



# Parent Handbook

## 2024-2025

[www.prebleminiminds.org](http://www.prebleminiminds.org) or email [director@prebleminiminds.org](mailto:director@prebleminiminds.org)

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## **VISION**

**To make PREBLE COUNTY the best place to be a young child so that every child can reach their full potential.**

## **MISSION**

**To champion high-quality early learning and healthy development strategies from the prenatal period to age eleven, that lay a strong foundation for PREBLE COUNTY kids, families, and the community.**

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## PHILOSOPHY

Preble Mini Minds believes young children develop optimally through close, meaningful relationships with adults and peers. While a child's primary attachment is with parents or guardians, early childhood teaching staff should also form emotional bonds with children to enhance their development. The development of trusting relationships is particularly important for infants. Primary caregiving also maximizes each family's connection to and comfort with our program. Our classroom teaching team approach supports all teaching staff working together to provide the highest quality care for each child. These approaches to continuity of care provide children, families and staff with consistency, predictability and opportunities to develop long-term relationships.

### Inclusion

We believe that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging in childcare. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program based on their individual capabilities and needs.

### Non-Discrimination

Equal educational opportunities are available for all children, without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, or parent/provider political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation or special needs, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state or local laws. Educational programs are designed to meet the varying needs of all students.

Multiculturalism is vital for all children because it sets social goals and promotes respect for all people and the environment we inhabit. We utilize books, music, games, and a wide range of activities as aids to instruct our children to respect our world and the diversity of life upon it.

## ENROLLMENT

Enrollment and Forms Checklist will be completed prior to the child attending the center and before transitioning to a new classroom.

- Parents will update information while the child is enrolled at the center
- Family information including name, address, phone number, emergency contacts, medical, employment and related information is kept on file electronically and on site.
- Completed Physical and Immunization records required to enroll and updated annually.
- Payment Information entered at enrollment and updated as needed
- Parents review and sign the family Handbook agreement

## WHAT TO BRING

Because children in our program are actively interacting with their environments, it is important that they wear functional play clothes that can get dirty or messy. Sturdy shoes made for active play will provide safety and comfort. We ask that children do not wear sandals, clogs, or mules. Children will go outside to play in all kinds of weather. Only temperatures below 25 degrees, above 90 degrees and other extreme conditions such as humidity, wind chill, ozone levels, pollen count, lightning, rain, or ice will keep us inside. Children need to be dressed appropriately for the weather, including hats, coats, mittens, and boots. During warm weather months, children may participate in water play activities, such as sprinklers, parents will need to make sure extra clothes are on site.

All children will need to bring at least one extra set of clothing in case of accidents. Families with infants and toddlers supply diapers as well as necessary extras during potty training times. Families should check with classroom staff for additional details. The Center prohibits the use of cloth diapers. Children are often comforted by items from home. For toddler and preschool naptime we encourage small, travel sized pillows and cot-sized blankets; we do not have appropriate storage space for larger items. Infant rooms furnish all crib linens. As the program prohibits blankets in cribs for infants under twelve months for safety reasons, families are asked to bring sleep clothes, sleep sacks or swaddles. Toddlers and preschoolers may also bring small stuffed animals or dolls, but infants may not have these items placed in their cribs.

## OBSERVATION AND ASSESSMENT

Thoughtful observation and assessment of children helps staff learn more about children's unique qualities, develop individual goals, plan, and implement effective curriculum, and make referrals as appropriate. The program starts the assessment process upon enrollment asking for a family's input on their child's needs, interests, and development. Parents are asked to complete the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) at enrollment, and before a child transition to the next age group. The ASQ is a developmental screening tool designed to identify a child's developmental strengths and needs. Formal screening and assessment may be shared with ODJFS pursuant to chapter 5101:2-17 of the Administrative Code.

The program utilizes the Teaching Strategies assessment system, which aligned to The Creative Curriculum objectives for development and learning. These objectives relate to age- appropriate developmental milestones. Teachers share information informally with families through conversation, documentation displays and classroom newsletters and meet formally with families at least twice a year for parent/teacher conferences. If there are developmental concerns or the need for extra resources,

The Child Care Program utilizes Help Me Grow, and your local school districts. We believe Early Intervention is critical to a child's success.

#### Hours of Operation

PMM is open 6:00 am until 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday, year round

In the event Eaton school district is on a delay or closes once children have arrived, children will remain at the center until the parent picks up at their regular scheduled time or the district bus arrives on delay time.

#### General Class schedule/ratios

Specific schedules, based on age and development posted in each classroom.

