

# NIKKI'S CHRISTIAN ACADEMY STAFF HANDBOOK POLICIES AND PROCEDURES



NIKKI'S  
CHRISTIAN ACADEMY  
**FAITH.....EXCELLENCE.....FAMILY**

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# NIKKI'S CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

## STAFF HANDBOOK POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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## **FORWARD**

This handbook is a basic reference concerning policies, procedure, privileges, opportunities, obligations and responsibilities affecting the employees, volunteers, student workers, and enrolled families of Nikki's Christian Academy (NCA). Information contained in this handbook does not create any contractual rights for employees, volunteers, student workers, or enrolled families. Policies contained in this handbook do not increase or diminish the legally enforceable rights of NCA and its employees. The misapplication or failure to follow any specific provision in this handbook should not be grounds for setting aside or modifying any employment decision when it has been determined by appropriate administrative authority that the decision was fairly made and in the best interest of NCA.

## **RESPONSIBILITY AND ORGANIZATION**

NCA is an independently owned organization. The center's Executive Director and subordinate Directors, as appointed, are responsible for policy making, operation, and management decisions.

## **OTHER GOVERNING RESOURCES**

Other governing resources governing rules, regulations and procedures adhered to at NCA are Virginia Department of Education, Standards for Licensed Child Day Center - Technical Assistance, Background Checks for Licensed Child Day Centers, NCA Emergency Preparedness Plan, and Family/Student Daycare Center Policy Handbook.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the Nikki's Christian Academy is to offer a high quality child care program at market rates to students, staff, and faculty, while serving as a model for the community, state, and nation. The inclusion of academic and research components will ensure the provision of an optimum environment for the growth and development of children.

## **Established Lines of Authority**

NCA is a corporation. Nicole Brown is the Executive Director/Owner and the sole agent of the corporation and there is no Board of Directors involved in the management of the company. The chain of authority is:

Nicole Brown - Executive Director/Owner  
Director of Administration/Operation  
Center Director  
Assistant Center Director  
Program Leaders  
Instructional Aides

**This handbook is effective July 2025 all previous editions and amendments are obsolete.**

## **NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY**

It is a goal of Nikki's Christian Academy is to serve the child care needs of students, staff, and faculty, regardless of race, gender, class, ability, ethnic background of children from the age of 6 weeks through 12 years old.

### **EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF NIKKI'S CHRISTIAN LEARNING CENTER**

Early childhood development is a process that is continually changing and expanding, therefore both structured and unstructured activities are offered for children. However, our basic philosophy is one of freedom to learn, grow, and make choices. We believe that children learn through a combination play, age appropriate academic curriculum and we have structured the environment to reflect that belief. The team at NCA is encouraged to be flexible and to allow the children freedom to learn at their own pace. All activities are steps to growing and developing physically, socially, emotionally, cognitively, and spiritually. Children learn in different ways, with all their senses. Varied experiences and materials are provided for multisensory and whole brain learning. Cognitive learning is not overemphasized, but rather children are given ample opportunity for activities and exposed to pre-numbers, activities designed to form a positive self-image. Practice in motor skills is encouraged. Children learn independence, turn-taking skills, and how to interact with others.

The best atmosphere for learning is one of acceptance, mutual respect, pleasure, fairness, consistency, clear limits, expectations, and encouragement. A predictable, organized environment, with caring adults, clear expectations, and appropriate consequences supports the whole child. The outdoor play environment is an extension of the classroom, requiring the same level of adult planning, supervision, and involvement with the children.

Families are considered an integral part of our program. Daily communication and collaboration between families and teachers are stressed. Support encouragement, and assistance are vital in helping to ensure personal and professional success for parents.

### **NIKKI'S CHRISTIAN ACADEMY PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION**

Nikki's Christian Academy is a Christian center, whose very existence is founded on Holy Bible, the Word of God. We believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God born of a virgin. He was crucified on a cross for the sins of man. He was buried, rose again on the third day, and is seated on the right hand of God the Father interceding on behalf of all believers. While it is not a requirement for all employees and students to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ to become a member, we do, have daily times of prayer, Bible study, and weekly chapel for our students. We also begin each staff meeting with prayer. Our standards are such as to bring glory to God in every area. The music, curriculum, books, movies, computer programs and other teaching tools promote the quality of life instructed in the Word of God. This center is nondenominational.

### **PRIMARY CARE GIVERS**

Primary care givers ensure that every child has a "special" person and every parent has a primary contact. Primary care giving is a type of care that encourages the forming of close relationships and fosters the development of closeness and trust between caregivers and the child's family. Intimate

relationships with other people are the foundation of our emotional health and well-being; therefore it is important that children develop a relationship with one certain caregiver.

This attachment and bonding process will be developed through a program leader being assigned to a group of children. This person will form a caring, nurturing, and responsive relationship with the children in their care. In the classroom, the program leader shall be the expert on each child in their care, knowing pertinent information like the child's individual schedule, developmental abilities and special needs, sleeping needs, and individual interests. The program leader will be responsible for evaluating each child's development and have parent conferences for each child two times annually.

## **CONTINUITY OF CARE**

Continuity of care at NCA keeps primary caregivers and their assigned children together for one - two years. Loving relationships between caregivers and children and between the children themselves develop in an atmosphere of familiarity and trust. Families are also able to form a long-term relationship with the caregiver. Typically, in continuity of care, separation anxiety between parents and children often become nonexistent as the expectations, the families know the staff and the environment. Young children often need a full year to get to know new faces, trust them and settle into a group. The second year, in our younger group, encourages new beginnings within the familiar and "safe" environment for the child. The second year also gives the families an opportunity to develop deeper levels of trust between them and the staff in the center. Some children continue to need their primary caregiver throughout the year, while others become more comfortable with all the teachers in their group, and eventually in the whole center. Children's individual styles of interacting and coping are respected. The staff will meet the level of consistency and predictability that your child needs to feel safe and comfortable

Continuity and consistency are essential components of quality care for infants and toddlers. The adaptation period and communication go a long way in helping us provide consistency of care. We provide continuity of care by moving children in groups from one room to another at the beginning of the school year. Educational research has shown that familiar children, as well as familiar adults, provide a sense of stability and familiarity to young children in new circumstances.

## **CURRICULUM PLANNING GUIDELINES**

While each class at NCA has its own distinction, there are at least five principles that are consistent from the youngest group of children to the oldest. These principles are most influenced by the theories of educational practice that are based on an understanding of child development. In addition to adhering to these guidelines in curriculum planning, all classes have a purchased curriculum as their foundation.

### **Guiding Principles**

**1. How Children Learn:** Children learn best from self-initiated activity with concrete objects. They build on previous knowledge through repeated experiences. Through social interactions with peers, children learn to collaborate, cooperate and to understand another point of view. Children who are active in their own learning process make sense of the world for themselves and construct their own ideas. By having choices and making decisions, children learn to be in control of their own learning

and to be independent thinkers. Children need to be presented with a variety of materials, strategies and approaches because not every child learns the same way.

**2. How Curriculum Develops:** Curriculum in our program develops through an interactive process between the child, teacher and the environment. In each group there is a balance between teacher-planned activities and those activities that emerge from the children's interests, abilities and needs. There is a balance between individual, small group and large group experiences. Curriculum is based on inquiry, problem solving and discovery and application of key issues and concepts. We strive to have all children's learning be integrated, active and meaningful.

Our teachers are facilitators of learning. They act as mentor-companions...observing, reflecting, collaborating, adapting, intervening, scaffolding and building upon each child's questions or ideas, as well as assessing the level and interest of each child in order to make informed decisions.

**3. Creation of Partnerships With Family:** The family is an essential part of our community and crucial to our genuine understanding and appreciation of each child. We strive to build home-school partnerships that are collaborative, trusting, and respectful. Parents and staff regularly communicate through frequent interactions, phone conversations, open houses, parent conferences, parent workshops, written reports, center gatherings, home visits, and parent participation. Getting to know the values and cultures within families helps nurture the home-school relationship and contributes to the child's self-esteem. Having parents participate in the goal-setting process is an important part of developing curriculum for the individual child.

**4. Importance Of The Individual And The Community:** Each child is unique. The curriculum focuses on supporting the growth of the whole child, including social-emotional, language, cognitive, and physical development. We believe that children go through stages of development, which are marked by general characteristics, but we also recognize the range of individual and cultural variation. Yet each individual child is also a member of a community that includes the family, the classroom, the school and the world at large. Building this sense of community takes conscious planning and ongoing effort. Our goal is to make each child feel like a valued member of the community and to develop a sense of empathy and caring for others.

**5. Respect and Appreciation of Differences:** Our center's perspective involves creating a classroom and school environment which respects and supports all dimensions of human differences, including cultural, linguistic, ability, learning style, ethnicity, family culture, gender, age and socio-economic differences. In curriculum, using materials that support diversity and integrate similarities and differences into the daily life of the classroom attains this perspective. We also adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of all learners, differentiating instruction for the members of the group. Activities have multiple entry points where children can be working on the same activity but with different materials, goals and objectives.

## CURRICULUM PLANNING FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS

During the first two years of life, children are working on acquiring a sense of trustworthiness of oneself and others. This is the sense of safety and security that comes from responsive and predictable care from familiar others to whom the child is attached. In the toddler years, a strong sense of autonomy is building. This comes from being treated as an individual and being allowed opportunities for independence.

When children feel the sense of independence, power, and competence, they can step out into the world and be active learners and problem solvers. Young children need a safe environment full of opportunities to explore and have fun. They need to be able to see, touch, feel, and move.

The curriculum for the infants and toddlers involves everything that happens to the child throughout the day. Responsive care giving is the key component to setting up a safe and secure environment and trusting relationships. **Everything that a child experiences is a learning opportunity.** For example, diaper changes are perfect opportunities for learning experiences: language, singing and speaking the Word of God gently to a child; showing gentle touches; letting the child know that this is not a hurried or rushed experience and that they are valued and precious individuals; gently moving their legs in a bicycle motion stimulating movement or having them reach and grasp for an object. Throughout the day, teachers will take advantage of these care giving experiences that are so important in the early years of life and turn them into meaningful and positive experiences for a child's healthy development.

Along with the individual care giving moments, teachers will also plan and organize their environments to provide experiences which enhance motor development – reaching, grasping, crawling in and out, throwing, pulling; cognitive development – object permanence, cause and effect experiences, language, listening and responding to sounds and voices, and problem solving; social development – playing among others, positive peer interactions, and expressing emotions towards others. All caregivers are required to speak, in fluent English, to our children, regardless of their age.

Planning for infants and toddlers does not necessarily involve "lessons" but rather opportunities for experiences that as individuals they can make the most out of. When teachers organize materials for the room, they take into account children's individual differences along with their knowledge child development. Planning is based on observations of the children using their interests, their new skills, and their reactions to materials. As the children grow and change, the teachers change the classroom environment. They may put out more challenging climbing equipment or add a building area with different toys. A classroom may look very different at the end of a semester than it did at the beginning!

