

# Saint Luke's Children's Center Parent Handbook

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# Welcome to Saint Luke's!

## **Mission Statement** Empowering God's Children

### **Philosophy**

Welcome to Saint Luke's Children's Center. We are glad to have you as part of our team. Our goals for the children at our center are to help them grow in faith in Jesus Christ, grow in knowledge about the world around them, and grow in self-esteem as a special child of God. "Children are a gift from GOD." (Psalm 127:3)

### **Governing Body**

Saint Luke's Children Center is overseen by the Children's Center Advisory Team, who reports ultimately to the Pastor and the Congregation Council. Advisory Team members include church members, the Pastor, the Center Director, and a parent representative. Our staff and management team encourage and empower parents to be involved in all Center activities.

### **Ages**

We care for children ages 6 weeks to 5 years old. We welcome children ages 5-12 years old for our summer camp.

### **Children with Special Needs**

Saint Luke's Children Center is in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Children with special needs are welcome to enroll at Saint Luke's Children's Center. Our Center is completely handicapped accessible. We require a copy of an existing individualized health care plan. The plan should include a medication schedule, equipment, nutrition and feeding instructions, medical emergency instructions, and toileting and personal hygiene information. We require a yearly update to the health care plan. The care plan must be signed by a physician and the child's parent or legal guardian.

## Hours of Operation/Holiday Closures

The Center is open Monday through Friday from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm. We are closed on the following holidays:

- New Year's Eve and New Year's Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Friday before the first day of the new school year
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day and the following Friday
- Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

If a holiday falls on a weekend, we will be closed either Friday or Monday.

## Inclement Weather

If the Center needs to close due to inclement weather or for any other emergency, it will be posted on KKTv news. Web address is [www.kktv.com](http://www.kktv.com). In cases of extreme wind, cold temperatures or excessively hot weather the children will utilize the upstairs room.

## The School Day Out Program

The School Day Out Program is care for children in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade or under, with current and former Center families having priority, and is limited to 15 children. Calendars of school holidays will be available to parents in the fall and the spring. Parents must reserve slots for their children with the Center Director. Any changes or cancellations must be made at least one week in advance; otherwise, parents will be charged for any reserved days even if children do not attend. A set fee per child for daily care will be charged and is due when the child is picked up from the Center. A reduced fee is charged if the family has another child (or children) enrolled in the Center. Please see the Center Director for any questions on this policy.

## Snow Policy

When local area schools are closed due to inclement weather, the Center will accept older children of currently enrolled families if space and staffing allow. Additionally, if space and staffing are sufficient, the Center will accept children of families who were enrolled in the previous summers' programs at the Center. **Parents must call the Director or Assistant Director by 8 am to**

**reserve a space for their child(ren).** A set fee per child for daily care will be charged and is due the day the child is at the Center.

## **Fire/Tornado Policy**

In the unlikely event of a fire, the Center will be evacuated. Fire alarms are monitored by the fire department. The Center is also fully equipped with a fire sprinkler system. In the event of a tornado, all children and staff will go to the lowest level and most interior rooms. Parents will be notified as soon as possible. Fire/emergency drills are completed monthly to ensure that all children and staff are knowledgeable and in compliance with procedures in an emergency situation.

## **Registration and Fees**

### **Admission and Registration**

A pre-admission meeting with the child's parent(s) is scheduled to determine if the child requires any special services and to fully discuss the Center's policies and procedures. In compliance with Colorado state regulations, parents must complete an enrollment packet containing general information forms and a food program form; parents must also provide an immunization card signed by the child's physician. A registration fee is due at time of registration.

### **Health Records**

Health records for each child are required and kept on file at the Center. Records should be updated at every well baby/child checkup or as the Center requires when quarterly updates are done. All children's records are available for review upon the request of state authorities.

### **Fee Schedule**

All fees are clearly stated in the enrollment packet. Parents are required to sign a tuition/fee agreement form as part of the enrollment process.

### **Late Check Payment Fee**

Tuition payment is due each Monday. A \$35 late fee will be charged if payment is received after Wednesday.

## **Non-sufficient Funds Check Fee**

A \$35 fee will be charged for any check returned by the bank. If this occurs, we will only accept payment in the form of a money order until the NSF check issue has been resolved.

## **Withdrawal from the Center**

We require two week written notice when childcare services are no longer needed. If a two week written notice is not provided, parents will be required to pay an additional two weeks tuition.

## **Our Building**

### **Smoking**

Saint Luke's Children's Center and Saint Luke's Lutheran Church is a smoke free campus. Smoking is not allowed in the building, on the playgrounds, or in the parking lots.

### **Firearms**

Firearms are prohibited in Saint Luke's Children Center and Saint Luke's Lutheran Church.

