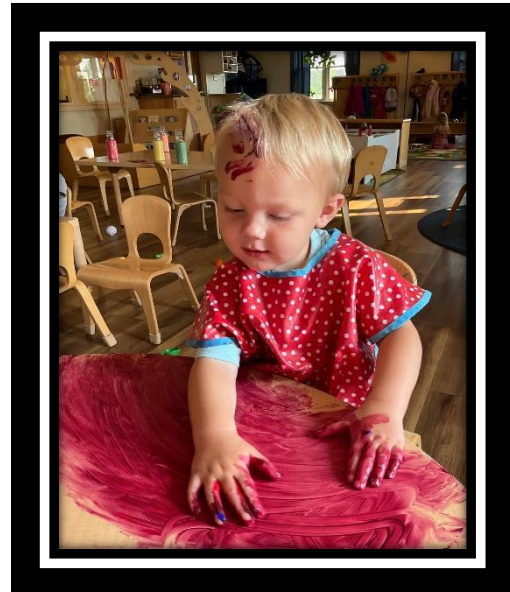


Owens Early Learning Center Parent Handbook



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MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Owens Community College Early Learning Center is to provide quality, affordable childcare for the children of faculty, staff, students and community. The center serves as a college lab school in which early childhood education lab students can develop professionally. Our program is devoted to enhancing the lives of young children through a developmentally appropriate curriculum, and to serve as a role model and an advocate for quality childcare throughout the community.

PHILOSOPHY

Our philosophy includes the following beliefs:

- That each child is a unique individual with special gifts and talents.
- That the needs of the whole child must be considered and nurtured when planning any activity or environment for young children.
- That parents are the primary educators of their children and that we serve to support the family in its child-rearing role.
- That children must be nurtured and respected as they go about their everyday role of work through play.
- We acknowledge that growth during the early years is uneven and that each child learns at his/her own pace. As such, developmentally appropriate curriculum is planned to meet the needs of each child.
- Hands on experience for young children are the best teachers. Emphasis is on learning by doing, rather than by being told.
- At all times the health, welfare and happiness of the child and family must be respected.

CHILD CENTERED LEARNING

We believe in a "CHILD CENTERED" learning environment. We follow the guidelines for developmentally appropriate practices as described by NAEYC. Strong emphasis is placed on learning through play with the caregiver as the facilitator, role model and listener rather than "teacher" in the traditional sense. Caregivers constantly look for the "teachable moment" when the child is developmentally ready to absorb and learn a particular concept. Learning is more meaningful for the child when there is a high level of interest. Children learn best when they are actively involved in the learning process. Learning centers are set up throughout the classrooms and children select activities that are of interest to them. Children are encouraged to explore and develop in all areas to provide a well-rounded experience for each child.

The Owens ELC provides quality care for children beginning at 18 months of age up to age 5. In addition, the center provides before/after school care and a summer program for school age children from ages 5-11.

An Excellent Staff

A qualified staff member is the most essential element in a quality childcare program. Teachers must possess a good mix of theory and practice to maintain a nurturing setting while developing a creative educational program. In addition to their educational training, our staff combines on-the-job experience with a genuine passion for what they do.

Each classroom uses a team-teaching approach, each team includes 2 full-time teachers who have a two- or four-year degree in early childhood education (or a related field) and practical experience ranging from student teaching, to years of experience in the child care field beyond their degree. The team also includes substitutes who serve as teacher assistants. By combining teachers and teacher assistants with varying levels of experience, a mentoring relationship can develop that will increase the strength of the teaching team.

Each team is responsible for developing curriculum that is thoughtful and thought provoking. All teachers contribute to weekly planning sessions, and attend scheduled staff meetings.

Staff Training Plan

Regardless of previous education and experience, staff at Owens ELC are required to complete 20-30 hours of in-service training every 2 years. Additionally, all full-time staff members are current in CPR, First Aid, Preventing Infectious Diseases, and Child Abuse Recognition and Prevention. In addition, staff are members of the Early Childhood Education Professional Organization, NAEYC- The National Association for Education of Young Children.

GENERAL OPERATING INFORMATION

Hours of Operation: 7:15 a.m. – 5:24 p.m., Monday through Friday

Center Closing and Holidays

The Center recognizes the same holiday schedule as Owens Community College, and is closed on the following days: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day (Teacher In-Service), Veteran's day, Thanksgiving Day, Wednesday before Thanksgiving, and Friday following Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, and Christmas day, all weekdays between Christmas day and New Year's Day. An additional teacher in-service day will coincide with the statewide early childhood conference. This is typically in mid-April each year. The Center does not follow the student schedule but instead follows the school closing schedule for full time employees. In this way we are better able to serve our full-time employees.

Emergency Closing Policy

The Owens Community College Child Care Early Learning Center follows the closing routines established by the College. Closing information may be found on-line at www.owens.edu and/or by listening to the radio or TV for closing announcements. It is critical that the center have current contact information for all the children so that we might contact you in case of emergency closing. Please note; we will not contact families if we close the center prior to operating hours. We would only contact you if we should need to close once the center is operational.

Licensing

Center Parent Information Required by Ohio Administrative Code

The facility is licensed to operate legally by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. This license is posted at the entrance of the childcare center.

