LITTLE OAKS
HANDS ON LEARNING
CENTER, LLC

Employee Handbook

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LITTLE OAKS
HANDS ON LEARNING
CENTER, LLC

Employee Handbook

Welcome!

Welcome to Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC!

On behalf of Little Oaks HLC, LLC and your new colleagues, we are thrilled that you are here and look forward to working with you! At Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, we are firm believers that it takes a village to raise a child and we are committed to partnering with you and families to ensure that every child that attends our center has a positive social and learning experience as they build upon their innate curiosity and disposition for learning in a nurturing environment.

This handbook is designed to help you get acquainted with our center and answer many of your questions, as well as provide you with information about working conditions, benefits, and policies affecting your employment.

The information contained in this handbook applies to all employees. Abiding by these policies is considered a condition of continued employment. The contents of this handbook are not intended to constitute or be construed as a promise of employment or as a contract between the center and any of its employees. The Staff Handbook is a summary of our policies and a commitment to how we will work together.

We hope your time here will be joyful, rewarding, and supportive of your professional growth.

Sincerely,

Dana Abboud

Dana Abboud
Owner/Director

Section 1: Our School

1.1 Mission Statement

Here at Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, we are committed to providing high-quality early care and education through close and thoughtful partnerships with educators, families, child development professionals, and our local state agencies.

The tenets that guide and inspire our work:

1. We believe that children reach their fullest potential in nurturing and secure developmentally appropriate learning environments with caring and attentive adults and meaningful relationships with their peers.
2. We believe the family is a child's first teacher and the experts on their child. Supporting a child to reach their fullest potential means partnering closely with the family.
3. We believe educators are the heart and soul of the school and as such we are committed to uplifting and celebrating our teachers' professional growth through professional development, compensation, and other benefits.
4. We are inspired, but not confined to, the teachings of Montessori, Waldorf, and Reggio Emilia.

Little Oaks HLC, LLC strives to be advocates for all children, families, and educators within our community and beyond as we lead by example to have a positive impact on the future of our youngest citizens, families, and the field of early childhood education.

1.2 Purpose of Handbook

This handbook has been prepared to inform new employees of the policies and procedures and to establish Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center expectations. It is not all-inclusive or intended to provide strict interpretations of our policies; rather, it offers an overview of the work environment. This handbook is not a contract, expressed or implied, guaranteeing employment for any length of time and is not intended to induce an employee to accept employment with our organization.

Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC reserves the right to unilaterally revise, suspend, revoke, terminate or change any of its policies, in whole or in part, whether described within this handbook or elsewhere, in its sole discretion. Every effort will be made to keep you informed of the Little Oaks HLC policies, however, we cannot guarantee that notice of revisions will be provided. Feel free to ask questions about any of the information within this handbook. This handbook supersedes all personnel policies and manuals previously distributed, made available, or applicable to employees.

Section 2. Employment at Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC

2.1 Equal Employment Opportunity

Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC is an equal opportunity employer and does not unlawfully discriminate against employees or applicants for employment on the basis of an individual's race, color, religion, creed, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status, veteran status or any other status protected by applicable law. This policy applies to all terms, conditions, and privileges of employment, including recruitment, hiring, placement, compensation, promotion, discipline, and termination. Whenever possible, Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center makes reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities to the extent required by law. Employees who would like to request reasonable accommodation should contact the director.

2.2 At-Will Employment Status

Little Oaks HLC personnel are employed on an at-will basis. Employment at will may be terminated with or without cause, and with or without notice, at any time by the employee or Little Oaks HLC. Nothing in this handbook shall limit the right to terminate at-will employment. No Director or employee of Little Oaks HLC has any authority to enter into an agreement for employment for any specified period of time or to make an agreement for employment on anything other than at-will terms. Only the Owner of Little Oaks HLC has the authority to negotiate any agreement and an at-will provision can only be modified by an enforceable written agreement. Nothing in this policy shall unlawfully limit an employee's right to engage in legally protected concerted activities.

2.3 Pre-employment Qualifications

To ensure that individuals who join Little Oaks HLC are well qualified and have a strong potential to be productive and successful, it is the policy of Little Oaks HLC to check the employment references of all applicants. In addition, it is our policy to conduct pre-employment background checks on all applicants who accept an offer of employment. Background checks may include verification of any information on the applicant's resume or application form. Although a criminal conviction does not automatically bar an applicant from employment, state and federal law prohibit individuals convicted of a crime that endangered the health, morals, welfare, or safety of minors, the elderly, or the disabled, from working with those types of individuals.

All offers of employment are conditioned on receipt of a background check report that is acceptable to Little Oaks HLC, LLC. All background checks are conducted in conformity with the Federal Fair Credit Reporting Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and state and federal privacy and anti-discrimination laws. Reports are kept confidential and are only viewed by individuals involved in the hiring process.

If the information obtained in a background check would lead Little Oaks HLC, LLC to deny employment, a copy of the report will be provided to the applicant, and the applicant will have the opportunity to dispute the report's accuracy. Additional checks such as a driving record or credit report may be made on applicants for particular job categories if appropriate and job-related. Little Oaks HLC, LLC also reserves the right to conduct a background check for current employees to determine eligibility for promotion or reassignment in the same manner as described above.

2.4 Open Door Policy

Suggestions for improving Little Oaks HLC, LLC are always welcome. During the course of your employment, you may have a suggestion, question, or complaint about your job, your working conditions, or the treatment you are receiving. Your good-faith suggestion, question, or complaint is a concern to Little Oaks HLC, LLC. We ask you to first discuss your concerns with the Director. If you still do not receive a satisfactory response, please escalate it to the Owner. Little Oaks HLC, LLC values your observations and you should feel free to raise issues of concern, in good faith, without the fear of retaliation. All suggestions will be taken into consideration but may not always be acted upon.

2.5 Non-harassment policy / Non-discrimination policy

Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC prohibits discrimination or harassment based on race, color, religion, creed, sex, national origin, age disability, marital status, veteran status, or any other status protected by applicable law. These individuals have the right to work in a professional atmosphere that promotes equal employment opportunities. Little Oaks Hands- ON Learning Center, LLC prohibits and will not tolerate harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, sex, disability, marital status, veteran status, or any other status protected by applicable law. Violations of this policy will not be tolerated. Discrimination includes but is not limited to employment decisions or employment-related actions on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, age, sex, disability, national origin, marital or veteran status, or any other status protected by applicable law.

Harassment is generally defined as unwelcome verbal or non-verbal conduct based upon a person's protected characteristics. Behavior that shows hostility or aversion towards the person because of the characteristics, and which affects the person's employment opportunities or benefits, has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with the person's work performance or has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. Harassing conduct includes but is not limited to called an epithet; slurs, or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts; denigrating jokes, and display or circulation in the workplace of written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion towards an individual or group based on their protected characteristics.

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual, or physical contact of a sexual nature, when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Examples of sexual harassment include:

1. Unwelcome or unsolicited sexual advances 2. Displaying sexually suggestive material 3. Unwelcome sexual flirtations 4. Advances or propositions 5. Suggestive comments 6. Verbal abuse of a sexual nature 7. Sexually-oriented jokes	8. Crude or vulgar language or gestures 9. Graphic or verbal commentaries about an individual's body 10. Display of obscene materials 11. Physical contact such as patting 12. Pinching or brushing against someone's body 13. Physical assault of a sexual nature

Reporting:

Any employee who feels that they have been harassed or discriminated against or has witnessed or become aware of discrimination or harassment in violation of these policies, should bring the matter to the immediate attention of the Director. Little Oaks HLC, LLC will promptly investigate all allegations of discrimination and harassment and take action as appropriate based on the outcome of the investigation. An investigation and its results will be treated as confidential to the extent feasible in Little Oaks HLC, LLC will take appropriate action based on the outcome of the investigation. No employee will be retaliated against for making a complaint in good faith regarding a violation of these policies, or for participating in good faith in an investigation pursuant to these policies. If an employee feels they have been retaliated against, the employee should file a complaint using the policies set forth above.

2.6 Pregnancy Discrimination

Little Oaks HLC, LLC prohibits discrimination based on pregnancy which includes:

- The basis of past pregnancy, current pregnancy, family status, and intended pregnancy;
- An employee who needs time off to undergo in vitro fertilization;
- An employee who uses contraceptives, including not discriminating against the employee by excluding coverage of prescription contraceptives;
- A medical condition relating to pregnancy or childbirth including lactation and breastfeeding;
- An employee having an abortion or contemplating having an abortion;
- Forcing an employee to take leave just because they are pregnant, as long as they are medically able to perform the essential job functions;
- Treating a pregnant employee who is temporarily unable to perform the functions of their job differently than other employees who are temporarily unable to perform the functions of their jobs.

For the purposes of this section, the Little Oaks HLC, LLC will treat an employee who is temporarily unable to perform the functions of their job because of their pregnancy-related condition in the same manner as it treats other employees in their ability or inability to work. Little Oaks HLC, LLC will do this by providing modified tasks, alternative assignments, or fringe benefits such as disability leave and leave without pay as required under state, federal, and local law. This includes providing pregnant workers or those with pregnancy-related conditions with light-duty work or a leave of absence if the employer does so for other employees with similar limitations.

2.7 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) protects qualified employees with disabilities from discrimination in the workplace.

If you have a disability that may prohibit you from performing essential job functions in any way, notify the Director as soon as possible. Little Oaks HLC, LLC will reasonably accommodate individuals with a disability so that they can perform the essential functions of their job unless doing so causes a direct threat to these individuals or others in the workplace and/or if the accommodation creates an undue hardship to Little Oaks HLC, LLC. At no time will Little Oaks HLC, LLC discriminate, harass, or retaliate in any way against you for making an accommodation request. Any type of harassment or discrimination whether real or perceived should be reported to the Director or Owner immediately.