Calendar reflects "No School" on Federal Holidays as well as 3 professional Development Days

Thanksgiving 11/28

Christmas 12/25

New Year's 1/1

Martin Luther King 1/20

President's Day 2/17

Memorial Day 5/26

Juneteenth 6/19

Independence Day 7/4

Professional development Days: Jan 2, April 4, August 5

6:00am-8:00am Greet families, developmental activities and experiences

8:00am-9:30am Breakfast

9:30am-11:15am Large motor/outside time, developmental activities and experiences (sensory, small motor, music, language), diaper changing, naps as needed

11:15am-12:15pm Lunch

12:15pm-2:30pm Naps, as needed per classroom schedule

2:30pm-3:30pm Clean up, Journals available, Restroom, wash hands

3:30pm-4:00pm Snack

4:00pm-6:00pm Large motor/outside time, developmental activities and experiences, departure

Age of Children	Staff/Child Ratio	Group Size
Infants (birth and under 12 months)	1 to 5 or 2 to 12 in same room	12
Infants (12 months and under 18 months)	1 to 6	12
Toddlers (18 months and under 2 1/2 years)	1 to 7	14
Toddlers (2 1/2 years and under 3 years)	1 to 8	14
Preschool - three years	1 to 12	24
Preschool - four and five years of age	1 to 14	24
School age - kindergarten to 11	1 to 18	36

There will always be 2 staff members present with 7 or more children of any age present at the center.

All children will be supervised according to the above ratios, including school aged children. School aged children will be greeted by a staff member (school year) when the district bus drops off at the front of the building. They will have activities in their classroom and outside until the parent arrives to pick their child up for the day.

Summer Programming: school aged children will be dropped off/picked up at their classroom for the day by the parent/authorized person.

All children will be signed in/out using the ProCare app. Any changes in authorized persons will be made by the parent with the director/administrator.

Classes will be combined at the beginning and end of the days, based on above ratios and OH revised code.

#### INFANT CARE

Infants will be fed and diapered, according to individual needs, and at a minimum every two hours. Infants will be changed immediately when wet/soiled.

Daily activities will include “Tummy Time” and opportunities to move and explore. Responsive care will be individualized for each child, for meals, changing and social interactions. Infants will have a schedule consisting of peer and adult interaction, including reading books, engaging in play, and learning gross motor skills.

The formula will be prepared at home and labeled with the child’s name, date of preparation, and date received by the program. Labels will also be provided in the infant vestibule. Breastmilk can also be brought in and labeled. Formula and milk will be kept in the refrigerator in each classroom until the child’s mealtime. Ounces will be documented by staff, and any remainder of the formula will be discarded after two hours. A bottle warmer can be used to warm formula/breast milk if the parent requests.

## BREASTFEEDING

The center supports and encourages breastfeeding. Parents are welcome to breastfeed children at the center in a quiet welcoming space, room 112. Breast milk can be brought in bottles, labeled, and kept in accordance with safe food handling guidelines.

## TRANSITION INTO OUR PROGRAM OR THE NEXT AGE GROUP

Our goal is to make a smooth transition for children and families. Establishing a relationship with families is an essential aspect of the teacher's role. The first contact with the classroom upon enrollment is a Meet the Teacher appointment. The appointment typically does not include children to facilitate open communication between the teacher and family. The teachers will plan for the transition to ensure the child is comfortable and supported in the new environment. Teachers and families will use this time to:

- share the classroom Welcome Packet
- explain age- appropriate activities for the child to prepare them for the transition
- answer questions and to learn about the family by discussing the Family Information form
- explain and provide the ASQ, a Developmental Screening Tool
- complete the Meet the Teacher checklist, to include transition goals
- create developmental/education goals with the family based on their input
- learn as much as possible about the family, to provide responsive care
- provide a brief visit to the child's classroom

## DINING AND FOOD SERVICE

Mealtimes at the Child Care Program are an important part of the day for all children. Whenever appropriate, children dine together as a family and staff sit with children during each snack or meal. We ask that families do not bring food from home so that all children are having the same menu and experience. The goals of dining together are to:

- have a relaxing, pleasant environment for enjoying one another's company.
- offer nutritious food choices in an environment that allows children to safely try new foods and develop new daily living skills. In infant and toddler classrooms, the first serving of food and milk is served by teaching staff to ensure that an appropriate serving of each food is offered to children and to encourage food tasting. Meals are served "family style". Serving bowls are placed on the table; teachers assist children as needed with serving their own food and passing the serving dishes. All children are encouraged to try new foods but are never forced.
- The program respects religious and dietary restrictions and will make substitutions when possible. If the program cannot provide a substitution, it is the responsibility of the family to do so. Families must provide substitutions only from the USDA food groups. Corrections, deletions, and substitutions to be provided by the program must be indicated on a monthly menu and turned in to your child's teaching staff.
- Formula may be prepared at home, labeled with the child's name, date of preparation and date received by the program.



- Menus are posted in each classroom and available in the offices. The Child Care Program participates in the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child and Adult Care Food Program which assists childcare sponsors to serve nutritious meals by providing funds to supplement food costs. Families help the program receive these benefits by completing the required forms annually.

**BREAKFAST:** Includes 3 foods from the USDA

**LUNCH:** Includes 4 foods from the USDA Food Groups; served at a scheduled time

**P.M. SNACK:** Includes 2 foods from the USDA Food Groups;

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

**NUT-FREE FACILITY RESTRICTIONS** Because we place children's health and safety as our highest priority, and the risks of nut allergies can be severe, the Preble Mini Minds maintains a nut-free policy. We do not serve food containing nuts, nut butters or foods processed where nuts may be present. In addition, we do not allow families to bring food containing nuts, nut butters or foods processed where nuts may be present into our facilities. In addition, children may have severe allergies to other foods which cannot be completely restricted in a childcare environment, including, but not limited to, milk, eggs, soy and wheat. Because of dangers associated with food allergies, we request that families do not bring foods from home to share with the classroom community.

