifts and holds head up – physical development

Smiles or vocalizes to initiate social contact – social/emotional development.

Displays several clearly different emotions – social/emotional development

Hits or kicks an object to make a pleasing sight or sound continue –cognitive

Observes own hands – cognitive development

**Ages 8 months to 18 months:**

Sits well in chairs - physical development

Stoops, trots, walk backwards a few steps - physical development

Demonstrates intense attention to adult language – social /emotional

Shows pride and pleasure in new accomplishments – social/emotional

Brings a stool to use for reaching something – cognitive development

Looks at picture books with interests and points to objects – cognitive

**18 months to 3 year olds:**

Walks upstairs one foot on each step – physical development

Stands and walks on tiptoes – physical development

Has beginning notions of self – social/emotional development

Shows pride in creation and production – social/emotional development

Classifies, labels, and sorts objects by group – cognitive development

Helps dress and undress self – cognitive development

**3-5 year olds:**

Walks heel to toe – physical development

Begins to coordinate movements to climb – physical development

Acts more cooperatively than a toddler does – social/emotional development

Enjoys dramatic play with other children – social / emotional development

Uses language to organize thought – cognitive development

Can retell four or five step directive or the sequence in a story – cognitive

**Staff Qualifications:**

All of the teachers and staff at Daydreams share a love of children. We believe that all of our staff have something special to offer, so sharing is highly encouraged.

All of our staff must be fingerprinted and a complete background check is conducted. They must pass a Level 2 FBI/ FDLE Background check. In accordance with the Department of Children and Families, all staff must take 45 hours of training and complete 20 hours of additional in –service training each year. Our staff are certified in CPR and first Aid and some of them hold a degree in early childhood education. Several of our staff have completed or are working toward completion of their CDA (Child Development Associate).

**Student Admission:**

Daydreams Child Development Center accepts children 8 weeks to 5 years of age. We admit children of any race, color, religion, or nationality. No child will be refused admission or be dismissed from Daydreams for reasons of race, color, religion, or nationality. However, the administration reserves the right to refuse admission and /or dismiss a child whose behavior is disruptive or harmful to him/herself or others. All of the children are admitted conditionally on a 2-month trial period.

**Parent Involvement:**

At Daydreams, we love our families. We encourage each family to be as involved as they would like in the educational process of their child. Talking to your child’s teacher, volunteering or stopping by for a visit are all encouraged with proper notice given. When special events take place, we will let you know so that you can plan to attend if you wish. If you are interested in volunteering, please let the office know; we welcome your participation. If you are interested in observing, you will also need to let the office know before entering the classroom. Please remember that for some children saying “good-bye” twice in one day can be difficult and emotional. For this reason, we ask that you be selective about the observation and volunteering visits and try to keep these visits on days when your child can go home with you.

**Drop Off and pick up;**

A parent or guardian must accompany children into the building. **Each child must be signed in on the computer**. There are no drop offs allowed after 10:00am. Preschool only children will be waiting for pick up at 12 or 1:30. All children must be picked up in the building and signed out on the computer. If someone other than yourself will be picking your child up, please be sure that person is listed on your authorized pick up sheet and that you notify the office of the change in pick up. Only those people indicated on your child’s pick up list may pick your child up and they must be prepared to show identification to the office.

**What to bring:**

* One soft stuffed toy for your child to use at nap time (full day only)
* Blanket and pillow for nap time (full day only)
* Bag or backpack with your child’s name on it.
* Clothing that encourages self-help skills.
* Complete change of clothes labeled in a zip lock bag.
* Pull-ups, diapers, or training pants and wet wipes.
* Bag lunch.
* In cooler weather, a light weight jacket or sweater.

**What not to bring:**

* Toys and treasures are to be kept at home except on special show and tell days or on invitation from the teacher during the study unit. It is very upsetting to children when they lose, break or misplace a special toy at school.
* Gum or candy.
* Please do not let your child bring money to school.

