



Parent Handbook

Busy Bee Preschool
PO Box 115
13 Academy Street
Lee, Ma 01238
413-243-5535 X23

Leeyouthassociation.org

Mission:

The Busy Bee Learning Center provides high quality care for children from two years and nine months through pre-kindergarten. High quality childcare is characterized by, high staff to child ratios, small groups of children and well-trained staff offering children developmentally appropriate curriculum. The center strives to meet standards set by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) (a voluntary program) and the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care.

The center strives to meet the childcare needs for residents of Lee and surrounding towns. We seek to reflect the diversity of the community. The center accepts children without regard to marital status of parents, their race, creed, sexual orientation, cultural heritage, religion, national origin or political beliefs. We will endeavor to accommodate child's special needs where we can reasonably do so. All children are welcome here regardless of their abilities.

Philosophy:

At the Busy Bee Learning Center we view each child as an individual ready to learn. We designed a program that will provide developmentally age-appropriate experiences in a safe and nurturing environment. Our staff strives to provide experiences to promote the physical, emotional, social and cognitive development of our children. Implementation of these areas follows an integrated model where the environment encourages children to learn about the world around them through play and interactions with materials, peers, and adults.

Curriculum:

Our staff creates a theme-based curriculum that considers each child's interest and skill levels. Our diverse curriculum promotes growth in language arts, math, science, art, music, dramatic play, socialization and fine and gross motor skills. Our teachers create a learning environment where the child is actively engaged in meaningful learning activities. These learning experiences are developmentally appropriate and constructed according to the standards established by: National Association for the Education of the Young Child, and Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care.

Goals:

1. To provide a curriculum for each preschool child based on individual differences and abilities.
2. To provide experiences that meets each child's needs and will stimulate learning in all developmental areas.
3. To provide opportunities to participate in relationships, interactions and activities designed to develop children's self-esteem and positive feelings toward learning.
4. To provide opportunities for preschool children to participate in individual and group activities to their fullest abilities.
5. To provide opportunities in all areas of language development; listening, speaking, reading readiness, writing, thinking and expressing their ideas in a variety of ways.
6. To provide experiences in gross motor (running, skipping, balancing, climbing etc.) as well as fine motor activities (writing, cutting, finger plays, coloring, etc.)
7. to provide daily opportunities for experiencing a wide range of art, music, and movement activities
8. To make each child's school experience a positive one.
9. To stimulate each child's ability to solve problems and make decisions and choices independently.
10. To help each child recognize the rights, feelings, and property of others and themselves.
11. To encourage sharing and cooperation.
12. To help parents become active participants and advocates for their child's education through participation in on-going play and discussion groups.
13. To prepare children for a successful transition to Kindergarten and a life-long desire to learn.
14. To stimulate each child's thinking and reasoning skills through language-rich play experiences.

Organization and staffing:

The Busy Bee Learning Center, licensed by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care, is a department within the Lee Youth Association. The executive director of the Lee Youth Association is responsible for the overall administration of the Center. The Center's director is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Center. She works closely with the Executive Director to oversee fiscal management, staff training and supervision, compliance with EEC licensing regulations, enrollment and program development and evaluation.

Behavior Management plan:

We strive to offer a compassionate, caring and sensitive staff that helps each child build trust through consistency, calmness and reassuring mannerisms, with realistic expectations. Our staff assists the children as they develop the use of proper manners, community responsibility and awareness of others. We strive to maintain positive approaches to discipline and look for opportunities to channel a child's energy towards safe, constructive behavior. We encourage problem solving and settling disagreements through communication. Our staff uses positive reinforcement techniques instead of criticism to help children learn self-control.

Occasionally, a child's behavior may be particularly unsafe or disruptive. When this occurs, the child may be removed from an activity and redirected to another more productive activity. Depending on the child's actions, s/he may need to separate from the group to a quiet place to reflect on his/her behavior. Calm discussions of the problem behavior and discussion of a more appropriate behavior follows the quiet time. When the child rejoins the group, his/her positive behavior will be praised.