#### **NAPPING AND RESTING**

Naptime is an important part of a young child's day. Young children need approximately 12 hours of sleep each day and typically at least one or two hours is gained through napping. Sleep is a vital need, essential to a child's health, immune function, normal growth, and development. Sleep enhances emotional health, alertness, attention, and cognitive processes such as memory. Infants are expected to nap on their own schedules; staff will work with families to accommodate individual sleep patterns. Infants must always be placed in their cribs for sleeping. Infants are placed on their back to sleep unless a physician provides written instructions detailing the medical need for an alternate position. The program furnishes all crib linens; infants may not have other items. As the program also prohibits blankets in cribs for infants under twelve months for safety reasons, families are asked to bring sleep clothes, sleep sacks or swaddles. Toddlers and preschoolers are provided with at least a two- hour rest period, although not all children will sleep during this time. Children who do not sleep or wake early will be provided with quiet activities on their cots or in another area of the room. To make cots more comfortable, we encourage small, travel-sized pillows and cot-sized blankets; we do not have

appropriate storage space for larger items. Children are also welcome to bring small stuffed animals, dolls or other small comfort items. Infants 0-12 months nap in a crib, 12-18 months can nap on a cot with parent written permission and all children 18 months and older will be supplied a cot for napping.

#### CHILD GUIDANCE/DISCIPLINE POLICY

No corporal punishment is used to manage children's behaviors, instead we strive to provide a secure, nurturing and stimulating environment that enhances young children's:

- recognition of themselves as persons of value
- understanding of individuals who are different from themselves
- respect for themselves and others
- development of self-regulation

To grow and develop in these areas, children must engage in relationships with both adults and peers. Effective relationships and effective learning both require effective social skills, emotional regulation skills and communication skills. The development of these skills is enhanced by child guidance strategies that promote prosocial behavior, use language to communicate needs, emphasize problem-solving, and effectively use the environment as a primary support. The following child guidance strategies are used in the Child Care Program in response to the individual needs of children: **Involve the Family:** Parents are our partners in creating successful experiences for children. Parents know their children best and can share much about their child's personality as well as the guidance strategies used at home. Teachers frequently share information with parents about their child's developing social skills and emotional regulation. When concerns arise, teachers and parents work together

**Manage the Physical Environment:** Classroom environments are designed to encourage active, meaningful, sustained play. Providing children with a balanced, engaging environment helps them to have positive, successful experiences that nourish their imaginations and creativity.

**Manage the Social and Emotional Environment:** Staff creates an environment where all people are respected through words and actions, pro-social behavior is modeled by adults, emotions are accepted, and communication is essential for problem-solving. The use of books, songs and other activities is responsive to children's social and emotional needs.

**Provide Predictability and Consistency:** Children are more relaxed and comfortable when they know what to expect in their environment. Teachers provide predictability through daily schedules and effective transitions. They provide consistency by involving children in the development of classroom rules and referring to them often.

**Accentuate the Positive:** Teachers recognize, discuss, and encourage children's attempts at pro-social behavior, enhancing children's intrinsic motivation to make effective choices. Teachers also recognize and encourage each child's innate gifts and talents, helping them to recognize themselves as people of value. Teachers use positive language when reminding children of rules, such as "Blocks are for building," instead of "Don't throw the blocks." Teachers demonstrate empathy for children's mistakes, remembering that all mistakes are opportunities for learning. **Listen:** Children need to know that they are valued members of the community and respected for the contributions that they can make. Teachers show respect for children's thoughts and feelings by being on their level physically and giving

their full attention when listening. Teachers also observe carefully for non-verbal messages and reflect these ideas back to children.

**Problem-Solve:** To help children begin to manage their own social challenges, teachers must guide them through the steps many, many times. Teachers help children listen to one another and express their thoughts and feelings appropriately. They help children remain respectful even when upset. They help children develop negotiating skills so that satisfactory solutions can be agreed upon.

**Provide Choices:** Sometimes children’s behavior has unintended negative consequences that can naturally help children choose more effectively the next time. Other times, teachers must construct these choices to prevent children from being hurt or property from being damaged. Teachers may redirect children by diverting their attention to a more appropriate strategy or activity. Teachers may also offer a “limiting response” by stating two appropriate choices and allowing children to make the decision.

**Ensure Safety:** Children’s safety and well-being is always our primary concern. When children are engaged in any behavior that may be harmful to themselves or others, teachers stop the behavior as quickly as possible and then follow appropriate guidance strategies. It may be helpful for teachers to remove a child from an area or an activity for a brief time, however, the Program does not implement the “time-out” technique. Teachers take these opportunities to help a child learn a new skill.

