



FAMILY HANDBOOK

Effective 8/1/2018

Suzy's Little Peanut's Day School

WELCOME

Dear Families,

Hello! I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you and your family to my center. It is my goal to offer a safe and happy environment for your child.

Little Peanuts are state-licensed centers. Many of the policies that are outlined pertain to state regulations. *It is extremely important that all areas that require information or permission from you are filled out completely.* Before a child starts at any of my centers I must have all of the appropriate paperwork in my possession.

Little Peanuts began as a home-based childcare provider in 1998. In 2001, it became a licensed center. We are now a Five-star, NAEYC Accredited program with locations in Springfield and Ascutney Vermont, the highest achievement a childcare program can receive. Little Peanuts is also a preschool partner with all local Vermont school districts.

Little Peanuts has an open-door policy. This means that I invite you to come to me with any questions or concerns that arise at any time. My center has been created for the benefit of children, families, and the community. You are free to stop by the facility at any time during open hours. Please see the director or a member of our admin team upon arrival for a visitor's pass.

Little Peanuts is open to full inclusion of all children. Little Peanuts does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, creed, age, sexual orientation, disability, or national origin, and takes proactive steps to address discrimination.

This handbook contains information on center policies and procedures.

Little Peanuts is a smoke free and peanut free campus.

In closing, I look forward to having your child in my center and working with you.

Sincerely,

Suzy Coutermarsh

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ABOUT US

Philosophy

Mission

Suzy's Little Peanuts strives to provide a safe, academically challenging social environment to develop positive self-esteem and responsibility of children for their future in school and community.

Vision

Every child deserves to receive a quality early childhood education experience that will prepare them to be positive and responsible members of our communities. To provide this quality education Suzy's Little Peanuts is dedicated to educating children through highly trained and qualified staff who stay up to date on early childhood development and standards. Our indoor and outdoor environments are designed to provide an enriching and challenging academic and social environment.

Program Philosophy

Our philosophy at Little Peanuts is to nurture and educate children using research based methods. We believe that children need a sense of security, helping when in need of guidance, and the knowledge that when everything else around them is changing- a provider will be there.

Our program is influenced by early childhood philosophers such as Erik Erikson, Piaget, and Vygotsky, Early Multi Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), Responsive Classroom and Second Step, a social and emotional curriculum. We believe, as Piaget did, that children go through stages in their development. Our job as providers is to support children in the stage that they are in, pushing them along can sometimes prolong the process. We believe that children learn from their peers and adults. Social interaction is a key element in our facility. We use second step to teach children positive social skills such as fair ways to play, how to enter a group and problem solving skills.

We communicate our philosophy through both our indoor and outdoor environments. Our atmosphere is calm and cheerful, welcoming play and social interaction. We setup our classrooms according to creative curriculum. This means that our classrooms are set up in centers. We have home living area, dramatic play, block area, tabletop toys, music, discovery area, art area, technology and library. These centers encourage learning. We believe that children learn many things from books, therefore we have books in all of the centers and often spend time reading to children. There are many opportunities to experience the outdoors on a daily basis. Our playground is used for recess and provides lots of space for running and playing. We garden with the children each year and take advantage of every opportunity to spend time enjoying nature.

We are always growing and changing as a center, as our children grow and change. We recognize that each family is diverse and we welcome you to influence the growth and change of our center. Our doors are always open and we encourage your family to feel at home here.

Definition of Family

In this handbook we refer to family as a parent, legal guardian, sponsor or anyone else who provides for the well-being, best-interest and responsibility of the child in our care.

Hours of Operation

Child care services are provided from 6:30 AM to 5:30 PM Monday through Friday.

Holidays

We are closed on certain days through out the year. Please see our annual calendar for specific dates for closings.

Admission & Enrollment

All admission and enrollment forms must be completed and enrollment fee and first tuition payment paid prior to your child's first day of attendance, including any subsidy certificates from NH or VT.

An application fee of \$20 is due at the time of enrollment to be added to our wait list. This fee is non-refundable.

A one-week, non-refundable tuition deposit is required for each child enrolled. This deposit will be held without interest and will represent tuition payment for the last week of the child's enrollment.

Based on the availability and openings, our facility admits children from 6 weeks to 8 years of age. We do not hold open slots for long periods of time.

Children are admitted without regard to race culture, sex, religion, national origin, or disability. We do not discriminate on the basis of special needs as long as a safe, supportive environment can be provided.

Inclusion

Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School believes that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging in child care. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program based on his/her individual capabilities and needs.

