

 Family Handbook

**Value Statement**

“Playtime Learning Center is a very special place where kids can just be kids.” I believed in this statement back when we first opened our doors in 1997 and I still believe this today! As the owner and director of Playtime Learning Center I feel a great connection and responsibility to each child and family enrolled in my center. I take pride in our center as we have the area’s largest fenced in playground. The children are encouraged to explore their outside environment by just being kids! Imaginations are encouraged here! Our classrooms exceed the states standards while having a bright and open atmosphere. Each child is encouraged to be creative, to problem solve, and to learn about their world and themselves. In the children’s exploration messes will be made and we encourage them to explore as much as they can! We want our children to realize that learning is fun!

Besides our exciting classrooms we also understand that safety is a priority! We have installed a new security system which has a keyless entry. Along with a secure building all of our staff is trained in CPR and First Aid and each year the staff takes a fire safety course.

**Non-Discriminative Policy**

Playtime Learning Center does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, sex, religious creed, ethnic origin, handicap, national origin or economic status.

**Statement of Confidentiality**

All information given on your child’s forms and any other information is strictly confidential and will only be accessible to the staff and state representatives for inspection purposes only.

**Childline**

Playtime Learning Center and the staff are bound by law to report any suspects of abuse to Childline.

**Conclusion**

All of the staff at Playtime LC welcomes you and your child to a very unique learning experience. We are here to assist you in any way we can. We want you to feel secure and confident about your child’s care. We realize that being a parent can be a difficult yet rewarding job. We will do everything we can to help your child achieve his/her full potential and have an opportunity to experience “a very special place where kids can just be kids”.

**Community Resources**

Throughout your experience at Playtime LC you will find that we will often send out information on topics including health and human services, wellness, nutrition, and fitness and / or child development. You can find these articles in your child’s cubby, on our Parent Bulletin Board or on our Facebook page. [www.facebook.com/playtimelc](http://www.facebook.com/playtimelc)

**Getting to Know You Meeting**

When you first enroll and 45 days after enrollment we offer you a “getting to know you meeting”. This meeting is for is to get to know your family better so we can better care for your child. It is also so we can build a solid relationship. After 45 days we will hold another meeting to go over a brief assessment of your child’s progress and to receive any concerns or questions you may have about the program.

**Referral Program**

Playtime LC has in place a referral program for our families. If you send in another family and they enroll and come you will receive free days! You will receive the same amount of days free that they have enrolled. For example, if they enroll and come for 4 days a week you will receive 4 free days. We also hold contests throughout the year for discounted or free tuition. Like us on Facebook for updated information.

My staff at Playtime is very loving and caring. I strive for a family like atmosphere where the children all feel comfortable. I want them to feel safe and loved at the center and my staff does just that! They are a reliable and meet all the standards of the Department of Public Welfare. The staff has been with me for an average of over 3 years and some staff members have been here for over 9 years. It is important to me that the children and parents have a consistency in their care and I believe that begins with the staff.

I understand that each family is different and their needs are also different. This is why I offer parents a range of enrollment options. Unlike other centers I have no minimum of days. If you only need one day a week I will do that for you or if your schedule changes each week I can also provide care for you.

I believe that in order to provide the best possible care for your child I need to have a special place. You need to feel comfortable and secure that someone is taking great care of your child. There needs to be a special bond between us; you are trusting us with the most important part of your life. We are more than babysitters here at Playtime Learning Center. You are not a number here but you are family. Know that your child will not only receive an education at Playtime but they will be loved and they will have a wonderful experience!

**Enrollment Forms**

Pennsylvania’s Department of Public Welfare requires a variety of forms for each child enrolled. These forms must be completed on the first day your child attends. These forms must be updated every six months or if there are any changes before the six months.

The Emergency Contact form must be filled out and brought on the first day. Your child cannot be admitted if we do not receive The Emergency Contact on the first day. This form needs to be updated immediately if there are any changes and every six months. Please remember, this is how we contact you in case of an emergency. Please remember that it is double-sided.

