



The Children's Center

Where it all begins

PARENT HANDBOOK

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THE CHILDREN'S CENTER INC. CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

MISSION

The Children's Center Inc. is located on the far south side of Chicago, Illinois. Our center is designed to provide a quality-learning experience for children ages 6 weeks to 12 years. The teaching staff plans developmentally appropriate activities for the children based on their individual needs.

Our mission is to help each child give birth to the talents and gifts that are placed down inside of them through social, physical, cognitive, language and character development. Each child will be supported in expanding their interests and fueling their creative thinking, realizing that each child is a unique individual.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

We at Children's Center Inc. are passionate about our commitment to you and your child. Our goals, with your help, are to exceed in enhancing your child's academic excellence and character development. Each child shall be recognized as an individual whose gender, ability, personal privacy, choice of activities, cultural, ethnic and religious background shall be respected.

Our curriculum has been carefully chosen to stimulate your child's desire for discovering the world around them. We provide a basic program of activities geared to the age levels and developmental needs of the children served. We then tailor our curriculum to each individual child to meet their individual needs.

Children's Center Inc. is a locally owned and operated facility. We are very proud to provide the most innovative facilities and effective educational programs for children 6 weeks through 12 years of age.

Our sincere love for children and strong belief that they should have a solid foundation, in combination with Children's Center Academy, the absolute leader in its industry, make the perfect choice for your family's childcare needs. Our center is comprised of 9 classrooms, a cafeteria area, a activity area for before and after school students and two large outdoor play areas separated for age groups.

At Children's Center Inc. and the Academy, we share a common desire with parents, which is to provide the absolute best for the children. Our high quality teachers, creative and fun educational programs and, of course, our state-of-the-art facility make us stand high above our competitors.

Parents, we realize that it is essential that you be on board with us, so we encourage you to visit the daycare to observe and participate in your children's experience. Collectively, we all can work together in a spirit of agreement and cooperation.

CLIENTS

Our clients are of all ages and reside primarily in economically disadvantaged neighborhoods throughout Chicago's South Side. More than 40% of the 12,000 clients that the Agency serves annually are developmentally disabled. Our clients represent a broad spectrum of races and cultures, including 91% African American, 6.5% Hispanic, 2.4 % Caucasian, and the remaining 7% Asian, Native American, and other.

COLLABORATIONS

The Children's Center are currently in collaboration with Preschool for All, HeadStart, Early HeadStart, Illinois Action for Children, Chicago Public Schools, Department of Children and Family Services, and Child & Adult Care Food Program.

TABLE OF CONENTS

Message	5
Key Introductions	6
Programs	7
Mission	7
Educational Experience	7
How the Program Operates	8
Classroom Activities	9
Parent Fee	10
Tuition	10
Delinquent Fee Policy	10
Fee Determination	11
Attendance Policy	11
Lateness Policy	11
Late Pick-Up Policy	11
Child Not Picked-Up Policy	12
Adult-Under-The-Influence Pick-Up Policy	12
Vacation	12
Observations in Classrooms	13
Field Trips	13
Parent Partnerships	14
Parent Committee	14
Power Hour Agreement	14
Volunteer Activities	15
Family Partnership Agreement	15
Home Visits	16
Confidentially	16
Standards of Conduct	16
Adult Expectations	17

Child Abuse Response Policy	17
Dismissal Policy	17
Grievance Procedure for Parents	18
Communication	18
School Photographs	19
Celebrations	19
Celebration Policy	19
Holiday Celebration Policies	19
Halloween Policies	20
Thanksgiving Policies	20
Christmas & December Holidays	20
Christmas & December's Holidays Policies	20
End-of-the-Year Celebrations (Transitioning)	21
Birthday Celebration Policy	22
Student Discipline Policy	23
Method to ensure Staff Compliance w/Student Discipline	24
A Sick Child	24
Medical Exclusion Policy	25
Infectious Diseases	26
Medication Policy	26
Lice Policy	27
Communicable Disease/A.I.D.S. Policy _	28
Universal Precautions	29
Closing	30
Closing- Inclement Weather	30
HeadStart Family Service Areas	31
Family and Community Partnerships	32



Dear Parent(s):

Welcome to our program! We are so delighted that you, your child (ren) and your family have chosen to become a part of our programs. We recognize the responsibility we have to provide the best possible program for you and your child.

We want you to know some key information about our programs, so you will feel confident that your choice was a wise one. To that end, we have prepared this **"Parent Handbook"**. Keep this book in a handy location so you can refer to it throughout the year.

The **"Parent Handbook"** is also designed to answer many of your questions. We hope this will help you to get to know a little about us. We encourage additional questions. We are glad to answer anything you may want to ask.

Our hope is that we will form a strong partnership to support your child (ren)'s optimal growth and development. We believe that you are your child's first and most important teacher and together we can offer the best possible learning experiences for your child. You can help us to do this by becoming involved and getting to know your child's teacher and the other center staff.

Again we welcome your input and we truly welcome you! Our goal is to do the best job we can with your child!

Sincerely,

Children's Center Inc.

KEY INTRODUCTIONS



Your child's Teachers will be:

The Classroom is called _____
(Number or Name)

The Site Director is _____

Our Phone # is _____

Fax # is _____

Arrival Time: _____

Pick-Up Time: _____



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Where it all begins

PROGRAMS

Children's Center Inc. offer:

- Childcare for children ages six (6) weeks through twelve (12) years of age in a center-based program.

- Head Start for children ages 3 to 5 years of age in half day, full day, collaboration and year-around models. Head Start offers a wide range of services, grouped into components that include Education & Early Childhood Development, Health Family & Community Partnerships, and Program Design & Management.

- Before and After School for school-age children attending schools in the community

MISSION OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Children's Center Inc. provide thoughtful and careful planning, reflective evaluation of care, quality education and family support services to Chicagoans where opportunities are the fewest and the obstacles are the greatest.

Our purpose is to promote and encourage "life-long learning" cognizing the fact that each and every child has the potential to be a great citizen.

EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Children's Center Inc. is designed to provide quality-learning experiences for children ages six (6) weeks to twelve (12) years. The teaching staff plan developmentally appropriate activities for the children based on their individual needs. These activities also address the physical, emotional, cognitive, and social aspects of the child's development.

The infants, toddlers, and two year old programs are designed to meet eight (8) aspects of child development; awareness of sensations, balance/big movements, dexterity, hand/eye coordination, vision, space-time awareness, personality, socialization, language and creativity.

