

*SMALL WONDERS CHILD CARE
CENTER, INC.*

PARENT HANDBOOK

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PARENT HANDBOOK

INTRODUCTION

Small Wonders Child Care Center, Inc., is a private, not-for-profit child care center serving children ages 8 weeks through preschool. The goal of Small Wonders Child Care Center, Inc., is to provide high quality affordable child care services to children of New York State employees at the New York State Office Building in Hauppauge.

Small Wonders Child Care Center, Inc., is open from 7:15 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. The Center is closed on all holidays that result in the New York State Office Building complex closing. The Center will remain open on floating holidays. In case of severe weather conditions and or emergency situations, the Director, in conjunction with two members of the Executive Board, may decide to delay opening the center, close the center early or close the center for the day. Parents should listen to WALK (97.5) or watch Channel 12 News for information.

Should Christmas Eve fall on a weekday, the Center will close at 3:00 p.m.

Small Wonders Child Care Center, Inc. offers a sliding fee schedule for New York State employees based on household income. Community households pay based on a standardized fee schedule. Small Wonders Child Care Center, Inc. is mainly supported by parents' fees, and funded in part by Family Benefits Committee which represents CSEA, PEF, PBA, Council 82, UUP, District Council 37, GSEU, NYSCOPBA and the Governor's Office of Employee Relations on behalf of Management Confidential Employees.

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

Small Wonders Child Care Center, Inc., is concerned with the child's total growth and development and provides opportunities for children which promote:

- a. physical development
- b. social competence in relating to adults as well as to peers
- c. emotional growth and control
- d. cognitive learning.

Small Wonders Child Care Center, Inc., is concerned with the development of children's skills. These include:

- a. social skills
 - 1. consideration for others
 - 2. cooperation
- b. psychological skills
 - 1. self esteem
 - 2. independence
- c. physical skills
 - 1. running
 - 2. climbing
- d. cognitive skills
 - 1. ideas
 - 2. words
 - 3. colors
 - 4. numbers
 - 5. problem solving

Small Wonders Child Care Center, Inc., is an extension of the family and continually strives to enhance each parent's relationship with his/her children.

GENERAL ELIGIBILITY

Children must be in general good health as certified by a physician in order to be accepted into the program.

Small Wonders Child Care Center, Inc., does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin or economic status. Children with special needs are welcome provided their needs can be met within the confines of our program.

LICENSE TO OPERATE

Small Wonders Child Care Center, Inc., is licensed by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services. In addition, the center is inspected annually by the Suffolk County Health Department and the Fire Prevention Unit of the Office of General Services.

The license to operate is posted in the office area, and the laws and rules governing day care facilities are available in the office for review.

Small Wonders Child Care Center, Inc., is licensed for a maximum of 55 children, 8 weeks to 5 years of age.

HOURS OF OPERATION

7:15 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

A late fee of \$10.00 per 15 minutes of lateness is required should a staff member be detained past normal hours of operation due to parent tardiness.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Currently there are five programs, grouped by age as mandated by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services. Each classroom maintains the mandated teacher/child ratio. Children move to older rooms based on their chronological age and developmental level. The classrooms are as follows:

Infant I
Infant II
Toddlers
Three year olds
Pre-Kindergarten

Each classroom operates autonomously; however, each program is a continuum of the previous to assure a smooth transition for the child. Program objectives in each of the five areas provide for structured and unstructured time and include a healthy blend of quiet and active time. Daily schedules are posted in each room. A daily report is provided for each child in Infant I and is available for all children upon request. Curriculum is developmentally appropriate.

STAFFING

In addition to the regular staff in each classroom, volunteer staff will be used when available. Foster grandparents or student teachers from local universities may provide assistance. Volunteers will be supervised by the head teacher in the classrooms and will not be left alone with the children.

REGISTRATION PROCESS AND FEES

A \$10.00 non-refundable application fee is required upon submitting an application form in order to be placed on a waiting list. Once the child is accepted to the program, a \$25.00 non-refundable registration fee is required. Parents are required to complete a registration package which includes a developmental history on each child, permission forms and a physical form which must be completed by the child's pediatrician.

The following is Small Wonders Child Care Center, Inc. fee policy:

1. Fees for New York State Employees are based on a sliding fee scale, taking into account the gross income of those responsible to contribute to the support of the child. Community households pay a standardized tuition fee based on the age of the child. Income for NYS employees includes current salaries, support payments, and any other income including public assistance, SSI, Unemployment, Business Income, etc. For those whose income is based on seasonal work, the average yearly

income must be reported. All income must be verified at least annually. Any change in income must be reported to the Director immediately unless parents are currently paying the maximum fee. Acceptable income verification will be three recent pay stubs from each household member, income maintenance forms for DSS, legal documents identifying support payments, and the previous year's 1040 tax return. Management of Small Wonders Child Care Center, Inc., reserves the right to verify and/or request income verification at any time.

