



Family Handbook

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Las Cruces, NM

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Dear Parents,

Welcome to Children's Playhouse Childcare Center! 😊 This handbook is to provide you with very important information regarding policies and procedures. It is our goal to make sure your child's learning experience here at Children's Playhouse is an enjoyable one. Please take time to read this handbook carefully. During the year, you may find it necessary to refer to this handbook for specific information. At the end of the handbook is a Parent Signature page that needs to be signed and turned into the Director where it will be kept in your child's folder.

If at any time you have questions, concerns or suggestions please see the Director, who is at the center from 9am - 6pm, Monday through Friday. The Director can be reached at 575-521-1627 or you can also email at cppreschooldirector@outlook.com

MISSION, PHILOSOPHY & CURRICULUM STATEMENT

Our mission is to provide the highest quality childcare possible in a challenging, fun filled safe and nurturing environment. We want each child that attends to feel comfortable, welcome and enjoy their time here looking forward to new challenges and adventures.

- ❖ (1,4,5) We know some of the best years of life are spent as a child and we understand how crucial those years are, that is why we start with growth and development as young as 6 weeks. We encourage children to express themselves freely through their own creativity and by giving them the support to learn at their own pace. We believe every child has unique gifts and abilities that are to be celebrated and nurtured.
- ❖ (6,1) We respect their cultural background and home environments, and we work to accommodate each child's learning style. We acknowledge and respect each child's unique temperament, which helps us when creating individualized curriculum to meet the child's needs.
- ❖ We strive to build strong bonds with both children and their families. We feel this sets the foundation for a positive learning and nurturing environment with support in all areas so children may grow successfully cognitively, emotionally, and socially.
- ❖ (2,7,8) We strongly encourage family involvement, and we know families are the first educators in the lives of their children, we strive to build strong partnerships with each of our families and we value and respect their morals and beliefs, which in return holds promise for every child to reach his or her full potential.
- ❖ (3,9,10,11,12,15) We incorporate children's home language into our learning environment to the best of our ability. It is our goal to make children and families feel welcome and accepted. We value their cultural background, and we strive to build trustworthy relationships. Therefore, we offer inclusive practices that build upon unique child, family and community strengths and are accountable to all children and their families.
- ❖ (3,13) We believe play is essential to the fundamentals of children's learning development and we are committed to helping all children succeed by providing stimulating challenging activities to help them grow physically, mentally, socially, and

emotionally. Therefore, we design our curriculum to assist in developing positive outcomes.

- ❖ (13,14,16,17) Within our curriculum, we reflect on our observations and documentation of each child, which correlates with ELG's (Early Learning Guidelines) to help us determine where each child is developmentally. We set logical goals to help each child accomplish these goals and develop appropriately. In addition, we improve services and support by evaluating current practices and incorporating effective methods, training, and participating in FOCUS Quality initiatives, models, and research in our work with children and families. We collaborate with many community agencies like CACFP, CYFD, and Early Intervention agencies to support our families.

HOURS & HOLIDAYS

Hours of operation are from 6:30am to 6:00pm, Monday through Friday. We are closed for the following holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, 4th of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and the Friday after Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day. If additional holidays are added to the calendar, you will be informed one week prior to closure.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Children's Playhouse will follow the Las Cruces Public School Inclement Weather Schedule. For example, if LCPS is on a 2-hour delay, we are on a 2-hour delay. Please refer to your local TV broadcasting and the LCPS website regarding inclement weather closings. There is always a posted notice of this policy located next to the door.

ENROLLMENT & TUITION

Children between the ages of 6 weeks to 12 years of age are eligible for enrollment here at Children's Playhouse. Children may attend between the hours of 6:30am to 6:00pm, Monday through Friday. We do not discriminate here at Children's Playhouse; we accept all families who need care for their children.

Documents that need to be completed and returned before enrollment are:

- Enrollment Application
- Tuition Agreement
- No Pay/No Play Agreement
- Parent Permission
- Health Acknowledgement
- ASQ and ASQ-SE Permission
- IFSP and IEP Permission
- CACFP Income Eligibility Form
- Getting to Know Me
- Handbook Acknowledgement Form

In addition to these forms, a copy of the child's current immunizations and a copy of the parent's driver's license will be needed at enrollment time. If your child has a milk allergy, please bring a doctor's note for a milk alternative to be provided during mealtimes. All the information in a child's file stays confidential.

FEES/ATTENDANCE/VACATIONS/RECIPTS

We have a "no pay/no play" policy. Payments and co-payments will be made on the first day of care for that week. If payment has not been made, your child will not be accepted until payment has been received. Payment obligation is based on the hours enrolled, not on the actual hours of attendance. Both full and part-time fees will be charged based on contracted hours, including missed days due to illness, holidays, teacher's in-service training and vacation days. This also applies to early and late drop-offs. Late drop off does not constitute late pick up.

