

## A NOTE FROM OUR PASTOR

Greetings! And thank you for entrusting the care of your child to the Circle of Friends, a ministry of Shiremanstown United Methodist Church.

As pastor, I understand our task as a group of followers of Jesus Christ as sacred custodians of the welfare of your child. It is a holy calling for us because we believe every child is a gift from God to be treated with loving care, respect, and with their safety as our utmost priority.

Because we are a Christian child care center, we take seriously Jesus' command to "let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." (Matthew 19:14). Children have therefore always been a blessing in my life, even when they're not at their best behavior. And we consider your child to also be a blessing to love as unconditionally as God loves us.

Every week, I look forward to meeting with the children and their teachers for a time of telling Bible stories and prayer. I'm often amazed at how attentive they are as I ask them questions about their own experiences with God and pray with them. I and the staff try very hard to model for them what a follower of Jesus looks like, because we know that Christianity is more caught than taught. We teach more by our actions than by our words.

I'm very proud of our leadership. They are thoroughly vetted, trained, devoted to Jesus, and gifted by the Holy Spirit to work with your child.

Because children aren't born with instructions, it may be sometimes difficult for you as a parent or guardian to know how to handle situations involving your child. I am available to you if you seek Christian spiritual coaching or just need a listening ear.

Again, thank you for trusting Circle of Friends. We hope and pray we will continue to earn that trust, because we love your child as Jesus loves all of us

Grace and peace,

Pastor Logan

# **Circle of Friends Child Care Center**

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# **WELCOME**

## **OUR ORGANIZATION**

The Circle of Friends Child Care Center is one of the many ministries of Shiremanstown United Methodist Church. Circle of Friends is owned and operated by the church and is provided as a Christian alternative to other child care settings. All are welcome to join us for worship services or other church activities at anytime.

### **MISSION AND PURPOSE**

The mission of Circle of Friends Child Care Center is to offer every child love, support, and guidance in a warm and friendly Christian environment. As a Christian program, we will provide the opportunity for growth and development in the areas of mental, emotional, physical, social and spiritual well-being. There will be daily prayers before each meal and snack times, Bible stories and Christian holiday observances. We will provide an environment that builds character and shapes values for your child's future success.

### **ADMINSTRATIVE STRUCTURE**

The Child Care Center Director reports to the Administrator who reports to the Pastor, the Staff-Perish Relations Team and the Church Council.

### **OUR STAFF**

Staff is hired according to qualifications set by the Department of Human Resources (DHS), Child Day Care Services of

the Commonwealth of PA. The Circle of Friends Child Care Center employs professionals in each classroom who are trained in early childhood education and/or related fields. All staff members are required to complete a minimum of 6 hours of continuing education classes each year. The center provides annual fire safety, annual emergency planning training, annual first-aid training and adult/infant/child CPR training in accordance with the American Heart Association or the American Red Cross. Staff are also required to pass a child abuse, state police and FBI clearance check every 5 years.

### **STAFF / PARENT MEETINGS**

Circle of Friends has Parent-Teacher meetings for the purpose of continuous quality program improvement. They are held the second Thursday of September, January, and May. Parents are encouraged to attend and participate in these meetings to be better informed and to take an active role in the design of our curriculum and program activities. The staff will be present to share upcoming plans and events and answer any questions you may have. This is a time of open communication with the teacher; however, personal or behavioral problems should be discussed privately.

### **SPIRITUAL EMPHASIS**

Non-denominational spiritual training will be offered on a regular basis. Storytelling will include Bible stories. Videos and songs may be of a Biblical nature. There will be Children's Minutes by the pastor during Chapel Time with music and praise. Children are also encouraged to pray before meals and snacks. We will observe and talk about religious holidays such as Christmas, and Easter. Children and families are also informed of and invited to events held by the church.

# ADMISSION POLICY

## ELIGIBILITY AND HOURS OF OPERATION

Circle of Friends accepts children from ages 6 weeks through five years plus elementary school age children. We accept only full-time enrollment. Our hours of operation are from 6:30 AM to 5:30 PM, Monday through Friday.