**Observe and Reflect:** Child guidance is a dynamic process that requires constant observation and reflection. Minor changes to the environment, the daily schedule, the curriculum, or the teachers’ responses may be needed to ensure the safety of all students.

## FAMILY COMMUNICATION

Sometimes a child demonstrates a pattern of challenging behavior not successfully guided using typical strategies. Challenging behavior is any behavior that interferes with a child’s development, learning or success at play; is harmful to the child, other children, or adults; puts a child at high risk for later social problems or school failure. It is of the utmost importance that these challenging behaviors be addressed quickly and effectively. If a teacher believes that a child is demonstrating a pattern of challenging behavior, the following steps will be taken:

- A meeting of the family and staff will be scheduled. The goal of the meeting will be to share information and develop a plan. Appropriate follow-up meetings will be scheduled to discuss progress.
- Program staff and the family will communicate regularly. Program staff will implement specific guidance strategies as defined in the plan, document observations of the child and implement appropriate evaluation methods to determine if the plan is successful. If at any time a child’s behavior places the child, other children, or adults at consistent or extraordinary risk of harm, it may be necessary to ask the family to pick up and/or withdraw the child.
- On rare occasions, a child’s behavior may warrant the need to find a more suitable setting for care. Examples of such instances include:
  - A child appears to be a danger to others.
  - Continued care could be harmful to, or not in the best interest of the child as determined by a medical, psychological, or social service personnel.

- Undue burden on our resources and finances for the child's accommodations for success and participation.

#### CHILD ABUSE POLICY

Preble Mini Minds is concerned with the physical and mental well-being of all students and will cooperate in the identification and reporting of child abuse or neglect in accordance with the law. Any employee who knows or suspects child abuse or neglect is responsible for reporting to the Preble County Child Service Agency, as prescribed in Ohio Revised Code 2151.421. Employees are given training and sign-off to understand this policy.

#### PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

Physical restraint is not used or permitted for discipline. There are rare instances when we need to ensure a child's safety or that of others and we may restrain a child by gently holding her or him only for as long as is necessary for control of the situation. The staff is trained in Crisis management, CPI, to prevent and handle these situations.

#### CHILD SAFETY

Ensuring the safety of all children while they attend the Program is a top priority. Program staff work in partnership with parents to maintain a safe, nurturing environment while teaching children skills to enhance their safety and well-being. A parent or guardian is the best person to begin teaching a young child about the importance of personal safety. Program staff will also be communicating safety messages, and it is important that other adults share similar messages. Staff should always maintain professional boundaries with children and families. Early childhood is a time when children are to be nurtured as they navigate their growth and development. Examples of improper boundaries between staff and families include but are not limited to: staff becoming personally involved with families; staff giving exclusive attention to one child; staff giving gifts exclusively to a single child. If a parent experiences a suspected breach of a professional boundary, an administrator should be contacted immediately.

Preble Mini Minds is a Nonsmoking Facility: No smoking/vaping devices and actions are permitted indoors, immediately outside of each facility or anywhere on the campus.

No firearms or other hazardous materials are permitted on Preble Mini Minds Program property.

All children will be supervised according to state ratios and at all times while at the center.

#### FIELD TRIPS/COMMUNITY WALKS

The program will maintain staff/child ratios for any community walks. Staff will notify parents and building personnel prior to planning community walks. Staff will be equipped with contact information and first aid, while off premises.

Field trips will be parent transport. Planning such events will be in advance and staffed accordingly. Meals will be supplied by the parents when such an event is planned. Mini Minds will not participate in swimming activities. Water play will include on-site use of discovery tables and science centers.

#### COMMUNICATION AND INVOLVEMENT

Families are welcome in the Program at any time. Parents and guardians have complete access to the facility in which their child is enrolled. Noncustodial parents have the same rights of access to the program unless limited by official court documentation. The custodial parent is responsible for providing the program with relevant information. Families with legally documented parenting agreements are also required to provide a copy to the program. Confidential information will only be disclosed to the specific audience for which it is intended. Visiting parents or guardians are required to notify the office and classroom staff of their presence. Families should plan to visit before their child's first day and after their child is enrolled in the program. Visiting will help both you and your child feel more comfortable.

We encourage family involvement at all levels of our organization. High quality early care and education is a partnership between families and the program. The more you know about the program and the more teachers and administrators know about you, the better we can serve your child and your family. Should your family require a translator, please speak with an administrator.

#### WAYS TO LEARN

- Classroom Documentation – Each classroom posts information for parents, such as daily schedules, curriculum plans, project documentation, and information about eating, napping and diaper changes.
- Classroom Newsletters – Each classroom provides a monthly newsletter full of information unique to your child's classroom.
- E-mail – All families are required to provide a current e-mail address. Many program messages, newsletters, paperwork update reminders, and financial information are sent to families electronically.
- Information Areas – Each classroom posts information. Program and community resource information is also available.
- Website – The program maintains a website providing information for families.

