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LUTHERAN HOME  
CHILDREN'S CENTER

## CHILDREN'S CENTER HANDBOOK

## OUR MISSION

It is our mission to provide a safe, nurturing and fun environment and to encourage physical, emotional, intellectual, social and spiritual growth for our children and our families. We strive to achieve this goal by embracing the core Lutheran Home values of compassion, commitment, collaboration and creativity.



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CHILDREN'S CENTER



Dear Families,

We would like to welcome you and your child to the Lutheran Home Children's Center (LHCC). As a quality childcare program, we stress the importance of a positive self-image for children. It is our mission to provide a safe, nurturing and fun environment and to encourage physical, emotional, intellectual, social and spiritual growth for our children and our families. We strive to achieve this goal by embracing the core Lutheran Home values of compassion, commitment, collaboration and creativity.

The Lutheran Home Children's Center is licensed by the State of Wisconsin and is a participant in the YoungStar quality rating and improvement system.

As early childhood educators, we recognize that a program's success is dependent on close relationships between children, staff, and parents. For this reason, we encourage parental participation in all areas of our program. We believe that by working together we will be able to provide the best possible experience for your child.

### **Our Philosophy**

It is the belief of the Lutheran Home Children's Center that children need warmth and guidance in a learning environment. It is this kind of support we wish to provide to both the family and the child for the betterment of our community. We strive to strengthen the family by reducing stresses at home and work by providing quality childcare that recognizes the child as a unique individual created by God. We believe quality childcare supplements, not substitutes, for the care given at home by the child's parents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Emily Waller'.

Emily Waller  
Administrator- Child Care Center



## I. **General Information**

### Eligibility

Children are admitted to Lutheran Home Children's Center (LHCC) regardless of race, color, creed, handicap, sex, sexual preference, or national origin. The center is licensed by the State of Wisconsin's Department of Children and Families to serve children aged six weeks through 4 years 11 months.

Employees of the Lutheran Home and Harwood Place (LHHP) will have first priority for enrollment. When employees' needs are met and openings are available, they are filled from the completed wait list applications that have been turned in.

Children with special needs will be accepted into the center if it is determined that their needs can be sufficiently met. LHCC will make any reasonable accommodations to ensure inclusion of all children. We are happy to collaborate with any therapists or consultants regarding the individual needs of the child.

### Hours of Operation

LHCC is open from 6:00AM - 5:45PM Monday through Friday. It is closed on the following nationally recognized holidays including but not limited to: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day. When a holiday falls on a Saturday, the center will be closed and observe Friday as the holiday. When the holiday falls on a Sunday, the center will be closed and observed the following Monday as the holiday. We also reserve the right to close for two additional days for employee professional development days upon the center's discretion. A 30-day notice will be given.

### Fees

Fees vary according to the classroom your child is in and enrolled days per week. See our rates sheet for more information and the current rates.

LHHP staff are able to register their children at the employee rate while employed at LHHP. Fees will be adjusted if employment is terminated.

You will be billed for your weekly rate, regardless of whether or not your child is in attendance. There is no trading of unused scheduled days. You are able to add days with written permission from the administrator on a first come, first serve basis and when availability permits.

No credit will be issued if LHCC is closed due to severe weather or other emergency.

All fees are subject to change with advanced written notice. Our rates typically increase annually beginning with the New Year.

*Late Payment & Other Fees:* Families are required to pay their weekly tuition one week in advance. Tuition must be paid no later than Friday of the week prior, or we reserve the right to suspend care.



- A \$25 fee for late payment will be assessed if payment is not received on time
- A \$25 fee for returned checks will be implemented

*Late Pick Up:* Parents must notify the center by phone in advance if they will be more than a half hour late in picking up their child from their scheduled time, or if they will be picking up any time after the center closes at 5:45 PM. The late pick-up fee after 5:45 PM is \$15.00/15 minutes/child.

### Billing

Parents will be made aware of their child's weekly rate when they enroll with LHCC. Weekly fees are due the Friday prior to each week of service and the rate remains the same until a child is moved to another age group's classroom. For this reason, bills are not sent out.

*Wisconsin Child Care Assistance Program:* If you qualify for state funded financial assistance, SHARES, the Lutheran Home provider number is: 2000563832/001

For families under the SHARES program, your tuition for the entire month will be due at the beginning of that month. Milwaukee County deposits money on the first of every month. It is the parent's responsibility to pay that month's tuition by the fifth of the month. Please understand that you *will* be charged a co-payment, if one is applicable. If families must pay a co-payment, these fees would be subject to the weekly pre-pay schedule regardless of when Milwaukee County funds are deposited. You will also be charged the co-pay if your child is absent during his weekly scheduled days. Co-pays are due no later than the Friday before the following week.

Speak to the LHCC administrator or the Lutheran Home Business Office with any billing questions.

### Parking – Drop Off & Pick Up

The LHCC has parking spots dedicated to pick-up and drop-off time. Be mindful of others and only park in these spots if you will be in and out within 10 minutes

For purposes of safety, children must be left in the care of an adult at all times. If classrooms are outside during drop off or pick up times, parents are required to walk the children down to the playground. *Children may not come to or leave the playground unsupervised.* When picking up or dropping off your child, it is the responsibility of the parent to visually and verbally communicate with the teacher that your child is arriving or departing for the day. Children are to be brought to the center at the scheduled time specified by the parent upon enrollment. *If the child is to be arriving at an earlier or later time than scheduled, or is not attending on a scheduled day, the parent should call or email the center to inform the staff.*

## II. Registration Information

### Scheduling Options

Part-Time: Children are considered enrolled as part-time when they attend 2-3 days per week. These days will be a set schedule and cannot be changed without permission from the administrator.