The Child’s Health Assessment Form needs to be filled out by your child’s physician within 60 days of their enrollment and once a year thereafter.

The Agreement will be discussed later in the handbook.

The Getting to Know You Form needs to be filled out by the first day of enrollment. This for is in place so we may get to know your family so that we can take special care of your child. If you would like a conference/meeting it can be set up to go over the form.

If you need to change any information please see Debi.

**Birthdays**

Playtime LC allows birthday celebrations. If you wish to bring in treats for your child’s birthday we ask that you speak to your child’s teacher and make sure of classroom allergies and the day you will be bringing in the treats. We will also pass out party invitations for parties outside the center. We understand that not everyone can be invited to the birthday parties. We ask that if the whole class cannot be invited that you privately give the invitations to your child’s teacher. We will discreetly pass them out.

**Biting Policy**

Please see our Infant or Toddler Program Pamphlet.

**Field Trips**

We do not take the children on field trips. We plan fun and exciting activities to do here at the center. Once a month we hold activities in which the whole family can participate. These activities will be posted in the monthly newsletters. These activities are meant to bring everyone closer together or to provide you with a special service or opportunity.

**Children’s Attire and Cubbies**

It is our belief that kids need to be kids and this means that we let them explore and experience different and sometimes messy art mediums. With this in mind we ask that you dress them appropriate for play. For play outside we ask that you dress your child for the weather and in sneakers.

Your child will have a cubby in their classroom. This is where you can hang their coat and put their lunch box. The preschoolers have a separate red cubby for their paperwork; please check your child’s cubby every day for art work and special notices.

**Snow Closings**

Playtime LC makes every effort to open in bad weather, however there are times in which we cannot open. A message will be on the answering machine by 5:30 am as to our schedule modification. There are times when we will close, close early, or open late.

**Outside Playtime**

Playtime LC is proud of our large, developmentally appropriate and fun playgrounds. Our playgrounds give our children the opportunity on a daily basis to play, exercise, develop their large motor skills, use their imaginations, explore the outside classroom and build lasting friendships.

The children go outside weather permitting every day. We supply a sunscreen with an SPF of 50.

The center asks that you dress your child appropriately for outside play. They need to be dresses for the weather and must have sneakers on to play on the equipment. With fun on the playground also comes dirt. We allow the children to explore so they will get dirty. Please provide play clothes and a change of clothes to leave at the center.

**Toys from Home**

We do allow toys from home. We understand that some children have favorite toys or want to show something new off. However, we are not responsible for lost or broken toys. The staff cannot take away from the care of the children to look for a toy. We encourage the children to bring in books to share with their class.

**Holiday Celebrations**

Throughout the year we do have holiday celebrations. There are times that we will ask families for help and bring something special in to share. Please keep in mind that this is on a voluntary basis. There will be a notice in the monthly newsletter.

**Tuition continued**

After six months of enrollment you will be issued credit days. Credit days go from year to year and do not transfer to the next year. The amount of credit days you will receive will be determined by the amount of days your child is enrolled. If your child is pulled out of the center for over 1 month and returns there will be no credit days issued.

There will be a fee of $30.00 on all returned checks plus a $25.00 late fee. The amount must be paid in full with cash, credit/debit card or a money order. If there is a second returned check all payments are to be paid in cash, credit/debit card or money order from then on.

The agreement form is a legal contract with Playtime Learning Center. Once you give me your schedule you are responsibly for payment regardless of attendance.

If you choose to leave the program you must give 1 week notice.

Children left at the center after 6:00 pm will be charged $5.00 for every 5min. After 6:00pm.

**Tuition**

Once your schedule is determined we will determine your weekly payment and 2 weeks is due immediately to hold your space. We will use one-week tuition for the first week your child is present and the second week will be held to use for your last week’s tuition. Payments can be made by cash, check, Visa, Master Card, American Express or your debit card or ACH.

Payments are to be paid the first day of service. If payment is not received by Wednesday of that service week there will be a $25.00 late fee attached to your bill. If payment does not reach us by the following week another late fee of $25.00 will be added to your bill and your child will be denied care until payment is paid in full. All payments are to be placed in the mental locked box on the wall by the office. Please do not hand them to the staff. A receipt will be issued at the end of the day for cash payments only.