Throughout each day care providers must intertwine, naturally, into your curriculum the Word of God, whether speaking, singing, reading, or structured learning. NCA is a Christian facility, whose charter is more than alphabets and numbers. It is our position that just as important as preparing our students academically for kindergarten it is also our obligation to work with the parents to prepare them spiritually with foundations for life.



## **COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES**

Effective communication with families strengthens the quality of the program. Staff-family communication should include the following:

- Opportunities for obtaining information about the child in care
- Encouragement of family involvement within the program
- Family-teacher conferences conducted as needed, but at least twice a year
- Ongoing communication with families regarding the well-being of the child in care

Program leaders, supervisors, and executive staff members, are encouraged to communicate with parents through a variety of means including orientation activities, informal telephone or face-to-face conversations, notes, or newsletters.

In the fall and spring, each teacher conducts a conference concerning each child's progress and student assessment results. This gives the teacher and the parents a chance to discuss any needs, difficulties, or concerns. These conferences are held at times to meet both parent and teacher convenience; a sign-up list can be sent out ahead of time. The conference notice must have a place on it where parents can list things that they would like to discuss at the conference. This allows the parents input into the conference; as well as, it allows teachers the opportunity to prepare ahead of time. Additional conferences may be scheduled when either parent or teacher feels they are needed.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

All members of NCA shall maintain the confidentiality of all families' personal and financial records. The records shall be the property of the center. The Director shall maintain and secure records against loss, tempering, or unauthorized use. Employees of the center shall not disclose or knowingly permit the disclosure of any information concerning the child or his/her family, directly or indirectly, to any unauthorized person.

Enjoy what the children do and tell you, but remember it is confidential. It is important that you never tell stories or discuss a child with anyone other than that child's teacher, or the Director of the center. A child's behavior patterns are confidential as well. If a parent asks a member or the staff other than that child's program leader a question concerning their child, please refer the parent to the child's program leader. The teacher has been with the child the whole day where you have been with the child for a short period of time.

## **CODE OF ETHICS**

Those of us who have selected early childhood education as our profession follow an important code of ethics that guides our involvement with children. We expect each of the staff member, paid or volunteer, who works in our center to be committed to maintaining ethical behavior. The following guidelines relate particularly to staff involvement in the childcare center.

1. Remember that it is a privilege to have these children and parents to talk with and observe; they are people who deserve respect. We convey this respect by a variety of behaviors, including active and sincere valuing, patience, tolerance, and acceptance. Please remember that while children may respond in ways that are "funny" to adults, it is usually appropriate to smile or laugh only when they are expressing happiness or delight. In other words, laugh with them, not at them.

2. It is essential that we protect the confidentiality of all personal information concerning our children and their families. Therefore, you may use the children's names in discussions occurring during lecture and lab only, but not in situations other than these. Such conversations can be very beneficial, for your observations and can be discussed in light of others' experiences and the knowledge and experience of your instructors.
3. During staff meetings, an observation or discussion of a child's behavior is acceptable: "Sarah has been hitting several children today," or "Joe has been playing by himself a lot today." It is not acceptable to make evaluative comments: "Sarah is little toot," or "Joe is really a wallflower."
4. Evaluative comments are unprofessional in nature, and, if overheard by the child or parents, can have serious consequences for the child and the program.
5. Remember that children are people who deserve respect. We convey this respect by a variety of behaviors, ranging from sensitive to "active" listening to protecting children from their own impulses or the aggression of others.
6. Remember that you are free to maintain your own self-respect. You can be a kind, friendly adult without allowing children to abuse or manipulate you: "I'm tired of running, I'd like to rest now," will help children understand the limits of their expectations of others.
7. Maintaining a professional attitude includes being responsive to the needs of teachers, peers, and children. We continually serve as role models for children, as well as for other adults, thus such qualities as patience, tolerance, cooperation, and enthusiasm are highly desirable.

**Staff, students, and volunteers adherence to these ethical principles is required. Professional behavior is essential to providing a quality program for young children, and we believe that it will enhance the learning experience.**

### **CODE OF ETHICS FOR NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG CHILDREN (NAEYC)**

I will know about, abide by, and advocate for laws and regulations that enhance the quality of life for young children.

I will support the rights of children to live and learn in environments that are responsive to their developmental needs.

I will improve my competencies in providing for children's needs.

I will appreciate each child's uniqueness, thus enhancing the child's self-respect.

### **ROOM AND CENTER MAINTENANCE**

Staff members are expected to maintain their classroom with order and attractiveness. This includes creating a schedule of rotation of display of children's work in the room.

Easels must be covered with newspaper that is changed weekly. Brushes are to be washed daily and clean ones put into clean paint cups with *fresh* paint.

Toys and books are to be rotated as curriculum progresses. Toys are to be cleaned daily. Shelves are to be washed and kept dust free. Chairs will need to be washed occasionally as well. Teachers may wish to have the children participate in these activities. NCDC&LC provides basic cleaning. The

arrangement and appearance of the room, as well as clean tabletops, are the teachers' responsibility. **Clean and disinfect. Each class has 2 bottles 1 Clorox solution and 1 soap and water.**

Materials and supplies are to be treated with respect, not wasted or neglected. While we do not advocate skimping on materials children use in their activities, we do encourage them to be careful. When a child is being wasteful, the teacher will guide him/her accordingly. Children can also learn to use the back of a paper!

The following applies to the storage areas at NCA. When you take something from a storage area, it should be returned in good condition to the same place you found it. If a closet is messy, help straighten it up. Staff members are responsible for washing and cleaning up after their own cooking projects, after getting coffee and tea, and using the kitchen area at the center. All staff members are responsible for shared areas with consideration for other groups and colleagues.

Clean up is required in the playgrounds as well. At the end of the day all blocks, balls, wheel toys, etc. are to be locked in the provided storage receptacles. Please pick up on the playground the way you do in the rooms. **If there is a paper towel or tissue on the ground, pick it up and put it in the trash.** Teach the children to do this as well.

Teachers and assistants (including student teachers) share in all activities of a classroom, the care of the children, and the maintenance and cleaning of the physical environment.

### **DRESS CODE AND PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR**

Staff will be required to dress and groom themselves in accordance with accepted social, business and Christian standards at all times. Shoes are not allowed in the infant play areas, therefore staff and volunteers who work in these rooms will need to wear socks or use the provided shoe covers. Volunteers and student workers will be encouraged to wear comfortable, washable clothes and low-heel shoes to work. It is, necessary for staff, volunteers, and student interns to look and act professionally at all times. Very short shorts, backless dresses on the top, tank tops, micro mini-skirts, and half shirts are not appropriate dress. Longer shorts, T-shirts, tennis shoes, and jeans if neat and clean are appropriate. In general, your clothing should be conducive to working with children and should allow you to move and maneuver as you interact with them while maintaining cover and modesty. Hoop earrings, spiked collars, lip rings, eye rings, tongue rings, and chipped nail polish are hazardous and should be avoided. Strong perfume is also to be avoided because some children maybe allergic to it. September – June NCA staff will wear uniforms Monday – Thursday. Uniforms consist of dark/deep purple scrub blouse and pants. On Friday – Jeans (no rips or tears) may be worn with a purple NCA t-shirt.

Nikki's Christian Academy is a Christian organization therefore all books, music, videos and other media must represent the beliefs of this center as outlined in the Word of God. This includes but is not limited to materials presented to the children.

Even though the atmosphere in the center is relaxed, professional behavior is expected at all times. Vulgar language and raucous behavior are prohibited by staff, students, parents or other visitors. Any employee coming to the center under influence of alcohol or any drug, unless prescribed by a doctor, will be immediately dismissed.

## **MISCONDUCT, VIOLENCE FREE WORKPLACE, SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

The following are examples of conduct, which will not be tolerated at NCA. Any employee, student employee, or volunteer engaging in such conduct could be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. This list is not all inclusive.

- Marring or defacing walls, furniture, or fixtures.
- Using obscene or profane language.
- Disrespectful conduct toward supervisory personnel, fellow staff members, parents, or children.
- Use and/or possession of alcohol, drugs, firearms, or other lethal weapons on school premises.
- Threatening a child, other staff members, parent, or volunteer.
- Sexually harassing a child, other staff member, parent, or volunteer.
- Willfully perpetrating acts of dishonesty and deception.
- Handling a child in an inappropriate manner.
- Violation of this handbook, state standards, contracts, or other instruction or guidelines as given by the Executive Director or an appointed representative could result in disciplinary action.

## **NON-SOLICITATION AND NON-COMPETE RESTRICTIONS**

Nikki's Christian Academy invests significant time, money and resources in screening, educating and training employees. Employees have access to confidential business information and proprietary methods that are the sole and exclusive property of Nikki's Christian Academy. This specifically prohibits employees from solicitation of daycare opportunities or acting as nannies for Nikki's Christian Academy clients for a period of one year after leaving the employment of Nikki's Christian Academy.

While employees may provide occasional babysitting services during non-business hours, employees are specifically forbidden from 1. Opening home daycares, 2. Accepting nanny positions from current clients of Nikki's Christian Academy or parents who have been clients of Nikki's Christian Academy during their employment. 3. Soliciting Nikki's Christian Academy clients for any other daycare provider.

Since such acts could have a damaging impact on Nikki's Christian Academy employees who violate this policy will face disciplinary action, up to and including termination. In addition, former employees who violate their agreements are financially responsible for any losses Nikki's Christian Academy may incur as a result of their actions.

## **SMOKING**

Smoking is prohibited at all times in and on center premises and property; this includes your private vehicle if parked on center property or being used in the transport of children from the center. Smoking is also prohibited on fieldtrips or other activities where children are present. Our no smoking policy extends to include volunteers and fieldtrip chaperones.

## **ALCOHOL, ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES, FIREARMS**

The center prohibits the use of alcohol and the use or possession of illegal substances or unauthorized potentially toxic substances, fireworks, firearms, pellet or BB guns (loaded or unloaded) in the center, on the playground and on any center-sponsored field trip or vehicle.

## **VISITORS AND PHONE CALLS**

NCA is a full-time childcare center, a teaching center, and a model childcare program. Therefore, there are many people—parents and children visiting classes who come into the center. It is understandable that staff might want to show the center to a close friend or relative, but extended visits while you are at work are inappropriate.

The phones are for business calls and emergencies. Staff is asked to not use them for personal calls unless it is an emergency. All personal, out-going, and non-emergency incoming calls are to be made during lunch or break. These policies also apply to cellular telephones. The uses of cellular phones are also prohibited for playing games and text messaging. **TURN YOUR PHONES OFF.**

## **VOLUNTEER/VISITOR POLICY**

Keeping an open line of communication between the center and families insures that the best interests of the children are served, both at home and at the center. All parents are encouraged to visit, telephone, and send notes whenever they deem necessary. An open door policy for families and the community to visit at anytime shall be maintained. If a parent needs to discuss a problem or needs more detailed conversation, we ask that a conference time be setup with the child's caregiver or Director. This will prevent staff from leaving children unattended. If a potential client or member of the community requests a tour, the director or the administrative assistant shall arrange it. NCA is to serve as a model childcare facility, therefore tours are welcomed. All visitors to the center must register in the office and are not permitted in the classroom except by prior arrangement and accompanied by a NCA staff member. Under no circumstance will a visitor (vendors, inspectors and repairmen included) be allowed to roam freely throughout the center.