A toll-free telephone number is listed on the facility's license and may be used to report a suspected violation of the licensing law or administrative rules. The licensing law and rules governing childcare are available for review at the facility upon request. The licensing capacity may also be seen on the license posted in the center at the entrance of the childcare center.

The administrator and each employee of the facility is required under Section 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code, ORC to report their suspicions of child abuse or child neglect to the local public children's services agency.

Any parent, custodian, or guardian of a child enrolled in the facility shall be permitted unlimited access to the facility during all hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided by the facility or evaluating the premises. A parent of a child enrolled at the center who is not the child's residential parent shall be permitted unlimited access to the center and be offered the same rights as the residential parent unless there is court documentation limiting access and conditions of the nonresidential parent. It is up to the residential/custodial parent to provide the center with the proper documentation. Upon entering the premises, the parent, or guardian shall notify the Administrator of his/her presence.

The licensing inspection reports and complaint investigation report, for the current licensing period, are posted in a conspicuous place in the facility for review. Licensing Laws and Rules are available for review at the facility upon request.

The licensing record including compliance report forms, complaint investigation reports, and evaluation forms from the building and fire departments are available for review upon request from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. The department's website is: <http://jfs.ohio.gov/cdc/childcare.stm>.

It is unlawful for the facility to discriminate in the enrollment of children upon the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, or disability in violation of the American with Disabilities Act of 1990, 104 Sta. 32,42 U.S. C. 1210 et seq.

This information must be given in writing to all parents, guardians and employees as required in 5101: 2-12-30 of the Ohio Administrative Code.

Step Up To Quality

Step Up To Quality is a voluntary, quality rating system for early care and education programs. It recognizes early care and education programs that exceed quality benchmarks over and above Ohio's licensing standards. Owens Early Learning Center is currently a Step Up To Quality 5-Star rated center. The program is re-assessed on an annual basis through a representative from ODJFS.

Programs can earn a 1-, 2-, 3-, 4- or 5-Star rating by meeting the quality benchmarks for the State of Ohio.

❖ Step Up To Quality means:

- Fewer children per classroom
- Better trained teachers
- A more comprehensive early education experience for your child
- A focus on continuous improvement

Please visit <http://jfs.ohio.gov/CDC/stepUpQuality.stm> for more information on Step Up To Quality.

Staff Child Ratios

The Owens Child Care Early Learning Center observes the following adult/child ratios and group sizes based on Step Up To Quality standards.

Age

Toddler (18-36 months)
Preschool (36-60 months)
PreK (48-60 months)
School Age (5-11 years)

Staff/Child Ratios

One Adult: Seven Children (1:7)
One Adult: Twelve Children (1:12)
One Adult: Fourteen Children (1:14)
One Adult: Eighteen Children (1:18)

Group Size

Two Adults: Fourteen (2:14)
Two Adults: Twenty-four (2:24)
Two Adults: Twenty-eight (2:28)
Two Adults: Thirty-six (2:36)

Enrollment:

Enrollment is contingent upon space availability in each classroom. First priority is given to siblings of children already enrolled in the program. Required enrollment paperwork includes:

- Enrollment application
- Permission Form
- Child Medical Statement
- Transfer of Records Form
- Facebook Form
- All About Me Form
- Administration of Medication Form(s)- when applicable
- Medical/Physical Care Plan- when applicable

*Authorization to transport children for emergencies must be granted to the program in order for a child to be enrolled in this program.

Transition Guidelines

Into the Center

When a child transitions into Owens Early Learning Center the parent/guardian must have a meeting with the Manager and teachers to be introduced to the classroom and go over all paper work and procedures for their child. At this meeting the parent will be given a tour, all paperwork including a parent handbook, current newsletter. We encourage the parents to bring the child for a short visit and meeting of their new friends if possible before the first day.

Transition to the next Classroom

It is our goal to let your child develop relationships within their current classroom or group of children, therefore teachers and the manager use not only your child's age but also his/her development to determine when they are to move to the next older age group. This transition period is typically one week for full time children and two weeks for part time children. In some cases children may need more or less time to adequately feel comfortable with their new classroom, teacher and peers. Parents, Manager and teachers work hand in hand to determine the best time for a transition to take place. A written agreement for transitions to take place will be provided to parents. Staff/child ratios and group size are taken into consideration before transitions occur.

Transition to Kindergarten

When we think about a child getting ready for Kindergarten, there are lots of expectations. It is our goal to help prepare you and your child for this transition. We feel it is important to help your child transition out of naps as many children will be attending all-day kindergarten. We will also post all the information we receive about kindergarten screenings and sign up times on our parent boards.

Inclusive policy

The Owens Early Learning Center is committed to caring for children from diverse backgrounds and for those with differing abilities. Enrollment is accepted on a first come basis, and parents are encouraged to apply early. There can be

a waiting list depending on the time of year, and age of the child. The center does not discriminate in enrollment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or differing abilities (children with special needs). Special needs children are evaluated on an individual basis as to the ability of the Center to provide a developmentally appropriate program that will promote the total development of the child. The Childcare Center must be determined to be the best least restrictive environment for the child.

