

Welcome to St. Paul Children's Center! We are honored that you have chosen our child care program as a place for your child to learn and grow during the times that you are not able to be with him/her.

St. Paul Children's Center is dedicated to providing your child with the best care through meaningful experiences in a safe and nurturing environment. We believe that parents are a child's first teacher and consider parents to be our partners in supporting each child's development. Your input and involvement is valuable and we encourage you to keep open communication with your child(ren)'s teachers. At the end of this handbook, you will find a list of possible ways that you can be part of St. Paul Children's Center, depending on your availability, of course. Teachers and families working together, even if it's just through brief conversation, is what will guarantee the best experience for your child.

This handbook contains information about all the Center's policies and practices. Should you have questions about the content at any time, please feel free to speak with the Director.

Thank you for choosing St. Paul Children's Center. We look forward to working with you and your child!

Philosophy/Mission Statement

As a Christian child care center, we have set the following as our foundation:

God – is the creator of all seen and unseen and will receive credit as such

Family – is the central point of our nation and the foundation for building our future

Love – is the unifying factor for all of the above

Our philosophy is that all children are as important to us as they are to Jesus Himself. Matthew 19:14 states, “Let the little children come unto me and do not hinder them for such is the kingdom of God.” If children are this important to God, then how can we possibly minimize their worth?

Our goal is to enhance the total growth and development of your child. We will do this by concentrating on:

1. Promoting physical adeptness through running, climbing, balancing, and other large motor skills
2. Enhancing emotional development through expressiveness, self-sufficiency, self-worth, acceptance, and positive discipline
3. Enhancing social competence through consideration for others, cooperation, and relating to adults and peers
4. Providing opportunities for cognitive learning, utilizing ideas, words, colors, numbers, and decision-making

Our objectives are:

1. To provide LOVE and ACCEPTANCE to all children.
2. To convey to the children in our care that they are important enough to talk with, play with and learn with
3. To give them guidance, a balanced day, and to provide the necessary materials for a creative atmosphere

Inclusion

According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children, “early childhood inclusion embodies the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every infant and young child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families, communities and society. The defining features of inclusion that can be used to identify high quality early childhood programs and services are access, participation and supports.”

St. Paul Children’s Center supports actively including all children in all center activities. Inclusion is promoted by providing modifications and accommodations through tiered levels of instruction and interventions. In addition to providing environmental accommodations, St. Paul Children’s Center also accesses supports such as specialized professional development, community resources and therapies for children, families and staff. The emphasis St. Paul

Children's Center's focus on inclusion is to create high expectations for every child to reach his/her full potential and to provide multiple opportunities for children to develop, learn and form positive relationships.

Language

Our program has policies and procedures that are in place to support language development and academic achievement of children who are culturally and linguistically diverse. If your child's first language isn't English, we will support them by using intentional supports to meet your child's language needs. Sensory Supports: real life objects, toys, manipulatives, pictures and photographs, illustrations and drawings, magazines, videos and film, demonstrations, gestures, models, music, and costumes and props. Graphic Supports: charts, diagrams, graphic organizers, graphs, number lines, visual schedules, and icons/symbols. Interactive Supports: pairs with partners, small groups, large group, cooperative group structures, internet or software programs, home language, and adult prompting/ modeling. We focus on the quality, quantity, and consistency of the language used, both the child's home language and English, and ensure that any nonverbal language and messages in the environment are respectful of children and families. We value and utilize what we know about each child's culture, development, and personality to intentionally plan for inclusion and language learning.

Keystone Stars

St. Paul Children's Center participates in the state-wide Keystone STARS program. STARS stands for **S**tandards, **T**raining/Professional Development, **A**ssistance, **R**esources, and **S**upport. The program is an initiative of the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) to improve, support, and recognize the continuous quality improvement efforts of early learning programs. The program has four STAR levels, and each STAR level has its own research-based performance standards. These standards measure three areas of child care that make a difference in the quality of care your child receives:

- from the staff employed by the center,
- in the environment your child attends every day
- in the way the facility is operated
- For more information visit www.pakeys.org

Family Partnerships

Research shows that a positive relationship between parents and teachers is very important to the child's development. Children feel safe and well taken care of (and therefore able to learn best) when they see the meaningful adults in their life working together. In addition, teacher and family partnerships help teachers to learn about the child and help parents feel good about leaving their children in someone else's care.

