



Parent Handbook

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...Grow, Learn, Play

About Us

Never Grow Up, Inc., is a licensed parent corporation of child development centers and preschools in Middle Tennessee, operating both The Academy and Holly Tree Preschools. Never Grow Up, Inc. is dedicated to providing quality preschool education and childcare in a loving atmosphere. For more detailed information about our centers please visit us online:

www.academychilddevelopment.com

www.hollytreechildcare.com

Hours of Operation

Our centers are open Monday-Friday with the specific times varying at each location. The websites are a great place to find this detailed information. Please refer to the list of closings later in this handbook as well.

Curriculum

Our program uses a nationally recognized, research-based curriculum as its educational foundation. Our teachers then expand upon this curriculum with additional projects, activities, and games designed to enrich your child's educational experience. In addition, our teachers are trained to recognize the individual strengths and talents of each child to provide individualized activities to foster each child's unique development. Our educational program is designed to be creative and fun for your child, with hands on learning experiences and many opportunities to learn through play!

Staff – “We’re Creating Childhood.”

Children deserve a fun and memorable childhood and we pride ourselves on having a loving staff and home-like atmosphere in each of our centers to make that happen. Our experienced and degreed teachers are specifically chosen for their caring attitudes, knowledge of child development, and their enthusiasm for teaching young children. Professional development including training in First Aid, CPR, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) prevention, as well as age specific training on child development is a continuous process for our staff. In addition, we make it a priority to remain informed about current child development and education research and trends in order to most effectively serve your child's needs. Each teacher undergoes a criminal background and fingerprint check to ensure your child's safety.

Enrichment Programs

We know that it is important for kids to learn from the experts! Therefore, we bring in outside professionals to teach your children special skills. At Holly Tree centers, we offer several faith-based enrichments included in your tuition as well as several optional parent-pay programs. At The Academy centers, we provide enrichment classes in Spanish language skills, computer skills, art and art education/appreciation, and music and fitness. Some of these classes begin for kids as young as one year of age. These enrichment classes are a part of your child's regular program and are included in your weekly tuition!

Admission

Admission to The Academy program is based on availability and the age of your child. When a classroom no longer has open enrollment positions, a waiting list will be established. Priority will be given to siblings or currently enrolled children. Otherwise, individuals will be placed on the waiting list on a first-come, first served basis. The Academy does not discriminate against any race, religion, nationality, gender, or sexual orientation.

Enrollment

A complete and signed application form is required. Please be sure to answer every question thoroughly. In addition, prior to your child's start date parents must fill out a Health History checklist. An updated immunization record is also required prior to enrollment. The form must be up to date and signed or stamped by your child's physician.

Registration and Supply Fees

A registration fee and the first week of tuition are required to hold an enrollment space until the requested start date. **These fees are non-refundable.** In order to provide our excellent curriculum and activities, we require an annual supply fee. Please refer to the Fee Schedule in your enrollment package for more detailed information.

Payment

Payment must be received in advance, prior to the first day your child attends. Thereafter, tuition is due at the beginning of each week. All tuition is paid through automatic bank drafts. Your deposit and first week's tuition may be paid with a check. If the draft fails a 10% late fee will be charged.

- Full payment is required even if the child is not in attendance regardless of absences or closings.
- Parents of children not picked up by 6:00pm will be charged a late pick up fee. Please refer to your fee schedule for more information.
- Rates and fees will be adjusted periodically.

Discipline Policy

We focus on building classroom community in our centers. We believe given the proper choices, children learn to make conscious and accountable decisions to foster a sense of companionship and community in their classroom and with their peers. With our trained teachers, your child will be prompted through example and redirected in a manner, which protects your child's dignity and well-being. Discipline will not be embarrassing or abusive, and physical punishment will never be allowed. This method will be consistent and fair. The staff will use positive reinforcement and re-direction techniques. First, the child will be redirected verbally and given options for behavior. If negative behavior continues, the child may be separated from the group, but still within the classroom. If the behavioral issue persists without improvement, the director will have a conference with the parent. Behavior problems that cannot be easily resolved or are not being addressed in a way that supports the classroom community, may result in dismissal from the center.

Medication Policy

We do not dispense any over the counter or prescription medication other than REQUIRED medical equipment or emergency medication that is supported by written and signed release from a physician that is kept in your child's file.