### **Illegal Drugs and Alcohol**

Illegal drugs and alcohol are prohibited in Saint Luke's Children Center. Children will not be released to anyone who is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

### **Environmental Hazards**

The Center will protect all children from environmental hazards at all times. The Center is free from asbestos and operates within public health requirements for air pollution, lead, and asbestos.

### **Peanut Free Environment**

Due to the severity of peanut allergies, we ask that any food brought into the building be peanut-free. This includes food brought in for parties. We also ask

that no gum or candy be brought to the Center. A supply list of approved snacks is available in the office.

### **Visitor Policy**

All visitors must sign a log book stating the reason for their visit. While on the Children's Center premises, all visitors are to remain with a staff person, unless authorized by the Center Director.

### **Our Parents**

#### **Open Door Policy**

Parents are welcome to stop in and check on their child at any time. Parents may also call during the day and check on their child.

#### **Communication with Parents**

We strive to keep our parents well informed about their child's childcare/preschool facility. We communicate in person during pick up and drop off times, and through conferences, email, and surveys.

#### **Confidentiality**

Each Center family's confidentiality is our highest concern. A child's records are available to the Director, the child's teacher and the State of Colorado Child Licensing representatives. Parents must provide written consent for other parties to view their child's record. Records are kept securely locked in the Director's office.

Any assessments or screenings of Center children will only be viewed by the parent, the child's teacher, and the Center Director. If any screenings or assessments indicate concerns, parents will be contacted and given information for outside resources.

#### **Questions/Concerns**

Questions or concerns should be brought to the attention of the Director immediately. We are here to serve parents and children.

## Parent Volunteers

We encourage parents to volunteer in their child's classroom or for any Center activity. Parents who would like to volunteer should contact their child's teacher.

## Filing a Childcare Complaint

We encourage open, honest, pro-active communication and problem-solving between parents and Children's Center staff. Parents have the right to file a complaint with the state of Colorado childcare licensing office. You may contact them at 1-800-799-5876 or at Colorado Department of Human Services, 1575 Sherman St, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Denver, CO 80203-1714.

## Reporting Child Abuse

All staff members of Saint Luke's Church and Children's Center are mandated reporters by law. If a staff member or parent is concerned for the safety and welfare of a child, it should be brought to the attention of the Director or Pastor. Child Protective Services will be called. If a staff member or parent suspects any form of child abuse, a formal complaint may be filed by calling 719-444-5700 or by mail at 105 N. Spruce Street, Colorado Springs, CO 80905. To file a complaint with the El Paso County Health Department, call 719-578-3199.

## Curriculum, Assessment and Conferences

### The Creative Curriculum

Our Center's curriculum of choice is *The Creative Curriculum*.

*"For over 30 years, Teaching Strategies has helped early childhood educators across the country to plan and implement content-rich, developmentally appropriate programs that support active learning and promote children's progress in all developmental areas. Today, The Creative Curriculum® is widely regarded as a forward-thinking, comprehensive, rigorously researched curriculum approach that honors creativity and respects the role that teachers play in making learning exciting and relevant for every child."*

(Creative Curriculum). [www.teachingstrategies.com/page/cc](http://www.teachingstrategies.com/page/cc)

Thematic units in this curriculum enrich and help children grow in knowledge as God's children and learn about the world around them.

## **Classroom Assignments**

Children will remain in their assigned classrooms unless the Director feels it necessary to move them. We recognize the importance of children to have the same teacher for the majority of the school day.

## **English as a Second Language**

If a family speaks a language other than English, the Center will provide all materials in the native language. An interpreter may be provided to ensure smooth communication between the family and the child's teacher. The teachers will also be provided with training in order to understand the family's language and cultural needs.

## **Age and Skills Questionnaires/Progress Reports**

ASQ assessments will be completed twice yearly for all children over 18 months. The ASQ will be completed every four months for children younger than 18 months. Progress reports for children who are two years of age and older will be sent home twice yearly. Parents of children under the age of two receive a daily observation sheet.

## **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parent/Teacher conferences are conducted in fall and spring and are based upon the ASQ questionnaires, progress reports, and daily observations made in the classroom.

## **Annual Reports & Surveys for NAYEC**

An annual survey will be given to each family to provide the center with feedback on their performance. These results, along with other reports, will be used by the staff and advisory team members to create goals for the center and ways for improvement. These reports are available to all parents that are enrolled.

## Arrival and Departure

### **Identification and Tracking of Children**

State regulations require a parent to sign his/her child in upon arrival at the Center. The parent shall then walk the child to the appropriate classroom or playground. The child's teacher will sign the child in to the daily log book, noting the time. Teachers keep a constant head count throughout the day and utilize their daily logs to keep track of students in their classes at all times. When a child leaves for the day, the teacher will note the time and sign the child out of the log book.

