



## Parent Handbook

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## **Philosophy Statement**

Amy Pyshers Childcare & Early Learning Center serves as a home away from home where children can play and learn while their parents are at work. It is a safe place for parents to leave their children, knowing they will be cared for and happy. The center is an extension of the home where the staff sees both parents and children as integral parts of the child care family.

Amy Pyshers Childcare & Early Learning Center is not a babysitting service but is an environment prepared by staff who knows how children grow and develop. The staff is people who are interested in and feel responsible for seeing that the day to day experiences of the children take place in an environment which promotes growth and learning. People staff the Center with special training in the developmental process of children.

Our staff, like the staff of any organization dealing with children, recognizes that this is an educational force. Each person on the staff serves as an example to the children since children learn by observing as much as by being "taught". Parents in the home teach the same way. We encourage a child to be a child....play, learn, grow, discover, and make choices. The secure learning environment, created by a staff of professionals, encourages a child to develop a strong sense of self-esteem as he or she grows within a personal level of comfort.

Amy Pyshers Childcare & Early Learning Center welcomes any child regardless of race, religion, sex, ancestry, special needs or national origin. Our policies and curriculum provide the equal care and attention to all children entrusted to us.

### **Program Goals**

To provide a relaxing, loving, safe and calm atmosphere where self-concept is enhanced, independence and making choices are encouraged, and self-discipline is gained in an environment where the child knows limits and expectation.

To provide an atmosphere in which children have respect for self, others and materials.

To provide a wide variety of activities within a routine, where cooperative play is encouraged. These activities are drawn from the areas of art, science and math, cooking, music and movement, social studies, practical life, dramatic play, language arts, and manipulative activities.

To develop in each child an active curiosity about the world in which the child lives and an enthusiasm which stimulates exploratory behavior and creativity.

To develop in each child and appreciation for beauty and nature.

To develop a child's respect for materials and equipment.

To ensure an appropriate learning environment, programming focuses on children's developmental levels rather than their chronological ages. Children need to learn, yet, at the same time, they need to be carefree and expressive.

## **Parent Provided Items**

The parents will need to provide the following items on a daily basis:

### **Infants:**

Formula in bottles marked with the child's name

Baby cereal and food

Diapers, wipes and diaper cream

Two complete sets of clothing (season appropriate) placed in a zip-lock bag with the child's name on the outside.

Sunscreen

Hat (summer and winter)

A written schedule of your baby's diet, scheduled feeding, and rest period.

### **Young toddlers and Pre-school children:**

All Special diet food

Sunscreen

Sleeping bag and blanket which will be washed by the parent

Diapers if the child is not potty trained or a supply of training pants if the child is learning.

Season appropriate extra clothing placed in a zip-lock bag with the child's name on the outside.

Large backpack (to carry home any important papers or crafts).

### **School-age children:**

All special diet foods

Backpacks need to be sent to school every day so send home all-important work.

Sunscreen

\*\*\*\*Please label all personal belongings with your child's name. Please don't forget the child's special blanket if needed for nap time.\*\*\*

### **Center Provided Items**

The center will provide the following items on a daily basis:

Breakfast	6:00 am-8:00 am
Lunch	11:00 am-12:00 pm
PM snack	2:30 pm-3:45 pm

All of our meals are home cooked and served hot. The center will serve only nutritious foods, whole milk and juice. If your child needs to have special milk please make the staff aware. All special diet foods must be supplied by the parent.

Supervised care at all times  
Age appropriate toys, games, books, art materials  
Outdoor or indoor play  
Whole milk and juice  
Bibs  
Art smocks

The center will provide each family with a complete menu for the month. A copy of the menu also hangs on the bulletin board. If your child does not like what we serve, please send a packed nutritious lunch. Our after-school snack is usually exactly what we are serving for lunch. We make extra for the school children.

## General Policies

### Welcome to the classroom

Before your child's first day of the new environment and introduction with the classroom teacher. At this time the teacher will share with you needed information and "tips" to help establish comfortable feelings for you and your child within the classroom.

