

## TENDER HEARTS MISSION

We are a Christian child care facility that is a ministry of the Faith Temple Church of God. Here at Tender Hearts, the Bible is part of a wide-range curriculum that also includes academic programs that encourage social, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual growth. Tender Hearts Learning Center ("THLC") is committed to providing a safe, nurturing, Christian environment for your child. We strive to teach children lessons that will last a lifetime. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (*Proverbs 22:6*)

## STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

At Tender Hearts, our staff attends various training/work shops throughout the year to stay up to date on current practices in the Early Childhood Development field. Some of these events include topics such as: health & nutrition; safety for young children; and developmentally appropriate practices (DAP) in Early Childhood. Please also realize that all staff here are state-mandated advocates for the safety of young children. If abuse or neglect is suspected, it is our duty to make a report to the authorities.

In addition to training each year, every employee, before completion of the hiring process, must satisfy a variety of clearances set forth by the State of Michigan, Department of Human Services (DHS). These include the following:

- **Child abuse/neglect clearance** – Every employee must fill out a form and send to the State of Michigan. Clearance obtained ensures that no staff member has ever been accused of the abuse or neglect of a young child;
- **Medical clearance** – A regular physical is required by a doctor to make certain that each employee is of sound physical and mental health to be working with young children. In addition to a physical, a negative tuberculosis test is also required.
- **Fingerprinting** – Upon acceptance of employment, each employee will be fingerprinted using new technology called "Live Scan." This method actually scans each employee's fingerprints into a computer database, facilitating the background checking of all employees.
- **CPR/First Aid/Blood Borne Pathogen** – Current infant and child CPR/First Aid is required for all staff coming in contact with children. Blood Borne Pathogen training is also required of each staff member within the first few weeks of hire. This is to ensure that all bodily fluids are cleaned up and disposed of in the safest manner possible.

## CENTER HOURS, HOLIDAY CLOSINGS, SEVERE WEATHER

We are open from Monday through Friday from 5:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m., with the exception of the following holidays:

- \* Good Friday
- \* Memorial Day
- \* Independence Day

- \* Labor Day
- \* Thanksgiving Day and Friday following
- \* Christmas Day
- \* New Years' Day

Exceptions: If a holiday falls on a Saturday, we will close the preceding Friday. If a holiday falls on a Sunday, we will be closed on the following Monday.

We realize how important establishing a regular daycare routine is to you and to your child, we pledge to remain open at all times unless unforeseen occurrences prevent, i.e., power failure or severe ice or snow storm conditions. In the event of such severe weather conditions, resulting in school closings, we ask that you would please check your local news/weather stations that provide up-to-the-minute closing information for the Lamphere School District or Tender Hearts Learning Center.

If you wish to remove your child from the program, a two-week notice is required. If notice is not received, you will be billed for that two-week period.

### **TUITION, FEES, PAYMENTS**

There is a one-time, non-refundable registration fee of \$75 and an annual curriculum fee of \$50 for all children aged 3 and over. You will be charged for the week in advance upon registration. \* Fees are subject to change without notice.

Our facility provides for subsidized care through the Department of Human Services (FIA) if certain qualifications are met. A co-pay policy exists for any child not fully covered by state aid. Parents are responsible for any co-pays. If you are in doubt, please check with the Director regarding application. No refunds given for DSH.

#### Infants & Toddlers (6 weeks to 2-1/2 years)

Full-time registered children, from five (5) to nine (9) hours per day is a full-time registrant. A separate sheet will describe the fees and hours.

Part-time registered children, from one (1) to five (5) hours per day is a part-time registrant. A separate sheet will be included in your registration packet describing fees and hours.

#### Preschool (2-1/2 years to 5 years of age, fully potty trained)

Full-time registered children from five (5) to nine (9) hours per day is a full-time registrant. Fees for a full-time, potty-trained child is located on the separate sheet that is included in the registration packet.

Part-time registered children from one (1) to five (5) hours per day is a part-time registrant. Fees for part-time, preschool aged children, fully potty trained, are included on the separate sheet designed to be part of the registration packet.

Care needed beyond nine (9) hours per day will be billed at \$5 per hour for each additional hour.

#### Latch Key/School Age Children

In the event you wish to register your school-aged child for Latch Key, you will be billed at \$5 per hour.

#### Late Pick Up Past 6:00 PM

In the event of a late pick up past 6:00 PM, you will be billed an additional \$1 per minute, payable at the time of pick up.