#### WAYS TO CONNECT

- Talk Daily – The best way to develop a partnership with your child's teachers is to spend just a few moments each day in conversation. Tell the teachers about your child's evening, his likes and dislikes, family and friends who are important in his life.
- Ask Questions – Ask the teachers about your child's day, the activities he enjoys, the friends he likes to play with, his progress in developing a new skill.
- E-mail and Message – You are also welcome to e-mail your child's classroom with information sharing or requests, keeping in mind that classroom e-mail is only checked sporadically throughout the day
- Parent Conferences – Teachers offer individual parent conferences twice each year, however, you are welcome to schedule a meeting with your child's teachers at any time. Parent conferences offer you the opportunity to give input on curriculum goals for your child.

- Family Events – Each year brings several opportunities for families to participate in interesting events
- Communication is vital. Contacting the center when your child is sick, has appointments or on vacation ensures a healthy relationship.

#### ADDRESSING CONCERNS

Sometimes a family has a concern about a classroom incident or a program policy or procedure which requires assistance from program staff. If you suspect any suspicious or inappropriate behavior, please follow the action steps below. Because we believe that we must work in partnership to provide the highest quality childcare for you and your family, it is important that we work together to quickly bring concerns to a satisfactory resolution. If such a concern exists, we recommend the following action steps:

- If the concern is about a classroom incident, discuss your concern first with the classroom teacher. Families are always welcome to schedule a time to meet with teachers privately.
- If the concern remains or if the concern is about a program policy or procedure, you may discuss your concern with the director. Most concerns can be resolved with a concrete plan of action and continued communication. If the concern cannot be resolved, disenrollment from the center will occur.

#### CONFIDENTIALITY

We respect the right to privacy of both the children and the families in our care. Program staff will refrain from disclosure of private or confidential information, including information about other children in the classroom. Incident reports will not list names of other children involved in an incident. If it is deemed appropriate to share information about a situation for the positive development of the classroom community, all involved families will be requested to give permission prior to the implementation of any plan of action. The information contained in children's files is confidential. The information may be compiled and viewed by administrative staff and classroom staff for the purpose of healthy, safe, and appropriate care and handled by support staff to ensure compliance with regulatory agencies. Families have access to their child's file at any time. Disclosure of children's records beyond family members, program staff and authorized consultants require family consent, except; As legally mandated reporters, if we have reason to believe that a child's welfare may be at risk, we may share confidential information with the necessary agency.

#### HEALTH AND SAFETY

Preble Mini Minds complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act, including administering medication and care procedures to child with disabilities.

#### ILLNESS AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

To help keep children healthy, the Program engages in practices to help prevent and control the spread of disease.

#### PREVENTION

Staff complete a Communicable Disease management course and use this information to observe each child daily upon arrival for signs of illness. Staff receive instruction and implement proper hand washing

and sanitation techniques. Children are also assisted in proper hand washing throughout the day. Staff or children observed to have signs or symptoms of illness may not attend the Child Care Program. Staff and children who are experiencing only minor cold symptoms and have no additional signs of communicable disease may attend. Families that chose not to immunize their child must complete the waiver at enrollment and the child may not attend if a communicable disease for which immunization is recommended is diagnosed in their child's classroom or an adjoining classroom or other space. While keeping an ill child at home can be difficult, it is important that we work together to prevent the continued spread of illness that will result in increased absences for all families.

When a child is observed with signs or symptoms of illness (as listed below), the parent or guardian is immediately notified and should arrange to pick up the child within one hour. The child is cared for in a portion of the classroom away from other children yet still within sight and hearing of a staff member, usually on a cot. Staff monitors the child's condition and records symptoms. When a child is sent home, the sick form is given to the family. In addition to information about the child's symptoms, information on when the child may return is recorded on the form. Decisions about when a child may return are determined by the Ohio Department of Health Communicable Diseases Chart posted in the office. and the Ohio Department of Job & Family Services Child Care Licensing regulations. The Program will not admit children with symptoms and will require that children who develop these symptoms be picked up within one hour.

#### IMMUNIZATIONS

Immunizations are required according to the current schedule recommended by the U.S. Public Health Services and the American Academy of Pediatrics, [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org). Annually, we check with the public health department or the American Academy of Pediatrics for updates of the recommended immunization schedule. Our state regulations regarding attendance of children who are not immunized due to religious or medical reasons are followed. Unimmunized children are excluded during outbreaks of vaccine preventable illness as directed by the state health department.

All caregivers, teachers, and staff are required to be current with all immunizations routinely recommended for adults by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

#### PHYSICALS

Routine physicals are required according to the current recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org). A copy of your child's physical should be received and updated annually. Families are responsible for ensuring that their child's physicals are kept up-to-date and that a copy of the results of the child's health assessment is given to the program.

## DAILY HEALTH CHECK

We conduct a health check, as soon as possible, when each child enters the center each day. We look for skin rashes, elevated temperatures, itchy scalps, lethargy and changes from usual behavior. These are quick checks to protect the well-being of all children in the program. Please understand these are not physicals and do not substitute for proper routine pediatric care.