Special needs children who have been admitted to the Center with an appropriate Medical/Physical Care Plan will be re-evaluated on an ongoing basis. Should additional conditions develop (health, developmental, behavioral) that would require reevaluation of the Medical/Physical Care Plan subsequent to initial assessment, a meeting will occur between manager, family, staff and appropriate referral agencies to discuss best placement for the child. Consistency of staff, availability and qualifications of staff may prohibit continued care and enrollment.

Termination of Enrollment

We recognize that each child is unique with individual needs for care, comfort and stimulation. Some children do not adapt to the routine of care in a group setting, and require an excessive amount of one-on-one individual attention from the caregivers. This prevents the teachers/caregivers from attending to the rest of the group.

It is in the best interest of the child whom is experiencing challenges to find care in a smaller setting, with lower adult to child ratios. If every attempt is made to help the child integrate into the center routine, and difficulties are still present, the center will ask the parents to make other child care arrangements.

Withdrawals

Parents wishing to withdrawal their child(ren) may do so at any time. A two-week notice, in writing, is appreciated.

Arrival-Departure Procedures

Arrival

To ensure the safety of the children at the Center, children and parents/guardians should enter the Early Learning Center at the front entrance. Short term parking for delivery and pick up of children is permitted in front of the center along the sidewalk. Please do not park in front of the entrance area to the center to allow for egress from the center. Also, please do not leave your car running for any period of time or leave children unattended for any reason! For the safety of your children, the Center requires that you accompany your child into the building and deliver them into the care of a teacher.

Children are permitted to arrive between 7:15 a.m. and 12 p.m., or after 2:30 p.m. If the need arises to bring your child between 12 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. please speak with the manager or a classroom teacher so that we can work to make this transition smooth for your child. He/she will need to go on a cot upon arrival between 12 and 2:30.

Parents/guardians must sign their child into the center at the front entrance using the sign-in computer. Please be sure that the teacher is aware that you are dropping your child in the classroom. Do not just leave your child at the door of the classroom. Teachers will keep accurate attendance records throughout the day.

To help your child get comfortable at school, please make sure you say good-bye and let your child know that you will be back. Staff members will do everything they can to provide support during these transitions.

If a child is arriving to the Early Learning Center from another program, we will ensure the proper transition into the center by taking the child from the bus and securing them to their teacher. If the child does not arrive as scheduled we will first contact the placement where the child was transporting from and then contact the family to determine the child's status.

Departure

Parents/guardians will sign their child out each day on the computer at the front entrance. Your child will be in their classroom, on the playground, or on a walk at the end of the day. Regardless of where you pick up your child, he/she must still be signed out at the front entrance.

Release of Children

If a person other than the designated parent/guardian will be picking up your child, the following must occur:

- The individual's name, address and relationship to the child must be on the "permission to release" form
- The parent must notify the child's teacher or the Center Manager who will be picking up the child.
- The individual must be prepared to show a photo ID as verification.

The child's safety comes first. No exceptions will be made to this policy.

In the case of separation or divorce, legal evidence of the party holding custody must be on file at the Center.

Safety

To ensure the safety of the children the center has a policy of "face to face" attendance. The teachers keep an additional attendance record in each classroom which tracks each of the children as they actually arrive in the classroom. Children who visit classrooms are included in the "face to face" record.

Children under age four (4) years of age and those who weigh less than 40 pounds must be restrained in a car seat; additionally, children ages four through seven who are less than 4'9" tall must ride in a federally approved booster seat. Security will be called immediately to enforce these policies if violated. These policies are part of Ohio law.

We feel uncomfortable releasing a child to a parent/guardian who appears to be under the influence. In these instances, we will make every effort to gain your cooperation in allowing us to contact one of your designated emergency contacts. If we feel your child is in danger, we will contact local law enforcement and/or children's services.

No Smoking Policy

Section 5104.014 of the Ohio Revised Code states that no Child Care Center shall permit any person to smoke in any indoor or outdoor space that is part of the center. Owens Community College enforces smoke free buildings.

Billing and Payment Procedures

Fees

Please see the current weekly tuitions fees included in your enrollment packet.

Tuition Payment

Weekly tuition payments/co-payments can be paid weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly via cash, check, or credit card. Tuition payments are due on the first day of attendance in each service weekly. Weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly payments will be accepted as long as they are paid in advance of care given. Payments not received after 14 days will be charged a late fee of \$10, and childcare service may be suspended until payment is made in full. Weekly tuition fees are assessed 52 weeks of the year, including times when the center is closed or when children do not attend on their scheduled days. Two free weeks of tuition are built into the weekly charges. This makes it easier for us and easier for you plan/budget tuition payments. Failure to make timely payments may result in termination of enrollment of your child and/or your account being sent to the Ohio Attorney General's Office for collection. There will be \$30.00 NSF fee for all returned checks.

Annual Fees

Annual Fee as accessed in August or upon enrollment.

❖ **See separate Tuition sheet for current fees**

Long Term Absence Fee

To ensure their child's enrollment if they take a leave of absence of more than two weeks for any reason: i.e. maternity leave, summer leave, families may put down a long-term absence fee of \$300.00. This fee must be paid before the child is absent. For absences two weeks or less, the weekly tuition amount will be charged.