2. The non-refundable application fee is due upon filling out an application form with the intent of being placed on a waiting list for acceptance in the center.
3. The non-refundable registration fee of \$25.00 is due at the time of registration.
4. A security deposit of two full weeks' tuition is due within two weeks of the first day of attendance. If a two-week written notice of the child's withdrawal is received, the security deposit will be used for the child's last two weeks of attendance.
5. Tuition rates for NYS employees are based on a sliding fee schedule according to family income. There is a sibling discount of 10% off the base fee. There is no additional cost for breakfast, lunch or snacks. There are no reductions or credits for vacations, illness, meals not taken or Center closing, which result in the child's absence. Full tuition is due regardless of holidays. In the case of a child's long term illness, fees should be discussed with the Director on an individual basis. Parents will be given ample notification in case of a tuition increase.
6. Written notice must be given to the Director, at least two weeks in advance, of the parent's intention to withdraw his/her child from care. Failure to give such notice will result in forfeiture of the security deposit.
7. Tuition payments must be kept current. Fees unpaid for two consecutive weeks will serve as notice of intent to withdraw the child from care and forfeiture of the security deposit.
8. All tuition periods will include 10-day tuition. There is no allowance for holiday and/or sick days. A Flex Spending Account (FSA) is available to all State employee parents. FSA enables you to set aside pre-tax

dollars to pay for your child care expenses. See your respective personnel office for details on FSA programs.

9. Part time care is not available.
10. Children must be picked up no later than 5:30 p.m. Failure to do so will result in a \$10.00 fee for every 15 minutes segment or any part thereof, which will be added to the weekly payment. If a parent is late more than three (3) times in picking up their child by 5:30 p.m., then at the discretion of the director a child may be dismissed from the Center.
11. Parents are expected to submit a schedule of hours that they anticipate needing care.
12. Tuition payments must be made by check or money order. Returned checks will result in a \$15.00 fee.

PARENTS' PARTICIPATION

Small Wonders Child Care Center, Inc., is committed to working with families. Parent participation is welcomed. Parents are asked to avoid visits during naptime, usually between the hours of 1 p.m. and 3 p.m.

Parents are encouraged to arrive with their child(ren) at the center no later than 9 a.m. If the child is going to arrive later than 9 a.m., parents must call so the lunch count includes their child. It is extremely important to reinforce consistency in each child's schedule. If the child is not going to attend on a particular day, parents are asked to notify the classroom teacher directly or leave a message on the main line at 631 360-0472.

It is important that a parent/guardian communicate his/her needs and desires openly and honestly to the child's teacher. Parents are encouraged to discuss any developmental concerns and to share any other information that may be appropriate. The two-year-old program includes assistance in toilet training. Cooperation between parents and staff is needed to accomplish this milestone prior to advancing the child to the three-year-old program.

An Annual Open House will be held in the spring. All parents and family members will be invited to attend. Parents are also invited to have a conference with their child's teacher in January of each year.

Parent representatives sit on the Board of Directors and participate in the development of the Center's policies. Board members are expected to serve on other committees as necessary.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

These are two very difficult times of the day for children. Parents are asked to assist the teaching staff during these transition times. Parents can be helpful by reassuring the child that they will return and then leaving the room so the teacher can divert the child to an activity. It is never wise for a parent to sneak out of the room as this only serves to raise the child's anxiety level. During the departure time, parents are asked to leave as soon as possible with their child. This assures the child that the parent has returned as promised and that the parent is truly interested in him or her.

Parents must sign children in and out daily, NO PERSON, OTHER THAN THOSE WHOSE NAME (S) APPEAR ON THE DEPARTURE AUTHORIZATION FORM WILL BE PERMITTED TO PICK UP A CHILD. In the case of SEPARATION/DIVORCE AGREEMENTS, parents maintaining custody of children will be asked to submit in writing when the visiting parent may pick up the child. Parents may change any information on the departure authorization form at any time; however, such changes MUST BE MADE IN PERSON AND WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED OVER THE TELEPHONE.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS AND TOYS

Each child is given a cubby in which to store personal belongings. Children may bring a cuddly toy for naptime only.

WHAT TO BRING

ALL PERSONAL BELONGINGS MUST BE LABELED WITH THE CHILD'S NAME.

INFANT ROOMS:

- a. Sheets – Two porta-crib sheets to be left at the Center.
- b. Food – Parents will supply all food for a child until he/she starts eating table food.