2.8 Lactation Policy

As part of our family-friendly policies and benefits, Little Oaks HLC, LLC supports breastfeeding employees by accommodating the person who wishes to express breast milk during their workday when separated from their newborn child.

For up to one year after the child's birth, any employee who is breastfeeding their child will be provided reasonable break times to express breast milk for their baby. Little Oaks HLC, LLC will designate a space for this purpose. Any breast milk stored in the refrigerator must be labeled with the name of the employee and the date of expressing the breast milk. Any nonconforming products stored in the refrigerator may be disposed of. Employees storing milk in the refrigerator assume all responsibility for the safety of the milk and the risk of harm for any reason, including improper storage, refrigeration, and tampering.

2.9 Health Clearance and Required Vaccinations

A tuberculosis clearance must be completed as a condition of employment for all newly hired employees (full-time and part-time), all student teachers, and other persons (i.e., volunteers) who provide care and supervision to the children.

Immunization records should be provided, by your doctor, with your Health Assessment and TB test results. It is recommended that employees and volunteers receive their annual vaccines. If you are not vaccinated for Covid-19, you may need to turn in weekly covid tests and wear a mask while in contact with children, co-workers, volunteers, and parents/guardians. An applicant may provide evidence of current immunity or exemption from immunity.

If an applicant meets all other requirements for employment or volunteering, as applicable, but needs additional time to obtain and provide immunization records, the applicant may be employed or volunteer conditionally for a maximum of 30 days upon signing and submitting a written statement attesting that they have been immunized as required.

Section 3: Employment Policies and Procedures

3.1 Work Schedules

Little Oaks HLC, LLC hours of operation are usually from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Normal hours are defined as time when employees are required to be working on approved Little Oaks HLC, LLC projects and assignments. The Director will assign your individual work schedule through Homebase. Your work hours may vary depending upon business needs. All employees are expected to be at their workstations and/or positions at the start of their scheduled shifts, ready to work. The workweek begins at 7:30 a.m. Monday and ends at 5:00 p.m. on Friday.

3.2 Meal and Rest Periods

Non-exempt employees who work five (5) or more hours in a workday are entitled to take an uninterrupted 30-minute unpaid meal period. This meal period is to be taken whenever coverage is available. Little Oaks HLC encourages employees not to perform any work during their meal period. An employee may choose to waive their meal period only if they do not work over seven (7) hours in a day and provide management with a Meal Period Waiver. An employee who works more than a 10-hour day is entitled to an additional 30-minute unpaid meal break. A Meal Period Waiver for this meal period is available if you have not waived your first meal period. Little Oaks HLC will ensure that all employees are allowed to take meal periods as required by PA State Wage and Hour Laws.

3.3 Payday

Pay is distributed bi-weekly through Homebase. If the payday lands on a holiday, pay will be distributed on the closest business day before the holiday, or as Homebase accounts for it. The paycheck will reflect work performed for the pay period dates. Notify the Director if your deposit appears to be inaccurate or if it has been misplaced. Little Oaks HLC reserves the right to charge a replacement fee for any lost paycheck if a paycheck is given. Advances on pay are not permitted. Information regarding final pay can be found under the termination section of this handbook. Any change in name, address, telephone number, marital status or number of exemptions claimed by an employee must be updated on Homebase and reported to the Director immediately.

3.4 Overtime

Employees will not be required to work overtime. Only actual hours worked in a given workday or workweek will apply in calculating overtime. All overtime must be previously authorized by the Owner. Little Oaks HLC, LLC provides compensation for all overtime hours worked by employees in accordance with state and federal laws.

- All hours worked in excess of 40 hours in one workweek will be treated as overtime. A workday begins at 7:30 a.m. and ends at 5:00 pm;
- One and one-half times the employee's regular rate of pay for all hours worked in excess of 40 hours in one workweek.

3.5 Secondary Employment

You may hold outside jobs as long as you meet the performance standards of your job with Little Oaks HLC, LLC. Please inform the Director immediately of any other employment commitments you have made. You will be judged by the same performance standards as other employees and will be subject to Little Oaks HLC, LLC scheduling demands, regardless of any existing outside work requirements.

Outside employment that constitutes a conflict of interest is prohibited (see Conflict of Interest). You may not receive any income or material gain from individuals outside the Little Oaks HLC, LLC for materials produced or services rendered while performing your job with the Little Oaks HLC, LLC.

3.6 Benefits

3.6a Professional Development Days

All employees who attend Professional Development Days (if,when scheduled) will receive pay for the hours used on the days determined.

A list of possible Professional Development Days is as follows:

- President's Day
- Spring Break - Good Friday
- Friday Before Labor Day
- Indigenous Peoples Day (Columbus Day)

Pay for Professional Development Days is based on your regular pay rate. All employees are eligible to receive pay for Professional Development Days, pending their attendance on those days. Employees who do not attend these days will not be paid.

3.6b Workers' Compensation

Little Oaks HLC, LLC provides Workers' Compensation insurance at no cost to you. Any injury or illness sustained while you are working that requires medical, surgical, or hospital treatment is covered under this program. If you sustain any work-related injury or illness, you must inform the Director immediately. If seen by a doctor, please report your status immediately to the Director.

If you are required to take time off work or are given limited duties per instructions of the Workers' Compensation physician, it is your responsibility to notify the Director and provide a doctor's certification for such requests. Employees who are absent from work are required to contact Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC with updates of their status at least once every week.

Neither Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC nor the insurance carrier will be liable for the payment of Workers' Compensation benefits for injuries that occur during your voluntary participation in any off-duty recreational, social, or athletic activity sponsored by Little Oaks HLC.

Little Oaks HLC will provide injured employees, upon request, reasonable accommodation should the injury cause the employee to be considered disabled according to Pennsylvania ADA regulations.

Workers' Compensation-Designated Physician

Little Oaks HLC provides medical treatment for work-related injuries through a medical provider network which Little Oaks HLC, and/or the Workers' Compensation insurance, has chosen to provide medical care to injured employees because of their experience in treating work-related injuries. Please see your Director for a possible list of medical providers within the approved network.

The law requires Little Oaks HLC to notify the Workers' Compensation insurance company of any concerns of false or fraudulent claims.

3.7 Leaves of Absence

As soon as you become aware of a need for any form of leave of absence, you should provide documentation that supports your request. Employees need to obtain approval from Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center for an unpaid leave of absence. All benefits will not continue to accrue during any leave of absence unless otherwise required by law.

General Provisions Regarding All Leaves (Eligibility must be checked)

The following general provisions apply to all leaves of absence:

- All leaves of absence must be approved in advance, in writing, by the Director;
- Failure to return to work on the first workday following the expiration of an approved leave of absence may be considered a voluntary termination;
- Requesting or receiving a leave of absence in no way relieves employees of their obligation while on the job to perform their job responsibilities capably and up to the Little Oaks HLC expectations, as well as to observe all Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC rules, policies, and procedures;
- Employees who are absent from work on a leave are required to contact Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC with updates of their status on a predetermined regular basis;
- Employees who falsify the reason for their leave of absence may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including possible termination;
- A request for an extension of a leave of absence must be made in writing prior to the expiration date of the original leave, and when appropriate, must be accompanied by a health provider's written statement that certifies the need for the extension;

3.7a State Disability Insurance

According to the Pennsylvania State Disability Insurance (SDI) program, the state provides short-term Disability Insurance (DI) and Paid Family Leave (PFL) wage replacement benefits to eligible workers who need time off work. You may be eligible for DI if you are unable to work due to non-work-related illness or injury, pregnancy, or childbirth.

3.7b Leave Without Pay

A personal leave of absence without pay may be granted at the discretion of Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC. This leave is not to be used for the purpose of additional vacation time or to remediate any attendance issues. Requests for personal leave should be limited to unusual circumstances requiring an absence of longer than two (2) weeks. Approved personal absences of shorter duration are not normally treated as leaves, but rather as excused absences without pay. Please note that all vacation time/sick leave must be used before leave without pay will be approved.

3.7c Bereavement Leave

After receiving approval from Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC, you may take up available unpaid time off because of the death of an immediate family member. "Immediate family" is defined as your spouse, parent/guardian, child, sibling, in-law, grandparent, grandchild, domestic partner, or child of a domestic partner.

3.7d Time Off for Voting

If an employee does not have sufficient time outside of working hours to vote in an official state-sanctioned election, the employee may take off enough working time to vote. Such time off shall be taken at the beginning or the end of the regular working shift (whichever allows for more free time). An employee will be allowed a minimum of two (2) hours of time off during an election day without loss of pay. When possible, an employee requesting time off to vote shall give the Director at least 10 days of notice.

3.7e Witness and Crime Victim Leave

Employees who are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and/or stalking are eligible for unpaid leave. In addition, as an employee of Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC, you may request leave if you are involved in a judicial action (such as obtaining restraining orders) or appearing in court to obtain relief to ensure the health, safety, or welfare of you or your child. You should provide notice and certification of your need to take leave under this policy. Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC will, to the extent allowed by law, maintain the confidentiality of an employee requesting leave under this provision.

3.7f Military Spouse Leave Law

To be eligible for the leave, the employee must work at least an average of 20 hours per week and have a spouse or domestic partner who is on active duty for any of the United States Armed Forces, National Guard, or Army Reserves. The employee's spouse must also be currently residing in an area of military conflict.

The eligible employee will be allowed to take a maximum of 10 unpaid days off per 12-month period. To be entitled to the unpaid 10 days off from work, the employee must provide notice to the employer no later than two business days after receiving an official notice that the spouse will be on leave from deployment and that the employee intends to take time off from work during the leave from deployment. The employee must also provide written documentation certifying that the spouse will be on leave from deployment.