Please be reminded that we hire staff based upon the enrollment of students on a per day/per week basis. If for some reason your child will be absent, please notify the Center at once for such things as illness, or unplanned absences. Failure to give the Center at least 24 hours notice of these changes will result in you being charged the regular, full rate. If the family takes an unexpected vacation, please notify the Center at least two weeks in advance of such change, as this affects our scheduling procedure and available care personnel. Failure to do so will result in you being billed for the staff required to provide your child the care you have contracted for, even in your child's absence.

Tuition may be paid by cash, check, or money order. All payments in this form must be made out for the exact amount billed as the office cannot make change or issue a credit.

Each week your family's tuition will be billed on Friday and is due and payable on the following Monday. Any tuition payments received after the Center closes on Monday evening at 6:00 p.m. will need to include a \$30 late fee. Any tuition payment not received by Wednesday evening will begin to accrue an additional \$5 late fee for each day past due. A charge of \$30 will be assessed on any payment made by check that is returned, regardless of the reason. If three (3) returned checks are received from you, payment must be made in cash, money order, or bank check. Failure to do so will result in the appropriate legal action. Accounts that become delinquent more than one week must be brought current prior to your child's being permitted to return to the Center. No verbal additions, amendments, or understandings between a parent and the Director will be honored by the Center's billing office. Any changes to stated policy between a parent and the Director must be in writing, signed and dated by both parties, and become a part of your child's file.

Parents working part-time must submit a request to the Director/billing office for a rate adjustment.

\*\*Please note: Any time you arrive after 6:00 p.m. to pick up your children, you will be charged a \$1 fee per minute, per child. This fee is due and payable upon arrival.

## TAX CREDIT

Most families should qualify for a tax credit under the provisions of the Federal Tax Reform Bill of 1976. You will receive a statement in January for use in income tax reporting.

## HEALTH

In accordance with State licensing regulations, we must have a doctor's complete physical exam along with an up-to-date immunization record on file for each child enrolled. Physicals are to be updated yearly by your child's physician. Please be reminded that whenever your child receives an immunization, remember to provide updated information for the Center's records as well as those kept at home.

Emergency Information. An emergency card must be filled out for each child enrolled with the Center, containing as much information as possible. Parents/guardians **MUST** notify the Center, in writing, of any change of employment, residency, telephone numbers, or insurance coverages.

Sick Children. We know there are times when you will question whether you should bring your children to school. When that occurs, please refer to the following guidelines:

1. Temperature more than 100 degrees (taken under the arm)
2. Diarrhea or vomiting;
3. An undiagnosed rash;
4. Sore or discharging eyes and ears, or profuse discharge;
5. Persistent coughing;
6. Lethargy that causes a child to be unable to participate in all activities.

We will use the same guidelines as above in determining whether or not to send a child home.

Your child must be symptom free for 24 hours before he/she may return to the Center.

## INJURIES

Our facility is designed to minimize all injury to small children. If your child does become injured on our premises, our staff will administer proper first aid. If the injury sustained is of an urgent nature, a call will immediately be made to 911 for emergency assistance. You will be notified by telephone as soon as possible. Upon your arrival to the Center, you will receive a report concerning all injuries.

## MEDICATIONS

Administration of all medications. We understand that there may be times when it will be necessary for us to administer medications to your child while in our care. It is our policy that over the counter medications such as Tylenol, Motrin, etc., can only be given to your child by a staff member if a medication form is filed out, including the child's name, amount of medication to be given, the time, and the dates. This medication must be kept in its original container marked with the correct dosage for your child's age/weight. All doctor-prescribed medication provided to the Center must be in the original pharmacy container bearing the child's name on the label, the prescribing doctor's name and phone number, the name of the medication, and the dosage on the label. \*\*Unless requested otherwise by the parent, all medications will be stored in the refrigerator.

## ALLERGIES

Please advise the Center and/or Director of any allergies or sensitivities your child may have, especially to foods or latex. We will attempt to accommodate your child's condition to the best of our ability once notified. Written notification must be in your child's file regarding any allergy.

Peanut-free Environment. We are a nut-free, peanut-free facility. Please do not send peanut snacks with your child, or any form of peanut butter, candy, etc., due to the severe reactions of some of our students.

## FOOD AND SNACK SERVICE

Children on solid foods. To remain in compliance with State regulations, Tender Hearts serves breakfast each morning at 8:30 a.m., followed by a morning snack at 10:00 a.m. Parents are required to provide a nutritious lunch for their child on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. The Center will provide pizza on Tuesday, and on Thursday, the Center will provide lunch from a local fast food restaurant or food prepared in our kitchen. The Center will also provide an afternoon snack at 2:30 p.m.