Full-Time: Children are considered enrolled as full-time when they attend 4-5 days per week. Again, these dates will be a set schedule and cannot be changed without permission from the administrator. Please note that regardless of the choice of the number of days (whether it be 4 or 5), LHCC will bill for 5 days.

### Applications

Applications for enrollment with LHCC are available on our website. You may also request an application from the administrator.

There is a \$100 enrollment fee per child when enrolling. When offered an enrollment spot, the family has one week to commit to the spot. Once the enrollment fee is received, a spot will be held.

The application itself will place you on LHCC's waitlist. Please be advised, enrollment is based on a first come, first serve basis and priority is given to LHHP staff as well as currently enrolled families enrolling additional child(ren). The application is good for one year. Once the application has been on file for a year, the application is considered void, and it will be the responsibility of the interested party to follow up with LHCC to maintain that application on the waitlist.

### Application Processing Priorities

Though priority is given to families with multiple children, entering an application for an additional child *does not* guarantee a space will be available. As stated previously, it is based on availability of the classroom at that time. Additionally, if your childcare account is past due and there is no agreement for payment on file, your application will not be processed.

### Acceptance Notification

Parents will be notified via email or phone by the administrator regarding their acceptance and scheduling status. Parents are given one week to decide if they would like to follow through with enrollment at LHCC. If parents proceed with enrollment at LHCC, they must submit the enrollment fee within that one-week timeframe

### Schedule Changes

Once enrolled with LHCC, parents must give a two week notice if they would like to reduce time. If parents do not give the two-week required notice, LHCC reserves the right to bill for those two weeks. Similarly, families are welcome to add time through

communication with the administrator. Please note there is no guaranteed ability to add time. The administrator will then notify you if the changes have been approved and when they take effect. If your child is able to increase their attendance, a new "acceptance" page, from the LHCC agreement form, must be signed.

Families have the option to reduce care for a maximum of 12 weeks each year during the summer or while on maternity leave. Schedules may be reduced to a minimum of 3 days per week with a hold on their regular schedule. If you choose to reduce your child's schedule to less than 3 days per week, their spot will no longer be on hold.

### **III. Attendance and Scheduling**

#### Arrival & Departure

LHCC families must enter through our secured childcare entrance using our code or doorbell. Families may share the code only with those persons identified on their child's authorized pick-up list. Any unfamiliar family or person picking up the child (including those on the authorized pick-up list) will be required to show picture identification. If someone will be picking up your child that is not on your authorized pick-up list, it is the parent's responsibility to provide the administrator with the individual's information.

LHCC will follow court orders and legal documents for pick up procedures when parental custody is in question. These documents must be on file with LHCC to ensure proper follow-through and safety for your child.

If your child will not be in attendance on a scheduled day at the center (due to illness, emergency, etc.), it is the responsibility of the parent to notify the center of this absence as soon as possible. If your child has not arrived within two hours of their regularly scheduled time and we have not heard from you, we will contact you to determine your child's attendance status for that day. Likewise, if you will be picking up your child more than 30 minutes later than their regularly scheduled time, it is the responsibility of the parent to notify the center. If your child will be absent due to an upcoming vacation, it is the parent's responsibility to notify the center two weeks in advance.

LHCC is responsible for a child from the time the child is signed in by the parent or authorized person to the time the child is signed out by the parent or authorized person.

It is the responsibility of the parent to apply sunscreen to their child during the warmer months before arriving to LHCC or upon arrival. LHCC will reapply sunscreen throughout the day.

When dropping a child off or picking a child up, families should only enter the classroom assigned to their child(ren).

As a reminder, there is a \$15.00 charge per child for each 15-minute increment that a child is picked up after the 5:45 PM closing time.

### Vacation & Illness

No vacation credits will be granted. In an extenuating circumstance (long-term illness, surgery, etc.), sick credits may be granted at the discretion of LHCC.

### Extra Days

Families can request to add days to a child's regularly scheduled days. Permission to add days to a child's regular schedule will be granted from the administrator. It is recommended that such requests are made at least one day in advance. While we are happy to accommodate when our scheduling allows, we cannot guarantee it. Please make sure you have received approval from the administrator before dropping your child off for the day. Extra days will be billed at the same rate as the regularly scheduled rate. While you are able to add days to your child's schedule, you may not "swap" days of care.

### Center Closing

Typically, our center does not close due to severe weather, however should a weather emergency arise where the safety of the children or staff is at risk, LHCC reserves the right to close.

### Cancellation

If you wish to cancel enrollment, you must notify the administrator via email within a minimum of two weeks prior to the date of cancellation. If parents do not give the two-week required notice, LHCC reserves the right to bill for those two weeks.

### Discharge/Suspension

LHCC reserves the right to give written notice of cancellation or suspension of enrollment of a child for any of the following reasons:

1. Non-payment or excessive late payment fees
2. Non-compliance with the policies and procedures as outlined in the handbook
3. A child has special needs that cannot be met or behavior challenges that put other children or teachers at risk or chronic disruption to the classroom
4. Physical or verbal abuse of staff or children by a child or parent
5. A child is not in attendance for 1 week of time or longer without notification
6. Neglecting to fill out and return required forms in a timely manner

## **IV. Program Description**

### Staffing

Our administrator and program manager oversee the center. This includes training lead teachers, ensuring adequate staffing for each classroom and providing ongoing leadership opportunities with developing curriculum and assessment.