Section 4: Professional & Ethical Conduct

4.1 Attendance & Punctuality

All employees are expected to show up on time for their scheduled shift, failure to do so may result in disciplinary action. In the event of an emergency, a 2 hour notice prior to the shift beginning is required, or as soon as possible. This is to provide as much time as possible to find a replacement. It is suggested that employees arrive 5 minutes early to allow for time to settle in (putting away your bag, using the restroom, making coffee, etc.) before actively being in ratio.

- Attendance is required at Professional Development Days when training courses, conferences, and staff meetings will be held. All hours spent in these regards will be compensated.
- Record Keeping: All employees shall use the sign-in sheet to clock in and out. Employees shall also clock in and out through Homebase. Each employee is required to keep an accurate record of all hours worked, as well as a complete and accurate record of leave. You can also access these records through your profile on Homebase.
- Employees are expected to arrive on time and ready for work. An employee who arrives 5 minutes after their scheduled arrival time is considered tardy. Little Oaks HLC recognizes that situations arise which hinder punctuality; regardless, excessive tardiness is prohibited and may be subject to disciplinary action. If you become aware that you are going to be tardy, you must do your best to notify the Director as soon as it becomes apparent to you. Three unexcused absences may result in termination.

4.2 Dress code and Other Personal Standards

Because employees are representatives of Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC, each employee must report to work properly groomed and wearing appropriate attire. Employees are expected to dress neatly in clean clothing free of holes and rips and in a manner consistent with the nature of the work being performed. Accommodations will be made on dress code for religious beliefs unless the religious clothing or grooming presents a safety hazard. Employees who report to work inappropriately dressed may be asked to clock out and return in acceptable attire.

Appearance and/or Clothing NOT Permitted

- Tank tops, halter tops, or sleeveless shirts;
- Tops that show the midriff, back, and/or are low-cut in the front; Visible undergarments;
- Excessively tight-fitting, excessively low, excessively short, or oversized shorts or pants;
- Wrinkled, dirty, or ripped clothing of any kind;
- Sweatpants or pajamas;
- No cutoffs, pants with patches, or ragged jeans are allowed;
- Clothing that displays pictures or words that are offensive, religious, or political in nature, or that portray or insinuate weapons or drugs;
- Unnaturally colored hair and extreme hairstyles;
- Jewelry that is functionally restrictive, dangerous to job performance, presents a safety hazard, or is excessive;
- Torso body piercings with visible jewelry;
- Visible inappropriate tattoos and body art; and
- Any form of attire that presents a safety hazard to employees, customers, or third parties. Employees who violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

4.3 Cell Phones and Personal Electronic Devices

Employees are prohibited from using personal electronic devices that may impair or interfere with their ability to complete their tasks and responsibilities (including the tasks and responsibilities of other employees).

For the purposes of this policy, personal electronic devices include, but are not limited to:

- Bluetooth or wireless earphones
- Headphones/Earbuds
- Cameras
- Cell phones
- Laptops/Tablets
- Video/Audio recording devices
- Game players

It is not the intent of this policy to interfere with an employee's right to free speech. Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC also does not want to interfere with an employee's rights to do what they choose during their off-duty time using their personal electronic devices. However, employees shall limit the use of their personal electronic devices during their work hours to emergency situations and cell phones should be silenced.

The Director has the final responsibility and authority to limit the use of the above personal electronic devices. If any of the above devices are medically required, the employee must provide a written doctor's note to the Director.

4.4. Security/Workplace Violence

Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC has developed guidelines to help maintain a secure workplace. Be aware of persons loitering for no apparent reason in parking areas, walkways, entrances and exits, and service areas. It is the employee's responsibility to report any and all suspicious persons or activities to your Director. Secure your desk or office at the end of the day. When called away from your work area for an extended length of time, do not leave valuable and/or personal articles in or around your workstation that may be accessible. The security of facilities, as well as the welfare of our employees, depends upon the alertness and sensitivity of every individual to potential security risks. You should immediately notify the Director when unknown persons are acting in a suspicious manner in or around the facilities, or when keys, security passes, or identification badges are missing.

Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC has a "zero tolerance" for any expressed or implied threats among employees. Employees, who threaten, initiate, become involved in, or assist others in violence in or out of the workplace will face disciplinary action up to and including termination.

4.5 Drug-Free/Alcohol-Free Environment

Employees are prohibited from unlawfully consuming, distributing, possessing, selling, or using controlled substances while on duty.

In addition, employees may not be under the influence of any controlled substances, such as drugs or alcohol, while at work, on Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC premises, or engaged in Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC business. Prescription drugs or over-the-counter medications, taken as prescribed, are an exemption to this policy.

Staff, job applicants, volunteer applicants, interns, and all persons working with or around children may be tested in certain situations.

The following types of drug testing are authorized under Pennsylvania's Drug-Free Workplace Act:

- Job applicant drug testing: employees, interns, and volunteers are all subject to initial drug testing for employment or approval to participate in Center activities. The Center shall use a refusal to submit to a drug test or a positive drug test as a cause to not hire or to decline participation with Center functions.
- Reasonable Suspicion drug testing: Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC, reserves the right to require an employee to submit to drug testing on a "for cause" basis, i.e., If there is reasonable suspicion to believe that an employee is reporting to work impaired by a substance whether it is lawful or unlawful. Reasonable Suspicion is indicated by behavior, job performance, information that an employee has caused or contributed to an accident while at work, or other relevant indicators or evidence.
- Routine fitness-for-duty: Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC may require an employee to submit to a drug test if the test is conducted as part of a routinely scheduled employee fitness-for-duty medical examination.

Anyone in violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. The center recognizes drug dependency as an illness and a major health problem. It is also recognized as a Safety and Security problem. Any employee who has a problem relating to either alcohol or drug abuse is strongly encouraged to secure counseling or appropriate treatment.

4.6 Social Media Policy

For the purposes of this policy, social media includes but is not limited to all means of communicating or posting information of any sort on the Internet. This includes posting to your own or someone else's website, social networking or affinity website, web bulletin board, or a chat room, whether or not associated or affiliated with Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC, as well as any other form of electronic communication. You are solely responsible for what you post online. Nothing in this policy shall unlawfully limit an employee's right to engage in legally protected concerted activities.

Social Media Guidelines

Carefully read these guidelines and ensure that your postings are consistent with this policy. Any conduct that adversely affects your job performance, the performance of other employees, or otherwise adversely affects customers, suppliers, or anyone working on behalf of the Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC legitimate business interest, may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. In summary, treat people fairly, with dignity and respect, and above all, be professional in your comments and postings on social media sites.

- Resolve work-related Little Oaks HLC complaints by speaking directly with co-workers or by utilizing the Little Oaks HLC Open Door Policy rather than by posting complaints to a social media site.
- Express only your personal opinions and never represent yourself as a spokesperson for Little Oaks HLC. If Little Oaks HLC is a subject of your social media postings, best practice would be to include a disclaimer such as "The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC."
- Do not use Little Oaks HLC email addresses to register on a social network, blogs, or other online tools utilized for personal use.
- Company electronic devices shall not be used at any time to access personal social media sites and/or postings, or any site deemed inappropriate or illegal including pornographic sites
- Do not create a link from your blog, website, or other personal social networking sites to a Little Oaks HLC website without identifying yourself as an employee of Little Oaks HLC.
- Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC reserves the right to review and record any employee's publicly available social media sites if an internal investigation ensues.
- Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC highly recommends that [managers and/or supervisors] do not "friend" or socially interact with a Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC employee on their social media site. In doing so, this creates a potential bias situation and may put the Director in an unfavorable position.
- If you choose to "friend" or interact with other employees via social media, you should realize that your social media comments may be viewed by other employees as well as by Little Oaks HLC.
- Little Oaks HLC also recommends that employees do not "friend" or socially interact with Little Oaks HLC families on their social media site.
- Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC maintains the sole right to edit any comments made by employees of Little Oaks HLC on any Little Oaks HLC-owned or maintained website, blogs, and/or message boards. Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC can only authorize and approve social media accounts for Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC.

Prohibited Social Media Use

Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC encourages the free speech of its employees and does not wish to infringe on any social media comments, dissenting or otherwise. However, Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC prohibits the use of social media for any speech that:

- Is deemed illegal and in violation of federal, state, or local laws;
- Promotes hate or fear of any kind when it is motivated by the person's actual or perceived race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sexual orientation, gender or disability, military or veteran status;
- Carries a credible threat of violence against an individual or group of people
- May be blatantly considered spam;
- Makes any reference to children, families, coworkers, and/or partners without first obtaining their expressed written permission to do so;
- Contains Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC proprietary or confidential information;
- Contains any copyrighted or other legally protected materials;
- May be considered by a court of law to be slanderous, libelous, or defamatory;
- Would negatively affect the outcome of Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC internal investigation;
- Includes the Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC logo, trademark, intellectual property, photographs, or proprietary graphics; and
- Discloses the personal and/or private information of an employee including but not limited to the employee's full name, date-of-birth, social security number, home address, landline or cell phone number, or credit card information.
- Certain violations of this policy may be considered criminal in nature and Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC reserves the right to notify law enforcement. Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC will assist law enforcement to the fullest extent of the law as required.

Social Media Passwords

Pursuant to Pennsylvania State law, Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC will not demand to know or ask for any employee's personal Social Media usernames, passwords, or any other information related to an employee's Social Media account(s). Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC can, however:

- Ask for and require an employee for any personal information, usernames, and/or passwords that may be used on any employee-used electronic devices owned, rented, or leased by Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC; and
- Require an employee to divulge personal social media reasonably believed to be relevant to an investigation of allegations of employee misconduct or employee violation of applicable laws and regulations.

Employees are expressly forbidden from changing or modifying in any way, a center-issued username and/or password without the express written permission of the employee's supervisor.

Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC prohibits taking negative action against any employee for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation. Any employee or any member of the management team, who retaliates against another team member for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

4.7 Photographing of Children

Only authorized employees may take photographs of children, and only if parent/guardian consent is given in writing. Employees may not keep photographs of children on their personal devices. Once photos are posted on Brightwheel, they should be removed from any personal device. Posting photos of children on personal social media accounts or other websites, other than those pertaining to Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC, is prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

4.8 Conflicts of Interest

All employees must avoid situations involving actual or potential conflicts of interest, which may impair an employee's ability to exercise good judgment on behalf of Little Oaks HLC.

Such situations may include:

- Personal or romantic involvement with a client, competitor, supplier, or consultant;
- An employee with supervisory responsibility who is romantically involved with any other employee;
- An employee volunteering, acting as a consultant to, or working for a competitor, supplier, or contractor;
- Hiring or managing a relative or close friend;
- Serving as a board member for an outside commercial company or organization;
- Owning or having a substantial interest in a competitor, supplier, or contractor; and
- Accepting discounts, favors, services, and/or gifts of $25 or more from a customer, potential customer, third party, competitor or supplier, unless equally available to all employees.

An employee involved in any of the types of relationships or situations described in this policy should immediately and fully disclose the relevant circumstances to the Director for a determination about whether a potential or actual conflict exists. If an actual or potential conflict is determined, the Director may take whatever corrective action is appropriate according to the circumstances.

4.9 Privacy

Employees and employers share a relationship based on trust and mutual respect. However, Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC retains the right to access all Little Oaks HLC property including computers, desks, file cabinets, storage facilities, files, and folders, electronic or otherwise, at any time. Employees should not entertain any expectations of privacy when on Little Oaks HLC grounds or while using Little Oaks HLC property. All documents, files, voice mails, and electronic information, including emails, and other communications, created, received, or maintained on or through Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC property are the property of the center, not the employee. Therefore, employees should have no expectation of privacy over those files or documents.

4.10 Personnel Files

Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC maintains a personnel file on each employee. These files are kept confidential to the fullest extent possible. Employees may review their personal files upon request. It is important that personnel files accurately reflect each employee's personal information. Employees are expected to inform Little Oaks HLC of any change in name, mailing address, home phone number or cellular number, home address, number of dependents, or emergency contact information.

4.11 Children's Files

Please respect the privacy of the children, their parents/guardians, and other staff members by not discussing them outside of the center environment. Information about one child should never be discussed with other parents/guardians without the specific written permission of the child's parent/guardian. Information about children or families may not be given to outside agencies without written permission by the parent/guardian.

4.12 Center's Property

Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC property, such as equipment, telephones, computers, and software, is not for private use. These devices are to be used strictly for Little Oaks HLC business and are not permitted off grounds unless authorized. Little Oaks HLC property must be used in the manner for which it is intended. On termination, employees are required to surrender any Little Oaks HLC property they possess. Little Oaks HLC computers, the internet, and emails are privileged resources and must be used only to complete essential job-related functions. Employees are not permitted to download any "pirated" software, files, or programs and must receive permission from a supervisor before installing any new software on a Little Oaks HLC computer. Files or programs stored on Little Oaks HLC computers may not be copied for personal use. Devices are provided for business use. Little Oaks HLC requests that employees not receive personal calls while on duty including via cellular phones. If urgent, please keep personal calls to a minimum and conversation brief so that does not interfere with work responsibilities. Personal long-distance calls are not permitted. Employees are reminded that they should have no expectation of privacy in their use of Little Oaks HLC computers or other electronic equipment. Violations of these policies could result in disciplinary action.

Section 5: Professional Growth and Development

5.1 New Staff Orientation

All new staff members will be asked to read the Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC staff and parent/guardian handbooks. Prior to working in the classroom, the Director will schedule an orientation meeting to complete the required paperwork, and review preschool and operation and policies.

Required training within the first 3 months of employment, for all staff members:

- Training for mandatory reporting of child abuse. (*Must be updated every 5 years)*
- Certification in infant, child, and adult first aid/CPR from American Red Cross, American Heart Association, or accredited program. A valid certificate indicating the date of training and expiration date must be turned in to the Director. *(Valid for 2 years)*

5.2 Staff Meetings

All staff members are required to attend staff meetings. Important information, procedures, and policies are introduced and reviewed at these meetings. Staff meetings will be announced ahead of time, but will usually take place on Professional Development Days.

5.3 Special Events

In addition to the regular staff meetings, there are special events that staff members are required to attend throughout the year which include the following:

- Back-to-School Preparation
- Open House
- Periodic Progress Conferences
- Professional Development Days
- Fundraisers
- In-service workshops required and /or requested by the administration.
- Any social events planned for the families

Employees will be notified at least 2 weeks in advance and must notify the Director if they are unable to attend and the reason for the absence. Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC will do its best to schedule these events during regular work hours.

5.4 Staff Supervision and Evaluation

Informal evaluations will be conducted by the Director periodically throughout the year. Evaluations include observations in planning, instruction, classroom environment, and interaction with the children. Staff performance evaluations are performed at least once a year and will include any special notes and recommendations. Staff members shall review, provide input, comment on and sign and return annual evaluations. Documentation of all observations and consultations shall be filed in the staff member's employee file. Please look at evaluations as a way of checking in and helping you meet your goals as an early childhood educator and not meant as a criticism or judgment. If you need guidance, help, or have any questions please schedule a time for a sit-down and see how we can provide a solution.

5.5 Continuing Education

Pennsylvania Child Care Regulations require all teachers to attend a minimum of 12 continuing education hours (training hours) each year. We will strive to provide a portion of those hours each year through planned workshops on campus, and or sending you to the training when it is local. You can earn the balance by taking classes in Early Childhood Education at a local college, attending workshops, or completing trainings from "Penn State Extension - BetterKidCare." Proof of transcript or certificate must be turned into the office for a record in your personal file. Please check with the Director to make sure the class or workshop is approved for early childhood learning before you register. Also, please make sure to fulfill the educational requirements, as it can affect your job.

Section 6: Employee Disciplinary Policy

6.1 Grounds for Discipline or Termination

Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC reserves the right to discipline and/or terminate any employee who violates Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC policy, practices, or rules of conduct. Poor performance and misconduct are also grounds for discipline or termination. The following actions are unacceptable and considered grounds for disciplinary action. This list is not comprehensive; rather, it is meant to merely act as an example of the types of conduct that Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC does not tolerate.

These actions include, but are not limited to:

- Engaging in any act of discrimination or harassment in the workplace
- Possessing, distributing, or being under the influence of a list of controlled substances
- Being under the influence of a controlled substance or alcohol at work, center premises, or while engaged in Little Oaks HLC business
- Unauthorized use of Little Oaks HLC property, equipment, devices, or assets
- Removing Little Oaks HLC property without prior authorization or disseminating Little Oaks HLC information without authorization
- Falsification, misrepresentation, or omission of information, documents, or record
- Lying
- Insubordination or refusal to comply with directives
- Failing to adequately perform job responsibilities
- Excessive or unexcused absenteeism or tardiness
- Disclosing confidential or proprietary Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC information without permission
- Illegal or violent activity
- Falsifying injury reports or reasons for leave
- Possessing unauthorized weapons on the premises
- Disregard for safety and security procedures
- Posting or distributing any photos of children anywhere unauthorized by Little Oaks HLC
- Disparaging or disrespecting supervisors and/or coworkers
- Any other action or behavior that is inconsistent with Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC policies, procedures, standard expectations

This list exhibits the types of actions or events that are subject to disciplinary action. It is not intended to indicate every act that could lead to disciplinary action. Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC reserves the right to determine the severity and extent of any disciplinary action based on the circumstances of each case.

Procedures

Disciplinary action is any one of a number of options used to correct unacceptable behavior or actions. Discipline may take the form of oral warning, written warnings, probation, suspension, demotion, discharge, removal, or some other disciplinary action, in no particular order. The course of action will be determined by Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC at its sole discretion as it deems appropriate.

6.2 Termination

Employment with Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC is on an at-will basis and may be terminated voluntarily or involuntarily at any time.

Upon termination, an employee is required:

- To continue to work until the last scheduled day of employment
- To turn in all reports and paperwork required to be completed by the employee when due and no later than the last day of work
- To return all files, documents, equipment, keys, access cards, ID cards, software or other property belonging to Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC that are in the employee's possession, custody or control, and turn in all passwords to their supervisor. Failure to do so will result in withholding of their final paycheck.
- To participate in an exit interview if/as requested by the Director

6.3 Voluntary Termination

Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC recognizes that personal situations may arise which require a voluntary termination of employment. Should this occur, Little Oaks HLC requests the employee provide two weeks' advance notice in writing, three weeks notice if possible. This request does not alter an employee's at-will relationship with Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC. All rights and privileges of employment with Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC terminate upon the date of separation. Terminating employees are required to return all Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC property assigned to them. Failure to do so will result in withholding of their final paycheck.

6.4 Final Paycheck

Employees who terminate employment with the Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC will be given their final pay by the next pay period. Furthermore, if an employee's child is enrolled in the center and childcare fees are due, the final fees will be taken out of the employee's final pay.

6.5 Exit Interview

Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC may request an exit interview upon notice of termination. The purpose of the exit interview is to complete necessary forms, collect Little Oaks HLC property, and discuss employment experiences with Little Oaks HLC.

Section 7: Philosophy and Curriculum

7.1 Philosophy

The goal of Little Oaks HLC is to provide a safe, supportive, and creative environment where each child can feel secure and thrive. We want the children to move on from our center feeling successful and confident, ready to face the challenges of their new environment. We also want to create an environment where the parents/guardians feel comfortable and confident about leaving their child in our care, knowing that we will keep them safe, and offer opportunities for the child to grow and mature socially, mentally, physically, spiritually, and emotionally.

Equally important is to provide an environment for our staff to thrive in, one in which the teachers work together in harmony as a cooperative team. We will strive to support, encourage, and assist each other in any way we can. Continuing education is emphasized, and each teacher is encouraged to renew her skills by attending frequent professional development opportunities.