Children's Center Inc. uses the ESI-R Preschool Screening Instrument and the infant/toddler program (6wks-3) uses Ages and Stages Questionnaire to assess the developmental level of each child. In addition, the Child Development Department uses the ASQ-SE (Ages & Stages Questionnaire) for Social Emotional Assessment to assist with each child's social and emotional development. The result of this assessment not only helps to determine the individual needs of each child, but also aids the teaching staff in meeting those needs.

Children who attend our Child Development Programs participate in a variety of educational activities. The program helps all children succeed and is designed to meet each child's individual needs. The program also aims to meet the needs of the community served and its ethnic and cultural characteristics.

Every child receives a variety of learning experiences to foster intellectual, social and emotional growth. Children participate in outdoor and indoor play and are introduced to the concepts of words and numbers. They are encouraged to express their feelings and to develop self-confidence and the ability to get along with others.



HOW THE PROGRAM OPERATES

Arrival Time - It is very important that your child arrives on time. Children must be escorted into the classroom, hand delivered to staff and the person bringing your child must sign the sign-in-sheet. Staff will then initial the sign-in-sheet.

Breakfast - Breakfast is served each morning, until 8:45 a.m. If you want your child to have breakfast at the center, he/she must arrive before this time so that your child can enjoy this experience with their classmates.

Please Do Not Bring - Children should not bring food, money, jewelry, or other valuables from home. Staff cannot be responsible for these items, as they are not allowed in the classroom.

Children's Clothing/Weather - Children need to be dressed for the weather. Your child should have warm clothes, boots, mittens, hat, etc. each day in the winter. During the summer, children should have a hat and sunscreen. Children will go outside most days, so it is important that each child have the clothes he/she needs to be comfortable in the weather. If you need assistance with these items, please notify your social service worker immediately.

Dressing For Play - Children need to be dressed for activities and play. Clothes may get messy. Children's shoes that allow for running and climbing are best.

Extra Clothes - Your child will need to keep a complete set of extra clothes in his/her classroom and your child's name should be on the clothes.

Picking Up Children - Children are to be picked up on time (See Late Pick-Up) He/she will **only** be released to those persons you listed on the "Permission Form". It is important that you inform us if there are changes in this information, and/whenever your address, phone numbers and emergency numbers change, so that we can always reach you in an emergency. **Any changes to the Authorization to Pick-Up Children form must be done in person and in writing:** talk with the Director about making any changes. Children must be signed out by the person picking them up and the staff will initial both the sign-in-sheet at arrival and at departure time.

Ages For Pick-Up - Children can only be picked up by persons aged fourteen (14) and older. It is our recommendation that the parent pick-up the child as often as possible, or an authorized adult.

Releasing Children to Either Parent - The center is legally required to release children to either parent unless current legal documentation is provided to indicate otherwise.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Meals

All children receive breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snacks. Children wash their hands before and after meals and they are taught to eat with proper utensils. They also set the table and clean up after themselves. All children brush their teeth twice a day in the full day program and once a day for the half-day program.

Free Play

Children are able to make choices during this period from a variety of activities such as blocks, dramatic play, art, water, sand play, stories, math, puzzles, etc.

Outdoor Play

Children are given the opportunity to exercise their large muscles through activities such as riding wheel toys, using jump ropes, climbing equipment, balls, etc. The children will go outside daily when weather permits.



Small Groups

Children are divided into small groups with one teacher for the purpose of working on activities such as, language, numbers, colors, shapes, alphabets, fine motor skills, cutting, pasting, etc.

Large Groups

Children and teachers get together for a group experience that include such activities as listening to stories, singing songs, exercising to music, watching movies, etc.

Development Testing

Teachers will test children during the year with a standard developmental screening test to determine the skill levels of all children, and later in the first year to see how much they have learned. They also observe children frequently with a skills check list. Parents will be informed of the observations, and results will be shared during home visits and at other appropriate times as things occur.

PARENT FEES

A monthly parent fee (co-payment) is assessed through Illinois Action for Children. Upon re-determination, if there is a change in your family status or income, another co-payment fee may be assessed.

Parent fee (co-payment) is due the first day of each month and is required to be paid in advance (example: fees for child care in July are due on the first day of July). Failure to pay your parent fee (co-payment) may result in termination of child care services.

TUITION

Parents who do not qualify for Illinois Action for Children can pay cash. All cash payments are required to be paid at the beginning of every week. Weekly tuition rates are posted at the center and will be listed on the tuition contract in the student application packet.

DELINQUENT FEE POLICY

The fees are set by the Illinois Department of Human Services, and are based on a sliding scale determined by the family's annual income and the size of the family. Fees are due by the first (1st) working day of the month. No refunds are given if a child is absent due to sickness or taking vacation. All fees must be by cash, credit card or money order. No personal checks accepted.

Our contract with Illinois Department of Human Services requires us to collect parent co-payment fees. Failure to pay said fees could lead to the family being dismissed from the program.

If fees are not paid by the first (1st) working day, the finances department will do the following:

- 🔔 On the third (3rd) working day a written notice will be posted throughout the school.
- 🔔 If fees are not paid by the fifth (5th) working day a \$20.00 late fee will be charged to your account.
- 🔔 If fees are not paid by the 20th of the month, a final letter will be sent to the parent. If the fees are not paid by the end of the month, services for the child may be terminated.

Exceptions to terminate service in special circumstances may be granted with approval of the Director of Operations.

Families applying for Illinois Action For Children will be charged a \$50 monthly co-payment until an approval letter is received. Once an approval letter is received the parent will be charged the balance of the co-payment. If the co-payment is less than \$50 a month, the parent will receive a credit on their account.

All families are re-assessed on a six (6) months basis or annually depending on the program. At that time we determine if there is any change in your family income. Please note fees may remain the same or can be decreased or increased based on assessment findings.

Parents are informed of the co-payment fee through Illinois Action for Children.

All parents entering the program must pay the first month fee, or the assessed co-payment for the first month in advance, depending on the date of entry and then regular monthly co-payment fees are due on the first working day of the following month.

FEE DETERMINATION

🔔 The number of persons in the family unit.

🔔 The family's annual income.



ATTENDANCE POLICY

It is very important that your child attends school every day. This will help your child feel comfortable, while getting used to the rules and routines of the classroom. It will also help develop the habit of good school attendance, which is so important for success throughout his/her school experience. Also, the program's funding and ability to continue to offer services is based on attendance. If your child misses a day, we ask that you call us by 9:30 a.m. to let us know. If he/she is not in attendance if we do not hear from you, we will call you. If your child's attendance is irregular (for example, if he/she misses every Monday), we will talk with you about what can be done to make sure your child comes to school every day. If your child is absent for three (3) or more days and we do not hear from you, we will try to reach you. If we are unsuccessful, your child may be dropped from the program. If this happens, you will be notified by phone or in writing, and you may place your child on the waiting list for re-enrollment.

