

# Grace Lutheran Early Childhood Development Center Parent Handbook



People were also bringing babies to Jesus to have him touch them. When the disciples saw this, they rebuked them. But Jesus called the children to him and said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.”

— Luke 18:15-17

## Grace Lutheran ECDC Policy on Health and Safety During Extreme Instances

In times of a local or national epidemic and/or pandemic currently enacted directives, protocols, guidance and/or requirements issued by the Centers for Disease Control and/or the Arkansas Department of Health supersede any and all previously issued requirements until relaxed, recalled or rescinded. When in enacted current protocols, guidelines, etc. of Grace Lutheran ECDC will be attached to the Parent Handbook as an addendum, distributed to parents through electronic means and printed copies provided upon request.

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## Mission Statement

Early childhood education at Grace Lutheran addresses the mental, emotional, social, and physical needs of young children in a developmentally appropriate Christian environment grounded in God’s word: “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them,” (Luke 18:16) and “Train up a child the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.” (Proverbs 22:6). The play-based and child-focused curriculum at Grace, therefore, aims to develop well-rounded individuals who acknowledge the daily presence of Christ in their lives.

## Governing Body

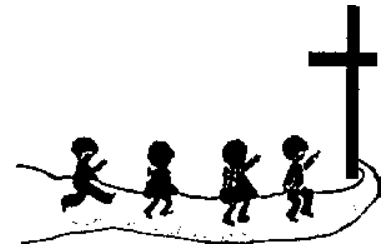
The Grace Lutheran early childhood development program is operated entirely by Grace Lutheran Church under the supervision of the Board of Christian Education. This board consists of members of the congregation elected to two-year terms. The director of the Early Childhood Development Center has responsibility for the daily operation and supervision of all activities in accordance with the policies and principles set forth in this handbook. Any question concerning the operation of the program should be referred to the director; however, if questions or concerns remain unresolved, they should be referred to the board.

## Financial Support

Grace Lutheran views its early childhood program as an integral and important element of its ministry. It is, however, designed to be self-supporting financially. Grace Lutheran Church provides the facilities, including utilities and maintenance for the program, and provides the ministry of the Pastor for the children and parents of the program.

## Non-Discrimination Policy

Grace Lutheran Church does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, national or ethnic origin in administering educational policies, programs, and/or activities; or in enrollment and employment practices.



## ECDC is . . .

. . . a Level 4 Arkansas Better Beginnings facility. Better Beginnings is a voluntary quality rating improvement system for licensed child care and education facilities in Arkansas. Minimum licensing regulations primarily address health and safety issues. Better Beginnings, however looks beyond minimum standards, evaluating the elements of high quality child care and early education experiences. Visit [arbetterbeginnings.com](http://arbetterbeginnings.com) for more information.

. . . licensed by the Arkansas Department of Human Services to provide care for up to 95 children, between the ages of six weeks and 5 years of age, at any given time.

. . . staffed by individuals who have been hired because of their expertise in, and commitment to, providing child development in a warm and nurturing manner; who have been cleared through the Arkansas Child Abuse and Neglect Registry, the Arkansas State Police, and the FBI; who are certified in CPR; and who have a minimum of twenty-five hours of enrichment training annually.

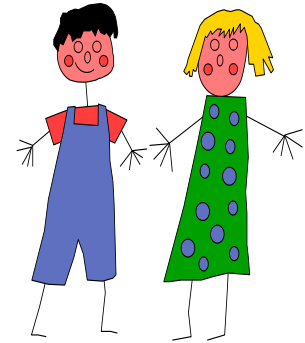
## Working Together

The staff at Grace Lutheran Early Childhood Development Center (ECDC) understand that you have entrusted them with a great responsibility. Our children are a precious gift of God which He has so graciously bestowed in our care. To this end, every effort will be taken to follow through on your wishes in regard to your child's development (i.e. potty training, giving up bottles, thumb sucking, etc.) This can sometimes be a difficult task when there are many children. Therefore, we ask for your patience and cooperation in making your child's needs clear to the staff.

## Communication

Grace ECDC believes that communication between parents and staff is essential. In addition to making every effort to personally become acquainted with each child's parents, ECDC provides the following:

- age appropriate daily report forms
- weekly and monthly curriculum updates
- posting of menus and daily schedules
- flyers notifying parents of special events
- regular newsletters



## Conferences

Parent conferences are scheduled twice a year — in November and June — so that parents have the opportunity to discuss their child's progress with his/her teacher. If for any reason, a parent desires a special conference with the teacher, please contact the teacher and arrange for a mutually agreeable time.

The Grace Lutheran ECDC staff are eager for each child's experience to be happy and fulfilling. Should there be any unresolved complaint or problem, please bring it to the attention of the director immediately. (see also "Governing Body")

## Parents & Family Member Visits & Classroom Involvement

Parents and other family members of ECDC children are welcomed and encouraged to visit the classroom at any time during the center's hours of operation. However, unexpected separation is often difficult for some children — what is meant as a happy visit turns into tears when it doesn't mean it's time to go home. Parents/family members may want to have a discussion with the staff prior to making such visits.