Arrival/Departure/Schedule

Children are permitted to arrive between 7:15 a.m. and 12 p.m. or after 2:30 p.m. In the event that a child needs to arrive or depart between 12 and 2:30 please see your child's classroom teacher in order to make this transition easier for your child. Parents are required to sign a contract for the hours they will be using the center. Contracts are available for full or part-time care. Make-up days or changing scheduled days for those children who attend part-time are allowable only if space allows. Please call the center and your child's classroom cell phone if he or she is going to be absent, coming in late or leaving early on a scheduled day. When children do not arrive at their regularly scheduled times the center manager, billing clerk or classroom teachers will contact the parent/legal guardian to inquire about the absence. The center closes promptly at 5:24 p.m. daily. Parents will be assessed a late fee of \$1.00 per minute, per child when they arrive after 5:24 p.m.

Children will be released only to those parties listed on the enrollment forms as authorized pick up people. In the event of a custody/guardianship agreement the center will need a copy of the court paperwork associated with the case.

Your Child's Classroom Schedule

Daily Schedule

The rhythm of a day must support and promote development in fine and gross motor skills, socialization, dramatization and language. During the day we try to find a balance between active and quiet times, solitude and interaction, and planned and spontaneous times. Below are sample class routines for each childcare room.

****At the beginning and the end of each day we may combine groups of children when there are no more than 12 total children in the center.**

Toddler Classroom

7:15-8:45 a.m.	Arrival, Free Play, Restroom
8:30-9:00 a.m.	Clean-up, Wash hands, breakfast
9:00-10:15 a.m.	Restroom/Change Diapers/Free Play
10:15-10:50 a.m.	Table Activities (art, math, literacy, blocks, etc)
10:50-11:00 a.m.	Stories and Songs
11:00-11:40 a.m.	Outdoor Play/Gross Motor Play
11:40-12:15 p.m.	Family Style Lunch
12:30-2:30 p.m.	Naptime
2:30-3:00 p.m.	Restroom/Change Diapers/Books
3:00-3:30 p.m.	Clean up, wash hands and snack

3:30-4:15 p.m.	Free play, Gross Motor/Outdoor time
4:15-4:30 p.m.	Restroom/Change Diapers
4:30-5:24 p.m.	Outdoor Play/Gross Motor/Free Play

Preschool Classroom

7:15-8:30 a.m.	Arrival; Free-play choices including: Block dramatic play, books, puzzles, drawing and writing, music and science exploration.
8:30-9:00 a.m.	Breakfast served family style.
9:30-9:50 a.m.	Free Play
9:50-10:20 a.m.	Group time
10:20-11:00 a.m.	Small group activities
11:00-11:40 p.m.	Gross Motor/Outdoor Play
11:40-12:30.	Lunch is served family style, prepare for nap, transition to nap
12:30-2:30 p.m.	Naptime
2:30-3:15p.m.	Transition from naptime to afternoon snack/Snack
3:15-3:30 p.m.	Afternoon group time
3:30-4:30 p.m.	Free play, small group activities and table choices
4:30-5:24 p.m.	Gross motor play, departure

Pre-Kindergarten Classroom

7:15-8:30 a.m.	Arrival and free time
8:30-9:00 a.m.	Breakfast and clean up
9:00-9:30 a.m.	Morning Meeting
9:30-10:30 a.m.	Choices/Centers
10:30-11:40 a.m.	Free Play/Gross Motor/Outdoor Play
11:30-12:30 p.m.	Lunch
12:30-2:30 p.m.	Nap
2:30-2:45 p.m.	Transition to snack
2:45-3:15 p.m.	Afternoon snack

3:15-3:30 p.m. Afternoon group time

3:30-4:30 p.m. Choices/Centers

School Age Classroom – School Year

7:15 - 8:45 a.m. Arrival, free time, breakfast, depart for school

3:40 – 4:15 p.m. Ride bus/van back to Owens

4:15 – 5:24 p.m. Snack, homework, free time, depart for home

- On school delay days, the schedule is subject to change

School Age Classroom – Summer/Closed Days

7:15 - 9:30 a.m. Arrival, free time, breakfast, prepare for fieldtrip

9:30 – 4:00 p.m. Fieldtrip

4:00 – 5:24 p.m. Snack, free time, depart for home

Making Your Child Comfortable

Here is a list of items to bring to the Center to help make your child comfortable. **Please label every item.** We will do our best to keep track of everything that you bring, but just like home, things do get misplaced and we cannot be responsible for replacing lost items.

Preschool & Prekindergarten

Change of clothing (change seasonally)

Small blanket and Small pillow

Extra underwear and socks

Family Pictures

Toddler

2 Complete Change of clothing (change seasonally)

Small blanket and Small pillow

Diapers/Underwear

Family Pictures

Toys from Home

Children are welcome to bring soft items (i.e. stuffed animals) from home to rest with during naptime. We strongly suggest that all other toys from home be left at home. Often times if a child brings in a toy from home it can be lost, broken, damaged, etc. There are times that specific classrooms will have a show-and-tell day where something other than a rest item can be brought in. Please watch for information placed in mailboxes, on doors, or on Facebook for these occurrences.

