

# 2026 PARENT HANDBOOK



50 Beach Street  
Saco, Maine 04072



manager@lnl.school



207-283-2345

## LEAP N LEARN CHILDCARE CENTER



# LEAP N LEARN CHILDCARE CENTER

## WELCOME

Dear Parents & Guardians,

Welcome to Leap N Learn Child Care Center! We are so happy you have chosen our program to care for your child. Our staff looks forward to building a strong, supportive partnership with you as your child grows, learns, and thrives in our care.

This handbook is designed to help you understand our program philosophy, daily routines, and policies. We believe that children benefit most when families and educators work together. Open communication between home and school is essential to providing a positive and nurturing experience for every child.

After your child transitions into the program, we encourage ongoing communication. Please share how your child is adjusting, ask questions, and let us know how we can best support your child's individual needs. Families are always welcome to visit their child's classroom, and the Director is available for questions, concerns, or suggestions at any time.



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Our Philosophy &amp; Mission</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Child Supervision &amp; Safety</b>	<b>16</b>
		Supervision Policies and Ratios	16
<b>Operating Hours</b>	<b>5</b>	Child Safety & Mandated Reporting	16
Operating Hours	5		
Holiday Closure Schedule	5	<b>Emergency Procedures</b>	<b>17</b>
Snow/Emergency Closures	5	Emergency Preparedness Plan	17
<b>Attendance</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Discipline &amp; Behavior Policy</b>	<b>18</b>
Attendance	6	Our Approach	18
Drop-Off/Pick-Up Policies	6	Additional Support	18
Late Pick-Up Policies	6		
		<b>Tuition &amp; Payment Policies</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Daily Routines &amp; Schedule</b>	<b>7</b>	Tuition	19
Daily Activities	7	Withdrawal Policy	19
Clothing	8	Termination Policy	19
Nap & Rest Time	8	Financial Assistance	19
Diapering/Toileting	9		
Pacifiers	9	<b>Parent Partnership &amp; Communication</b>	<b>20</b>
		Records & Information	20
<b>Curriculum</b>	<b>10</b>	Parent Involvement	20
Approach	10	Parent Communication	21
Curriculum Themes	10	Parent Code of Conduct	22
<b>Meals &amp; Nutrition</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>Rights for Children</b>	<b>23</b>
INutrition Guidelines	11		
Outside Food Policy	11		
Pizza Fridays	11		
		<b>Online Access</b>	
<b>Health &amp; Illness Policy</b>	<b>12</b>	You can access our Parent Handbook by visiting our Parent Center on our website or by scanning the QR code.	
Immunization	12		
Health Policy	12		
Reporting Illnesses	12		
Medication Administration	13		
Emergency Treatment	13		
Hygiene & Sanitation Practices	14		
Staff Health Procedures	14		
Return-To Care Guidelines	15		





## OUR PHILOSOPHY & MISSION

At Leap N Learn, we are committed to creating a safe, nurturing, and engaging environment where children can learn, grow, and thrive. Our approach is built on these core principles:

- 1** Safe & Supportive Environment – Your child’s well-being is our top priority, with caring staff and a secure setting.
- 2** Play-Based Learning – Hands-on activities foster creativity, problem-solving, and a love for learning.
- 3** Social & Emotional Growth – We encourage confidence, kindness, and strong communication skills.
- 4** Individualized Learning – Every child is unique, and we tailor experiences to their needs and interests.
- 5** Parent-Teacher Partnership – Open communication ensures we support your child together.

By choosing Leap N Learn, you’re joining a community that values education, connection, and joyful learning. We look forward to being part of your child’s journey!



## OPERATING HOURS & CLOSURES

### OPERATING HOURS

Monday through Friday  
7:00 AM to 5:30 PM.

Drop-Off: 7:00 AM - 9:00AM  
Pick-Up: 3:30 PM - 5:30 PM

### HOLIDAY CLOSURES

Leap N Learn will be closed in observance of the following holidays. Please refer to the School Calendar for a full list of closed dates.

- New Year's Eve & Day
- Martin Luther King
- President's Day
- Patriot's Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Columbus Day
- Veteran's Day
- Thanksgiving & Day After
- Christmas Eve & Christmas

### SNOW/EMERGENCY CLOSURES

The program may close if the Director decides there is the need to ensure the safety of the children and staff. If the Director closes or alters the operating hours, families will be notified of the closing by 6:00 AM. Closure Notices are sent through the Procure Parent App and via email.