Under no circumstances is a child subject to abuse or neglect, cruel, unusual, severe or corporal punishment including any type of physical ridicule or humiliation, denial of food, rest or bathroom.

Of utmost importance in our guidance of children's behavior is preserving the child's self-esteem and recognizing each child's unique contributions to the classroom community.

School rules are constantly being discussed so the children remember them. When appropriate and feasible children will participate in the establishment of rules, policies, and procedures. This is done by several group discussions and constant reminders.

Orientation and welcome of new family plan:

We ask families to come to the preschool for a visit of the program. For the visit we encourage families to bring the child they are interested in enrolling. We typically do visits in the morning so that way families can see what the program looks like while in operation. At the visit the director will show the family around the classroom, and ask them if they have any questions. The director will share the program's mission and philosophy with the parents as well as what a typical day would look like. The director will introduce the family to all staff present. The director will discuss with the family about our discipline policy and our bathroom policy. The director will also share what a child would need to bring with them for supplies on their first day (rest stuff, change of clothes, pull-ups or diapers if needed, outdoor gear, and a lunch). The director would go over our curriculum, how we plan and what they can expect from us monthly and daily for news. The director will also address the cost of the preschool as well as the operating hours. If at this point the parents wish to enroll their child, the director will go over what days are available and then they will go over the necessary paperwork. The parents will also receive a welcome letter that will address the different policies the director mentioned during the visit. On the child's first day, the parents will receive a copy of the parent handbook, schedule, and our closing schedule in their mailbox.

Termination Plan:

Termination will be enforced if at any time the Director feels that they are unable to fulfill the need of the child.

The Director will call the parents for a conference for the following circumstances:

- Excessive risk to the well being of the other children
- Excessive and extraordinary parental demands
- Non-compliance with the Lee Youth Association policies
- Extreme separation difficulties
- Extreme behavioral difficulties including excessive biting
- Any difficult situations or problems which may arise (defined by the discretion of the director).

If during the conference, the Director feels unable to accommodate the child or parent(s), the following termination proceedings will begin: Written documentation stating the reason for termination will be provided to the child's parents. Information and referral for other services will be provided upon the request of the parent(s).

The Director shall prepare the child for termination from the center by:

Setting up a last day of attendance Helping the child gather his/her belongings, including art work, and personal items
The child will be present when the Director announces to the class that the child will not be attending anymore with a brief explanation in a manner consistent with the children's ability to understand.

*** if at any time the Director feels there are serious safety concerns children will be terminated immediately**

Suspension Procedures:

It is our policy that a child should not be suspended from child care for any reason. A young child should not be suspended for discipline reasons as s/he may not be able to comprehend. Suspension will not be used for any discipline solutions as we feel a young child may not comprehend the consequences of his/her actions.

Health Care Policies:

The emergency phone numbers will be posted near each phone for staff and visitors to view:
When using a phone at the LYA please be aware that you must dial "9" first to reach an outside line.

Health Care Consultant:

Name: Dr. Robert Wespiser
Address: Suburban Internal Medicine, Stockbridge Road Lee, MA 01238
Phone: 9-413-243-0122

Emergency Phone Numbers:

Fire Department: 9-911
Police Department: 9-911
Poison Control: 9-1-800-222-1222
Ambulance: 9-911
DCF/Child Abuse: 9-413-499-7370
Public Health Department: 9-413-243-5540

Hospital used for Emergencies:

Name: Berkshire Medical Center (BMC)
Address: 725 North St. Pittsfield, MA 01201
Phone: 9-413-528-0790 9-413-447-2000

Name: Fairview Hospital
Address: 29 Lewis Ave Great Barrington, MA 01230
Telephone Number: 9-413-528-0790

Designated Adult Contact:

Sharon Terry (LYA director): 9-243-3496

Information given in an emergency:

Your name:

The Nature of the emergency:

The Center's Telephone number: 243-5535

Center's Address: 13 Academy St Lee, MA 01238

The Center's Location in the Building: 1st Floor

Emergency Procedures:

In the event of a medical emergency involving your child, the center will attempt to locate you immediately. If a parent cannot be reached, the center staff will attempt to reach the parent's emergency contact person and call the child's physician. If necessary, an ambulance will be called and the child will be transported by ambulance to the nearest hospital. The staff will continue basic first aid and or CPR if necessary, prior to the arrival of an EMT.