Guidance and Discipline

These statements reflect center policy and apply to ALL employees of the center.

1. Teachers will have reasonable expectations for the children. Children will not be expected to perform tasks that they are not developmentally ready for.
2. Teachers respect the children, their feelings and understand their developmental limitations and strengths.
3. Teachers will set a good example for children, knowing that they imitate adults.
4. Teachers will keep in mind each child's individual strengths and weaknesses
5. Teachers will help children to understand their feelings and the feelings of others. They will give suggestions to children of healthy ways to express themselves.
6. Children will not be allowed to hurt themselves or other children. They will know that the teachers are there to protect them.
7. No child will be humiliated or embarrassed in front of peers or teachers.
8. Children will be given the opportunity to work out their own conflicts first. Teachers will work together with the children to help them discover additional ways to resolve problems.
9. Teachers will have a caring, loving, attitude toward children.
10. Children need to know that rules must be followed and consequences will follow if rules are broken.

Discipline Methods

1. Teachers set up the environment to avoid problems:
2. Children need to know that they are important and so are the things they do.
3. Teachers provide affectionate care, reasonable classroom order, security and an interesting day.
4. Teachers plan a daily program that is suitable for the ages and needs of the children.
5. The teachers set up the environment for the children and provide plenty of materials.
6. Natural consequences will be used when possible. Children will be asked to discontinue play with a certain toy, in a play area, or with certain children for a brief time period if appropriate behavior is not occurring. They will be expected to help repair any damage done to physical structures other children have built. They will be encouraged to comfort their classmate when psychological or physical harm is done.
7. Teachers will redirect the children to more appropriate activities.
8. Time away with a staff member will only be used as a last resort to help calm a child who is out of control. They will sit until calm enough to talk. The teacher will talk with the child and help him or her come up with an appropriate way to interact/engage in play before re-entering an activity.

Owens Community College Early Learning Center: Child Guidance Policy

Owens Community College's Early Learning Center ("Owens ELC") believes in a positive approach to child guidance and is committed to providing an environment where children feel safe, comfortable, and have fun. Child guidance guidelines and procedures are in place in order to protect the safety of all children and staff members.

At Owens ELC, children are taught expectations for appropriate behavior and encouraged to act accordingly. Children are expected to be kind, helpful, and to follow age appropriate instructions. Child training and guidance will be handled with kindness, consistency, and understanding in accordance with the individual needs of each age group and each child.

Child guidance procedures will consist of the following strategies (this list may not be all-inclusive):

1. Encourage children to use words when having a disagreement with another child.
2. Assist and facilitate children in solving disputes safely and productively.
3. Redirect behavior by offering an alternative toy, area of the room to play in, etc.
4. Separate a child from the group for a short period, and offer the child something to do while being separated (for example: offering a puzzle to child at one of the tables if he/she is unable to be redirected). This should be used as a time for the teacher to communicate with the child as to what transpired and to encourage the importance of acceptable behavior.
5. Counsel children individually about their behaviors.
6. Model desired behavior for the children.
7. Encourage children to control their own behavior and cooperate with others
8. Involve parents/guardians in creating successful experiences for children. Parents/guardians know their children best, so when concerns arise, teachers and parents/guardians should work together to develop positive strategies and solutions.

Disruptive behaviors can be distracting for everyone at Owens ELC. The following behaviors may be considered disruptive (this list may not be all-inclusive):

1. Requiring constant attention from the staff.
2. Inflicting physical or emotional harm on other children, adults, or self.
3. Disrespecting people and materials provided at Owens ELC.
4. Consistently disobeying classroom rules.
5. Verbally threatening other children or staff.
6. Using verbal or physical activity that diverts attention away from other children.

Generally speaking, the following constitutes guidelines for chronic disruptive behavior:

1. Chronic disruptive behaviors will be documented on a behavior log/report. The log/report will be used to document any inappropriate behaviors that directly impact other children, staff members, or the group as a whole. This log/report will be shared with the parent/guardian and will explain the behavior and how the behavior affected others.
2. If a child has difficulty managing his/her behavior on a recurring basis, parents/guardians will be asked to meet with the child's teacher and the Owens ELC manager or director to identify possible solutions and create a plan of action. Owens ELC recognizes the need to communicate and consult with parents/guardians prior to implementing any specific behavior management plan. Any such plan shall be in writing and signed by the parent/guardian.

3. If the plan of action is not successful, parents will be called for another meeting with the director, teacher, and/or an early childhood mental health or other similar specialist. Another plan of action will be created which shall also be in writing and signed by the parent/guardian.
4. If no progress is made, and the disruptive behaviors continue, the child may be suspended from care at Owens ELC. Suspension may range in length from the rest of the day to permanently.

Parents/guardians should always be aware it may become necessary to suspend or dismiss a child from the Owens ELC either temporarily or permanently depending on the particular behavior involved. If a child's behavior places the child, other children, or adults at consistent or extraordinary risk of harm, it may be necessary to ask the family to withdraw the child. Likewise, parents/guardians are never permitted to discipline other children at the Owens ELC. All parent/guardian concerns should be directed toward the staff.