# ATTENDANCE & DROP OFF/PICK UP POLICY

## ATTENDANCE

We are required by the state to track your child's attendance daily, and to document absences and reasons. In accordance with State of Maine regulations, children may attend a maximum of 10 hours per day.

If your child will be late or absent, please notify the center by calling or messaging through the Parent App.

Leap N Learn does not provide transportation. Families are responsible for arranging transportation and must use designated pick-up and drop-off areas. **Children should never be left unattended in vehicles at any time.**

## DROP OFF/PICK UP

To help children fully participate in our daily routine, all children are expected to **arrive by 9:00 AM**. Please use the kiosk or QR code to sign your child in and out. Parents and authorized adults must check in with a staff member at drop-off and pick-up each day. For safety, children may only be released to a parent or an individual listed as an Authorized Person. Anyone not recognized by staff will be required to show photo identification. Guests must use the doorbell for entry—**please do not share your access code.**

## LATE PICK-UP POLICY

All children must be picked up by **5:30 PM**. A late pick-up fee of \$2 per minute will be charged after the scheduled pick-up time to cover extra staffing required to supervise your child after hours. If you anticipate a late pick-up, please notify us as soon as possible.



## DAILY ROUTINES & EXPECTATIONS

We believe that a structured routine helps children feel secure and provides opportunities for a variety of learning experiences. Our daily schedule is designed to balance both guided activities and free play, ensuring that each child's needs are met.

### DAILY SCHEDULE & ACTIVITIES

Our typical daily schedule includes a mix of activities that support our curriculum goals and help children meet developmental milestones.

- **Free Play:** Children engage in activities of their choice.
- **Sensory Activities and Creative Play:** Activities such as art, music, and sensory play.
- **Learning Time:** Activities that encourage early literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving.
- **Outdoor or Indoor Play:** Time for physical activities like running, climbing, and group games.
- **Snack and Meal Times:** Group snacks and meals
- **Rest Time:** Varies by age and development

# CLOTHING

## Clothing Items

- Each child must have at least one full change of clothing (underwear, socks, pants, shirt) stored in their cubby or backpack
- Extra clothes are needed for accidents, water play, and wet or muddy weather
- The center has a limited supply for emergencies only. If used, please wash and return it the next day

## Footwear & Personal Items

- Boots are not permitted in classrooms
- Please provide sneakers or indoor shoes for classroom use
- Clothing or accessories that pose a safety risk are discouraged
- Please label all clothing and belongings to help us return misplaced items

## Outdoor Attire

Children must have weather-appropriate outdoor clothing, including:

- Snow pants, boots, hats, mittens, and warm coats
- Cold- and wind-weather gear, even when there is no snow
- All children are expected to participate in outdoor play
- If a child is too ill to go outside, they should remain home
- Parents are responsible for ensuring children have appropriate attire

# NAP AND REST TIME

- All children participate in a scheduled nap or rest period in accordance with State of Maine Child Care Licensing Rules
- Each child is assigned an individual rest mat or crib
- Parents must provide a crib sheet and blanket. Children under one cannot use a blanket in their crib per State laws but may use a sleep sack
- Bedding must be taken home weekly for laundering

## DIAPER & TOILETING POLICIES

Teachers partner closely with families to ensure consistency between home and school.

- Diapers and pull-ups are checked at least every 2 hours, upon waking, and as needed
- Soiled or wet diapers are changed promptly
- Families must supply diapers and pull-ups. The center provides wipes.
- Disposable diapers and pull-ups are required unless a documented medical exception is provided

### Soiled Clothing

- Licensing regulations do not allow staff to rinse or clean soiled items
- Soiled clothing and diapers are bagged and sent home the same day
- If cloth diapers are medically required:
  - They must have a waterproof outer cover
  - They must be removed from the facility daily
  - Diapers are sent home exactly as removed per health code

### Potty Training

Our staff is committed to helping your child on their potty training journey. Please refer to our Potty Training Guide for more information on how we work with you to achieve this goal.

## PACIFIER POLICY

We understand the importance of comfort items and work with families to support children's needs while encouraging healthy development.

