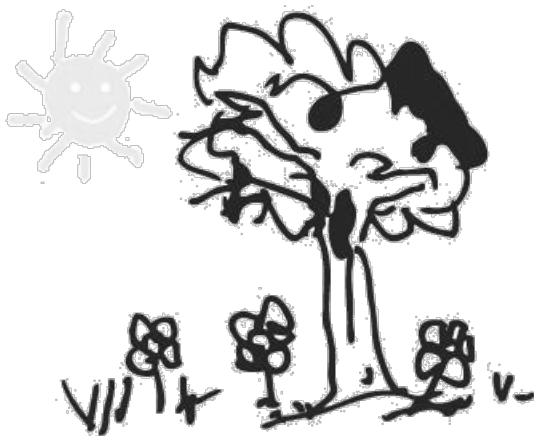


FAMILY HANDBOOK



Welcome

On behalf of the entire educational staff, our Center Directors and the Management of Hildebrandt Learning Centers, I would like to extend a warm welcome. Thank you for selecting our Early Learning Center and placing your trust in us to provide a quality early childhood experience for your child. We will work hard to keep that trust and provide many rewarding experiences for your family.

Hildebrandt Learning Centers, LLC (HLC) partners with progressive and caring organizations to provide children and families with the highest quality early learning programs. Our vision began in 1991 and continues to be supported by our dedicated early learning professionals who deliver our programs to children and families. We are driven to provide the best in early childhood education, and make a significant difference in the lives of children and families.

HLC's vision is to facilitate the development of early care and education environments that recognize, treat, and respect all learners as valuable individuals and members of our society.

Our mission is to partner with families of young children, collaborating with other early childhood professionals and community resource personnel to enhance the development and learning of each child through age-appropriate curriculum, play, individualized assessments, and nurturing relationships.

Here are some important facts that you should know about our company:

- **Management Fee Structured Contract with our Sponsoring Organizations** – HLC develops a partnership with our sponsors by building a sound financial structure based on the goals of the Sponsoring Organization. This arrangement puts the emphasis on achieving a high-quality program that meets the needs of the families we serve. HLC is compensated for managing the centers with set, annual management fees from our Sponsoring Organizations.

Hildebrandt Learning Centers places heavy emphasis on support and training for all of our directors and staff. This system begins with a team of qualified specialists who provide guidance, resources, and training to all Center Directors in administrative, marketing, human resources, client relations, fiscal duties, staff education and program support.

- **Privately Owned / Operated Company** – HLC is a privately owned and operated company. We are not driven by the needs of shareholders or corporate entities. Every decision that is made by HLC's Management is always made in the best interests of children and families.
- **Dedication to the Highest Quality Early Learning Programs** – HLC is committed to meeting the ideals and accreditation criteria set forth by NAEYC. Currently, over 75% of our early learning centers have achieved this pinnacle

of quality. In addition, the majority of HLC's centers have attained a STAR Four rating from the Keystone STARS program.

We truly believe that these standards form the foundation of a high-quality early childhood education program. Evidence of HLC's commitment to quality is validated by the fact that we employ a Program and Curriculum Development Department that includes professionals who possess a wealth of experience in the early childhood field. In addition, we further support the health and safety of our early learning centers with a full-time, registered nurse and a part-time, registered dietitian.

- **Commitment to Our Educational Staff** – Our early childhood educators are our most valued resource. From time of hire and throughout their career at HLC each and every employee, is offered development opportunities to support personal and professional growth. These opportunities are as unique as the needs of each individual staff member. Conferences, seminars, mentoring and tuition reimbursement are some of the ways that HLC provides for each employee's individualized professional development plan.

We hope that the information provided in this Family Handbook will inform and guide you during your family's participation in our early learning center. If you should have any questions about the information contained in this handbook, please feel free to speak with your Center Director.

Touching Minds... Shaping Futures™

William J. Grant

William J. Grant
Chief Executive Officer

OUR VISION

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OUR MISSION

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PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

Childhood is the most critical period in human growth and development. It is this period when the foundation for learning is laid. Children's brains develop at a rapid pace. For this reason, learning experiences for children need to be diverse, creative, and carefully planned on soundly researched principles of how young children develop and learn.

Hildebrandt Learning Centers strives to promote quality, early care and learning programs that encourage the development of the whole child from the time they enroll in our centers until they depart. Our program philosophy is founded on a developmental learning model which promotes all areas of a child's development, including emotional, social, linguistic, physical, and cognitive. This model of learning requires that all aspects of our program be focused on learning experiences based on the child's developmental age and interests, their individual needs and learning styles, and on meaningful experiences that reflect the child's cultural background.

The daily schedule and activities are teacher-planned, yet flexible to allow time for each child to interact and learn at his own pace, encouraging the development of a healthy self-image. In-depth studies or projects, support skill development that is integrated across all disciplines of learning (literacy, math, health, science, problem-solving, individual social environment).

To help children make meaningful connections and to provide opportunities for rich, conceptual development, teachers are intentional as they plan learning activities that are realistic and obtainable within a safe, nurturing, cognitively-challenging environment. The teacher enhances the learning environment with materials that encourage each child to become an engaged learner as they explore, manipulate, question, and partake in interactive learning with concrete materials, playmates and teachers. Learning is the end product of these carefully planned and meaningful, relevant activities and experiences.

Children continually progress from the time they enter the center until they leave. Each child is assigned a primary teacher who builds a responsive relationship with the child.

The primary teacher plans special activities that foster the individual growth of each child along with providing a positive and nurturing environment where the child feels safe and secure. The primary teacher facilitates a strong partnership with the child's home life, incorporating the child's family, culture, and traditions into the learning environment.

Families are an important partner in children's learning. The sharing of information and insight about the individual child's needs and development help to provide consistency and support between the learning center and home, fostering the child's total growth and development. Teacher/family partnerships are essential components of quality programs.

LICENSING, ACCREDITATION, & QUALITY STANDARDS

This center is licensed by the appropriate state agency; and may participate in the National Association for the Education of Young Children and a state quality initiative program.

EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM

Our High Quality, Early Learning Programs are reflected in the professional development of our staff, which is based on NAEYC's developmentally appropriate practices. Those practices include, positive relationships among children and adults, curriculum that reflects the community, above standard health and safety policies, and sensitivity to the diversity of our families. Above all, they create opportunities for wonder, curiosity, joy and possibilities...

Our Early Learning Environments are communities that reflect the individuality of the children, families and staff. Each center creates a safe, healthy, nurturing place where everyone is respected and valued. The philosophies of *Creative Curriculum & Reggio Emilia* inspire us to recognize "the role of the environment-as-teacher." Careful attention is paid to the beauty of the surroundings and the daily awakening of a sense of curiosity, wonder and discovery in our indoor and outdoor learning spaces. Teachers organize environments rich in possibilities and provocations that invite children and adults to explore, imagine, ask questions and problem solve.

Our Early Learning Curriculum provides opportunities for children to grow socially, physically, intellectually, creatively and emotionally. Lifelong skills of problem-solving, divergent thinking and conflict resolution are practiced daily within the context of real and relevant learning experiences based upon play, relationships and discovery.

HLC has selected *The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers, & Twos* and *The Creative Curriculum for Preschool*. These curricula provide a framework that is based upon sound theory and research in early learning, knowledge of child development, the role of the teacher, partnering with families, what children learn and creating responsive learning environments. *Creative Curriculum* has been linked with the PA Early Learning Standards to provide a smooth transition into formalized education.

PA Early Learning Standards

The Office of Child Development & Early Learning (OCDEL) has developed a strong partnership between early learning programs and formal education. Early Learning Standards are provided for infants through kindergarten so the child's development can be progressive and transitioned into the elementary school system. More information about the early learning standards can be obtained from your child's teacher or from: www.pde.state.pa.us/early_childhood/cwp/view.asp?Q=101706

The Infant and Toddler Program is based upon the caregiving relationship and routines. Infants and toddlers are learning who they are and what they are capable of in each of the small moments spent with nurturing adults. *Creative Curriculum* helps teachers achieve the very best program for children under three. Teachers plan experiences that are appropriately challenging, which support growth and development as infants, ones and twos learn about themselves and others, moving, their world and communicating.