### **Releasing Children from the Center**

A child will be released from the Center only to individuals authorized on the required emergency contact form. Photo ID is required until the Director and staff visually recognize a person. No one under the age of 16 is allowed to pick up a child from the Center. We do not allow children to be picked up from a field trip site.

### **Late Pick-up Policy**

If a child is picked up late, a \$1.00 per minute per child fee is added to the weekly bill. This late fee is paid directly to the staff members who stay with the child past closing. If a child is still in the center 15 minutes past closing, we will begin calling people listed on the child's emergency contact form. If a child remains at the center 30 minutes after closing and we have not been able to contact any individuals listed on the emergency contact list, we are required to contact Department of Human Services or the police.

### **Field Trip Policy**

Every field trip requires a permission slip signed by a parent. When classes leave the Center for a field trip, teachers will have all emergency information for each child, as well as water, first aid kit, and a cell phone (for emergency purposes only). A list of all participants is taken. If a child arrives late when his/her class is on a field trip, he/she will be placed into another age appropriate class until his/her class returns to the Center. We require that children wear rubber-soled shoes for safety reasons. No money shall ever be brought by the child, since all field trips will be paid for in advance.

## **Away from the Center**

When children are away from the Center, the following safety measures are taken:

- When children are transported from the Center, a signed consent form from the parent is required.
- Proper supervision will be provided at all times.
- Teachers will have emergency contact information for each child.
- Staff will have a list of all children in attendance.
- A cell phone will be available for emergencies only.
- Water and cups will be available.
- A first aid kit will be available.

## **Daily Routines**

### **Daily Correspondence**

Parents should check their child's folder daily for important notes from the Director and teachers. Folders are kept in the child's classroom.

### **Meals and Snacks**

At Saint Luke's Children's Center we provide breakfast at 8:30 am. Lunch is served at 11:30 am and an afternoon snack is served at 2:45 pm. We participate in the Colorado State Food Program. All of our meals and snacks comply with regulations regarding nutrition and portion size. Infants are fed according to the parent's guidelines.

### **Discipline Policy**

Our teachers communicate with children at an appropriate developmental level to help them work through the understanding of emotions as well as develop problem solving skills. We may also pray with the children and ask God for guidance in their day. Notes are sent home to inform parents if their child has had a difficult day. If a particular negative behavior continues, we will schedule a meeting with the parent(s).

## Infants

- Infants are placed on their backs unless there is a signed Alternate Sleep Position form from the infant's pediatrician indicating that an alternate sleep position is medically indicated and includes a signed health care plan that is signed by the physician and in the infant's file.
- Infants will not use infant swaddling unless there is a signed Swaddling Permission form from the infant's pediatrician indicating that swaddling is medically indicated and a signed health care plan by the physician and in the infant's file.
- Room temperature will be kept at a temperature that is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult. Sleep sacks (only those that allow free movement of arms and legs) or one-piece sleepers will be used in lieu of blankets. Sleep sacks that swaddle or restrain the arms will not be allowed, unless the physician permission form is complete and on file.
- Pacifiers will be offered for all infants one month and older at every sleep time unless the parent has signed a waiver that the infant is not to be given a pacifier. The pacifier will be clean and dry and will not be coated in any sweet solution.
- During sleep, infants are physically observed by sight and sound (normal skin color, normal breathing, level of sleep, signs of overheating and restlessness) every 10 minutes while in crib.
- Pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, stuffed toys, mobiles and other soft items are not allowed in cribs for infants younger than eight months.
- Music in the crib area will be played softly; no music will be played in, under or within 3 feet of crib. Music will be developmentally appropriate and promote a comforting sleep environment.
- Infants unable to sit will be held during bottle feedings. Bottles are not allowed in cribs or on beds. Bottles are never propped for feeding. Cups and bottles are not to be carried by children while walking or crawling.
- Fluids are offered from a cup as soon as parents and teachers decide together that a child is developmentally ready.
- We accept breast milk that is properly labeled with the child's first and last name, and date expressed. It will be stored in the freezer until served, expired, or taken home by parents. Milk can be stored for up to six months.
- Baby walkers are not allowed in the Center.

## **Diaper Policy**

All children who are not potty trained must be supplied with enough diapers to be changed every two hours. If parents prefer to have their child in cloth diapers, they must supply a hands free container with a waterproof bag for soiled diapers and an adequate number of cloth diapers and liners with a waterproof insert. All soiled diapers will be sent home on a daily basis. Health Department regulations prevent staff members from rinsing out any cloth diapers at the Center.

## **Toilet Training**

Parents and staff of St. Luke's Children's Center will determine a child's readiness for toilet training, based on a series of signs exhibited by the child which indicate interest and readiness. This will be based on the child's developmental level rather than solely on the child's age

The goals of toilet training at St. Luke's Children's Center are to help the child develop self-esteem, independence, and to maintain a consistent pattern.