A certified lead teacher plans and coordinates programming for each room. Each lead teacher adheres to LHCC policy development and is involved in all issues and concerns that encompass the childcare experience.

The lead teacher works full time maintaining daily responsibility for their classroom.



Assistant Teachers who are qualified to provide additional help with duties in a classroom make up a well-rounded classroom experience. Staff training is initiated by the program manager with the oversight of the program administrator. All Staff are CPR/AED certified and are engaged in the continual learning of early childhood classes, completing continuing education requirements as well as ongoing in-service training.

LHCC is also a training site for student teachers, students looking for field experience and students seeking volunteer credit opportunities. Students are not considered as part of our staff-to-child ratios.

### Curriculum

At LHCC we believe in the importance of curiosity and play as a major motivator for how children learn. Each teacher focuses their attention on the experience of play by providing a relatable definition for a child's actions; with a focus on providing overall self-awareness. During large group play, children learn healthy boundaries with other children and the adults who care for them. This includes appropriate response to difficult situations, healthy engagement and the acceptance of unexpected outcomes.

Each lesson plan is created with a structure tailored to a child's interest, cognitive capability and age. In addition, teachers create their lesson plans based on the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards (WMELS). Using WMELS, LHCC focuses on health and physical development, social and emotional development, language development and communication, approaches to learning, and cognition and general knowledge. A holistic approach is used that encompasses teacher guided, child initiated, space experienced, and material implemented planning. This daily routine provides a meaningful creative structure that progresses with a child's development.

*Intergenerational Programming:* The children have regular activities with the residents, whom they refer to as "grand friends" of the Lutheran Home. They are encouraged, but not required to participate in intergenerational programs as a part of their experience at the childcare center. Activities are co-planned by the teachers, recreation therapists and program coordinators, and are developmentally appropriate for all.

### Documentation, Assessment, Screening & Child Files

LHCC is a participant in the YoungStar childcare quality rating and improvement system. YoungStar guidelines as well as Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards are used as an accurate reference point for how each classroom is organized and planned. This provides a platform that guides each classroom's planning with a focus of learning by play, individualized to each child.

In an effort to assist in capturing each child's developmental growth and meet each child where they're at, LHCC will assess by using the Ages & Stages Questionnaire. Documentation for each child's progress in the infant, toddler and preschool classrooms will be established on an ongoing basis. Teachers will compile each child's progress regularly by observing all facets of development while at LHCC. In addition,

photos of children engaging in these activities may be included if a media release is on file.

You can find information about your child's progress and development in their child files or at the request of any one of our childcare teachers. The opportunity for a more in-depth outline will be communicated at parent teacher conferences twice a year. Families are always encouraged to engage in these meetings in an effort to collaborate with LHCC to better assist in the growth and individualized care of your child.

#### Approach to Traditions

Each year brings with it opportunities to acknowledge holidays and special seasons in a child's life. Among these celebrations, include religious holidays and holiday traditions. LHCC will celebrate these traditions while being respectful of family traditions and beliefs, encouraging the celebration and diversity of each child.

#### Approach to Spirituality

At LHCC, we respect spiritual diversity. As a Lutheran organization, faith and spirituality may be part of your child's curriculum.

#### Cultural Diversity

LHCC celebrates diversity and engages it as an opportunity of growth and acceptance for each other's differences. Some guiding principles are:

- A culturally diverse curriculum helps to develop identity and attitudes about others.
- Interacting daily with others different than themselves.
- Helping to recognize biases and stereotypes in themselves and others.

#### Becoming Involved in your Child's Curriculum

LHCC encourages the involvement of each family in their child's growth, learning experience and celebrations. LHCC is the extension of their daily lives and the beginning of your child's development and with your ongoing engagement and support can continue to provide the tools needed to make the experience at LHCC successful for both you and your child.

## **V. Classroom Routines & Procedures**

#### Preparing for the First Day

It is recommended that you visit your child's classroom, with your child, prior to their first day at LHCC. This is a great opportunity for you and your child to familiarize yourselves with the classroom as well as meet the teachers and other children. The lead teacher in your child's classroom may meet with you for an intake conference to gather information about the child.

Here is a list of items to label and bring with you on your child's first day with LHCC (a complete list is provided within the enrollment packet):

- An acceptable supply of disposable diapers and diaper wipes, if applicable
- A change of season-appropriate clothing
- A blanket for napping
- Outdoor clothing (including coat, snow pants, hat, mittens and boots during the colder months)
- Swimsuit & towel (during the summer months)
- Cloth diapers with wipes as well as an independent diaper pail for your child, if applicable
- Ointment, if applicable

### Meals

Our nutrition guidelines and snack/lunch procedures are based on state licensing regulations and USDA guidelines. On a daily basis, we provide breakfast, lunch and snacks to the children at LHCC. If your child requires special dietary regulations, it is the parent's responsibility to provide those meals for your child.

State licensing regulations require that children who eat lunch at childcare centers must be provided with food in each of the following categories:

- Protein source, such as meat, poultry, eggs, etc.
- Two servings of vegetables, or one vegetable and one fruit, or two servings of fruit
- Cereal or whole-grain or enriched bread products
- Grade A Vitamin D milk for children between 1-2 years of age (those not on formula or breast milk), 1% milk for children over 2 years of age (unless the parent requests whole milk). The center will provide both types of milk (1% & whole). If your child is unable to drink cow's milk, you must supply an alternative milk (i.e. soy milk, lactose-free milk)

Children are encouraged, but not forced, to eat snacks or lunches. At no time are foods used as threats or bribes, per our licensing requirements.