## ILLNESS

We understand that it is difficult for a family member to leave or miss work, but to protect other children; you may not bring a sick child to the center. The center has the right to refuse a child who appears ill. You will be called and asked to retrieve your child if your child exhibits any of the following symptoms. This is not an all-inclusive list. We will try to keep your child comfortable but he/she will be excluded from all activities until you arrive.

- Illness that prevents your child from participating in activities.
- Illness that results in greater need for care than we can provide.
- Illness that poses a risk of spread of harmful diseases to others.
- Fever (100°F or higher under the arm, 101°F or higher in the mouth, 102°F or higher in the ear) accompanied by other symptoms.
- Diarrhea – stools with blood or mucus, and/or uncontrolled, unformed stools that cannot be contained in a diaper/underwear or toilet.
- Vomiting – green or bloody, and/or more than 2 times during the previous 24 hours.
- Mouth sores caused by drooling.
- Rash with fever, unless a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease.
- Pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge, until on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Head lice, until treatment and all nits are removed.
- Scabies, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Chickenpox, until all lesions have dried and crusted.
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough), until 5 days of antibiotics.
- Hepatitis A virus, until one week after immune globulin has been administered.
- Tuberculosis, until a health professional indicates the child is not infectious.
- Rubella, until 6 days after the rash appears.
- Mumps, until 5 days after onset of parotid gland swelling.
- Measles, until 4 days after onset of rash.
- Has a physician or other health professionals written order that child be separated from other children.

Children who have been ill may return when:

- They are free of fever, vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours.
- They have been treated with an antibiotic for 24 hours.



- They are able to participate comfortably in all usual activities.
  - They are free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling (not related to teething) unless:
  - The child's physician signs a note stating that the child's condition is not contagious, and;
  - The involved areas can be covered by a bandage without seepage or drainage through the bandage.
- If a child had a reportable communicable disease, a physician's note stating that the child is no longer contagious and may return to our care is required.

#### Head Lice

- Children with head lice will not be allowed to return to the center until they have been treated and no further head lice or nits are detected during a health check.

#### ABSENCE

Parents will communicate with staff about the child's absence for sickness and other situations, such as vacations and appointments. Tuition fees remain the same and are not based on attendance.

#### ALLERGY PREVENTION

Families are expected to notify us regarding children's food and environmental allergies. Families of children with diagnosed allergies are required to provide us a letter detailing the child's symptoms, reactions, treatments and care, from the physician. ODJFS form 01236 will be used if supplement is needed. A list of the children's allergies will be posted in the main area and kitchen. We are trained to familiarize ourselves and consult the list to avoid the potential of exposing children to substances to which they have known allergies.

#### MEDICATIONS

All medications should be handed to a staff member with specific instructions for administration. Medications should never be left in the child's cubby or with the child to administer on their own. Our staff will ensure that the medication is recorded along with the directions and proceed to dispense the medication as directed.

- **Prescription medications** require a note signed by the family and a written order from the child's physician. The label on the medication meets this requirement. The medication must include your child's name, dosage, current date, frequency, and the name and phone number of the physician. All medications must be in the original container (you may request pharmacies to fill your prescription in two labeled bottles). Please specify the dosage and time(s) to be administered for each medication.

- **Non-prescription medications** require a note signed by the legal guardian. Non-prescription medication should not be administered for more than a 3-day period unless a written order by the physician is received. Parents will complete JFS form 1217
- **Non-prescription topical ointments** (e.g., diaper cream) require a note signed by the legal guardian, specifying frequency and dosage to be administered.

***Policy Whether School Age Children are Permitted to Carry Emergency Medication***

School-aged children may not carry or administer medications. All medications must abide by the medications guidelines in this document. Medications will be stored in designated cabinet and available as needed.

***Exceptions***

Student possession of an EPI pen or an inhaler is permitted only if the student has written approval from the prescriber of the medication and written approval must be on file with the director. In addition, the director must receive a backup dose of the medication from the parent. The parent is responsible for providing the school with all instructions and dosage amounts to administer care. The prescription must follow all other rules set forth for prescription medications.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

When an enrolled child or an employee of the center has a (suspected) reportable disease, it is our legal responsibility to notify the local Board of Health or Department of Public Health. We will take care to notify families about exposure so children can receive preventive treatments. Included among the reportable illnesses are the following:

- Bacterial Meningitis
- Botulism
- Chicken Pox
- COVID-19
- Diphtheria
- H1N1 Virus
- Haemophilus Influenza (invasive)
- Measles (including suspect)
- Meningococcal Infection (invasive)
- Poliomyelitis (including suspect)
- Rabies (human only)
- Rubella Congenital and Non-congenital (including suspect)
- Tetanus (including suspect)
- Any cluster/outbreak of illness

When a parent notifies the program that a child has been diagnosed by a physician with a communicable disease, or there has been an outbreak of an infectious disease, an exposure notice will be posted outside the child's room and any other rooms which may be affected. The notice will list the name of the disease, the date the symptoms were first observed, the date of diagnosis, the incubation period, typical signs and symptoms of the disease, and typical treatments. Also, the Preble Health Department will be notified to investigate the situation and offer support to the program. Families are urged to consult their own physician for advice about precautions to take with their child.