- c. Bottles – If your infant is using formula, the formula must be already mixed and in the bottle labeled with the child’s name.
 - 1. BOTTLES MUST BE HARD PLASTIC.
- d. Infant Toys – To make your baby’s space very special, parents can bring a mobile and a crib toy.
- e. Blanket – Crib size.
- f. Diapers - A box of diapers may be stored or you may bring a day’s supply and put them in your child’s storage area.
- g. Wipes – a container of baby wipes as needed.
- h. Training Cup – If necessary.
- i. Powders or Ointments – If your child needs for diapering.
- j. Clothing – One set of extra clothing with child’s name clearly marked.
- k. Pictures of family members are requested to help make your child feel comfortable.

Notes will be left for parents when any supplies run low.

TODDLER ROOM:

- a. Blanket and Sheet for cots
- b. Clothing – One set of extra clothing with child’s name clearly marked. In the winter, snowsuits, hat, gloves and boots for outdoor play.
- c. Diapers – A few each day or a large box. Teacher will let you know when supplies are running low.
- d. Wipes – A container of baby wipes as needed.
- e. Pictures of family members are requested to help make your child feel comfortable.
- f. Powders or Ointments – If your child needs for diapering.

3 YEAR OLD & PRE-K ROOMS:

- a. Blanket and sheet for cots.
- b. Clothing – one set of extra clothing with child’s name clearly marked. In the winter, snowsuit, hats, gloves and boots for outdoor play.
- c. CANDY, MONEY AND GUM ARE NOT PERMITTED.
- d. Birthday celebrations – We love them. Please discuss plans with your child’s teacher in advance.
- e. Pictures – of family members are requested to help make your child feel comfortable.
- f. Shoes – Sneakers or closed-toed shoes are required at all times.

THINGS WE LOVE TO HAVE

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| Fabric Scraps | Costume Jewelry |
| Large Beads | Dress up Clothes |
| Large Buttons | Scarves |
| Spools | Pocketbooks |
| Gloves | Wallets |
| Seashells | Pine cones |
| Toys (new or used) | Books (new or used) |

ILLNESS AND MEDICATION POLICIES

1. The following pages outline Small Wonders Child Care Center, Inc., illness return policy. Sick children and children with fevers above 100 will NOT be accepted at the Center. Children who become ill during the day will be sent home. The parent or, in their absence, an authorized designee, will be notified to come for the child. In the event that a child becomes ill with a communicable disease or condition, parents are expected to contact the Director immediately so that other parents can be notified. This will be strictly enforced. At the discretion of the Director, a doctor’s note may be required for prolonged illness of three days or more before a child may return

to the center. When a child is absent due to illness, parents are requested to notify the center as early as possible in the morning.

2. As there is no space to separate sick children, and staff resources are severely limited, the following guidelines must be adhered to:
 - a. Parents or an authorized designee are to be summoned by the Director or her representative, to the Center to remove sick children.
 - b. If parents fail to remove sick children in a reasonable amount of time, (reasonable amount of time is to be determined by the Director or her representative) the child will no longer be welcomed to attend Small Wonders Child Care Center. All security deposits will be forfeited and the child's enrollment in Small Wonders Child Care Center will be terminated.

3. **MEDICATION POLICY:** The Department of Social Services regulation states: "Children shall not be administered any medication, prescription or otherwise, except under written order from the physician. Medications shall be carefully labeled with the Child's name and safely and promptly stored." At all times it is best if the parents administer medication. If this is not possible, Small Wonders Child Care Center, Inc., must have the following information:

- a. The written order of the physician specifying diagnosis, name of the medication, dosage, frequency, the time for administering such medication, possible side effects and of course, the child's name and address.

AND

- b. The written permission of the parent requesting that the Center administer the medication as ordered.

It is preferred that parents utilize Small Wonders Child Care Center, Inc., Medication Release Form, which can be obtained from the Director. In lieu of this form, parents will be expected to provide the information as outlined above. Parents must provide medication in the original pharmacy container and also provide dosage spoons when applicable.

Medications will be stored in the Center refrigerator in a closed container. A medication log will be maintained and reviewed weekly by the Center's nurse.

3. **MEDICAL FORMS AND IMMUNIZATIONS:** A medical exam must be completed before a child is admitted in the Center (the Center will provide

the appropriate form). All immunizations must be up-to-date. A complete immunization schedule can be obtained from the Director. Please submit immunization updates as they occur. A copy of the child's immunization record is required.

a. It is the responsibility of the Board, Director and Staff to provide a safe environment for all children and staff. We must insure proper care for all. There is no need for well children and staff to be exposed unnecessarily to sickness. Since there is no space to separate sick children and staff resources are severely limited, parents must adhere to the sick child removal policy.