Mealtimes typically go as follows:

- Breakfast – 7:00 AM
- AM Snack – 9:00-9:30 AM
- Lunch – 11:30 AM -12:30 PM
- PM Snack – 3:00-3:30 PM

For children aged 2 and older: if you would prefer that your child eat breakfast at the center, be sure to have them arrive prior to 7:10 AM, as this is when breakfast service ends. If arriving after 7:10 AM, your child will not be able to participate in breakfast service. Please note lunches are typically served between 11:30 AM -12:30 PM. Please be sure to notify your child's teacher if lunch will not be needed for your child on any

given day. No lunches will be served after 12:30 PM, except in infant programs, as those children are fed on their own individual schedules. We provide milk for lunches and milk or water for all snacks. Tap water is offered to children throughout the day.

Staff will wash their hands before handling foods. Children will also be assisted in washing their hands before and after eating. During meals, face cloths will be provided.

Parents must provide food, formula and a supply of bottles/nipples from home for their children in the infant room. Teachers will permanently label each item with your child's name – please do not take the label off. The baby food will be served at room temperature (or warmed, if requested by the parent). No solid food or juice will be served to a child less than 6 months of age without instructions from a health care provider and family permission.

According to licensing requirements, "formula that is prepared by the center is of the commercial, iron-enriched type and mixed according to the manufacturer's directions." If your child is formula fed, please be sure to bring enough pre-mixed bottles for your child's consumption during the day and a small can of ready-to-feed formula to be stored at LHCC for your child for emergency use.

If you are breastfeeding your child, please provide an ample supply of bottled breast milk to last through each day of your child's enrollment. Bottles must be pre-made and stored in the classroom refrigerators. Please leave at least two servings of breast milk in our freezer to be used on an emergency basis. For stored breast milk in our freezer, we ask that parents freeze it flat and label with name, date and the amount. Mothers may also breastfeed their child in any area of the center.

As part of the application process, parents give LHCC permission to post children's allergies, medical conditions and any parent special requests. If your child has special dietary needs, you may want to send along snacks for your child if the snacks we serve do not meet those needs. If your child is on a special diet and/or must eat at specific times, be sure to notify your child's teacher.

#### Birthdays & Other Celebrations

There are various special occasions in a child's life and some families enjoy bringing in treats to celebrate these occasions. Parents are welcome to bring in special treats, but we ask that you inquire about any food allergies in your child's classroom. As part of the application process, parents will be asked to sign a permission form for their child to take part in eating a special treat, if it is brought in on any given day.

#### Food Allergy Management Plan

LHCC has children enrolled with various allergies to foods. Allergic reactions can vary from minor to life threatening. To avoid allergic reactions to food, LHCC has adopted these practices:

- 1) All families are asked to give LHCC information on any food allergies that their child has. The information is then posted in the classroom. Families are required to complete a Health History and Emergency Care Plan form so the staff working with your child can be alerted as to the allergy and specific action to take if there was an allergic reaction.
- 2) Allergic reactions, specifically to peanuts and tree nuts, can cause life-threatening (anaphylactic) reactions for individuals. Children with these reactions to foods must have an un-expired Epi-pen at the center at all times. Children with these reactions will not be allowed to be left at the center at any time without an un-expired Epi-pen. The policy of LHCC is to not serve any product containing nuts in any of our snacks based on whether or not there are children in our care with these allergies. If so, no snacks with nut products will be served.
- 3) Parents are asked to provide their own snacks or meals for their child when none of the LHCC provided snacks or meals meet the individual health needs of that child.
- 4) Food preparation tables and counters are washed and sanitized prior to preparing and eating food.
- 5) Events such as family potlucks that have foods which are not supplied by the center are not monitored by LHCC staff for allergens. Parents are responsible for monitoring foods eaten by their children at these events.

#### Diapering & Toileting

Per Accreditation 5.A.08:10 staff use only commercially available disposable diapers or pull-ups unless the child has a medical reason that does not permit their use (The health provider documents the medical reason).

- For children who require cloth diapers, the diaper has an absorbent inner lining completely contained within an outer covering made of waterproof material that prevents the escape of bodily waste. Both the diaper and the outer covering are changed as a unit (Plastic pants do not meet health and safety standards for group care.). Cloth diapers cannot be rinsed by staff, as state health codes prohibit rinsing diapers in public toilets. They will be placed in a plastic bag and put in your child's Individual diaper pail. These must be taken home on a daily basis.

Parents are responsible for ensuring an adequate supply of diapers is provided to LHCC. LHCC is not liable for any lost, stolen or missing cloth diapers. Parents must also provide an individual diaper pail with liner for cloth diapers.

Staff will wash their hands before and after diapering each child. Children are changed as needed and checked every 2 hours. If you want staff to provide diapering ointment, you must label the ointment with your child's name. You must also sign off on our ointment form.

Toilet Learning: The 2s classroom is the toilet learning classroom. Expect that toilet learning practices will begin shortly after a child begins in the classroom. Per childcare regulations, LHCC staff are not able to commence toilet learning in the toddler classroom.

Please let an LHCC staff know when you and your child are ready to begin toilet learning. It is best to continue to send diapers in addition to extra underpants and clothing for the first couple of weeks. Staff will wash hands before and after assisting your child with toileting. Staff will also assist each child in learning about habits with personal hygiene.