- Under 1 year: Pacifiers allowed as needed, per parent direction
- Ages 1-2: Pacifiers permitted during nap time only
- Over age 2: Pacifiers should remain at home
- This policy supports recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, which encourages phasing out pacifier use by age 3 due to potential impacts on speech development and dental health. We are happy to share resources and support families who are working to eliminate pacifier use.

# CURRICULUM & LEARNING APPROACH

## OUR APPROACH TO LEARNING

Leap N Learn Child Care Center follows the Maine Early Childhood Learning Guidelines, which provide a research-based framework for planning a developmentally appropriate, engaging, and well-rounded program.

Our curriculum supports growth in four key areas:

- 1 Social & emotional development
- 2 Physical development
- 3 Cognitive development
- 4 Language development

Each classroom balances teacher-planned activities with experiences that are influenced by children's individual interests, abilities, and developmental goals. Learning is hands-on and play-based, allowing children to explore, experiment, and build skills naturally throughout the day.

## CURRICULUM THEMES

- At Leap N Learn, our curriculum is enhanced through weekly themes that are consistent across all classrooms. These themes provide a shared focus throughout the center and serve as inspiration for learning experiences, discussions, and activities.
- Each classroom uses the weekly theme as a foundation, adapting it to be developmentally appropriate for their age group. Teachers thoughtfully design activities that align with the theme while supporting each child's individual growth, interests, and learning style.
- Curriculum plans and activities are displayed in each classroom, as well as shared through our Parent Newsletter and Boards.

# MEALS & NUTRITION

## MEAL & NUTRITION GUIDELINES

- Families are responsible for providing breakfast, lunch, and snacks throughout the day. We do provide afternoon snacks.
- All food items must be packed in a labeled lunchbox. For food safety, lunchboxes are stored in a refrigerator throughout the day.
- Please notify us if your child has any allergies or dietary restrictions.
- Leap N Learn has access to a microwave and can warm food as needed.
- Families are encouraged to pack nutritious foods that support their child's energy, focus, and overall well-being.



**WE ARE A NUT-FREE AND SHELLFISH-FREE FACILITY**



## OUTSIDE FOOD POLICY

Food brought from home for holidays, birthdays, or special celebrations—whether pre-packaged or home-baked—may only be shared with children with prior approval from the Center Director.

## PIZZA FRIDAYS



Children over the age of 1 may participate in Pizza Fridays at Leap N Learn with written parent permission. The cost is \$3 per child, which is billed quarterly.

# HEALTH & ILLNESS POLICY

Keeping our daycare a safe and healthy environment is a shared responsibility between our staff and families. To prevent the spread of illness, we follow strict health guidelines regarding attendance, illness reporting, hygiene practices, and immunizations.

## IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

All children must follow State of Maine immunization guidelines, provide a Certificate of Immunization that illustrates a child's immunizations status within 30 days of enrollment and update immunization records as needed.

## HEALTH POLICY

To maintain a healthy and safe environment for all children and staff, children who are ill must remain home. Children may not attend Leap N Learn if they have had any of the following within the past 24 hours:

- A fever of 101°F or higher
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Symptoms of contagious illnesses such as pink eye, flu, chickenpox, hand-foot-mouth disease, or COVID-19.
- Severe cough, difficulty breathing, rash, or extreme fatigue.

If your child becomes ill while at school, you will be contacted to pick up your child as soon as possible. If your child has any of the previously mentioned conditions or is sent home ill he/she will not be able to attend the program for the following day. Please review the readmission guide.

## REPORTING ILLNESS & ABSENCES

Parents must notify the daycare if their child will be absent due to illness. If a child has a contagious illness, parents must inform us immediately.

## MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION

During program hours, any medications that a child needs must meet the following requirements:

- Both prescription and over-the-counter medications can only be administered with a signed **Medication Authorization Form** from parents.
- Medications must be in their original containers with clear dosage instructions
- If your child is currently on medications, please communicate with the classroom teacher the last dose information prior to drop off.
- No First Doses: We do not administer the first dose of any new medication.
- Emergency Medications: EpiPens, inhalers, or other emergency medications require a doctor's note and an **Emergency Action Plan**.
- Topical Products: Sunscreen, diaper cream, and insect repellent require an **Authorization Form**.
- Fever reducing medications may be administered to children under two for teething pain with parental consent.
- Do not administer fever reducing medication to your child if they are ill and proceed to drop them off in our care. Follow the health policy for illness and readmission guidelines.