LATENESS POLICY

A pattern of frequent late arrivals or problems at pick-up time (a child not being picked up, or the pick-up person appearing to be inebriated/under the influence of a controlled substance) will result in the center taking the steps spelled out in the following policies.

LATE PICK-UP POLICY

The following plan of action will apply to parents and responsible adults who pick-up their child after the given grace period of five minutes:

🔔 At the "first" late pick-up, the parent or adult will be given a verbal reminder of the required pick up appropriate time and reminded of their tardiness.

🔔 At the "second" and any additional late pick-ups, the parent or adult will be assessed a \$10.00 based fee and \$1.00 per minute late fee for pick-ups after 6:00 p.m. This fee is payable and due immediately on the next day the child attends school. If the fees are not paid your child may be temporarily suspended and placed on the waiting list until the fees have been paid.

The staff does not want to enforce any procedure that would keep your child from attending, so please pick-up your children on time.

CHILD NOT PICKED-UP POLICY

When a child at the center has not been picked up by the child's parent, guardian or another authorized person; the scheduled times for child discharge and grace period have expired; the center is closing; and no person who is approved to pick up the child can be reached, the following procedure will be followed:

If a child has not been picked up from the center and the center is closing, Children's Center Inc. staff cannot keep the center open in order to provide care and shelter for the child. In this situation, the most appropriate course of action is to contact the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). DCFS maintains a 24-hour, 7-day-per-week HOTLINE (800) 252-2873 for this type of emergency. While waiting for DCFS to intervene, center staff will continue to attempt to contact someone who is authorized to pick-up the child. At a last resort, local law enforcement will be contacted. Staff will keep a written record of the attempts to contact authorized persons and the eventual manner of discharge. Appropriate discharge forms (sign-out sheets) have been provided at each center. If the parent or other authorized person does pick up the child, late fees will apply as specified in the Late Pick-Up Policy. Keep in mind that all staff is scheduled to leave the center by 6:00 p.m. Please keep us current with your emergency information.

ADULT-UNDER-THE -INFLUENCE PICK-UP POLICY

If a parent, guardian or other authorized person arrives at the center to pick-up the child and the person appears to be under the influence of a controlled substance, at the sole discretion of staff, then staff will follow these procedures:

Staff will discuss the perceived problem with the person and attempt to agree on another authorized person to pick-up the child. If the person in question is not the parent/guardian of the child, all attempts will be made to contact the parent/guardian. Local law enforcement or DCFS will be contacted if this informal means of handling the situation is not effective. An officer of a local law enforcement agency or a designated DCFS employee can take temporary protective custody of the child if there is reason to believe the circumstances or conditions are such that continuing in the care or custody of the person responsible for the child's welfare presents an imminent danger to the child's life or health. In this situation, staff will first attempt to contact local law enforcement, and then DCFS if necessary. A record of the efforts to intervene and the manner of discharge will be kept.

VACATION

If you are planning a family vacation and your child will be absent, you must discuss this absence with the director as early as possible and at least two weeks before the absence. We recommend that vacations be taken when the program has a break. Due to regulatory mandates, centers must maintain required attendance levels for childcare at all times; therefore, depending on attendance levels, a child's slot may not be guaranteed to be held while a family is on vacation.



OBSERVATIONS IN CLASSROOMS

Children's Center Inc. recognizes the importance of on-going professional development in the fields of child development and family services. Thus we do, on occasions, allow students and professionals to observe classrooms as part of their own education. The site director pre-approves all observations and the Site Director supervises these visits to ensure that confidentiality is maintained at all times. No focused observation of an individual child will be allowed nor will information about any child be shared with an outside observer (excluding student teachers) without written permission from the parent or guardian.



FIELD TRIPS

Teachers often plan field trips to extend and develop children's learning and knowledge of particular topics on the world around them as well as to just to have fun. You are encouraged to go along on field trips; it is a wonderful opportunity for you and your child to share some special time together. However, there are some things you should know about field trips:

- 🔔 Volunteers whose duties require contact with children must have an up-to-date physical, including a TB test, MMR immunization and documentation.
- 🔔 Volunteers must be at least sixteen years old and approved by center staff to participate.
- 🔔 Other children, who are not enrolled in the program, are not allowed on field trips, unless the trip is designated as a family event. This is due to licensing regulations.
- 🔔 Parents and other volunteers are expected to interact positively with all of the children to help them enjoy and learn from the trip. The teacher(s) will let you know more specifically how you can help.
- 🔔 Parents and volunteers must stay with program staff during the field trip.
- 🔔 Parents/Volunteers must eat foods similar to children.
- 🔔 No smoking is allowed on field trips.



PARENT PARTNERSHIPS

We hope that you will be very involved in your child's center and program. Parent participation is essential to the success of the Child Care Program. Parent's participation enables the center to provide an enriching environment and supports a positive partnership between parent and staff for the benefit of the child. Parents are encouraged to volunteer in the classroom, as well as other areas of the program, Volunteer time is helpful in developing job skills and knowledge.

Many parents are employed or in specific education programs. Since most families are involved in these activities during daytime hours, you may not be available to volunteer during the day. Therefore, activities such as parent meetings are scheduled in the evening hours. If you have free time during the day, you are always welcome to spend time at the center. It is a wonderful opportunity for you and your child to share the classroom experiences.

There are many ways to create partnerships in our Child Development Programs:

- Participate in the process of making decisions about the nature and operation of the program. As a parent, you are automatically a member of the Center Committee and/or Council (monthly meetings). Parent and staff discuss the program, their expectation, and ways to improve the program. Being active in decision-making keeps you informed about what is happening within the program.

PARENT COMMITTEE

All parents are members of the Parent Committee. At the beginning of each program year, parents elect a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. The children's parents learn about the various components of the program, discuss the budget, menus and other program concerns, set-up and meet to determine quality improvements in these areas. The parent committee meets once a month and all parents should attend.

POWER HOUR AGREEMENT

Studies have proven that children who have regularly scheduled parent involvement and activities become enthusiastic readers, thus better students than those children who do not have such involvement. By allotting just one (1) hour a day for an activity with your child, you can make all the difference in his/her future success.

Suggested activities will be provided to all parents on a monthly basis. All activities can be tailored to meet each family's needs. Most importantly, remember an hour can give your child power over their future, a small sacrifice which pays off in the long run. A power hour agreement will be given to each parent.