In addition, parents and family members are encouraged to participate in classroom activities (helping with projects, reading books, sharing music or special interests, etc.). If interested please speak with the director or classroom staff about possibilities to share gifts with the children.



## Learning Goals

1. To provide a warm and supportive atmosphere in which children know that they are secure and accepted. This enables them to grow in self confidence and independence, and to choose and think things through for themselves.
2. To share the story of Jesus the Savior with each child, thereby bringing each one to a greater understanding of and love for God, who has given us all things. To accomplish this objective, prayers and hymns are taught, Bible verses are learned, and stories about Jesus are told.
3. To develop large and small muscle skills through various activities.
4. To provide a climate in which children can grow in their ability to live happily with others. This includes sharing, learning respect for others, obeying rules and limitations, as well as understanding their own feelings and developing empathy for others.
5. To teach children about God's natural world and everyday familiar things, and to acquaint them with various resources (i.e. people, places, books, etc.).
6. To teach children language arts and number concepts, and to stimulate individual curiosity.

## Ages and Stages Developmental Assessment

Ages and Stages is a reliable and valid, nationally-recognized assessment tool for children from birth through age six.

Parents will be given an age-appropriate Ages and Stages developmental questionnaire to complete upon enrollment. This will help teachers determine where the child is on the developmental continuum as they work to help foster his or her growth. Teachers will continue to document each child's progress through Ages and Stages and developmental portfolios, which will be shared at parent/teacher conferences in November and June.



## Curriculum

The curriculum of the Grace Early Childhood Development Center is activity based in order to help children learn their God-given capacity. The monthly curriculum guides (Themes and Concepts, and Bible Stories) prepared by our staff, the Arkansas Child Development and Early Learning Standards: Birth through 60 Months (benchmarks) comprise the curriculum. The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers, and Two's, the Creative Curriculum for Preschool, and the Concordia Curriculum Guide also serve as a guide for the curriculum framework.



Following is a partial list of activities integrated into the total curriculum at Grace ECDC (please remember, activities are based on age appropriateness and allow for progression):

- **daily lessons** — Using a play-based curriculum children progressively explore basic concepts and then fine tune school readiness skills. In addition, a variety of religious activities, including Bible Stories and Jesus Time (daily worship), provide daily opportunities for children to learn of the unconditional love of Jesus.
- **art** — It's the process, not the finished product that counts. Children are given the opportunity to explore and experiment with many media.
- **language arts** — Children learn about letters and words, both written and spoken.
- **manipulatives** — Small-muscle and hand-eye coordination are the focus.
- **discovery** — Children explore by touching, smelling, seeing, hearing, feeling, and manipulating things related to the daily or weekly theme.
- **play – indoors and out** — Providing opportunity for growth in gross motor skill development and imaginative play. During inclement weather, children use the Fellowship Hall for indoor activities.
- **housekeeping, blocks, music and movement, science and nature, library, and computer/iPad, and special monthly centers are available throughout the year.**
- **And there is even more** as children participate in weekly chapel services conducted by the Pastor of Grace Lutheran Church; learn sign language (nursery), enjoy monthly field trips (older classes) and special activities enhancing learning; attend swim lessons (older classes); and just have fun playing and interacting with children their own age and caring adults!



### Hours & Days of Operation

Grace Lutheran ECDC is open between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. After Care is offered daily from 5:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. for an additional fee. (see Holiday Schedule, Staff Development Days and Grace Lutheran ECDC Policy on Health and Safety During Extreme Instances)

### Holiday Schedule

Grace Lutheran ECDC will be closed in conjunction with the following: New Year's Day, Spring Break, Good Friday, Memorial Day, 4th of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving including the Wednesday prior and the Friday after, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and the day after. When a holiday falls on a weekend, ECDC will be closed in accordance with the "observed" holiday. ECDC also reserves the right to close on the day preceding or following these holidays.

Specific dates for each school year are distributed to parents at the beginning of each school year in August.

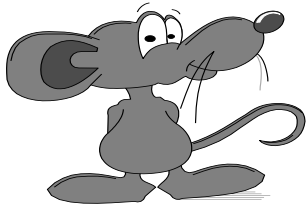
### Staff Development Days

Grace Lutheran ECDC will be closed two times during each school year for staff development days. Specific dates for each school year are distributed to parents at the beginning of each school year in August.



## **Inclement Weather or Emergency Closings**

ECDC uses an automated phone/email system to contact families in the event of inclement weather, emergency closings, delayed openings, etc. Each family is asked to provide one phone number and one email address for this use. ECDC information is also posted on KARK Channel 4's website – arkansasmatters.com. (See Grace Lutheran ECDC Policy on Health and Safety During Extreme Instances.)



**Call ECDC – 501-663-0755 – or email [ecdc@gracelutheranlr.org](mailto:ecdc@gracelutheranlr.org) for Current Tuition Rates**

## **Fees**

### **New Registrants – First Time Enrollment**

A one time, non-refundable, registration fee of \$50.00 and one year's supply fee of \$250.00 (a total of \$300.00) is due with receipt of each child's initial registration form.