DRUG FREE ENVIRONMENT

Small Wonders Child Care Center, Inc., certifies that it will provide a drug free environment

ILLNESS CHART

ILLNESS	RETURN REQUIREMENTS
Chicken Pox	6 days after the appearance of first lesion
Conjunctivitis	24 hours after start of treatment (specifically drainage and excessive tearing have stopped)
Croup	After illness has subsided
Diarrhea-Gastro Enteritis	24 hours after last loose stool or after 1 normal bowel movement
Rubella	Eighth day after onset rash
Hepatitis A	At least 7 days after onset of jaundice
Impetigo	24 hours after treatment has started
Fever	24 hours after temperature is normal
Influenza	24 hours after temperature is normal
Measles	Sixth day after rash onset
Lice	24 hours after treatment has begun
Pin Worms	After treatment is completed
Roseola	After illness has subsided
Scabies	After eggs & mites are destroyed
Strep Throat	24 hours after start of antibiotic therapy
Poison Ivy	After lesions cease to ooze
Pneumonia or Epiglottitis	Written Note from physician. If due to H-Flu, Health Department must give order.

Bacterial (Spinal) Meningitis	When Health Department gives OK
Mumps	Tenth day after onset of symptoms

IN ALL CASES, SMALL WONDERS CHILD CARE CENTER, INC., RESERVES THE RIGHT TO SEND A CHILD HOME WITH SUSPICIOUS OR PROLONGED SYMPTOMS.

THIS POLICY WILL BE STRICTLY ENFORCED!!!

SAFETY

Accident reports are completed for any injury observed or reported to teachers regardless of severity. One copy will be provided to the parents.

In the event of an emergency, parents will be contacted immediately. If we are unable to reach either parent, the emergency contacts identified by the parents will be contacted.

The Office of General Services conducts fire drills on a regular basis and documented reports are on file in the office. In addition, the child care center will conduct monthly fire drills.

If the need to evacuate ever arises, all children will be taken to a designated area and parents will be notified by telephone.

All full-time staff are required to have Red Cross First Aid Certification.

Parents are expected to bring their child into the classroom, remove the child's outer garments, sign in the child and see that the child is under supervision of the teacher before leaving the premises.

No child is ever left alone or unsupervised.

ACCIDENTS AND ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Small Wonders Child Care Center, Inc., carries Accidental Injury Insurance. The policy is set up to cover any medical expenses not covered by the parent's policy. The policy is a non-deductible coverage policy, up to \$10,000.00 per occurrence. If the child is injured while in attendance at Small Wonders Child Care Center,

Inc., and medical expenses beyond those covered under the parent's policy are incurred, the parent is asked to request insurance forms from the Director. If parents would like specific information concerning this policy, please contact the Director at 631 360-0472/0473.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT REPORTING

1. **DISCIPLINE MEASURES:** Small Wonders Child Care Center, Inc., recognizes that all children need clearly defined limits and such limits must be set in a firm, yet non-threatening manner. It is the philosophy of the Center that preventative measures, such as well-planned, carefully executed daily programming, will assist in providing limits. The center does not and will not condone or tolerate corporal punishment as a means of discipline, nor will it condone any other action that humiliates, frightens, or results in the loss of a child's self-esteem. Furthermore, disciplinary measures will never be associated with toilet training, food, rest, or isolation. Any staff member found in violation of this policy may be suspended.
2. **MANDATED REPORTING:** Child care workers are by law mandated to report suspected cases of child abuse and maltreatment. Department of Social Services Law States:

"In accordance with the provisions of Section 413 and 415 of the NYS Social Service Law, the staff and Directors of day care centers are to report to the New York State Child Abuse and Maltreatment Register (CAMR) whenever there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused or maltreated."

This shall be done in the following manner:

- a. Center staff shall report such information to the Director of the center and
- b. The Director is then responsible for making or causing a report to be made to the CAMR immediately by telephone (1800-342-3720) and within 48 hours by writing a report to the appropriate Department of Social Services in the County in which the child resides.

Small Wonders Child Care Center, Inc., will strictly adhere to this policy regardless of whether the allegation is made against a parent or a staff person.

PARENTS' APPEAL PROCESS

If parents have a problem with a classroom or classroom staff person, they should follow the appropriate procedure:

- a. Set up a time to talk privately with the teacher of the classroom.
- b. If the problem cannot be resolved at this level the parent should speak with the Director.
- c. If no satisfactory solution can be found, the matter in question should be directed in writing to the chairperson of the Board of Directors.
- d. If there is still no resolution, the parent may appeal. The Board of Directors will resolve the matter after reviewing the written and/or oral testimony from the parent. A written report of the final Board decision will be submitted to the parent.

If Parents have a problem with the Program or the Policies of the Center, they should follow steps "b" through "d".