APOH recognizes that parents today are very busy with work and/or school, family responsibilities and commitments, and other outside involvement. We try to offer a variety of ways and times that parents can volunteer and enjoy the experience of greater involvement in your child's program:

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

- ☺ *Serve as a Parent Committee member.*
- ☺ *Assist in developing component plans.*
- ☺ *Prepare materials for classroom activities either in the class or at home.*
- ☺ *Maintain a safe and clean classroom environment.*
- ☺ *Tutor individual children.*
- ☺ *Lead a small group activity such as reading a story or table games.*
- ☺ *Prepares bulletin boards.*
- ☺ *Participate in multi-cultural awareness activities.*
- ☺ *Lead large group activities like Hokey Pokey, Simon Says, or Finger Play.*
- ☺ *Chaperone on Field Trips*
- ☺ *Assist with record keeping.*
- ☺ *Supervise children's learning centers.*
- ☺ *Help in obtaining classroom materials.*
- ☺ *Assist during transition periods by supervising the cleanup of one activity and/or prepare for the next.*
- ☺ *All parents must have current T.B. test, physical and background check on file in order to volunteer.*

🔔 *Participate in the classroom as paid employees, volunteers, or observers. While in the classroom you can see how your child works and plays with others. You will be a great help to the teaching staff by assisting with scheduled activities. You may want to prepare materials for activities and become involved in planning daily sessions. Other possibilities will become apparent as you become more familiar with the Child Development Program.*

🔔 *Participate in activities that parents have helped to develop. These activities may include educational programs in which you have an interest, social events, fund-raising, or working with other parents on community problems which are of common concern (i.e. health, housing, education and welfare issues).*

As a parent you are the primary influence in your child's life. The interest you show in his/her education and development is very important to your child, as he/she develops and grows. We hope that the partnership we form with you will ensure a positive, growth experience for your child.



FAMILY PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

The Family Partnership Agreement is an agreement between a parent and staff to work together toward the goal identified in the family's agreement. The Family Partnership Agreement's purpose is for parents/guardians to identify their hopes and dreams for their families and for Children's Center Inc. staff to support families in finding ways to set and reach their goals.

Family partnerships are ongoing, collaborative relationships between staff and families in the Head Start community. The family partnership agreement is an individualized, strength-based, family driven, and staff supported process.

When collaborating with parents, Children's Center Inc. staff will offer a variety of opportunities to meet and to interact with parents throughout the year. During these meetings, staff will continually identify and access services either directly or through referrals.

Our goal is to provide opportunities for families to enhance their skills and to support families as they identify and work to achieve their goal.

HOME VISITS

Child Development Program staff will make two (2) visits to your home. The purpose of the visits is to allow you and your child and his/her teacher to get to know each other and exchange information. These visits enable your child's teacher to answer any questions you may have about the program. Being familiar with your child's home environment, the teachers are better able to understand and work with your child.

These visits or any other may include the social service worker. The social service worker will offer assistance and support which may include assistance to you, your child, or your family. The staff wants to answer any questions you have about the program.

Home visits are not a condition of your child's participation, but Head Start guidelines state that at least two (2) visits should be made to each home during the year. Children's Center Inc. staff has picture identification cards. These cards should be visible when a home visit is being conducted. If identification is not visible do not hesitate to ask for it. If a family is experiencing difficulties, the social service worker and/or staff members may make additional home visits to offer assistance and support.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Children's Center Inc. maintains records for each child and family in order to provide better services for the family and to meet documentation requirements. All records are kept confidential, according to the "Policy on Confidentiality," which is available at the Administrative Office and at your child's center. The following is a summary of the policy:

- 🔒 A parent/guardian has complete access to the information in his/her child's file.
- 🔒 All information regarding any child or family will be kept in strict confidence.
- 🔒 The written consent of the parent/guardian must be obtained prior to any forwarding and/or receiving of confidential information.
- 🔒 If a parent wishes, he/she may consent in writing to have records transferred to and/or from other schools or child placements, including the child's kindergarten school.

Illinois State law requires that all suspected cases of child abuse/neglect or cases of homicide be immediately reported by staff. Consent is not needed and confidentiality does not restrict the reporting of these matters.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT



Children's Center Inc. conducts all its services based on respect, dignity, and support for every child's emotional and developmental growth by providing a secure, loving, and nurturing environment. This is accomplished through a partnership between staff, parents and volunteers.

ADULT EXPECTATIONS

Through growth and change, we promote a nurturing environment that encourages appropriate interaction and open communication. As Children's Center Inc. establishes a partnership with families, it is our expectation for all adults (staff, parents, consultants, and volunteers) to:

- 🔔 Respect each individual child and family not categorizing their sexuality, race, culture, religion, or disability.
- 🔔 Keep in privacy the information about our children, families, and staff members. The Policy on Confidentiality is followed as found in the Procedural Manual. Mandatory reporting on suspected abuse or neglect cases is an exception of confidentiality. The Child Abuse & Neglect Policy is followed as found in the Procedural Manual. Children or families should not be discussed in front of any child or adult not involved.
- 🔔 Assure children will be supervised at all times. Co-workers will be aware of each other's presence at all times. All adults should inform co-workers whenever they leave, (even just to go to the bathroom). Furthermore, one should let a co-worker know when you are coming back.
- 🔔 Support the child's emotional and developmental growth by providing a secure, loving, and nurturing environment where children are treated with utmost respect and dignity. Policies of Treatment of Children and Appropriate Discipline Techniques are followed as found in the Procedural Manual.

As an adult at Children's Center Inc., I understand that I will not solicit or accept personal gratuities, favors, or anything of significant monetary value from contractors or potential contractors. I also understand that anyone violating these standards will be given at least, a warning and at the most any contact or involvement with the program would be discontinued and would not be allowed in the program or the building.



CHILD ABUSE RESPONSE POLICY

As mandated reporters of child abuse and/or neglect, staff must immediately report any suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect. One of the goals of the program is prevention of abuse/neglect through educational opportunities for parents to improve their parenting skills and their abilities to cope with stress. If you are having difficulty with you child, the social service worker and other staff members are available to work with you. Every staff member is a Mandated Reporter. Reporting a situation of suspected abuse or neglect is not meant to be a punitive action taken by staff, but is done to protect children and to assist parents in acquiring the skills to discipline in an effective and appropriate manner. A copy of the Children's Center Inc. Mandated Reporter (Child Abuse and Neglect) Policy is explained and signed by all parents upon registration and is also available at each center upon request.