The Preschool Program specifies the literacy, math, science, social studies, art and technology to be taught, cross walked with published standards. For young children, meaningful and lifelong learning requires active thinking and experimenting to find out how things work. This is best accomplished through purposeful play facilitated by highly intentional teaching practices and relevant learning experiences that do not include worksheets. Our "homework" may include activities that allow families and children to reinforce the day's learning objectives. These ideas may be found daily on the HLC family information board, in your weekly family Take Home Folder, or from your child's teacher.

The Kindergarten Program is licensed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and is offered in a limited number of our early learning centers.

Documentation & Assessment

Center staff document children's work through observation, photographs and work samples. Staff engages in on-going, structured observations of naturally occurring child behavior in everyday settings. Classroom observations capture and document the real life experiences of each child's social/emotional, physical, cognitive and language development. Staff collect portfolios or observation notes and work samples to represent your child's attainment of skills and then share this information with each family three to four times per year.

The Ages and Stages (AGS) screening tool is a series of questions to track your child's development. Ages and Stages will be used at your child's initial enrollment, or at any future date, when a family or staff person would like to monitor the young child's development. Knowing that you are the expert of your child, we have much to learn from you. You know your child best and we look forward to the information you can provide to us so that we can better meet your child's needs and interests. Families will receive a form with a series of simple questions regarding the child's abilities at the time of enrollment such as; does your child climb on an object such as a chair to reach something he wants or when your child wants something, does she tell you by pointing

to it? Our staff can use the knowledge gained from the information on this form to plan individual skills and activities for learning that meet the needs and interests of your child.

Holidays

As an early childhood program, we have chosen to minimize the impact of holidays on our curriculum. Though we do recognize holidays, we focus on exploring the cultures, traditions and diversity of children, families and our community. We encourage all families to share their special customs and traditions with us throughout the year.

Special Occasions and Birthdays

To respect all families and their values, we ask that you honor the celebration of birthdays in a meaningful and simple manner. If treats (food) are being provided by the family of the child celebrating a birthday, they must be purchased from a commercial bakery and include an ingredient list. If multiple items are brought into the center, one item will be served to the children at snack time and the remainder will be given to the children's families so the children may enjoy them at home.

Commercial bakery products sometimes include labels stating that the food(s) may have come into contact with items that may cause an allergic reaction. For example, cupcakes may include a statement that they may have come into contact with peanuts. Treats having these labels will not be served to children if one of their classroom friends may be affected by the food item. The treat will be sent home with each of the classroom children to allow their families the opportunity to determine if the children may enjoy the treat.

Other examples of how you can honor your child's birthday would be to donate a book in your child's honor to the classroom's library or you may visit your child's class to share a craft project.

HLC will recognize each child's birthday within the contexts of the normal, daily routines (songs and stories). Special birthday celebrations planned for your child are to be held outside of the center. Invitations will not be distributed by center staff. They may be distributed by the family. If all children in the class are not invited to a birthday event, we ask that you distribute your invitations outside of the center to prevent hurt feelings.

Remember, whenever a treat is brought into the center, there must be a sufficient amount to be served to all the children in your child's classroom.

Please see **Nutrition** for further guidance on food related treats.

ROLE OF THE CHILD

Our commitment to the highest quality early learning program for young children is based upon the belief that each child possesses many resources at birth with extraordinary potential. All children have independent means to build upon their own thought processes, ideas, questioning and attempts to answer life's most burning questions.

A child attempts to make meaning of his/her everyday life and has intense curiosity. This curiosity is nurtured and children are encouraged to “learn how to learn.” Our instruction must accommodate each child’s learning style, abilities and rate of development.

Children observe their immediate world to reconstruct their understanding. As early child educators, we recognize children’s need for a discovery approach to learning by providing opportunities to make choices, explore, problem solve, experience challenges, exercise imaginations and use open ended materials to create. Children practice these essential life skills during play. The role of the child is, therefore, an active co-creator of his/her own learning. These beliefs guide our thinking and planning for developmentally appropriate programming, choice of curriculum, observation and assessment.

Above all, children offer adults the opportunity to continuously engage in the lifelong learning process.

Outdoor Play

All children have a right to play each and every day. Play is the child’s work, in a place where they can explore and learn the life skills required for the development of community, mutual trust, cooperation, empathy, socialization and learning. All children will be taken outdoors to play when the weather is suitable. Weather Permitting is defined by the PA Keys in the PA Position Statement as follows: Children are expected to go outside when the forecast temperature/wind chill are above 25 degrees, the forecast temperature/heat index is less than 90 degrees and there is no current air quality alert. It is understood that given these parameters there may be portions of some days that do not meet the conditions of weather permitting since forecasts are generally targeted to a point in time in the day. Paint, water and other messy materials are provided indoors and outdoors.

Art

Children will explore a variety of art materials. Our goals for children and art are: to pay attention to detail, to look carefully, to work with intention and awareness, to reflect on their expression, and to use art experience to guide their explorations. At HLC art is focused on the process, on doing, problem solving, and experimenting with a variety of materials. You will not see cutesy or crafty projects, but artwork utilizing a variety of media and methods of expression.

Toilet Learning

HLC believes that during toilet learning children will control their toilet habits when they are ready. The child’s teacher and the family will work together to determine when the child is ready to begin toilet learning. We are willing to follow family recommendations as much as possible in aiding each child in a successful, stress free toilet learning experience. Children can proceed developmentally to the next room regardless of their ability to control their bathroom needs. Keep in mind that there may be some regression in a child’s toileting habits upon initial enrollment. When children are becoming toilet learned, please supply the center with three complete sets of clothing, including shirt, pants, underwear, socks and shoes, in case of accidents.

ROLE OF THE FAMILY

Hildebrandt Learning Centers is committed to families. It is for this reason that the family plays such a vital role in the center. The programs are developed with family participation as an integral component. Daily communication with families helps the staff build a necessary bridge between home and center. We encourage families to visit, share talents, attend field trips, etc. The center has an extensive library of information on a variety of topics. If families need information on a specific topic, it may be obtained from their child's teacher or the Center Director.

Communication

In an effort to keep all families informed of center happenings, we offer a variety of center communications that may include, but are not limited to:

- Newsletters
- Family Information Board
- HLC "What I Did Today" posting
- Individual conferences to discuss your child's development
- Parenting Information Library
- Workshops or "Lunch & Learns"
- "Take Home Folder" - we ask that you check your child's folder weekly for center updates, your child's art projects, and other center related information.
- Displays to showcase the child's learning and integration of State Learning Standards and Creative Curriculum Goals

Transitions

Transitions can be defined as a change in child's environment from one program to another (initial enrollment or transferring), OR from one room to another room based upon age.

When a child is new to the program, the family and child will be invited to visit the center and determine if HLC is a match for both. Information about separation and strategies to help both parent and child engage in "healthy" good-byes is shared. Within the first 45 days of enrollment, an individual conference will be held with families, embracing the belief that "the parent is the expert on their child".

Families are encouraged to establish a routine for daily transitions. Time is spent in early days helping children and families to learn classroom routines. It is vital that staff communicate to families the importance of establishing "good-bye" rituals and not allow parents to sneak out without saying good bye.

When there is a transition from Early Intervention we will encourage teacher visitation from the sending program and HLC staff to visit sending program. HLC director and staff will attend the Individual Family Service Plan / Individual Education Plan (IFSP / IEP) meeting and assist in goal setting with early intervention and the family.

When transitioning to kindergarten, teachers will share the Kindergarten Readiness Checklist and invite families to complete transition information to be shared with their child's kindergarten teacher.