Once you give me your schedule (please get it to me by Friday the week before), that will be what is due regardless of your child’s attendance. If you need to switch days you must contact me ahead of time. We need to stay in state ratio and I need to prepare the staff and my expenses to run the center stay the same. Payments are due regardless of holidays, illness, vacations and weather.

**Getting to Know You Meeting**

When you first enroll and 45 days after enrollment we offer you a “getting to know you meeting”. This meeting is for is to get to know your family better so we can better care for your child. It is also so we can build a solid relationship. After 45 days we will hold another meeting to go over a brief assessment of your child’s progress and to receive any concerns or questions you may have about the program.

**Teachers**

All our staff at PLC brings wisdom of experience and warmth of heartfelt dedication to your child. Each staff member is certified in CPR, First Aid, and Fire Safety. Our staff also participates in professional development through workshop and training classes. Your child is always cared for by a loving, sensitive and knowledgeable staff. Playtime LC has a low staff turnover because our staff love working here and they especially love what they do!

**Termination**

The health and safety of our children is our highest priority. When a child exhibits recurring inappropriate behavior that is potentially dangerous to themselves or others, we will notify the parents. A plan that is agreeable between the parent/guardian and Miss Debi will be put into place. If after a reasonable amount of time and if adequate improvement is not demonstrated the next step will be a possible evaluation with other professionals. After all resources are exhausted we will terminate care. Other reasons for termination include but are not limited to: disruptive and dangerous behavior, abuse (including verbal abuse) by a parent or child, Playtime’s inability to meet the child’s needs, non-payment of tuition and violation of Playtime LC’s policies.

**Custody**

Playtime LC understands that at times custody agreements are necessary. If you have a custody agreement we ask that you give us a copy to keep on file.

**Arrival and Departure**

Your child must be brought into the center and be signed in using our system. Your child should be placed in the care of one of our staff members. Since we are state licensed it is important that you drop off and pick up your child at the scheduled times. This is so we can make sure we have enough staff available. If you need to change your times please see Debi to make sure space is available.

If someone other than yourself is picking up your child you need to notify the staff. The person must be on your emergency contact list and have a valid photo id. Your child will not be released if they do not have photo id or you do not tell us of the pickup change. There will be no exceptions! This is for your child’s safety.

**Meals**

Playtime LC provides a morning and an afternoon snack. Children must bring their lunches. In the Toddler and Preschool Rooms the children must have a lunch box with an ice pack. The infants may put their food in the refrigerator in the kitchen. We will gladly heat up any food for your child. We ask that it comes prepared and in a microwaved safe bowl. We do have utensils and plates for your child to use.

If you would like your child to have breakfast at the center you must provide it. We have a toaster and a toaster oven. You may also leave food here such as milk, juice, cereal, or waffles etc.

We do understand that some children have allergies to food. We take every precaution to keep each child safe. Please let us know if your child has any known food allergies and if they require an epi pen. If they do require a pen we need one to keep on site.

**Placement/Advancement**

Playtime LC determines your child’s placement in a classroom with you during the first meeting. As your child grows and can graduate to the other classrooms you will receive a letter from me informing you of the transition and all the details. As always if you have any concerns or questions please feel free to see me.

When your child needs to move to another educational setting I will gladly put together a portfolio to take to the next educational setting. If you wish us to release this information you will need to sign a release form.

Playtime LC is located the Pleasant Valley School District. We do have transportation through First Student (The PV Bus Company) available.

**Curriculum**

Playtime LC uses a theme based curriculum. Each week our theme includes activities with your child’s social, emotional, language, cognitive and physical development. We offer developmentally appropriate learning experiences through blocks, dramatic play props, paint, puzzles, and manipulatives, books and large motor equipment. In addition to these activities the children also have experiences through science activities, music, games and circle time. Our entire curriculum is linked to Pennsylvania’s Learning Standards.