If disenrollment occurs for non-payment, clients have 30 days to pay the balance due before accounts are turned over to collections.

Expiring Contracts

If your contract is due to expire, you will be notified by the Director at the beginning of the expiration month. If your contract is not renewed by the Expiration date your child(ren) will be disenrolled from the center.

DROP OFF

We open at 6:30am. Please do not drop off your child prior to the opening. Parents are expected to check in their child(ren) and accompany them to the classroom. Here at Children's Playhouse, we use Procure to keep track of attendance daily. When you enroll your child, the Director will register you in the system allowing you to check your child in and out daily. Since we have an Open-Door policy here at Children's Playhouse, walking your child to class gives you a chance to check in and see what your child has been learning and doing. We find pick up and drop off to be an essential part of creating a strong relationship between family and teacher. Please take this time to talk with your teacher briefly, if you would like a longer extended amount of time, please schedule a small conference with your teacher so that their undivided attention can be given to you to address the matter.

If your child is an infant or toddler in our program, you will receive a Daily Log that details the important parts of your child's day such as meals, diaper changes and any other important information you need to know about. Please feel free to let the Director know if you don't receive a Daily Log or have a problem with them.

Infant and toddler children must arrive with a clean diaper. Parents must change their child's diaper if it is wet or soiled prior to drop off. Parents can utilize the changing table in the classroom to change the soiled diaper.

AUTHORIZED & UNAUTHORIZED PICK-UP

We close at 6:00pm. Please allow enough time to arrive, sign your child out, and leave by closing time. Your child will only be released to you or those persons you have listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. If you want a person who is not identified as an Emergency and Release Contact to pick-up your child, you must notify us in advance, in writing. Your child will not be released without prior written authorization. The person picking up your child will be required to show a picture ID as verification. Please notify your pick-up person of our policy.

In order to safeguard your child, we will need copies of any court-ordered custody agreements. Without a custody agreement, we are not able to prevent the release of your child to a parent.

If a child has not been picked up after closing and we have not heard from you, attempts will be made to contact you and the contacts listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. Provisions will be made for someone to stay with your child, but if after 30 minutes we have not been able to reach you or a person listed as an Emergency and Release Contact, we will call the local child protective services agency.

DAILY SCHEDULE

Here at Children's Playhouse, we focus on cooperative play and learning through large and small group activities. We focus on social emotional development while incorporating academics throughout all areas of the day and classroom. Below is a general daily schedule for our classrooms. *For a more detailed classroom daily schedule please see the parent boards located in every room* You can always request a copy of your child's daily schedule at any time. Please keep in mind that schedules are subject to change due to the weather.

6:30am - 8:00am: Center Opening and Welcoming of Children
8:00am - 8:30am: Breakfast
8:30am - 9:00am: Morning Meeting/Good Mornings
9:00am - 10:30am: Small Group Activity/Center Time/Outside Time
(Weather Permitting)
10:30am - 11:30am: Clean Up/Storytime/Prep for Lunch
11:30am - 12:00pm: Lunch
12:00pm - 12:15pm: Bathroom/Wash Hands/Clean Up Lunch
12:15pm - 2:00pm: Rest/Nap Time
2:00pm - 2:30pm: Wake Up/Get Ready for Snack
2:30pm - 3:00pm: Afternoon Snack
3:00pm - 4:30pm: Center Time/Large Group Activity/Outside Time
(Weather Permitting)
4:30pm - 6:00pm: Center Time or Table Activities/End of the Day Goodbyes

FIELD TRIPS

A universal field trip permission slip is in the 'Parent Permission' part of the enrollment packet and kept in the child's file. When a field trip arises, you will be asked to sign an additional permission form for teachers to keep with them the day of the field trip. This is another way for us to maintain parent permission and communication on the day of field trips. We will always be looking for parents who would like to join us and chaperone the field trip. Please see your child's teacher about being a chaperone during field trips.

TOYS FROM HOME

Children's Playhouse provides developmentally appropriate play and learning toys. We request that your child's toys be left at home unless it is a toy that can promote healthy educational growth and development. Occasionally, your teacher may request children bring a toy from home for Show & Tell. Anything that is brought to the center that was not requested by the teacher will be put up until it is time for pick up. If your child has a special comforting teddy bear, blanket, etc., feel free to bring it for naptime and please label it properly to prevent it from getting lost. Please do not give your child money, candy, toys, etc. to keep in their pockets. Please leave your child's **CELL PHONE** at home and do not allow them to bring it or smart watches to the center. We are not responsible for lost or damaged items.