When transitioning within the center, the following general steps will include:

- Transitioning to the next room will be determined based on the following guidelines:
 1. Available space in the next room
 2. Child has a birthday that matches the ages of the children in the next room
 3. Family and teachers agree that the move to the next room is in the best interest of the child developmentally
- When a center is full and the child is unable to transition to the next room due to a lack of space, the room in which the child is currently enrolled is adapted with materials and curriculum to meet the developmental needs of all children in that room
- Notification to families that children are ready to transition to the next room
- Teacher engages in discussion with family, addressing questions and concerns and documented on the *Transition Partnership Agreement*
- Implementation procedures will reflect information provided in the “*Child Transitions and Relationships between Teachers and Families*” support materials
- Primary teachers from both rooms will evaluate the child’s adjustment and share information with the family and director
- Family, teacher and director determine a transition date
- Transition will be strictly based on space availability (as defined by room licensed capacity and current enrollment)
- The oldest child in current room will be prioritized (family is given primary consideration to move into the new room, based upon meeting and documentation of the *Transition Partnership Agreement*)
- If the *Transition Partnership Agreement* reflects that the child remain in the current room, the child will be given the next available opening and the NEXT oldest child in the current room will be provided an opportunity to fill the transition slot

In compliance with the American Disabilities Act, transitioning of children may NOT be based upon developmental needs or milestones (such as ability, toileting, feeding or napping).

Family Code of Conduct

HLC requires that families of enrolled children shall at all times conduct themselves in a manner consistent with courtesy and respect. One of HLC’s goals is to provide an appropriate environment in which a child can grow, learn and develop. Achieving this ideal environment is not only the responsibility of HLC’s employees but is also the responsibility of each and every family or adult who enters the center. *Families who violate the Family Code of Conduct may have their services terminated immediately and will not be permitted on center property thereafter.*

No family or adult is permitted to use inappropriate language on center property at any time, whether in the presence of a child or not. Such language is considered offensive and will not be tolerated. If a family or adult feels frustrated or angry, it is more

appropriate to verbally express the frustration or anger using non-offensive language. At no time shall inappropriate language be directed toward members of the staff, children, or other families.

Threats of any kind will not be tolerated and shall be reported to the appropriate authorities. While apologies for such behavior are appreciated, the center will not assume the risk of a second chance. Families must be responsible for and in control of their behavior at all times.

We request that families show respect to other children enrolled and families by recognizing confidentiality of information unrelated to your child. Please remember that center staff are not allowed to share information with you about any other child. In addition the personal lives of center families and staff are considered confidential and are not to be shared.

Physical / Verbal Punishment of Your Child or Other Children While at the Center

HLC does not support nor condone corporal punishment of children and such acts are not permitted in the child care facility. While verbal reprimands may be appropriate, it is not appropriate for families to verbally abuse their child. Doing so may cause undue embarrassment or emotional distress. Families are always welcome to discuss a behavior issue with their child's teacher and / or the Center Director and to seek advice and guidance regarding appropriate and effective discipline techniques.

Families are prohibited from addressing, for the purpose of correction or discipline, a child that is not their own. Of course, no family member or other adult may physically punish another family's child. If a family should witness another family's child behaving in an inappropriate manner, or is concerned about behavior reported to them by their own child, the family should direct their concern to the child's teacher and/or the Center Director.

Families should not seek out another family to discuss their child's inappropriate behavior. These concerns should be brought to the child's teacher and / or Center Director. At that point, our staff will address the issue with the other parent. Although you may be curious as to the outcome of such a discussion, classroom staff and/or the Center Director are strictly prohibited from discussing anything with you about another child. All enrolled children in our center have privacy rights and are protected by our Confidentiality Policy. You may be assured that we will not discuss anything about your child with another family or adult visiting the center.

Grievance Procedure

We are committed to ensuring your full satisfaction within our center. Experience has demonstrated that open communication between families and center staff is the key to maintaining a positive relationship. We continually look to families' to provide input regarding how we can improve our programs and services.

Concerns or issues are best resolved in a timely manner with the person who is directly involved.

If a problem should arise, contact should be made with the following persons in the
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order listed:

1. Discuss the concern with your **child's teacher**. We maintain an open door policy in which families are encouraged to visit their child's center at any time. Staff will make every effort to be available to discuss family concerns regarding their child or classroom operations.
2. Discuss the concern with your **Center Director**. Family concerns or questions that cannot be resolved or answered by your child's teacher should be redirected to the Center Director who is qualified to respond to issues at hand.
3. **Contact the Curriculum & Program Development Department** to discuss any concern that has been addressed with the Center Director but remains unresolved. The phone number for the C&P team is (717) 481-5660.

Termination of Enrollment

In rare instances, a concern may arise that cannot be resolved to the mutual satisfaction of the center and the family. Under such circumstances, it may be necessary to disenroll the child. Hildebrandt Learning Centers reserves the right to do so at its sole discretion.

ROLE OF THE CENTER STAFF

Individuals employed at the child care center are chosen not only for their formal education and training but also for their previous experience in the early learning field. HLC follows the guidelines of the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare when selecting individuals for specific positions in our early care center.

All employees are required to obtain State Police criminal background checks, child abuse clearances and FBI Fingerprint Checks. Satisfactory clearances are a condition of employment. All staff are required to complete a Pediatric First Aid Training. In addition, a number of on-site staff will be trained in Infant & Child CPR. In some cases, staff may need to receive their Pediatric First Aid training after being hired. In such cases, the staff person who does not yet have their Pediatric First Aid training will always be in the classroom with another staff person who received Pediatric First Aid Training.

Professional Development

Hildebrandt Learning Centers supports and encourages staff professional development. Research supports that the quality of child care is related to teacher's education. Good early childhood teachers are actively engaged in continuing professional development, and benefit from enhanced ongoing training and updating their skills and knowledge in accordance with the latest research. HLC staff are required to follow guidelines for ongoing professional development. Annually, all staff must complete 24 hours of professional development, maintain current pediatric first aid training and engage in 2 professional growth activities as defined by PA Keystone STARS.

Staff Code of Conduct

As an individual who works with young children, all staff must commit to furthering the values of early childhood education as they are reflected in the ideals and principles of the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct. To the best of their ability staff will:

- Never harm children
- Ensure that programs for young children are based on current knowledge and research of child development and early childhood education
- Respect and support families in their task of nurturing children
- Respect colleagues in early childhood care and education and support them in maintaining the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct
- Serve as an advocate for children, their families, and their teachers in community and society
- Stays informed of and maintain high standards of professional conduct
- Engage in an ongoing process of self-reflection, realizing that personal characteristics, biases, and beliefs have an impact on children and families
- Be open to new ideas and be willing to learn from the suggestions of others
- Continue to learn, grow, and contribute as a professional
- Honor the ideals and principles of the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct

Qualifications

Director: Meet the educational requirements for PA Keystone STAR 4 and The National Association for the Education of Young Children

Teacher: Meet the educational requirements for PA Keystone STAR 4 and The National Association for the Education of Young Children

Assistant Teacher: Meet the educational requirements for PA Keystone STAR 4 and The National Association for the Education of Young Children

Ratios

Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare requires staffing according to the following child to staff ratios:

Infant (6 weeks to 12 months)	-	1 staff for 4 children
Young Toddler (13 to 24 months)	-	1 staff for 5 children
Older Toddler (25 to 35 months)	-	1 staff for 6 children
Preschool (3 to 5 years)	-	1 staff for 10 children
School Age (5 to 12 years)	-	1 staff for 12 children

Confidentiality

Within Hildebrandt Learning Centers, confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with our employees on a "need to know" basis in order to most appropriately and safely care for your child. Confidential and sensitive information about staff, other families and/or children will not be shared with families as the center strives to protect everyone's right to privacy. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to, names, addresses, telephone numbers, disability information, and other health related matters of anyone associated with HLC.

Outside the center, confidential and sensitive information about a child will only be shared when the child's family has given written consent, except where otherwise provided for by law. Families will be provided with a document detailing the

information that is to be shared outside of the center, persons with whom the information will be shared, and the reason(s) for sharing the information if this should be necessary.