DISMISSAL POLICY

Children's Center Inc. strives to meet the needs of children and families enrolled in its programs. Steps for dismissal of a child in the Child Development Program are taken only when the program is determined to be an inappropriate setting, and can no longer adequately provide for the child's and/or family's needs. If a parent does not meet the requirements of the program, including meeting the eligibility and attendance requirements and paying the childcare parent co-payment are also steps for dismissal of a child. Parents may also be barred from the premises for gross misconduct. The Area Director must approve all termination of children or families. Children's Center Inc. staff will, whenever possible, assist parents in finding an alternate placement for children who are determined to be inappropriate for existing programs. When parents desire assistance, the following steps will be taken by staff to find an alternative setting:

- 🔔 Agencies will be contacted to identify possible alternative settings for the child. Information on availability of services and eligibility requirements will be provided to the parent(s).
- 🔔 A conference with the family and staff will be held to discuss the available resources and determine the best possible setting for the child.
- 🔔 Staff will assist in the transition from the Child Development Programs to the new agency. If requested, Children's Center Inc. staff will attend an initial staffing or session with the child, family and staff from the new setting.
- 🔔 Staff will arrange for all necessary documents to be signed by the parent, so that pertinent information may be released to the new agency regarding the child's stay in the program.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE FOR PARENTS

A grievance is defined as a complaint against the agency and/or one of its employees. The complaint is handled through a systematic procedure. Children's Center Inc. acknowledges that it is most desirable for parents and community members to resolve problems through free and informal communications. If however, such an informal process fails to satisfy the parties involved, a complaint policy and procedure has been established.

If a parent or community member has a grievance, the following steps may be taken:

- 🔔 The problem will be discussed with the parent or community member, the staff involved, his/her immediate supervisor and the Site Director. It is the responsibility of the Site Director to hear the complaint, explain applicable policies and procedures and obtain a solution. The Site Director will respond to the parent or community member within two (2) working days. The goal will be to attempt to bring the issue to closure, if possible, through negotiated terms. If there is an agreement reached with all parties a "Letter of a Resolution" will be signed by both parties. Each party will receive a copy of letter indicating the resolution was reached and a copy will be maintained in both the Site Director's and Executive Director's "confidential file".
- 🔔 If the agreement is not reached, the Site Director will inform the Executive Director, verbally and in writing, within two (2) days. The Director will review the situation and the initial plan of action taken and make new recommendations. All parties will meet to again, seek a

resolution.

If proper steps are taken, hopefully concerned parties can reach a satisfactory solution at any stage in this process. If there is a grievance/complaint the following steps can and should be taken:

- 1) Notify the Site Director/Alternate Director
- 2) Site Director will notify Executive Director



COMMUNICATION

Each parent will receive letters with information regarding field trips, changes in schedule, closing for holidays, parent meetings, workshops and other areas of importance. This information will be sent home with your child, please check your child's "cubby" each day.

Copies of all letters will be posted on the Parent Bulletin Board and also on individual boards in the classrooms.

SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHS

Group and individual pictures will be taken during the school year. You will be notified of the time, place and cost.

CELEBRATIONS

Children's Center Inc. has developed a policy regarding the celebration of holidays, birthdays, end-of-the year time and other special events. This policy is meant to respect the diverse backgrounds of families participating in our programs and to ensure that all celebrations are developmentally appropriate. We recognize the importance of celebrations to acknowledge special times. Talk with staff about ideas you have for these celebrations (see the Celebration Policy that follows).

CELEBRATIONS POLICY



Holiday activities at centers can offer opportunities for children, staff, and families to have fun, to celebrate together as a group and to share meanings and experiences. However, these activities should be planned thoughtfully with reflection about what children, parents, and staff believe, feel or think about them. Activities centered around holidays, whether national or religious, must not ignore diversity or be offensive to families of varying national, ethnic, racial, or religious backgrounds. Centers must respect the beliefs and concerns of all the children, families, and staff at the center. This does not mean that certain holidays should not be acknowledged; it means that staff and parents must work together to be certain that holiday activities help children learn about and appreciate diversity. (See York (1991) "Roots and Wings: Affirming Culture in Early Childhood Programs. (St. Paul, MN. Red Leaf Press).

Holiday celebrations must not be overemphasized; “holidays” should not become such a focus for planning that they prevent teachers from recognizing and building on other interests of children.

HOLIDAY CELEBRATION POLICES

- 🔔 The time spent preparing for the celebrating holidays should not exceed 2- 3 weeks, and there should always be other activity options available.
- 🔔 Decorations used at holidays must be made by the children and the process used to make them must be age-appropriate.
- 🔔 If children make gifts to give to family member or each other, the process used to make them must be age-appropriate. Other activity options will be available for children to choose.
- 🔔 Any gifts given to children must be age-appropriate and they must be unisex (for example: bubbles, puzzles, art supplies, mittens).
- 🔔 Good nutrition practices should occur during holiday celebrations.

HALLOWEEN POLICIES:

- 🔔 Children and staff are not to wear masks, unless made by children. (Hypoallergenic face-paint is an acceptable alternative.)
- 🔔 Costume pieces will be provided for children who do not have them.
- 🔔 Adults are not to wear costumes frightening to children.

THANKSGIVING POLICIES

Care must be taken not to reinforce historical misconceptions and stereotypes about Pilgrims and Native Americans. The celebration should emphasize appreciation of the bountiful harvest and thankfulness for the pleasant aspects of life.

SUGGESTIONS (Thanksgiving Holiday):

- 🔔 Staff may celebrate the harvest by collecting vegetables from local stores or plant some vegetables and use them for a food experience.
- 🔔 Staff may read a Native American folk tale; invite a Native American to their class to teach a song or share a food experience.
- 🔔 Staff may plan a holiday feast with family.

CHRISTMAS AND DECEMBER HOLIDAYS

Although Christmas is celebrated as a national holiday, it represents specific religious beliefs. Not all children and staff celebrate Christmas, and not all families who do celebrate it, do so in the same way. Centers must respect everyone's traditions and must work with parents to make sure that all holiday activities help children learn about and appreciate diversity. Sites should form a group of parents and staff to decide on guidelines for how these holidays should best be celebrated at that site. Questions to address could include: Can Santa visit the site? Should there be a Christmas tree? Should there be decorations representing particular holidays?

- 🔔 If Santa Claus is to be part of the celebration, he must visit the site. Children are not to visit Santa at a mall or store. Santa should visit only one group of children at a time. Photos of children with Santa can be taken.
- 🔔 Staff must never threaten children that they must be good or else Santa will not give them anything.
- 🔔 If only one or a few children have beliefs different from the majority, staff must consult with those parents about how best to handle holiday celebrations.