## **ORIENTATION, IN-SERVICE TRAINING, AND CONTINUING EDUCATION**

Within one week of employment and prior to having sole responsibility for a group of children, each staff member, including substitutes and volunteers, will have submitted a Virginia Department of Social Services/Child Protective Services Central Registry Release of Information Form and a Criminal History Record Request. Also the same shall receive orientation training to include the items listed below.

- a) NCA Policies and Procedures
- b) Health and Safety Procedures
- c) Emergency and Evacuation Plan
- d) Supervision of Children
- e) Guidance and Discipline Policy
- f) Job Description
- g) Individual needs of the enrolled children
- h) Current State Class "A" Minimum Licensing Standards
- i) Confidentiality of information regarding children and their families

Orientation training shall be followed by four days of supervised work with children. Documentation of the training will include a statement/checklist in the employee record signed and dated by the employee and Director attesting to having received such orientation and four days of supervised work with children. Documentation shall become part of the staff person's personnel file.

Employees, substitutes, and volunteers of NCA are required to attend in-service training conducted by the Director. The in-service training will include training topics pertinent to working with young children. Annually, all staff and volunteers will review the topics included in the orientation training.

Continuing education shall consist of 16 clock hours of training per NCA anniversary year for each staff member plus 3 hours of Health and Safety Procedures. Continuing education may be obtained through childcare workshops or conferences as approved by the Department of Social Services.

## **GUIDANCE OF CHILDREN**

Our goal is to promote the child's self-esteem through practicing positive non-evaluative guidance, providing experiences that match their developmental level and meeting their needs responsively. Supporting children's play is important.

Give guidance as needed, but try not to interfere in a child's activity.

Action is necessary if such activity is endangering him/her or some other child.

Be positive in word and attitude when you must maintain limits. Be kind, matter of fact and composed at all times. Offer choices when possible.

Refrain from discussing the negative behavior of a child in his or her presence.

Refrain from visiting with other adults while in the classroom.

Avoid labeling (positive and negative) or shaming a child.

During art activities, never draw on a child's paper or on a separate paper even if the child asks you to draw. We want the child to draw from his/her own thoughts, not from a model.

Tickling or throwing children up in the air is not appropriate to our goal of child led play within a safe, secure environment.

## **DISCIPLINE – CHILD**

Discipline is deciding which things you are going to insist on. Discipline helps children cope with the challenges of daily living, to interpret their world and learn social skills. Discipline is a multifaceted term. Parents and teachers frequently talk about and are concerned about discipline, the how's, whys, and when's of setting boundaries and helping children learn to become self-disciplined. All these terms are interrelated, and NCA has a few guidelines for dealing with negative behavior that are in keeping with both our understanding of child development and our philosophy. We use as a guide Love and Learn, Discipline for Young Children by Alice S. Honig (NAEYC, 1989).

Things to consider:

- Decide where you stand on important issues and stick to it. Consistency is a key to positive discipline:
  1. Choose your issues;
  2. Set clear, consistent and reasonable rules;
  3. Help children gain self-control;

#### 4. Don't expect them to behave like adults or even older children.

- Children do need to learn about boundaries, what is safe, what is allowed or not allowed and why. They need help learning to organize their time and energy.
- Some strategies: distracting (re-direction), negotiating, ignoring, anticipating, setting rituals, and advance preparation.
- Offer limited choices. "Do you want me to help with your coat or do you want to do it yourself?" (Phrase the choice so that the one you want the child to pick is last after the word "OR").
- Take advantage of children's ritualistic tendencies and behaviors. Setting up rituals around activities gives children a sense of control since they know what to expect.
- Avoid ultimatums (e.g., "You have to do \_\_\_\_\_ before I \_\_\_\_\_").
- Avoid carrying on a fruitless, frustrating or ridiculous argument. You are bound to feel awful afterwards.
- Prepare the child in advance for what will happen next ("We will read one book, then we will get our coats on.") It often helps avoid conflict.
- Motivation: "Where does your coat go?" rather than "Hang up your coat." Pretending you forgot where the coat goes often thrills young children.
- Sometimes, picking up the child and removing him/her from the situation is the only remedy.

### **DISCIPLINE AT NCA**

Discipline at NCA is developed with support and encouragement of positive behavior through a planned environment, which provides a variety of activities from which the children may choose. Methods include reinforcement such as verbal praise, smiles and pleasant attention for appropriate stated alternatives when a conflict situation occurs.

The following methods of discipline are prohibited by anyone on the premises of the NCA, any use of the described practices shall be grounds for immediate termination of staff, volunteers, student workers, or student trainees.

- No child shall be subject to physical punishment, corporal punishment, verbal abuse or threats by staff, volunteers, or parents while on center property.
- No child or group of children shall be allowed to discipline another child.
- Unsupervised isolation of a child is never allowed.
- The withholding of food, water, a nap or rest, or bathroom facilities is to never be used as means of discipline.
- Preventing a child from participating in a routine activity as a means of discipline is prohibited.
- A child is never to be physically restricted in any way unless his or her actions would bring harm to self or others.
- An adult shall never address a child harshly, with intimidation or ridicule.
- Adults are never to discuss a child's behavior with another adult in the presence of other children or other parents. Written or verbal reports to parents regarding conflicts or disagreements between children shall not include the name of the child who hit, bit, or pushed their child.

NCA staff maintains a safe, non-threatening environment that fosters creativity, encourages children to explore, and allows them to make discoveries. When inappropriate behavior occurs, it is dealt with

immediately. Teachers individualize responses to the children's behavior, in relation to the particular child and the situation. They try to identify the cause of the inappropriate behavior and recognize that repeated problem behavior may be the child's way of signaling that he/she needs help in dealing with a certain task or situation. Teachers can then modify the learning environment and/or activities to help resolve the situation. We set limits and encourage self-discipline, because boundaries reassure young children and because order and stability are as important to a child as freedom.

To enforce the boundaries and rules at the center, the adults are to use the following techniques with the children:

- Clear statement of the limit. ("Blocks are for building, balls are for throwing.")
- Stating expectations positively. ("The blocks are for building.")
- Redirection. ("Let's go see what Eric is cooking in the kitchen.")
- Supporting problem solving and negotiation between the children. ("How could you use your words to tell John that you would like to have a turn with that truck?")
- Logical consequences or choices. ("You are having a hard time playing with the blocks without throwing: You need to make another choice: do you want to play with play dough, or to paint at the easel?")
- Modeling effective ways to express feelings and emotions. ("I do not like it when you grab the book from my hands. Which words can you use to let me know that you need something that I have?" with toddlers, give the appropriate script such as, "Leah, say, Can I have the book, please?")

## **DISCIPLINARY ACTION PROCEDURES- STAFF**

### **Types of disciplinary action:**

- Verbal warning - notification and warning to employee.
- Written reprimand - formal notification in writing to employee.
- Suspension - loss of work and wages for a specified number of hours or days.
- Discharge - termination of employment.

**Progressive discipline:** NCA promotes a policy of progressive or corrective discipline, i.e., discipline shall gradually increase depending upon the severity and/or frequency of the infractions. Normally, disciplinary action begins with a verbal warning for the first offense and culminates with discharge only after repeated attempts to correct employee's behavior have failed. Serious infractions may warrant immediate imposition of a written reprimand, suspension or discharge, as appropriate.

**Determination of action:** Supervision will determine the action appropriate to the infraction up to and including termination, considering the severity of the offense, mitigating circumstances, previous infractions, etc. Assistance in determining the appropriate action may be received through NCA Executive Director. Approval for discharge must be obtained from NCA Executive Director or Center Directors in advance.

**Appeals of discipline:** Must be presented to the Executive Director/Owner within 7 calendar days.

### **Investigation (verbal warning, written reprimand, suspension):**

Director or her appointed representative will:



- Investigate facts surrounding cause for possible disciplinary action.
- Review employment record.
- Prior to taking disciplinary action, in cases involving suspension or discharge, the matter will be discussed with NCA Executive Director/Owner.
- Meet with employee prior to determination of action to be taken.
- Determine an appropriate action following progressive discipline, where appropriate.
- If verbal warning, written reprimand, suspension, or discharge is to be imposed, see appropriate procedure outlined below.

### **Disciplinary action - verbal warning:**

Director or her appointed representative will:

- Meet with employee to discuss his/her action(s) which may be cause for discipline.
- Notify employee of right to representation, and allow for Executive Director to be present at disciplinary interview if requested by employee.
- Inform employee of specific problem.
- Tell employee how behavior can be improved and what is expected.
- Warn employee that failure to correct behavior will result in further disciplinary action.
- NCDCLC will process Disciplinary Action form, noting the action taken. (For a notation of a verbal warning, complete why the disciplinary action was taken.)

### **Disciplinary action - written reprimand:**

Director or her appointed representative will:

- Meet with employee to discuss his/her action(s) which may be cause for discipline.
- Notify employee of right to representation, and allow for the Executive Director to be present at disciplinary interview if requested by employee.
- Inform employee of specific problem.
- If investigation produces cause for discipline, prepare Disciplinary Action form. Include the following:
  - indicate it is a written reprimand,
  - a statement of the problem including specific reasons for the reprimand,
  - a summary of previous discussions and/or discipline, if any,
  - a summary of what corrective action is expected of employee, and
  - a warning that failure to correct behavior will result in further disciplinary action, up to and including discharge/termination.
- Meet with employee to present written reprimand, and notify employee of right to representation. Allow for Executive Director to be present if requested by employee.
- Discuss written reprimand with employee. Sign written reprimand and ask employee to sign acknowledging receipt. If employee does not wish to sign, so indicate.
- Distribute original and copies of Disciplinary Action.

### **Disciplinary action - suspension:**

Director or her appointed representative will:

- Meet with employee to discuss his/her action(s) which may be cause for discipline.
- Notify employee of right to representation, and allow for Executive Director to be present at disciplinary interview if requested by employee.
- Inform employee of specific problem.

- Contact NCA Executive Director for assistance in determination that suspension is appropriate disciplinary action.
- If investigation produces cause for action, prepare Disciplinary Action form. Include the following:
  - indicate employee is suspended from duty,
  - a statement of the problem, including specific reasons for suspension,
  - a summary of previous discussions and/or discipline, if any,
  - a summary of what corrective behavior is expected of employee, and
  - a warning that failure to correct behavior will result in "further disciplinary action up to and including discharge."
- If an employee is being suspended without pay pending an investigation use Disciplinary Action form to place an employee on suspension pending an investigation.
- Meet with employee to present suspension. Notify employee of right to representation, and allow for Executive Director to be present if requested by employee.
- Discuss suspension with employee. Sign the suspension and ask employee to sign acknowledging receipt. If employee does not wish to sign, so indicate.
- Distribute original and copies as set forth on the Disciplinary Action form.
- Notify NCA or Payroll Office as follows:
  - for hourly employees, no time is submitted to Payroll Office on labor time report, or
  - for salaried employees, circle the personnel action for leave of absence/suspension, indicate that the leave/suspension is without pay, and submit form to NCA Executive Director.