Our attendance book, emergency numbers and first aid kit must accompany any group on a field trip. If the children are away from the Center, a staff person will begin first aid and seek additional help or transportation to the nearest health care facility. Staff will notify the Director who will contact the child's parents and inform them of the location and status of their child.

In the event of a Center wide emergency, evacuation procedures are posted at every doorway leading out of the classroom. An emergency drill is conducted several times at the beginning of the school year. Every other month the drill will be practiced during the school year and monitored by the Director. A quarterly drill will be conducted by the Fire Department.

In the event of a natural disaster (tornado, hurricane, flood, fire major storm or unusual situation including chemical spills, bomb threats) we will evacuate the building in the manner that is practiced monthly. Once we have met at the flowerbed outside of the LYA gate, attendance will be taken to ensure all children are out of the building. We will proceed to the location listed in our evacuation plan. We will remain at that location until all parents have been contacted and arrangements have been made for each and every child.

In the event that our building should lose heat, water and/or electricity during the winter months, and the inside temperature falls below 65 Fahrenheit, we will notify all parents of our plans to close. The staff will remain until the last child is dismissed. If during the fall and spring we should lose heat or electricity, we will remain in operation. Should we lose water for longer than one hour, we will be forced to close the Center. Again, all staff will remain until the last child is dismissed.

The Center's staff places the highest priority on monitoring the environment and activities of the children at the Center. Every effort is made to minimize the risk of injury to children in our care. The Director will be responsible for a daily check of equipment to assess the need for repair or replenishment. The center maintains two fully stocked first aid kits located on the top of the refrigerator in the kitchen.

All injuries that require ice, washing or extra comfort will be reported to parents within 24 hours via an injury report form. Three copies are made of these forms for a central log, the child's folder and the child's parents. For a more serious injury involving excessive bleeding or swelling, the injury will be treated accordingly and parents will be notified immediately by phone and by written report at the end of the day.

The Director will maintain a log of all injuries. When an accident occurs, parents will be informed regarding the circumstances, including the description of injury and a follow-up report. The staff is also responsible for storing all toxic substances, poisonous plants, medications, sharp objects and other hazardous items in a secure locked place out of children's reach.

Procedures for using and maintaining First Aid Equipment:

First Aid kit is located on top of the refrigerator. Contents are maintained by the director and include: (adhesive tape, band aids, non-latex gloves, scissors, tweezers, thermometer, coldpack).

First Aid may be administered by any staff member certified in basic First Aid.

Policy for illness:

The center operates in conformance with regulations and recommendations set forth by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Parents will be notified when a communicable disease has been diagnosed at the center and will be alerted to the symptoms. A note is posted on the parent bulletin board and placed in each child's mailbox. Each child must be immunized in accordance with Department of Early Education and Care, and the Department of Public Health regulations. Each child must have documentation of immunization on file.

When a child is out sick, parents are asked to call the center by 9:00 a.m. and report pertinent information regarding the child's illness. It is important that the Director and teachers be notified in order to prevent further spread of the illness and to recommend action as needed.

It is the responsibility of the teaching staff to observe children throughout the day for signs of illness. If a child is observed to be under the weather or unhealthy, the teacher or Director will assess the child's symptoms to determine whether the child should be excluded from the Center. The child will be placed on his/her mat in a quiet area of the room and away from other children while we contact the parent. If you are called, it is expected that you arrive at the center within one hour. If you can't make it to the center within that period, please make arrangements with one of the persons authorized to pick up your child. A child who leaves the center with a question of communicable infectious disease must have a note from the doctor stating the child is non-infectious and able to return to school before we will re-admit him/her.