#### MEDICAL/PHYSICAL CARE PLANS

A child identified by a physician or parent as having a medical or physical care condition must complete and have on file in the child's classroom a Medical/Physical Care Plan and ODJFS 01236 form. Conditions that may require a plan include, but are not limited to:

- Asthma
- Allergies
- Eczema
- Seizure disorders

Medical/Physical Care Plans provide clear instructions for staff in managing any special care needs. Staff that require knowledge and training will be identified by administrators considering the severity of the special care need, type of medication/treatment and the child's attendance schedule. It is the family's responsibility to train all identified staff in the proper care of the child, use of medical or special equipment and administration of medication. Plans are updated annually or any time a change is indicated. If conditions require medication, a Request for Administration of Medication form is also required to be completed.

#### ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION OR FOOD SUPPLEMENTS

The Child Care Program may receive, approve, and administer medication to children when the medication is needed for a chronic or life-threatening condition (such as asthma treatments or emergency allergy medication) or when it is needed for daily care (such as lotion for eczema, diaper cream or sunscreen). The program cannot administer any medication, food supplement, medical food, or topical product until after the child has received the first dose or application at least once prior to the center administering a dose or applying the product, to avoid unexpected reactions. Other types of medication, such as antibiotics, which can be administered outside childcare hours, must be cared for by parents rather than Child Care Program staff. Medication will not be administered to reduce fever; children must stay home until fever-free without aid of medication for 24 hours. Medication may be administered to reduce pain when prescribed or recommended by a physician for a specific injury or non-communicable condition, such as an allergic rash. All medications must be signed by the physician on ODJFS form 01236. If the type or extent of treatment for a condition is considered beyond the range of services, the Child Care Program can deny administration. All medications, including topical preparations such as sunscreen, must be approved by the director before being taken to a child's classroom. Teaching staff cannot receive any medication or topical preparation without proper approval.

The elimination of an entire food group from the menu, i.e., dairy products, requires written documentation from the child's physician.

#### ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION BY PROGRAM STAFF

OH Revised Code rule 501:2-12-15 (C ) and 5101: 2-12-25

Only designated staff will administer oral prescription and nonprescription medications. The medication will be administered according to the directions on the Request for Administration of Medication form. Staff will record the time(s) the medication is given and will sign the form after each administration.

#### STORAGE OF MEDICATION

Medications will be stored in a designated area in the classroom or in the office inaccessible to children. Medications, including diaper cream, sunscreen, and lip balm, may not be stored in a child's cubby, diaper bag or backpack regardless of the child's age. Medications no longer needed or expired will be returned to the family; the completed forms will be placed in the child's file.

#### SAFETY AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Nothing is as important to us as ensuring the safety and security of the children entrusted to our care. Emergency response plans are posted in each classroom and in the administrative offices. In addition, each classroom has an Emergency Binder with procedural and other important information taken with the group when they move to any other area inside the building and outside on the playgrounds. Fire, inclement weather, lockdown and evacuation drills are conducted at least monthly, and the program has a comprehensive emergency management plan developed in cooperation with Ohio State's department of Public Safety. All visitors must sign in and out of the building at the front desk. Visitors must also wear a bright colored badge not to be left alone with children. The director is also present daily, monitoring classrooms.

#### LOCKDOWN AND EVACUATION EMERGENCY

- Staff are trained in shelter-in-place, lockdown and evacuation procedures. Shelter-in-place and lockdown would be implemented if there is a potentially harmful situation in or near a facility and it is safer to stay inside rather than evacuate; evacuation would be implemented if there is a potentially harmful situation inside a facility and it is safer to leave the premises. If the program is made aware of a potentially harmful situation, administrative staff will notify classrooms as to the appropriate course of action. Classroom staff will follow all attendance procedures to ensure all children and staff are present and either gather in the safest place within their classroom or evacuate to the pre-determined area. Staff will contact families as needed.
- Evacuation: if evacuating from the center is necessary, the reunification site is The Preble County Council on Aging: 800 East St Clair st, Eaton. Parents will be notified via the center app, a sign will be posted on the front door. Only authorized adults (over 18 years of age) will be

permitted to obtain the child. Staff will care for children at the reunification site throughout the process.

- Staff sign-out at the front desk before taking children on a routine walk.
- Staff take their classroom emergency backpack, including their Emergency Binder, first aid kit and necessary medications, attendance sheet and a cell phone on all routine walks.

#### ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES

Through appropriate supervision and low staff/child ratios, staff will work to prevent as many accidents and injuries as possible. Because some accidents and injuries will inevitably occur, all full-time staff are provided with First Aid and CPR training. If an accident does occur trained staff will respond and notify administrative staff if necessary. An Incident Report is completed for any injury that requires first aid. Parents are asked to sign the report upon receipt and a copy is kept in the child's file.