**What to wear:**

Please dress your child in simple, comfortable clothes suitable for the weather. Please label all jackets and sweaters with your child’s name. Children should wear shoes or sneakers that fit the foot securely. Flip flops, cowboy boots, or dress shoes do not give your child good protection or traction when playing on the playground.

**Lunches:**

All children need to have a lunch with a drink each day. We offer a catered lunch program on Fridays. This is our pizza day. Each classroom has a microwave, so we are able to heat lunches up for your child.

**Snacks:**

Juices, fruits, raisins, bagels, nutria-grain bars, peanut butter crackers, and such items will be offered to the children in the morning and in the afternoon. During the year, parents may bring a special snack for the class as a treat. If you would like to share a snack with the class, please let the teacher know in advance.

**Birthdays:**

Birthdays are a very special time for young children. We enjoy helping your child celebrate their birthday. If you wish to provide a special treat at morning snack or after lunch, please let the teacher know in advance. This treat should also be prepackaged or store bought. Please make an effort to keep it simple. Please do not bring written invitations to your child’s home party to school unless the entire class is invited. **Birthday gifts should not be exchanged in class.**

**Naps/rest time:**

We have a specified time each day for resting/napping. While all children do not nap, most rest quietly. Children will be provided with a cot for rest time. They may bring a blanket and pillow and sleep toy.

**Holidays:**

Daydreams Child Development Center will be closed for the following holidays:

Memorial Day

Third and Fourth of July

Labor Day

Thanksgiving and the day after

We will be closed for Christmas Break (the week between Christmas and New Year’s) we will reopen the first day after New Year’s.

These dates are subject to change each year. Please see the Director about any questions you may have.

**Yearly enrollment:**

Re-enrollment dates are established yearly. Completion of the registration forms and payment of the annually established fees begins the process of securing a position for the next school year. Enrollment will be guaranteed only after the necessary applications are complete and the required fees are paid.

**Withdrawal policy:**

If you plan to withdraw your child from the program, please notify the Director in writing. This should be done two weeks prior to the last day your child will be in the program. Your monthly/weekly tuition charge will continue until notice is given

We reserve the right to withdraw any child from the program for any of the following reasons:

* The child is a constant disturbance to the others
* Repeatedly injures other children
* Continually behaves in a manner that threatens his/her own safety
* It is evident that the programs schedule, philosophies, and goals or other issues are in conflict with a family.
* Non-payment fees

**Please note: prior to asking a parent to withdraw a child, we will contact the parent and attempt to resolve the issue to concern.**

**Health policy:**

If your child is unable to participate in daily activities such as outdoor/playground time, he/she should be kept home that day.

If your child has exhibited any of the following symptoms in the last 24 hours, do not send your child to school. If your child exhibits any of the following symptoms while ad Daydreams, we will notify you immediately. We will ask that you come and pick up your child within two hours after the initial phone call.

* Fever at or over 101.0
* Diarrhea ( two episodes in a school day)
* Vomiting
* Excessively runny nose (thick or greenish discharge)
* Sever cold
* Sore throat
* Bad and/or continuous cough
* Unusual skin rash
* Conjunctivitis (pink eye) or “cold in the eye”
* Head lice (no nit policy)
* Communicable diseases (chicken pox, roseola, etc.)

Your child **must be free of any of the above symptoms for 24 hours before returning to school** or be on a doctor prescribed antibiotic for 24 hours before returning to school. You must notify the administration immediately if your child contracts a contagious disease.

We will gladly administer medication with a prescription to your child. You must complete the authorized form allowing us to do so. This does not include medications such as Tylenol or Advil to prevent/treat fevers, unless they are accompanied by a prescription from the doctor. This form is available in the office and must be completed before medication will be dispensed.