#### **Disciplinary action - discharge:**

Director or her appointed representative will:

- Meet with employee to discuss his/her action(s) which may be cause for discharge.
- Notify employee of right to representation, and allow for Executive Director to be present at disciplinary interview if requested by employee.
- Contact NCA Executive Director for approval of discharge.
- Prepare Disciplinary Action form/letter, sign and obtain signature of departmental administrator, and forward to NCA Executive director. The Executive Director will prepare authorization slip for immediate, final paycheck. Director forwards authorization slip to Payroll Office and receives employee's final paycheck. (Paycheck may be delayed no more than two weeks if request is received by Payroll Office too late to process.)
- Meet with employee to explain discharge. Notify employee of right to representation, and allow for Executive Director to be present if requested by employee.
- Discuss the discharge with employee. Sign Notice of Disciplinary Action form and ask employee to sign acknowledging receipt. If employee does not wish to sign, so indicate. (NOTE: If the employee is unavailable, a notice of discharge letter is to be mailed to the employee's last address of record by Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested.)
- Include the following:
  - indicate employee is discharged,
  - a statement of problem including specific reasons for the discharge, and
  - a summary of previous discussions and/or disciplinary action(s).

## **Verbal Guidance for Preschool Children**

### **Say:**

Remember to sit down when you slide.  
Sand is for digging.  
Are you going to bottom swing or tummy swing?  
Remember to climb down the ladder.  
Keep the puzzle on the table.  
Be gentle with the book pages.  
Use your inside voice.  
Remember to use paper towels to wipe your hands.  
Be safe when you climb on the ladder.  
Let's keep the chair on the floor.  
Remember to walk *around* the swing.  
It's time to go back inside.  
Are you going to bottom swing, or tummy swing?  
Feet first when you climb down the ladder.  
  
Use your "inside voice" when you're inside.  
Let's keep the chair on the floor.  
Let's keep our feet on the floor.

### **Do Not Say:**

Don't stand up when you slide.  
Don't throw the sand.  
Don't stand in the swing.  
You'll fall if you don't watch out.  
Don't dump the puzzle pieces.  
Don't tear the book.  
Don't shout.  
Don't put your hands on anything.  
Be careful, you might fall.  
Don't rock on your chair.  
Be careful. The swing might hit you.  
Shall we go inside?  
Get your feet off the swing!  
Don't climb down the ladder with  
your hands!  
No screaming!  
Don't lift the chair!  
Don't climb on the table!

There are times when all of the above-mentioned techniques have been used and the problem persists. It is at those times that we might ask a child to sit quietly by their self until that child can return to play appropriately. We do not have a "time-out" place and this lone time is not seen as punishment. Rather it is seen as a time to regroup. Even as adults, we sometimes need time alone to "pull ourselves together." Children also need this, especially when they have been in a group situation most of the day. Time out will consist of 1 minute for each year of the child, for example if a 3 year old must be placed in time out they will spend no more than 3 minutes there. If a child displays repeated inappropriate behavior and shows little progress toward changing that behavior, the teachers may call upon the child's parent(s) to work cooperatively in developing strategies that will meet the child's needs.

**Any action that warrants calling the parent(s) will be cleared through the office, documented by the teacher, and kept in the respective child's file.**

## **INFANT AND TODDLER DEVELOPMENTAL ISSUES**

### ***Biting***

Children biting other children are unavoidable occurrences of group childcare, *especially* with toddlers. It is a common happening in any childcare program. When it happens, and sometimes continues, it can be scary, very frustrating, and very stressful for children, parents, and staff. *Every child in the Infant and Toddler classrooms is a potential biter or will potentially be bit.* It is important to understand that because a child bites, it does not mean that the child is "mean" or "bad" or that the parents of the child who bites are "bad" parents or they are not doing their job as parents to make this stop happening. **Biting is purely a sign of the developmental age of the child.** It is a developmental

phenomena – it often happens at predictable times for predictable reasons tied to children's ages and stages.

### *Why do they bite?*

Every child is different. Some bite more than others; or some may not bite at all. The group care setting is where the biting derives its significance. If a child has not really been around other children very much, he probably would not bite because neither the cause for biting or opportunities has presented themselves. There is always the possibility that **any** child, including your own, can be either a biter or be bitten. Group care presents challenges and opportunities that are unique from home. The children are surrounded by many others for hours at a time. Even though there are plenty of toys and materials available for all the children, two or three children may want that one particular toy. The children are learning how to live in a community setting. Sometimes that is not easy. **Biting is not something to blame on the child, parents, or caregivers.** Confidentiality is also practiced with biting. We cannot tell a parent who bit their child. There are many possible reasons as to why an infant or toddler may bite:

- Teething.
- Impulsiveness and lack of control
- Babies sometimes bite just because there is something there to bite. It is not intentional to hurt, but rather exploring their world.
- Making an impact. Sometimes children will bite to see what reactions happen.

**Excitement and over stimulation.** Simply being very excited, even happily so, can be a reason a child may bite. Very young children don't have the same control over their emotions and behaviors as some preschoolers do.

**Frustration.** Frustrations can be over a variety of reasons – wanting a toy someone else has, not having the skills needed to do something, or wanting a caregiver's attention. Infants and toddlers are simply lacking the language and social skills necessary to express all their needs, desires, and problems. **Children often see biting as their quickest and easiest way of communicating.**

### *What do the teachers do in response to children who bite?*

It is our job to provide a safe setting in which no child needs to hurt another to achieve his or her ends and in which the normal range of behavior is managed (and biting is normal in group care). Again, the name of the child who bites will not be released because it serves no useful purpose and can make a difficult situation even more difficult. Punishment does not work to change a child who bites: neither delayed punishment at home, which a child will not understand, nor punishment at the center, which will not be used and would make the situation worse.

There are several things the teachers do to assess the biting situation and what can be done to prevent it from happening again. Teachers can try to minimize the behavior by:

- Letting the biting child know in words and manner that biting is unacceptable.
- Avoiding any immediate response that reinforces the biting, including dramatic negative attention. The teachers will tell the child that "Biting hurts" and the focus of caring attention is on the bitten child. The biter is talked to on a level that she/he can

understand. The teacher will help the child who is biting work on resolving conflict or frustration in a more appropriate manner, including using language if the child is able.

- Examining the context in which the biting occurred and looking for patterns. Was it crowded? Too many toys? Was the biting child getting hungry/tired/frustrated?
- Not casually attributing willfulness or maliciousness to the child. Infants explore anything that interests them with their mouths, and that includes others' bodies and limbs!

When biting changes from a relatively unusual occurrence (a couple times a week) to a frequent and expected occurrence, it will be addressed with added precautions.

- The teachers will keep track of every occurrence, including attempted bites, and note location, time, participants, and circumstances.
- "Shadow" children who indicate a tendency to bite. This technique involves having a teacher with a child who bites. This teacher would be able to then anticipate biting situations and to teach non-biting responses to situations and reinforce appropriate behavior in potential biting situations.
- The teachers may consider changes to the room environment that may minimize congestion, commotion, competition for toys and materials, or child frustration.

## **POLICIES REGARDING BITING**

The following procedure shall be followed regarding bites:

### **If a child has been bitten:**

1. Wash the wound with soap and water.
2. Apply ice.
3. If the bite breaks the skin, notify the Director or Assistant Director who will then call the parent.
4. Write accident report.

**For toddlers:** Give attention to the bitten child. Remind the biter that biting hurts and that we do not bite our friends. Give the toddler something to bite on like a teething toy or a rubber ring.

**For preschoolers:** Give attention to the bitten child. Have the child who did the biting help to care for the injured child. (e.g. hold ice, comfort) Remind the child that we do not bite our friends and that we use words. In all cases explanation will be given to the child in a language that he or she can understand to explaining why the behavior is inappropriate and to reinforce the concept that even if the activity is inappropriate, the child is not a "bad" child.

### **How will we handle the biting child?**

1. We will look for the causes of the behavior and try to take a preventive approach.
2. We will shadow the biter in situations where we think the child might bite.
3. We will be consistent in our interventions, realizing it is a temporary stage of normal development.
4. We will communicate to parents about the incident. However, information about the "biter" is confidential.



## **HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES**

Staff shall report any injury of a child to the Director, no matter how insignificant it may seem. The director will determine if the parent needs to be immediately notified and if first aid should be administered. Majority of the NCA staff are trained in CPR and First Aid. Volunteers and student interns may be asked to apply a Band-Aid or clean a wound, but the teacher determines the action plan. First aid kits are in each classroom and should be pointed out to all staff, volunteers, and student trainees on the orientation tour. If a child falls in the classroom or on the playground and may be seriously hurt, he or she should not be moved. An adult must stay with the child and keep him or her still while sending someone else to get the Director.

Parents must be notified if a child suffers an accident while in care. All head injuries must be reported to the parent immediately as well as bites that break the skin.

All accidents/incidents shall be written up on an accident report to be given to the parent at the end of the day. A copy of the report is to be placed in the child's folder.

The following procedure shall be followed regarding small cuts, abrasions, or scratches:

1. Wash the area with soap and water.
2. Apply ice or Band-Aid as necessary.
3. Write accident report.

The following procedures shall be followed regarding serious accident with injuries:

1. Remain with injured child but do not move child.
2. Send for Director.
3. Give emergency first aid if necessary.
4. Notify parent or get emergency help.
5. Fill out an accident report.

Children in care at NCA are **never** to be left unsupervised.

Sticks, pointed objects, or other swallowable objects should be placed out of reach of the children. (Be sure to check outside for any of these objects.)

If adults need to pick up a child, lift him/her under his/her arms, never by the arms. Also bend at the knees to protect the back.

Avoid sitting on tables, ledges, or shelves. Adults need to model "feet on the floor" for children.

Check all equipment daily. If an item need repairs or is broken, remove it from the area.

Children are to be shown how to use equipment safely and rules are to be enforced. Adults need to be aware potential accidents and hazards.

Children are to be watched carefully when they are on slides and climbers. While adults are supervising indoors or outdoors, they are not to congregate with other adults and are to always stand where children can be safely observed. Adults should be aware of blind spots!!

Staff, students', or volunteers' purses should be kept out of reach of the children.

All areas of the center shall be checked for children before the doors are locked for the evening.

### **STAFF'S HEALTH**

Each employee must have an initial health examination, including a screening for tuberculosis (TB), prior to employment with NCA. The employee must have a health re-examination, including a screening for TB, annually to assure they do not, because of communicable diseases, pose a significant risk to the health or safety of others in the NCA program. Staff, volunteers, and student shall not remain at work if he or she has any sign of a contagious disease.

### **SANITATION AND ILLNESS PREVENTION**

Staff, volunteers, and children must wash their hands with soap and warm water after using the toilet and before eating. Staff and volunteers must wash hands with soap and running warm water **before and after** changing a diaper, assisting a child with toileting, feeding a child, handling food, and caring for a child with symptoms of a communicable disease, including nose blowing.