Mandated Reporter Information

Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to appropriate authorities. Teachers and child care administrators are not required to discuss their suspicions with families prior to reporting the matter to appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior or condition prior to making a report. Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. This responsibility is taken very seriously and we will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities. The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interests of all children.

If you would like additional information please see your center's family information board.

Touch Policy

Touching, in a positive manner, is essential to a child's social/emotional growth. Touching helps provide affection and a sense of security/safety within the child. In the early childhood setting, touch is about physical contact between children and their caregivers and peers, and about providing young children with tactile experiences of the world around them. Positive physical touching helps children learn how to deal with stress now and later in life. As nurturers, teachers can show children how to relate proper, positive emotion through modeling appropriate touches and through a teacher's example of caring for others.

All staff are instructed in what constitutes appropriate touch, how to incorporate appropriate touch in classroom practice, and how to educate young children about appropriate touch.

All staff will consider the following guidelines:

- Physical contact is valuable to children, let the child lead in showing what kind of touch is acceptable to him or her
- Try to touch non-vulnerable body parts, such as shoulder, back, arms and hands
- Be aware of cultural considerations when touching children
- Be aware of child's activity level and do not interrupt the child's engaged play with touch
- Understand that child's need for physical contact varies individually

Positive touching, such as hugging, hand holding, stroking, assisting in physical activities and the like will only be done with the child's verbal or physical consent or when child initiated.

- Massage, i.e., back rubbing as a positive experience, will only be performed with the child's verbal or physical consent or when child initiated

- Kissing of children is only allowed on cheeks, hands, or head and only with permission or if child initiated
- If a child flinches, pulls away, or in any way withdraws, he/she will not be touched. No child should ever be forced to perform/receive positive touching actions against his/her will

Touching should always be nurturing and never be punitive or corporal in action:

- Squeezing of the arm, neck, face, etc., is unacceptable
- Arm-twisting is inappropriate
- Arm-lifting or pulling children is not an allowed action

*Restraining touch is not acceptable. **

- Equipment, e.g. infant swings, infant seats, toddler chairs with straps, strollers, etc., may not be used to restrain a child in any manner for any amount of time
- The teacher/caregiver will call for assistance if they feel they are out of control in handling a child's behavior and before restraining the child in any way
- The teacher/caregiver will use an incident report form to provide a written description of any physical restraint that was necessary. A witness must sign the document
- Families will be provided with a copy of the report

**ONLY EXCEPTION - when a child is out of control or harming themselves or others, it may be used to prevent the child from physical injury. Every occurrence of physical restraint is documented.*

All staff recognize that the genital area of infants, pre-toddlers and toddlers must be touched during diaper changing.

- Preschool aged children should wipe themselves.
- Should a child's genital area need to be examined for reasons other than diapering, a second staff member will be present as a witness.

All staff hired are screened through appropriate outside agency security measures designed for those working with young children.

ENROLLMENT & ADMISSIONS

Enrollment at Hildebrandt Learning Centers is accepted according to the guidelines established by the center's Eligibility and Waiting List Enrollment Policy.

Forms

Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare's regulations require that specific forms be complete and on file prior to a child's admittance into the program. These forms include:

- *Family Contract / Application*
- *Child Illness Policy (family is to sign the illness policy acknowledgement)*
- *Family Consent / Emergency Information*

- *Child Health Report*
- *Emergency Evacuation Plan Acknowledgement*
- *Non-prescription Medication Form*

In addition, centers participating in the Child and Adult Food Program will need to complete enrollment and application forms when children enter the center and annually thereafter. Enrolling infant families will also need to complete forms in the Infant Feeding Packet.

Please note: Families are encouraged to share their child’s developmental assessments with the Center Director. IEP/IESP are created by qualified individuals to ensure your child’s needs are being met. These tools allows us to work together to ensure that appropriate guidelines are put into practice.

All forms in children’s files are subject to mandatory family review no later than every six months. These reviews are required as per Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare regulations to ensure that children’s information is both current and accurate. Failure to maintain these records may result in termination of services provided to your child.

All legal guardianship is to be on file at the center at the time of enrollment and any other time there is a change in guardianship. HLC will only abide by the court ruling. For example, if the court rules that one parent is not to have visitation rights to his child, the center will not release the child into that parent’s custody regardless of the understanding that is contrived between the parents outside of the court system.

Tuition / Fees

Tuition is charged according to the *Tuition Rate Sheet* that is supplied to all families. Tuition rates may change from time to time based upon the finances of the center and other factors. It is customary for families to be notified of a change in tuition as soon as possible.

Specific fees are addressed on your center’s Tuition Rate Sheet.

Absences

The center is staffed according to the children’s schedules provided on the Family Contracts. When your child will not attend on a scheduled day, please call the center as early in the day as possible to notify staff of your child's absence. Please note, your usual weekly tuition will continue to be charged.

Waiting List

Children are enrolled into the center according to the *Eligibility & Waiting List Enrollment Policy*. A complete copy of the policy is included in your child’s enrollment packet. Additional copies may be obtained from your Center Director.

Divorce / Custody Agreements

In the event of divorce or custody disputes, a copy of the custody agreement is to be kept on file at the center at all times. Families are to understand that all paperwork is to

be completed based on the ruling in the courts and if individuals have shared or joint custody of the child, paperwork is to be completed and approved by both parties by each person signing the necessary items that will be kept on file. Parties cannot complete their paperwork individually. For example, there may not be two emergency contact forms; the individuals must agree upon the information that is provided to the learning center as correct and viable in the event of an emergency. *As per our policy, all emergency contact information is to be updated every six months.*

If and when an individual does not have full visitation rights or no child visitation rights, we request that the learning center be informed of this ruling and that a copy of the court order be provided to the center director. All such documentation will remain in the child's confidential file.

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

Scheduling

Hildebrandt Learning Centers complies with state regulations by staffing the center according to the schedules provided by families. For this reason, it is very important for families to adhere to their scheduled hours. Please see your Center Specific information for additional scheduling matters.

Occasionally, families find it necessary to utilize the center at a time not previously scheduled. We will be happy to accommodate your needs provided the center is given advanced notice, space is available in your child's class, and adequate staff is available on site to meet state regulations. Permanent changes must be made on your child's Family Contract.

Overtime Charges / Late Fees

Families are asked to call the center when they anticipate arriving early or late to pick up their child. This will allow the center to staff accordingly and provide reassurance for your child.

Families who exceed their Family Contract's scheduled hours or who arrive after the center's closing time will incur additional charges as defined on the center's *Tuition Rate Sheet* and the Family Contract.

Arrival

We request that families give the center a one week notice of a needed schedule change. If you arrive earlier than your scheduled time and appropriate staffing is not yet in place, you will be asked to visit with your child for a few extra minutes while staffing can be provided. In the event of an emergency, please contact your Center Director as soon as possible to prevent staffing issues from arising.

Upon arrival at the center, all children are required to be escorted by their parent, or other authorized adult, to their designated classroom. The family removes the child's Photo Identification Supervision Card from the classroom's designated area and gives the child's card to the classroom staff when placing the child into the staff's care. The family member dropping off the child must sign him / her into care on the sign-in sheet

located in the classroom.

At arrival, families are required to follow the center's *Medication Policy* (see Child Health) whenever a child must receive medication during the course of the day.

Families are asked to **wash their children's hands** upon arrival to reduce the transmission of germs. This consistent activity is a nice transition for children and families at drop off.

Families are required to notify the center staff both in writing and verbally of any *special instructions* related to the child. These special instructions include, but are not limited to, early pick-up, alternate pick-up person, health issues, and general issues of concern which the center staff should be aware to best meet the needs of the child.