**Assessment & Parent –teacher Conferences**

Playtime LC uses a PA Department of Public Welfare assessment sheet to asses each child every six months. The information for these assessments are collected from teacher observations, anecdotal records and communication with parents/caregivers. The information in the assessment are also used in planning curriculum. Your child’s developmental progress is then shared with you at a parent/teacher conference. The conferences are scheduled at your convenience and usually last fifteen minutes in length. If parents would like to have a conference at other than the scheduled conference times please make arrangements with your child’s teacher.

**Assessments**

Playtime LC does developmental assessments throughout the year for each child enrolled. You will receive a copy of the assessment and we offer a parent/ teacher conference to discuss your child’s development.

**Nap Time**

We do not require all the children to nap. If your child does not nap we provide them with quiet activities such as puzzles, coloring or table games or a special movie. With exception to the infants, the children usually nap from 1:00-3:00. If you wish them to sleep for a shorter amount of time please let their teacher know. If they are napping here they will need the following:

-a sheet

-a blanket

-a pillow

We provide a cot or mat for the toddlers and preschoolers. The infants have pack n plays which we provide.

Please provide a bag that can close and make sure it is labeled with your child’s name to store these items.

**Communication**

Here at Playtime LC we believe that communication between the parents and staff is an important part of our relationship. We have a variety of ways of communicating with you.

The Infant and Toddler Rooms each have daily sheets. You may request one for the preschool room if you wish. We also will communicate verbally at the end of the day. Feel free to ask our staff how your child’s day went or if you have any problem or concerns.

I also have an open door policy for all my families. I am here and available to talk anytime you need me. At enrollment you will receive my cell phone number, my email, the center’s number, our website and our Facebook page information.

As I stated before, communication is key in our relationship. The staff and I are here for the whole family. Your feedback is welcomed and encouraged. If you have a concern please bring it to our attention immediately. So we may take care of it right away. I want you to have the best experience that you can at Playtime LC.

**Special Needs**

Hear Playtime LC we will accommodate any IEP/IFSP plans within reason. We allow outside services to come in and work with your child. Playtime LC asks that we receive at least a 24 hour notice that they are coming and they must bring ID and sign in and out on our sign in sheet.

**Daily Schedules**

Each classroom follows a daily schedule which is posted in each classroom. Please keep in mind however that the schedules can change to meet the needs of the children.

**Child Guidance**

Playtime LC believes in positive role modeling. We promote positive social skills and self-control through positive guidance. We view discipline as any other skill that must be developed and we try to provide children with appropriate opportunities that allow for self-discipline. We encourage children to settle disputes peacefully but if necessary, we direct them to a quiet area of the room where we can discuss the inappropriate behavior with the child.

**Health & Communicable Disease Policy**

Upon enrollment you have 60 days to submit the Child’s Health Record form, completed by your child’s physician and every year after. In order to protect the well-being of your child and others, if at any time, it is felt that a child is too sick or contagious; he or she will not be admitted or kept at the center. Please have an alternate care plan in case of illness. If your child is going to be out, please call the center. Any child absent for more than three days, or one who has had a contagious disease, must have a doctors’ note in order to return to school.

Your child should be kept home or will be sent home for any of the following symptoms:

-A fever over 101. Children may not return to the center until they are fever-free for 24 hours, without fever reducing medication.

-Diarrhea of two or more episodes (children may not return to the center until24 hours have passed after the episode).

Vomiting, nausea, or abdominal pain (children may not return to the center until 24 hours have passed after the vomiting),

-Rashes that you cannot identify or that have not been diagnosed by a physician. Infected or untreated skin patches. Weeping or bleeding skin lesions that have not be treated by a physician or nurse.