### Toys and Candy

We have a large selection of toys at the center for the children to play with and ask that you do not allow your child to bring any toys from home. The exception would be a comforting security item for napping or to help with adjusting to the changes. Other exceptions would be items that relate to a teacher's planned activity, for example, the child could bring a teddy bear for Teddy Bear Day. You would be notified ahead of time if your child needs a special toy for the day. Please do not send candy or gum to school.

### Outside Play

The children will go outside every day that the weather permits. Please send adequate outdoor clothing so your child will be comfortable. Children who cannot participate in daily outside activities should be kept home.

### Fees

Tuition payments are due on the first day your child is enrolled for care unless other arrangements are made in advance. If your tuition is not paid on time, there will be a late fee of \$10.00 per day added to the week. If the fee is not paid, in full, by the end of the following week, the child will not be admitted into care. Our program and licensing regulation require us to engage staff based on enrollment; therefore, we cannot give tuition refunds for the days your child is absent. **Your tuition is due on days your child is scheduled to attend and they are absent for any reason!** Your child's place will be reserved for him/her on the days you have chosen on your enrollment application. Therefore, you will be obligated to pay for those days for the full year. **This also applies to holidays.** We will be closed on the following days, however, they will be included in your fee. The center may be closed on the following holidays during the year. Check with the center for the up to date schedule.

Memorial Day

Independence Day

Labor Day

Teacher Professional Day

Thanksgiving Day

Day After Thanksgiving

Christmas Eve

Christmas Day

New Year's Day

There will be a one-time family charge of \$50 registration fee due when you register your child. There will also be a \$40 fee charged for each returned check from the bank for any reason. There will also be a \$20 fee charged if your check needs to be redeposited for any reason.

### **Vacation leave**

When your child has been enrolled for 11 months of continuous child care services, you will earn the equivalent of your child's average childcare week with no tuition charge. You will be permitted one vacation week per year. You must, however, provide two weeks written notice of the dates that vacation time will be taken. Vacation may not be taken one day at a time.

### **Absences**

Please call the center when your child will not be attending as scheduled. If an absence is due to an illness please communicate the nature of the illness. In order to ensure a safe and healthy environment, please exercise every precaution to keep the infection from spreading. If your child is vomiting, has diarrhea or a fever please keep him/her home until the symptoms are gone for 24 hours without medication. If they are sent to child care with this illness you or your emergency contact person will be called to pick the child up.

If your child has pinkeye or pinkeye symptoms, he/she will not be admitted to childcare until he/she has seen a doctor, been put on medication for 24 hours and MUST have a note with a release date on it. Over the counter medication will be given for no more than 5 consecutive days by the child care staff. If your child needs over the counter medication for more than 5 days, please send a note with the reason why we should continue the medication (ie: allergy medication signed by the child's physician).

If your child has had 2 incidents of diarrhea in one day the child will be sent home and may not return until he/she is diarrhea-free for 24 hours. If the child returns and has diarrhea again the child will be sent home and not allowed to return until he has a note from the doctor.

Children, who cannot participate in daily activities, including outside play, should be kept home. If the child care staff deems the child is too ill to remain in the center for the remaining period of the day, the staff shall inform the parents that the child must be picked up within one hour from initial contact of the parent. If a parent cannot pick the child up, or refuse to pick the child up, the emergency contact person will be notified. If emergency medical care is needed for the child, the parent(s) /guardian shall be informed as soon as possible. If necessary, a staff member will accompany the child to the hospital and stay with the child until he/she is turned over to the parent/guardian or emergency contact person.

## **Medication**

The staff will administer prescription medication to the child provided the prescription is current, has the child's name on it, the physicians name, and physicians instructions on the label. Please hand the prescription medicines to your child's teacher with instructions to place the medicine in the refrigerator or in the medicine container. Parents must give authorization for dispensing the medications by signing your child's medication which is located in a safe place in the classroom. All medication is confidential so the log also is confidential.