**\*\*Hands shall be washed using the following method:** Turn on the warm water and wet hands. Squeeze the liquid soap in hands and rub for at least 20 seconds making sure to wash all areas of the hands and nails. Rinse with running water and then dry with a disposable paper towel. Use paper towel to turn off water as last step, so you will not re-contaminate your hands.

Toilets must be sprayed and wiped with bleach water solution after each use.

Dirty diapers and/or pull-ups must be placed in plastic bags before placing in trashcan.

When putting children down for a nap on cots, the cots must be spaced at least 18 inches apart and children should be arranged in a head to foot arrangement.

Keep trash lids on the container.

The medication drawer in the refrigerator is only for children's medicine.

Toys and objects put in the children's mouth (all toys in the infant/toddler rooms) should be sorted, washed, and disinfected daily.

All other toys should be sorted, washed, and disinfected weekly.

Tabletops, shelves, and other furniture should be washed and disinfected weekly.

Carpets should be vacuumed daily and shampooed weekly. Floors should be mopped daily with disinfectants.

The bathrooms should be cleaned daily.

Disinfecting should be done with a solution of Clorox made fresh daily.

If the water table has water in it from the previous day, it shall be drained and cleaned.

Noses shall be blown or wiped with disposable tissue and discarded in plastic lined garbage container. If child or staff is outside when the nose is wiped, the hands should be wiped with a baby wipe and discarded. If the child or staff person is inside, then the hands should be washed using the proper hand washing procedure.

Draining or oozing cuts or sores shall be covered.

The following procedures shall be followed when handling blood, and blood containing fluids and wound exudates of all children in the center.

1. For spills of vomit, urine, and feces on floors, bathrooms, tabletops, toys, kitchen counter tops, and diaper changing tables shall be cleaned and disinfected.
2. For spills of blood or blood-containing body fluids and injury and tissue discharges, the area shall be cleaned and disinfected. Gloves shall be used in these situations unless the amount of blood or body fluid is so small that it can be easily contained by the material used for cleaning.

Persons involved in cleaning contaminated surfaces should avoid exposure of open skin sores or mucous membranes to blood or blood containing body fluids and injury or tissue discharges by using gloves to protect hands when cleaning contaminated surfaces.

Mops shall be cleaned, rinsed in sanitizing solution and then wrung and hung to dry after every use.

Blood-contaminated material and soiled diapers shall be put in a plastic trash bag and tied then, put in the plastic lined trash bag.

## **STUDENT WELLNESS AND MEDICATION POLICY**

Students who are sent home from the center because of vomiting, diarrhea, fever in excess of 100° degrees or any of the symptoms listed in the hand book **will not be allowed to return to care for at least 24 hours after they are picked up and are symptom free *without the aid of medication.*** This will apply even if the child “feels” better.

Students who are absent, due to illness, for 2 days or more must have a doctor’s note stating their ability to safely return to the center before being readmitted. Students who have been prescribed antibiotics continue to be contagious for 24 hours after the first dose and cannot return to the center until this time period has passed.

Parents must sign an *Authorization to Give Medication* for **all prescription and nonprescription medication** (including diaper ointment) a child is required to take during the course of the day. As you sign your child in for the day ask any staff member for this form. All medication, prescription and nonprescription, must meet the labeling and dose administration requirements outlined in the handbook. Under no circumstances will any student be administered any medication outside of these parameters.



In an effort to make our center as safe as possible for our students and staff members, these standards will be strictly enforced without exception. Your cooperation and support is appreciated.

## **MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION POLICY**

With the exception of emergency medication NCA does not administer medication whose dosage requirements are every 12 hours or less than the amount of time the child in need is normally at the daycare. When possible, based on the instructions for the doctor, parents must arrange dosages during the hours children are not at the daycare. Medication CANNOT be accepted or administered unless all of the Virginia state requirements are met. We CANNOT “just give it to them today” for any reason. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure medication is brought in the original packaging, with the child’s name on the medication. If over the counter, the name can be written on the container and the medication must be accompanied by the insert. If the medication is prescription, the pharmacy label with the child’s name must be affixed to the medicine. When medication is presented for a child the following procedure will be followed. Note only staff members who have successfully completed the MAT or PMAT (limited) training are authorized to administer medication.

### **MAT Qualified Staff Member Receiving Medication**

1. Review medication to ensure it complies with Virginia state standards. Have the parent to complete the Medication Consent Form. Review and ensure the form is complete in accordance with state standards.
2. If the medication does not meet the standards DO NOT accept responsibility for the medication or the administration of the medication.
3. Complete heading of the Log of Medication, include the last day the medication is to be administered.
4. Give the forms and medicine to the office. Ensure a member of the office staff is aware of the medication needs.

### **Office**

5. Verify completed documents against the medication. Ensure medication is properly identified.
6. Complete a suspense form for last day medicine is to be administered. If the form is for long term (beyond 10 days) suspense 1 month from expiration date, 2 weeks from expiration date and the last day of the medication use is scheduled. At any rate list all suspense dates in the child’s file. On the last day all medication will be given to the parents. Especially in long term requirements ensure expiration date of medication is identified.
7. Inform the child’s program leader of the medication requirement. Provide a board reminder with the child’s name, from to dates and time dosage is due. Place the same on the office board.
8. File authorization and log in active medicine book.
9. When period of medication is over file the authorization and log in the child’s file on the left side for 1-year.
10. Place medication in the kitchen lock box.
11. Monitor to ensure paperwork is being completed and medications are being administered both IAW Virginia state standards.

### **Medication Administering MAT Staff Member**

12. The program leader for the child’s class is primarily responsible for ensuring the medication is administered. If the program leader is not MAT certified they will be responsible for coordinating medication requirements with a qualified staff member.

13. Obtain the child's medication file from the office and medicine from the medication cabinet.
14. Administer medication IAW MAT standards.
15. Before and after administering medication ensure your hands and the hands of the child are washed using proper hand washing procedures.
16. Complete log.
17. Return child, medication, and authorization file to appropriate places.

## **WELLNESS POLICY**

It is inevitable that children will get sick, no matter where they are. As children begin to have contact with the world outside that of their own families, they come into contact with viruses and bacteria that are foreign to their bodies. This is the way they build immunities. We cannot, nor would we want to shield a child completely from the outside world. If we did, the natural immunities a child gains through contact with others would not develop and a simple cold could become a serious illness. We do, however, want to protect a child from an unusually high exposure to germs all at once.

In a child care setting, children come into contact with groups of other children outside their families. It is in this situation that the illness of one child can spread rapidly through the group to other children and staff members if stringent measures to prevent this spread are not taken.

For this reason, the staff of NCA will take constant precautions to prevent the spread of disease. Many common childhood diseases are contagious; germs that can be spread in several ways cause them. Intestinal tract infections are spread through stools; respiratory tract infections are spread through coughs, sneezes, and runny noses. Other diseases are spread through direct contact. Careful hand washing by staff and children alike can eliminate approximately 75 percent of the risk of spreading these illnesses. Other precautions include separating children once they are determined to be ill, taking extra precautions with diapering or toilet training children, and working to maintain sanitary conditions throughout the center.

As parents you can help us in our efforts to keep your children healthy. We ask your cooperation in the following ways:

- If your child has been exposed to any of the diseases listed below notify us of the exposure.
- If your child shows any of the following symptoms you will be called and asked to come immediately. Please help us protect the other children and staff by responding promptly. If your child has any of the symptoms at home, we ask that you keep your child out of the center until the symptoms are gone or until your physician says it is safe to return to the center.
- Symptoms include but are not limited to:
  - Fever greater than 100 F, or 37.7 C
  - Severe coughing, child gets red or blue in the face
  - High-pitched cough or whooping sounds after coughing
  - Difficult or rapid breathing, especially in infants
  - Yellowish skin or eyes
  - Pinkeye, tears, redness of eyelid lining, followed by swelling and discharge of pus
  - Unusual spots or rashes
  - Sore throat or trouble swallowing
  - Infected skin patches
  - Crusty, bright yellow, dry, or gummy areas of skin, possibly accompanied by fever
  - Unusually dark, tea colored urine, especially with a fever

- Grey or white stool
- Headache and stiff neck
- Vomiting
- Severe itching of body or scalp or scratching of scalp
- Even if the above listed symptoms are not present if a child appears cranky or less active than usual, cries more than usual or just seem generally unwell

It is imperative that we all work together to keep all of the children who attend the center as healthy and happy as possible.

## **ILLNESS GUIDELINES**

In accordance with the state law governing the licensing of daycare providers, it is unlawful to provide care to a child who has fever, rash, diarrhea or shows any other symptoms of illness.

Additionally, the parent/guardian shall make arrangements upon notification to pick up the child promptly should the child become ill during the course of the day in the provider's care. If your child has a temperature of 100° or higher once notified, you must pick up your child immediately. Students who are sent home from the center because of vomiting, diarrhea, fever in excess of 100° degrees or any symptoms listed in this hand book will not be allowed to return to care for at least 24 hours after they are picked up and are symptom free without the aid of medication. This will apply even if the child "feels" better.

Students who are identified as having conjunctivitis, or, as it is better known pink eye, will not be allowed to return to the center without a note from a physician attesting they are no longer contagious and are cleared to return. We will not allow exceptions to this policy since the period of contagiousness varies from case to case.

Students who are absent, due to illness, for 2 days or more must have a doctor's note stating their ability to safely return to the center before being readmitted. Students who have been prescribed antibiotics continue to be contagious for 24 hours after the first dose and cannot return to the center until this time period has passed.

## **DIAPER CHANGING POLICY**

### **Procedure:**

1. Gather all supplies needed: diaper, wipes, gloves and ointment if needed in place at the changing area.
2. Wash hands before changing diapers if soiled.
3. Bring the child over to the diaper changing table.
4. Put on clean gloves.
5. Remove the dirty diaper and wipe child with a clean wipe, using a front to back motion to prevent infection.
6. **Dispose dirty diaper and used wipes inside of the glove or plastic bag.**
7. Put on a clean diaper on the child.
8. Wash the child's hands with a clean wipe or wash hands with soap and water and dry with paper towel. Then you can return the child to the prior activity that the child was involved in.

9. If diaper is wet, place it inside of the plastic bag or glove and throw away. If diaper is BM, **place in plastic bag or glove and put it in another plastic bag and throw away.** All diapers must be contained prior to placing in the diaper trashcan.
10. Clean and sanitize the diapering area. Spray area with disinfectant solution, wipe with a paper towel, and discard paper towel.
11. Place the used diaper and paper in the step diaper trashcan.
12. Wash hands thoroughly.