Children learning to use the toilet are taken to the bathroom more frequently to encourage consistency and learning. This can be a very stressful time for children and is handled with sensitivity, patience and positive reinforcement. If you have suggestions on your child's individual needs with regard to toilet learning, please let your child's teacher(s) know.

As with diapers, rinsing soiled underwear is not possible (per state health codes). They will be placed in a plastic bag and put in your child's cubby. Please take this home on a daily basis.

Once children move to the 3s classroom, children should be wearing pull-ups or underwear daily and be successfully using the toilet 75-100% of the time.

### Napping

Times of rest and napping are provided for those children who need them. We provide a crib or a cot and a sheet for each child that naps at the center. Sheets are laundered weekly at LHCC. We recommend that all parents provide a special blanket for your child. Please ensure it is labeled clearly with your child's name. At the end of each week, please be sure to take the blanket home to be laundered and send back the following week.

Infant and toddler rooms nap their children in their classrooms throughout the day. The 2's-4's have specific naptimes, typically from 1:00-3:00 PM. However, these do vary from younger to older age groups, as younger children usually begin napping earlier in the day.

The following policies are in accordance with state licensing and accreditation guidelines:

- All staff that work at LHCC will be trained in SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) Reduction prior to their start of employment with LHCC.
- All infants, 12 months and younger, must be placed to sleep on their backs. Infants who are capable of rolling over may do so on their own, but only after the staff has physically placed the child down on their back. A child, 12 months or older, may be put in a different sleep position if they can roll over on their own.



- Doctor authorization is needed if a child, 12 months or younger, is going to be placed down to sleep in a position other than their back.
- Doctor authorization is needed when using a wedge in the infant's crib.
- An infant's shoulders and head must be uncovered at all times while sleeping.
- Items such as pillows, comforters, stuffed animals, and quilts are not allowed in the crib, if the infant is younger than 12 months of age. If a blanket must be used, it must be thin and large enough to tuck in securely around the sides and the bottom of the mattress and must be below the child's shoulders.

### Pacifier Use

If your child uses a pacifier, parents should provide at least two pacifiers labeled with the child's name using a waterproof label or non-toxic permanent marker. LHCC can also label your child's pacifier. Pacifier wub-a-nubs are prohibited. Pacifiers will be cleaned separately with soap and hot water. They will be inspected for cracks or tears and immediately thrown away if these errors are noted. Parents will then need to replace the pacifier for their child. Parents should inform their child's lead teacher when a pacifier should be given to their child.

### Clothing

Children should be dressed so they can play comfortably and without concern of staining their clothing. Although children wear smocks for painting and water play, clothes can still become wet or stained.

Each child needs a complete change of clothing which will remain in their cubby at LHCC. These are used in case of accidents or play-related reasons. All clothing should be labeled with your child's name so it can be easily identified. LHCC is not financially responsible for lost items.

Once a child transfers to another room, the teachers will move their clothing supply to the next room. It is the parent's responsibility to check your child's extra clothing, to ensure they still fit and are weather appropriate. Additionally, LHCC teachers will provide quarterly reminders about changing out each child's clothing to ensure they fit the current season.

Wet or soiled clothing will be sent home in a plastic bag and must be taken home daily. Per our state regulations, LHCC is not allowed to rinse soiled clothing in toilets or sinks. LHCC has additional clothing for children that do not have a replenished supply of clothing. If this clothing is needed for your child, please launder the items and return as soon as possible, along with a complete change of clothing for your child.

Children's shoes are kept on at all times (with the exception of the infant room) except during water play and special projects/games. Shoes worn at LHCC should be skid-resistant and secure around their feet. They should also be sturdy enough to protect their feet if they step on an object which could injure the sole of their foot. Please do

not send your child to LHCC wearing sandals, flip flops, clogs, or any other footwear that is not protective of their feet.

Children should always be dressed for the weather. Our rooms tend to be cold in the summer months and warm in the winter months, so dressing your child in "layers" may help.

### Gyms & Play Yards

The infants and toddlers share a playground outside of the toddler classroom. The 2 year olds, 3 year olds and 4 year olds share a playground outside of the 3 year old room. During summer months, children spend a great deal of time outside. During days of inclement weather, children are taken to the little gym where they can exercise their bodies and voices. When children are in this space, a sign is posted on the classroom door to alert parents to their child's location. When picking up your child in any of these areas, please be sure to connect with your child's teacher before leaving to assist us in keeping our rosters accurate.

To protect against heat and sun injury, LHCC's play yards offer various shade sources for children while they are playing. The play yard for infants and toddlers has a shaded area built into the play yard. The preschool play yard has an abundant number of high trees which afford good shaded areas throughout. Play structures also provide shade.

Staff-to-child ratios do not accommodate having an individual child stay indoors. Outdoor play requires reliable supervision so being short one teacher is dangerous. If your child is well enough to attend LHCC, we assume he/she is well enough to go outside. Upon your arrival, if children are playing outside, please have your child join his/her classroom in the play yard.

Per our state licensing requirements, all children should be taken outside at least once a day except during times of inclement weather. LHCC staff must be aware of inclement weather for the safety of the children we serve. Inclement weather could be defined as heavy rain, temperatures over 90 degrees Fahrenheit, wind chills of 0 degrees Fahrenheit or below for children aged 2 and above, wind chills of 20 degrees Fahrenheit or below for children under age 2.