One of our goals is to create that sense of partnership by inviting you to be part of your child's early learning experiences. We understand the stress that parents face in balancing their

children's needs, work, and daily life. Below you will find a list of possible ways for you to be involved in St. Paul Children's Center. Involvement looks different for every family, depending on your resources and availability, so the list includes options, not expectations.

Family Involvement:

- Complete annual parent surveys
- Join your child's class during special class celebrations
- Attend open houses to get to know teachers and other parents
- Participate in bi-annual parent-teacher conferences
- Share your culture or family traditions by planning with the teacher a special activity (cooking, story sharing, songs, etc.)
- Share a talent or job (play an instrument, share job experiences, etc.)
- Volunteer to help in your child's classroom or take items home to help teachers (cut out laminating, etc.)

Transition Policy

When considering when children should move up to the next classroom, we group children in relation to their developmental stages, not just their chronological age. The children will typically remain with the same teacher for 6 months to a year, to build the relationship between the children and the teacher. The teachers will be assigned a primary care group with specific children. The teacher will take observations and assess the assigned children on their development. At the end of every day, your child will receive a daily sheet to communicate activities done during the day, your child's emotions, any items need for your child, and notes about special classroom events or activities. Teacher also attend professional development that focuses on strengthening caregiver- child relationships.

Our main focus during transition is to make it as easy as possible for everyone. Transitions can be difficult for children, parents and the teacher. We allow a full week transition period for current children of St. Paul's. Children visit their new rooms for a portion of the morning before lunch and return for their afternoon routine. This way they become more familiar with the classroom setting, understand the new routines and allows the teachers and children to get to know one another.

Children coming into the center are offered a transition week, however this is only offered if a family member is present with them during this time.

During transition from preschool to kindergarten we are in collaboration with the Chambersburg Area School District and other school districts as needed. We share information with families on kindergarten registration dates and upcoming school district events.

Before a transition period, the center holds an Open House, which allows the children and families to meet the new teachers and classrooms. During this time, they receive a "Welcome" packet that provides information needed for the new classroom, information on their new teachers an overview of the schedules and daily routines. During our Open House families can

visit each classroom, allow children to play with materials and familiarize themselves with the teachers.

Curriculum

SPCC classrooms use *The Creative Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers* and *The Creative Curriculum for Preschool* (published by Teaching Strategies, Inc.) as a framework for setting up and maintaining developmentally appropriate environments and activities. Throughout each day, children engage in a balanced variety of experiences including:

- Indoor and outdoor play
- Free choice and teacher directed activities
- Quiet and active play
- Large group, small group, and individual projects

All teachers create lesson plans that are posted in the classroom. Lesson plans address all areas of development (physical, social/emotional, cognitive, language) and may include new books being introduced, different themes and activities for the week, and changes to the environment. Each teacher intentionally plans experiences based on information gathered through observations, current best practices using child development and early learning theory, and Pennsylvania Learning Standards for Early Childhood Programs (available at www.pakeys.org) For more information about curriculum, schedules, and routines, see your child's teacher or the Director.

Observations and Assessments

In order to plan appropriate experiences that meet each child's needs, we use early childhood assessments that are recommended by the Keystone Stars Program. *Teaching Strategies GOLD* is the assessment tool that we use for all children who are enrolled at the center. These assessments are not "tests" and do not "grade" your child. They are simply used to guide our teachers in their observations of your child. Information gathered through observation is used in a variety of ways that benefit you and your child:

- To share current and accurate information about your child's progress in all areas of development during informal conversations or at parent-teacher conferences
- To help inform teachers' planning
- To identify if children might benefit from special services and supports (see "Referrals")
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the teachers

This non-intrusive observation-based assessment takes place in the context of the regular classroom routines and activities and provides teachers and families with extremely valuable information to support your child's growth.

Conferences

Conferences are held three times a year. We hold two sit down conferences; usually in the Spring & Fall, where we discuss each child's progress and general observation. This is also a time when we can discuss the family's goals, concerns and answer any questions. Parents and staff sign off on conference forms, a copy is given to the parents and placed in the child's records.

Our third conference is a send home conference; usually over the winter months. This is simply a printed conference form, where parents read over their child's progress and observations. If at this time they would like to request a sit-down conference they may; otherwise a signed copy is given to the parents and a copy is placed in the child's records.