-Inflammation or redness of eyes with discharges (conjunctivitis)

1. On the first day try to be a little ahead of schedule so you have time to get your child settled.
2. If there is anything you feel the staff should know, write it down before the first day.
3. When you come into the center, you and your child will be immediately welcomed. At this time the staff person will show you where your child’s things should go. Give the staff person any additional information at this time. After a few minutes let your child know that you have to go and your will be coming back. It’s a good to give them an idea of when our will be back. An example would be “I’ll be back after naptime”. It is best for everyone that you say good=bye, give one more hug and kiss and leave. It only makes it worse if you linger. If your child cries let the staff comfort them and you should go. Please do not hang around outside where they can see you, it just makes it harder on them. In most cases the children stop crying after the teacher holds and comforts them.
4. Please feel free to call the center (570-+992-3935) to check on your child.
5. It could take a few days to a few weeks for them to adjust. Every child is different.

**Commitment to Quality**

Playtime LC has a strong commitment to quality throughout the center. Part of our commitment is our participation in Pennsylvania’s Keystone Star’s program.

For more information visit [www.pakeys.org](http://www.pakeys.org/)

**Your Child’s First Day**

At Playtime LC the staff understands how emotional the first day at a new center can be for both you and your child. It is our hope that through the following information and good communication, that the staff will help you and your child eases into this transition. As always, please see Debi with any problems or concerns.

Tips:

1. Before your child starts we suggest you schedule a time in which your child can visit the center with you. We believe this works best so there are no surprises on the first day.
2. Talk to your child about why they need to come to the center. Make sure they understand that you're not just leaving them. Explain to them the best way you feel they can understand. You know your child best.
3. Make sure all your paper work for the center is completed ahead of time.
4. If you think your child may need to bring something special from home (a blanket, toy, etc.) please feel free to bring them in. Sometimes it helps to bring a small photo album or picture of a loved one that they can keep with them.
5. Include your child in as much as the preparation for the first day as possible. Let then help pack their lunch, their bag and pick out their clothes to wear. Please label EVERYTHING

Please immediately report these diseases to Playtime so that others may be notified. A doctor’s note is required in order for the child to return to the center.

**Respiratory Illnesses**

Chicken Pox German Measles\*

Hemophilus Influenza\* Measles\*

Meningococcus\* Mumps\*

Strep Throat Tuberculosis\*

Whooping Cough\*

**Gastro-Intestinal Illnesses**

Giardia Lamblia\* Hepatitis A\*

Salmonella\* Shingella\*

**Contact Illnesses**

Impetigo Lice Scabies

\*Reportable diseases, as required by The Board of Health

**If your child requires medication while in our care we will gladly administer it for you. There are a few rules that you must follow:**

-The medication must be in the original container.

-The medication must be signed into the medication log.

-The medicine must be handed to a staff person and not left in a lunch box or diaper bag.

**Safety**

Playtime LC’s first and for most job is the safety of your child. We have in place policies for everyday health and safety issues and we also have an extensive emergency plan in place.

Playtime LC has a keyless entry front door. We will get your finger print and this will be how you can open the hall door to enter the facility. This is also how your child will be signed in and out and how you are billed. Please do not let your child touch or play with the screen. When you enroll your child you will be given a number and we will help you set your fingerprint. We ask that if you are signing in and another parent comes in behind you that you do not “piggy back”. Each parent needs to scan their own fingerprint for the system to work.

Hand washing is an important part of staying healthy. We ask that upon arrival you have your child go into the bathroom to wash their hands. Throughout the day we have the children wash their hands. They wash before eating, after using the toilet or having their diaper changed, when they cough or sneeze in their hands and/or when we feel it to be necessary.

**Playtime Learning Center upholds a non-discrimination policy:**

Admissions, the provisions of services, and referrals of clients shall be made without regard to race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, sex or sexual orientation.

If you feel that you have been discriminated against on the basis of your race, color, religion. Creed, handicap or disability, ancestry, national origin, age, sex or sexual orientation, you may contact:

**Director, Playtime Learning Center and Child Care, Inc.**

**U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services**

Office of Civil Rights

Suite 372, Public Ledger Bldg.