If your child has an identified special need, please make us aware of this. We will work with local area agencies including the parent child centers and local school districts to provide quality care to the best of our abilities.

Non-Discrimination

At **Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School** equal educational opportunities are available for all children, without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, or parent/provider political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation or special needs, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state or local laws. Educational programs are designed to meet the varying needs of all students.

Family Activities

Each family is a child's first teacher. We value families as partners in the growth and development of children in our program. We encourage parents and other family members to be

involved in the program, visit children’s classrooms, participate in events, and provide feedback on the program. We offer a variety of ways in which families can participate in helping us establish and reach our program goals.

Please see the list of Family Activities at the end of this booklet.

Confidentiality

Unless we receive your written consent, information regarding your child will not be released with the exception of that required by our regulatory and partnering agencies. All records concerning children at our program are confidential.

Staff Qualifications

Our teachers are hired in compliance with the state requirements and qualifications as a base minimum. Typical staff certifications are as follows:

Position Title	Education/Certification	Experience
Lead Teacher	Level 3A on career ladder within 1 year of employment	2 years
Associate Teacher	Child Development Associate Credential or Level 1 within 1 year of employment	1 year

Caregivers participate in orientation and ongoing training in the areas of child growth and development, healthy and safe environments, developmentally appropriate practices, guidance, family relationships, cultural and individual diversity, and professionalism.

We strongly discourage families from entering into employment arrangements with staff (i.e. babysitting). Any arrangement between families and our caregivers outside the programs and services we offer is a private matter, not connected or sanctioned by **Suzy’s Little Peanuts Day School**.

Child to Staff Ratios

Children are supervised at all times. All caregivers receive scheduled breaks which reduce fatigue and help to ensure alertness.

We maintain the following standards for child to staff ratios:

Age	Child to Staff	Maximum Group Size
6 weeks – 24 months	<u>1 to 4</u>	<u>8</u>
2 yrs to 3 yrs	<u>1 to 5</u>	<u>10</u>
3 yrs and up	<u>1-10</u>	<u>20</u>
2 years 8 months	<u>1-6</u>	<u>12</u>

Source: National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education.

Communication & Family Partnership

Daily Communications. Daily notes from center staff will keep you informed about your child’s activities and experiences at the center upon request. We use various modes of communication

at our centers including daily activity sheets, the daily connect app, phone calls and emails. Please talk with your child's teachers about which method works well for your family.

Bulletin Boards. Located throughout the center, bulletin boards provide center news, upcoming events, faculty changes, holiday closing dates, announcements, etc.

Newsletters. Monthly newsletters provide center news, events, announcements, etc. These newsletters are available at the sign-in/sign-out desk for your taking.

Email. We encourage you to provide an email address that you use regularly so that we may send you announcements, event invitations, newsletters and general updates.

Family Visits. Family participation is encouraged. Visit our classrooms, volunteer, come along on a field trip, or eat a meal with your child. Signing in is required for the safety and protection of our children. Each visitor must wear a visitor's badge while on premises and sign-out upon leaving. Any family member wishing to volunteer at the center must sign in with admin and receive a visitor's pass.

Conferences. Family & teacher conferences occur twice a year. During these conferences, we will discuss your child's strengths, likes and dislikes, and styles of learning. We will work together to set goals for your child's growth and development. You may request additional conferences regarding your child's progress at any time. We encourage you to communicate any concerns. We will also go over your child's ASQ and if they are a PreK student their TS **Gold**.

Open Door Policy

We are delighted to have family members participate in our program. Parents/Guardians are welcome to visit the program any time during regular program hours. The infant room welcomes parents/guardians to nurse or feed their infants.

Our team will always do their best to speak with parents/guardians. Since staff days are devoted to caring for children, it is usually not feasible to have a long discussion during regular program hours. If a situation requires a longer discussion, kindly arrange for an appointment.

Publicity

Occasionally, photos will be taken of the children at the center for use within the center or on our website. Written permission will be obtained prior to use of photographs.

Unless the family indicates that they want their child to participate, we will not use pictures and names of children for publicity.

CURRICULA & LEARNING

Learning Environment

We provide a rich learning environment with curricula that are developmentally appropriate to the specific ages in each classroom. We have a flexible day routine that allows children to advance at their own pace. We strongly believe that learning happens through play. Learning and exploring are hands-on and are facilitated through interest areas. Our program is designed to enhance children's development in the following areas: creativity, self-expression, decision-making, problem-solving, responsibility, independence, and reasoning. We encourage openness to that which is different from us, and the ability to work and play with others.