Developmental Screening and Assessments

Classroom teachers are required to complete a development appropriate screening of each child upon program and/or classroom entry. The screening tool that SPCC uses is called *Ages and Stages Questionnaires*. The questionnaire must be completed and share with families with 45 days of program/ classroom entry. The child's classroom start date must be written on the questionnaire and a copy of the questionnaire with parent signature will be placed in the child's folder in the office.

Referrals

If throughout the observation and assessment process it appears as though a child shows signs of a developmental delay or disability, or if a parent has concerns about the child's development, St. Paul Children's Center will support the child and family in finding special services to meet the child's needs. Support to the family may include:

- Providing staff training
- Providing families with child development information
- Providing families with documentation of child's development and explanations of why a delay is suspected
- Sharing community resources
- Assisting in data collection as part of an evaluation
- Participating as invited in the development of an intervention plan
- Assisting in monitoring progress
- Working with community service providers to support the child and family

IEPs and IFSPs

IEPs (Individualized Education Plans) and IFSPs (Individualized Family Service Plans) are created by service providers working with children with special needs and include information about the child's needs. If your child has an IEP/IFSP, it would be beneficial to share a copy of this plan so that we can work together to ensure the guidelines are put into practice. Upon invitation, we would gladly participate in any meetings to share information or to learn more

about how we (teachers and/or Director) can support the child and family. All information in IEPs/IFSPs and discussed in meetings will be kept confidential by SPCC staff.

A current copy of your child's IEP or IFSP needs to be kept in your child's records. Please provide the office with a current copy after quarterly reviews.

Nap & Rest Time

Nap or rest time for toddlers and preschoolers will be from approximately 12:30 PM – 3:00 PM. Blankets and rest toys such as teddy-bears or other favorite sleep time items are allowed at naptime only. These items will be stored in your child's personal space for the remainder of the day. Children are not forced to sleep; however, they will be required to rest quietly for thirty minutes before being able begin an alternate quiet activity.

Parents of the Toddler and Preschool Rooms are requested to take the nap bedding home each Friday to be washed. Sheets and blankets are supplied for the Infant Rooms.

Governing Board – Weekday Ministries Board

The Weekday Ministries Board of St. Paul United Methodist Church governs St. Paul Children's Center. There are 13 members on the board, including at least one parent representative and one staff representative. Members of the board are selected from other boards and committees so that there is a variety of knowledge and representation from the different realms of the church (Trustees, Finance, Staff-Parish Relations Committee.)

Please call the Children's Center or see the bulletin board outside the Director's office to get the name and telephone number of the Parent Representatives of the Weekday Ministries Board.

Center Hours & Closures

Hours/Days Open

Monday through Friday
6:30 AM to 5:30 PM

Closed for the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Fourth of July
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Friday after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Day

If Christmas Eve falls on a weekday, closure will be decided by Board. Parents will be notified with details regarding this day.

Closed for the week between Christmas and New Year's Day.

Full tuition is charged on any day the center is open and for those holidays that do not fall into the center's weekly closing.

Families may request in writing one vacation week annually in which they will not be obligated to pay tuition. Parents must submit this request for approval at least two weeks prior to the requested vacation week.

We appreciate your flexibility in allowing our staff to spend time with their families when the center is closed. Parents are encouraged to make arrangements for back up child care as soon

as possible to adapt to this schedule (see also Inclement Weather Policy and Illness Policy). To hear ideas for back-up options that other parents use, please see one of the directors.

Inclement Weather Policy

Our first priority in making the decision to close the center for the day, delay opening, or close the center early, is the safety of your child and then of our staff. During inclement weather, the Director will make the decision whether to delay opening, close the center for the entire day or close early.

On days that we are closed or delayed it will be announced through the Facebook page, email, and on the TV station WGAL 8. Parents can also access closing information through WGAL's website (www.wgal.com). When it is necessary to close the Center early, we will post on Facebook, email, post the closing on the WGAL TV station and parents will be notified by phone. If the parents cannot come by the time the center closes, it is their responsibility to make other arrangements for the pickup of their child.

When the center operates during inclement weather, it is recommended that all parents enter the parking lot via St. Paul Drive as the church's parking lot may not be plowed.

Discounts

Families who have two or more children enrolled full time at St. Paul Children's Center will receive a 10% discount for the oldest child.

Payment Information

Payment Fees

- Infant (Duckies & Lambs Rooms): \$205.00 per week
- Toddler (Bears, Foxes & Turtles Rooms): \$185.00 per week
- Preschool (Bees & Fishies Rooms): \$165.00 per week.