SUGGESTIONS (Christmas & December's Holidays):

- 🔔 We suggest that children and families celebrate the holiday at home, so that children can bring in photos, recipes, or activities that are part of their heritage to share their class.
- 🔔 Staff may celebrate winter holidays other than (or in addition to) Christmas. For example, expose children to "Hanukah", "Kwanzaa", or the "Winter Solstice".
- 🔔 Any Staff who does not celebrate December holidays in the classroom; should allow/have children share what they did after they return from Christmas holidays.
- 🔔 Large holiday celebrations should be a joint decision of staff and parent committees.

END-OF-THE-YEAR CELEBRATION (TRANSITIONING)

An end-of-the-year celebration provides an opportunity to share the joy and pride of parents as their children's first school experience comes to a close. It must be planned in a way that is meaningful and thoughtful to the child, staff and parents. The day should be a meaningful and happy experience for all children that are appropriate for their ages and stages of development. Children come first. Frustrated, pressured and tired children do not enjoy themselves.

Traditional "graduation" ceremonies are a ritual in which parents enjoy and take pride in their children's achievements. In many instances, these ceremonies put great strain on the children, staff and parents.

Formal ceremonies, elaborate and costly celebrations are not in keeping Children's Center Inc. philosophy of providing developmentally appropriate activities for our children. We believe that traditional graduations are more appropriate for elementary and secondary school levels. Therefore, the Children's Center Inc, offers a "end of the year celebration", that not only acknowledge our graduates but all program participants.

If certificates are distributed, all children are to receive certificates. All children are to participate in the celebration regardless of whether they are returning the next year. Children, parents and staff are encouraged to reflect upon their thoughts and feelings about the past year's experience. Furthermore, they are encouraged to represent it and share it with each other.

SUGGESTIONS (End-of-the-Year Celebration)

- 🔔 Keep it simple.
- 🔔 Involve parents in planning the celebration
- 🔔 Consider having a family picnic/outing, a luncheon children prepare for parents; a luncheon parents prepare for children; a potluck event;
- 🔔 A special nutritional treat.
- 🔔 Certificates of completion can be awarded.
- 🔔 Consider having the children and parents sing songs together.
- 🔔 Make the day a meaningful day for the children, staff and parent

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION POLICY

For infants through pre-school, birthdays can be celebrated on the child's birthday, as young children have not yet fully grasped the concept of time. If a child's birthday falls on a day when there is not school, celebrate on the next closest day. If a child has a birthday which falls during an extended vacation, it is recommended that the teaching staff send the child a birthday card.

The primary reason for celebrating a child's birthday is to celebrate his/her birthday. Food should never be the primary focus. Parents then have the option to bring in one of these snacks or have the center provide one. Centers must make sure that all children have the same opportunities for celebrations, regardless of whether a parent brings in a birthday snack. Ideas for appropriate birthday snacks include granola bars, apples, oranges, raisins, fruit salad, cake and muffins.

Licensing requires that all snacks must be pre-packed and store bought when brought from home. For example, if cakes are chosen as an option, then cakes must be pre-packaged. If fruit salad is chosen, then fruit salad must be pre-packaged.

SUGGESTIONS (Birthday Celebration):

- 🔔 Parents bring in baby pictures of the birthday child.

- 🔔 Children make a card or gift for the birthday child.
- 🔔 Birthday child can invite a special guest.
- 🔔 During free play the birthday child decorates a special hat, sash, or badge to wear throughout the day.
- 🔔 A special birthday chair or place can be designated during mealtimes, etc.
- 🔔 The birthday child can choose the book to be read at story time, song to be sung at group time, etc.
- 🔔 The birthday child can be a special helper.
- 🔔 A birthday snack is shared with all children.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE POLICY

Infrequently, but on occasion, Children's Center Inc. children exhibit behaviors that prevent learning, are disruptive, destructive or dangerous to him/her and others. To lessen or extinguish these behaviors; a system has been developed and will be described on the next pages. Teachers are to use this system to address negative and inappropriate behaviors. No child shall ever be subjected to corporal punishment for toilet accidents. Remember, any discipline measure should be designed to help children learn to control their own behaviors.

In accordance with Section 407-270 Discipline Code from Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, the following rules must be adhered to at Children's Center Inc.:

1. For both Children and Staff simple, understandable rules shall be established in writing. These rules shall set the limits of behavior required for the protection of groups and individuals within it.
2. Discipline shall be the responsibility of adults who have an ongoing relationship with a child.
3. Discipline shall be developmentally related to the child's act and shall not be out of proportion to the particular inappropriate behavior. The child shall be made aware of the relationship between the act and the consequences.
4. Removal from the group to help a child gain control shall not exceed one (2) two minutes per year of age. Supervision must be present at all times. As soon as the child shows he/she has gained control, the child should be reintegrated with words of encouragement. Removal from the group shall not be used for children less than 24 months of age.

5. If there is an assessment of a child's pattern of unacceptable behavior, the entire staff shall be made aware of it. Full cooperation is needed in carrying out the specific plan developed for him or her.
6. Firm, positive statements about behaviors or redirection of behaviors shall be the effective controlling techniques used with infants and toddlers.
7. Discipline shall encourage self-discipline, including when appropriate, allowing school-age children to solve their own interpersonal conflicts.

POLICY ON BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

The Behavior Management system must include:

- 1) Identification (by staff and/or parent) of the behaviors to change.
- 2) The suggested method for controlling or lessening the behavior.
- 3) Development of the plan.
- 4) Implementation of the program plan.
- 5) Frequent evaluation of the program's effectiveness
- 6) Revision of the program, as needed
- 7) Recognition of progress when achieved.

Two methods of correction are generally used:

- 1) When in-appropriate behavior is displayed, it is encouraged (or reinforced) to call attention to it. Depending on the client's level, privileges small items or verbal correction, redirection, and modeling the appropriate behavior.
- 2) Withdrawal of privileges and in specific cases "removal from the group" are appropriate corrective actions. When the student is removed from the group, he must still be supervised at all times. He is not to be separated more than minutes per year of age per occurrence. Before returning the child to the group, a few minutes should be taken to explain what the rules are, what is expected of the child and an encouraging word to make him feel that you know he can do it?

When appropriate, especially for serious behavior problems, the parent should be included in the planning of the management program and should be working on the same-targeted behaviors at home.

METHOD TO ENSURE STAFF COMPLIANCE WITH "STUDENT DISCIPLINE AND STUDENT (HUMAN) RIGHTS POLICY"

All new classroom staff will be given copies of "The Student Discipline Policy". Administrator(s) will meet to discuss strict enforcement of these policies with new staff and to answer any questions from the new employee. Head Start administrators and supervisors make regularly scheduled and unscheduled classroom visits to observe program operations and student/staff interactions. All administrators and supervisors have been trained to assess staff interactions with students and to see how consistently staff employs behavior management techniques. Administrators and supervisors also ensure that all staff know correct

practice, and are comfortable in the implementation of management programs.