We approach the preschool concept from a developmental approach, with an emphasis on the following:

- All children learn and develop in stages - as administrators and teachers, we need to meet each child at whatever stage they are in and offer experiences that will challenge them to reach the next stage.
- Children learn by doing - the process is far more important than the product. This concept needs to be taught to parents/guardians, as they tend to focus on the product.

How do we implement these two beliefs into the center? In preparing to teach each lesson for the week, offer many different experiences to reinforce the topic. This effort will assure that each child has had the chance to absorb what you are focusing on, no matter what their learning style. Make sure each week you offer hands-on art experiences, music, dramatic play, language development, science exploration, and math activities that will stretch each child to their next level of development. During the day, teachers should be interacting with the child, helping them develop oral language skills, make observations, predict what will happen next, and solve problems.

The philosophies we follow are inspired by the teachings of Montessori, Reggio, and Waldorf:

Montessori

Focus on the "whole student," taking into consideration their social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development. Individualize learning by having less whole group lessons, and more small group work; this way students have various activities to choose from, rather than trying to learn in a way that doesn't suit them. Use rotating centers; once students have explored all centers, they then choose which suits their learning best.

Reggio

Our job is to teach children to be independent, involved learners. We give them the tools they need to feel capable and to realize they are able to depend on themselves, but still know when to ask for help if necessary. Our classroom environment provides a small community for our students. Students will be given responsibilities pertaining to their weekly "jobs," and encouraged to practice their problem-solving skills.

Waldorf

Teach students by letting them *do*. As often as possible, our lessons will not simply stay within the walls of the classroom. Do your best to give students *experiences* that go hand-in-hand with what is being taught. In order for students to truly *learn*, they need to *do*, not just listen and memorize.

7.2 Curriculum

The curriculum must fit the needs of the children; we should not try to force the children to fit the curriculum. It needs to focus on what the child experiences in the world around them and what is relevant to them. It should include activities that develop self-esteem, confidence, cooperation, and problem-solving skills. The curriculum should be flexible, and responsive to the child's interests and needs.

We need to provide a developmentally appropriate curriculum that enables children to explore and discover the world around them. Children learn through their senses and by doing. They need to manipulate and actively explore their environment. To them, the process is more important than the end product.

While following the set curriculum, each teacher is encouraged to modify lesson plans, as needed, to follow the interests of the children.

Daily lessons should incorporate:

- Reading Readiness (books, games, drawing)
- Large Motor Skills (large hollow blocks, balance beam)
- Small Motor Skills (puzzles, scissors, lacing)
- Dramatic Play (dress-up clothes, kitchen, puppets)
- Math Readiness (shapes, patterns, counting)
- Science Readiness (magnets, plants, bugs)
- Expressive (water tables, finger painting, music)
- Social (sharing, cooperation)

The daily schedule and activities should create a balance between active and quiet times; large and small group, and individual activities; indoor and outdoor playtimes; as well as child-directed and teacher-directed activities.

Section 8: Expectations for Working with the Children and Families

8.1 Daily Preparation

Our goal is to ensure a warm, caring, and stimulating environment for children which encourages the development of physical, social, emotional, and cognitive skills, as well as enhances self-esteem and independence.

- Plan, organize and implement lessons based on developmentally appropriate practices and learning standards.
- Supervise and ensure the safety and well-being of the children at all times, being alert to the needs of children as individuals and as a group.
- Provide and maintain a neat, organized classroom; take responsibility for the upkeep of materials and equipment. Involve the children in the housekeeping- encourage them to put away their toys and supplies in the proper areas.
- Maintain a stimulating, aesthetically and educationally appealing room décor (display of children's work, arrangement of bulletin boards, placement of books, science materials, etc.).
- Assess children's progress, routines, and interests, and keep parents/guardians informed of their child's development.

8.2 Using brightwheel

Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC has partnered with Brightwheel to manage classrooms, and schedules, stay in constant touch with parents/guardians, and manage child clock-in and clock-out times. All teachers are expected to use the brightwheel app daily as part of their job duties. Teachers are expected to update daily any changes consistent with a child's schedule so we can keep an accurate record for each child and help families feel connected with our program.

Daily Teacher Usage Requirements are as follows:

- *Infant Group:* Teachers must update all activities, as well as photos/videos throughout the day
- *1s and 2s Group:* Teachers must update curriculum, photos/videos, potty/diapering times, amount of diapers and wipes available, naptimes, snack and lunchtime amounts (under special circumstances)
- *3s, 4s, and 5s Group:* Teachers must update curriculum with state preschool standards and observations, photos/videos, general daily notes, "needs" list, and naptimes for those still napping

8.3 Playground Guidelines

The children's safety is your primary responsibility while out on the playground. Staff members should be spread out and be able to observe all areas of the playground. This means that teachers should not be standing near each other for long periods of time.

Outside time is not a time to write notes, prepare lesson plans, or prepare materials. As in the classroom, there should be no talking on cell phones or text messaging.

Interact with children while on the playground. Talk to them, read a book, or create activities. However, do not focus too much attention on one group for too long, make sure to look up to see what other children are doing periodically.

Keep an eye on the gate. Nobody should leave the playground without permission and an adult chaperon. If a child needs to go to the bathroom or get a drink, you need to go with the child, making sure there is enough coverage outside, and letting the outside staff know you are going in.

If you see a child do something they shouldn't be doing, don't yell from across the yard unless they are in imminent danger. Instead, walk over and talk to the child.

Please make sure to keep the area organized and see that the children put away the toys they play with and that you put away any supplies you set up for outside time.

8.4 Water Play

It is a part of the philosophy of this center that water play is an integral part of our curriculum.

Through water and sand play, a child:

- Experiments with mathematical concepts of mass, volume, and measurements
- Learns concepts of warm and cool, wet, damp and dry, heavy and light
- Creates own patterns and symbols - needed for pre-writing and reading skills
- Works with others in cooperative activities
- Stimulates sensory perceptions and works on small muscle coordination
- Learns to solve problems

Water should always be available for children to experiment with, with the following guidelines:

- Water play is made available to children during their scheduled outdoor play in the morning and after nap time. Common sense will be used as to whether it is warm enough for the children to get wet. Staff needs to observe the children in their class to make sure that if their clothing gets wet, they are changed promptly.
- Children should wash their hands BEFORE playing at a water table.
- At the end of the day, the water table must be emptied and wiped down with a bleach solution.

8.5 Behavior Guidance

The goals of discipline are to help children learn what acceptable behavior is, and help children gain inner control. Our role as staff members is to provide a positive model of acceptable behavior. Behavior guidance needs to be tailored to the developmental level of the child. We will attempt to redirect children and groups away from problems and toward constructive activity in order to keep conflict to a minimum. The staff will teach children how to use acceptable alternatives to problem behavior in order to reduce conflict. We will help children learn appropriate behavior through logical and natural consequences when there are no safety concerns. Absolutely no form of verbal or emotional abuse or physical punishment will be tolerated. It is grounds for immediate dismissal. This includes teasing, threatening, making unkind comments, scaring, withholding food or drinks, slapping, pinching, restraining, intimidating a child, or any other form of abuse. If any allegations are made, the matter will be investigated.

You can use a variety of approaches to guide children's behavior. No one approach works for every child or every situation.

Positive guidance approaches include:

- Anticipate and plan ahead to prevent problems
- Look for reasons why a child is misbehaving
- Focus on the child's behavior, not the child's value as a person
- Help children understand the consequences of their behavior
- Explain the choices available
- Help children use problem-solving skills
- Help children from dwelling on mistakes
- Watch for signs of frustration or restlessness

In guiding their behavior, it is important to be clear, positive, and firm. Establish simple, but clear rules and limits for your classroom and enforce them consistently. Consistency helps children know what to expect and it helps establish boundaries that provide emotional security for children.

8.6 Conflict Resolution: Negotiating Life in a Community

Here at Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC, we view conflicts as opportunities for supporting children's learning. During conflicts, children practice self-awareness and communication, they master the skills of negotiation and compromise, and they deepen friendships. As teachers, we choose from a range of roles when conflicts arise. We may choose to act as a coach, helping children find appropriate language for talking about a problem, or we may choose the more subtle role of facilitator during a conflict. We may simply listen to children talk about a problem, mirroring their understanding and ideas back to them, or we may offer gentle suggestions for approaches to a problem. Our priority is always to nurture children's self-awareness and communication.

Rather than establishing a list of rules, we prefer to state very clearly the underlying principles that guide our way of acting in the classroom and then approach each new situation from that starting point.

Our most basic expectations are:

- *Safety for everyone*—we need to protect our own and each other's bodies and feelings by being gentle, calm, and careful;
- *Respect for everyone*—we seek to use words and actions that demonstrate kindness and caring for one another;
- *Responsibility for our actions*—each person in the classroom monitors and controls her or his own body and language;
- *Appropriate use of materials*—supplies are used for their intended purpose, or in creative ways that don't damage them.

Usually, any behavior or situation which seems like a problem has probably reached the threshold of one of these basic agreements. If we see a child doing something unsafe, disrespectful, irresponsible, or inappropriate, we will remind them of our expectations and encourage them to resolve the problem in appropriate ways, offering our support.

We strive to work out interpersonal conflicts and issues verbally, first identifying the problem and then generating possible solutions until we find one that everyone involved can agree on. This form of conflict resolution, often called "social problem-solving," is more respectful of children's processes than a teacher-dictated solution, and builds social and cognitive skills, as well.

Often, in the course of a year together, certain situations arise often enough that a shared "agreement" becomes standard policy for the whole class. Some of these common-sense agreements may carry over from year to year or from room to room, but they are always based on the basic principles of safety, respect, and responsibility.