Payment Schedule

Your tuition payment is due the Friday prior to the week of care, unless arrangements have been made with the Director. If tuition is not paid on time, a late fee of \$10.00 will be assessed. If the tuition is not paid within ten (10) working days, your child will be dismissed from care. Any tuition account that accumulates more than four late fees within a quarter will have an increase in their late fee for the remainder of that quarter. The late fee will go from \$10.00 per week to \$20.00 per week. Quarters will run as follows: January 1- March 31; April 1- June 30; July 1- September 30; October 1-December 31.

Please keep in mind that you are responsible for your regular payment each week even in the case of an illness or vacation (the only exception being if you requested your one annual unpaid vacation week). This is because you are paying for the availability of the child care spot, not just for the days when your child is in care. If paying with cash, the top portion of the tuition receipt must be completed and submitted with your payment. Payments are to be placed in the payment box located on the wall by the front doors of the Children's Center. Some banks also offer an automatic deduction that comes to us in the form of a check. Check with your personal bank for details.

Registration Fee

A registration fee of \$30.00 per child is assessed at the time of enrollment.

Late Pick Up Fee

Late pick up of your child is discouraged except in the case of an emergency. If you pick your child up after 5:30 PM, a late fee of \$15.00 will be assessed. An additional \$15.00 will be charged for every 15-minute increment past that time. It is very important that you call the Children's Center if you will arrive after 5:30 PM.

Enrollment/Termination Policies

Enrollment

At the time of enrollment, the following forms will need to be completed: Health Assessment, Emergency Contact Form, and Parent Fee Agreement with schedule of arrival and departure times. Please adhere to your schedule so that we may plan for staff accordingly. If you find your schedule will change, please notify the Director.

Extended Leave Policy

St. Paul Children's Center will "hold" a spot for a child of a currently enrolled family for a period of two (2) to nine (9) paid weeks. During this period of extended leave, the family is responsible to pay a weekly rate that is equal to the 3-day tuition fee (daily rate + \$5 per day), regardless of days attended.

If the family wishes, the child may attend up to 3 days per week to keep the child familiar with the routine of the Center. A schedule for the child's attendance must be worked out with the Director at least one week in advance, and can be any day excluding Friday.

Any leave requested beyond the nine (9) week period will need to be paid in full in order to secure the child's spot.

Further consideration of this policy will be made on a “case by case” basis and will be reviewed by the Weekday Ministries Board for a final decision.

Behavior Management Policy (Suspension and Expulsion Policy)

Just as children take time and make many mistakes when learning how to walk, talk, and say their ABCs, we understand that children will make “mistakes” in learning how to behave. In regards to behavior management and social and emotional development, our goal is to provide the supports needed for children to participate in play and learning activities that will prepare them for school and life success. We will meet this goal through the following objectives:

1. Create positive climates and focus on prevention
2. Develop clear, appropriate and consistent expectations and consequences to address disruptive behaviors.
3. Ensure fairness, equity and continuous improvement

In the instance of persistent or extreme challenging behavior, the Director will facilitate a more intensive intervention process involving regular meetings and creating a behavior support plan with the child’s family, teachers, and any other person with significant involvement in the child’s life.

If a child is consistently hurting other children, teachers will make every effort to protect the other children while still giving that child opportunities to learn and practice more appropriate interactions with peers. The Director and teachers at St. Paul Children’s Center are advocates for ALL children.

The Director does reserve the right to dismiss a child from care if the child and/or family is unable to adapt to the center and its policies. Before considering expulsion or suspension, the following steps will be followed:

1. Center teachers will document behavioral issues including date, time and specific circumstances surrounding incidents.
2. Center teachers will document interventions provided when behavioral issues arise. The center teachers will use positive guidance techniques, strategies include: redirection (verbal and physical), modeling, setting clear appropriate limits, offering choices, planned ignoring, consistency, natural consequences, acknowledging appropriate behavior, problem solving.
3. Center teachers will attend teacher development courses in-person or online on positive guidance and effective discipline.
4. Center teachers and administration will meet with families to discuss documented issues. A behavior plan will be created which will include specific responsibilities for center teachers and families to complete within a specified time frame.
5. Center teachers or administrators will contact local agencies, including, Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation, Early Intervention, Lincoln Intermediate Unit, or Therapeutic Support Staff.