A child should not attend the center if any of the following symptoms are apparent:

- A temperature equal to or greater than 100.5 (a child must be temperature free without medication for a period of 24 hours before returning to the center)
- Intestinal trouble accompanied by diarrhea or vomiting (must be without for a period of 24 hours before returning to care)
- Any undiagnosed rash
- Discharging from eyes or ears and extreme nasal discharge
- Severe cough
- Open or oozing sores on face, hands or body
- Lethargy that prevents the child from functioning within the group
- Wheezing that is not controllable
- Signs of severe cold or sore throat
- Biting of unusual frequency or severity that would be accompanied by actual transfer of blood from the biter

If a child vomits, we will call home for pickup. If a child has a 2 or more incidents of diarrhea, then we will call home. If your child is sent home due to diarrhea or vomiting, then your child cannot return the next day to school (they need to be healthy for 24 hours before returning). If your child is sent home due to a fever, then your child cannot attend the next day because they need to be fever free for 24 hours prior to returning to preschool.

Administering medications at the center:

In the case of prescription medications, the medication must be in the original container from the pharmacy with the name of the medication, the child's name it is intended for, dosage, how long it is to be administered for, expiration date, storage instructions, administration instructions, and the doctor's name. The parent authorization form also must accompany it. Parents will complete this form when presenting the prescription drug. Parents will be asked for the time, dosage, and method of administration and this will be documented on the form. The center cannot administer any medication contrary to the direction on the original container without authorization from the child's physician. Be sure to indicate whether the medication needs to be refrigerated. Medications will be stored in the refrigerator or out of reach of children in a locked container, and returned to parents when no longer needed. If a child has a chronic health condition, then we need and individualized health plan signed by the child's pediatrician.

In the case of non-prescription medications (pain relievers, cold medicine, etc.) the center requires parent/guardian approval to administer these medications to your child. Parents can use a blanket form from the center that is good for one week. Forms can be obtained from the director or teacher. This form authorizes the center to administer these medications on an as-needed basis. These medications must also be in the original product container.

Topical non-prescription medications (such as antibacterial ointments, sunscreen, insect, repellent, and petroleum jelly) also require a yearly blanket form, signed by a parent. Forms for these medications do not require a physician's signature. All children will keep their own personal supply of such topical medications, labeled clearly with their name.

With the execution of topical non-prescription medications, a record of the time, date, dosage and staff person administering the medication will be kept as part of your child's file. In addition, when a previously authorized non-prescription medication (non-topical) must be administered to your child (and parents had not discussed this possibility at morning drop off) teachers will notify parents to advise them and make a decision by phone (at pickup parents must sign and complete a new non-prescription medication form). Parents will also be notified in writing of the time, dose and staff person administering any unanticipated medication. Records of all medications administered, prescription and non-topical non-prescription, are kept in your child's confidential file. It is also kept in a log book of medication.

For any medication given on a regular long term basis (ex. Asthma inhaler) a log will be kept with date, time, and dosage and staff person administering the medication. Parents will not be notified daily, as this will be a previously agreed upon arrangement documented in your child's file.

Teachers will check all medications for expiration dates. Expired medications cannot be administered to children. Any leftover medications will be returned to the parent.

When your child is prescribed a medication that will be taken at the center and at home, we advise you to ask your pharmacist for two appropriately marked containers of medication, one to leave at the Center during the course of the prescription. This way you will not need to bring your medicine home overnight or on the weekend. If you have one container of medicine that will go back and forth with your child, parents are asked to check with the teacher about where to store the medication safely and to retrieve it from the safe storage location at pick-up.

Toilet/Hygiene Procedures:

No child shall be punished, verbally abused or humiliated for soiling, wetting or not using the toilet. Children do not have to be toilet trained upon entering the preschool. Staff will work with families when the time is right to be consistent and nurturing while toilet training.

Each child will be helped with hand washing:

- Upon arrival at the preschool
- After each toileting
- Before and after eating or handling food
- When coming in from outdoors
- After handling any classroom pets
- After coming in contact with bodily fluids and discharges
- After cleaning
- Before and after play in the sensory table
- And any other time a teacher deems it so

Children will be reminded not to share cups, bottles, eating utensils, combs or brushes. Individual paper towels shall be used to dry hands. Teachers will follow strict disinfecting procedures for eating surfaces, mats and toilet areas, as well as for equipment used by the children. The disinfectant solution is a commercially prepared disinfectant, which indicated it kills bacteria, viruses and parasites. A solution of consisting of ¼ cup of household bleach to each gallon of water is also accepted to use as a disinfectant solution. All such disinfectants shall be stored in a secure place and out of reach of children.