### **Supply Fees**

An annual per child fee is assessed to help defray costs of supplies used in providing child care services. The fee is payable in one or two installments for families currently enrolled. Fees will be prorated for children admitted at other times of the year; however no refunds or credits will be available should a child leave early. Please see the Fee Schedule for current rates.

- one installment due August 1 each year
- two installments due August 1 and February 1 each year

### **Tuition**

Tuition is an annual amount. As a convenience to families it may be paid in weekly increments that are due the beginning of each week (Monday). Tuition for any days missed or when the center is closed during the week is forfeited

### **AfterCare**

For families needing/wanting care until 5:30 p.m. ECDC offers AfterCare for an additional weekly fee. As space is limited registration is accepted on a first-come basis. If interested, please inquire about availability and cost.

### **Family Discounts**

Family discounts are not offered.

### **Drop-Ins**

Drop-ins are welcome when space is available. Please call ahead to secure a spot for the desired day(s). There is a 3 hour per day minimum charge.

### **Drop Off and Pick Up Times**

Children may not be dropped off prior to 7:30 a.m.



All children must be picked up and out of the building by 5:00 p.m. (5:30 p.m. for AfterCare). Families will be assessed a fee of \$1.00 per child per minute for each child/family member still in the building beginning at 5:01 p.m. (\$2.00 per child per minute for each child/family member still in the building beginning at 5:31 p.m.)

In cases of emergency (i.e. weather, traffic) when on-time pick-up will be impossible, call the school prior to 5:00 p.m. to advise the staff of your situation. Arrangements for late fees will be considered on an individual basis.

### **Returned Check**

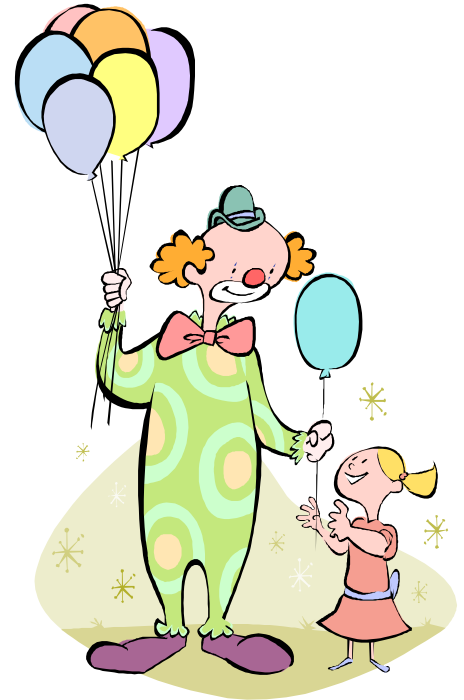
There is a \$25.00 charge on any check that is returned to Grace ECDC.

### **Late Payment**

Tuition is due the first day of the week (Monday). If payment is later than Tuesday, 12:00 noon, a \$25.00 late charge will be assessed. If fees are one full week overdue, children will not be allowed to attend ECDC until full payment or arrangements for payment have been made.

### **Electronic Payments**

ECDC accepts electronic ACH, Credit & Debit Card payments for a reasonable convenience fee. For additional details please ask the director.



### **Admittance & Dismissal**

Admittance to Grace Lutheran ECDC will be allowed after an initial conference with the director, the proper forms have been filled out and/or obtained, and fees paid.

If it is determined that a child cannot adjust to ECDC program, whether due to development or behavior, the child will be dismissed after one week's notice.

Dismissal will occur after a conference with the director, and all fees have been paid in full with the director.

### **Withdrawal Policy**

Grace Lutheran ECDC requires a two week written notice before withdrawing a child. In lieu of notice a two (2) week payment may be made on or before the child's last day.

### **Financial Difficulties**

No one likes to anticipate financial difficulty; however, it is necessary to understand the procedure should a problem occur.

Should any family, for any reason, be unable to meet the full financial obligation to Grace Lutheran ECDC, please speak to the director immediately. A suitable payment plan will be individually designed.

Should a child be withdrawn from Grace Lutheran ECDC with an outstanding balance due, and/or a plan of payment not being agreed upon, the account will be turned over to the Board of Christian Education and they will handle the situation.

If every avenue for reaching an agreement has been pursued and an account remains unsettled, a professional agency may be brought in. Costs and fees incurred in collecting an outstanding balance will be added to the account and the family's responsibility.

## Supply List for Children

Please send the following LABELED supplies with your child on the first day of attendance:

- Infants/Young Toddlers (Nursery, Woddler, Freshman)
  - One (1) container of diaper wipes
  - Supply of disposable diapers (at least 10)
  - Change of clothes
  - Baby bottles, formula, and food
  - Any other personal items (i.e. pacifier)
- Older Toddlers/Preschool (Sophomore, Junior/Senior)
  - Supply of disposable diapers or training pants (as needed)
  - Change of clothes
    - Any other personal item he/she needs to have at school
  - Optional — pillow and/or blanket for naptime

You will be notified when supplies need to be replenished. If after two (2) notices, parents fail to replenish needed items, ECDC reserves the right to purchase items for the well-being of the child and to request reimbursement from parents.