6. As a last resort, if the behavior plan is not successful, the Director will contact the **CONNECT Helpline** for a referral at **1-800-692-7288**. If the child is currently receiving intervention services, the IFSP/IEP will respond by adding a previously unidentified behavior to the IFSP/IEP or work with child care personnel to develop or share strategies. If the child has not previously been evaluated for intervention services, Intervention services will work with the child's family to schedule an evaluation. The child will either receive services or the evaluator will assist the family in accessing other supports. If the child has previously been evaluated for intervention services and does not qualify, intervention services will be contacted with concerns and ask about re-evaluation. In the interim, continue to work with the Regional Key in order to receive appropriate program supports.

7. After specified time frame (recommended one month), teachers, administration and family will meet to discuss progress. If at that time, if sufficient improvement has not occurred with recommended responsibilities, then suspension/expulsion maybe considered. Expulsion is considered as the very last resort.

Termination of Care Policy

We require a two-week written notice if you remove your child from the Children's Center permanently for any reason. If no notice is given, any fees paid in advance will be forfeited to the Children's Center. When your child transitions to another educational setting, his/her records including health assessments and evaluations will be transferred if a written request is submitted within one month of the end of care.

Security System

A security system is in operation at St. Paul United Methodist Church at all times. Unauthorized individuals are not able to enter the building. At the time of a child's enrollment, parents are to pay a \$30 deposit and will be issued two (2) key fobs. The key fobs deactivate the security system for a brief period to allow parents to enter. If parents or other authorized "pick up" individuals do not have their key fobs, they are then required to press the white intercom button outside the Children's Center door. An employee of the Children's Center will let the individual into the building after verification of proper identification. **Parents are asked not to allow anyone to enter the building without first getting approval from an employee of the Center.**

If a key fob is lost, it is the parent's responsibility to contact the office immediately so that the specific fob can be deactivated. **The replacement fee for a key fob is \$20.00.**

Upon termination of care, families will receive a letter with information on an online exit survey and a check voucher in the amount of \$30. Once the key fobs and the check voucher has been returned a check will be issued and sent to the family.

Health and Medication Policies

Health Policy

A Physical Exam and updated immunization record are necessary for each child who attends the Center. Please request a new form each time your child is scheduled for a well child check up. It is to be completed by your child's physician and returned to the Director. It is the parent's responsibility to make the appropriate appointments. If the Director does not receive the health forms within 60 days of their necessary exam schedule, your child will immediately be dismissed from care. The exam schedule is set by the American Academy of Pediatrics which requires check ups at 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, and 24 months as well as at 3, 4, 5, and 6 years of age. **This is a State mandated regulation.**

Exemption from Immunization Policy

Children may be exempt from immunization for medical need or religious belief. For either exemption, the parent must complete the appropriate exemption form which can be requested from the Director. St. Paul Children's Center respects parents' rights to not immunize their child, but in turn ask that they respect other children attending the center by not knowingly putting them at risk should their child be exposed to a communicable disease. The Director also has the right to ask parents to keep a non-immunized child at home should an outbreak of a communicable disease occur in the local area.

Medication Policy

Employees of St. Paul Children's Center are **not** permitted to administer **oral prescription or oral nonprescription medication** at the Center at any time. Medication **cannot** be stored in the Center. Parents, who are giving a child prescribed medication at home, must complete a Parent Administered Medication Form found in the child's classroom. **Parents are not permitted to put medication in bottles or cups that their child will use while at the center.**

Head Lice/Nit Policy

Any child discovered to have head lice or nits will be sent home immediately. The child must be treated and nit free before returning to the center. Upon returning to the center, the child will be checked for nits or lice by a staff member. If the child is found to be nit free, he or she may return to the center. If there are still nits or lice present, the child will need to leave the center to be retreated.

Illness Policy

Child Illness Policy

If a child vomits once, or has diarrhea 3 times while at the Center, the parents will be notified immediately, a Health Observation will be written up, and the child will be sent home. Parents need to pick up their child from the Center within one hour. If the parents cannot come, it is their responsibility to make other arrangements for the pick up of their child. The child must wait 24 hours after the last incident to re-enter the Center.