Curricula & Assessment

Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School uses the Handwriting Without Tears curriculum as well as Second Step, a social and emotional curriculum. As a Pre K partner for Vermont Schools, we gather information about each child's developmental abilities and evaluate progress using Teaching Strategies Gold so we can modify and adjust what we are doing in our classroom so as to deliver the best individualized instruction for each child. This evaluation is communicated to families periodically during the school year using various formal and informal tools, forms, and resources. For infants and toddlers, we use the Ages and Stages Questionnaire as well as the OUNCE scale assessment tool for infants and toddlers under 24 months of age.

For information about your child's day, please see copies of daily schedules and lessons plans posted in each classroom.

Outings and Field Trips

Weather permitting; we conduct supervised outdoor play each day for all children. Children are accounted for at all times

From time to time, there will be supervised field trips, and we encourage you to join your child on the trip. *Permission Slips* for each trip must be signed by the child's family. And all family members wishing to chaperones must complete background checks beforehand.

For field trips, please dress your child appropriately for the season. Walking shoes are a must. Sandals and flip-flops are not appropriate for walking and make it difficult for your child.

The safety of children and staff will be guarded in all activities of child care programs. Car seats will be used and provided by each family during field trips and they will be properly installed in our van or in staff-owned vehicles.

Transitions

Your child's transition in child care should be a positive and exciting learning adventure. We will work with you and your child to ensure the smoothest possible transition occurs as new routines and new people are introduced.

Transition from home to center

Prior to your child's first day, you will have an opportunity to tour the center, meet with your child's peers and teachers, and communicate any anticipated concerns. At this time please share the best communication methods that the teacher may use to reach you.

Transition between learning programs

Children are transitioned to the next program based on age, developmental readiness, state licensing requirements, and space availability. During the transition, current and future teachers will meet with you to propose a plan to introduce your child into the new program.

Transition to elementary school

Transition activities such as a field trip to a local elementary school, creating a mural of special friends and special times at our center will be part of your child's education at our center. We will provide you with information on local schools, what to expect, and ideas on how to talk to your child about going to elementary school.

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism is vital for all children because it sets social goals and promotes respect for all people and the environment we inhabit. We utilize books, music, games, and a wide range of activities as aids to teach our children respect for our world and the diversity of life upon it.

Celebrations

Our holiday policy encourages an enhanced understanding of and respect for different cultures and beliefs of children, families, staff and community.

Rest Time

Infants sleep according to their own schedule and are put to sleep on their backs. Caregivers/teachers directly observe infants by sight and sound at all times and check on sleeping infants every 15 minutes. For any alternative sleep positions or sleep requests, please see the director. A doctor's note is required.

After lunch, all children less than 6 years of age, participate in a quiet rest time. Children are not required to sleep and may be given quiet activities. Our rest time is from 12 – 2:30 and all children are awake by 2:30. As children approach kindergarten they may need to be weaned from napping. Please communicate with us about this when the time comes.

Toilet Training

The most important factor in making the toilet learning experience successful and as low-stress as possible is a family/teacher partnership that supports the child. Research indicates that children cannot successfully learn how to use the toilet until they are physically, psychologically, and emotionally ready. Many pediatricians say that most children under 24 months of age are not physically capable of regulating bladder and bowel muscles. Most positive toilet training occurs only after children show signs of physical control or awareness of their bodily functions and when they demonstrate an interest or curiosity in the process. We are committed to working with you to make sure that toilet training is carried out in a manner that is consistent with your child's physical and emotional abilities and your family's concerns. Please let us know what methods of encouragement you are using at home so we can create a consistent environment for toileting.

*****Please note that Suzy's Little Peanuts does not reward children with food or edible items and this policy extends to toilet training.*****

GUIDANCE

General Procedure

Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School is committed to each student's success in learning within a caring, responsive, and safe environment that is free of discrimination, violence, and bullying. Our center works to ensure that all students have the opportunity and support to develop to their fullest potential and share a personal and meaningful bond with people in the school community.

Thoughtful direction and planning ahead are used to prevent problems and encourage appropriate behavior. Communicating consistent, clear rules and involving children in problem solving help them develop their ability to become self-disciplined. We encourage children to be

fair, to be respectful of other people, of property, and to learn to understand the results of their actions.

Challenging Behavior

Children are guided to treat each other and adults with self control and kindness.