## Clothing

Children should be dressed in comfortable play clothing that is appropriate for the day's weather. **DON'T FORGET THAT THE CHILDREN HAVE OUTDOOR PLAY ALMOST EVERY DAY!** Please send children in a coat, and with a hat and gloves/mittens on cold days.

While not required, sturdy, closed toe shoes are preferable.

**FOR INFANTS AND CHILDREN IN DIAPERS:** Please dress children in "user-friendly" clothing (i.e. pant legs that zip or snap), so that the staff need not completely remove clothing for diaper changes.

**PLEASE**

**LABEL**

**ALL**



**PERSONAL ITEMS**

## Food

### Lunches

To help curb food waste, only children in attendance by 9:30 a.m. are guaranteed a lunch for the day, unless parents have notified the staff in advance of late arrival.

ECDC provides balanced lunches Monday through Friday for children over the age of one (1) year. For your convenience menus are posted throughout the school and on the website. The staff works with families of children with allergies, etc. to adjust servings accordingly (see Board of Christian Education statement on allergies).

A child may receive second helpings of the protein or vegetable portion of his/her lunch if he/she has made an attempt to eat each food item on the plate.

### Snacks

Nutritious snacks and drinks are provided by ECDC each morning and afternoon.

### Milk

Milk is provided by ECDC to all children over the age of 1 year at least once per day.

### Infants

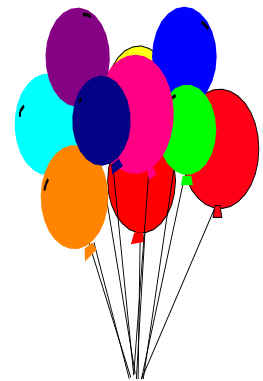
Children under one (1) year of age should have the necessary food and snacks, bottles, and any written instructions. The staff at ECDC knows that children make messes when they “feed themselves” — they also know that it’s part of the development process! Therefore, we ask that parents send finger foods when possible and age appropriate.

### Celebrating Birthdays

Birthdays may be celebrated at ECDC. Refreshments with low sugar content are preferable. In addition, refreshments should be simple — cupcakes or cookies (two and three year olds can handle cookies much better than cupcakes).

Arrangements for birthday celebrations should be made with the director.

Party invitations will not be distributed unless the entire class is invited.



## Safety, Security and Health

(see Grace Lutheran ECDC Policy on Health and Safety During Extreme Instances)

### Cellphone Use

#### Parking Lot:

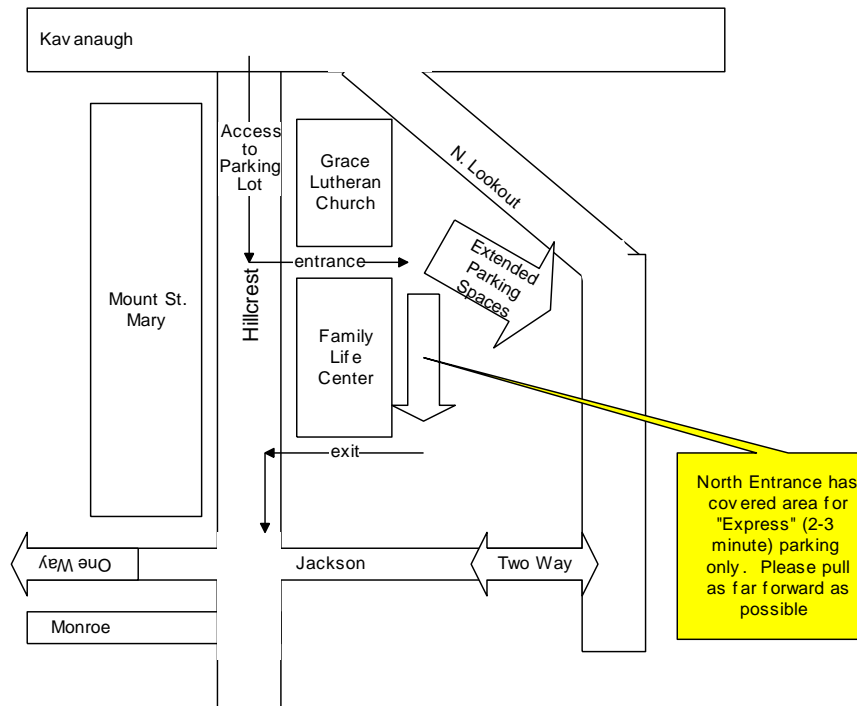
To help ensure a safe outside environment for children and adults alike, we ask that no one use a handheld wireless telephone while operating a motor vehicle in our parking lot. In addition, we would like to remind everyone that Arkansas state law prohibits such use in a school zone.

#### Inside the Building:

Believing your children and their caregivers merit your full attention at the beginning and end of each day we respectfully request that cellphones not be used while dropping off or picking up children at ECDC.

### Traffic Pattern for ECDC Families

We ask that families enter the parking lot from the west (between the Church and the Family Life Center); use either the drive-thru or parking areas; and then exit via the east end of the parking lot, proceeding east to Jackson Street (this helps eliminate congestion at the corner of Hillcrest and Kavanaugh.) Please use the north entrance for dropping off and picking up children.