BIRTHDAYS & HOLIDAYS

Birthdays are very special for children; you are welcome to provide a healthy snack for his/her class. We ask that it be store bought and not homemade. We also ask that you speak with your child's teacher to see if there are any allergies in the classroom so that we keep all children healthy and safe.

Holidays are unique and each is celebrated differently in every family. Our holiday policy encourages an enhanced understanding of and respect for different cultures and beliefs of children, families, staff, and community. We believe that all forms of celebration of holidays are important and hold an anti-bias belief here at Children's Playhouse. We make sure our teachers include all families when teaching and celebrating holidays throughout the year. We encourage our families to participate in the teaching of these celebrations as well.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT/OPEN DOOR POLICY

Parents are the first and most important teachers' children have in their life. Parent involvement is the cornerstone at Children's Playhouse, and we have an Open-Door Policy into your child's classroom at any time. Please feel free to join us in any learning activities. Throughout the year, we will have parent teacher conferences, open house, and special family celebrations. You are always welcome to volunteer on special projects, field trips, or social events.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is the key to a good relationship. All the staff at Children's Playhouse are concerned about the well-being of children and their families in this community. The staff are always ready to listen to your suggestions and any concerns you may have regarding the day-to-day operations in the classroom. When it comes to communication with teachers, we encourage you to share any events or information that may affect your child's behavior.

Infants and toddlers will be provided with a Daily Log sheet that details the child's activities, feedings, and diapering/potty training. It will also let you know if your child needs anything like diapers, wipes, or extra clothes. If you do not get a Daily Log, please inform the Director.

ILLNESS POLICY

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

- Fever (100.4°F or higher)
- Diarrhea (after 2)/Blood in stools
- Vomiting
- Persistent abdominal pain
- Mouth sores
- Rash with fever
- Pink eye
- Illness that prevents your child from participating in activities
- Illness that results in greater need for care than we can provide
- Illness that poses a risk of spread of harmful diseases to others

Children who have been ill may return when:

- They are free of fever, vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours
- They have been treated with an antibiotic for 24 hours
- They are able to participate comfortably in all usual activities
- The child's physician signs a note stating that the child's condition is not contagious and can return
- If a child had a reportable communicable disease, a physician's note stating that the child is no longer contagious and may return to our care is required

If a child has a contagious illness i.e.: chicken pox, measles, lice, etc., parents will be contacted immediately, and the child will need to be picked up as soon as possible. A note will be posted on the parent board, the classroom doors and a letter will be sent home with the children notifying all the families of the illness.

MEDICATION POLICY

The center's staff will not administer medication to your child. If the child requires medication in the event of an emergency, the center Director will administer the medication. Emergency medications include Epi pen, inhaler, and other emergency medications that are administered orally only. A medication form must be filled out and the medication must be in the original container prescribed by a licensed physician. No over-the-counter medication will be administered by center staff.

ABSENCE POLICY

Parents should inform us as soon as possible if the child is going to be absent for any reason. No reimbursements or credit will be given in the event of a child not being able to attend or fully participate due to an absence. If your child is under contract, please inform the Director of all long-term absences or vacations. Per the rules of a contract from ECECD, we are mandated to report absences of 14 consecutive days to your caseworker which can put your childcare contract in jeopardy.

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE POLICY

The staff at Children's Playhouse is committed to each student's success in learning within a caring, responsive, and safe environment that is free of discrimination, violence, and bullying. Our center works to ensure that all students have the opportunity and support to develop to their fullest potential and share a personal and meaningful bond with staff and peers. Behavior guidance is teaching children how to self-regulate their behavior choices during times of stress. We encourage children to be fair, to be respectful of other people, of property, and to learn to understand the results of their actions. Teachers will never use negative terms when redirecting a child, instead will always use positive reinforcement to develop a meaningful, positive, and successful pathway of communication to help children learn how to self-regulate is our goal.

For all incidents in the classroom that become consistent and/or threaten the safety of the staff and other children will be documented through observations and incident reports to establish a pattern of behavior. If a child is constantly disruptive, is unable to redirect with multiple attempts and a pattern of behavior is established, the child will be placed on a Progressive Behavioral Plan. It will be a three-tiered plan that will begin with a meeting between the teacher, parents, and Director to establish what is going on and how to handle the behavior. The second tier will be a write-up with a phone call to be picked up immediately. The third tier will be a day suspension and a meeting with parents and the Director to discuss future placement at Children's Playhouse. The well-being and happiness of your child is our priority. If you have any questions or concerns with this policy, please contact the center Director immediately.