For preschool aged children only: if the temperature is colder than 0 degrees Fahrenheit with wind chill (but not below -10 degrees Fahrenheit), classrooms that go outside must limit the time they are outdoors. This decision will be based on the activity the children will be doing outside. Similarly, when the temperature with heat index is above 90 degrees Fahrenheit (but not to exceed 99 degrees Fahrenheit), classrooms that go outside will engage in an activity that keeps the children cool and limits the time spent outside.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources notifies Wisconsin residents during unhealthy air quality by using a system called Air Quality Advisory. For more information

about this, please see the chart in the LHCC lobby.

#### Field Trips & Walks

All children enrolled with LHCC will be taken on walks around the block of the Lutheran Home campus on various days. Classrooms may also walk to the Wauwatosa Library or Roosevelt Elementary School for a special field trip. Staff will address any special concerns, such as severe allergies, and take the necessary precautions prior to leaving the building. Parents will be asked to sign a permission slip for Field Trips & Walks in their enrollment packet.

When public health authorities recommend the use of insect repellants due to high risk of airborne disease, repellants with DEET are used. If a classroom is going on a walk, staff will apply this repellant no more than once a day and only with written permission. Parents will be asked to sign off on a permission form regarding the use of bug spray in their enrollment packet.

#### Photographs

LHCC takes pictures from time to time of the children for documentation purposes and to record a special activity (such as Intergenerational activities). Photographs may be displayed in the childcare center or within the facility, used on Lutheran Home's social media sites or in marketing materials. For this reason, parents will be asked to sign a Media Release in their enrollment packet.

Parents will be made aware of special requests for photographs other than those mentioned above, in advance. Parents will also be asked permission for their child's participation. If you have any concerns about photographs of your child, please contact the LHCC administrator.

Parents may also take pictures for their own personal use at group functions sponsored by LHCC (center events, parent/intergenerational events, etc.). Staff may take photographs of the children for professional use at various times. However, parents and staff should not be taking photographs for personal use of children during normal activity in the classrooms.

#### Media in the Classroom

The use of media is offered from time to time. Media, such as television, films or videotapes, is limited to developmentally appropriate programming which is previewed and approved by teachers in advance.

#### Toys from Home

Though children enjoy showing their friends and teachers something from home, LHCC encourages parents to keep their child's special items at home. However, it is understood that children prefer to have a security object (stuffed animal, blanket) at times. If your child brings in an item from home, please be sure it is labeled with your child's name. If the security object is needed, please ensure it is not a toy which

promotes aggression (play weapons, toys, etc.). LHCC is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items brought into the center.

### Behavioral Guidance

We believe the best way to deal with inappropriate behavior is to prevent it. This is done by keeping the children involved in activities and establishing clear and consistent guidelines regarding behavior. In guiding children, we use positive guidance, redirection, substitution and teaching respect for self and others.

At different stages of their development, children may experience varying difficulties. LHCC believes the best outcomes come from parental and LHCC staff involvement to not see behaviors as "just a stage" but rather, something to work on together. If left unchecked, this can create difficulties for the child, for his/her parents and others. If a problematic behavior is noticed, your child's teacher will inform you at the early stages of the concern and continue to communicate with you on a regular basis, regarding the status of the behavior. The administrator and/or program manager will also be made aware of the behavioral concern to discuss possible supports that may be needed for the child. A parent-teacher conference may be requested to discuss behavioral concerns. Together a plan will be made to address the concern both at home and at LHCC. A second meeting may be rescheduled within two weeks to reconnect and see how things are working with the plan that was made. If it is believed that the time the child is in care (i.e. here too many hours) is contributing to the behavioral concerns, a reduction in hours at the center may be discussed.

Families must be involved in the solutions discussed to reduce the child's behaviors. Depending on the severity of the behavior, it needs to be resolved within 4-6 weeks for care to be continued at the center. Children using a therapist who are diagnosed with special needs will need to have the therapist work with LHCC in developing a behavior plan that everyone can agree on. Families may be asked to get a developmental assessment of their child by a specialist. The center does not have a school psychologist, doctor, therapist or psychiatrist on staff.

Our goal is to care for all of the children we serve but if after reasonable efforts have been made by the parents and the teachers, no solution can be found and the behavioral concerns continue, parents will be counselled on finding an alternative childcare arrangement. We have to ensure the safety of all of the children we serve, as well as the teachers.

Any form of corporal punishment (i.e. spanking, hitting, etc.) is strictly prohibited. Timeouts are also prohibited by State licensing for children under 3 years of age and are only used with older children when other methods of direction are unsuccessful.

### Transitioning to a New Classroom

This can be a hard time for the child and their parents, and it requires time and sensitivity during the transition to a new classroom environment with teachers that are

unfamiliar. Teachers from your child's current classroom also assist in the process of "moving" to help them transition by visiting the new room and new teachers. Families are always invited to visit the new classroom, as well. If you would like to speak with the lead teacher of the new classroom, you may set up an appointment with him/her to ensure he/she is available.

The procedure for this transition is as follows:

- The administrator will contact the parent two weeks before the classroom move, via email, with the official date of the move.
- Your child will visit the new classroom a few times, for short increments of time.
- Your child will begin to spend half days in his/her new classroom before the official move to the new classroom.
- Families will receive a welcome packet from the new classroom teacher.

LHCC staff will take care of moving your child's extra clothing and individual items to their new cubby.

If you have any concerns about your child's move, please feel free to contact the administrator. As with anything, the administrator may not be able to accommodate every concern, but it will be addressed as best as possible.