### Remote Door Access

For the safety and security of the children and staff the doors of Parker Hall (ECDC) are controlled by a magnetic remote access system and PIN system. Anyone needing/wanting access will call the school or knock on the door.

### Parent Sign-in and Sign-out

Each child **MUST BE SIGNED IN AND OUT EVERY DAY**— this is one of the checks and balances that ECDC uses to help ensure their well being. The iPad is located as parents enter by the Center's main door

located on the north side of the building. Once registered through ProCare (our management software) individuals will receive a PIN. If needed you may share that PIN with anyone dropping off or picking up your child.

### **Release of Children**

Only persons authorized by parents and whose names are on file with ECDC may pick up a child. Anyone who is unknown to the staff, attempting to retrieve a child, will be asked for identification. No unauthorized person will be allowed to take a child from the premises.

In cases of emergency, contact the director for procedures to have a child released from care by a person whose name is not on file.

No child will be released to any person observed by staff to be under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance.

### **Ice and Snow Removal**

Grace Lutheran Church has contracted a snow removal company. Upon anticipation of a snow event, the contractor will mobilize to the church site to prepare for timely removal of snow in the parking lots and on the sidewalks.

Since the contractor may have tractors and equipment on the campus, ECDC patrons should proceed cautiously during and after snow events. Also, since snow removal in most instances is not able to remove ice, please drive and walk with extreme care to avoid accidents and falls on slick surfaces that may be icy.

### **DHS Interviews and Access to Compliance Forms**

Arkansas state law requires every child care facility to inform staff, students, and parents that an agent of the state can, as part of an investigation, interview any child or staff member without prior notice or parental permission. If this occurs, parents will be notified that day.

Licensing compliance forms (DCC-521) are available at the facility for three (3) years. Parents may request to review the compliance forms at any time.

### **Drills**

At least one fire and one tornado drill are conducted each month.

### **Immunizations**

Each child must receive all immunizations at appointed ages unless there is a medical reason certified by a health care provider.

### **Immunization Records**

A current immunization record must be on file at ECDC at all times. Initial records should be presented on or before the child's first day of attendance.

Please help keep children's records up to date by providing an updated record each time the child receives an immunization.

## Medications

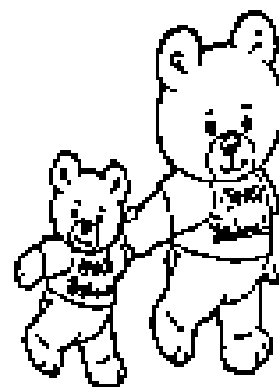
If medications are required to be administered at ECDC, a *Permission To Medicate* form must be filled out and signed by the parent. These are available at the sign-in desk.

All medications must remain in their original containers with the child's name, dosage, and expiration date noted clearly. Medications will be kept in a locked box at all times.

## Child Development Services

The staff at ECDC recognize that each child develops at his/her own pace and work to provide activities that encourage and stimulate development on an individual basis. The staff are also sensitive to children that seem to be developing at a slower pace, and after consultation with parents, are able to enlist the services of appropriate early childhood development and education programs to work with the child. The goal of these early intervention services is to prepare the child for future school success.

Numerous services such as speech/language, vision, hearing, motor skills, behavior/social skills, and cognitive/readiness skills are available at no cost to families through the Little Rock School District Early Childhood Special Services Program. Once a child is tested, an individualized program can be designed and administered by a trained professional during the child's day at ECDC.



## Illness Policy and Procedures

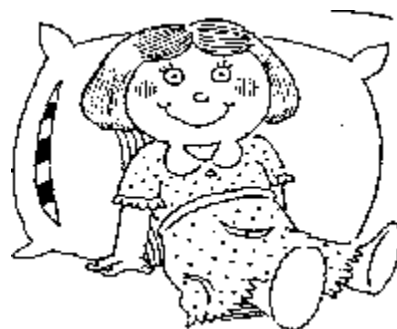
Grace ECDC is not licensed, nor does it have staff trained, to care for sick children. therefore children with any of the following symptoms may not remain at ECDC, or return until they are either free of all symptoms for a full 24 hours, or have a letter from the doctor stating that they may return.

In times of a local or national epidemic and/or pandemic currently enacted directives, protocols, guidance and/or requirements issued by the Centers for Disease Control and/or the Arkansas Department of Health supersede any and all previously issued requirements until relaxed, recalled or rescinded.

The following are guidelines reprinted from *Minimum Licensing Requirements for Child Care Centers Arkansas Department of Human Services Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education (Rev. 01/01/2020)*

1. No child or staff shall be admitted who has a contagious or infectious disease.
2. The parent or legal guardian shall be notified as soon as possible when a child has any symptom that requires exclusion from the facility. The child shall be separated from other children and closely monitored until the parent arrives to pick the child up.
3. The caregiver shall determine if the illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities, results in a greater need for care than the child care staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children, or poses a risk of spread of harmful diseases to others.