150 South Independence Mall West

Philadelphia, PA 19106-9111

**Department of Public Welfare**

**Bureau of Equal Opportunity**

Room 223, Health&Welfare Building

PO Box 2675

Harrisburg, PA 17105

**PA Human Relations Commission**

Harrisburg Regional Office

333 Market Street- 8th Floor

Harrisburg, PA 17101

Opportunities like Family Nights, workshops, parent/teacher conferences (including and initial adjustment report about one month after enrollment), daily informal conversations, and visiting the classroom are all meant to involve parents in our

joint responsibility: the education and care of your children. Teachers want you to feel welcome in the classroom. The lead teacher can always give you suggestions about ways you can participate here at school or in learning activities you and your child can do at home.

Center – wide monthly calendars, memos, a daily classroom bulletin of the day’s activities, curriculum themes and displays of children’s work are written methods of communicating and keeping you, the parents, informed and involved.

**-The Right to Express Concerns**

If you have a concern or problem involving the classroom, the lead teacher is the first person to talk with. Since it can be difficult to constructively air concerns in the classroom, arrange a meeting with the lead teacher. This way concerns and problems can be discussed productively and privately.

Problems can also be raised with any administrative staff member. Set up an appointment to give you plenty of time to talk confidentially.

Serious grievances should be communicated to the Director/ Owner, Debi Karpinsky. You may also request a meeting with Debi at any time.

Our rooms are cleaned on a daily basis and throughout the day. All mouthed toys are taken away and sanitized. Our toys are washed on a regular basis.

Playtime LC is serious about safety. All our staff members go through a criminal background check, a child abuse check, first aid & CPR course and a fire safety class. They are also trained in our emergency preparedness plan.

Playtime LC does have an emergency preparedness plan in place.

Our staff also performs routine safety checks inside and outside the building. We have a maintenance staff that can repair and or replace damaged or broken equipment.

Accidents do happen, and at times children need first aid care. If your child is injured at the center one of the staff members will call you. In some cases we will even send a picture of the injury through a text message. If it is a minor injury we will wait until pick up time or we will send you a short text. For major injuries the director or senior staff person will accompany your child to the hospital and stay there until you arrive. For any injury you will be asked to sign an incident form. You will receive a copy and a copy will be put in your child’s file.

If your child gets ill while at the center you will be notified immediately. It is your responsibility to pick up your child within 2 hours of the first phone call. If someone does not pick up the child within the 2 hour time frame we will notify Monroe County Children and Youth.

**Parent’s Rights**

**What can parents expect from Playtime LC?**

Playtime Learning Center is committed to the policies of the following regulatory bodies:

-**Pennsylvania child care licensing legislation**

These are posted on the front bulletin board, and may also be obtained from the Department of Public Welfare Northeast Region at 100 Lackawanna Ave, Scranton State Office Building, Scranton, Pa 18503. Toll free -1-800-222-2108. Licensing regulations cover health and safety standards and minimum policy and procedure requirements for child care programs in the state of Pennsylvania.

-**Keystone Stars**

Keystone STARS is an initiative of the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) to improve, support, and recognizes the continuous quality improvement efforts of early learning programs in Pennsylvania. They can be reached at NORTHEAST REGIONAL KEY Community Services for Children 1520 Hanover Ave. Allentown, PA 18109 610-437-6000 - 1-800-528-7222 (toll free) - 610-432-5700 (fax) nekeycorr@cscinc.org.

**Other rights that Playtime LC parents have are:**

**-The Right to Confidentiality**

Types of information which are kept confidential and shared only with those who need it to carry out their jobs include: medical history including any current or suspected medical problems: family status: financial information: and other personal issues like family matters or children’s behaviors.

Access to written records is restricted to administrative staff, state monitors and the teachers directly responsible for the child. In order for records to be released to any other person, school or agency, permission is needed from the child’s parent.

Areas of concern (like problem behavior or other special needs) are discussed with parents in private and in a problem-solving manner, respecting the roles we all can play in helping children feel competent and successfully become part of the group.

**-The Right to Participate in Your Child’s Education**

The teaching staff has professional education and experience with children and the way they develop and learn. Parents have very specific experiences of their own child and family, culture and background. Finding time to regularly share these perspectives benefits everyone (especially the children!)