Each student at **Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School** has a right to:

- Learn in a safe and friendly place
- Be treated with respect
- Receive the help and support of caring adults

When a child becomes verbally or physically aggressive, we intervene immediately to protect all of the children. Our usual approach to helping children with challenging behaviors is to show them how to solve problems using appropriate interactions. When discipline is necessary, it is clear, consistent and understandable to the child. We maintain a zero tolerance to bullying. If you have any concerns about this at any time, please report it to the Director of the Center.

Physical Restraint

Physical restraint is not used or permitted for discipline. There are rare instances when we need to ensure a child's safety or that of others and we may hold a child by gently holding her or him only for as long as is necessary for control of the situation.

Notification of Behavioral Issues to Families

If a child's behavior/circumstance is of concern, communication will begin with the parents as the first step to understanding the child's individual needs and challenges. We will work together to evaluate these needs in the context of our program.

On rare occasions, a child's behavior may warrant the need to find a more suitable setting for care. Examples of such instances include:

- A child appears to be a danger to others.
- Continued care could be harmful to, or not in the best interest of the child as determined by a medical, psychological, or social service personnel.
- Undue burden on our resources and finances for the child's accommodations for success and participation.

ENROLLMENT, TUITION AND FEES

Enrollment Process

Application and Enrollment

Families who are considering Suzy's Little Peanuts are welcome to stop by to visit. Formal tours must be scheduled in advance. Our application process is as follows:

To be considered for enrollment families must submit our enrollment packet pages 1-5, and a \$20 application fee. Our application fee helps to defray the cost of tours and processing paperwork. Applications will be reviewed within 5 business days upon being received. You can expect to receive an acceptance or denial phone call once the application has been submitted. .

Upon acceptance families have 2 business days to accept or deny the space(s) being held. One week's tuition deposit is required to finalize acceptance, this will apply to the last week's tuition. After acceptance the enrollment paperwork is required a minimum of 3 business days prior to a child's start date:

Families who are given the option to go on our waiting list have 2 business days to accept a space on the waiting list. Suzy's Little Peanuts cannot give accurate time-lines in regard to length of time a family will be on the wait list. The waiting list works on a first come first serve basis. Families with children already in the center and staff will receive priority.

Only parents or legal guardians can enroll a child. Names and contact information must be provided for both parents regardless of parent involvement.

Applications for enrollment can be picked up at the center and are also available on our website. Enrollment will not be complete without a visit to the center.

Each August we complete a file review at which time you update your child's forms including immunization records. There is an annual paperwork & supplies fee of \$10 that will be billed to your tuition amount of the 1st week of September.

Tuition & Late Charges

Weekly Rates and Payment Policy

Children ages 6 weeks-2 years

- Full-time (40-45 hours per week) \$213/weekly
- Part-time \$ 6 an hour
- Extended care (Over 45 hours per week) \$213/weekly **plus** \$7 an hour for each hour over 45 hours.

Children age 2 years

- Full-time (40-45 hours per week) \$193/weekly
- Part-time \$6 an hour
- Extended care (over 45 hours per week) \$193/weekly **plus** \$7 an hour for each hour over 45 hours.

Children ages 3 years-Kindergarten (Non publicly funded weeks)

- Full-time (40-45 hours per week) \$182.50/weekly
- Part-time \$5.50 an hour
- Extended Care (Over 45 hours per week) \$182.50 **plus** \$7.00 an hour for each hour over 45 hours.

Children ages 3 years-Kindergarten (Publicly Funded Weeks)

-
- Full-time (39-45 hours) \$140/weekly
 - Extended Care (Over 45 hours per week) \$140 **plus** \$7 an hour for each hour over 45 hours.

School Age Children

- Hourly rate is \$4.50 an hour
- Full-time (39-45 hours per week) \$180/weekly

Please note that tuition is based on the age of the children, not the classroom in which they are enrolled.

Effective 2018, a 1.5% tuition increase may take place annually in January at the discretion of the owner. Families will be notified by November of any scheduled tuition increases.

Late payments can pose serious problems for our programs. Therefore we have put procedures in place to reduce their impact.

If payment is not received on the day that it is due, a late fee of \$25 will be added to your next tuition payment for each day that it is late. If your account has not been paid in full within 7 business days, we reserve the right to terminate our contract with you.

Any payments made will be applied to the oldest charges and late fees may still apply if the account is not paid in full by the next tuition due date.

If payment is more than 14 business days past due, we may attempt to recover payment in small claims court and/or your account may be sent to a third party collections agency. You will be responsible for all expenses associated with these actions including all court and attorney fees.

Payment is always due in advance with no deduction for any absences, holidays, or closures due to inclement weather, power outages, or other situations beyond our control. Payment is due weekly on the first day the child is scheduled each week, as outlined in the *Enrollment Agreement*.