## **OVER THE COUNTER SKIN PRODUCTS**

All nonprescription drugs and over-the-counter skin products shall be used in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. Nonprescription drugs and over-the-counter skin products shall not be kept or used beyond the expiration date of the product. If sunscreen is used, the following requirements shall be met:

- Written parent authorization noting any known adverse reactions shall be obtained;
- Sunscreen shall be in the original container labeled with the child's name;
- Sunscreen does not need to be kept locked but shall be inaccessible to children under five years of age or those children in a therapeutic child day program or special needs child day program;
- Any center-kept sunscreen shall be hypoallergenic and have a minimum SPF of 15;
- Staff members without medication administration training may apply sunscreen, unless it is prescription sunscreen, in which case the storing and application of the sunscreen must meet medication-related requirements; and
- Children nine years of age and older may administer their own sunscreen if supervised.

If diaper ointment or cream is used, the following requirements shall be met:

- Written parent authorization noting any known adverse reactions shall be obtained;
- These products shall be in the original container and labeled with the child's name;
- These products do not need to be kept locked but shall be inaccessible to children;
- A record shall be kept that includes the child's name, date of use, frequency of application and any adverse reactions; and
- Staff members without medication administration training may apply diaper ointment, unless it is a prescription diaper ointment, in which case the storing and application of diaper ointment must meet medication-related requirements.

If insect repellent is used, following requirements shall be met:

- Written parent authorization noting any known adverse reactions shall be obtained;
- Insect repellent shall be in the original container and labeled with the child's name;
- Insect repellent does not need to be kept locked but shall be inaccessible to children;
- A record shall be kept that includes the child's name, date of use, frequency of application and any adverse reactions;
- Manufacturer's instruction for age, duration and dosage shall be followed; and
- Staff members without medication administration training may apply insect repellent, unless it is prescription insect repellent, in which case the storing and application of insect repellent must meet medication-related requirements.

## **ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT**

The employees and volunteers of NCA are required legally and ethically to report child abuse. If you see suspicious marks on a child or if a child says something to you that causes you to be suspicious, share this information with the director. The director will determine if Child Protective Services needs to be called.

Virginia's Code legally defines abuse and neglect as follows:

**Abuse** is any one of the following acts which seriously endanger the physical, mental, or emotional health of a child:

- The infliction, attempted infliction, or as a result of inadequate supervision, the allowance of infliction or attempted infliction of physical or mental injury upon the child by a parent or any other person.
- The exploitation or overwork of a child by a parent or any other person.
- The involvement of the child in any sexual act with a parent or any other person, or the aiding or toleration by the parent or the caretaker of the child's sexual involvement with any other involvement of a child in sexual activity constituting a crime under the laws of this state.

**Neglect** is the refusal or willful failure of a parent or caretaker to supply the child with necessary food, clothing, shelter, care, treatment, or counseling for any injury, illness or condition of the child, as a result of which the child's physical, mental or emotional health is substantially threatened or impaired. The following are not considered neglect:

- The inability of a parent or caregiver to provide for a child due to inadequate financial resources shall not, for that reason alone, be considered neglect.
- When, in lieu, of medical care, a child is being provided treatment in accordance with the tenets of a well-recognized religious method of healing which has a reasonable, proven record of success, the child shall not, for that reason alone, be considered neglected or maltreated. Nothing shall prohibit the court from ordering medical services for the child when there is substantial risk of harm to the child's health or welfare

## **STUDENT INTERACTIONS**

This is a gentle reminder to all staff, regardless of gender, concerning appropriate interaction with children of the center. Please hear my heart, I am not advocating that we become a loveless bunch... one of the things that draws families to NCA is the Love factor. God is Love, and as He is in us we can't help but show love. However at the same time we must be wise in our display. The following are a quick list of reminders.

- No placing children on your lap
- No picking up children that are able to walk
- Do not kiss children on the lips.
- Keep snuggles and hugs appropriately brief
- No swinging children in circles or between your legs

To our men on staff, you are blessings and each time I give a tour of NCA I express to prospective parents how instrumental you are to this staff as your role is special and unique in that you offer a

positive male image to families who may not have one otherwise. However we would be foolish if we ignored that there are special precautions we need to take to protect you and the center. For the most part you are doing this but I want you to become conscious of never being behind closed doors with students. Again, please hear my heart, both of you are trusted, but we must be wise.

In our annual training/meeting we will go over this and other interaction related issues. You are an appreciated staff. I enjoy serving with you. I can see your growth and the growth of this team. Thanks for all you do. If you have questions or concerns in regard to this letter or anything else please know the door is open to you.

## **PREVENTION OF INJURY AND ACCIDENTS**

Staff members should be informed of procedures for reporting any unsafe situations they may have discovered in the building or on the playground. The list below shows only a few examples of hazards of which staff should be aware. For a complete listing of hazards, please refer to the Licensing Standards.

### **Unsafe Situations Include:**

#### ***Inside the Building:***

- uncovered electrical outlets
- light bulbs that have burned out
- loose floor boards or bricks
- crack in concrete sidewalks or steps
- nails sticking out
- loose hand rails
- loose or broken locks or handles on doors that go outside, to the basement, or that are used to lock away poisons

#### ***Outside the Building:***

- holes in the ground
- roots sticking up that might cause tripping
- broken playground equipment
- head and neck entrapment spaces on playground equipment
- lack of resilient surfacing under playground equipment
- hot spots on metal playground equipment
- splintered wood
- broken latch on gates
- poisonous plants
- holes in the fence

#### ***Toys or Equipment:***

- toys that are inappropriate to age group (small enough to be swallowed by children under four years of age)
- toys with loose parts that might have sharp edges, springs, or small pieces
- allowing inappropriate use of toys so as to pose a dangerous situations
- too many toys scattered around the floor

## **GENERAL CENTER POLICIES**

### ***OUTDOOR PLAY POLICY***

Weather permitting, all children, including infants, will spend from 15 minutes to 2 hours per day in daily outdoor play. It is necessary that children have freedom of movement, so it is requested that children are dressed accordingly. Shoes and socks are required. As we encourage children to explore, there may be times when he/she may become messy or rumpled. For this reason, we request that parents send one complete change of clothing that is to remain at the center. Parents are to be sure to label all articles of belongings.

Children will be outside unless the heat index indicates extreme caution or the temperature is below 38 degrees, weather conditions permitting. Accommodations cannot be made for children to remain indoors if they are feeling “under the weather.” A child too sick to be outside is probably too sick to be around other children.

### ***TRANSPORATION AND FIELD TRIPS***

Field trips and other outings are planned throughout the year. Individual notices will be sent home prior to each trip. Permission slips must be signed and on file for your child to participate. The parent/guardian authorizes the center to transport the child in center’s vehicles for fieldtrips to the swimming pool, park, store, schools, libraries, etc. Field trips may require a fee (you will be notified). Fees must be paid in advance or your child will not participate. We encourage parents to act as chaperones on any field trips.

If the center provides transportation, the center shall be responsible from the time the child boards the vehicle until returned to the parents or person designated by the parent. Any vehicle used by the center for transportation of children shall meet the following requirements:

- The vehicle shall be manufactured for the purpose of transporting people seated in an enclosed area
- The vehicle’s seats shall be attached to the floor
- The vehicle shall be insured with at least the minimum limits established by Virginia State statutes
- The vehicle shall meet the safety standards set by the Department of Motor Vehicles and shall be kept in satisfactory condition to assure the safety of children
- If volunteers supply personal vehicles, the center is responsible for ensuring that the requirements of this subsection are met.

NCA shall ensure that during transportation of children:

- Virginia state statutes about safety belts and child restraints are followed and stated maximum number of passengers in a given vehicle shall not be exceeded
- The children remain seated and each child’s arms, legs, and head remain inside the vehicle;
- Doors are closed properly and locked unless locks were not installed by the manufacturer of the vehicle;
- At least one staff member or the driver always remains in the vehicle when children are present;
- The following information is in transportation vehicles:
  - Emergency numbers for each student and for medical facilities

- The center's name, address, and phone number; and
- A list of the names of the children being transported.
- Insurance and vehicle registration
- Valid driver's licenses for all drivers

When entering and leaving vehicles, children shall enter and leave the vehicle from the curbside of the vehicle or in a protected parking area or driveway. Children shall cross streets at corners or crosswalks or other designated safe crossing point if no corner or crosswalk is available.

The staff-to-children ratios established by the State of Virginia Department of Social Services shall be followed on all field trips. The staff-to-children ratios need not be followed during transportation of school-age children to and from the center. One staff member or adult is necessary in addition to the driver when 16 or more preschool or younger children are being transported in the vehicle.

The center shall make provisions for providing children on field trips with adequate food and water. If perishable food is taken on field trips, the food shall be stored in insulated containers with ice packs to keep the food cold.

Before leaving on a field trip, a schedule of the trip's events and locations shall be posted and visible at the center site. There shall be a communication plan between center staff and staff who are transporting children or on a field trip. Staff shall verify that all children have been removed from the vehicle at the conclusion of any trip. Parental permission for transportation and field trips shall be secured before the scheduled activity. If a blanket permission is used instead of a separate written permission, the parents shall be notified of the trip in advance and they will have been given opportunity to withdraw their child from the trip.

## ***NUTRITION STATEMENT AND POLICY***

The philosophy for feeding children at the center is a very important part of early childhood education. We choose to use family style meals. Snack time and mealtime provide the opportunity for learning experiences that form correct habits of eating in a pleasant atmosphere, such as:

- Mealtimes are scheduled to be relaxing and a social time
- Children should be told the truth and correct name for foods offered
- Children are encouraged to eat but not forced. Children are served a bite of each disliked food so if they decide to taste it they can
- As age allows, children are allowed to feed and serve themselves not fed by the staff members, even when it means a mess is being made.
- Food is presented to children in a very positive and matter of fact manner. Making food and plate arrangements attractive will encourage children to eat well.
- Children are presented food objectively, because they need it, not that it is eaten as a favor to any adult
- Children are given sensible size first servings, with the opportunity and encouragement to take seconds.
- Spilling, dropping, and breaking of dishes are accepted as accidents. Children are told how to avoid accidents but not blamed or made to feel guilty for accidents
- Children are neither bribed nor rewarded for eating
- New foods are served in small amounts until they have become familiar foods
- Staff encourages early finishers to remain at the table for awhile so that getting dessert early will not trigger a general rush for dessert
- If something is being served that children do not like one alternative will be offered.



- Seconds are permitted
- NCA is a member of USDA.

## ***WATER ACTIVITIES POLICY***

Water activities used at NCA include the use of water tables, sprinklers, and water spraying devices.

## ***MISSING CHILD POLICY***

In the event a child becomes missing while at the center the Director or Assistant Director will be notified. Locks and physical presence of staff or volunteer members will secure all exits doors as an expeditious and thorough search of the entire facility is made. If the child is not located the Director will contact the authorities and parents.

## ***OFF-SITE ACTIVITY POLICY***

Occasionally we will take official field trips approved by parents. Each family will be notified about the trip, the price (if any), and how the child will be transported. Each child will be required to have a signed permission slip. Walking field trips may be taken, the family will be asked to sign a blanket permission slip during the enrollment process to cover walking field trips.

Offsite activities will include at least one staff member in attendance and accessible to children at all times who has documented current certification in infant/child/adult CPR and pediatric first aid. In addition to the adult/child ratio regularly employed by the center, an additional adult shall be added for off-site activities.