- 🔔 Should an incident occur involving observed suspected or reported violation of the discipline policy, an immediate administrative investigation will occur?
- 🔔 Should the findings reveal that the staff person was in error, the matter will be addressed in a manner appropriate with the staff person's violation.
- 🔔 The administrative actions taken may include, but will not be limited to the following measures: conference with the staff person, reiterating the compulsory nature of adherence to discipline policy, along with a warning; a mandate for the staff person to receive additional in-service training; modeling of correct way to handle behavior; written reprimands, progressive disciplinary action, depending on the offense including dismissal and reporting to DCFS should the miss-handling result in child abuse.



A SICK CHILD

In the event that your child is sick, we assume that you will not send him/her until he/she is well enough to participate in the program. If your child becomes sick during the day, you will be contacted to pick up your child. In the case of a serious illness or injury, your child will be transported to the nearest hospital by ambulance and you will be contacted immediately. In the case of all accidents/injuries, an incident report will be completed and shared with you at the time you pick up your child. If someone else from your pick-up list – picks up your child, he/she will be asked to give you the incident report.

In case of an emergency, the center must be able to contact you. It is the parent's responsibility to keep home, work, cell and all emergency numbers up-to-date.

MEDICAL EXCLUSION POLICY

In order to assure the health and safety of children enrolled in the program, Children's Center Inc. has adopted exclusion criteria in accordance with the Chicago Department of Health, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Red Cross. When a child has certain symptoms or conditions, she/he will not be allowed to attend the center. The only time an exception will be made is if the child's physician states in writing that the child is not contagious, can be in the child care setting and is able to participate fully in the program's activities. A child suspected of having or diagnosed as having a reportable infection, contagious, or communicable disease for which isolation is required by the Illinois Department of Public Health's General Procedures for the Control of Communicable Diseases shall be excluded from the center.

A child may not be excluded for a minor illness, unless any of the following symptoms or conditions is present:

- 🔔 *A rash combined with an oral temperature of 101 degrees Fahrenheit or higher or a rash with behavior changes, until a Health Professional determines the rash/illness is not contagious.*
- 🔔 *Any oral temperature of 101 degrees Fahrenheit or higher...*

- 🔔 Vomiting & Nausea – two or more times in the previous 24 hours, unless the vomiting is determined by a health professional to be due to a non-communicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration.
- 🔔 Diarrhea and/or watery stool with stomach cramps twice within child's program hours, unless the diarrhea is determined by a health professional to be due to a non-communicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration.
- 🔔 Usually lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficult breathing or other signs of possible severe illness, or any condition that prevents the child from participating comfortably in the daily routine, or any illness which requires greater care than the classroom staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children.
- 🔔 Mouth sores associated with the child's inability to control his or her saliva, until the child's health professional or health department clears the child of any infection. An earache accompanied by an elevated temperature and/or drainage.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Because the following conditions are infectious/communicable diseases, a doctors' note is required for readmission.

- 🔔 Varicella ("chicken pox") for at least six (6) days after onset of rash and the sores are dried and crusted.
- 🔔 Purulent conjunctivitis ("pink eye") until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.
- 🔔 Strep throat, until 24 hours after the treatment has been initiated and until the child has been without fever for 24 hours.
- 🔔 Hepatitis A, for one week after onset of illness or until immune serum globing has been given to the appropriate children and staff in the program as directed by the health department.
- 🔔 Ringworm, until 24 hours after treatment.
- 🔔 Scabies, until the morning after the first treatment.
- 🔔 Tuberculosis, until health department states the child is noninfectious.
- 🔔 Lice, until the morning after the first treatment (See Lice Policy)

- 🔔 Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.
- 🔔 Whooping cough, until five (5) days of antibiotic treatment has been completed, pending doctors' statement.
- 🔔 Mumps, until nine (9) days after onset of parotid gland swelling, pending doctors' statement.
- 🔔 Measles/Rubella, until (six) 6 days after rash appears.

The Site Director has the discretion to require a doctor's note for any condition where the child's health is in question.



MEDICATION POLICY:

The following policies and procedures will be followed when accepting medication and administering medication:

- 1) The parent/guardian of the child will obtain a Medication Consent Form from the main office. This form should be filled out completely, dated and signed by the parent.
- 2) The medication must have a pharmaceutical label with the child's name, dosage, expiration date, and route.
- 3) The medication will be given to the main office along with the signed Medication Consent Form.
- 4) All medications (including over the counter) must have a Doctors' prescription or recommendation before it will be administered Children's Center Inc.. The medication should contain clear directions, stating the duration in which it is to be administered.
- 5) All medication, (including over the counter), must be kept in the Social Service office in a locked container for safe storage. The person designated to administer the medication will obtain the prescribed or physician recommended over the counter medication
- 6) After administering the medication, staff will document the administration of the medication on the Medication Log and sign the Log Sheet.
- 7) All over the counter medications must be in a sealed container and remain at the center.
- 8) Risks and side effects of medications must be provided and placed in the notebook with the Medication Log Sheet.

9) All discontinued, outdate, and empty containers of medication will be returned to parent for disposal.

10) A note will be added to the medication log sheet.

Children's Center Inc. **does not** accept verbal orders for administering medications.

LICE POLICY

Children's Center Inc. adheres to the National Pediatric's Associations' "No Nit Policy" on lice. This three-prong policy calls for:

- a. The removal of all lice, lice eggs and egg cases following application of an over-the-counter pediculicide agent (i.e. Rid, Lice-Enz).
- b. The exclusion of the child from the center until such treatment has been accomplished.
- c. Community education to insure that parents understand the reason for the policy, their role in carrying it out and the degree of accountability to which they will be held.

A child found to have an active case of head lice should be kept separate from other children. The parent will be notified that the child may not return until treated. Other close contacts should be checked to determine if there are other cases. If your program is having a problem with head lice, morning head checks will be conducted before children mingle together. Removal of nits is difficult, and the majority of nits will be killed by treatment. However, re-infestation is possible if some nits survive and hatch into adult lice. If the nits are not removed, you will not be able to tell whether re-infestation has occurred or they are only old nits. The Site Director, Social Service Worker and Nurse should decide on a case-to-case basis, the best policy for the family and the center when re-infestation occurs. To ensure successful treatment, the children need to be checked for new nits for (ten) 10 to (fourteen) 14 days after therapy.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE/A.I.D.S. POLICY

Due to the dramatic rise in the number of persons diagnosed as HIV + and the companion condition known as AIDS, and in view of the fact that this is a serious disease required to be reported to the state public authorities, Children's Center Inc. feels the need to clearly state its policy concerning those individuals who become affected by this disease and any other communicable disease.