As your child enters a new classroom, their rate will change, as well. This rate change begins once your child enters the 2-year-old classroom. At times, children are transitioned into the next classroom prior to their birthday. This is often based on their growth and readiness for this big step! If your child enters the next level classroom prior to their birthday, parents will be charged the daily rate for their new classroom at the time of their child's move.

Things to consider with this transition:

- Younger children benefit from consistency – it is best to keep your family routines during this time to provide a sense of stability for your child during a big change.
- Plan to spend some time in the new classroom with your child.
- Children can sense how you are feeling about the change – try to promote the positivity of this change and share in the excitement of a new classroom!
- Too much talk about the move can create anxiety for some children. Shorter discussions and visits to the new room allow them to see the room and remove the fear of the "unknown".

The infant rooms are arranged to keep infants in familiar surroundings until about 12-16 months. In the two-sided infant room, there is a younger nursery area and an older infant area. Infants are able to make a soft transition to the older infant room at about

6-8 months.

At roughly 12-16 months, children move to the toddler room. They stay in this room until they are approximately 2 years old. Once children are between 2 and 2 ½, they move into the 2-year-old room. Children then move into the 3-year-old room and then the 4-year-old room, respectively, based on their readiness and when space is available.

### Observers

LHCC works with students in the high school and college setting to provide opportunities for learning and growth. LHCC has worked with students from MSOE and local high schools for many years, all from a variety of disciplines. These students ask to observe our classrooms or conduct projects, such as reading to the children. The students are supervised by LHCC staff at all times and are directed by LHCC staff in the amount of observations allowed to minimize disruption to the daily routines of the classroom.

## **VI. Health and Safety**

At LHCC the health and safety of the children, families, and staff are our top priority. Any item considered potentially dangerous to children and adults as well as smoking, firearms, and ammunition are prohibited on the premises of LHCC.

### Health Policies

Each child enrolled at LHCC is required to have the following documents on record, as part of our licensing compliance:

- Health History and Emergency Care Plan
- Child Care Enrollment
- First Aid Permission and Emergency Information
- Emergency Contact, Sunscreen, and Walks Permission
- Family Questionnaire
- Photo and Facebook Posting Permission
- Child Health Report
- Child Immunization Record
- Intake Form (children under 2 years of age)
- Ointment permission (if applicable)

The documents will be signed and kept on file prior to the first day of care and will be updated as required. If there are no current records on file, LHCC reserves the right to suspend or discontinue care until all forms are received and are current.

For children 2 years old and younger, there must be an initial health examination on file not more than 6 weeks prior to nor 6 weeks after being enrolled at the center. A follow-up health examination is required at least once every 6 months after admission. For children over 2 years old, there must be an initial health examination on file not more than one year prior to nor later than 3 months after being enrolled at the center. A



follow-up health examination is required at least once every 2 years after admission. The health examination must be documented on the Child Health Report (available on our website or from the administrator) and signed and dated by a physician, physician assistant, or HealthCheck provider.

Information required on physical exams:

- Immunization record (within first 30 days of enrollment)
- Known allergies
- Date of exam, and signature of physician

*Exclusion for Illness:* Children and staff members shall be excluded from the center when ill.

If your child has a diagnosis of a communicable disease, parents must let the center know. We will then follow up with recommendations from the Wisconsin Childhood Bureau of Communicable Diseases. Families of the children who may have been exposed to the communicable disease will be notified. If your child has a diagnosis of a communicable disease that requires reporting, we will report it to the State Health Department.

Our policy on illness requires any child sent home because of symptoms of illness to remain at home for a minimum of 24 hours or longer if symptoms have not resolved. This includes, but is not limited to, diarrhea, vomiting, fever, and changes in a child's normal behavior (clearly uncomfortable and not able to participate in activities). When the child's behavior has returned to normal and the child is symptom free for 24 hours without symptom reducing medication, the child may return to the center. Likewise, children sent home with a fever of 101 degrees or higher may not return to the center until they are fever-free without fever-reducing medication for 24 hours. Exceptions will be made with written permission from the child's physician.

If your child becomes ill while at the center, you will be contacted and asked to take him or her home. In the event that you cannot be reached, we will contact an emergency contact person you have listed.

For the safety and health of all the children and staff in the center, please do not send your child to LHCC if he or she is ill. We are not able to adequately care for sick children. If your child has a pre-existing (but not contagious) or possible developing illness, please alert staff.

Children with head lice will be sent home. Confidentiality of the child assessed as having lice will be maintained, but families of the classroom the child is in will be notified.

#### Medication

All medications at the center must be unexpired. Children may not be left at the center without an up-to-date Emergency Care plan as well as quick-relief medication for children with asthma or anaphylactic reactions to foods or other environmental conditions.

If your child needs to have prescription or over-the-counter medication administered while at the Center, parents are required to fill out an Authorization to Administer Medication form. This form gives us permission and instructions for administration of medicine. The person administering the medication will record administration times and dosages on this form. A doctor's note is required for all medications that are being administered in the center.

In order for any medication to be administered, medication must be in its original container and properly labeled. Medicines will be stored in a secure location and out of reach of children or refrigerated as needed. When medication is no longer needed, please take the medication home with you immediately. All medication must be given directly to a staff person by an adult.

In order for topical ointment to be applied, an Ointment Form must be filled out for diaper ointments. A Sunscreen Application Permission form must be filled out for use of sunscreen. A new form must be filled out or updated each time a child moves up to the next classroom.