## EMERGENCY TREATMENT

In the case of a medical emergency, staff will provide first aid and contact emergency services (911) if needed. Parents will be notified immediately.

A baby with light brown hair, wearing a white short-sleeved shirt, is leaning over a yellow and white toy. The baby is looking down at the toy with interest. The background is a blurred indoor setting with a green wall and a yellow container.

## HYGIENE & SANITATION PRACTICES

Proper hygiene is enforced to reduce the spread of illness. Children and staff wash hands frequently, including before meals, after restroom use, and after outdoor play. All toys, surfaces, and shared spaces are sanitized daily, and the facility undergoes deep cleaning on a regular basis.

## STAFF TRAINING & HEALTH PROCEDURES

- The childcare facility keeps a first aid kit in the office and on the playground.
- If a child sustains an injury, a supervising teacher or the Director will provide first aid, complete an incident/injury report, and file it in the child's folder. The parent will receive a copy of this report.
- All staff receive CPR & First Aid certification and training on recognizing symptoms of childhood illnesses.
- Regular staff training sessions cover topics like hygiene, food safety, and emergency medical response.
- Staff are required to stay home if they are experiencing contagious symptoms.

## RETURN-TO-CARE GUIDELINES

Children may return to daycare when they have been symptom-free for at least 24 hours without medication. See below for readmission guidelines.

Illness	Readmission Guidelines
Fever (Over 101°F)	May readmit after 24 hours from last normal temperature without medication.
Chicken Pox	May readmit 7 days after the first rash appeared and all lesions have scabbed over.
Conjunctivitis	May readmit after treatment with an antibiotic for 24 hrs and there is no longer any discharge from the eye. If medication is not prescribed, a child must be free from any discharge from the eye before being readmitted.
Covid-19	We follow the CDC requirements. We reserve the right to require testing.
Rashes	May re-admit only with physician's written assurances that symptoms are not contagious.
Impetigo	May readmit after treatment with oral antibiotic for 48 hrs and/or treatment with topical antibiotic has been started – lesions should be covered if possible.
Head Lice	May readmit 24 hrs after anti-parasitic treatment is completed and nits are removed. No live bugs.
Hand Foot Mouth	May readmit after 24 hours of no new lesions and all lesions are scabbed over.
Ringworm	May readmit 24 hrs after anti-fungal treatment is started – lesions should be covered if possible.
Scabies	May readmit 24 hrs after anti-parasitic treatment has been started.
Strep Throat	May readmit 24 hrs after antibiotic treatment has started and when temperature has been normal for 24 hours minimum.

# CHILD SUPERVISION & SAFETY

Our staff are trained to provide active supervision and ensure children are safe, engaged, and within sight at all times.

- **Supervision Ratios:** We maintain the following teacher-to-child ratios in accordance with state regulations:

Infant	6 weeks - 12 months	1:4
Toddler 1	12 months - 2 years	1:5
Toddler 2	2.5 years - 3 years	1:7
Preschool	3 years - 5 years	1:10

- **Head Counts & Transitions:** Regular head counts are conducted throughout the day, especially during transitions, outdoor play, and field trips.
- **Indoor Safety:** Staff ensure all play areas are free from hazards, toys are age-appropriate, and all safety protocols are followed.
- **Outdoor Play & Field Trips:** Children are closely supervised during outdoor play. Field trips require additional safety measures, including permission slips, extra staff supervision, and emergency contact access.
- **Safe Release Policy:** Children will only be released to authorized individuals listed on the Authorized Pick-Up List. Photo identification will be required.

## CHILD SAFETY & MANDATORY REPORTING

As part of our commitment to providing a safe environment, all staff members are trained to recognize signs of neglect or abuse and are legally required to report any suspected cases of child maltreatment to the appropriate authorities. This is not optional, and staff will follow all required protocols to ensure the child's safety.



# EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

Our daycare follows a comprehensive emergency preparedness plan that includes evacuation procedures, shelter-in-place drills, and staff training.