4. The caregiver shall temporarily exclude the child from child care if the child has:
  - a. Sudden change in behavior, such as:
    - lethargy or lack of responsiveness
    - unexplained irritability or persistent crying
    - difficult breathing
    - a quickly-spreading rash
  - b. Fever over 101 degrees/oral, 100/axillary (or equivalent method) in a child who also has pain, behavior changes, or other symptoms of illness.
    - An infant younger than 2 months with any increased temperature shall get urgent medical attention, within an hour.
    - An infant younger than 6 months with any increased temperature shall be medically evaluated.
  - c. Diarrhea, defined as watery/runny stools, if frequency exceeds 2 or more stools above normal for that child, and is not related to a change in diet or medication. Exclusion from child care is required if diarrhea cannot be contained in the diaper or if diarrhea is causing soiled clothing in toilet-trained children.
  - d. Blood or mucus in stools (unless caused by hard stools)
  - e. Vomiting illness (2 or more episodes of vomiting in the previous 24 hours)
  - f. Abdominal pain which lasts more than 2 hours
  - g. Mouth sores with drooling
  - h. Rash with fever or behavior change
  - i. Conjunctivitis or “pink eye” – with white, yellow, or green eye discharge and red (“bloodshot”) eyes, exclude only if child has:
    - fever,
    - eye pain
    - redness and/or swelling of the skin around the eyes, or
    - if more than one child in the program has symptoms
  - j. Pediculosis (head lice), until after the first treatment.
  - k. Active tuberculosis, until a health care provider or health official states that the child is on appropriate therapy and can attend child care.
  - l. Impetigo, until treatment has been started
  - m. Strep throat, until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has been started
  - n. Chicken pox, until all lesions have crusted (usually 6 days after the rash appears)
  - o. Rubella, until 6 days after onset of rash
  - p. Pertussis (whooping cough); until 5 days of antibiotic treatment
  - q. Mumps, until 5 days after onset of gland swelling
  - r. Measles, until 4 days after onset of rash
  - s. Hepatitis A, until 1 week after onset of illness or as directed by the health department



Parents will be called and consulted if any of the following become a concern and it will be determined by the director and parent if the child needs to be picked up:

- unusual behavior
- loss of appetite
- child feels discomfort
- child cries more than normal

- child is cranky or less active than usual

**Grace ECDC reserves the right to send home any child with obvious signs of illness.**



**FOR THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF ALL THE CHILDREN AND STAFF AT ECDC — PLEASE REPORT COMMUNICABLE DISEASES TO THE DIRECTOR IMMEDIATELY!**

Parents will be called immediately if their child is sick and arrangements must be made to pick up the child within an hour of notification. There will be a \$25.00 per hour charge for one-to-one care after the first hour.

In the event that parents cannot be reached, one of the parties provided as an "emergency contact" will be contacted. As a last resort, and in the case of extreme emergency, parents, upon enrollment at ECDC, will sign an authorization giving the director, or her designate, the authority to obtain medical treatment, at the parent's expense.

### Behavior Guidance

As Christian child care providers, the staff at ECDC strive to provide a loving and accepting atmosphere for each and every child. Every effort will be made to show children acceptable behavior in a positive way. Should discipline be needed, Grace ECDC uses the following methods:

#### Children under the age of 2 years of age:

- Change of Scene — moving the child to an alternate activity
- Playground — having the child sit with teacher
- Last Resort — a call to the parents

#### Children over the age of 2 years of age:

- Change of Scene — moving the child to an alternate activity
- Time Out — moving the child into a quiet area to regain control for an age-appropriate length of time (within the same area as classmates)
- Playground — having the child sit with teacher
- Director — having the child visit with the director
- Last Resort — a call to the parents



### Behavior Help

If additional help is needed to help a child succeed, the ECDC staff may enlist the collaborative service provided by the State of Arkansas, Department of Human Services – Division of Child Care and Early Child Education and a Behavioral Help Response Team. This team offers custom support and resources to the staff and the child's family relating to child behavior and/or classroom management.



## **ECDC Position on Promotion**

Promotion from one class to the next is the general practice at Grace Lutheran ECDC. This is not to say that we have a policy of automatic promotion. Each case is taken on an individual basis.

When, in the opinion of the teacher, it is thought best to retain a child, the teacher is asked to consult with the director. They in turn, notify the parents and all three parties meet to obtain a proper decision, or when possible a measurable course of action to prepare the child to promote. This should be done in spring (April/May).

In accordance with accepted admission guidelines, the following ages must be met by August 1st for admission to the corresponding ECDC class:

Nursery — 6 weeks through 9 months

Woddlers — 10 months through 18 months

Freshman — 19 months through 24 months

Sophomore — Over 2 years of age

Junior/Senior — Over 3 years of age

Certain developmental indicators must be met for a child to promote:

1. from the Nursery or Woddler Class to the Freshman Class child must be walking
2. from the Sophomore Class to the Junior/Senior Class child must be potty trained.

## **ECDC Position on Infant/Toddler Biting**

Biting is sometimes an issue with children in the approximate age range of 6 months to 24 months. Studies over the years have not been able to determine the exact cause or reason for children to bite one another. There are various theories, but without a decisive conclusion there can be no specific cure or fix. From an administrative point of view we find it difficult to spell out specific corrective measures for infant and toddler biting and therefore will deal with biting on an individual basis. Biting is an undesirable trait that no one cares for and is difficult for parents on both sides of the issue to accept. Teachers will remain vigilant to the potential for occurrence and will advise parents when a biting incident involves their child.