Prescription and non-prescription medication (including cough medicine and Tylenol) will be administered only by written permission from the parent. Fever-reducing medication ie: Tylenol, Motrin needs a note from the doctor. telling us how much should be given to your child. Without the note, medication will not be given. All children with special health needs must have an action plan from the physician as to the condition the child has and all medications the child must take when in care. Directions for the medication must also be written and signed by the physician.

Any backpacks containing medication must be handed to a staff member when your child is dropped off.

## **Backpacks**

Children are encouraged to bring a backpack to carry items to and from the center. There are to be no harmful items (IE. sunscreen, medication, creams, weapons, etc...) in any backpack that is hung in the common child areas of the center. Backpacks in the center are subject by to a search by staff at any time!

## **Rest time**

Children have an assigned rest time. The length of the rest time depends on the child. Children will be allowed to nap until they wake up. If this is a problem then please discuss it with the teacher. If the children do not nap then they must rest. Rest time is used to refresh the child for a long afternoon of play. This is also the time the teacher uses to make plans for the next day, record her observations, work on bulletin boards or any other important jobs needed to effectively run her class.

## **Litter**

Positively do not throw any litter, including cigarette butts on the child care property. Remember we care for young children and the first thing they do when they go outside is pick up the butts. This is unhealthy for the children and it offends people who do not have to smoke around their children.



## **Smoking**

We offer a smoke-free campus. Absolutely no smoking on the property & do not discard your cigarette butts on the property.

## **Snow Cancellations**

During inclement weather, the center may open on a delay, close early or close for the entire day. These decisions will always try to be made in a timely manner. Any delays or closings may be posted on WFMZ, Facebook, email, website or text message. Make sure you have all your contact info up to date to receive information in a timely manner.

## **Driveway**

Remember that when you pull into the driveway, children are playing nearby, so please use a speed that will allow you to stop if a child runs in front of your car. Remember the child YOU hit could be your own. Please park your car so several people can park in front of the garage. Try to make your pick up and drop off time as quick as possible, this will cut down on the congestion and allow everyone a parking spot.

## **Termination**

A two-week notice is required for withdrawal from our program. We will also give you a two-week notice if we are going to terminate your child's care. All children are accepted on a two-week trial period. If for some reason you are not happy with our care, you will be free to choose another facility. Likewise, if we feel we cannot accommodate your child's needs, we will have the option after two-week notice, to terminate your care.

## **Toilet training**

Please make sure that if your child is potty training, he/she can manipulate the clothing you send them in. A staff person is not always stationed in the bathroom to unbutton complicated clothing. If you are in the process of toilet training your child, we are perfectly willing to work with the child. Remember, we cannot toilet train a child alone. All children learning to go potty need to bring lots of extra clothing.

## **Health appraisals**

Each child enrolled in the Early Learning Center shall have an age-appropriate health appraisal, required by the Department of Public Welfare, on file within one month of enrollment. Forms are always hanging on the bulletin board in your child's room and on the parent bulletin board at the bottom of the facility's stairs. These physicals MUST be updated yearly after your child is 18 months old. Once your child is 6 years old, the children need to have health appraisals every even birthday (ex: 6,8,10 & 12).

## **Hours**

Amy Pyschers Childcare and Early Learning Center will be open from 6:00 am to 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Remember the center staff has families also, so you need to be prompt to pick up your child. A fee of \$10 every 15 minutes will be charged after 6 pm for each child. The late fee is due the day it is incurred. That means when you pick the child/ren up.

## **TV policy**

The children will be allowed to watch TV between the hours of 6:00 am and 8:00 am and then again after 4:30 pm. The only programs the children may view in the Early Learning Center are quality programs such as Sesame Street. We are not allowed to show any video's other than educational ones. If we want to show Disney videos we must pay a yearly copyright fee which starts at \$500.00. Regular videos are for home use only.