Disciplinary Practices Not Allowed at Children's Playhouse

NO Physical punishment of any type, including shaking, biting, hitting, pinching or putting anything on or in a child's mouth.

No withdrawal of food, rest, bathroom access, or outdoor activities.

NO abusive or profane language, including yelling

NO form of public or private humiliation, including threats of physical punishment

EXPULSION POLICY

If the behavior has become increasingly disruptive, and we have used all the behavioral methods. Behavioral Methods include: giving choices, problem solving, giving the child space, positive redirecting, natural and logical consequences, and/or a cooling off period. As a safety measure, the Director will place the child on a Progressive Behavioral Plan if the behavior continues to become disruptive/unsafe. First incident, the Director will schedule a meeting between the teacher, parents, and Director to discuss the behavior. Second incident, the parent will be called to pick up the child immediately for the day. Third incident, the center will call the parent immediately and the child will be placed on a 3-day suspension and/or the child will be withdrawn from the daycare.

Immediate Expulsion: If the child's disruptive behavior injures or is a threat to other children or staff at any time, that child may be subject to disenrollment at the time of the incident. The well-being and happiness of your child is our first priority.

DISENROLLMENT POLICY

Unfortunately, there are sometimes reasons we must dis-enroll a child from our program either on a short term or permanent basis. We want you to know we will do everything possible to work with the family of the child(ren) in order to prevent this policy from being enforced. The following are reasons we may have to dis-enroll or suspend a child from the center:

Immediate Causes for Disenrollment

- The child is at risk of causing serious injury to other children, staff, or themselves.
- Parent threatens physical or intimidating actions toward staff members.
- Parent exhibits verbal abuse to staff in front of enrolled children.
- Two bites within a 30 day period.
- Hitting children or staff twice within a 30 day period.

Possible Actions Leading to a Child's Disenrollment or Suspension

- Failure to pay/habitual lateness in payments.
- Failure to renew their contract by the expiration date of contract-children may not attend the center until we have a current contract from ECECD.
- Failure to complete required forms including the child's immunization records.

- Habitual tardiness when picking up your child.
- Persistent and uncontrollable tantrums/angry outbursts putting other children, staff, or themselves at risk
- Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children.
- Parent's failure to follow through with support resources to help remediate the above child behaviors.

ACCIDENT/INJURY POLICY

Safety is a major concern in childcare and daily safety inspections are completed inside and outside the center area in order to prevent injuries. First aid will be administered by a trained teacher in the event that your child sustains a minor injury (e.g., scraped knee). You will receive an incident report outlining the incident and course of action taken. If the injury produces any type of swelling or needs medical attention, you will be contacted immediately. Each classroom is equipped with a first aid kit meeting state regulations.

In the event of a serious medical emergency, the child will be transported to the hospital immediately by ambulance, while we will contact you or an emergency contact.

CLOTHING POLICY

Please dress your child in practical clothing that allows for freedom of movement and is appropriate for the weather. Your child will be involved in a variety of activities including: painting, outdoor play, sand, weather, and other sensory activities. Our playground is used as an extension of the center, and daily programs are conducted outside when weather permits.

Sandals and flip-flops are not appropriate for center play and make it difficult for your child to participate in some activities. You will need to provide an extra set of clothing for your child in case of any accidents or spills. **Note: When soiled clothing is sent home please remember to bring a fresh change of clothes.**

EMERGENCY & DISASTER CLOSING

Children's Playhouse has an emergency evacuation plan set in place if an evacuation of the building is necessary. We will post a message on the front door as well as the outgoing message on the phone with instructions stating where to pick up your child. In the event of emergency closing, you will be notified as soon as possible, and all children will be transported to Las Montanas High School, 1405 S. Solano Drive, Las Cruces, New Mexico 88001, or alternate site. Parents will be required to pick up their child(ren) as soon as possible and sign them out personally on a class list.

REST TIME

All children attending full day session are given a rest/quiet period of at least an hour and a half to two hours. Each child will be encouraged to rest, and we will provide a mat or cot with their name on it. Cots and mats are sanitized daily after rest time to keep a healthy environment. We ask that parents provide a fitted sheet and a blanket for rest time that will be kept in their cubby during the day. The sheet and blanket will be sent home every Friday to be washed and must be returned on Monday. Children who do not fall asleep or awaken early will be guided to quiet activities that will not disturb the children that are resting.