Returned Checks/Rejected Transaction Charges

All returned checks will be charged a fee of \$30. Two or more returned checks will result in your account being placed on "cash or money order only" status.

Late Pick-up/Early Drop-off Fees

Late pick-up is not a normal program option and will only be considered as an exceptional occurrence. Late fees of \$1 per 1 minute will be assessed beginning at your contracted pick up time. Also, if you drop your child off before their contracted time, you will be charged \$1 for every 1 minutes before your contracted time,

Special Activity Fees

From time-to-time there will be additional fees associated with special activities or field trips. These fees are due prior to the event, activity or trip.

ATTENDANCE & WITHDRAWAL

Absence

If your child is going to be absent or arrive after 9:30 AM for an appointment, please call the center. All children must arrive at the center before 9:30 am to avoid disruptions in the classroom routines. We will be concerned about your child if we do not hear from you.

Withdrawal

A written notice, 2 weeks in advance, is required by the center when a child is being withdrawn. Failure to notify will result in forfeiture of your one-week deposit.

Closing Due to Extreme Weather

Should severe weather or other conditions (i.e., snow, storms, floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, blizzards, loss of power, loss of water) prevent us from opening on time or at all, notification to the families will be announced on our Facebook page and all families will be notified by phone. Please note that we do not usually close for weather and as long as the center has water, heat and power, and the staff can safely travel to the center...we will remain open.

If it becomes necessary to close early, we will contact you or your emergency contacts as soon as possible. Your child's early pick-up is your responsibility to arrange.

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

General Procedure

Please do not drop-off your child prior to your contracted time. Parents are expected to accompany their children and sign them in using the Procure system.

Please do not pick up your child after your scheduled time. Please allow enough time to arrive, sign your child out, and leave by your contracted time. For families contracted to arrive at 6:30 or pick up at 5:30, please note that we are licensed from 6:30 am to 5:30 pm and cannot legally care for children outside of these times and families are not permitted inside of our facilities outside of our operating hours.

Parents are asked to drive with caution in the parking lot. Please be aware of other drivers and possible children.

All children must arrive prior to **9:30am** (excluding children only attending PM preschool). If you require a later drop-off time periodically to accommodate appointments, please give your child's classroom teacher as much notice as possible. Our classrooms thrive on consistency and routine within our schedules and drop-offs outside of normal hours are distracting and cause many children distress while taking the teachers attention off the group.

Only parents, guardians and people on your child's pickup list can pick up unless you have notified the center that another person will be picking up. If the person picking up is unfamiliar to the center staff they will be asked for a picture ID.

It is most often easiest on children to have a quick drop-off routine. Children thrive on routine and consistency. We recommend that drop offs happen quickly once you enter the classroom because children often find separation to be challenging and the less build up leading to the separation the less anxiety that children feel. All staff members are sensitive to the feelings that

occur during drop-off and they will do their best to create a post drop-off routine that will eventually allow your child to feel comfortable separating from you. You will be notified if your child does not calm down after a reasonable amount of time.

Authorized & Unauthorized Pick-up

Your child will only be released to you or those persons you have listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. If you want a person who is not identified as an Emergency and Release Contact to pick-up your child, you must notify us in advance, in writing. Your child will not be released without prior written authorization. The person picking up your child will be required to show a picture ID as verification. Please notify your pick-up person of our policy.

In order to safeguard your child we will need copies of any court ordered custody agreements. Without a custody agreement, we are not able to prevent the release of your child to a parent.

If a child has not been picked up after closing and we have not heard from you, attempts will be made to contact you, and the contacts listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. Provisions will be made for someone to stay with your child as long as possible, but if after 30 minutes we have not been able to reach you or a person listed as an Emergency and Release Contact, we will call the local child protective services agency.

Right to Refuse Child Release

We may refuse to release children if we have reasonable cause to suspect that any person picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way that may endanger the child. To protect your child, we may request that another adult listed as an Emergency and Release Contact pick-up the child or we may call the police to prevent potential harm to your child. Reoccurring situations may result in the release of your child from the program. Please note that all SLP staff are mandated reporters and are required to report all suspected child abuse and neglect to DCF.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

What to Bring

- **Infants:** 4 clean bottles, diapers & wipes, at least 2 changes of clothes per day, pacifier if needed, one crib sheet, and shoes or slippers. All bottles must be labeled. You may leave bottles at the center and we will wash and reuse them.
- **Toddlers:** At least two changes of clothes, or more per day if toilet training, diapers & wipes if needed, one crib sheet, blanket, water bottle and inside shoes or slippers.
- **Preschoolers:** One crib sheet, blanket, at least one full change of clothes, socks and shoes, water bottle and inside shoes or slippers.