Children shall be under the direct supervision of staff at all times, during the offsite activity.

If a child becomes missing during an offsite activity the staff member in charge will immediately notify the group leader who will in turn contact the center. The authorities and parents will then be notified. During this time, with the remaining children remaining under supervision an adult will search the immediate area for the missing child.

If the offsite activity requires transportation, then arrangements shall conform to state laws, including seat belts and child restraints. The following precautions shall be made:

- At least two staff, one of which may be the driver, shall be in each vehicle unless the vehicle has a communication device and child/staff ratio is met in the vehicle.
- At least one staff in each vehicle shall be currently certified in adult/child/infant CPR and pediatric first aid.
- The driver or attendant shall not leave the children unattended in the vehicle at any time while transporting children.
- Each child shall board or leave the vehicle from the curbside of the street or shall be safely escorted across the street.
- Each child is delivered to a responsible person authorized in writing by the parent or guardian.
- A designated staff person shall be present when the child is delivered to the center.
- Good order shall be maintained in the vehicle.

- The driver shall check the vehicle at the completion of each trip to ensure that no child is left in the vehicle and all children were picked up and dropped off at the correct locations.
- The vehicles shall be maintained in good repair.
- The use of tobacco in any form, use of alcohol and possession of illegal substances, firearms, pellet or BB guns (loaded or unloaded) in any vehicle while transporting children is prohibited.
- Children shall not be transported in the back of a pick up truck.
- The number of persons in a vehicle used to transport children shall not exceed the manufacturers recommended capacity.
- All drivers and vehicles shall be covered by liability insurance as required in Virginia
- The driver shall hold a valid, appropriate Virginia driver's license.
- Each driver or attendant shall be provided with a current master transportation list including each child's name, pick up and drop off locations, and authorized persons to whom the child may be released.
- The driver or attendant shall maintain a daily attendance record.
- The vehicle shall have evidence of a current safety inspection.
- There shall be first aid supplies in the vehicle.
- There shall be information in each vehicle identifying the name of the Director and the name, telephone number, and address of the center, for emergency situations.



## **PHOTOGRAPHING CHILDREN POLICY**

At various times throughout the year, we will be taking photographs and/or videotapes of the children for educational and decoration purposes (e.g. we post photos on bulletin boards, in cubbies, etc.). Please be aware that we allow parents to come in to also photograph and/or videotape. We require permission from the parent and/or guardian to photograph, videotape, or publish photographs in newspapers or websites and other such types of correspondence.

## **DEPARTURE TIME/THIRD PARTY RELEASE POLICY**

All centers must be very careful about releasing children. Children can only be released to those people listed on the consent form. Therefore, we ask that **only staff release children.** If an adult other than those on the list comes to pick up a child, get the director.

**If a parent asks you a question concerning their child, please refer the parent to the child's teacher.** The teacher has been with the child the whole day while you have only been with the child for a short period of time.

Only those persons listed on the Division of Licensing Programs Department of Social Services Child Registration Form as "Persons authorized to pick up child" can pick a child up from the center. If anyone other than those authorized on the Division of Licensing Programs Department of Social Services Child Registration Form is to pick up a child, written permission must be given to the center by the registering parent/guardian.

In case of an emergency, persons listed in “Emergency Information” list can pick up a child if the center cannot reach the parent/guardian and the center calls these persons to pick up a child.

In a non-emergency situation, persons on “Emergency Information” list cannot pick up a child without written permission from the parent/guardian.

Every child enrolled in the center must have a Division of Licensing Programs Department of Social Services Child Registration Form on file. It is the responsibility of the family to inform the center of any changes on this form.

The center will not release a child at any time to a parent or designated individual who is visibly impaired due to alcohol consumption or substance abuse (either prescribed or illegal). In the event that a parent or designated individual is impaired, the center’s administrative staff will telephone individuals from the third party release form to arrange for an alternative adult to pick up the child. If a parent or designated individual is impaired and insists that their child be released in his or her custody, the center’s administrative staff will immediately telephone the appropriate law-enforcement officials.

If a child has not been picked up from the center after 1 hour from the center’s closing time, the Prince William County Police will be notified and the child shall be released into their custody.

### **CUSTODIAL PARENT’S RIGHTS**

Section 22.1-4.3 of the *Code of Virginia* states that unless a court order has been issued to the contrary, the noncustodial parent of a student enrolled in a public school or daycare center must be included, upon the request of such noncustodial parent, as an emergency contact for events occurring during school or daycare activities.

### **GENERAL RULES**

- Be on time!! If you will be tardy or absent you are responsible for calling. Remember that children come whether or not adults do.
- Treat the children with respect. **Handling children in an inappropriate manner is cause for immediate dismissal.**
- You are responsible for helping maintain a healthy and safe environment, so please follow all sanitation and health policies.
- The classrooms and playground must be monitored for hazards regularly, make sure to throw away any garbage or broken objects found.
- Remember, we are here for the children, so socializing and personal business will be done on your time, not ours. If you find free time during work, check to see what you could be doing. There is always something to do, cleaning, organizing, preparing...
- Being kind and respectful to families is a MUST. Give positive feedback to the parents concerning their child daily.
- Positive language and voice control are a MUST and will be used at all times around the children.
- You will be responsible for any furniture or equipment that is mishandled.
- **NEVER** leave children alone on the playground or in the room for any reason. If you must leave for some reason, find a person to take your place.
- When on the playground, you need to walk around a lot. Avoid staying in one place for too long. Go where children are and be aware of the blind spots (behind buildings and trees). **THIS IS**

## **NOT TIME FOR TALKING TO THE OTHER STAFF. YOU WILL BE EVALUATED FOR THIS BEHAVIOR.**

- Chairs, stools, and other items for sitting are absolutely forbidden on the playground. Staff and volunteers are under no circumstances authorized to sit on the playground while responsible for children.
- Do not sit on the playground equipment or toys. These are for the children's use only!
- Be positive and respectful of children and adults alike. Modeling appropriate godly behavior is part of your job.
- Be sure to let the coordinator, assistant director, or director know when there is a problem with you and your relationships with co-workers, volunteers, or student workers.
- Be nice and respectful to parents. Avoid sharing negative comments about a child's misbehavior; if the parent needs to be approached about an incident please consult the coordinator, assistant director, or director first.
- Encourage the children to "do things". Get them involved in an activity.
- If you are interacting with a child, reading to them or playing a game, position yourself to see as much of the room or playground as possible.
- Explain to the children what you expect from them.
- Encourage children to pick up and put away things as they finish playing with them.
- Use simple, clear directions. You may have to remind children more than once.
- Walk over to children to speak to them.
- Get down on the child's level to speak to them.
- Appreciate the children and their efforts.
- Never send a child home wet, cold, or dirty.
- Ask for help if you need it.
- Be yourself! Do not be overly sweet or phony when speaking to children.
- Staff are to dress in a manner, which is appropriate for working with young children. Halter tops, tube tops, high heels, short shorts or skirts (knees length or longer required), and low cut blouses are not acceptable.
- All supplies, learning materials and books are to be returned to the proper place when the staff is finished using them. Any book lost or damaged will be the responsibility of the person who checked it out last.
- Gossip or vulgar talking is not allowed in NCA
- Each year you are responsible for attending 16 clock hours of training. You will submit proof of that training to the coordinator or assistant director to be placed in your file.
- Every 2 years you must get a new TB test.
- You must attend scheduled training.
- Enjoy yourself!

## **LEAVE REQUESTS/PAID/UNPAID**

Maintaining professionalism and following protocol ensures smooth operations at Nikki's Christian Academy. Leave requests, whether paid or unpaid, must be submitted in writing to the coordinator or Director. Staff should adhere to the guidelines for timely submission and approval processes to avoid disruptions.

Although leave is rarely denied, staff are encouraged to submit their leave requests at least 2 weeks in advance to ensure proper planning and minimal disruption to operations. This policy allows the

administration to coordinate schedules effectively while maintaining a supportive environment for all personnel.

## **PAID/UNPAID HOLIDAY'S AND LEAVE OF ABSENCES ISSUES**

- Annually Nikki's Christian Academy observes the following federal holidays. During these holidays our center will be closed and full time staff members, who have been employed for at least 1 year, will be paid for the day. Exact dates will be announced at the beginning of each calendar year.
  - Martin Luther King Jr. Day
  - Memorial Day
  - Independence Day
  - Labor Day
  - Juneteenth
  - Thanksgiving Day
  - Christmas Day (if day falls on a weekend, full time employees will get paid for 1 work day)
  - New Years Day (if day falls on a weekend, full time employees will get paid for 1 work day)
- The following holidays are unpaid. An employee that is full time and has earned personal leave hours may use personal leave hours toward any unpaid holiday. The amount of hours used will be determined on the amount of hours the employee has worked during that work week the unpaid holiday is scheduled. Therefore, an employee may not be paid more than the hours needed and to not exceed a 40 hour work week.
  - Columbus Day
  - Veteran's Day
  - President's Day
  - Good Friday
  - Easter Monday
- In addition, annually, Nikki's Christian Daycare & Learning Center will close for the following breaks. Exact dates will be announced at the beginning of each calendar year.
  - Thanksgiving (close no later than 3:00PM the Wednesday before Thanksgiving through the Friday after) \*
  - Christmas \*(close no later than 3:00PM Christmas Eve through Christmas Day. Christmas closure dates depends on the day Christmas falls on the calendar)
  - New Year \*(close no later than 3:00pm New Year's Eve through New Year's Day)
  - Time off before or after a holiday without prior approval, employee will not get paid.
- Each full time employee after 1year who works 35 to 40 hours per week, will receive 40 hours paid personal/sick leave (2 years-80 hours) (5 or more years-120 hours) each calendar year.
- In the event of the death of an immediate family member, full time employees after first year of employment, will be granted 5 days paid bereavement absence. Part time employees will be granted 2 days paid bereavement absence. An immediate family member is identified as spouse, child, father, mother. Full time employees will receive 3 days bereavement absence for sister, brother, grandfather, grandmother, or grandchild.
- All time off, with the exception of bereavement absence, sickness, and emergencies requires advance approval. All requests for time off, regardless of the nature or amount of time requested, requires written request.

- With the exception of instance as listed in this policy letter, Nikki's Christian Academy is not obligated to pay employees for times of absence. Individual cases can be addressed to the CEO, Nikki's Christian Academy.
- When submitting your request for leave indicate if you want to be paid for the time.
- Earned hours do not roll into the new year. At the end of the year all accounts will be zeroed out.

### **SNOW DAYS, RAIN DAYS, INCLEMENT WEATHER AND OTHER EMERGENCIES** **WEATHER POLICY**

In the event Nikki's Christian Academy is closed due to Snow, Rain, other inclement weather or other emergencies, employees will not be paid for any days the center is closed and/or days the employee does not work. An employee may choose to use their personal leave time if available for missed work days during the time the center is closed. If the center is open and an employee decides not to come to work, the employee will not get paid and the employee may not use personal leave time.