MEALS & SNACKS

We provide healthy meals and snacks that are properly planned, prepared, and portioned according to the Child and Adult Care Food Program and the state requirements for food service. We serve breakfast, lunch, and snack in a home-style setting. Breakfast is served between 8:00am-8:30am. Lunch is served 11:30am-12:00pm. Snack is served between 2:30pm-3:00pm. School age children will be served snack at 3:00pm-3:30pm. **If your child arrives after the scheduled mealtime, please make sure to feed your child before dropping them off.** We ask that no outside food or drinks are brought into the center. Children may bring a water bottle with their name on it to have water available in their classroom.

We provide Similac Advance formula and all baby food approved through WIC for our infants up until 1 year of age. If your child is on a specialty formula, you need to provide the formula.

SPECIAL MEALS & ALLERGIES

Children who require a special diet will be required to bring a doctor's note, otherwise NO outside food is allowed. We will try our best to provide safe alternatives for these children, but some items are out of our control. If your child has an allergy, please let us know right away so that we can make sure all staff are aware. If your child has a milk allergy, please bring a doctor's note for a milk alternative to be provided during mealtimes.

PARENT REFFERALS

Referrals from a current client are one of the biggest compliments we can receive. As a special thank you, Children's Playhouse offers families \$20.00 for each referral that enrolls.

RESERVING SLOTS (NEW CLIENTS)

Due to the numerous requests for childcare, we do not hold spaces without a one-week deposit. We will hold your slot for up to 2 weeks. After 2 weeks, parents will be required to pay for an additional week. These fees are non-refundable.

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

The Children's Playhouse most important job is to keep the children safe. We are required by law to report all observations of child abuse or neglect cases to Children, Youth, and Families Department (CYFD) at 800-797-3260 and Child Care Licensing at 575-524-6057, if we have reasonable cause to believe or suspect a child is suffering from abuse or neglect or is in danger of abuse or neglect, no matter where the abuse might have occurred. The child protective service agency will determine appropriate action and may conduct an investigation. It then becomes the role of the agency to determine if the report is substantiated and to work with the family to ensure the child's needs are met. Our center will cooperate fully with any investigation and will maintain confidentiality concerning any report of child abuse or neglect. The safety of the children who attend our facility is our priority.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

At Children's Playhouse equal educational opportunities are available for all children, without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, or parent/provider political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation or special needs, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state, or local laws. Educational programs are designed to meet the varying needs of all students. This manual was not written to single out any one person, family, or incident. It is intended to clearly explain policies on a few important issues. We do retain the right to deny admission if all slots for a particular child's age group are filled.

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Children's Playhouse Staff are trained in the importance of confidentiality and sign a confidentiality statement upon hire. We will never release any personal information on our children, parents, or staff members. Any information requested to be released will be directed to the parent for permission by the Director. Center information will not be distributed, shared, or sold.

IMPAIRED PARENT POLICY

Staff will NOT release children if we have reasonable cause to suspect that any person picking up a child is under the influence of drugs, alcohol or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way that may endanger the child. Staff will immediately refer this situation to the Director. Should the Director decide that the parent/authorized person might be impaired, for whatever reason, the Director will request that the emergency contact number be utilized so that the impaired person and child can return safely home. Staff will remain with the child until alternate transportation arrives. If you should arrive impaired our staff will call CYFD to report this incident and let them know of our concerns. Reoccurring situations may result in the disenrollment of your child from the program.

MISSING CHILD POLICY

If a child is ever missing from the center, staff will immediately return all the children to their designated classrooms and perform a physical count of all the children. All center exterior doors will be locked, and two senior staff members will perform a search of the surrounding area. A designated staff member will search the playground. If the child is not found within 10 minutes, the police must be called along with the child's parent or emergency contact. Staff will continue to search for the child until the proper authorities take over the situation.

EMPLOYEE CELL PHONE POLICY

In order to maintain staff ratios and give full attention to children in classrooms, cell phone and smart watch use by staff is prohibited. It is important that every staff member's attention always remains on the children. A lapse in attention could result in a serious accident, which with appropriate supervision would have been prevented. Cell phones and smart watches will remain in the office.

COMPLAINTS & LICENSING INFORMATION

At Children's Playhouse we have an Open-Door policy and hope that you never need to make a complaint. If you have any complaints, questions, or suggestions do not hesitate to ask for Robert Herrera, the Owner, or speak with the Director at 575-521-1627. If the complaint cannot be resolved, the center has the right to terminate the contract or to disenroll the child(ren). If you feel your complaint is one that ECECD should be aware of you can contact them at 575-373-6490. For reference, our license number is 4000244.

PARENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have received and read the current year's handbook with Guidance Policy for Children's Playhouse and agree to comply with all rules and responsibilities stated therein.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Director's Signature _____ Date _____

* A signed copy will be kept and maintained in my child's file.