Menu calendar. Each month you will be given a calendar showing the month's breakfast and snack schedule. We will also post a copy of the calendar at the "sign-in" area for your review should you misplace your copy. Some of our snacks may have unusual names, so please feel free to ask questions if you are uncertain as to what the food item may be.

Infants. Tender Hearts will provide whole milk, infant appropriate cereal and jar food. Parents **must** provide bottles, labeled with your child's name, date, and the contents of the bottle. Food, breast milk, and formula will be warmed in a crock pot to ensure safe temperatures.

Birthdays. Please feel free to send in a special treat for your child's birthday. We understand that you wish these treats to be fun, but please keep in mind the nutritional

value. Also, because some of our children may have food allergies, please give the Center a one-day notice before bringing in snacks to share so that our children with allergies may make other arrangements. PLEASE BE REMINDED ----- WE ARE A PEANUT-FREE FACILITY.

### **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE POLICY**

Our Center has a very full and exciting schedule. We ask that you try to establish regular arrival and departure times. When your child arrives at school each day, it will make the transition from home to school much easier if they know what to expect when they arrive. Coming in at the same time each day will reinforce your child's need for structure.

Because of State regulations for a staff/child enrollment ratio, we will not be able to give credit for any days missed by your child without at least a two-week notice.

Arrival. All children must be brought inside the Center by a parent or guardian; it is not sufficient to watch your child enter the facility from your car. All children must be accounted for by signing in by the parent/guardian. A "sign-in/sign-out" sheet is available outside of your child's classroom. Please indicate the name of the child, the name of the responsible party bringing the child to school, and the time the child is brought in, or removed from the facility. Please check with your child's primary caregiver before leaving to see whether there are any special notes for the day.

Adjustments for new students. Parents, if you see that your child has any difficulties in adjusting to being dropped off, we request that you do not stay longer than a few minutes to reassure your child, say good-bye, give your hugs and kisses. Prolonged good-byes make it much harder for your child to make this adjustment.

Departures. Children enrolled at the Center will **only be released** to an adult appearing on that child's emergency card bearing a valid driver's license or State identification card of the same address as the registered child. Please do not send siblings in alone to gather your child. State regulations prohibit the picking up of minor children by siblings less than 16 years of age, and such teen must have valid picture identification before we will permit the release of our enrollee. If you must make changes to your child's responsible party list, changes in status must be made to your child's emergency card when such change occurs. The person picking up your child must sign out for your child, and check with your child's primary caregiver/teacher regarding any notes for the day.

Child Custody. In the case of divorced or single-parent situations, copies of Court Orders must be left at the Center outlining which party(ies) are legally authorized to pick up your child. We do not have the legal authority to refuse a child to a parent who has joint legal custody, with parenting time. Sole legal custody Orders must be provided and, in such cases, refusal to release a child can be made, and appropriate actions taken.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Positive reinforcement and redirection are the acceptable forms of behavior management practiced at Tender Hearts. Behavior expectations are based upon the child's development level. Center rules are age appropriate, clearly stated, and reinforced on a consistent basis. There will be no physical punishment or threats of physical punishment administered. State law prohibits staff from engaging in the following:

- ❖ Hitting, spanking, shaking, biting, pinching, or inflicting other forms of corporal punishment;
- ❖ Restricting a child's movement by binding or tying them;
- ❖ Inflicting mental or emotional punishment such as humiliating, shaming, or threatening a child;
- ❖ Depriving a child of meals, snacks, rest, or toilet use;
- ❖ Confining a child to an enclosed area, i.e., a closet, locked room, box, or similar cubicle.

## **CURRICULUM**

We believe that children learn best through "hands-on", exploratory learning, engaging all of the five senses. Teachers create an environment through learning centers where children are able to think creatively, learn basic concepts, and emerging literacy. Some of the centers your child will experience are: (i) Bible time; (ii) music appreciation; (iii) dramatic play; and (iv) science exploration. Our curriculum is a combination of theme-based and child interest. Each week our teachers make lesson plans covering a wide variety of concepts and ideas for a theme. For children in preschool, the curriculum will be taught September through June, somewhat mimicking the school system. Our Center uses a mixture of A Beka ( a Christian-based curriculum) and other age appropriate materials.