Please label all items brought from home with your child's name (i.e., clothes, bottles, diapers, pacifiers, crib sheet, blanket, etc.) to prevent items from becoming misplaced or lost. We are not responsible for lost or damaged items. Bedding will be sent home weekly to be washed.

Please note that if center items are used, a \$5.00 charge will be added to parent accounts.

Upon enrollment each child will be assigned a “cubby.” Cubbies are labeled with your child’s name and located in your child’s classroom. Please check your child’s cubby on a daily basis for items that need to be taken home.

Toys from Home

We request that you do not allow your child to bring toys from home into the center unless they are part of a show-and-tell activity. Your child’s classroom will inform you of any show-and-tell activities taking place. We are not responsible for lost or damaged items from home.

NUTRITION

Foods Brought from Home

We request that you do not bring food from home into our center. For celebrations, you may provide a snack to share but we request one week’s notice. We also request that you please make an effort to choose a healthy snack for celebrations. Please note that we are a nut free facility. If your child has an allergy, please provide documentation from his or her doctor and we can provide an alternative food.

Food Prepared for or at the Center

Food prepared for or at the center will be properly planned, prepared and portioned according to the Child and Adult Care Food Program (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/care/>) and the state requirements for food service.

Food Allergies

If your child has a food allergy, you must notify us in writing so that we can make appropriate substitutions. The written notification must come from the child’s doctor .

Food allergies can be life threatening and each child with a food allergy should have an action plan for emergency care completed by the family physician.

Meal Time

At meal time the dining table is set with plates and flatware, and the food is placed in small bowls from which the children can help themselves. Everyone sits at the same table. Children are encouraged to serve themselves from food passed around each table. Good table manners are modeled and encouraged. Weekly menus are posted for viewing by parents/caregivers.

A caregiver who is trained in first-aid for choking is present at all meals.

Infant Feedings

Infant feedings follow these procedures:

- Infants will be held for bottle-feeding. Bottles will never be propped.
- Infants are fed “on cue” to the extent possible (at least every 4 hours and usually not more than hourly) and by a consistent caregiver/teacher.
- Breastfeeding is supported by providing a place for nursing mothers to feed their babies. Expressed breast milk may be brought from home if frozen or kept cold during transit.

Previously frozen, thawed breast milk must be used within 24 hours. Expressed milk must be clearly labeled with the child's name and the date the milk was expressed. Frozen breast milk must be dated and may be kept in the freezer for up to 3 months.

- Breast milk and formula brought from home must be dated and labeled with the child's name.
- Labels on all milk/formula containers should be resistant to loss of the name and date/time when washing and handling.
- Solid foods will only be introduced after a consultation with the child's family.

Children 24 Months and Older

- No child shall go more than 3 hours without a meal or snack being provided.
- Children are encouraged to self-feed to the extent that they have the skills. Children are encouraged, but not forced to eat a variety of foods.
- Round, firm foods that pose a choking hazard for children less than 4 years of age are not permitted. These foods include: hot dogs, whole grapes, raw carrots, pretzels, thick sun butters ,popcorn and hard candy.

HEALTH

Immunizations

Immunizations are required according to the current schedule recommended by the U.S. Public Health Services and the American Academy of Pediatrics, www.aap.org. Our state regulations regarding attendance of children who are not immunized due to religious or medical reasons are followed. Unimmunized children are excluded during outbreaks of vaccine preventable illness as directed by the state health department.

All caregivers, teachers, and staff are required to be current with all immunizations routinely recommended for adults by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Physicals

Routine physicals are required according to the current recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, www.aap.org. A copy of your child's physical should be received before but must be received no later than [30] days after your child begins the program. Families are responsible for assuring that their child's physicals are kept up-to-date and that a copy of the results of the child's health assessment is given to the program.