Sometimes, when a problem emerges, direct intervention from an adult is needed. We will usually remind a child about the classroom agreements, explain and follow through on the logical consequences of their actions, invite them to make more appropriate choices, and describe a contingency plan if inappropriate behavior continues. We may ask a child to meet with a teacher in the hallway, away from the distractions of the play area, for these sorts of conversations. In some cases, when the safety or comfort of the group is being compromised, we may take a child out of the room and sit with them there for a few minutes while they calm down and order is restored.

Our goals are to foster in children competence in negotiating and resolving problems that they encounter and awareness of themselves as able, caring people, well-loved and respected by the adults around them.

8.7 Parent/Guardian Communication

Communication between parents/guardians and teachers is vital for us to provide the best possible care for the children. Parents/guardians feel more confident in us when we periodically share with them what is going on at the preschool.

This includes:

- Using Brightwheel to communicate daily with families
- Infants and toddlers will share the most info regarding diapers, bottles, etc.
- Older classes should still share daily *a little something* about what the children were doing that day, and a photo(s)
- Sharing newsletters/lessons of what their children will be learning in their individual classrooms
- Communication, alerts, reminders, and announcements
- Notes to and from parents/guardians if anything needs to be shared about their child
- Notification of any injuries
- Assessments of children's progress, routines, and interests to keep parents/guardians informed about their child's development
- Periodic Progress Conferences

Conversations at pick-up and drop-off should be brief, but make sure to receive and distribute any pressing matter or important information; your chief responsibility remains the supervision of the children. If you feel a parent/guardian needs more time or attention, ask to schedule a time to meet when you are not in the classroom.

8.8 Assessing Children's Development: Observing, Recording & Assessments

Teachers and lead teachers will observe children in the program throughout the year by recording observations, anecdotes, checklists, and other methods. These observations will be included in the children's records.

Based on these ongoing observations, teachers and lead teachers will complete written progress reports for each child. The reports will be provided to the parents/guardians in November and again in March at the Periodic Progress Conferences. All reports must be completed and submitted to the Director two weeks before the Periodic Progress Conference dates. For children with special identified needs, progress reports will be completed and provided to parents/guardians in November, January, and March.

Teachers and lead teachers will conduct periodic progress conferences in November and March, and on an as-needed basis throughout the school year. The Director will be available for conferencing with parents/guardians on an as-needed basis. Periodic Progress conferences will be conducted during school hours. A parent/guardian-requested or teacher-requested conference will be conducted at a mutually agreed upon time between the parent/guardian and teacher(s) and the Director.

Concerns about a child's development will be brought to the Director's attention first. The concern will be discussed, noted, and placed in the child's file and, if necessary, a conference with the child's parents/guardians will be requested by the teacher or director.

8.9 Referral Services Policy

In the event that the program staff feels that an assessment for additional services would benefit the child, such as social, mental health, educational, and medical services, including but not limited to a dental check-up, vision or hearing screening, the teacher will bring this to the Director's attention, write a statement for the reason for the referral, a brief summary of the teacher's observations related to the referral. A conference will be requested with the parents/guardians and the teacher(s) and Director will attend. The written statement will be provided to the parents/guardians at the meeting and a copy will be placed in the child's file.

Note: Parents/guardians will not be told of a presumed issue or concern about development or need for services at pick-up or drop-off time. It is important to have dedicated time to discuss this with the parents/guardians.

We will offer assistance to the child's parents/guardians in making the referral and shall have written parental/guardian consent before any referral is made. Supportive services to the program, including consultation and educator training, may also be an option pursued. The Director shall maintain a written record of any referrals, including the parent/guardian conference and results.

8.10 Suspected Abuse or Neglect

Pennsylvania law requires certain persons to report known abuse or suspected child abuse. Mandated reporters include a licensee, an administrator, or an employee of a licensed community care or childcare facility. No supervisor or administrator may impede or inhibit an individual's reporting duties or subject the mandated reporter to any sanction for making the report.

Should a parent/guardian or staff member suspect abuse or neglect, these steps are the usual course of action:

1. Staff members are encouraged to discuss the suspected case with the director.
2. The Director will observe the child, talk with the child and further seek to determine if abuse or neglect may have occurred. These findings will be documented in the child's file.
3. The Director may talk with the child's parent(s)/guardian(s) about the concerns.
4. The staff and Director will determine the need to call the appropriate child abuse agency.
5. A social worker or representative of the agency may visit the child at the preschool or the child's home.

Section 9: Child Care Practices

9.1 Mealtime

Mealtimes go beyond meeting the nutritional needs of a child. It is also an opportunity to promote prosocial behavior (i.e., conversations, turn-taking, caring for one's space before and after meals, etc.) as teachers model conversation skills and caring for self.

Procedures:

- Prior to each meal, tables must be washed following the sanitizing procedure.
- All staff and children must wash hands before and after each meal, for at least 20 seconds.
- Sit with the children at the tables and supervise all mealtimes. You are welcome to eat your lunch as you sit with the children and model good table manners.
- Demonstrate pleasant mealtime conversation and teach manners through example as well as discussing them while using them.
- Encourage children to try all foods but do not make an issue out of it. Children should never be forced or bribed to eat.
- Children, in all but the infant groups, are responsible for clearing away their napkins and trash and for wiping up spills. You may need to demonstrate to the children and guide them through the steps of cleaning up for the first few times.

Important: We are NOT generally a nut-free school. If a child with a nut allergy becomes enrolled, we will make changes as needed; please be aware that staff and children are only allowed Soy Butter or Sunflower Butter as a substitute, if this occurs.

9.2 Naptime

Children differ in how much sleep they need, how soundly they sleep, and the regularity of their sleep pattern. These differences are due both to the age of the child, (as a child moves closer to two, morning naps are usually not needed) and to the variances in body types and metabolism.

Why do some children find it difficult to sleep?

- Some cannot be still - they might be practicing walking and want to do that every minute.
- The child may find it difficult to disengage from all the interesting things in this world.
- The child may see it as a type of separation from loved ones. If the child is fighting separation anxiety, he may also fight sleep.
- The child may be asserting his independence by refusing to nap.
- The child may be overstimulated or overtired and find it hard to wind down.
- The child may need more one-on-one time with an adult, and not napping is a way for the child to get it.
- The child may not be tired.

What can we do to help children get enough sleep?

- Create an environment that encourages sleep. Play soothing music.Turn the lights off. Limit talking.
- Separate the sleeping area from children who are awake.
- Have each child sleep in the same place each day. They will feel more secure and comforted by the routine.
- Bring a favorite blanket or "lovey" from home.
- Provide lots of outside time with fresh air and exercise.
- Watch for cues that tell you the child is tired so you can help them to sleep before they become overtired (rubbing eyes, a special "I am tired" cry, or fussiness).
- Stick to a routine at nap time each day, with special rituals that let the child know it's time to settle down.

What to do if a child does not nap?

- Reflect on what might be happening, so you can appropriately respond.
- If the child is just not sleepy, try to help him relax by rubbing his back on top of his shirt, rocking, etc. If the child is still not sleepy, let him quietly look at books or do a puzzle.

Working with families around sleep issues

- Ask families how their child sleeps at home - what schedule they are on if they are allowed to sleep until they wake up on their own, and how the child is put to sleep (rocked, laid down in a crib, and allowed to fuss, allowed to sleep wherever they are, etc.)
- Share information each day about how the child slept last so that the next caregiver will be able to judge the child's sleep needs.
- Work with the parent/guardian, if needed, to balance sleep times between the center and home.

Procedures

- Mats should be set up so there is the least amount of interaction between the children.
- Remind the children to use the bathroom before lying down.
- Teachers can help children get settled on their mats with their blankets. Position yourself to rub two backs at the same time. Rubbing children's backs while they lie on their cots may help children relax.
- At rest time the environment should be made as conducive to rest as possible with shades pulled, lights out, and soft music playing.
- Do not converse with children at this time, just whisper that it is rest time now.
- The children should remain on their mats for the entire rest period. If children wake up early you may offer books for the children to look at during the last hour of nap time.
- During nap time, teachers are to stay awake, using their time to watch the children and keep awake children quiet. This is a great time to work on lesson plans and preparation, put up artwork, catch up on observations, and send or answer messages on brightwheel.
- Let each child wake up naturally. If you need to wake a child up, do so gently and with a soft voice. Age 1 and up should be up no later than 2:45 pm.
- At the end of each child' s care week, their nap mats need to be sent home for laundering. Make the Director aware of any extra nap mats, supplied by the center, that have been used so they can be laundered.

9.3 Diapering Routine

The diapering routine offers an opportunity for young children to closely connect with their caregivers one-on-one. This is a great time to respectfully engage the child by narrating each step of the diaper change routine.

Procedures

1. Gather any change of clothes needed. Make sure supplies are within reach.
2. Place the child on the changing table. Always keep a hand on the child.
3. If gloves are needed, put them on before continuing.
4. Remove and bag soiled clothes (if necessary) and put them out of reach of the child. Remove diaper. If the diaper contains solid waste, place in a plastic bag. Place diaper in a covered, lined, foot-operated can.
5. Cleanse the diapered area of the child with wipes or a wet paper towel and dispose of wipes in the can.
6. Remove gloves, if worn. Apply cream if requested by parents/guardians.
7. Re-diaper and clothe the child.
8. Wash your hands and the child's hands.
9. Spray pad with a bleach solution and wait more than 2 minutes before wiping with a disposable towel.
10. Record diaper change on daily sheet and Brightwheel. Note diaper rash or uncommon contents.