- **Fire Drills & Evacuation:** Fire drills are conducted monthly to ensure children and staff know how to exit the building safely. Evacuation routes are posted in all rooms, and staff assist children to designated safe areas.
- **Severe Weather & Shelter-in-Place:** In case of tornadoes, earthquakes, or other severe weather, children will be moved to designated safe areas within the building. Parents will be notified if shelter-in-place procedures are activated.
- **Lockdown Procedures:** If there is a threat in or near the facility, staff will secure doors, move children to a safe location, and follow emergency protocols until authorities give clearance.
- **Medical Emergencies:** If a child experiences a medical emergency, staff will administer first aid/CPR if needed and call 911. Parents will be contacted immediately. Leap N Learn is required to report any serious injury or death to the Department of Health and Human Services.
- **Emergency Contacts:** Each child must have an updated Emergency Contact List on file. Parents must ensure this information is accurate at all times.

# DISCIPLINE & BEHAVIOR POLICY

At Leap N Learn, we believe every child deserves a safe, supportive, and respectful environment where they can learn and grow. Guidance and discipline are handled in a positive, consistent, and developmentally appropriate way throughout the day.

## OUR APPROACH

Our approach focuses on helping children learn important social and emotional skills, including:

- Cooperation and teamwork
- Using words to express needs and feelings
- Taking turns and showing respect
- Managing emotions and physical impulses
- Problem-solving and persistence

How teachers support children:

- Model positive, respectful interactions
- Respond promptly to children's needs
- Help children identify feelings and describe problems
- Offer guidance and alternative solutions during conflicts
- Provide comfort and reassurance when children are frustrated

What we **do not** use as discipline:

- Physical punishment
- Threats or intimidation
- Derogatory or shaming language
- Withholding food or basic needs

## ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

Ongoing behavioral concerns will be discussed in a meeting with teachers, the Director, and parents/guardians. Together, we will create goals and strategies to support the child's success. If a child's behavior becomes unsafe and cannot be resolved, Leap N Learn reserves the right to terminate care. When possible, written notice will be provided; however, immediate termination may occur if safety is at risk.

# TUITION & PAYMENT POLICIES

## TUITION

Tuition payments at Leap N Learn Child Care Center are due in full each Friday for the upcoming week of care. All payments are made through direct ACH withdrawal from your designated bank account. Tuition is based on your child's enrolled schedule, not on daily attendance. Tuition rates remain the same regardless of absences, holidays, scheduled closures, or unexpected closures.

- Late Payment Fee: \$10 per day
- Late Pick-Up Fee: \$2 per minute
- Returned Payment Fee: \$35

## WITHDRAWAL/TERMINATION POLICY

- **Withdrawal:** A written notice of two weeks is required for withdrawal if you choose to withdraw from the program. Tuition will be charged until the notice period is completed.
- **Termination:** Leap N Learn reserves the right to terminate enrollment for reasons including but not limited to non-payment of tuition, repeated behavioral concerns, failure to comply with daycare policies, or if the child's needs cannot be adequately met within our program.

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Families receiving childcare subsidies or financial aid must provide documentation and adhere to the payment terms outlined by their respective programs. For any questions regarding tuition or payment arrangements, please contact the Center Director.



## PARENT PARTNERSHIP & COMMUNICATION

At Leap N Learn, we believe children thrive when families and teachers work together. Parents and caregivers are valued partners in our program, and open, respectful communication is key to creating a positive experience for every child.

## RECORDS & INFORMATION

It is essential that we have up-to-date contact information, including phone numbers, emergency contacts, and any medical or allergy information. Please notify us immediately if there are any changes to your contact details or emergency information to ensure that we can reach you or a designated contact in case of an emergency. Information is required to be updated annually per State requirements.

## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Families are always welcome at Leap N Learn. We encourage parents to stay engaged and involved in their child's learning experience.