Clothing soiled by feces, urine, vomit or blood shall be double bagged in sealed plastic bags and stored separately from other items.

A change of clothing shall be available for each child. Extra center owned clothing should be available for changing purposes in addition to the clothing brought from home by each child. Center-owned clothing must be laundered after being worn and returned to the Center.

Children will be allowed to use the bathroom as needed under a teacher's supervision. There are also scheduled times for using the bathroom in which each child are encouraged to try and go. Please send extra clothes that can be kept in your child's cubbies.

Program's Assessment plan:

At the Busy Bee Preschool we use Teaching Strategies Gold as an assessment tool in order to assess as well as observe children. Through using this tool we are able to plan for each child individually as well as for the entire classroom. We are able to adapt the curriculum in order to meet the needs of each child. Children will enter preschool in September; however we do have open enrollment all year as long as we are not full. The first set of progress reports will be generated in October, or 45 days after a child's date of admission. This first set of progress reports will be based upon how we see the children entering into the school year. The second progress report will be completed in April, or 6 months after the first progress report. If children are entering Kindergarten in the fall, then an additional progress report will be completed in June for those children. In between progress reports; teachers will conduct both formal and informal observations based upon the objectives outlined in teaching strategies gold these observations occur during free-play, and during skill building groups. As we enter these observations into the .net, we are able to identify the children's interests and needs for continuing their growth along the continuum. Once progress reports are ready they will be placed in children's mailboxes with a note explaining what they are and that if a parent would like to schedule a conference, please let the director know and we would love to schedule one.

Eventually our goal is to include parents in using the.net. Parents will be given their own username and password to log into the classroom. Once a parent is logged into a classroom they are only able to see information regarding their own child. For now, we send home the progress reports with a note asking parents if they would like to meet and discuss the progress report, or if they have any feedback on the progress report or what they would like us working on with their child.

From the assessments teachers are then able to make changes in the curriculum and even the classroom environment to meet the needs of all children. The assessments help teachers reflect on their own practices and to improve program planning.

If a teacher felt a child needed an outside referral we would then follow the referral policy.

As always all children's information is kept confidential, and the procedures for keeping the children's records confidential is outlined in The Center's Responsibilities to Parents

Referral Policy:

From time to time a child or family may need support services that the Center is not able to provide. For this reason, the Center has established a policy describing when and how a family may be referred for outside support services. It is the Center's policy to involve parents in this process as soon as a concern is identified, and to work closely with the family towards the best interests of the child. All information about the student and families will be kept confidential. *The process for this is as follows:*

1. Identifications of a concern:

All the teachers at the Center have received significant education and training on normal patterns of growth and development for children. When a teacher becomes concerned about a child's health, behavior or developmental abilities, these concerns will be brought to the attention of the director. The Director and teachers will explore strategies to best help the child while at the center. These discussions will be documented by the primary teacher and will include specific examples of concerned behavior along with the interventions the team agreed to implement.

At this initial stage, when a concern is first identified, the concern will be brought to the attention of the parents. During this discussion with parents, the team will hope to learn additional information and involve the parents in the intervention process.

2. Implementing an Intervention plan:

Parents and the Director will work together to develop a plan to address the concerns about the child's behavior or development. This plan will be documented in writing and will become a part of the child's record at the Center. As part of the plan, a schedule for reviewing and evaluating the child's progress will be agreed upon.

3. Referral for additional services:

In some cases, a child's concerned behavior may continue despite a teacher's attempt to intervene. If no progress is observed in an agreed upon length of time, it may be time to engage outside resources. The Director will meet with the child's parents and make referrals for additional help and support. The lead teacher will work closely with the family to ensure consistency with the plan to provide ongoing feedback.