Children's Center Inc. will make every effort to control the spread of communicable diseases and will establish health policies and precautions to that end. Staff members and other persons with an illness in a communicable state will not be permitted to have contact with the children in the program or work in a capacity where illness could be transmitted to the children. Whenever exposure to disease has occurred in the program the program's health provider or the local health officer will be consulted, and his/her instructions followed with respect to control measures. Such measures will include the disinfection of toilet facilities, furnishings, toys, and effective disinfection and disposal of bodily discharges containing infectious materials. When a child is suspected of having a reportable infectious, contagious, or

communicable disease for which isolation is required by the Illinois Department of Public Health, the director or social service worker will notify the program's health provider, the local health officer and the child's parents.

ENROLLMENT FOR CHILDREN WITH A COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

Enrollment of children and their participation in the program shall be in response to their needs and the program's ability to meet them. Children shall not be excluded from the Head Start or Child Care programs solely on the basis of their HIV status. Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is a physical handicap under the Illinois Human Rights Act Ill. Rev. Stat., Ch.68, Sec.1-101, et seq. Decisions about attendance in HeadStart, Child Care or State Pre K of a child with special needs, including HIV+ infection, shall take into consideration the child's social, psychological, and developmental status; current health status, including degree of immune function and stamina; and the ability of the program to provide appropriate care. The team involved in the acceptance of a child with special needs, including HIV+ infection, shall include the parent or legal guardian of the child, the program director, the head teacher, social service worker and medical and/or professional team previously involved with the child. Testing for HIV is neither required nor recommended as part of the health examination required for enrollment.

CONFIDENTIALITY FOR CHILDREN WITH A COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

Confidentiality regarding any communicable disease will be maintained to ensure the rights of every individual. Those people who "need to know" are those directly accountable and responsible for the child who will need that knowledge in order to care appropriately for that child and family. These people are program director, head teacher, social service worker, education, and nurse responsible for that family. The recorded information shall be kept confidential with all records locked in a file cabinet. Any breach of confidentiality shall be sanctioned with an immediate disciplinary action. If a situation arises that shall be signed by the parent or legal guardian.

PERSONNEL ISSUES (COMMUNICABLE DISEASE)

No one shall be denied employment, the continuation of employment, or the right to volunteer at the center solely on the basis on HIV+ status. HIV testing of potential employees or volunteers shall not be mandatory. Confidentiality of records shall be maintained by a locked file cabinet. Any breach of confidentiality shall be sanctioned with an immediate disciplinary action. Equal opportunity shall be provided regarding job assignment, promotion, and demotion, based on the person's ability to perform a given job. Disclosure of HIV+ status shall require a time limited, single purpose consent signed by the employee. All employees and volunteers shall be informed of the provisions of the personnel policy.

MONITORING OF CHILDREN WITH A COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

All educational staff shall be responsible for monitoring children's health on a daily basis. All observable signs of illness shall be reported to the immediate supervisor. Parents shall be contacted and asked to pick up their child. If a child has been diagnosed with a contagious disease, a letter shall be sent out to the parents on the first day of such notification. The child in question shall return to school upon the presentation of a doctor's note verifying that the child is free from communicable diseases will be covered in the annual agency orientation.

EDUCATION OF PARENTS AND STAFF (COMMUNICABLE DISEASE)

Each staff member, volunteer, and parent shall receive an orientation to the program policies and procedures upon arrivals. The medical, legal, and social issues concerning all communicable diseases will be covered in the annual orientation.

UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS

All staff, volunteers, parents, and children shall be taught to use and practice universal precautions and infection control procedures, including daily washing, sanitizing, and hygienic measures to stay clean and healthy. Infection control shall include the following:

1. Thorough hand washing with soap and warm water upon arrival for the day, before eating, feeding, or handling food, after toileting, following nose blowing, sneezing, coughing, after cleaning equipment, before and after giving medication after taking a child's temperature and after removing disposable diapers.
2. Use of disposable waterproof gloves in situations where there is contact with blood or body fluids.
3. Use of proper sanitizing procedures on all surface areas, toys, equipment, bathrooms and tables before food service or cooking activities. Sanitizing solution shall be prepared fresh daily with four tablespoons of bleach to one gallon of water. There shall be an adequate provision of cleaning supplies and disposable gloves at all times. All blood and body fluids shall be handled as if infected.

CLOSINGS

Children's Center Inc. is closed for the following holidays during the year:

Labor Day (September)

*Thanksgiving Day (November)
(One Additional Day)*

*Christmas Day (December)
(One Additional Day)*

*New Year's Day (January) (One
Additional Day)*

Dr. Martin Luther King's Birthday (January)

Presidents Day (February)

Good Friday (March or April)

Memorial Day (May)

Independence Day (July)

CLOSING – INCLEMENT WEATHER

Children's Center Inc. might also close due to a severe weather emergency. In this case watch TV Channels 2, 5, 9, or 32 or listen to radio stations WMAQ (670 AM), WGN (720 AM), or WBBM (780 AM) to find out if your center is closed. Call the center if you are unsure if the center will be open or closed. Other circumstances (such as no electricity) may also close the center. In these cases you will be notified by center staff as soon as possible. Please call our Office for further instructions if necessary and needed.



HEAD START SERVICE AREAS

In each component area, Children's Center Inc. Child Development Program will do the following:

I. EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND HEALTH

1. Child Health and Development Services:

- Ensure that each child has an ongoing source of continuous, accessible health care and that he/she is receiving all regular and follow-up healthcare needed.

2. Education and Early Childhood Development:

- Ensure that the learning environment supports the development of each child's social, emotional, cognitive and physical development: and that the program involves parents in the program's approach to child development.

3. Child Health and Safety:

- Ensure that the program operates in a safe and healthy way.

4. Child Nutrition:

- Ensure that each child's nutritional needs are met and work with families to support good nutrition.

5. Child Mental Health:

- Work collaboratively with parents to identify mental health concerns and support their participation in any interventions, through services of a mental health professional for consultation and intervention.

II. FAMILY AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

1. Family Partnerships:

- a. Engage in a process of collaborative partnerships with families, including developing Family Partnership Agreements, offering resources and services, and providing opportunities for parents to enhance their skills and advocate for their child.*

2. Community Partnerships:

- a. Work together with parents to take an active role in community planning and collaboration both within the Head Start program and in the community.*