Except for families of the Shiremanstown U.M.C. and siblings of enrolled students, whose enrollment needs are a priority, applications are accepted on a first-come-first-served basis without regard to race, gender, national origin, physical disability, or religious affiliation. However, enrollment is not guaranteed. The Center reserves the right to deny enrollment of any person.

- There is no registration fee, however, a deposit in the amount of one week's tuition is required to reserve a space for your child. This deposit counts toward your first week's tuition. **Once a deposit is accepted, it is non-refundable.**
- Deposits and forms must be completed before the child's first day of attendance.

## ENROLLMENT

A child is considered enrolled when all of the following steps are completed:

1. The parent tours the facility and has an informal interview with the Director.
2. The parent reviews the Parent Handbook.
3. The enrollment packet is completed and returned to the Director.

4. The deposit of the first week's tuition is received.
5. Pictures of those who are permitted to pick up.
6. All other forms are completed.

The following forms must be filled out at the time of enrollment:

1. Emergency Contact/Parental Consent Form.
2. Agreement Form with the Statement of Acknowledgment for receiving the Parent Handbook (which serves as a binding contract between the center and the parent)
3. Child's Health Report (must be completed, signed by a licensed physician, and returned within 60 days.) State law requires a health appraisal form with all up-to-date immunization information. Children will not be allowed to continue in the program if immunizations are not kept up-to-date. Health appraisals must be completed at least every 6 months for an infant or young toddler, and at least every 12 months for an older toddler or preschool child. A health report must be written and signed by a physician, physician's assistant or a CRNP. The signature must include the individual's professional title.

## INSURANCE

Liability insurance provides medical coverage against accidental injury while your child is on the church premises or off church premises but engaged in church or childcare center related activities. Healthcare coverage for accidents arising during center activities is the responsibility of the enrolling parent. Claims must be filed with your health insurance carrier.

## TERMINATION OF ENROLLMENT

- If you wish to withdraw your child from our program, a written two-week notice must be given. Payment for the next two weeks must be made at the time the written notice is received by the Director.
- If the Director requests your child's withdrawal, the two-week notice and tuition payment will be waived. Further in this handbook, you will find the disciplinary plan that is followed by our center in cases in which children have repeated behavior problems.

## **PROGRAMS**

**Infant Care** (~6 weeks - ~14 months), dependent upon availability and child development)

Infants are accepted from six weeks of age. Nurturing and interaction is the main focus of the infant program. Infants will be held, sung to, played with and talked to throughout the day. Weather permitting; they will be taken on outside walks every day. A daily report, which includes napping schedule, feeding schedule and diapering schedule will be completed and sent home by the teacher weekly. Milestones to advance to the next class are: walking, able to feed themselves finger-foods, able to use sippy cups, one nap/day. The infant room is staffed at a ratio of 1 teacher to 4 infants. Room capacity will be 8 infants with two teachers.

**Young Toddler Care** (~12 months – ~24 months, dependent upon availability and child development)

Toddlers follow weekly themes and monthly developmental plans. They have a daily circle time where they sing and read stories. There is also a time set aside each day



for growth and development in gross motor and fine motor skills, language skills, and self-help skills, just to name a few. Art projects may be included several times throughout the week. Each activity is intermixed with free/group play. The amount of time spent on any one activity is flexible according to the individual's and/or group's attention span. Milestones to advance to the next class are general in nature. We look for verbal skill development as well as increased attention span and group participation. The Young Toddler room is staffed at a ratio of 1 teacher to 5 children. Room capacity is 10 toddlers with 2 teachers. Please do not ask us to start potty training in the Young Toddler class. This is one area where we feel it is detrimental to push a child for success. We have found that most children are not ready for potty training until they reach 2 ½ years of age.

Older Toddler Care (~24 months - ~36 months, dependent upon availability and child development)

The Older Toddler room continues the focus on the growth and development skills begun in the Young Toddler room. It is also the room where potty training begins. Each child is different and will be ready for potty training at different times. Parents are encouraged to work with the teachers and decide when the time is right for their child to begin the process. We have found that pull-ups seem to be more detrimental than helpful to the process. We do not use them. Training pants and rubber pants seem to better alert the child that they have had an accident. Milestones to advance to the next class are: POTTY-TRAINED, self-help skills are developing, ability to verbalize their needs to friends and teachers. The Older Toddler room is staffed at a ratio of 1 teacher to 6 children. Room capacity is 10 toddlers with two teachers.