At the referral meeting with the parents, the Director will provide the parent with a written summary of the Center's observation, interventions made and reason for referral. The parent will be informed of the availability of services and their rights under Chapter 766. For children under the age of 3, parents will be informed of available Early Intervention Services. The Director will work with parents to find the most appropriate referral.

4. Follow-up:

The LYA staff will work with the parents to provide a correlation between home, school and additional services that are necessary for the appropriate development of the child.

Grievance Procedure/Communication:

A parent who has a concern/grievance with any aspect of the Busy Bee Learning Center should follow this procedure:

1. Contact the school and speak directly with the preschool teacher. Parents may contact the teacher during the regular hours (7:30 – 5:00). The teacher may not be able to discuss your concern during instructional time. If the teacher is unable to talk, she will return the call within 24 hours.
2. Contact the preschool Director if you do not feel satisfied with the results of speaking with the teacher. The Director will check that the parent has first discussed the concern/grievance with the teacher. If the teacher has not been contacted, the director will ask that the parent do so.
3. If this approach does not lead to a resolution of the concern/grievance, the Executive Director may be asked to mediate.
4. The final step if you are still not satisfied would be to contact a member of the Board of Directors.

* At any time a parent may call EEC. The Busy Bee Preschool licensing specialist is Karen Burns. She can be reached at 413-788-8401 x111. Her office is 95 liberty street Suite 1124-3rd floor Springfield, MA 01103

Day-to-Day Procedures:

Hours of Operation for the Busy Bee Preschool is from 8:00am till 4:00pm.

The wake-up program is from 6:30am till 8:00am for working parents only.

The extended day program is from 4:00pm till 5:30pm for working parents only.

If your child is attending part time, then they must be picked up by 11:45 am.

* Our morning routine starts at 9:00am for circle, if your child does not arrive by 9:00am your child will be marked as absent for the day. It is very important for your child to participate in this circle.

Rest Time:

All preschoolers will have a rest time each day after lunch. If a child cannot sleep, a teacher will suggest that s/he rest quietly for at least 45 minutes. Each child will have his/her own mat. Parents are asked to supply a small blanket, a favorite stuffed animal, and a fitted crib sheet. Bedding will be sent home each week for laundering. Children who do not rest will be given quiet activities to do on their mats after 15 minutes.

Food and Snack:

If your child has food allergies, or a special diet, please notify the Director at the time of enrollment. The Center will make every effort to satisfy the special dietary needs for each child. Milk, water, and juice will always be available at the Center. Children are encouraged to eat healthy snacks and make healthy food choices at lunchtime; however no child will ever be forced to eat against his/her will. Parents are responsible for bringing nutritious bag lunches for their preschooler to eat at the center. Lunches may be refrigerated at the Center and will be warmed up if necessary. Don't forget to label your child's lunch bag. Please do not send candy and soft drinks. We encourage you to check in with your child's teachers or other parents for lunch ideas if your child is a picky eater. Often children get interested in foods they see their friends eating.

The Center will provide P.M. snack for preschool children. Nutritious snacks such as fresh fruit, vegetables, cheese, crackers, and bread products, or items baked by the children with teachers, will also be provided.

Parents are responsible to bring A.M. snack for all children one day a month. This day will coordinate with your child's "helper day". Please send in healthy food.

Outdoor time:

In order to provide a stimulating program for children in the center, outdoor outings are included on a daily basis, weather permitting. Outings are considered essential for good health and a welcome change of scenery.

Outings will be mortified during inclement weather, including rain, and severe heat or cold, as follows:

1. For outdoor temperatures below 24 Fahrenheit, outings will be canceled.
2. For outdoor temperatures between 25 and 30 Fahrenheit, with a wind chill factor, outings will be canceled.
3. For outdoor temperatures between 25 and 30 Fahrenheit with no wind chill factor, outings will be modified to between 15 and 20 minutes. Children will be watched for chilling and extreme wetness and will be brought inside immediately should these occur.
4. For outdoor temperatures greater than 90 Fahrenheit outings will be modified to between 15 or 20 minutes. Water will be available in the play area for all children. Children will be watched for over-heating and will be brought in immediately should this occur. If parents request it, children will be covered with sunscreen prior to going outside. A permission slip for applying sunscreen is included in the enrollment packet. Children are encouraged to wear hats to decrease sun exposure.
5. For outdoor temperatures greater than 96 Fahrenheit and high humidity, outdoor outings will be canceled.