9.4 Toilet Training Guidelines

For children who are unable to use the toilet consistently:

- Staff check for signs that diapers or soiled underwear are wet or contain feces at least every 2 hours when children are awake, and when children awaken from their nap; diapers are changed when wet or soiled.
- Staff change children's diapers or soiled underwear in the designated changing area and not elsewhere in the preschool.
- All wet and soiled clothes will be bagged and sent home at the end of the day to be laundered.
- At all times, staff has a hand on the child when the child is being changed on an elevated surface;
- Surfaces used for changing and for placing changing materials are not used for other purposes, including temporary placement of other objects, and especially not for any object involved with food or feeding;
- Containers that hold soiled diapers and diapering materials have a lid that closes tightly and opens using a hands-free device (diaper genie). These containers are kept closed (except for receipt of soiled materials) and are not accessible to children;

For those children ready for toilet training:

1. Introduce the toilet area.
2. Assist the children with taking off and putting on clothes.
3. Teach children correct bathroom words.
4. Teach children to flush the toilet.
5. Assist with washing hands with soap and water.

* Staff will never leave a child unattended while using the toilet and no child will be forced to sit on or use the toilet.*

Section 10: Health and Safety Practices and Policies

10.1 Daily Health Screenings

Employees are trained to do daily health screenings along with a record of the teachers' concerns. The daily screenings include the following:

- Changes in usual behavior or appearance;
- Taking the child's temperature with a thermometer, if there are changes in the child's behavior or appearance,
- Skin rashes, itchy skin, or lice/nits (during a lice outbreak);
- Complaints of pain or not feeling well;
- Other signs or symptoms of illness (including drainage from eyes, vomiting, and diarrhea); and
- Reported illness or injury to the child since the last day of attendance.

10.2 Handwashing

All employees, children, parents/guardians, and volunteers must wash their hands frequently while at the center. Germs grow in warm, moist places, especially on palms, between fingers, and under nails. Hand washing is the single most effective method of reducing illness and the spread of germs. Children should be instructed and assisted to wash their hands as well.

It is recommended to wash hands when:

- Arriving at the center
- Food preparation, assistance, or consumption occurs
- Diaper changing or assisting with toileting
- Removing disposable gloves
- Water play occurs
- Setting out sheets and blankets for naptime
- Moving from one classroom to another
- Mealtime occurs
- Personal toileting occurs
- Contact with body fluids occurs (wiping/blowing noses, coughing on hand, vomit, etc.)
- Administering medication
- Handling any garbage
- Cleaning
- Leaving the center

10.3 Handling Food

All employees are responsible for checking for food allergies and religious dietary needs and serving the proper food accordingly. Use spoons, tongs, gloves, or napkins when handling food. Do not use your bare hands. Food returned from individual plates will be discarded. For safety reasons, all children must sit on their bottoms in chairs during mealtimes.

No one with signs of illness including but not limited to vomiting, diarrhea, and open infectious skin sores, or who is known to be infected with bacteria or viruses that can be transferred to food, will be allowed to handle food during that time.

10.4 Sick Child Procedures

If a child is not feeling well, it is in the best interest of the child to stay home.

Children should be picked up if they:

- Have a fever of 100.4 degrees or greater
- More than one bout of diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Communicable diseases- measles, chickenpox, strep throat, etc.
- Chronic and excessive runny nose (unless caused by allergies, teething, or as explained by a doctor's note.)
- Constant cough
- Pink eye
- Rash- other than normal diaper rash

If a child has any of these symptoms, take the child to the Director to discuss the situation. The parent/guardian will be called. The child can stay in the office on a mat until the parent/guardian arrives.

Some children may have none of the above symptoms but evidently do not feel well. It is appropriate to call or message the parent/guardian on Brightwheel to inform them that the child appears to not be themselves and give the parent/guardian the option to pick up the child. You can tell the parents/guardians the child appears to be getting sick and that you will let them know if they get worse.

10.5 Administering Medication Procedures

If a child requires medication to be dispensed during the school day, the following guidelines should be followed:

- Parents/guardians are to fill out a Medication Authorization Form.
- As long as the medication has been prescribed by a doctor, and is in the original pharmacy container, labeled with the child's name and the doctor's name, phone, and directions, we do not require a doctor's signature.
- If the medication is over-the-counter, we will require a doctor to fill out the medication form, including dosages and times.
- Medications will not be administered contrary to the directions on the original medication container.
- Bring the medication and form to the office. The Director or Assistant Director will log the medication and put it in the office or the refrigerator.

- Medications will be stored in a locked box or a high cabinet when in use at the preschool. The Medication Authorization Form must remain with the medication at all times.
- The teacher or Director will dispense the medication when required, and record the time given on the Medication Authorization Form.
- Long-term medications needed for emergency care, such as Epi-Pens or inhalers, will be kept in the emergency backpack in the child's room. A copy of the medication form will be kept there as well.

10.6 Accident Procedures and Incident Reports

Children are active and busy, so scrapes, bumps, and cuts are not unusual. In case of accident or injury, take the following steps:

1. Log an "Incident" through brightwheel.
2. Fill out an injury report form (kept in the small locked cabinet in the office). All injury report forms must include the following information:
    - Name, gender, and age of the injured person;
    - Description of the injury;
    - Date and time of injury;
    - Location where the injury took place;
    - Body part(s) involved;
    - Name of the staff member responsible for supervising the child at the time of the injury;
    - Actions taken on behalf of the injured following the injury;
    - Name of the person who completed the report and signature;
    - Name of parent/guardian notified (if applicable).

    Special Consideration for Head Injuries:

- Any injury to the head should be reported to the parents/guardians immediately.
- Watch for raised areas on the head.
- Check the child's behavior, watching for disorientation.
- Pay special attention to the mouth area, checking for loose teeth and /or cuts inside the mouth. Put on a glove and very gently check the inside of the mouth for any injury.

If the parent/guardian has been informed and the decision is made to allow the child to remain at the preschool, monitor the child periodically during the rest of the day, watching for a possible concussion**.** A second call to the parent/guardian should be made if any further symptoms appear.

If medical attention is needed:

- Notify the Director or teacher in charge immediately.
- Contact the parents/guardians, if possible, so they can take the child to their physician.
- If parents/guardians cannot be contacted, and it is an emergency, call 911. Give the ambulance EMT the child's emergency card and the medical release form so that the doctor may give treatment.

10.7 Child's Safety: Indoors and Outdoor Spaces

Each classroom is responsible for daily inspection for any potential hazards in the classroom or on the playground.

Daily Inside:

1. Check to see that electrical outlets are covered with safety caps.
2. Toys are not damaged or broken.
3. Adult supplies are out of reach- scissors, staplers, etc.
4. Cleaning supplies are up high and out of reach.

Daily Outside:

1. Make sure sand is kept in its designated area.
2. Check the yard for any debris or unsafe objects.
3. Notice if any equipment is broken or needs repair.
4. Make sure there is adequate supervision on the playground.

10.8 Releasing a Child from the Center

All employees must be familiar with procedures for releasing a child to a person other than the parent/guardian. Children are to be released for pick-up only to parents/guardians, or persons designated on the child's Authorized Pick Up form. In the event that any other person is to pick up the child, a signed note from the parent/guardian must be sent and put in the front office. Parents/guardians are requested not to phone with this information. Parents/guardians are responsible for notifying the person who will pick up the child that they will be asked for identification before the child will be released to them. Employees are responsible for checking identification on any adult with whom they are not familiar and who is picking up a child from the center. The name and address on the license must match that of the one on the Authorized Pick Up form or signed note.

If you ever feel like any child is in danger, for example, an intoxicated parent/guardian, notify the Director immediately. Delay the parent's/guardian's departure until you feel it is safe to release the child. If you feel endangered, release the child and then call another parent/guardian or person on the emergency contact list, or the local police department.

What to do if a child is not picked up by closing:

- If a parent/guardian calls and will be more than 15 minutes past closing, ask the parent/guardian to suggest someone else who can pick up the child.
- If you cannot reach a parent/guardian 15 minutes after closing, call down the list of emergency contacts authorized to pick up.
- If the child is still here 30 minutes past closing, and you have not reached anyone, call a supervisor for further instructions.
- Notify the director as soon as closing time occurs, as parents/guardians will be subject to late fees.

10.9 Workplace Safety

Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center values the safety of our employees and our children. Each employee is expected to obey safety rules and exercise caution and common sense in all work activities. Employees are required to report any unsafe conditions to their supervisor. Additionally, your compliance with the following rules is mandatory:

- Employees must report immediately any accident that results in injury, no matter how insignificant the injury may seem
- Be sure you know the emergency numbers (posted in teacher area, parallel to the office)
- Know the location of fire exits, first aid kits, fire extinguishers, gas shut off valves, and any MSDS (material safety data sheets)
- When performing duties, you must take care to protect your safety, as well as that of your co-workers, students, and public
- Clean up all spills immediately
- Jumping from elevated areas is not permitted
- Lift heavy materials with assistance from a colleague

Keep your work environment clean. This includes the following:

- Keep floors dry and free of trip hazards
- Passageways to exit doors and through classrooms should remain open and not be blocked
- Desks and cabinet drawers/doors should be kept closed when not in use
- Clean up after yourself in all common areas, bathrooms, kitchen, and classrooms
- Know your responsibilities in an emergency.

10.10 Universal Precautions

Universal precautions are the term for infection control measures all health care workers and childcare providers should follow to protect themselves from infectious diseases.

Staff will adopt universal precautions when exposed to blood and blood-containing fluids and injury discharges of all children.

- All persons exposed to blood or blood-containing body fluids and tissue discharges will wash their hands immediately with soap and warm water.
- Single-use disposable gloves will be worn if there is contact with blood-containing body fluids or tissue discharges.
- Hands will be washed with soap and water after the removal of gloves.
- Gloves will be discarded in plastic bags.
- For spills of vomit, urine, feces, blood, or other bodily fluids, staff will clean and disinfect the area including floors, walls, toilets, tabletops, toys, or other areas.

All staff must wear latex gloves when changing diapers or when they may come into contact with body fluids such as blood, vomit, urine, fecal matter, wiping noses, etc.