## **Grace Lutheran Early Childhood Development Center Policies**

### **Policy for Placement of Siblings and Members of Grace Lutheran Church**

Siblings of currently enrolled children and members of Grace Lutheran Church will be given priority for placement. Placement will be available mid-August with “year change”; and at other times of the year upon availability. After registration, tuition payment will be required beginning the date the spot becomes available. If the number of siblings and Grace Lutheran members on the waiting list exceeds the number of available spots, placement will be at the discretion of the Board of Christian Education.

### **Child Maltreatment Policy**

Procedure:

1. Report any suspected abuse or maltreatment to the ECDC Director.
2. The director will examine and question the child, in the presence of the reporting party if feasible, to determine if abuse is in fact a possibility.
3. If warranted, the director will call the Hot Line Number (1-800-482-5964) to report the case; and file a written report of the incident which includes date reported, symptoms of abuse, and any action taken.
4. The director will follow up with a second call as necessary.
5. In order to maintain confidentiality, all parties should refrain from discussing the incident with other teachers, employees, parents, etc.
6. If the director fails to follow the above procedures, or is under suspicion, reporting parties should follow above steps 2 through 4; and notify the Director of the Board of Christian Education of Grace Lutheran Church.

### **Licensing Violations Policy**

Licensing Violations refers to the regulations as found in the Minimum Licensing Requirements for Child Care Centers (latest revision), as published by the Arkansas Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education, Child Care Licensing Unit.

Procedure:

1. Suspected violations should first be brought to the attention of the staff and director for clarification and correction.
2. If concerns are not addressed and/or the violation(s) continues, concerns should be reported to Child Care Licensing, Child Development Unit (682-8590).

### **Possession of Weapons Policy**

The center strictly prohibits possession of any weapon, or object that may be used as a lethal weapon (including but not limited to firearms, knives, clubs, etc.), at any time on the center's premises or while conducting the center's business. Law enforcement personnel authorized and required to carry such weaponry are exempt from the policy while on duty.

### **Distribution of Personal Email Addresses and/or Phone Numbers Policy**

ECDC does not distribute family or staff personal email addresses and/or phone numbers for reasons of privacy. ECDC will continue to provide lists of children in classrooms for parties, etc.

### **Grace Lutheran ECDC Policy on Health and Safety During Extreme Instances**

In times of a local or national epidemic and/or pandemic currently enacted directives, protocols, guidance and/or requirements issued by the Centers for Disease Control and/or the Arkansas Department of Health supersede any and all previously issued requirements until relaxed, recalled or rescinded. When in enacted current protocols, guidelines, etc. of Grace Lutheran ECDC will be attached to the Parent Handbook as an addendum, distributed to parents through electronic means and printed copies provided upon request.

### **Grace Lutheran Early Childhood Development Center Board of Christian Education Statement on Allergies**

In our continuing efforts to maintain safe and healthy conditions for our children with food allergies, it is our intent to continue to do our very best to monitor and ensure that each child with a known and

verified allergy not ingest or have contact with the known substance that causes a specific adverse reaction. Staff members are aware of the children in their respective rooms with various allergies and do what they can to protect each child. They can only do this after having open communication and specific dialog with parents.

Parents are responsible for providing maximum information regarding the offending substance and adverse reactions by the child. Likewise, special steps to treat the reaction and level of urgency must be made known to staff members. Staff should also be provided with current telephone numbers of parents and other contact persons as necessary. All of this should be in writing and signed by the parent.

Parents should review the published menu which is on a five-week rotation basis. It may be necessary for the parent to provide a healthy substitute food item on a particular day if we are unable to do so. Some situations may prove extremely difficult to manage since a young child can quickly reach over to another child's plate when he or she sees an item which appears more inviting than what is on their own plate. The answer is not necessarily to move the child to another table since such separation and isolation could be viewed as punishment.

There is no one specific set of rules to follow in each and every situation with all children and their allergies. The single best approach is for discussion between parents, teachers, and the Director concerning each individual case. If a certain course of action may be deemed impractical, based on the needs of all children, the Director reserves the right to make the determination as to what we can do to accommodate the needs of the child. This will be done after discussion with parents to arrive at a workable solution.

Whenever a parent brings treats, such as the child's birthday, this must first be approved by the Director, due to allergies of other children in a given room.

Hopefully, the above comments serve to clarify various points concerning the subject of allergies. After all, we do want to protect all of our children. We appreciate the faith and trust you put in us to care for your child.

#### **Distribution of Shaken Baby Syndrome Information**

In accordance with the Arkansas Department of Human Services Minimum Licensing Requirements for Child Care Centers, Grace Lutheran ECDC distributes Shaken Baby Syndrome information to all families enrolling children eighteen (18) months old and younger. The Arkansas Department of Health approved brochure is included in the Grace Lutheran ECDC Parent Handbook. Written documentation of receipt of this information by each parent, with signature, shall be placed in the appropriate child's file.