Walking Field trips:

Walking field trips occur frequently for all age groups and are considered an important part of our program. A permission slip (included in the enrollment packet) gives permission for short walking trips in the designated area of the center. Throughout the year, the preschoolers will enjoy field trips when possible. The teaching staff welcomes parent's suggestions and participation in the choice and organization of the field trip. Prior parent notification and specific permission slips will be required for trips outside the designated areas. Parents will be provided with specific information, child/adult ratios will be kept very low (generally 1 adult for 2 children) and children will be prepared in advance for the expectations for such a trip.

Transportation Plan:

All children will have a signed transportation plan in their file. This plan will inform the program of how the child will arrive and depart the program. We do not transport the children off of the premises unless trip. Of an emergency or a planned walking field trip.

Birthdays and Holiday Celebrations:

Birthdays are very special to children and their families. Parents are welcome to plan a birthday celebration with their child's teacher. Your child's teacher can help suggest a way to celebrate which would be appropriate to your child's classmates. As part of our commitment to making the Center an extension of the child's home, the children will have the opportunity to learn about the variety of holidays celebrated by the children in each of their classes. Parents are encouraged to suggest or initiate activities and materials that reflect their own cultural background. We work to keep "holiday learning" multicultural, simple, and non-commercial.

Parent Participation:

We encourage you to be involved at the Center in whatever ways are convenient for you and your family. Below are several ways that parents can be involved in the center.

Visiting:

Parents are always welcome at the center. We encourage parents to stop by during the day to participate in the center activities and excursions. Young children sometimes require extra help dealing with additional transitions when parents visit. We ask that you check with your child's teachers regarding classroom rules and expectations during your visit. Please keep in mind that the children have rest time from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm.

Conferences/Meetings:

Parent conferences are held every 6 months. The teaching staff will provide parents with a written update of their child's skills and interests at the time. Parents are also welcome to request additional conferences with a teacher and or Director. However the Director will bring special problems or significant development to the parent's attention as soon as they arise. For children with disabilities, progress reports will be given or discussed with parents every three months.

Get Togethers:

Throughout the year, we will plan lunch meetings and potluck suppers so that parents can discuss concerns and share ideas with each other and staff.

Classroom Participation and Special Events:

We welcome parents to share with the children special talents and skills they may have. In other years, parents have come in to tell children about their jobs, to share musical talents, to cook a special treat, or to tell about their family holiday celebrations. Please check with your child's teachers for ideas about how you can help.

Communication:

In order to optimize the care that is provided, it is essential to have daily parent/staff communication. This can be done informally as you arrive to pick up your child each day. If you would like a more formal meeting time, please do not hesitate to arrange one with your child's teacher or the Center's Director. The preschool teachers will send home a daily news sheet to keep you up to date on classroom activities. In addition, a monthly newsletter will be sent home to help keep parents informed about upcoming events.

There are many parent resources-reference books, videos and other media which may be of interest to parents in the front foray of the Lee Youth Association.

We ask that parents provide a written note for the following situations:

- For going home at a time or with a person that is different from the norm

- For requesting special treatment
- For allowing someone other than the parent to be temporarily responsible for the child

The Center's Responsibilities to Parents

Providing information to the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) by keeping and maintaining under their regulations and any other information reasonably related to the requirements of these regulations. This includes information in your child's records. Authorized employees of EEC will not remove identifying care materials from the Center premises and are required to maintain the confidentiality of individual records.

REPORTING SUSPECTED ABUSE AND NEGLECT

All center staff is required by law to report suspected abuse or neglect to either the Department of Children and Families or to the Center's Executive Director. The Center has written policies and procedures for reporting and we will provide the written policy to you upon request.

NOTIFICATION OF INJURY

The center will notify you immediately of any injury to your child that requires emergency care. They will also notify you in writing within 24 hours if any first aid is administered to your child.