Preschool Care (~36 months - ~48 months, dependent upon availability and child development)

The Preschool classroom serves children age three and who are potty trained. The children are provided with developmentally appropriate activities, positive guidance, and opportunities for exploration and creativity. The preschoolers have a daily circle time where they read stories, sing, and talk about the week's theme. Reading and music are a very important part of the learning activities of this class. Special attention is given to further developing self-help skills. Milestones to advance to the next class are really based on the child's expected year of enrollment in Kindergarten and room availability. The preschool room is staffed at a ratio on 1 teacher to 10 children. Room capacity will be 10 preschoolers with one teacher.

Pre-Kindergarten Care (~48 months - ~60 months, dependent upon availability and child development)

The Pre-Kindergarten class focuses on preparing children for kindergarten. The children work on recognizing letters and numbers and writing their names. Fine motor skills are developed through cutting, pasting, painting, and coloring. Socialization is also a focus of the pre-kindergarten class. Reading, writing, and arithmetic skills will continue to be developed through tracing, letter recognition, counting and numeral recognition. The pre-kindergarten class offers a wide variety of learning activities. The class has a daily circle time where they have calendar time, read stories, sings songs, and share together about the weekly theme. Portfolios are kept for each child, including skills assessments and creative artwork. This information is then shared at parent-teacher conferences. For those moving on to "big school," we will celebrate their success at an annual

graduation ceremony. The pre-kindergarten class is staffed at a ratio of 1 teacher to 10 children. Room capacity will be 10 pre-kindergarteners with one teacher.

## After-kindergarten Care

We offer childcare for those children who are enrolled in other morning kindergarten programs and still require care after kindergarten. This is a more relaxed setting and more free time is given to the kids. Classroom instruction is given in their respective kindergarten classes. Therefore, we provide an environment of choices: rest and relaxation, playtime, learning activities, individual and group activities. This is primarily for children attending the Lower Allen school in the West Shore School District, however if parents can arrange transportation, we may be able to accommodate those attending other schools in the area.

## Elementary School Age

We also offer before and after school care for the elementary grades 1-5. At this time, this is primarily for those children enrolled in the Mechanicsburg School District going to the Kindergarten Academy & Elmwood Elementary Schools, and the Lower Allen Elementary and Rossmoyne Schools for West Shore School District. We also provide after-school care for those children going to the West Shore Christian Academy, however, if parents can arrange transportation for their child(ren), we may be able to accommodate those attending other schools in the area. Costs are based on the daily amount of time at the center and calculated using a formula. The opportunity for completing homework is offered and much time is spent in organized group sports and games. This is a full time program during the school year and tuition is due regardless of school closings. However, during school closings, we will attempt to offer extended care to meet your needs during snow days, early dismissals, delays and days off school. In

these instances, there is an extra charge incurred in addition to your weekly rate. The parent **MUST** sign-up for this care in advance and will be billed regardless of the child's presence.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY**

**Payment is required on Fridays by 5:30pm for the upcoming week regardless of illness or holidays.** There is a one-week vacation period, which can be taken tuition-free. (refer to Scheduling section)

### **SCHEDULING**

- The center is open Monday through Friday from 6:30am to 5:30pm, except as noted in those guidelines.
- Children must be signed in and out of the program daily.
- Please notify the office within ½ hour of your child's scheduled arrival time, if your child will be late or not be in attendance for any scheduled day. This applies to our school-aged children as well.
- When you register your child, you are reserving space during the times you state your child will be in attendance, regardless if they are here or not.
- Weekly tuition includes up to 9 hours of care a day. A child may be in full-time care for a period of more than 9 hours per day, however, there is an extra charge for this extended schedule. Please see the director for this additional charge.