Illness

We understand that it is difficult for a family member to leave or miss work, but to protect other children; you may not bring a sick child to the center. The center has the right to refuse a child who appears ill. You will be called and asked to retrieve your child if your child exhibits any of the following symptoms. This is not an all-inclusive list. We will try to keep your child comfortable but he/she will be excluded from all activities until you arrive. Please see our health policy below:

Suzy's Little Peanuts prohibits the admittance of any children displaying the following symptoms:

- **Fever (100°f or higher) (in combination with another symptom)** child needs to be fever free for 24 hours **without** the aid of medication
- **Diarrhea** – That cannot be contained in the toilet or diaper, happens 2 or more times in a 24 hour period or combined with other symptoms.
- **Vomiting** – 2 or more times in 24 hours or combined with other symptoms.
- **Conjunctivitis**- Watery red eyes or continuing yellow/green eye discharge. Child may return when symptoms subside or child has on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- **Lice** – child needs to be treated and nits removed before return.
- **Pain or Excessive Fatigue**- of which the child complains and interferes with activities. Child may return when symptoms have passed.
- **Severe Coughing**- of which the child is having coughing fits or trouble breathing normally.
- **Open or Moist Cold Sore**- that cannot be covered or is not being treated.
- **A skin rash that has not been identified by a physician**- a note must remain on file for reoccurring non contagious rashes.
- **If your child is unable to participate in our programs activities they will be sent home.**

Children who have been ill may return when:

- They are free of fever, vomiting and diarrhea without the aid of any medication.
- They have been treated with the first dose of an antibiotic medication.
- They are able to participate comfortably in all usual activities.
- They are free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling (not related to teething) unless:
 - The child's physician signs a note stating that the child's condition is not contagious, and;
 - The involved areas can be covered by a bandage without seepage or drainage through the bandage.
- If a child had a reportable communicable disease, a physician's note stating that the child is no longer contagious and may return to our care is required.

Communicable Diseases

When an enrolled child or an employee of the center has a (suspected) reportable disease, it is our legal responsibility to notify the local Board of Health or Department of Public Health. We will take care to notify families about exposure so children can receive preventive treatments. Included among the reportable illnesses are the following:

- Bacterial Meningitis
- Botulism
- Chicken Pox
- Diphtheria
- Heamophilus Influenza (invasive)
- Measles (including suspect)
- Meningococcal Infection (invasive)
- Poliomyelitis (including suspect)
- Rabies (human only)

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- Rubella Congenital and Non-congenital (including suspect)
 - Tetanus (including suspect)
 - H1N1 Virus
 - Any cluster/outbreak of illness
 - Tuberculosis

Allergy Prevention

Families are expected to notify us regarding children's food and environmental allergies. Families of children with diagnosed allergies are required to provide us a letter detailing the child's symptoms, reactions, treatments and care from a doctor. A list of the children's allergies will be posted in the main area and kitchen. We are trained to familiarize ourselves and consult the list to avoid the potential of exposing children to substances to which they have known allergies.

Medications

All medications should be handed to a staff member with specific written instructions for administration. Medications should never be left in the child's cubby or with the child to administer on their own. Our staff will ensure that the medication is recorded along with the directions and proceed to dispense the medication as directed. All prescription and non prescription medications to be administered must be recorded on a medication form filled out by the parent.

- **Prescription medications** require a note signed by the family and a written order from the child's physician. The label on the medication meets this requirement. The medication must include your child's name, dosage, current date, frequency, and the name and phone number of the physician. All medications must be in the original container (you may request pharmacies to fill your prescription in two labeled bottles). Please specify the dosage and time(s) to be administered for each medication.
- **Non-prescription medications** require written permission and instructions signed by the family. The written permission must include your child's name, dosage, current date, frequency, and all medications must be in the original container. Non-prescription medication should not be administered for more than a 3-day period unless a written order by the physician is received. We are not able to administer doses of medications that are not indicated on the package.
- **Non-prescription topical ointments** (e.g., diaper cream or teething gel), sunscreen and insect repellent require a note signed by family, specifying frequency and dosage to be administered as well as the length of time the authorization is valid which cannot exceed 12 months.

SAFETY

Clothing

Please dress your child in practical clothing that allows for freedom of movement and is appropriate for the weather. Your child will be involved in a variety of activities including: painting, outdoor play, sand, water, and other sensory activities. Our playground is used as an extension of the center, and daily play happens outside whenever weather permits.

One particular aspect of concern is the risk associated with children's clothing that may become entangled with climbing or sliding equipment that could lead to choking or other serious harm. All drawstrings from children's clothes should be removed as a precaution.

Sandals and flip-flops are not appropriate for center play and make it difficult for your child to participate in some activities.

Extreme Weather and Outdoor Play

Please see our weather watch chart for specific details related to safe temperatures for outside play. Unless deemed unsafe via this chart, we are committed to outside play each day.