Departure

Families or other authorized adults (as listed on the Parent Consent and Emergency Information Form) are required to sign their child out of care using the sign-out sheet located in the child's classroom. Children will be released only to the adults specifically authorized by the families on the required forms in the child's file. These persons must be a minimum 16 years of age. Children will not be released to school-age siblings without a family member present. It is important that families also make verbal contact with staff at pick-up time to assure all necessary information is exchanged. Once families sign their child out, they are solely responsible for supervising the child at all times while on center premises. Families may not allow their child to wander through the hallways, bathrooms, other classrooms and/or the playground. Families are required to conduct all necessary business issues prior to signing out their child. At this time, your child's Photo Identification Supervision Card will be returned to the classrooms designated area for use the following day.

In the event of a change in authorization of a pickup person (someone who is not listed on your emergency contact form), a *Verbal Request Form* is to be completed by the center staff based on information provided by the family or other authorized adult. This form is to be completed at each occurrence. Please note: HLC requires that center staff verify the Verbal Request Form information by contacting an authorized person listed on the child's Emergency Contact Form. The pick-up person is required to provide proper identification at the time of pick up.

Security

Each center is equipped with a security system to allow authorized access to families and staff. At arrival and departure, we ask that all families be vigilant in preventing unauthorized individuals from entering the center. Please do not hesitate to question an unfamiliar adult or individual attempting to enter the center at your arrival or departure. These measures allow us to keep your children safe.

We strongly discourage families' sharing of their access number / card to protect all children. This information / card is considered confidential and is only to be shared with the enrolling family.

Drop-Off / Pick-Up

In order to ensure your child's safety, a secure route has been established for drop-off and pick-up. Upon arrival at the center, please park your vehicle near the child care center's main entrance or in the designated child care parking spaces. Do not leave your child unattended in your car. We require that you turn off your vehicle's engine and remove your keys whenever your vehicle is parked. Also, please walk on the sidewalks provided whenever possible.

If your center requires a parking pass, please display appropriately to prevent being ticketed by local authorities.

Safety Seats

A reminder that all children should be fastened in his / her own, individual safety seat that is, federally approved for the child's weight and age. As role models, we would expect everyone to wear seat belts for safety and protection.

Families Under the Influence of Alcohol or Drugs

At pick-up time, the staff will contact local police and the other custodial family member should a family member appear to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. Other authorized persons attempting to pick-up a child who appear to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol will be denied access to the child. The staff will contact the child's family, local police, and Child Protective Services.

PERSONAL TOYS / ITEMS

Your child is provided a cubby or personal storage space in their enrolling classroom. This space will be labeled with his or her name allowing for your child an area in which to store personal belongings.

Items Needed for a Child Attending the Center

- A lightweight blanket and sheet for rest time. Sleeping bags and full size pillows are not permitted due to storage limitations. Families are required to take sheets and blankets home every Friday for laundering. Your child will have their own sleeping mat or cot available at the center for rest time
- A bib for infants and toddlers
- A soft, cuddly toy for naptime and/or a security item can be provided if needed
- A change of seasonal clothing including shoes and socks. Families may be called to pick-up their child if they do not have extra clothes available.
- For a more detailed list of supplies please check the list provided at enrollment or transition

Please do not use plastic bags, bags with draw strings, or other similar items for children's belongings as these are a suffocation risk and are opposed by the Department of Public Welfare.

Items Not Needed for a Child Attending the Center

The program at Hildebrandt Learning Centers is structured to provide children with optimum learning experiences. The equipment and play materials are very carefully chosen to provide a specific learning environment. With this in mind, we ask that you not allow your child to bring in items (toys) from home to share unless specifically requested or preapproved by the teacher.

We do not allow items (toys) from home for the following reasons:

- They may hurt or injure other children
- Staff cannot monitor toys at the expense of supervising the children
- Children do not understand the concept of possession. Another child may take the toy and this would cause hurt feelings.
- Toys such as guns (or other toys that promote aggressive behavior) do not promote the type of learning and cooperative play that is the principle of our program.

Appropriate Dress

Children learn through play and our programs are designed to allow children to develop hands-on and self-help skills. Children are encouraged to use art materials, paint, glue, etc., daily. Water and sand play is also part of the daily activity schedule. Children should be dressed in clothing that allows for these types of activities; some may refer to these clothes as play clothes. It is also part of the daily programming to take children outdoors and therefore, it is necessary for all children to have clothing for outdoor play such as coats, hats, mittens, boots, snow pants (or a change of pants). All articles of clothing must be labeled with the child's first and last name. If outdoor play is limited or is to be prohibited, a note from the child's physician is required.

Items such as jewelry or small barrettes should not be worn by children under three years of age due to the risk of choking. Even if your child knows not to place these items in his or her mouth their friends may not have learned this and could be at risk for choking on these small items.

Closed toe shoes are required to prevent injury from stubbed toes or tripping.

INFANTS

SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome)

HLC adheres to the recommendations of the Department of Public Welfare for the placement of infants in cribs, as follows:

All infants (any child under twelve [12] months of age), unless otherwise ordered by a physician, are to be placed on their backs to sleep upon a firm surface which was manufactured for sale as infant sleeping equipment and that meets the standards of the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission. Those infants who are capable of rolling may do so after the child has been placed on their back to sleep.

Pillows, bumper pads, stuffed toys, sheepskins and other soft items are not permitted in the crib while a child is sleeping.

Shoes in the Infant Area

Hildebrandt Learning Centers requires all adults (staff, families and legal guardians) and children to remove, replace or cover with clean foot coverings (provided by the center) any shoes that have been worn outside of the infant play area to reduce spread of germs in the infant area. Adults and children are not to be barefoot in the infant play areas.

Breast Milk

All breast milk is to be brought into the center in ready-to-feed containers (bottles) to reduce the amount of contact that would occur if other receptacles are used for storage. Please refer to your Infant Feeding Packet for additional information that is to be provided to families upon enrollment.

Baby Powder

Please do not provide the center with baby powder products as the powder can induce asthma complications or irritate those with allergies.

Feeding Containers

HLC requests that glass bottles not be used for infant feeding in the center due to the chance of accidental breakage or chipping.

CHILD SAFETY

Emergency Procedures

To assure you of our concern for the safety and welfare of your child, the center has in place Emergency Plans that provide response actions for all types of emergencies. These plans are reviewed annually and are filed with the local Emergency Management Agency.

As part of your child's enrollment, families are required to acknowledge the center's emergency procedures.

Please see your center specific information sheet for further details.

No Smoking

Hildebrandt Learning Centers prohibits smoking or tobacco use, in any form, in the child care center and on or near the playground. Hildebrandt Learning Centers prohibits staff, parents and legal guardians from disposing smoking paraphernalia on the child care center's property.

Hot Beverages

Beverages or liquids 110°F or greater are not permitted in the child care setting. For example, adults are not to bring their hot beverages into the center to prevent the chance of accidental spillage and possible scalding.

Allergy Accommodations

Children who have allergies to dust mites or to components of furnishings or supplies must provide a *Special Care Plan* (this document is to be completed by your child's physician) or provide a note from the physician stating the child's condition and the ways in which to prevent aggravation. Each case will be considered on an individual basis and reasonable accommodations will be made.

Photo and Video Policy

Throughout the year center staff take photos of various activities. These photos are used for documentation of classroom project themes, to make project photo journals, for publicity (if families agree to this type of use), and most important as a component of each child's portfolio. Families will be asked to sign consent, allowing their child to be photographed by staff upon enrollment.

Some families may elect to not have their child photographed or videotaped. Therefore, we ask families not to take photos of other enrolled children with a camera, cell phone, or video camera.

Please Note: Some Hildebrandt Learning Centers utilize closed circuit video surveillance for observation and / or security purposes.

Accidents & Injuries

From time to time during play children encounter minor injuries, as bumps and "boo-boos" are part of early childhood. Center staff are trained in first aid to assess a child's minor injury, provide necessary treatment and comfort. An *Injury Report Form* will be completed if injuries occur and presented to the family for signature. The center will secure the services of 911 for any injury requiring emergency medical care. A staff member will accompany the child to the source of emergency care and remain with him/her until the parent/guardian arrives and assumes responsibility for the child's care.