Child Guidance Policy

I have read the Owens ELC *Child Guidance Policy* and have discussed the expectations with my child. Our family agrees to comply with all policies and procedures set forth by the Owens ELC program.

Parent/Legal Guardian (signature)

Parent/Legal Guardian Name (printed)

Child's Name (printed)

Date

Toilet Training

Toilet training is something we work very hard on in the toddler room. We are here to support and encourage families through the process of toilet training. Here are a few helpful hints:

- Most children are ready for toilet training between 21 and 28 months of age
- When your child is staying dry for at least 1 hour in his/her diaper it is a sign of readiness
- It is helpful to begin sitting your child on a potty chair or potty seat (on top of the regular toilet) around 18 months of age. This helps them become comfortable with the process.
- Pull-ups are NOT helpful in the process of toilet training. They actually make the process more challenging. It is best to just transition to underwear from diapers.
- Be as consistent as possible. Going back and forth between diapers and underwear is confusing for children who are just learning to use the potty.
- Use praise for each successful use of the toilet.
- Accidents will happen. They are part of the process.

Health and Nutrition Guidelines

Good health involves a combination of sound medical, dental and nutritional practices. We support your child's physical well-being at the Center by following the guidelines listed below, as well as by reporting any changes in your child's health that we observe.

1. The Center maintains updated immunization records for each child as required by the State of Ohio. Children are required to be up to date on immunizations against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus (DPT), polio (OPV), measles, mumps and rubella (MMR), Haemophilus Influenza Type B (HIB), and receive Tuberculosis screening, prior to entering the Center. Children without immunizations will be accepted with a child medical statement signed by a physician.
2. The Center requires a yearly physical exam by a licensed physician. This updated health record will be maintained for each child as required by the State of Ohio. This is a mandated form and the form must be on record within 30 days of enrollment and annually thereafter. All medical information must be on the form along with a physician's signature. The physician cannot be the parent of the child.
3. The center notifies parents in writing of any possible exposure to communicable disease. We will care for a child that has symptoms of a communicable illness until a parent or authorized adult arrives. If a communicable infection such as chicken pox or conjunctivitis is suspected, the Center will follow specific exclusion guidelines provided by the State of Ohio. There is an ill child cot in the manager's office for children that need to be excluded from the group.
4. Maintains an illness policy for staff and children, with clear guidelines for parent's to use in determining whether a child must stay out of the program and for how long. (See Illness Policy)
5. The center provides consistent procedures and schedules for toy and classroom cleanliness and sanitization.
6. The center will post all children's allergies in the classroom. All medication forms and medical/physical care plans will be given to teaching staff as well.
7. We provide breakfast, an afternoon snack and lunch on Fridays. We use a rotation menu on a 4 week cycle. Menus are available on the bulletin boards outside each classroom.
8. Parents will provide a nutritious lunch Monday-Thursday. The USDA recommends the following guidelines when preparing meals for children ages 1-12.

Lunch or Supper

	1-2 years	3-5 years	6-12 years
Milk	½ cup	¾ cup	1 cup
Meat*	1 oz	1 oz	2 oz
Veggie	1/8 c.	1/4 c.	1/2 c.
Fruit	1/8 c.	1/4 c.	1/4 c.
Grains	1/2 oz	1/2 oz	1 oz

*Meat or Meat Alternative

9. All children will wash hands prior to and following each meal and snack.

Illness Policy

The Center promotes the protection of well children by preventing illness whenever possible. Teachers practice preventive hand washing by washing their hands at the following times: arrival at the center, after exposure to bodily fluids and prior to eating or meal preparation. Protective gloves are used at every diaper change and when working with other bodily fluids.

The Ohio Department of Health Child Communicable Disease Chart is located in the Center Office area.

We consider reasons for exclusion from the center to be:

- 1. When the presence of the child poses a risk of infection to other children, and/or**
- 2. When the ill child requires more attention and care than is available by regularly scheduled Center staff, and/or**
- 3. Fever of 101.0, or two bouts of vomit, or two loose/watery stools/diarrhea. Children should remain excluded from the center for 24 hours symptom free without the use of medication to reduce or mask symptoms.**

AT HOME: If a child should have any of the following symptoms, the child **must remain at home until they have been symptom free for a 24-hour period of time without the use of medication to reduce or mask symptoms.** The Center should be contacted as soon as possible. Notification of absence lets the Center staff know not to expect your child and alerts the staff to the possibility of a contagion.

AT SCHOOL: If a child should develop any of the below-mentioned symptoms, the parents will be contacted. A sick child will be separated from the other children until a parent or authorized adult arrives. This isolation is necessary not only for the protection of other children, but also for the ill child, who is highly susceptible to other infections.

We will use the following guidelines to determine a child's exclusion from the Center.