- There is a fee of \$10.00 per 15 minutes, which will be charged when your child is not picked up on time or if they were dropped off too early, according to the times listed on your agreement.
- A one-week vacation is granted yearly without fee. This year begins on your child's start date and runs to the next year. A one-week notice is needed in writing for the use of the tuition-free week. Your child may not attend the center during a tuition-free week. You may not use your ONE-WEEK VACATION if you are not maintaining a zero balance on your account.
- The center will be closed on the following days:
  1. New Year's Day
  2. President's Day (Teachers' in-service)
  3. Good Friday
  4. Memorial Day
  5. Independence Day
  6. Labor Day
  7. Thanksgiving Day
  8. Friday following Thanksgiving
  9. Christmas Day
- We close at 4:00pm on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.
- In the event that a holiday falls on a Saturday, we will be closed the Friday before the holiday. In the event that a holiday falls on a Sunday, we will be closed the Monday after the holiday.

## SNOW AND EMERGENCY DAYS

- We operate as long as there is need for our service and we are able to adequately staff the center.

- If weather would warrant the delay of opening or closing of the center:
  1. We will have available to you, two voice mailboxes to call into. The messages will be posted by 6:00am and available for all to call. To use this option, all you need to do is call the number below, punch in the mailbox number and listen to the message. There is no need to listen for any prompts in between. As soon as the initial message begins - hit the extension number and listen. That's all there is to it! So please do not call your child's teacher at home.
  2. A delay in opening may occur to allow for the snowplows to open roads.
  3. If/When this occurs, the decision will be made by 6:00am and the delay will be until 9:00 or 10:00am. This means that regardless of your arrival time, the Center will not be open until the designated time. Your departure time will automatically move to 5:30pm, when the Center closes for the day.
  4. Early Dismissals: We will call everyone according to the Emergency Contact Information on file.

**737-6621 ext. 25**  
**737-6621 ext. 26**

## FEES

- All fee information will be given to you at the time of registration.
- **Fees are due regardless of illness or holidays.**
- If your child starts or leaves in the middle of a week you will be charged for the whole week.

- CCIS – previously Childcare Network (CCN): Circle of Friends will accept payment by the subsidizing agency. The parent is responsible for the remaining balance of tuition left from what CCIS pays and Circle of Friends charges. We do not recognize the agency's suggestion of the parent's responsibility.
- Payments are due on Fridays at 5:30pm for the upcoming week or a \$20 late fee is charged. If payment, (including late fee and the following week's payment) is not received by the following Wednesday at 5:30pm, then NO ADMITTANCE.
- Payments should be deposited in the Center's mailbox located outside the Director's office.
- LATE PICK-UP FEE – Parents are expected to promptly pick up their child at the contracted time. Staffing patterns are based on these contracted times. When they are abused, we risk being out of ratio. This could adversely affect our license. More importantly, over ratios could lead to unsafe conditions for all children. This is monitored very closely. Some centers require a \$1 per minute late fee. We will assess a fee of \$10 per 15 minutes for late pick-ups. This LATE PICK-UP FEE will be enforced if you are late picking up an ill child. (After the 30 minute window) Those needing a 5:30pm pick up time MUST be on time. The center closes promptly at 5:30pm.
- There is a returned check fee of \$25.00 per check.
- If checks are returned more than twice, then future payments MUST be with cash or money order.

## DISCOUNTS



SIBLING DISCOUNT= 10% off total cost for 2 children in our program and 20% off total cost for more than 2 children in our program, rounded to even dollar amount.

## ILLNESS POLICY

- An ill child (one with vomiting, diarrhea, fever over 99 degrees, pink eye, or an unexplained rash) should not be sent to the program until he/she is symptom free for 24 hours.
- A normal temperature (without fever reducer) must be maintained for at least 24 hours before your child may return to the center. This includes if your child is sent home with a temperature one day, then they should not be brought back to the center the next day.
- If an emergency occurs, you will be notified immediately.
- If your child is involved in any type of minor accident, we will fill out an accident report and ask you to sign it when you pick up your child.
- Since it appears that no two physicians can agree on how to handle Pinkeye, the Center's policy on Pinkeye is this: If your child's eye is goopy, they are contagious and should not be here even if they have been on medicine for 24 hours. The contagion is in the goop!
- The directors have the option to deny care on any given day, regardless of your physicians advice, or to require that a child be picked up from the Center if



the child is determined too ill (vomiting, fever over 100 degrees, diarrhea, or an unexplained rash) to remain in our care. For the health and safety of others, your child must be picked up within 30 minutes of notification of illness. You will start to incur late fees if pick up is after 30 minutes. In other words:

- If your child has a temperature of at least 99 degrees, don't bring them to the Center. If they develop a temperature here at the Center, we may ask you to pick them up, if the temperature exceeds 100 degrees.
- Parents are required by DHS to inform the director of any infectious or contagious disease or of infections such as tuberculosis, chicken pox, hepatitis, salmonella, AIDS/HIV, pinkeye, ringworm or lice. Failure by the parent to report any serious infectious disease to the director may result in termination of care.

## MEDICATIONS

According to Pennsylvania State law, facility persons are not required to administer any medication, which is requested by a parent or physician.

- The administration of prescribed medicines such as antibiotics, cold medications, etc., should be scheduled outside your child's time at the center, if at all possible.
- In the event medication is administered, the following requirements apply:
  1. ALL MEDICATION MUST BE TAKEN OUT OF BABY BAGS AND BACKPACKS AND PLACED IN THE MEDICATION BASKET AT SIGN IN.

2. Medication: Prescription AND over-the-counter, must be in its original container and labeled with the child's name.
  3. A staff person will administer medication only if written instructions are provided and the parent properly completes and signs the medication log.
  4. The parents must provide a medicine spoon. We will not use a kitchen spoon to administer any type of medicine.
  5. Medication will be administered to only the child whose name appears on the container.
- Please discuss with the director any medical condition which may require long term medication.

## ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE

- ONLY THE FRONT DOORS to the Fellowship Center may be used. The drive through entrance may be used for drop off and pick up ONLY. If you are coming to visit your child or for any other reason which will keep you here longer than 10 minutes, please use the side parking spaces. (You may disregard the Senior parking signs and Handicap signs for drop-off/pick-up purposes only!)
- Parents are required to escort their child into the center and pick them up inside the center. Children and siblings must stay with their parents during this time. They may not walk the halls, play in the gym, or roam the building unsupervised. Parents must sign their child in and out daily.

- Parents must come into the room where the child is located so that they are visible to the childcare staff.
- Any person unfamiliar to the staff must be on record and must show a valid picture ID to the staff member in charge, for the safe release of the child.
- All vehicle engines must be turned off when dropping off or picking up children.
- Please use ONLY the front entrance to the Fellowship Center childcare wing.
- Please follow the **One-Way** signs and the **Do Not Enter** signs in the parking lot. All exits should be from the west ends of the lot.

## AUTHORIZATION FOR CHILD PICK-UP

- At the time of enrollment you will be asked to give the names of persons to whom your child may be released to. Your child will only be released to the people on your list. A picture of each person on your list must be provided at time of enrollment. Your enrollment process is not complete without these pictures.
- If an adult other than you (the legal guardian) is picking up your child and they are on your pick-up list, the staff must be notified prior to the release of your child. A picture identification will be required if one is not on file here at the Center.
- It is the parent's responsibility to keep all records up-to-date regarding additions or deletions to whom your child may be released.

- A certified copy of a custody agreement/court order will need to be provided to the director in cases where the situation would warrant.
- Unless a valid custody agreement/court order is on file prohibiting a parent from picking up their child we must release a child to either parent upon proper ID.

## FIRE SAFETY

State regulations require fire drills every 60 days. We will be exercising fire drills on a monthly basis. Periodically, we will have visits from fire personnel to present fire safety to children.

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

As well as fire safety, there are other emergency procedures that will be taught and exercised periodically. These will include such things as storm warnings, evacuation plans, etc. The emergency procedures plan is posted in each child care room.

## EMERGENCY PLANNING – Protection, Shelter, and Evacuation

This policy is to assure you of our concern for the safety and welfare of the children attending the Circle of Friends Child Care Center. Our Emergency Plan provides for response to all types of emergencies. Depending on the circumstance of the emergency, we will use one of the following protective actions:

### **1. Protection**

- a. Immediate Protection** – secure within classroom or bathroom
- b. Lock Down** – secure the entire building

## 2. Shelter

- a. **Shelter in place** – stay in room, under desks/tables
- b. **Seek Shelter** – quickly move to designated area providing the most shelter within the building.