### **PROBATION PERIOD**

All employees are hired for an initial 90-day probationary period. During this 90-day period you will be evaluated in every area, to include but not limited to, timeliness, ability to interact with staff, children and parents, communication skills, and ability to follow instructions. You will be counseled every 45 days concerning your progress and performance. At the end of your probationary period you will be counseled in whether you are offered a permanent position on the team at Nikki's Christian Academy and given the opportunity to accept our offer of employment if extended. Any time during the 90-day probationary period you are subject to release from employment if negative observations are not corrected and continue to occur. During this period the customary 2-week notice may be waived at the discretion of the Director. Please ensure you thoroughly read and understand the Staff Standard Operating Procedures since this is the standard by which you will be evaluated.

### **EMPLOYMENT DISQUALIFYING CIRCUMSTANCES**

**Accusation Steaming From The Center:** In the event you are formally accused of an incident that, if found guilty would disqualify you from being eligible to work with children you will be placed on unpaid administrative leave until the case is closed. If the case is closed favorably and you are found to be innocent of the allegations, you will be allowed to return to work with all pay and privileges returned to you from the date of the administrative leave. If you are found to be guilty of allegations that disqualify you from working in the center you will be immediately terminated losing all pay and privileges effective the initial date of administrative leave.

**Accusation Steaming From Outside of Center:** In the event you are formally accused of an incident that, if found guilty would disqualify you from being eligible to work with children you will be placed on unpaid administrative leave until the case is closed. If the case is closed favorably and you are found to be innocent of the allegations, you will be allowed to return to work receiving not more than 1-month of your normal pay. If you are found to be guilty of allegations that disqualify you from working in the center you will be immediately terminated losing all pay and privileges effective the initial date of administrative leave.

## **RESIGNATION POLICY**

No matter how long an employee has been with NCA all resignations must be submitted in writing to the center director providing at least a 2-week notice from the date the resignation is received. If an employee resigns without providing at least a 2-week notice that employee will lose all or a portion of their pay and allowances due. If the director determines all or a portion of an employee's pay and allowances will be withheld the employee has the right to appeal the decision to the Executive Director of NCA. The funds withheld will be used to enable the center to quickly cover and offset the unexpected personnel shortage. Further, for employees who have not been employed for 1-year, money invested into the employee will be recovered from the final pay. Investments include but are not limited to the cost for background checks, specialized training, uniform cost...





## **CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT**

Young children have not yet developed a sense of judgment about the difference between information that can be shared about their families and information which properly stays within the family. Very often young children are the source of much gossip and much conversation about the private lives of their families. Teachers and caregivers unwittingly become the receivers of shared confidences both from children and their parents. It is critical that the children's and parents' confidences are not repeated to other teachers, to the caregivers' friends, or families.

Our center stresses the importance of protecting the rights and privacy of children, their families, and our teacher. The practice of maintaining the confidentiality of verbal information and written records is a basic policy of our center. This practice is in accord with one of the primary ethical principles of professional behavior in early childhood settings. The identity of children and their families should be revealed only in cases of professional necessity such as in child abuse or neglect, developmental records, or special family circumstances.

**AGREEMENT:** I agree to respect the confidentiality of verbal and written reports of children, families, and teachers within my classroom, the center, and in my non-work environment.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Staff Member \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Director/Director \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



**APPENDIX A****Illness**

<b>Illness/Infection Symptom</b>	<b>Should child/staff member stay home?</b>	<b>When can child/staff member come back?</b>
Chicken Pox	YES	When all the blisters/pox have scabbed over
Cold	NO (without fever) YES (with fever)	Refer to Fever
Coxsackie (hand, mouth, and foot disease)	NO	
Diarrhea (two or more stools or over and above what is normal for child)	YES	Diarrhea is resolved.
Ear Infection	NO (with doctors diagnosis)	
Fever of unknown origin (100 degrees F oral or 101 rectal or higher) and some behavioral signs of illness	YES	Free of fever for 24 hours and fever reducing medications have not been given in the past 8 hours or on prescribed medication for 24 hrs.
Fifth Disease	NO (without fever) YES (with fever)	Refer to Fever
Giardia	YES	When diarrhea subsides or doctor approves readmission
Hib disease	YES	Well and proof of non-carriage or cleared by physician.
Hepatitis A	YES	One week after illness started and fever is resolved
AIDS (or HIV infection)	YES	Until child's health, neurological development, behavior, and immune status is deemed appropriate (on a case by case basis) by qualified persons, including the child's physician chosen by the child's parent or guardian and the Director.
Impetigo	YES	When treatment has begun
Lice	YES	When 1 treatment has been given
Meningococcal disease	YES	Well and proof of non-carriage (Neisseria meningitis)

<b>Illness/Infection Symptom</b>	<b>Should child/staff stay home?</b>	<b>When can child/staff come back?</b>
Pink Eye	YES	24 hours after treatment has begun
Undiagnosed generalized rash	YES	Well or cleared by child's physician as non-contagious
Ring Worm	No (keep area covered)	
Rosella	YES (with fever)	See Fever
Rota virus	YES	24 hours after treatment has begun and fever free
Severe Cold (with fever, sneezing, and nose drainage)	YES	Refer to Fever
Thrush	NO (should seek treatment)	
Any child with a sudden onset of vomiting, irritability or excessive sleepiness	YES	Evaluated and cleared by a physician



## **APPENDIX B**

### **Abuse**

The following chart on recognizing child abuse and neglect in the classroom setting will provide guidelines, which should be helpful.

#### **Recognizing Child Abuse and Neglect in The Classroom Setting**

By: Ann French Clark, MS

#### **PHYSICAL ABUSE**

##### **PHYSICAL INDICATORS**

Unexplained Bruises and Welts:

- On face, lips, mouth
- On torso, back, buttocks, thighs
- In various stages of healing
- Clustered, forming regular patterns
- Reflecting shape of article used to  
Inflict (electrical cord, belt buckle)
- Aggressiveness or withdrawal
- On several different surfaces areas
- Regularly appear after absence,  
Weekend or vacation

Unexplained Burns:

- Cigar, cigarette burns, especially  
on soles, palms, back or buttocks
- Immersion burns (sock-like, glove-like,  
doughnut shaped on buttocks, genitalia)
- Rope burns on arms, legs, neck, and torso

Unexplained Fractures:

- To skull, nose, facial structure
- In various stages of healing
- Multiple or spiral fractures

Unexplained Lacerations or Abrasions:

- To mouth, lips, gums, eyes
- To external genitalia

##### **BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS**

Wary of Adult Contacts

Apprehensive When Other  
Children Cry

##### **Behavioral Extremes:**

Frightened of Parents

Afraid to Go Home

Reports Injury By Parents

## **ABUSE CONTINUED**

### **EMOTIONAL MALTREATMENT**

#### **PHYSICAL INDICATORS**

Speech disorders

Lags in physical development

Failure to Thrive

#### **BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS**

Habit disorders (sucking, biting, rocking, etc.)

Conduct disorders (anti-social, destructive, etc.)

Neurotic traits (sleep disorders, inhibition of play)

Psychoneurotic reactions (hysteria, obsession, compulsion, phobia, hypochondria)

Behavior extremes (complaint, passive, aggressive, demanding)

Overly adaptive behavior (inappropriately adult, inappropriately infant)

Developmental lags(mental, emotional)  
Attempted suicide

### **PHYSICAL NEGLECT**

Consistent Hunger, Poor Hygiene, Inappropriate Dress

Consistent lack of supervision, especially in dangerous activities of long periods

Unattended physical problems or medical needs

Abandonment

States there is no caretaker

Begging, Stealing Food

Extended stays at school (early arrival and late departure)

Constant fatigue, listlessness or falling asleep in class

Alcohol or Drug Abuse  
Delinquency

## **ABUSE CONTINUED**

### **SEXUAL ABUSE**

#### **PHYSICAL INDICATORS**

Difficulty in walking or sitting

Torn, stained, or bloody underclothing

Pain or itching in genital area

Bruises or bleeding in external genitalia vaginal or anal areas

Venereal disease, especially in pre-teens

Pregnancy

#### **BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS**

Unwilling to change for or participate in physical education class

Withdrawal, fantasy, or infantile behavior

Bizarre, sophisticated, unusual sexual behavior or knowledge

Poor peer relationships

Delinquent or run-away

Reports sexual assault by caretaker

### **SEXUAL ABUSE INDICATORS**

#### **Behavioral indicators that may be present in victims**

Child doesn't feel safe where he lives

Change in eating habits.

Change in sleeping habits(nightmares, sleep walking, etc.)

Poor or unusual school behavior (stop going, grades drop, etc., coming early leaving late, does not participate.)

Depressed, crying episodes.

Runaway.

Sexual acting out.

May feel like "damaged goods"

Angry, hostile, aggressive behavior.

Impaired ability to trust.

Pseudomature, overly compliant.

Inability to make friends.

Unusual fear of adults, especially men.

Seductive or promiscuous behavior.

Detailed understanding of sexual behavior which is not age appropriate.

Conversation hint of sexual behavior.

Regressive behavior, acts babyish

Suicidal, talks of death and dying

#### **Dynamics that may indicate a sexually abusive family**

Isolated either socially or physically.

Inappropriate sleeping arrangements.

Poor supervision.

Rigid rules.

Children forced into adult roles.

Family members don't communicate.

No limit setting.

Inability to empathize.

Emotional deprivation.

Neglectful situation.

Unrealistic expectations.

History of drug or alcohol abuse.

Absent parent.

Prior sexual offenses involving family members.

A large number of surrogate parents

In and out of family.

Parent with personality disorder or other mental illness.

Adults with special needs as caretakers.

Adults who expect immediate gratification/have no impulse control

## **ABUSE CONTINUED**

**Why do children keep sexual abuse a secret? They fear: blame, rejection, punishment, loss of parental love, that adults won't believe them, parents will divorce, parent will go to jail, child will go to foster home or institution, retaliation, pregnancy, disease. What friends will say, etc.**

### **REFERENCES:**

Sexual Abuse of Children: Selected Readings, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Publication No. OHDS 78-30161.

Suzanne M. Sgroi, MD, Handbook of Clinical Intervention in Child Sexual Abuse, Lexington Books, 1982





## **POLICY RECEIPT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, acknowledge that I have read a copy of **Nikki's Christian Academy Staff Handbook Policy and Procedures during my orientation.** Also I acknowledge the handbook is on the company website for my review.

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Employee Signature

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Date

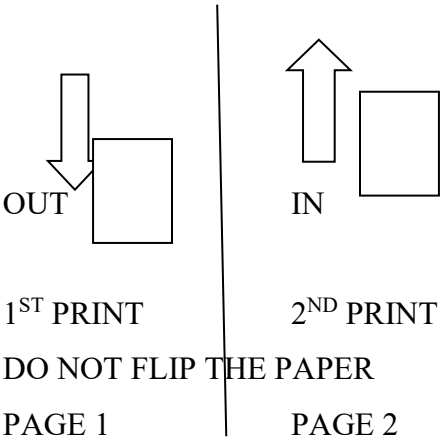
**"PLAY IS THE WORK OF THE CHILD." —  
MARIA MONTESSORI**





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