- **Fever**
A temperature of at least 100F or above taken under the arm when in combination with other signs of illness such as pallor, irritability and excessive sleepiness vomiting or diarrhea. If fever is the only symptom, the Center's manager may decide on a case-by-case basis whether to exclude the child from the Center.
- **Diarrhea**
If a child has two or more abnormally loose/watery stools in a 24-hour period even if there are no other signs of illness.
- **Vomiting**
Vomiting more than one (1) time, or one (1) time if accompanied by any other sign of illness.
- **Rash**
Any illness involving untreated skin patches, unusual spots or rashes is to be checked by a physician. The child should remain home until all evidence of the illness is past (exceptions: allergy rashes and mild diaper rash). If your physician notes that the rash is not infectious, the child may return to the Center with the physician's permission. A medical health plan for on-going allergies and rashes must be on file with a Dr.'s statement.
- **Other Illness**
A child will be excluded from the Center for the following additional symptoms:
Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing, evidence of lice infestation, scabies, or other parasitic infestations; redness of the eye with obvious discharge, matted eyelashes, burning, itching; stiff neck with an elevated temperature, difficult or rapid breathing, yellow skin or eyes, severe coughing causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whopping sound; unusually dark urine or gray/white stool.

Isolation Precautions

A child isolated due to suspected communicable disease shall be:

- ❑ Within sight and hearing of an adult at all times
- ❑ Cared for in another room or portion of a room away from other children
- ❑ Provided with a cot and made comfortable. (After the cot has been used, the cot will be disinfected with an appropriate germicide, or if soiled by bodily fluids the cot will be cleaned with soap and water and then disinfected with an appropriate germicide.)
- ❑ Parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up child. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached the center will begin calling the emergency contacts on the child's enrollment paperwork.

Serious Injury/Illness:

If an injury/illness is serious (trauma to the head, broken bone, seizure, etc.) the center may call 911 in addition to the parents/guardians

Should a child display any listed above symptoms and need to be sent home, parent/guardian will be notified immediately. The child will rest in the library area of the classroom with a book or puzzle until their parent/guardian picks up. At the point of pick up, parent/guardian will sign off on 24-hour symptom/medication free before child can return.

Return to the Center

Children who have been sent home ill from the Center can be readmitted upon verification from the parents that the child has been free from the communicable condition for a 24 hour period of time without the use of medication to reduce or mask symptoms for a 24 hour period of time, a doctor's notice that the situation is not contagious, or if the center manager determines that the child's condition is in accordance with the minimum control standards listed on the Communicable Disease Chart.

Please make sure you contact the Center if your child will be remaining home due to any of the above-mentioned symptoms. If your child becomes ill during the day, we will contact parents immediately and care for the child in a separate place, if possible, until a family member arrives.

Notice of Exposure to Communicable Diseases

Parents will be notified if their children have been exposed to a communicable disease other than the common cold. Notices will be posted outside of your child's individual classroom. If there has been an exposure for the entire center each classroom will post the information.

Administration of Medication

The center manager, and/or teachers will administer medication or food supplements to children. Parents must have completed an Administration of Medication Form with written instructions from the child's physician as required by state law and the prescription with a current label. The form must include the child's name, name of the medication, birth date of the child, date first requested, and specific administration directions. The Center will keep a record of all medication administered. All medication brought into the center must be given to a classroom teacher or the manager upon arrival at the center. NO medication is permitted to be kept in a child's backpack, diaper bag, or cubby. The medication will be placed in a lock box in the in the kitchen. All medications will be disposed of after their listed expiration date as noted on the medication/supplement label. Tylenol, Motrin, etc. can be administered for **PAIN ONLY**, not to reduce a fever. No child will be permitted to administer his/her own medication.

Some medications/medical conditions will require a medical/physical care plan to be filled out and kept on file. Training must be provided to all staff members by a parent/guardian or other professional in order to provide care to the child. This training must be done prior to the child's first day in the program.

The center will need to have permission forms completed by the parents in order to apply diaper ointments and sunscreen lotions. You will receive an Administration of Medication request form upon request. The permission is good for one (1) year from date of the original permission.

Emergency Procedures

Injuries, accidents and illnesses

Parents will be contacted immediately and an Incident/Injury Report form completed if their child:

- Has a bump or blow to the head
- Requires emergency transportation
- Has or develops an illness which requires first aid
- Or any unusual or unexpected event which jeopardizes the safety of the children or staff

An Incident/Injury Report form will be completed and parents may be contacted, at the discretion of the teacher/manager, if your child has an

- Accident which requires first aid treatment
- Injury that requires first aid

If we are unable to reach you, we will contact any other person listed on the Emergency Authorization Transportation Form. The staff that witnesses the accident/injury will complete a written report of the injury.

Medical and Dental Emergency Procedure

In case of a medical or dental emergency deemed **serious** by the Child Care Center, we will refer to the child's emergency medical form and will contact the following persons:

- parent/guardian
- authorized person
- Preferred physician, dentist, clinics, and will follow the recommendation received.

In the event that parents cannot be immediately located, emergency medical treatment will be secured by the Child Care Center. If necessary, the child will be transported to the source of emergency medical or dental care listed on your child's enrollment for or the nearest available source of medical assistance. They will be transported by the HAN-CO or MED-CORP AMBULATORY SERVICES. The center carries no liability insurance to cover possible injuries occurring in the child care center or emergency EMT costs/fees. Parents should check on the coverage that they currently have on their present family health insurance policies. Be assured that the Manager or teacher of your child will accompany your child in the event that he/she must be transported to a source of emergency care. Also, know that the Emergency Transportation Authorization form only authorizes transportation not treatment. The source of emergency medical services will sustain life and do basic first-aid, but will not be able to go forward with treatment until the parent or legal guardian arrives to authorize treatment.