**Emergency plans**

**Accidents and First Aid:**

Unfortunately accidents happen. While we try to minimize the number of accidents that occur while your child is away, we cannot always prevent every one. Should your child have an accident while at school, the incident will be documented, and, if necessary, we will notify the parents. Minor bumps and scratches will be taken care of and cleaned with soap and water then bandaged. Ice and TLC will be applied. We are not allowed to use any other type of medication without a completed authorization form.

**Emergency medical treatment:**

In an emergency situation, school personnel will contact Emergency Fire and Medical Assistance (911). A parent or authorized contact will be notified immediately.

**Fire Drills:**

Fire drills are conducted monthly. Children are walked to a designated position at the perimeter of the school to clear a path for emergency vehicles.

**Tornado/Hurricane Warnings:**

Children will be walked to the interior hallway in the main building. We will seat the children in a tucked position.

**Major Disasters:**

Disasters of this type, which require the closing of the schools, will be handled through major communication channels. Television stations and radio stations will be direct communication channels. Messages concerning school closings will normally be announced early in the morning of each closing. Daydreams will follow the decisions made by the Orange County School Systems

**Discipline Policy:**

At Daydreams, one of our goals is to help children become responsible citizens and to develop appropriate skills. To encourage the development of these skills, we use a positive approach. We always encourage appropriate behavior through the use of verbal praise, adult modeling, reminders, and encouragement. It is our intent to avoid embarrassing, humiliating, or frightening your child for inappropriate behaviors. At no time will your child be disciplined by the use of physical punishment. Removal of food privileges, lack of rest, of denial of toilet access will never be used to discipline your child.

Remember that an unusually joyous, as well as an unpleasant experience at home, can affect a child’s behavior at school. Please let your child’s teacher know if there is a change in routine or an unusual event or circumstance at home. When necessary the following will be used:

* The child will be offered an opportunity to move to a “safe spot” to take a break from the group.
* If inappropriate behaviors persist, the child will be asked to go to the office and speak with the Director/Asst. Director.
* Parents will be notified or reoccurring behavior difficulties or sever misbehaviors. We will work together to develop a plan for the child at school.
* If the disciplinary problem becomes too severe and our cooperative plan is ineffective, we reserve the right to ask that the child be withdrawn from school.

**Biting Policy:**

**For Parents:**

First offense – A warning in the form of a note will be given to the parents telling of the incident.

Second offense – a parent conference is required and strategies will be developed to assist the child at school.

Third offense – parents will be called to immediately pick up their child. The child may not return for 24 hour period from the time of pick up.

Fourth offense – this would result in dismissal from the program unless extenuating circumstances are involved.

**For Children:**

Procedures will be followed in the classroom such as separation from peers, loss of privilege, or other actions stated in a developed discipline plan or In the discipline portion of this handbook.

**Changes in the Home Situation:**

Occasionally there may be a personal crisis in your family. Although this may not be related to the center, it may adversely affect the behavior of your child while in our care. It is not our purpose to invade your privacy; however, should such an event occur, we would appreciate a brief note or phone call to make us aware of your personal situation. This would allow us to respond to the special needs of your child.

**Financial Policies of Daydreams**

**Tuition Payment Policy**

**Monthly Preschool Tuition:**

Tuition is computed on a monthly basis, NOT an attendance.

* Monthly tuition payments are due in the **FIRST** of each month. There will be a $20.00 late fee for payments received after the 3rd of the month. If payment is not received by the 5th of the month, the child will not be allowed to attend the program until tuition and all fees are paid.

**Weekly Preschool Tuition:**

* Payments for students who are enrolled in the full day program can be made on a weekly basis. This tuition must be paid on Mondays. A late fee of $20.00 will be assessed after Tuesday.
* If tuition goes unpaid for a period of two weeks, the child will be dismissed from the program and new enrollments will be accepted immediately to fill the vacancy.
* If your child is unable to attend the school for any reason, tuition must still be paid.

**Discounts:**

A second child discount of 10% will be given for the second child. This discount applies to children who are enrolled in the full day program only.