Sunscreen Policy

Due to the possibility of skin allergies, we will not apply sunscreen to your child. During warmer seasons, we advise you to apply an 8-12 hour full coverage sunscreen to your child before you drop them off in the morning.

Pick-Up Policy

During the application process, parents are required to provide names of people who may pick up their child on the child's enrollment form. Thereafter, parents must provide written notification if they wish to add or remove any individual at their discretion. The person who picks up the child will be required to present photo identification before the child is released.

Dis-enrollment Policy

We require a two-week written notice to be given in the event that a family ends enrollment at the center (including when a child leaves the center to attend kindergarten). Payment of tuition for these two weeks is required even if a family leaves prior to the end of the two-week period. We reserve the right to dis-enroll any family for any reason deemed necessary, including non-payment of tuition or other fees, disruptive or dangerous behavior as deemed by center staff, or for the inappropriate or disruptive behavior of a parent/guardian that interferes with the operation of the center.

Inclement Weather Closing Policy

Normal hours of operation are subject to change at any time to ensure the safety and well being of your children and our staff. Emergency conditions cannot always be predicted with accuracy, so please be prepared for short notices on snow or ice days. Due to the unavoidable occurrence of emergency weather conditions, the center is unable to reduce tuition. Please remember any closure is to protect the well being of the children in our care. Closings will be announced on News Channel 5 TV/radio as early as possible. You can also sign up on their website www.newschannel5.com to have the specific closing or delay text messaged and/or emailed to you directly.

Man Made Disaster Plan

In the event of a man made disaster, such as a chemical spill, gas leak, etc., the following procedure will be followed: The children will be evacuated by employees and be transported in employees' automobiles to an alternate facility. All parents will be contacted and informed of the evacuation. Parents will be given instructions on how they can pick up their children. An incident report will be filed with the Department of Human Resources within 24 hours of the incident.

Natural Disaster Plan

The following procedure will be followed in the event of a natural disaster, i.e. tornado, threatening winds, etc.: the children will be moved to an inside room or area of the center in accordance with the center's approved emergency plan of action. A weather radio will be maintained at all times for updates on threatening conditions, as well as flashlights, first aid kits, and other necessary items needed. In the event the situation requires evacuation, the same procedure used for a man made disaster will be followed. Parents will be notified as soon as possible. The Department of Human Resources will be informed in the event of an actual disaster, and an incident report will be filed within 24 hours of the disaster. The Academy will also follow a schedule of safety drills, such as fire and tornado drills, throughout the year to maintain preparedness for any emergency.

Communication

Communication is a top priority for us. Therefore, we provide communication in several ways including weekly emails, blog newsletter updates, as well as daily sheets with detailed information about your child's day. Daily sheets will include details about meals, snacks, diaper/potty, nap times, activities, your child's behavior and activities, as well as needed items (diapers, wipes, clothing, etc.). In addition, where applicable, each child will have a "Take Home" folder or bin/cubby for you to check each day. Here you will find artwork and activities from your child's day. Please check these each day! Below are important avenues in which you can communicate information to us:

- Please provide your child's teacher with any special instructions
- Please inform your child's teacher if someone other than you will be picking up your child. You will be asked to provide names of those individuals who are approved to pick up your child in the application procedure.
- Twice a year our teachers will provide progress reports about your child's development. Parent-Teacher conferences will be offered as well to discuss this information and to work with your child's teacher on special projects and activities uniquely designed for your child.
- Please inform your child's teacher when he or she will be absent. If an absence is unexpected, please call. Also, please call if your child will be arriving later than 10:00am.

Personal Belongings/Toys

Please refrain from allowing children to bring personal belongings to the center other than those we request. For the safety and well being of all the children in our center, we ask that you do not allow your child to bring toys from home except on special "sharing" days. We are not responsible for personal items or toys from home that get lost or broken. Any items brought for a special reason requested by teachers need to be labeled appropriately with the child's first and last name. Labeling all of your child's items is the best way to ensure they do not get misplaced.

Clothing

Part of creating childhood means FUN! When choosing your child's clothing, bear in mind that sometimes our fun can be messy, too! For this reason, please follow our clothing policies to ensure your child gets the best experience.