Hands (staff and children) must always be washed after each task that may obtain germs (regardless of if the staff has worn gloves):

- after each diaper change
- after cleaning a child's nose
- after you have assisted a child with going to the bathroom
- after coming in from outside before handling food or snacks

10.11 Reducing Back Injuries

Back injuries are the most common cause of occupational injury for a childcare teacher. All employees need to be able to lift and carry 40 lbs.

How can staff prevent back injuries?

- Proper lifting techniques such as, but are not limited to, bending at knees, using legs to do the lifting and bare weight, and avoiding twisting when lifting up or setting down.
- Adult height changing tables and sinks.
- Bring changing pads to the ground instead of lifting children.
- Using strollers to transport children for long distances.
- Glider rockers with back support for holding children for extended periods of time.

Section 11: Classroom Maintenance and Procedures

11.1 Opening Procedures for Rooms

- Turn on the lights for the classrooms and café
- Put personal items up/away from kids' reach
- Take chairs down off of the tables
- Check & Prepare bleach solution for all classes
- Return any toys that were left to dry after cleaning
- Pick out students' morning activities
- Review lesson plans
- Prepare what you need for the day
- Confirm that families have checked-in their child(ren) at drop off

11.2 Daily Cleaning Procedures for Rooms

- Clean up and put away material that you used- art material, books, etc.
- Put away snack supplies
- Wash and put away everything you used before you leave for the day
- Clean the eating area, tables, and chairs after each meal or art project
- Sweep the floor under the tables after lunch and snack time
- Keep an eye on the bathrooms and tidy up throughout the day
- Oversee attendance in brightwheel
- During the day, do small cleaning, dusting, and straightening up as time allows
- Clean up outside activities and sweep as needed
- *End of care week-* Help children get sheets and blankets ready to go home for washing
- Wipe down counters and sink areas before you leave for the day
- Remove any debris from the sink strainer
- Toys mouthed or otherwise contaminated by children are placed in the toy washing container immediately after the child is finished with the toy
- Spray down all mouthed toys with bleach solution and leave out to dry
- All garbage and recycling needs to be taken out daily to the dumpsters at the end of the parking lot; when the number of children is low enough, one teacher at a time can take the garbage out

- Sanitize tables:
    - To remove soil, spray the table (or highchair tray) with a soap-water solution and wipe dry with a disposable paper towel.
    - To sanitize the eating surface, spray the table /try with the bleach-water solution and wait at least 2 minutes before wiping with a disposable towel or air dry, in order to allow the solution to kill germs. The surface cannot be sprayed and immediately wiped.
    - Sponges should not be used for sanitizing tables because they soak bacteria away from the surface of the sponge, which then cannot be easily reached in the interior of the sponge by the sanitizing agent.
    - If highchair trays are used as eating surfaces, the trays should be washed and sanitized in the same way as plates and other food service utensils.
    - In case different children rotate through snacks, each place must be cleaned and sanitized between use by different children. Sanitizing solution should not be sprayed while children are seated at the table.

11.3 Closing Procedures for Rooms

As soon as the number of children is low enough, the toddler room may closed-out and the rooms can be combined.

- Put chairs up on the tables with seats resting on the tables
- Leave the classroom organized and clean for the next teacher
- Turn off the lights in all of the classrooms when the last child has left
- At closing, if any children are still here, begin calling parents/guardians to come to pick up their child
- Check that the door is locked when leaving

Section 12: Emergency Procedures

**Always refer to the Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC Emergency Plan, all procedures listed here are summarized and may be changed over time. The Emergency Plan is updated annually and should be referenced before all other emergency plans/procedures.*

12.1 Earthquake

1. Tell children to "Duck, Cover, and Hold On."
2. Make a quick assessment of the situation – if there is damage to the building, evacuate immediately.
3. Make a quick assessment of the children and/or injuries. If the situation calls for immediate evacuation, help the children leave the classroom and building immediately. Take the safest route out of the building.
4. In the absence of an immediate critical need to evacuate, check for injuries, and initiate first aid for severe injuries if needed. Reassure the children and wait for further instructions.
5. If evacuation is necessary, teachers must take the red emergency folder and backpack with them.
6. Take roll on the emergency sheet found in the backpack. The roll will be taken to the Command Center.
7. Teachers that have Emergency Assignments, move to their assignments.
8. Help the children stay calm by engaging them in songs, stories, etc.
9. Parents/guardians will be directed to the location for pick up to sign their child out. Runners will be sent to accompany the child to the release gate once a parent/guardian or approved person has been processed and allowed to take the child.
10. Staff members should be prepared to stay on campus until all students are picked up unless they are released by the Command Center.

Duck, Cover, and Hold

When the ground begins shaking, a loud explosion is heard/felt, or a duck, cover, & hold drill begins, everyone — students, staff, and all others present — take the following protective actions:

Indoors:

- Duck: Take cover under a nearby desk or table, positioning as much of the body as possible under cover.
- Cover eyes by leaning the face against the arm.
- Hold on to the table legs or side of the desk. Remain in position until the ground stops shaking, objects stop falling, or the teacher indicates that this phase of the drill has ended.
- If there are no tables or chairs nearby (or not enough): Duck, cover, hold: take cover by dropping to the floor, against an interior wall, if possible. Select the closest safe place: between tables or against a wall. The "drop" position is preferred: on the floor, on the knees, leaning over to rest on the elbows, hands clasped behind the neck, face down for protection.

Outdoors:

- Duck, cover, hold: Move away from buildings, power lines, block walls, and other items, which might fall. Take the "drop" position or sit down.
- Remain in position until the ground stops shaking or the teacher indicates that this phase of the drill has ended.

Situation assessment:

- The teacher or supervising adult makes a quick assessment of the situation. Any of the following require immediate evacuation: fire, damage to structure, hazardous materials spill.
- Teacher makes a quick assessment of injuries to students. Unless the situation calls for immediate evacuation, the teacher uses first aid for critical injuries.
- Teacher checks with buddy teacher. It may be necessary to assist or evacuate the buddy teacher's class.
- In most cases, the teacher will wait until composure has been reached and an evacuation signal has been received before directing the class to evacuate.

Aftershocks:

- Students and staff *duck, cover, & hold.*
- Teacher/staff repeat situation assessment procedures detailed above.

12.2 Fire

- If the fire alarm sounds, take your students outside immediately and go to the designated safe spot in the playard.
- In case of fire, the Director will call 911.
- Take roll and let the Director know if any children are missing.
- Parents/guardians will be contacted, and children will be released to a parent/guardian or approved person following appropriate emergency procedures.
- Staff members should be prepared to stay with their class until all students are picked up.

12.3 Hazardous Materials Release - Shelter-in-Place

When?

- Unusual odor or sound (explosion, etc.)
- Visible smoke, vapor cloud, or fire
- Skin or eye irritation
- Breathing difficulty

When in doubt, Shelter-in-Place and contact School Office. If you do not reach School Office, call 911.

What?

- Get everyone inside immediately
- Close doors, windows, or other openings to outside air
- Turn off air conditioning/heat
- Seal windows and doors with duct tape
- Close curtains
- Place towels or blankets at bottom of doors

- If the seal is not good, wet towels and place over the mouth and nose, particularly those with asthma
- Take roll
- Do not allow anyone to leave the classroom
- Wait for further instructions
- Do not evacuate until "all clear" is given, or emergency personnel instructs to do so
- When you evacuate the room, open all windows and doors to air out the room.

12.4 Modified Shelter-in-Place

When?

- Smog alert
- Gunfire
- Severe storm
- Police activity

What?

- Get everyone inside
- Close and lock doors and windows
- "Hit the deck" (lie flat on the floor) if gunfire
- Stay away from windows; close curtains if available

Note: Use your common sense- all situations are different.

12.5 Gunfire—Modified Shelter-in-Place

When gunfire is heard nearby, (the sound is very loud), the teacher or staff member shouts to *"hit the deck*." This means lying flat on the floor.

- Use emergency locks to lock your doors.
- Initiate Modified Shelter in Place.
- If outdoors, as soon as it appears safe for people to move and come inside.

12.6 Bomb Threat

The person receiving the threat should keep the caller on the line as long as possible to obtain information that will help the police. This would include:

- Exact time of the call
- Voice characteristics of the caller
- Approximate age: boy, girl, man, woman
- Background noises: music, traffic, laughter, etc.
- Where the bomb is located
- What time it is supposed to explode

Procedures

1. Immediately after contact with the caller has ended, the person receiving the call should notify the Director or designee, who will call 911.
2. Evacuate any section of the school deemed unsafe.
3. Wait for the police to assist in a search.
4. School personnel should assist with searches

Section 13: Volunteers /Student Teachers

Parents/guardians and student interns can be a wonderful experience in the classroom. However, a person *cannot* volunteer in the classroom (even if only for an hour) unless they have completed the paperwork required by the state licensing division. Please direct any individuals wanting to volunteer within the classroom to the Director.

Once approved, the Director will conduct an orientation with the volunteer to let them know of their responsibilities and our classroom procedures (including, but not limited to daily schedule, emergency procedures, and child guidance policies).

On their volunteer day, each volunteer must list their name and the time they arrive and leave on the attendance sheet. Volunteers will be under the direct supervision of a qualified staff member at all times. The volunteer will not be alone with a child at any time in accordance with state regulations and should defer child guidance/discipline concerns to the supervising educator.

LITTLE OAKS
HANDS ON LEARNING
CENTER, LLC

Employee Handbook

Section 14: Acknowledgement

Employee

I, _____, acknowledge that I have received a copy of the staff handbook for Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC. I have read and understood the contents of the staff handbook.

_____ _____

Employee's Signature Date

Employer

I, _____, acknowledge that I have provided a copy of the staff handbook for Little Oaks Hands-On Learning Center, LLC to the employee. I have provided time for thoughts, comments, questions, or concerns in regards to the staff handbook.

_____ _____

Employer's Signature Date