## **Busing policy**

Children who attend our Early Learning Center, can be bussed to the Moore Township School. The parents are responsible for contacting the office at the school and reporting to the secretary that they need to have their child ride the bus from the center. The children get the bus in front of the childcare center. A staff member escorts the children to and from the bus every day. If your child is not going to be returning on the bus, please inform the center staff in writing when you drop the child off. If your child gets the bus from home and is not going to return after school to the center, you will also need to call the center and notify them that your child will not be on the bus. IF YOUR CHILD IS NOT ON THE BUS, AND WE HAVE NOT BEEN NOTIFIED AND NEED TO SEARCH FOR THE CHILD, YOU WILL BE CHARGED YOUR REGULAR DAILY CHARGE. WE NEED TO KNOW IN ADVANCE WHO WILL NOT BE ON THE SCHOOL BUS.

All parents need to explain the bus riding rules to their child on a regular basis. If a child is removed from the school bus for poor behavior, the center will not transport him/her to school. Parents will need to make other arrangements.

If your child does not return to the center on the school bus, the center will contact the school secretary immediately. Once the school has been notified the center will contact the parents. If parents are not available a voice message will be left. After contacting the parents we will be in contact with the school until they locate the child.

## **Release of children**

Children will only be released to the parents/guardians and the persons listed on the agreement.

## **Communications**

Communication between the childcare center and parents is extremely important. We encourage close contact between the staff and parents. If you have any concerns, they are important to us, please call or talk to your child's teacher. Please check the bulletin board in your child's classroom for any information pertaining to that particular class. The general Parent Information bulletin board is located at the bottom of the steps with general information on it.

## **Reports and conferences**

Once you have chosen to use our program for your child care needs, we will have an enrollment meeting. During this meeting, we will fill out all the paperwork needed to safely care for your child. Upon entering our program you will be offered a "Getting to Know" you meet. This meet will help you learn about how your child is adapting to our program and will be held within 45 days of your enrollment. You will be able to talk to the director and or teacher every day in the event you have any question before the meeting is held.

Each child enrolled in the childcare center will receive some type of report on a weekly basis. Infants and young toddlers receive their reports daily. Older toddlers, preschool and kindergarten will receive their reports on a weekly basis.

Everyone will receive a menu and newsletter monthly.

Conferences will be scheduled twice a year with all parents. The first conference will be in January and then in May.

## **Meals**

The center serves breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack. The menu is posted on the Parent Information bulletin board. We serve balanced meals using a wide variety of foods. There is no alternative meal served. If your child does not care for the food we serve, you can send lunch.

Breakfast consists of milk, juice or fruit and either hot cereal, cold cereal, pop-tarts, waffle, pancake or toast. Lunch consists of a meat, fruit, vegetable, bread & butter and milk. Snack consists of milk or juice plus either cookies, fruit, vegetable, or snack food.

If your child does not like any component of our lunch, however, please be sure the lunch you pack is nutritious. We will offer your child milk to drink you do not need to send a drink.

Notices will be posted if there is a food allergy in the center and your sent items must meet the requirements or will be thrown away.

**Discipline**

The discipline used at the center is redirection or time out. We discuss all behavior problems with the parents. If at any time you have a question about a behavior situation PLEASE bring it to our attention immediately.

**Transition within the center**

The transition of children is always a real problem. We have collaborated with several other area child care centers as well as other child care officials to make our transition policy. Children will transition to the preschool class in September. All children must be 3 years old by September 1 and be potty trained in order to move to the preschool class.

**Individualized Education Plans**

If your child has an IEP or IFSP, please notify us so we can continue working with your child. Enclosed at the end of this handbook you will find a form requesting a copy of the plan.

**Transition out of the center**

When your child leaves our program to enter the public or private school system or to continue in another Early Learning Program you have the right to have his/her observation records transferred. Enclosed at the end of the handbook, you will find a form that needs to be completed and returned in order for this process to occur. We will then release the records to you.