If a child is taking an antibiotic and has diarrhea three times while at the center, the child may not return to the center until **a doctor's note stating that the diarrhea is medication related and not infectious is on file in the office.**

Infectious Disease Policy

If it is suspected that a child may have an infectious disease such as chicken pox, measles, strep, etc., the parents of that child will be contacted and that child will be sent home within the hour. A doctor's excuse must be submitted to the Director indicating that the child either does not have the disease or is no longer contagious before that child can return to the Children's Center. A form will be sent out to all parents to watch for symptoms. **This is a State mandated regulation.**

Temperature

If at any time a child's temperature rises above 101 degrees, parents will be notified immediately, a Health Observation will be written up, and that child will be sent home. No doctor's excuse is necessary for the child's return. However, the temperature must be normal **without fever-reducing medication** for a full 24 hours before the child can re-enter.

Suspected Illness

If you suspect that your child may be ill, it is your responsibility to notify the staff so that they can closely monitor your child. However, if your child has vomited or has diarrhea, attendance that day is **not** permitted. **A child must be kept home when ill or otherwise unable to participate in all day care activities including outdoor play.**

Medical Emergency

If it becomes necessary for your child to be treated for a medical emergency, the medical release form you sign at the time of enrollment will be used by the staff to have your child treated. The parents will be notified immediately upon knowledge of the need for care.

Center Policies

Child Abuse Policy

By law we are required to report suspected child abuse. Our plan to prevent child abuse is to provide information to staff through training and education. The best defense against child abuse is education. It will be stressed to the children that their bodies are their own and they have the power to say no. Any marks that seem suspicious will be noted on a Health Observation Form. If injuries are unexplainable and not consistent with the medical history of the child, we are **mandated by the Child Services Law to report all suspected child abuse.**

Pick Up Policy / Pick-up and drop-off Points (PA regulation 3270.171)

Upon enrollment a list of designated persons to whom a child may be released must be given to the Director for your child. They will be authorized to pick up your child on a daily basis. Identification will be checked by the staff in order to protect the children. After the staff become familiar with the designated persons, identification may not be required.

If at any time the authorized pick up persons change, it will be the parent's responsibility to notify the Director so the list can be updated.

If the child is to be picked up by someone not on the list, a verbal release is required from the parent. This release should be given to the Director or Assistant Director in the Director's absence. A verbal release form is filled out and placed in the child's file. Identification is required from the person. This policy is for emergencies only and should not be used on a daily basis.

Please park your vehicle in the designated location or parking spot near the facility. You must turn your vehicle off before entering the program. ***Under no circumstances should a vehicle be left running while unoccupied by operator.*** Use pedestrian cross walks and sidewalks.

Sign In / Sign Out Policy

Upon arrival at the Children's Center the parent must sign their child in. When leaving the center, the parent must also sign the child out. A clipboard is provided for this purpose. Please note on the Sign In / Sign Out sheet any daily changes in pick up or parent contact phone numbers for emergencies. At no time are parents permitted to pick up their child outside at the playground by lifting the child over the fence. Parents are asked to use the Center's inside entrance to the playground at all times.

Communication is very important between parents and teachers. Unfortunately, the end of the day is not the best time for any lengthy discussions with the teachers. Teachers' first responsibility is to the children and any conversations with the parents could inhibit teachers from doing their job. Parents are encouraged to set up appointments as needed with their child's teacher.

Drop off Policy

Families are expected to have their child(ren) at the Center no later than 11:00 am. Exceptions will be made for families who have appointments and need to bring their child in at a later time. The appointment will need to be verbally communicated with the child's teacher at least one day in advance. Bringing your child by 11:00 am ensures that the classroom schedule runs smoothly from lunch into naptime. Please keep in mind that nap time is from 12:30-3:00 pm. We would appreciate if you were considerate of the other children in the classroom and not drop your child off during these times. However, we understand if you have no other option.

Meals and Snacks

The children will be provided breakfast and an afternoon snack, which meet the requirements for nutritional value. Meal time will be an opportunity to thank God for their food and learn good manners and nutrition. A monthly breakfast and snack calendar will be displayed in the classroom. Lunch is to be provided by the parents. The Children's Center encourages parents to provide a nutritionally balanced lunch for their child, avoiding sugary treats. Please do not pack personal utensils. The center will supply cups, plates, spoons and forks as well as all beverages. **If your child has a documented medical dietary restriction, you will be given a 10% tuition discount, and in return, will be expected to provide the child's food for breakfast, lunch and snack. This issue will be addressed on a case by case basis.**

Infant Bottles

The center does not provide formula so parents must provide the appropriate amount for their child. Regulations state that all bottles must be covered regardless of the child's age. There must be separate bottles for each feeding, and center employees are not responsible for mixing formula. Parents are expected to mix the bottles before coming to the center. All unused portions will be discarded between feedings. **All bottles and lids must be labeled with the child's first name or initials.** Bottles will be rinsed and sent home every day to be washed and returned the following day.