LHCC will only give vitamins or nutritional supplements with written instruction from your child's health care provider.

#### Special Medical Procedure Care

If your child needs specific care for a medical condition, it is the responsibility of the parent to inform LHCC staff prior to the child being left in our care. In addition, we must meet with the parent and have written information on file from the child's doctor regarding the child's specific care needs.

#### Accident

In the event of a minor accident at the center, all staff are CPR and First Aid certified and there are first aid supplies available at all times. In addition, we have nursing staff on site that will help when needed. No medications are used in the event of a minor accident. For any injury occurring at the center, an accident report is filled out. The report will explain how the accident happened and what first aid action (if any) was taken. The parent is required to sign this form and it will be stored in the child's file. If the parent seeks medical treatment for an injury occurring at LHCC, the center must be notified within 48 hours.

In the event of a medical emergency, we must have written permission on file from a parent to refer a child for medical care. If ambulance transport is necessary, the administrator will accompany the child.

If your child arrives at the center with a noticeable injury, an accident report will be filled out. Please notify Staff of any injuries your child may be coming in with.

#### Insurance

It is the parent's responsibility to ensure ample medical coverage for their child while enrolled with LHCC. LHCC is not liable for any injuries incurred during the time of your child's stay.

### Fire Drills & Tornado Procedures

Fire drills are practiced once per month. In an actual emergency, LHCC remains in place unless the weather or emergency requires evacuation. During fire drills we practice remaining in place as well as evacuation.

Tornado drills are practiced once per month from April through October. During a tornado drill the Infants and Toddlers go to the 4-year-old classroom and the Twos, Threes, and Fours go down to the basement.

If you are in the center during a drill, please proceed to the nearest exit, or remain with your child's class and follow the procedures for the drill. Do not drop off or pick up your child in the middle of a drill.

Accommodations will be made for children that may need a special evacuation consideration.

### In An Emergency

If an emergency situation were to arise at LHCC, the Staff are prepared to handle it calmly and efficiently.

If building evacuation is necessary, the children and staff will gather just past the playground fence. If site evacuation is necessary, the children and staff will relocate to Longfellow Middle School. Once name checks are complete, we would notify families and parents to pick up their children as soon as possible.

## **VII. Parent Involvement and Communication**

### Parent Visits

At LHCC we have an open-door policy. Parents are welcome to stop in at any time to spend time with their child, observe their child, or just say "Hi." Likewise, mothers are welcome to come and breast feed at any time. If there is a special project, talent, interest, or hobby you would like to share with the children, talk with your child's lead teacher and they will be happy to plan for it.

### Conferences

Communication between teachers and parents is ongoing on a daily or weekly basis at arrival and pick-up times. In addition, lead teachers hold conferences twice per year. Conferences are an opportunity for you to meet one-on-one with your child's teacher to discuss their growth and development and to answer any questions you have about your child's time at the center. If you are unable to meet with the teacher during our regularly scheduled conferences, you may set up a different day and time that works for you and the teachers. You may also request a conference with your child's teacher at any time.

### Referrals

Families will make the primary decision regarding any additional services their child may need with the support and encouragement of lead teachers and administrators. Teachers and administrators will share any relevant observations they have made to

help with early detection.

#### Home & School Communication

LHCC will put out regular communication via email and Procure. Classrooms may also put out a newsletter sharing classroom-specific information. Parent and child-specific information will be communicated via Procure. It is the responsibility of the parent to inform a Staff person and record any specific needs for your child in the drop-off notes or as a message in Procure.

#### Communication within the Center

We value your feedback and welcome any questions you have about the center and its policies. If at any time you have a complaint or concern, please share this with the appropriate person so that we can help to resolve the situation. Copies of our policies and procedures are available upon request and can be useful for clarification. Sometimes adjustments in our policies and procedures may be warranted.

If you have an operations-related concern (scheduling, billing, penalty fees, etc.), please contact the administrator. The administrator will work with you to resolve the situation or will help direct you to the appropriate person.

If you have a concern regarding classroom practices or your child's experiences in the classroom, share these with your child's lead teacher or the administrator.

#### Privacy and Confidentiality

Confidentiality of children and families' information will be maintained. Please share with us any information that will help us care for your child. The information will only be shared with staff on a need-to-know basis.

All enrollment forms and information (including accident/illness forms and health and immunization records) concerning the child and family will be accessible to the custodial parents/guardians, center staff, and our licensing agent.

Each child has a file that contains assessment information, anecdotal records, pictures and child work examples. This file is kept in the classroom that your child is enrolled in. These files are used by the child's classroom teacher and are available for viewing upon request to the parents.

Families should expect that general information about their child will be posted in their classroom such as the child's name, birthdate, parent names, sibling names, pictures of their child, and special food or care requests.

#### Mandatory Child Abuse Reporting

Childcare workers are considered mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect according to Wisconsin law. Teachers must report if they have a reasonable cause to suspect that a child in their care has been abused or neglected, or if they have reason to believe that a child has been threatened with abuse or neglect, or that abuse or neglect of a child will occur.

## OUR PHILOSOPHY

It is the belief of the Lutheran Home Children's Center that children need warmth and guidance in a learning environment. It is this kind of support we wish to provide to both the family and the child for the betterment of our community. We strive to strengthen the family by reducing stresses at home and work by providing quality child care that recognizes the child as a unique individual created by God. We believe quality child care supplements, not substitutes, for the care given at home by the child's parents.



LUTHERAN HOME  
CHILDREN'S CENTER



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