AVAILABILITY OF REGULATIONS

The Center has a copy of CMR 102.700, Standards for the licensure or approval of Group Day Care and School Age Child Care Programs on the premises, available to any person upon request. If you have questions about any of the regulations, ask the Director to show them to you.

Parental Rights

THE RIGHT TO VISIT

You have the right to make unannounced visits to your child's classroom while your child is present.

THE RIGHT TO GIVE YOU'RE INPUT

Your input in the development of Center policies and procedures is welcome and valuable. We welcome your suggestions either to the Director, The Executive Director, or the Board of Directors. Implementation of suggestions will be up to the center's administration.

THE RIGHT TO STAFF CONFERENCES

You have a right to request an individual conference with center staff. Staff is always happy to meet with you at a mutually convenient time.

THE RIGHT TO MEETING AND MATERIALS PRIOR TO ADMITTANCE

It is important for you to have your questions answered before your child begins attending the Center. You have to meet with the administration prior to your child's admittance. You have a right to visit your child's classroom prior to enrollment.

Before admission you should receive and review your parent handbook which contains the Center's written statement of purpose; services provided; referral policy; behavior management policy; termination and suspension policy; information on food and snacks at the Center, including suggestions for healthy food to send for lunch; the policy for identifying and reporting child abuse and neglect; the center's health policy and illness exclusion policy. You should also receive a copy of the fee schedule.

THE RIGHT TO PROGRESS REPORTS

At least every six months, you should meet with the center staff to discuss your child's progress and/or receive a written progress report of your child's activities at the center. This report will become a part of your child's permanent file at the Center. Center staff will bring any special problems or significant developments to your attention as soon as they arise.

THE RIGHT TO YOUR CHILD'S RECORDS

Information contained in your child's records is privileged and confidential. Center staff may not release information from your child's records to anyone not directly related to implementing the program plan for your child without your written consent. You will be notified if your child's record is subpoenaed.

ACCESS TO THE RECORDS

You should be able to have access to your child's records. The Center will provide access within two business days, unless they have your permission to take longer. You will be allowed to view your child's entire record, even if it is located in more than one location. The center has procedures regarding access, duplication and dissemination of children's records. They will maintain a written log that identifies anyone who has had access or has received information out of the record. This log is available only to you and the person responsible for maintaining the Center's records.

AMENDING THE RECORDS

You have the right to add information or comments on data or any other relevant material to your child's record. You also have the right to request deletion or amendments of any information contained in the record. Such requests shall be made in accordance with the procedures described below:

1. If you are of the opinion that adding information or comments is not sufficient to explain, clarify or correct objectionable material in your child's record, you have the right to a conference with the Director to make your objections known.
2. The Center shall, within one week of this conference, give you a decision in writing stating the reason or reasons for the decision. If the decision is in your favor, the Director shall immediately take steps necessary to put the amendment into effect.

CHARGE FOR COPIES

The Center will not charge a fee for copies of any information contained in your child's records.

TRANSFER OF THE RECORDS

Upon your written request, when your child is no longer in our care, the Center can give you your child's records or transfer them to another person you identify. The Center will ask you to sign a form verifying that the record has been received.

LATE PICK-UP POLICY

As a licensed Child Care Provider, we are in compliance with regulations set forth by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care. It is our role, and the role of any approved assistants we may employ, to be a "mandated reporter". Because of this role, we are mandated to take the following steps when a parent is not present at the prearranged child pick-up time and has not contacted us to discuss any changes in the schedule and appear to have abandoned their child:

1. Following a period of 15 minutes, we will contact persons who have been previously designated by the parent(s) as "Emergency Contact People". The contact person (s) will be asked to pick the child up immediately.
2. If, after a period of 30 minutes, we are still unable to reach any of the emergency contacts, and the parent has made no attempts to notify us of any changes in their schedule, or any other emergency, we will notify the Department of Children and Families to file a report of Abuse and/or neglect (51A). We will also notify the local police department.
3. Once these steps have been taken, parents should contact the Department of Children and Families in order to rectify the situation.
4. In addition, a fee of \$5.00 per 5 minutes will be charged to the parent(s).