## 3. Evacuation

- a. **Building Evacuation** – Fire drill procedures
  - b. **Relocation**
    - i. **Near** – off site to adjacent borough property
    - ii. **Far** – off site to the distant Relocation Facility – Country and Town Baptist Church, 1822 S. Market Street, Mechanicsburg, PA
- **Direction and Control** – The Administrator and/or Child Care Director will have direct control and responsibility over emergency operations.
  - In the absence of these Directors, the following facility person will take charge: Primary – After-Kindergarten Teacher, Secondary - Older Toddler Teacher.
  - In an emergency, child care staff and resources will be focused on providing for the safety and well being of children and staff.
  - Regular drills on emergency plans, procedures and duties will be conducted to:
    - Provide training for staff, including substitutes;
    - Orient children on emergency procedures and responsibilities; and
    - Develop skills needed for a real emergency.

- Accountability
  - Children will be released to adult(s) designated by the parent;
  - In case of an evacuation, attendance will be taken at the assembly area, upon boarding and exiting the emergency transport vehicle(s) and upon the arrival at the relocation facility.

Please listen to one of these radio stations: WINK 104, WROZ 101.3 or WRVV 97.3 or these TV stations: WHTM, WHP or WGAL  
- for announcements relating to any of the emergency actions listed above.

We ask that you do not call during the emergency. This will keep the main telephone line free to make emergency calls and relay information. If you must call, please use these cell numbers:

**KEN'S CELL – 580-3004**  
**KAREN'S CELL – 503-8601**

As always, your child will not be released to anyone who is not already listed on the Emergency Release Form. We specifically urge you **not** to attempt to make different arrangements during an emergency. This will only create additional confusion and divert staff from their assigned emergency duties.

In order to assure the safety of your children and our staff, we ask your understanding and cooperation. Should you have additional questions regarding our emergency operating procedures contact the director.

# **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

As with other areas of development, discipline is viewed as an individual growth process. Our staff's primary goals are to help keep children safe from harm, to help teach them respect for their belongings and others', and to guide each child toward a positive sense of self and others. Teachers will set reasonable limits for children by explaining and modeling those limits as well as by working with each child to achieve self-control and responsibility in a natural way.

Our Two-prong approach helps keep discipline matters to a minimum:

1. We recognize that children like to follow and please older children and adults. We are clear on our expectations and abundance of praise and positive feedback for good choices and behavior.

2. Routine and structure: Keeping children busy and following a routine are foundational to successfully promoting good choices and behavior. They like routine and it promotes successful and smooth transitions throughout their day.

No child will receive physical punishment. They will not be verbally shamed or humiliated. Teachers may use a stern voice as the situation may warrant, (ie: if the child is about to hurt himself/herself or another child by a dangerous act.) We will be teaching about DANGER and DANGEROUS actions.

Every attempt to solve situations that call for discipline will be made by the teacher within the classroom. Should a recurrent problem arise, the following guidelines will be followed.

## 1. CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE

- a. Verbal Warning is given
- b. Second Verbal Warning is given
- c. Sit and Watch Time
- d. First Office Visit- talk and time out period
- e. Second Office Visit- talk and time out period
- f. Third Office Visit- talk, time out period, and a call to the parent or a letter to set up a conference.

## 2. CONFERENCE

A meeting is held with parents, teacher, and director to discuss the behavior/situation, what has been done thus far to help with the situation, what has brought success and/or failure. The parents, teacher, and director will work together to create a new behavior plan and to discuss possible referrals.

## 3. POST CONFERENCE

- a. First Office Visit- talk and time out period and call parents with a warning about behavior.
- b. Second Office Visit- talk and time out period and call to the parents to come immediately to pick up child with next day as suspension.

## 4. SUSPENSION DAY

Out of school suspension is taken the school day immediately following the post-conference second office visit.

## 5. POST SUSPENSION DAY

- a. First Office Visit- talk and time out period, call parent to come immediately and pick up child with suspension indefinite until approved documentation of further help is provided.