Inclement Weather Policy

The child care center will remain open except under the most severe weather conditions and shall follow the employer / sponsor's Inclement Weather Policy. If weather conditions are such that the employer / sponsor's Inclement Weather Policy requires them to close, the child care center shall close one hour later.

See your center specific information sheet for television and radio station channels used by your center to announce delays / closings.

CHILD NUTRITION

Hildebrandt Learning Centers is committed to serving quality meals and snacks. All menus are developed and/or monitored by a registered dietitian. Families are required to provide written notification from a physician of any food/dietary restrictions.

For the safety of your child, families are required to provide notification, in the form of a doctor's note or a Food Allergy Plan of Action, of any allergies with instructions for

treatment should a child have an allergic reaction. HLC will assist families of those children who have been found to have food allergies by attempting to modify menus to accommodate those children. In cases of severe, multiple food allergies, we may not be able to provide all food categories.

Please do not bring food items to the center without prior authorization due to potential allergic reactions. If a meal substitution is necessary for reasons of health or religious beliefs, we ask that you discuss this with the center director.

Some foods are considered a choking risk for children. We avoid these items. Some centers have families pack lunches for their children. If unacceptable food items (see the items listed below) are brought into the center for your child to eat, the item will not be served and will be returned to the family member.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hot Dogs• Whole Grapes• Hard Candy• Nuts• Seeds• Raw Peas• Raw Carrots• Dried Fruit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hard Pretzels• Chips• Peanuts• Popcorn• Marshmallows• Spoonfuls of Peanut Butter• Large Chunks of Meat that cannot be swallowed whole (must be cut to ¼ to ½ inch size)
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Any food that is round, hard, small, thick and sticky, smooth, or slippery should not be given to children under four (NAEYC)!

Meal Time

Nutrition is important for the development of a physically and emotionally healthy child. Hildebrandt Learning Centers believes that children build healthy eating habits from birth. For this reason, we have developed the following meal time policy:

Each child is served all components of the meal at the same time. This allows the child to choose what he/she will eat first. This also diminishes the idea that "dessert" is a reward for eating a "good" lunch. Food is never used as a reward or punishment. All children will be given the same opportunities at meal times unless there is a medical or religious reason for omission of a particular food. Children are never "belittled" for not eating or drinking a particular item - each person's taste is different. Children are not forced to eat or drink. Children are encouraged to eat and/or join the other children at the table, but it is ultimately the child's choice.

Children may have second servings of a particular food without eating other items on their plate; however, they are encouraged to taste each food item. Remember it may take a child between ten to fifteen tries to acquire a taste for a new food. All children are encouraged to taste foods each time they are served.

All children are given silverware, and are encouraged to use them; however, it is developmentally appropriate for infants and toddlers to use their hands and fingers.

Peanut Products

Due to the extreme nature of allergic reactions to peanuts and products containing peanuts, Hildebrandt Learning Centers avoids peanuts and/or foods containing peanut products. Peanut allergies can be so severe that exposure to peanuts can result in an anaphylactic reaction. An allergic child may experience a reaction from simply smelling peanuts on someone's breath. In an effort to avoid these reactions, please assure all food items brought to the center do not contain peanuts or peanut products.

Fluids

Water is available for children at all times throughout the day.

Special Occasions

Food items such as special occasion cupcakes or birthday cakes must be purchased from a commercial bakery and include an ingredient list. In addition to the items listed above we also suggest the following alternative items:

- Ice pops
- Ice cream
- Fruit cups
- Pudding cups
- Jell-O cups

Homemade items will not be accepted due to the possibility of food borne illness and severe allergies. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Special Meals

There may be times when a family member may want to take their child out for a special meal. This is a wonderful benefit for families! Family members just need to remember a few points:

- Whenever a child leaves the center, their family member is to sign them out at departure and sign them back in upon their return.
- Special meals are to be enjoyed outside the center and not brought into the center for consumption. Unapproved food could increase the risk of allergic reactions and cause disruption within the classroom.

CHILD HEALTH

Hildebrandt Learning Centers is concerned about your child's health and the spread of infectious diseases. Maintaining health and preventing the spread of illness is a responsibility shared by families, staff, and HLC. Our staff are trained in illness prevention practices that limit the spread of infections. Gloves utilized during diaper changing and the use of proper sanitizing agents aid in reducing the spread of infections. In addition to steps taken to prevent illness in the child care setting, HLC also requires that families shall have an age-appropriate health report (*Child Health Report*) on

record at the facility no later than 6 weeks (42 days) after enrollment (per NAEYC 5.A.01). Enrolled infants must have their completed *Child Health Report* available on their first day of attendance. The child's health report is to be conducted according to the schedule for routine health supervision, immunizations, and screenings as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics. The immunization recommendations are based upon the American Academy of Pediatrics' vaccination schedule which is updated in January of each year.

Child Health Report

The *Child Health Report* (completed by the child's physician) is required at enrollment and at the following ages:

2 Months	15 Months
4 Months	18 Months
6 Months	24 Months
9 Months	Each year thereafter
12 Months	

Child Health Reports must be completed according to the schedule above. Immunizations are required as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and include screenings for lead levels, hearing, vision, and dental. *Child Health Reports* must be completed in their entirety or they will be returned.

Failure to provide your child's *Health Report* may cause a disruption in child care services.

Please Note: A physician's notation on the *Child Health Report* (or separate note from the physician) is necessary to limit foods or activity/activities available to your child for more than a two day period.

Immunizations

All children are required to have a complete up to date immunization record on file at Hildebrandt Learning Center. HLC will not admit any child whose immunizations are not current according to the Academy of Pediatrics guidelines for immunizing children, subject to the situations listed below. The American Academy of Pediatrics Recommended Immunization Schedule can be obtained from your center director.

If due to a medical disability or religious belief, you have not immunized your child, please discuss the issue with the center director and you will be required to complete an immunization waiver form and provide certification of the medical disability or religious tenet which precludes the child from being immunized.

A medical disability is defined according to the Americans with Disabilities Act. Under ADA the disability must be permanent in nature and affect a major life activity. In the case of a medical disability, families must provide certification from a Licensed Health Care Provider stating the nature of the disability and that as a result of this disability the child cannot be immunized.

In the case of a religious belief, families must provide certification from their religious leader citing the tenet and/or religious law which precludes the child from being

immunized. The tenet and/or religious law must be a mandate of the religious doctrine to which the family and/or the child strictly adhere.

Your child may be excluded from participating at the center if the required immunizations, as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics are not current.

In the event of a diagnosis of a vaccine preventable disease, children who have not been vaccinated or are not of age to receive proper vaccination will be excluded from care until the local Department of Health has authorized their return.

Hand Washing

Hand washing is of primary importance in our battle against germs. Hand washing practices are reviewed often and monitored to meet high quality health and safety standards. The center staff may use hand washing as an opportunity to study germs and review this important daily routine.

Hand washing is to be performed:

Upon arrival and when moving from one child care group to another.

Before and After . . .

- Eating, handling food, or feeding a child
- Administering medication
- Playing in water that is used by more than one person

After . . .

- Diapering
- Using the toilet or helping a child with toileting
- Handling bodily fluid (mucus, blood, vomit) from sneezing, wiping and blowing noses, from mouths, or from sores
- Handling uncooked food, especially raw meat and poultry
- Handling pets and other animals
- Cleaning or handling garbage
- Playing outdoors

Differing Abilities

Inclusion or exclusion of children with non-contagious conditions such as a disabling injury or illness, asthma, or failure to thrive will be determined by the capacity of the center and the staff to provide proper care for the child's special needs. Each case is considered individually.

Dental Emergencies

If a dental emergency should occur while the child is at the center, staff will contact the child's parent immediately to assure that the child may receive prompt dental care. Staff will follow the recommendations set forth in their pediatric first aid training on how to handle dental emergencies, such as a broken or dislodged tooth.