## **OUTDOOR PLAY**

The children will be taken outside whenever the weather permits. Children should come dressed appropriately for outdoor play. No "good" clothes, please. Please remember that if your child is enrolled, he/she should be well enough to play outside. We cannot make special arrangements for children to remain indoors during outside play time. The State of Michigan permits outdoor play as long as the weather is between 20 degrees Fahrenheit and 90 degrees Fahrenheit. In case of inclement weather, we will avail ourselves of the gymnasium during play time.

## **NAP TIME**

The State of Michigan requires each child to rest on a mat or cot for at least one (1) hour during the afternoon. The Center's rest time begins between 12:00 – 12:30 P.M. and lasts until between 2:00 --- 2:30 P.M.

## **PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

ALL personal belongings including clothing, blankets, shoes, socks, sweaters, coats, etc., must be permanently labeled with your child's name. Each child must have a full set of clothing, including socks, undergarments, and shoes at the Center to be used in case of an accident. Please check frequently to make sure your child's extra clothing is clean, size appropriate, and seasonally appropriate.

Any unmarked or unclaimed clothing or other belongings will be kept in a "Lost and Found" box for approximately one (1) month, then donated. You should make a point to check the box regularly for any lost items.

## **POTTY TRAINING**

Between the ages of 18 and 30 months, many children begin to take an interest in potty training. This is an exciting time for everyone involved, but can also be a bit stressful. We will be happy to work with you and your child in making the transition from diapers to potty as easy and stress free as possible.

Before jumping "head-first" into this adventure, we ask that you first let us know what is going on at home and what methods you are using there. Keeping us involved in the journey will make the entire process much easier. We also ask that you provide a written description of the method you would like us to follow.

Since your child will be learning to pull up and down his/her own clothing for the first time, we ask that you dress your child in "potty friendly" attire, such as sweat pants. At this time we request that no overalls, button-fly pants, or onesies be provided, as they are quite a challenge to little fingers.

## **VISITORS**

You are welcome to drop into the Center at any time. We ask that you first check in at the office before stopping into your child's classroom. For those of you wishing to do so, please keep in mind that your child will be thrilled to see you; however, to other children in the room you are a "stranger" and may cause some anxiety.

Please also keep in mind that while you are at the Center, you will be responsible for all feeding and changing duties your child requires. Many children become upset when a loved one is nearby and a caregiver/teacher attempts to step in to provide the necessary care.

If you are still nursing and have come by to nurse your child, we will have a room available for you to sit, but please be aware that there may be foot traffic in and out.

Should you have any matter that you would like to discuss regarding your child, the schedule, curriculum, etc., please see the Director. If the matter requires your child's teacher to participate in the discussion, the Director will summon the teacher and arrange for a substitute in the class. This is important as your child's teacher has a responsibility to all the other children in the classroom and we wish to avoid any possible mishap due to the teacher's attention being drawn away from the children during your discussion.

### **WITHDRAWAL AND DISMISSAL POLICIES**

Notice. You may withdraw your child at any time from the Center with a two-week (2) advance, written notice. If a child is withdrawn without notice, parents will be expected to pay the equivalent of two (2) weeks' tuition. Your signature on the separate form, acknowledging receipt of this booklet, policies and procedures, further acknowledges acceptance of this policy.

Behavior Problems. From time to time there may be a need to meet with parents to discuss inappropriate, unmanageable, or overly aggressive behavior on the part of the child. Should this occur, the following procedures will be implemented:

1. A meeting between Center representatives and the parents will be arranged. During this meeting a written plan of action to eliminate the behavior will be constructed. This plan will include actions to be taken at the Center as well as at home, including an established time frame in which improvement to the behavior should be realized;
2. After the established time has passed, another meeting will be scheduled with the parents to evaluate the child's progress. If no progress is realized, parents may be asked to withdraw their child from the facility.

**\*\*Please Note:** Parents unwilling to meet with Center representatives, or parents who are unwilling to take appropriate action to solve a problem, will be asked to withdraw their child immediately. The Center operates under State regulations regarding the care of children at certain ages, i.e., no blankets in cribs with children under the age of one (1) year old. Please check with the Director regarding specific regulations as they pertain to your child. It will assist us in providing your child with a safe and secure atmosphere if these regulations are implemented at home as well.

We sincerely hope that this booklet answers any questions you may have as to our policies, procedures, and curriculum. If we have omitted anything of concern to you, please feel free to speak to the Director, or drop us a line. Thank you for choosing Tender Hearts Learning Center for your most precious "little person."

3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. (10/01/2007)