Injuries

Safety is a major concern in child care and so daily safety inspections are completed inside and outside the center area in order to prevent injuries. First aid will be administered by a trained caregiver in the event that your child sustains a minor injury (e.g., scraped knee). You will receive an incident report outlining the incident and course of action taken. If the injury produces any type of swelling or needs medical attention, you will be contacted immediately. Each classroom is equipped with a first aid kit meeting the state regulations.

In the event of a serious medical emergency, the child may be taken to the hospital immediately by ambulance, while we contact you or an emergency contact.

Biting

Biting is a normal stage of development that is common among infants and toddlers – and sometimes even among preschoolers. It is something that most young children will try at least once.

When biting happens, our response will be to care for and help the child who was bitten and to help the biter learn a more appropriate behavior. Our focus will not be on punishment for biting, but on effective behaviors that address the specific reason for biting.

Notes will be written to the family of the child who was bitten and the biter's family. We will work together with the families of each to keep them informed and to develop strategies for change.

Respectful Behavior

All children and families will be treated with respect and dignity. In return, we expect the same from all of our families. We will not tolerate hostile or aggressive behavior. If this occurs, we reserve the right to ask you to control your behavior or to remove your children from our care.

Smoking

The poisons in secondhand smoke are especially harmful to infants and young children's developing bodies, therefore the indoor and outdoor center environment and vehicles used by the center are non-smoking areas at all times. The use of tobacco in any form is prohibited on the center's premises.

Prohibited Substances

The use of alcohol or illegal drugs is prohibited on the center's premises. Possession of illegal substances or unauthorized potentially toxic substances is prohibited.

Any adult who appears to be inebriated, intoxicated, or otherwise under the influence of mind-altering or polluting substances is required to leave the premises immediately. We will report any situations of this nature to police and DCF as needed.

Dangerous Weapons

A dangerous weapon is a gun, knife, razor, or any other object, which by the manner it is used or intended to be used, is capable of inflicting bodily harm. Families, children, staff or guests (other than law enforcement officers) possessing a dangerous weapon will not be permitted onto the premises.

In cases that clearly involve a gun, or any other weapon on our premises, the police will be called and the individual(s) involved will be immediately removed from the premises. This policy applies to visible or concealed weapons.

Child Custody

Without a court document, both parents/guardians have equal rights to custody. We are legally bound to respect the wishes of the parent/guardian with legal custody based on a certified copy of the most recent court order, active restraining order, or court-ordered visitation schedule. We will not accept the responsibility of deciding which parent/guardian has legal custody where there is no court documentation.

EMERGENCIES

Lost or Missing Child

In the unlikely event that a child becomes lost or separated from a group, all available staff will search for the child. If the child is not located within 10 minutes, the family and the police will be notified and we will also notify state licensing.

Fire Safety

Our center is fully equipped with fire alarms and smoke detectors.

Our fire evacuation plan is reviewed with the children and staff on a monthly basis.

In the event your child needs to be transported due to a medical emergency, if no other authorized person can be contacted and the need for transportation is essential, an ambulance will be called for transportation. A proper escort will accompany and remain with the child until a family member or emergency contact arrives.

Suspected Child Abuse

We are required by law to report all observations of child abuse or neglect cases to the appropriate state authorities if we have reasonable cause to believe or suspect a child is suffering from abuse or neglect or is in danger of abuse or neglect, no matter where the abuse might have occurred. The child protective service agency will determine appropriate action and may conduct an investigation. It then becomes the role of the agency to determine if the report is substantiated and to work with the family to ensure the child's needs are met. Our center will cooperate fully with any investigation and will maintain confidentiality concerning any report of child abuse or neglect.

Child car seats

Employees cannot buckle children into car seats or install them into vehicles not owned or operated by Suzy's Little Peanuts. We are able to tell and show guardians or pick-up people how to install child car seats and how to buckle them and tighten the straps but cannot physically do it ourselves. Staff can install and fasten car seats when using SLP owned or operated vehicles to transport children on field trips.

Family Handbook Acknowledgement

Please sign this acknowledgement, detach it from the handbook, and return it to the center prior to enrollment.

This handbook may be updated from time-to-time, and notice will be provided as updates are implemented.

Thank you for your acknowledging the policies and procedures we have established for the safety and welfare of all children in our care. We look forward to getting to know you and your family.

I have received the **Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School Family Handbook**, and I have reviewed the family handbook with a member of the **Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School** staff. It is my responsibility to understand and familiarize myself the Family Handbook and to ask center management for clarification of any policy, procedure or information contained in the **Suzy's Little Peanuts Day School Family Handbook** that I do not understand.

Recipient Signature

Date

Center Staff Signature

Date