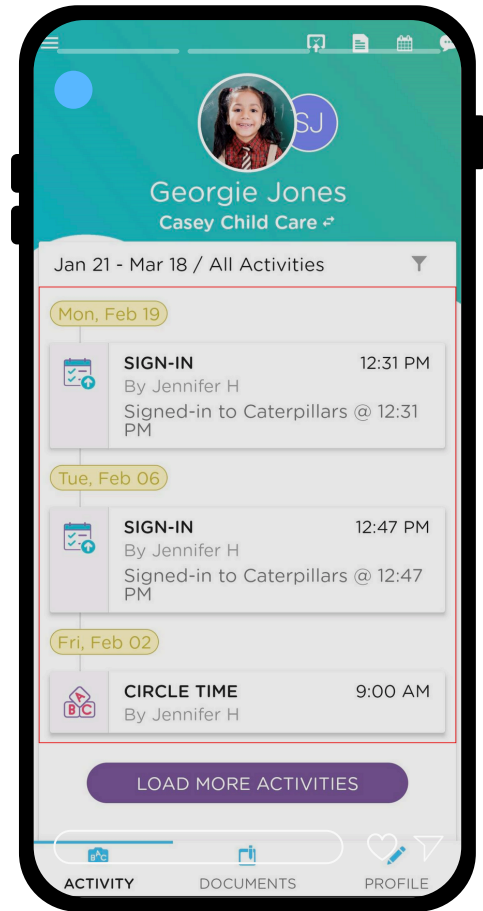
- Our center maintains an open-door policy
- Parents are welcome to visit classrooms and participate in activities throughout the year
- Families are encouraged to share special talents, interests, or hobbies with their child's class
- Teachers welcome questions, feedback, and insights about your child's learning style and development

# PARENT COMMUNICATION



Leap N Learn uses the Procure App as our primary method of communication. The app is used for daily updates, classroom information, center-wide announcements, and important reminders.

Families are expected to regularly check the Procure App to stay informed and connected with their child's day and center communications.



You may also reach out to our Center Director via email or phone



manager@lnl.school



207-283-2345

We believe it's incredibly important for parents to have open communication with our staff and encourage you to reach out at any time with questions, concerns, or feedback regarding your child's care.

# PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

A strong partnership starts with shared expectations. To ensure a safe, respectful, and supportive environment for all children, families are expected to follow these guidelines:

## Daily Responsibilities

- Sign children in and out and escort them to their designated classroom
- Supervise children at all times while inside the building and in the parking area
- Drive safely and follow posted parking lot guidelines
- Keep all required forms completed and updated
- Inform staff of any changes that may affect your child's behavior or well-being
- Parents shall refrain from using cell phones during drop-off/pick-up

## Health & Safety Expectations

- Parents must agree to abide by the Health Policies outlined in the Parent Handbook

## Respectful Conduct

- Families are expected to speak respectfully and refrain from using profane language on center property
- Parents may not discipline children other than their own
- Cell phone use should be limited during drop-off and pick-up to ensure proper supervision
- Disruptive, threatening, or disrespectful behavior toward staff or the program may result in immediate dismissal from the center

## Center Policies

Parents are expected to abide by the Center policies:

- Leap N Learn prohibits alcohol, illegal substances, unauthorized toxic substances, firearms, pellet guns, and BB guns on center property or at any center-sponsored event.
- If a parent or guardian appears impaired at pick-up, staff may require alternate transportation and may contact local authorities if needed.
- Leap N Learn is a smoke-free facility. Smoking or vaping is not permitted anywhere on the property. Children's clothing and belongings must be free from cigarette or marijuana odors.
- Pets of any kind are not allowed in the facility or on facility grounds at any time.

# RIGHTS FOR CHILDREN IN A CHILDCARE FACILITY

In accordance with the State of Maine Rules for the Licensing of Child Care Facilities, all children receiving care at Leap N Learn Child Care Center have the following rights:

1. Children have the right to be free from emotional, physical, and sexual abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
2. Children have the right to be free from harmful actions or practices that are detrimental to their welfare or that place them at risk of harm.
3. Children have the right to an environment that meets all applicable health and safety standards.
4. Children have the right to receive child care services without discrimination, including discrimination based on race, age, national origin, religion, disability, sex, or family composition.
5. Children have the right to be treated with dignity, consideration, and respect, with full recognition of their individuality and developmental needs, including the use of developmentally appropriate practices.
6. Children have the right to the implementation of any service plan developed for them in collaboration with parents/guardians and community or state agencies.
7. Children have the right to participate in developmentally appropriate activities and to have access to appropriate materials and equipment.
8. Children with disabilities have the right to reasonable modifications and accommodations to child care facility policies and practices to support full participation.

To ensure equal access, the child care facility shall make reasonable modifications to policies and practices for children, parents, and guardians with disabilities, unless such modifications would constitute a fundamental alteration of the program.