- Please dress your child in seasonally appropriate and **comfortable play clothes**
- Each child should have at least one, preferably two, complete changes of seasonally appropriate play clothing; including socks in his or her cubby at all times. Please be sure to replace any articles of clothing that are used from the spare sets.
- During the summer months, we will have water play. We will notify you of the times for water play so that you may provide a swimsuit and towel.
- Please label ALL items (including clothing, coats, hats, bottles, baby food, bags, and sippy cups) that you bring to our center with your child's first and last name.

Security Codes and Entry

Safety and Security is very important to you and to us, which is why each family will have their own security code or fingerprint passcode to enter our building. Please do not share your code with anyone other than people who will pick up your children. Guests will be able to ring the bell and gain entry, where they will be properly identified before having access to the children. In compliance with our TN license regulations, children must be signed in and out daily.

Injury/Emergency Medical Procedures

Safety is an important part of our jobs. We believe it to be our top priority to keep your children safe each day. Although we have many procedures in place to prevent accidents, sometimes accidents are unavoidable. In the event your child has minor injury such as a bump, scrape, bite, etc. we reserve the right to treat your child with proper First Aid Care and will contact you immediately to inform you. Per our requirements, we will also fill out an accident/incident report that will need to be signed by you or the person picking up your child that day.

In the event that your child requires emergency medical treatment, center staff will call 911 immediately. If your child requires emergency ambulance transportation, the ambulance drivers will transport your child to the closest local hospital at their discretion and depending on the speed with which your child must be treated. Decisions as to the necessity of emergency medical treatment will be made by the Director or Assistant Director, or another staff member standing in their position. Parents or legal guardians of the child will be notified as soon as possible and will also be responsible for any and all medical expenses related to the child's injury including any medical transportation. It is the parent or legal guardian's responsibility to provide insurance information to medical personnel. Our employees are not responsible in any form for medical or transportation expenses.

Child Abuse Policy

As a passionate advocate for children's rights, we will comply with all Tennessee State laws in reporting any suspicion or evidence of child abuse. The Child Abuse Hotline (or 1-800-4-ACHILD) will be contacted and a report will be filed. A report will be made to the police if necessary to ensure the safety and well being of the child. The Department of Human Services will then be notified, and an incident report will be filed within 24 hours.

Release of Children Policy

We reserve the right to decline the release of a child to a person who appears physically, emotionally, or mentally unable to provide adequate care for the child as judged by the staff member responsible for the child. For instance, we will not release a child to an adult who appears intoxicated or otherwise impaired. In the event that this situation should arise, staff will release the child to an authorized individual on the child's emergency contact list who appears able to provide appropriate care for the child.

Policy Changes

Policies are subject to change and every effort will be made to notify parents in a timely fashion of any changes to the policies or procedures.

Parent Participation

We welcome parent participation in your child's class. We have an open door policy for parents and the opportunity to serve on our Parent Board that meets at least 2 times per year. We also have several regular opportunities for participation such as, reading in your child's class, sharing special family traditions or cultures, assisting with parties, open houses, and volunteering in the class. Also, ideas and suggestions are always welcomed and appreciated.

Health and Illness

The Academy will communicate with you about any health issues that are noted while your child is at our center. As a courtesy, please keep the staff informed about any health issues your child may have. In order to protect the health and well being of all children and staff within our center, the following health procedures and policies will be followed:

- We cannot admit a child who has any contagious symptoms, such as fever over 99.9 degrees, vomiting, diarrhea, open sores, unexplained rashes, infections, drainage, etc.
- If your child becomes ill with any of the above symptoms while at the center, we will notify you and the child must be picked up within one hour of contact. The Academy reserves the right to require a child to be picked up immediately for suspected contagion.
- **Your child must be symptom free for 24 hours without medication before he or she can return to the center.**
- We reserve the right to request a physician's statement prior to readmitting a child to the center.
- Children diagnosed with scabies or lice will have proof of treatment and be free of nits prior to readmission, according to DHS Licensing Standards (1240-4-3-10(d)).
- The Academy does not administer medication to any child (see Medication Policy)
- An Immunization Certificate is required upon enrolling and must be kept up to date according to Tennessee State Law. Your child will not be allowed to remain in the center without up-to-date immunization records.