- b. Documentation must be one or more of the following as agreed upon by parent and director during the conference:
  - i. Letter from medical doctor who has checked the child following suspension.
  - ii. Letter for a professional counselor or therapist with whom the child/family has met.
  - iii. Letter from a clergy person with whom the child/family has met.

## 6. TERMINATION

Upon return from Indefinite Suspension with Documentation, if the child's behavior warrants another visit to the Director's office, the Director may terminate care.

\*\*\*Please Note: In extreme situations, the director has the authority to proceed with the steps at a more rapid pace. The director may also exercise his/her authority to terminate care at his/her discretion without following the above steps.

## **OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

### WHAT TO BRING

Seasonally appropriate clothing: The law requires us to take the children outside every day, weather permitting. Blizzards, rain, and super cold weather are examples when we would stay inside. The director will use his/her discretion in this determination. Without a wind chill factor, the low 20's will be too cold to go outside.

**ALL ITEMS, INCLUDING CLOTHES,  
LINENS, DIAPER BAGS, CAR SEATS,  
BOTTLES, BOTTLE CAPS AND  
PACIFIERS, MUST BE LABELED  
WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.**

### Infants:

- Premade bottles of breast milk or formula may be brought in. Formula or frozen breast milk and empty bottles may be brought in also.
- Pacifiers
- Disposable diapers and wipes
- Baby food and cereal
- At least two complete changes of clothing (including socks)
- At least (2) crib sheets and blankets
- Bibs and burp cloths
- Pictures of those who are permitted to pick up you child(ren)
- A diaper bag or backpack.

### Toddlers-Kindergarten Age:

A backpack containing the following:

- A complete prepared lunch, including a drink, napkin and utensils, must be provided daily by the parent. *(Please label the lunchbox, thermos, etc., with your child's name. )*
- A rest mat for each child will be provided by the center. Nap items sent from home should include a sheet for the mat (crib sheets work well), a small pillow and thin blanket. These items should be kept in a pillow case and will be taken home for laundering

each Friday. Please label each item. Also, please refrain from bringing in sleeping bags or big blankets.

- A full set of extra clothing (including socks and shoes) should be kept at the center in case of accident, spill etc. Please place clothing in a plastic bag labeled with your child's name. Clothes may be sent home for season changes.
- Pictures of those who are permitted to pick up your child(ren).
- During potty training, more changes of clothing are necessary. Please keep at least two sets of clothing here at the Center during this time. Rubber pants are a must! Potty training will occur in the Older Toddler class. Please do not ask us to start potty training in the Young Toddler class. This is one area where it is detrimental to push a child for success. We have found that most children are not ready for potty training until they reach at least 2½ years of age.

Please try to limit items to what will fit into a small backpack and refrain from bringing toys from home unless it is show-n-tell day in your child's classroom. Toy guns, weapons, or violence-prompting toys of any kind are not permitted! We are not responsible for lost or broken toys. A small soft naptime toy will be permitted. Toys must be able to fit in your child's backpack.

## REST TIME

Each afternoon a nap period is provided for the children. Children are each assigned their own mat. This is the time when the teacher-child ratio is doubled, allowing us to give breaks to our staff. Your child **must** remain on his/her mat even when not sleeping.

## SNACKS

Children are provided a morning and afternoon snack. Please inform us in advance if you wish to provide a snack for a special occasion.

## COMMUNICATION

### **NEWSLETTER**

We will publish a monthly newsletter containing important information and dates. Please take the time to read the newsletter as it does serve to keep you informed and aware of activities pertaining to you and your child. The latest issue of our newsletter, as well as a few past issues are always available on our website: [www.sumc.info/circle-of-friends](http://www.sumc.info/circle-of-friends)

### **BLUE COMMUNICATION FOLDER**

A blue information folder will be provided by the center and it will be used for take home papers and communication between parents, teachers and the Director. Please make every attempt to check the folder daily and make sure your folder is returned to the center with your child daily.

This is a communication tool. Several children have different people picking up than dropping off. The folder is the best way to assure that everyone receives the same information and all the information.