Should a severe injury occur, office staff call 911 and the Police for assistance; the family is contacted at the same time or after the emergency call is placed. Emergency personnel or parents will determine further treatment. If transportation to a hospital is needed, emergency personnel or parents will provide transportation as indicated on the child's Enrollment and Health form. Staff will travel with the child if a family member is not present. The cost of all medical care is the responsibility of the family. Serious incidents must also be reported to the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services by an administrator. It is the Child Care Program's policy that to enroll, all families must sign permission for the program to secure emergency transportation for their child in the event of an illness or injury that requires emergency treatment.

#### ATTENDANCE/DROP OFF/PICK UP

- Parents are asked to communicate with the center about their child's absence
- All children are actively supervised by staff responsible for their care.
- Children are marked in attendance upon arrival and attendance accompanies classroom groups as they move about the building or outside. Staff completes face-to-name attendance checks before leaving any area to move to another.
- The person who brings a child to the Program must bring the child to the staff responsible for the child's care and ensure that staff is fully aware of the child's presence before departing.
- Family members are responsible for the supervision of their children when children are not in the care of staff, such as during arrival and departure times. Children may not be unaccompanied in the building and should never be sent inside the building or down the hallways alone. Children may not be unaccompanied outside the building, on the sidewalk or in parked cars.
- To ensure that access to the program is limited to families and authorized persons, all other visitors must be permitted entry by staff.
- When a child custody issue exists, it is the responsibility of the residential parent to provide official court documentation if there are restrictions or limitations placed on the nonresidential parent. The program may not deny a parent access to their child without proper documentation.

- The only persons who may pick up a child from the program are adults, 18 years of age and older, listed on the Authorized Release form. Staff will not release a child to anyone not listed on the form. Staff will ask to see photo identification of persons that they do not recognize.

If the person responsible for picking up the child has not arrived by 15 minutes after the end of the contracted childcare schedule, the director will contact persons listed as Emergency Contacts on the child's Enrollment and Health form. After one hour, if the person responsible for the child or an Emergency Contact has not arrived or been contacted, Preble County Children's Services will be contacted, and will determine if the child should be brought to their agency. Police will be contacted if it is necessary to provide transportation for the child.

- Children who arrive to the Program from another educational program by contracted transportation shall have a written plan, including appropriate contact information, for determining their whereabouts should they fail to arrive as scheduled.
- When families come to the building, we encourage all to turn vehicles off when they enter the building.

#### CLOSURES

- The center will post and provide parents with a calendar and holiday schedule.
- The center will be closed for pre-planned professional development of staff
- The Center will only be closed in case of weather emergency, determined by local authorities

#### CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Parents/guardians and other clients of the Child Care Program are prohibited from initiating or participating in any employment arrangements ("nanny," babysitting, transporting children, food service, etc.) with staff members of the Child Care Program

#### TUITION

- Tuition is charged based on type of enrollment, awarded discounts and age group of the child's enrolled classroom. A current Tuition Schedule is available in the office.
- Families must provide documentation of current income to receive reduced tuition; documentation is updated annually. Families can request a tuition change when there is a documented change in family income. Tuition is not reduced retroactively.
- When a child is in transition to an older age group, the new tuition amount is not charged until the child begins full enrollment in the older group.
- Families will be charged for any additional childcare provided beyond contracted enrollment.
- Families meeting eligibility requirements may apply for funding through the county Department of Job and Family Services.

#### PAYMENT

- Tuition is charged weekly, and payments are due on Tuesday of the current week. Payment can be made weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly, but must always be paid in advance of services.
- Tuition can be paid through an electronic app.
- Accounts must be kept current while payment is being processed. Changes to or cancellation of account on record for any reason, including change in program tuition, must be requested by the family. The Child Care Program cannot submit a request to initiate, change or cancel deduction without authorization.
- Full tuition is charged weekly, regardless of program closures or child absences.
- Nonpayment of tuition is cause for termination of service.

#### ADDITIONAL FEES

- A \$60.00 non-refundable family registration fee and a \$125 non-refundable deposit are charged when a family enrolls or re-enrolls in the program.
- There is a returned check fee of \$30.00.

Late Pick-up policy: Picking up children after the end of their contracted schedule will result in late pick-up charged as follows: After 15 minutes, \$10.00, and \$1 each subsequent minute.

- Families are required to give four weeks' notice for withdrawal. Upon submitting a withdrawal notice, families can request that records be shared with the new school by completing the records release request form.
- Families are billed for childcare services during the four-week notice period

#### SUSPENSION/EXPULSION

- Children will not be suspended or expelled from the center
- If a policy violation or non-payment occurs, parent will be responsible for rectifying the situation.
- The director and parents work together to create a plan suitable for both parties to continue enrollment.
- If a plan in place or resolution is not upheld, parents will need to surrender their child's spot in the center. At this time the child will be disenrolled.
- Parents and Director will meet in the event the child is in danger to him/herself or others. All resources available will be discussed and a plan will be made to help the child stay safely at the center. In the event safety is a concern, multiple instances of aggression or physical incidents involving other children or adults, the parents will be asked to surrender their child's spot in the center. At this time the child will be disenrolled.
- Safety is the priority, Preble Mini Minds will refer the family to community resources to aid in the plan to reduce the risk of incidents and any safety concerns.

Board Members/Contact Information

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