Medication

From time to time, it may be necessary for center personnel to administer medication to your child. Whenever medication is to be administered, a Medication Log must be completed! It is HLC policy to administer medication to children only under the specific

guidelines listed below.

Prescription Medication must:

- Have a label listing the child's name, the name of the medication, dosage of the medication, manufacturer's instructions, pharmacy name and telephone number, prescribing physician's name, the date the prescription was filled, and the medication expiration date.
- Be in the ORIGINAL, non-breakable container
- Have a child-proof safety cap
- Be prescribed for the child for which administration is requested
- Have administration time indicated on the medication log
- Be removed from the center daily

Non-Prescription Medication must:

- Be in the original container
- Be clearly and permanently labeled with the child's first and last name
- Not exceed a 5-day use without a physician's written note
- Be accompanied by a *NON-PRESCRIPTION ADMINISTRATION FORM* for children of all ages. This form is to be completed for children who are under two years of age at all well baby visits and for all children over two years of age, every year.
- Be removed from the center daily

ALL MEDICATION: Must be signed in daily on your child's personal *Medication Log*, list specific directions and time for administration, and have the complete signature of the parent/guardian (initials are not permitted).

Families are required to give all medication directly to the center staff. Medication should **never** be in the hands of a child or accessible to children. Additional information may be obtained from your Center Director. (Refer to the Medication Policy given to you upon enrollment)

Families are required to provide the center with appropriate medication administration devices (dosing cup, dropper, dosing spoon, etc.). The center does not provide dosing devices.

Prescription medications that are to be dispensed in one or two daily dosages should be given to the child during outside center hours by his/her family. These medications will not be administered by center staff unless otherwise indicated by your child's physician.

The center reserves the right to refuse administration of medication whenever the

center policy is not followed.

Sunscreen

Sunscreen is to be applied at home before drop off by the child's family. An additional layer of sunscreen may be applied before afternoon outdoor play. Prior, written family consent required. All sunscreen is to be provided by the family labeled with the child's first and last name.

ILLNESS POLICY

Hildebrandt Learning Centers' is concerned about your child's health. Regardless of all efforts, children will become ill. Young children, in particular children who have not previously participated in group care, become ill more often because: 1) their immune systems do not fight illness as well as an adult and 2) they have not been exposed to many of the germs (viruses, bacteria, fungi, or parasites) that cause infections. Contagious diseases spread from one person to another. Often people who spread disease do not appear or feel sick. The germs are spread by direct contact (touching), by coughing or sneezing, or by germs from the stool (bowel movement) or contact with blood.

Hildebrandt Learning Centers employs procedures for reporting exposures, identifying an ill child, and informing the family of a child illness. In order for HLC staff to follow through with such procedures, families are responsible for providing up-to-date emergency contact telephone numbers to the center director. If and when an illness occurs, a family member will be contacted and he/she shall be responsible for promptly picking up his/her child and consulting with the child's physician about diagnosis and care. It is vital that open and honest communication among the doctor, parent, and the child care center occurs to insure the health of all enrolled children. Families must inform the center when their child becomes ill with a contagious disease and should request their pediatrician's cooperation in consulting with the center if the illness has implications for the entire child care population.

In an effort to prevent illness in the center, we ask that all children, staff and families wash their hands at the times detailed in the Child Health area of this handbook.

Recognizing Ill Children

Families, as well as child care staff, need to be able to recognize the signs and symptoms of child illness. One well-known sign of illness is fever. Fever is an elevation in body temperature that may be caused by the following: overdressing or a hot environment, reactions to medications, and response to illness. Fever is the bodies' response to something, but is neither a disease nor a serious problem by itself (Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and Schools, 2005).

Generally, children should be excluded whenever fever is accompanied by behavior changes and/or signs and symptoms of illness. Families and legal guardians will be notified when a child's temperature reaches 100°F auxiliary (under the arm) or 101°F orally when accompanied by behavior changes and/or signs and symptoms of illness and shall be expected to pick up their child within one hour of notification.

Families of babies are required to have a doctor check babies immediately with a fever of 101°F axillary who are less than 4 months of age or any age child with a fever higher than 105°F. Families will be notified promptly when their child is found to have a fever while at the center and must pick up their child within one hour of notification. Failure to do so will require the Center Director to contact alternate emergency contact person or have the child transported to an emergency room.

The child's response to fever-reducing medicines (e.g., acetaminophen) is not helpful in determining the severity of an illness. Regardless of the presence or degree of fever, it is how ill a child looks or acts that is important. Have your doctor check your child whenever symptoms or signs of a potentially serious illness (unusual drowsiness, fussiness, persistent or excessive crying, wheezing, uncontrolled coughing, difficulty breathing) or if he / she refuses to play or complains of severe pain.

Inclusion/Exclusion From The Child Care Center

Most children with mild contagious illness do not need to stay home from child care. Usually the child has already exposed others before appearing ill. Other illnesses (e.g. impetigo, conjunctivitis) stop being contagious shortly after treatment has begun. Guidelines depend on the specific diagnosis or symptoms (see tables attached). Therefore, there is no reason to exclude mildly ill children or those being treated unless:

1. The child does not feel well enough to participate comfortably in usual activities. The child care center staff and/or the Center Director will make the decision as to whether to exclude your child from the center.
2. The staff are unable to care for the sick child without interfering with the care of other children. Again, the decision to exclude your child from the program will be at the discretion of the child care staff and/or center director.
3. The child has any of the following:
 - Fever and behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness as defined under "Recognizing Ill Children" until a health professional determines that the child may be in child care;
 - Uncontrolled diarrhea (stool runs out of a diaper or the child can't get to the toilet in time);
 - Blood in stools, not explained by dietary change, medication, or hard stool;
 - Vomiting 2 or more times in the previous 24 hours until the vomiting stops or a health professional determines that the cause of vomiting is not contagious and that the child is not in danger of dehydrating.
 - Mouth sores with drooling, unless a health professional determines the child's illness is not from communicable illness;

- Persistent abdominal pain (lasting longer than 2 hours) or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs and symptoms;
 - Rash with fever or behavior change until a health professional determines that the child may be in child care;
 - Pink eye with white or yellow discharge until 24 hours after treatment is begun;
 - Head Lice, until after the first treatment **and** the child is nit-free;
 - Scabies, until after treatment has been given;
-
- These contagious diseases (until the child meets the requirements listed in the appendix):

tuberculosis	mumps
impetigo	hepatitis A
chicken pox	measles
pertussis (whooping cough)	rubella
herpetic gingivostomatitis	shingles
strep throat or other streptococcal infections	

Should antibiotic treatment be required the child must have received the treatment for 24 hours before returning to the center or until a physician has stated that the child may return to care.

The final decision whether to exclude a child from the center, however, will be made by the Center Director / or staff designated in the absence of the director. In addition, a doctor's excuse or plan of care may be required by the Center Director prior to allowing a child to return to the center.

Families and Legal Guardians are encouraged to keep their child home until the child no longer exhibits signs and symptoms of illness.

A Reminder . . .

It is usually a good idea to call or consult a pediatric health provider early in the course of an illness. The pediatric health provider will help you determine how ill the child is and what treatment can be given.

All families must adhere to all policies and procedures listed in this Illness Policy. Failure

to do so may cause an interruption in your child care services or termination of your Family Contract. All families are required to sign and date the Acknowledgement of Receipt of the Child Illness Policy, a copy of which will be maintained in your child's file.

DISCLAIMER

The majority of the information detailed above regarding symptoms and conditions were prepared by the Early Childhood Committee of the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

GUIDANCE

The staff at Hildebrandt Learning Centers strives to interact with the children frequently showing affection, interest, and respect. Each child is recognized as an individual in his growth and development. Teachers understand that the social-emotional development of a child is as critical to a child's success in life as the child's cognitive abilities.