This is a two way street. The teachers will be checking the folder daily for any notes from you. Please keep the folders clean and free from clutter. Valuable information and notices will be sent home in these folders, as well. If you fail to check your folder daily, you will be “***the weakest link!***” in our communications. PLEASE, get into the habit of checking and sending these folders DAILY.

Please do not use the folders to deliver your tuition payments. Payments should be delivered directly to Director or the Center's mailbox located outside the Director's office.

**PARENTS' CORNER** is located in the lobby as you enter the Child Care Center hallway. This area will be used for communication of events and other important information. The tuition/suggestion box is located in this hallway as well. Please view this area daily for updated information. Parents are responsible for knowing the information that is displayed here.

## CHILD ABUSE REPORTING

In accordance with Pennsylvania State Law, all child care staff are required to complete a child abuse training course that has been approved by the Dept. of Human Resources. All staff are considered to be a Mandated Reporters, which means a staff member, who has reason to believe that child abuse or neglect is occurring, **MUST** report such to the Pennsylvania Childline. Childcare providers are protected from civil liability for any reasonable or prudent reports of possible abuse.

## INCIDENT/ACCIDENT POLICY

If a serious incident occurs, the staff will apply emergency first aid immediately, activate the local emergency medical services, and then call the parents. An incident report form will be filed and the parents will be asked to sign the incident report form when the child is picked up.

Minor accidents will be handled according to accepted first aid procedures. Parents will be notified by telephone if the Director or teacher feels it is necessary and, upon picking up their child, will be given an incident report form.

## PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

We encourage all parents to be involved with their child's life at Circle of Friends. Keeping informed and participating helps accomplish this. Please feel free to visit the center at any time- announced or un-announced! We may request help for special events such as field trips, parties, collecting materials, etc. We believe that parents are the best teachers for their children, and we want you to be a part of your child's educational experience while at the Center. Please attend and participate in the Staff / Parent Meetings held throughout the year. They are designed with open communication in mind.

While all parents are welcome to visit at any time throughout the day, there are a few guidelines we ask you follow:

1. During lunch times, you, (through example), and your child are expected to follow the same routines the rest of the class follows. This means that if the teacher requires that the main dish be eaten before junk food or desert, then this applies to you and your child as well. This is not a free playtime, nor is it nap time. Your child should stay at the table until excused by the teacher. While the staff teaches sharing of turns, toys, etc, we DO NOT share food from each other's lunches. There are several reasons for this policy and it must be enforced!
2. During activity/learning times, we ask that you do your best not to disrupt the class. Your child is expected to continue to participate in the activity, as well as, to maintain discipline. Please review your child's daily schedule, which is posted in their room. Planning your visits outside of structured learning times would be very helpful.

3. For liability reasons, we ask that you limit your involvement with the other children in the class and the Center. While we wish to promote a family atmosphere here, other parents may not want their child to be directed or corrected by a non-staff member. Also, keep in mind that you are a stranger to the other classes. Please limit your visiting to your child's class ONLY.
4. While you may use spanking or other forms of corporal punishment at home, you may NOT use these forms of punishment in front of other children at this Center.
5. When coming to visit, longer than 10 minutes, please use a regular parking space.

The bottom line here is this: We have rules and we have routines. They are designed to promote health and safety and to minimize behavioral problems. We ask that you respect these things and appreciate the effects of your visit on the rest of your child's class and teacher. Please make your arrivals, visits, and departures as smooth a transition as possible.

## **WE OFFER OTHER QUALITY PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND ADULTS**

### **S.U.M.mer Camp (K – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade)**

We offer a summer camp program for families of school-age children who are in need of childcare throughout the summer months. This is one of the premiere summer camps provided in this area. The cost is lower than most other programs with no hidden or additional fees! The program includes: swimming twice a week, weekly field trips, crafts, time for individual and group activities, along with a picnic, talent show and sleepover at the end of camp. There is a 10% discount extended to church members or

those who may have a sibling in either Circle of Friends or S.U.M.mer Camp.

**Sunday School (All Ages)**

You are always welcome to join us for Sunday School at 9:15 – 10:15, or worship with us at 8:00, 9:15 or 10:30.

**There's something for everyone at S.U.M.C.!**