**Making payments:**

Your monthly and weekly account information can be accessed on the sign in screen. Weekly and monthly payments can be placed on the desk in the Front Office, or in the payment slot next to the sign-in computer. Checks should be made out to Daydreams Child Development Center, with reason for payment indicated (Tuition for Jessica).

It is imperative that we receive your tuition in a timely manner. We must pay our bills and staff on time and can only do so with sufficient cash flow and proper money management. Please be assured that we are willing to work with you if you have an occasional problem.

* A $30 charge will be assessed for all returned checks. After two returned checks, we will no longer be able to accept your check. A money order, credit card, debit card, or cashier’s check will only be accepted.
* In the event a Daydreams customer’s account is delinquent for longer than 30 days, it shall be determined to be in default. All accounts in default may, at the sole discretion of Daydreams, be placed for collection. Any and all reasonable attorney fees and or any other costs of collection associated with the remedy of said default will be the sole responsibility of the Customer.

**Registration Fee:**

An annual non-refundable fee of $85 for a single child and $110 for a family is required at the time of enrollment and/or the beginning of each fall term. Additionally, there is an annual material fee which covers the cost of curriculum and supplies.

**Late Pick-Up Fees:**

Extended preschool closes at 6:00pm. Pick up for full day preschool is 6:00pm. After 6:05, a late fee of $5 will be charged for each child and another $5.00 will be charged for every 5 minute period thereafter.

**Catered Lunches:**

We offer a catered lunch program on Fridays only (pizza). If you choose to participate, you will be required to complete the catered lunch form for each child. There is a $3.00 cost for pizza on Fridays. The cost of the catered lunches will be added to your tuition.

**Sick Policy/ Vacation/ School Closures:**

If your child does not attend school on his/her scheduled days, full tuition is still expected to be paid. The absence, no matter what the reason, does not reduce our expenses.

The school will close for one full week each year; the week between Christmas and New Year’s. Your tuition is adjusted to reflect this closure.

You are entitled to one week vacation credit\* after your child has been attending Daydreams for 1 year. You will need to notify the school two weeks in advance. (\* This vacation credit applies only to students enrolled in a full day program (7:00-6:00/5 days or 8:00-3:00/5 days).

If your child is absent for two consecutive weeks without any notification to the office, your position will automatically be terminated and you will be billed one-half of your child’s tuition rate for this time.

As noted in the tuition policy, there is not a reduction in the tuition for the holidays falling within your regular scheduled program.

**Curriculum:**

At Daydreams Child Development Center, we believe that your child IS the curriculum. The curriculum used at Daydreams Child Development Center is geared toward the development needs of young children and will encourage your child’s social, emotional, and cognitive development. Lessons are carefully planned by our teachers to offer creative and stimulating activities for each child. Programs have been chosen to meet the need of every child in our center.

At Daydreams we will offer:

* Themed Arts and Crafts
* Center Activities
* Indoor and Outdoor play areas
* Science Activities
* Social Skills Development

Additionally, we will be using Theme Based Curriculum, A Balanced Reading Approach and beginning handwriting. We also utilize Learn Everyday curriculum for our Infants-2 year olds, and Beyond Centers and Circle Time for our 3-5 year olds. Other classes will be offered to the students who participate in the full and part day programs. These classes may vary in price and further information will be provided to you if you are interested.

**Classes and Hour of Operation:**

At Daydreams we welcome children ages 8 weeks to 5 years old. Children who are 8 weeks to 12months are required to attend full time (5 days from 7-6 or 8-3). Children who are 1 year to 3 years old are eligible to attend either full time or part time (FT 5 days 7-6 or 8-3, PT MWF 7-6, 8-3 or 9-1/1:30 and TR 7-6, 8-3, or 9-1/1:30). Children attending our Pre-K program are required to attend 5 days (7-6, 8-3, or 9-1:30).