Fire Evacuation Plan

In the event of a fire, the children will be evacuated through the nearest exit and moved to the safest point away from the building. The designated area for our center is the gym located across the street on campus grounds. Exits in the building are clearly marked, and fire drills are practiced on a monthly basis. Smoke detectors and fire extinguishers have been placed throughout the building and are inspected monthly by campus security and annually by the state fire marshal.

Tornado Drills

During a tornado warning, we will move the children to the safety zone/storage area in the Preschool closet, away from windows and doors. We will remain there until the warning has been lifted. Tornado drills are practiced on a monthly basis during the months of April through September. Each classroom has posted a safe tornado area for the individual classroom.

Building Emergency

In the event of a building emergency (bomb threat, utility disaster, workplace violence, and hostage situation), which requires building evacuation, the Emergency Response Team designated at Owens Community College, will notify Campus Police and the Child Care Center concerning the nature of the problem. Children will be evacuated from the building if necessary and moved to a designated safe location. This location is in the tiered classroom in phase 2 of the college. Center personnel or campus security will notify parents of their child's location and the process required to come and retrieve their children.

Safety

The center has established the following precautions to help ensure your child's safety:

- Spray aerosols, including sunscreen, are not permitted for use at the center any time children are present.
- Fire, emergency and weather alert plans are posted in each classroom, and teachers receive instruction for procedures during emergencies.
- Teachers have immediate access to a phone in the event of an emergency. All classrooms have a cell phone.
- Toddlers, Preschoolers and Prek will never be left unattended. School-agers may be left unseen for up to 5 minutes. They will still be heard, but may not be seen when in groups of 6 or less children.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The center complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), including administering medication to children with disabilities, and administering care procedures to children with disabilities.

Parent Programs/Communication

The center offers a variety of opportunities for you to become as familiar or involved as you choose.

Website and On-line Resources

Owens Early Learning Center's uses the App, HiMama. This allows teachers to enter how much/what each child ate for breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack. The App also allows for teachers to upload daily activities, lesson plans, and photos to keep you in the know.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent Teacher Conferences are held two times a year (typically in November and April). Our parent teacher conferences give parents and teachers an opportunity to share specific hopes or concerns about a child. It is an ideal setting for you to ask questions or share valuable information. Teachers are available to meet more frequently if the need arises.

Parent Educational Resources

Resources for parents include a variety of articles of interest to parents. In addition to these articles, we have many books on parenting, working with siblings, ages and stages of development, health and safety, activities to do at home with your child, and more. See the Manager in order to borrow resources.

Family Involvement

There are many opportunities for parents to be involved in our program. We have an open door policy. Parents are welcome to visit their child's classroom at any time. We also have an annual curriculum night, breakfasts to celebrate special family members, sign-ups to donate or help with classroom celebrations.

Facebook

The Early Learning Center has a secret Facebook page to keep you informed of any updates, reminders or happenings throughout the center. We must have parental permission in order to become a member of the group.

Email and Text Messaging

One way the center can communicate with the parents is through email and text messaging. Please give your email and phone number to the center, if you would like to receive communication from the childcare center via these means. In addition, each classroom has a cell phone that you will be given the phone number for that you can reach the teachers via phone call or text message.

Owens Alert System

The Owens Community College Alert system is designed to keep families safe and informed. Program enrollees will automatically receive notices by phone, email and text message when the college is delayed or closed due to inclement weather or emergencies. To sign up for alerts, visit www.owens.edu and click on quick links at the top right corner, then choose Owens Alert system.

Outdoor Play/Wading Pools/Swimming

The center provides outdoor play each day in suitable weather for toddlers and preschool and school age children in attendance four (4) or more daylight hours. Suitable weather will be described as the following: at least 25 degrees F (including wind chill factors), and no more than 92 degrees F (including the heat index). Ozone alerts will be considered per specific alert. Children will not be taken outside when there is thunder and/or lightening in the vicinity. On days when outdoor play is not an option, the children will be given large muscle play opportunities in their individual classrooms or in the gym located in Phase Two of Owens Community College during the day.

Wading pools and sprinklers will be used throughout the summer. All children will need a permission slip on file and updated annually to engage in water play.

School-age children will swim 2-3 times weekly throughout the summer at the Bluffton pool. A swimming permission slip is required for each child.

Child Assessments

Formal assessments are conducted twice per year on each child using a variety of methods, including: work sample portfolios, developmental checklists, anecdotal notes, photographs, running records, and a variety of other methods. The center uses Teaching Strategies Gold Online to input assessment information. Additionally, children who are receiving ODE Grant funds are assessed twice per year using Ohio's Early Learning Assessment. Child level data is reported to ODE for grant funded children.

Breastfeeding Space:

Nursing moms are welcome to nurse in the toddler room, teacher work room or manager's office.

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