Clothing Policy

Children are expected to come to the center rested, clean, and dressed in casual clothing, suitable for the weather and activity; both indoor and outdoor. Any child that is walking is required to have shoes and socks for outdoor activities. **Due to safety regulations, no open-toed sandals, flip-flops, or plastic shoes are allowed.** If your child is not able to comfortably walk or run in his/her shoes, you will be asked to provide an alternate pair.

Each child must have a complete change of clothing at the center in case of accidents, wet weather, or spilled beverages. Keep in mind that although precautions are taken, your child's clothing may get torn or stained at day care. If this should happen we will not replace ruined clothing.

If your child is very young, you will need to send more than one change of clothing, and an ample supply of diapers, wipes, diaper rash cream and plastic bags if you are not using disposable diapers.

Items belonging to your child including diapers, wipes, bags, clothing, lunch containers, and cups should be labeled with your child's first name and last initial.

Lost Items

St. Paul Children's Center cannot be responsible for personal toys and belongings lost at the center. We discourage toys from being brought from home.

Evacuation Drills

Monthly evacuation drills will be held at the Children's Center. These will be unannounced drills in order for staff and children to know how to exit the building in the event of a fire or emergency.

Grievance Policy and Procedure

If you should at any time feel the need to discuss any concerns involving eligibility, program policy, staff management, or quality of care, please follow the steps below:

1. First, speak to the person involved.
2. If still not satisfied, please bring your concern in writing to one of the Directors.
3. If the concern involves a Director, please bring the concern in writing to the Chair of the Weekday Ministries Board.
4. If a situation still cannot be resolved, a hearing in the presence of the Weekday Ministries Board will be conducted within 10 working days.

Weekday Ministries Board Review Procedure:

1. Hearing of the complaint by the Board.
2. A Review Committee, consisting of the entire Board or selected Board members, will investigate the matter as expeditiously as possible. The committee will report to the Board in writing the results of the investigation. The Chair of the Weekday Ministries Board will keep the grievant(s) informed of the ongoing investigation.
3. A final resolution will be made by the Weekday Ministries Board at a regular or at a special meeting.
4. Final results of the decision will be presented to the grievant verbally and in writing.

Notice of Nondiscrimination Policy as to Children

St. Paul Children's Center admits children regardless of race, color, nationality, or ethnic origin to all the rights and privileges, programs, and activities, generally accorded to all the children at the Children's Center.

The Center does not discriminate on the basis of color, race, nationality, or ethnic origin in administration policies, educational policies, and other childcare programs.

Confidentiality

St. Paul Children's Center protects the confidentiality of the children in its care. Employees are to respect the individual dignity of the children, families and co-workers at all times.

Staff members are not to post a child's full name in classroom areas, artwork, attendance sheets, cubbies, etc. Rather, children's belongings are to be marked with the first name and last initial only.

Employees are not to post a child's address or telephone number, social security number or other information that would make it possible to identify the child.

Information related to a child's family, medical history, and educational history shall be maintained in a locked, secured cabinet. Employees and volunteers are not to discuss confidential information gained in the course of their employment with staff, families, friends, or community members.

The parent of the child attending the Center shall have access to the child's complete childcare record, except in the cases in which that parent does not have shared or primary custody of the child or is otherwise precluded from such access by a court order.

Reporting Accidents/Incidents

All employees and volunteers of the Center are mandated to immediately report all accidents, incidents, or illnesses involving a child at the facility to the Director, Assistant Director or designated staff-member. A teacher will complete an Incident Report for accidents or incidents or a Health Observation for illnesses and unusual health conditions. The report will be signed by the teacher and the Director or Assistant Director. The parent is required to sign the Reports verifying that they are aware of the accident or illness. The original report shall be given to the parent on the day of the incident. The second copy of the report shall be retained in the facility in the accident file. The third copy of the report shall be retained at the facility in the child's file.

Thank You

The staff of St. Paul Children's Center thank you for taking the time to read this handbook. We all look forward to growing and learning with your child, and making it wonderful experience for everyone.