Daily Routines

Meals and Snacks-We provide nutritious meals and snacks throughout the day. Menus are posted for your reference. At The Academy centers, a continental style breakfast will be provided each morning. Parents may participate and enjoy breakfast with their child if they desire. Meal times and snack times are scheduled according to a group's age and developmental level. Please alert the staff concerning any special dietary needs or food allergies.

Rest Time-Rest times are scheduled in the middle of the day after lunch. Rest times will vary according to the group's age and developmental level. Children will be offered two hours of naptime. Children are not required to sleep, but must rest quietly as to not disturb other children who are resting.

Outside Play-We have separate, age appropriate playgrounds. During a normal daily routine and weather permitting, children will play on the playground two times per day, in the morning and again in the afternoon. However, if weather conditions do not permit outdoor play, other gross motor activities will be substituted.

Sample Schedule-The following schedule is a sample and is presented here to give you an idea of what your children will be doing throughout the day. Schedules are designed to be appropriate for the age and developmental level of the group. Therefore, please check with your child's teacher to see their regular schedule.

7:00-8:30	Center Play (dramatic play, art, science, blocks, music, etc.)
8:30-9:00	Breakfast time
9:00-10:00	Morning Circle and Curriculum Activities
10:00-10:30	Interest areas and projects- teacher directed and child-directed activities/chosen activities
10:30-11:30	Outside Play (weather permitting) or Indoor Gross Motor
11:30-12:00	Lunch
12:00-12:30	Story Time
12:30-2:30	Rest and quiet time
2:30-3:00	Snack Time
3:00-3:30	Outdoor or Indoor gross motor activities
3:30-4:30	Afternoon circle time and center play
4:30-5:00	Hand on learning activity
5:00-6:00	Books, Games, and Story Time

Labeled Supplies Needed

Infants (6 weeks through 12 months)

Please label all supplies with your child's first and last name:

- Please bring clean fitted crib sheets and receiving blankets for each day that your child attends.
- Prepared bottles (formula or breast milk) for enough feedings for each day, **clearly labeled with your child's name**. These will be refrigerated immediately. We provide milk for infants no longer on formula, but you may bring labeled milk from home if you wish.
- Two complete changes of seasonal clothing and bibs
- Diapers and wipes (NO CLOTH DIAPERS)
- Any cereal or unopened jar food. State law prohibits the center from accepting any opened baby food of any variety.

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) special note:

We are proactive against SIDS. Cribs will only contain a sheet and light blanket. Mobiles, stuffed animals, extra blankets, and propping will not be allowed. Infants in cribs are also checked every fifteen minutes during napping times.

Toddlers and 2's (12 months – 2 years)

Please label all supplies with your child's first and last name:

- Diapers and Wipes (NO CLOTH DIAPERS)
- A complete change of seasonal clothing including socks and underwear (if applicable).
- Sippy cups are provided. We provide milk, meals, and snacks for toddlers
- Please bring in a clean fitted crib sheet and a blanket each week for use on our nap cots/mats

Preschoolers (3 years – 5 years)

Please label all supplies with your child's full name:

- A complete change of seasonal clothing including socks and underwear
- Please bring in a clean fitted crib sheet and a blanket each week for use on our nap cots/mats

Special Occasions (Birthday's and Holiday's)

We love to celebrate! Please feel free to bring in party food (ex: cupcakes, cookies) or party favors on your child's birthday. Any food items brought in must be store bought in order for management to check ingredients so that no child will have an allergic reaction. You may stay for the party or have the staff give the party if you wish. We will also have holiday and special occasion parties. You will be given an opportunity to sign up to bring food, goodies, or paper goods for these parties. We also love to have parent volunteers during party time, so please let your child's teacher know if you are interested in participating.

We will observe and be closed for the following Holiday/Events:

New Year's Day

Good Friday

Spring Teacher In-Service (Friday before Memorial Day)

Memorial Day

Independence Day

Fall Teacher In-Service (Friday before Labor Day)

Labor Day

Thanksgiving Day and the Friday following

Christmas Eve

Christmas Day

New Year's Eve—closing at 4:00pm

Note: Holiday's that fall on a Saturday will be observed on the Friday before, and those that fall on a Sunday will be observed on the Monday that follows.