# Prevent Shaken Baby Syndrome.

- Babies need attention most of the time.
- Babies cry because they can't talk.
- Some babies cry more than others.
- It is all right to feel frustrated when a baby won't stop crying.
- It is **NOT** all right to shake a baby to stop the crying.
- Babies cry. Have a plan.

Create your own crying plan at:  
[www.cryingplan.com](http://www.cryingplan.com)

**Other helpful resources:**

- [www.arkansasctf.org](http://www.arkansasctf.org)
- [www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org)
- [www.dontshake.org](http://www.dontshake.org)

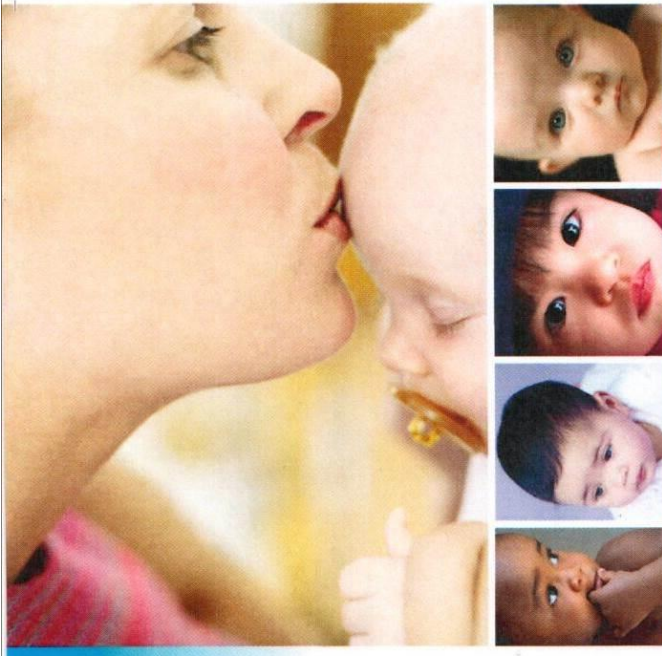


Arkansas Department of Health  
*Keeping Your Hometown Healthy*

4815 West Markham  
Little Rock, AR 72205  
[www.healthy.arkansas.gov](http://www.healthy.arkansas.gov)

*Special thanks to:*

Arkansas Children's Trust Fund  
UAMS Center for Children at Risk



## What You Should Know About

# Shaken Baby Syndrome



Arkansas Department of Health  
*Keeping Your Hometown Healthy*



## What is Shaken Baby Syndrome?

- It is a serious brain injury.
- It often occurs when a baby is forcefully shaken, causing the brain to move about inside the skull.
- Shaking is often done out of anger or frustration with a baby who won't stop crying and can't be soothed.
- It is a form of child abuse that can be prevented.

## Symptoms of Shaken Baby Syndrome

- Limpness or lethargy
- Trouble breathing
- Poor sucking or swallowing
- Irritability
- Seizures or trembling
- Vomiting
- Pale or bluish skin
- Unresponsive/will not wake up

**All babies cry.** Some cry more than others. Babies cry because they can't talk and need to say they are hungry, wet, sick, or hurting. Babies sometimes keep crying even when we try to comfort them. Shaking a baby won't stop the crying and may cause brain damage or death.

**Don't panic.  
Have a plan.**



## How to Cope with Your Crying Baby

It's important to have a CRYING PLAN that you (or anyone watching your baby) can follow when the crying starts.

### Check your baby's basic needs:

1. Is it time to eat?
2. Does he/she need to burp after eating?
3. Is it time for a diaper change?
4. Is the baby too hot? Too cold? Overdressed?
5. Are there any signs your baby is sick? (fever, vomiting) Seek medical care if you have any concerns about your baby's health.

### Try soothing your baby:

- Hold your baby close and rock, walk or sway side to side while standing.
- Offer a pacifier (don't force).
- Swaddle him/her with a blanket.
- Play soft music or a quiet sound.
- Take your baby for a walk in a stroller or a ride in a car seat.

If your baby is not sick or hurt, but continues to cry, remember:

**IT IS NEVER OK TO SHAKE A BABY. IT IS OK** to put your baby in a safe place (crib, infant seat) and let him cry while you take a break, or call a friend or family member for help.

**It is more important to stay calm than to stop the crying.**

## Calm yourself, so you can calm your baby safely:

- Go outside for fresh air.
- Take several deep breaths.
- Count to 100.
- Wash your face or take a shower.
- Exercise. Do sit ups or walk up and down the stairs a few times.



## Choose your baby's caregivers wisely:

**Before leaving your baby with anyone, ask yourself these questions:**

- Does this person want to watch my baby?
- Is this person good with babies?
- Will my baby be in a safe place with this person?
- Have I gone over my **CRYING PLAN** with this person?

## Do NOT leave your baby with anyone who:

- Is impatient or annoyed when your baby cries.
- Says your baby cries too much.
- Will become angry if your baby cries or bothers them.
- Might treat your baby roughly because they are angry with you.
- Has a history of violence.
- Has lost custody of their own children because they could not care for them.
- Uses drugs or alcohol.