When your child shows an interest in toilet training, his or her teacher will provide a detailed written policy to the parent. A parent is asked to sign the policy and a copy will be maintained in the child's records.

## **Supplies**

We ask that all parents bring in a blanket and travel size pillow for their child to use at rest time. We also ask that an extra set of clothes be kept at the Center in case of an accident. Please include top, pants, socks and underpants. Each child should have a toothbrush, cover and toothpaste. During the winter months snow pants, boots, and mittens are required.

## **Personal Belongings and Money**

We are not responsible for lost or broken items brought from home. No toys are to be brought from home unless it is the child's designated show and tell day. Money should not be brought to the Center by any child.

## **Outside Playtime**

All children will have a daily morning and afternoon outdoor playtime for at least 30 minutes each session. The outside temperature must fall within a

temperature range provided by Colorado Dept of Health standards. Notifications for air quality and other situations are also observed. Parents should dress their child according to the weather. Indoor playtime in Luther Hall will be provided if weather prevents outdoor play.

### **Rest Time**

All children are given a two hour rest period each day. If after 45 minutes a child does not fall asleep, quiet activities will be provided. Infant naps are based on individual needs.

### **Shoe Policy**

For safety reasons, we ask that all children wear closed-toe shoes at all times while at Saint Luke's Children's Center.

### **DVD/Video Viewing**

Children may periodically enjoy a thirty minute "G" rated DVD/video.

### **Pet Policy**

Classroom pets, visitor pets or service animals are all welcome to the center as long as they meet the state rules and regulations and have been approved by the Director. Reptiles are never allowed in the Center at any time.

### **Illness & Emergencies**

#### **Sick Policy**

If a child shows any of the following symptoms, we will call the parent to pick up the child or ask that parents keep the child home for that day.

- Fever over 100 degrees
- Undiagnosed rash
- Colored secretions from the eyes, ears, or nose
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting

A child **MUST BE SYMPTOM FREE FOR 24 HOURS** without the assistance of any over the counter medication. A note from the child's health

provider stating that the child may return to the Center does not automatically mean that a child will be accepted back into the Center. The Center Director will make any final decision.

### **If a Child Becomes Ill at the Center**

When a child becomes ill, we will contact the child's parent and request that the child be picked up within 30 minutes in order to minimize exposure to other children. When a child becomes ill at the Center, we will do extensive, extra sanitizing of the classroom and toys. We ask that the parent notify the Director of the doctor's diagnosis so we may inform other parents.

### **Medication Policy**

Medication procedures are as follows:

- Over the counter and prescription medication must be labeled with the child's name. Parents must provide a signed physician and parent consent form with specific instructions on administering the medicine. This includes dosage, time to be given, date authorized, end date, reason for medication, and potential side effects.
- Parents must supply an appropriate measuring device (regular table spoons are not accepted).
- All medications are kept in a locked cabinet and properly stored away from children.
- Only those staff members who are medication certified will administer medication to children.

### **Infectious Diseases**

If a child has contracted an infectious disease, he/she must remain at home until a doctor releases the child to return to the Center. We do require a note from the doctor authorizing the child's return.

### **Caring for Injured Children**

In the unlikely event a child is injured at the Center, proper first aid will be administered. If necessary, we will call 911. Parents will be notified and informed of any incident. An incident report will be completed. Parents may state their hospital preference; however, emergency personal can override that

preference is in order to make sure the child is given the best care possible. A copy of the child's medical information will be given to the paramedics.

## **Children with Special Medical Conditions**

A child with a special medical condition must have an individual medical emergency and care plan on file at all times. This plan must be kept up to date and signed by the child's doctor. In the event of an emergency, this plan will be taken with the child to the hospital.

## **Lost Child Procedure**

In the unlikely event that a child is lost, the Director and parent(s) will be notified immediately. Every effort will be made to locate the child, and when necessary, local authorities will be contacted for help in the search. Within 48 hours of the incident, the Department of Human Services will be notified and appropriate reports will be filed.

## **Lock-Down Procedures**

If an emergency occurs which requires a lock-down, all children will go to specified areas in their classrooms. Doors will be locked and lights turned off. Children will be reminded to be as quiet as possible. Teachers or staff will give the signal for lock-down by shouting CODE BLUE.

## **Emergency Procedures**

In a disaster/event requiring evacuation of the building only, staff and teachers will walk to the building north of the church. The site is Academy Mortgage Corporation at 5333 El Capitan Dr. Suite 100, Colorado Springs, CO 80918. Upon arrival at Academy Mortgage Corporation parents will be notified where they are to pick up their children.

In a disaster/event requiring evacuation of the building's surrounding area, the staff and teachers will take children in their cars to: Bethel Lutheran Church at 4925 Farmingdale Dr., Colorado Springs, CO 80917. Upon arrival at Bethel Lutheran Church, parents will be notified where they are to pick up their children