Teachers assist children's social and emotional development through creating age and individual appropriate room arrangements, curriculum, and positive teacher-child interactions that are supportive, responsive, and model for the child appropriate ways to interact with others. To facilitate the development of responsibility, self-regulation, and self-control in children, teachers implement the following **Positive Guidance Techniques**:

- a. Teachers set clear, consistent, fair limits for classroom behavior, and in the case of older children, help them to set their own limits.
- b. Teachers use children's mistakes as learning opportunities, describing the situation and encouraging children's evaluation of the problem rather than imposing the solution.
- c. Teachers anticipate and eliminate potential problems, redirecting children to a more acceptable behavior or activity.
- d. Teachers listen and acknowledge children's feelings and frustrations and respond with respect.
- e. Teachers guide children to resolve conflicts and model skills that help children to solve their own problems.
- f. Teachers encourage appropriate behaviors, patiently reminding children of rules and their rationale as need.
- g. Teachers apply logical or natural consequences in problem situations.

At no time does a staff member use corporal punishment or other negative discipline methods that hurt, humiliate, or frighten children. Food or beverages are never withheld as a form of discipline. The environment is always arranged so that a minimal number of "no's" are necessary, especially with young children.

Staff demonstrate, coach, and model actions and words to help children learn to solve their problems in appropriate ways and on their own. All these problem solving skills

such as turn-taking, helping, listening, negotiating, and appropriate choices begin in infancy.

The rules and guidelines are based on helping children to feel deeply that “I am safe here.”

- a. My body is safe,
- b. My feelings are safe,
- c. My thoughts, ideas, and words are safe, and
- d. My work (the things I made and materials I use) is safe.

With a sense of safety comes trust—one of the most basic developmental needs of children and an essential foundation on which all social, emotional, and cognitive development is founded. If children do not feel safe, efforts to teach them nonviolence will always be undermined and the goals to meet the whole needs of the child will be deterred.

Conflict Resolution

If a child places himself / herself or others health and safety in jeopardy, the teacher or Center Director will arrange a family conference to discuss the situation and possible solutions. A plan of action will be discussed and written with weekly goals in redirecting the child’s behavior to create acceptable child social behaviors. The child’s behavior will be charted and solutions will be implemented. If the jeopardizing behavior continues, additional family conferences will be conducted to discuss alternative methods to remedy the behavior, possibly consulting with outside services as an additional resource.

Termination

With reasonable and age appropriate progress, all efforts will be arranged to continue the child in our program. However, there may be instances in which it is in the best interest of the child to be removed from the center and placed in alternative care for a period of time or permanently. Some children function better in smaller groups, and / or more structured settings.

Dismissal from the Program

If a resolution between the center and the family cannot be attained, termination from the program may occur. If a child’s behavior is determined to be a severe concern or problem to the safety of his or her own well-being, that of staff, or other children, termination of services may need to be immediate. The decision to terminate services, in these extreme cases, will be made without regard to the Guidance and Termination Policy and will be solely at the discretion of the Center Director in consultation with the Curriculum & Program Development Department to ensure the safety of all children and staff.

Please remember that each case is considered on an individual basis. Open communication and collaboration between families, teachers, the Center Director, and Hildebrandt Learning Centers’ Management team is our primary goal.

Families will be refunded any unused tuition within two weeks of dismissal from the center. A check will be mailed to the address listed in the child's file. Any unpaid balance must be paid within two weeks of dismissal.

The Center Director or designee will assist the family in gathering the child's personal belongings at the time of dismissal. Families are required to immediately leave center property in a calm, respectful manner. Should family become disruptive and/or uncooperative while gathering their child's belongings following dismissal, HLC will request assistance from local authorities.

Local authorities will be notified if any family member or child harasses, threatens or in any way causes harm to anyone affiliated with the center by calling, writing, or contacting them by any other means.

CENTER SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Center Name: College Hill Children’s Center

Address: 417 W. Frederick Street

Lancaster, PA 17603

Phone Number: (717) 509-1502

Fax Number: (717) 509-1502

Director E-Mail Address: abrown@hildebrandtlc.com

Hours of Operation:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
5:45AM-6:30PM	5:45AM-6:30PM	5:45AM-6:30PM	5:45AM-6:30PM	5:45AM-6:30PM

Dates closed for holidays/Yearly Calendar:

Memorial Day	Christmas Day
Independence Day	New Year’s Day
Thanksgiving Day	

Maximum number of hours a child can attend program:

10 Hours / day

Overtime Charge:

\$5.50 per hour over 10 hours; \$20.00 per each 15 minute segment after the center is closed

Emergency Evacuation Site & Address:

1. Other Room Theater, 715 N. Pine Street
2. Alumni Sports and Fitness Center
929 Harrisburg Avenue
3. Mayser Physical Education Center, College Avenue
4. Lancaster Laboratories, 2423 New Holland Pike

Participation in CACFP: Yes

Hildebrandt Learning Centers participates in the CACFP program. Upon enrollment (and thereafter, annually), parents/guardians are asked to complete two forms to assist the center in complying with the requirements of the CACFP program.

All meals served to children under the Child and Adult Care Food Program are served at no separate charge regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. There is no

discrimination in admission policy, meal service, or the use of facilities.

The complaint procedures: Any complaints of discrimination should be submitted writing within 180 days of the incident to the USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Vacation Policy Schedule or Requirements:

Ten (10) days from July 1st through June 30th at \$25 per day.

Maternity Leave/Family Leave Policy:

Any leave of absence after the two (2) week discounted vacation period will incur a charge of the 3-day preschool tuition rate. A leave can be used for 6-8 weeks subject to the following: If the slot held for the child can be filled by a child on the center’s waiting list, one must pay the child’s contracted rate to hold the spot. If one desires, he/she may forfeit his/her slot and be placed on the center’s waiting list.

Security or Specialty Passes and Associated Charges:

Each family receives two (2) key fobs. Additional fobs may be purchased for \$25.00.

Inclement Weather/Delay or Closing Procedures:

- WGAL.com
- WGAL Channel 8

Radio Station or TV stations Relaying Inclement Weather/Delay/Closing Information:

- WGAL.com

Pick-up/Drop-Off Area and Procedure:

Parking lot is accessed off of Charlotte Street.

Deposit Information/Refund:

A one-time \$50 non-refundable registration fee per child enrolled at the center, plus one (1) weeks tuition.

Waiting list policy/Admittance Priority/Program Eligibility:

1. Families with siblings currently enrolled
2. Families of Franklin & Marshall College and Lancaster General Hospital
3. Community members

CENTER SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Licensing Agency Name(s):

Department of Public Welfare

Parents' Association Franklin and Marshall College

Submission of Children's Weekly Schedules:

Due by 6:30PM on Wednesday's prior to the week being scheduled. There will be a \$5.00 charge for schedules submitted after this time.

Building Safety:

- Security system featuring doors that are secured allowing only family and staff who have key fobs to access the facility
- Automatic fire sprinkler system
- Automatic fire alarm system
- Interior play equipment selected for its play value and safety

Non-Discrimination In Services

Admissions, the provision of services, and referrals of clients shall be made without regard to race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, or sex.

Program services shall be made accessible to eligible persons with disabilities through the most practical and economically feasible methods available. These methods include, but are not limited to, equipment redesign, the provision of aides, and the use of alternative service delivery locations. Structural modifications shall be considered only as a last resort among available methods.

Any student (and/or their guardian) who believes they have been discriminated against, may file a complaint of discrimination with:

Parents' Association of the Franklin & Marshall College
Children's Center
417 West Frederick Street
Lancaster, PA 17603

Department of Public Welfare
Bureau of Equal Opportunity
Room 223, Health & Welfare Building
PO Box 2675
Harrisburg, PA 17105

U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services
Office for Civil Rights
Suite 372, Public Ledger Building
150 South Independence Mall West
Philadelphia, PA 19106-9111

PA Human Relations Commission
Harrisburg Regional Office
Riverfront Office Center
1101 S. Front Street, 5th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17104