

Redeemer Early Learning Center **Parent Handbook**

August 2022



Preschool & Childcare

REDEEMER

Early Learning Center

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Dear Parents:

We welcome you and your child to Redeemer Early Learning Center (RELC)!

At Redeemer, we understand the tremendous responsibility we have in caring for your child, and we are committed to providing your child with a secure, comfortable, and loving Christian environment.

The caregivers, administrators, and staff of RELC are committed to offering quality childcare modeled on the highest early childhood standards. Our goals:

Care for children in a Christian environment that is challenging and nurturing.

Provide opportunities for children to develop spiritually, socially, emotionally, cognitively, and physically.

Provide consistency and stability in daily care.

Most importantly, we endeavor to be partners with you in the care of your child. We encourage you to share your insights about your child and welcome your comments, concerns, questions, and suggestions. You are invited to share in your child's early learning experiences by visiting and observing your child and participating in daily activities whenever possible.

We look forward to having your child at Redeemer Early Learning Center and want your child's experience with us to be positive and memorable!

Sincerely,

Redeemer Early Learning Center Staff and Board

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Our Mission Statement

At Redeemer Early Learning Center, we welcome each and every child. We believe that every child is a precious, unique gift from God. The goal of our early childhood curriculum is to partner with parents to help each child reach their full potential academically, physically, spiritually, and effectively prepare them for kindergarten and life.

Goals for Each Child

To help every child know the love of Jesus.

To provide an atmosphere where the foundation of respect for others, self, and property is established.

To develop an active curiosity about the world in which each child lives and encourage an enthusiasm for learning to stimulate exploratory behavior and creativity.

Promoting Emotional Growth

To build self-confidence and a sense of self-worth.

To promote a warm, accepting environment for each child to work and play.

To encourage curiosity and a sense of wonder.

To provide appropriate alternatives to negative behavior and strengthen inner emotional controls.

Promoting Social Growth

To promote and instill a sense of caring and sensitivity towards others.

To aid in the development of problem-solving skills.

To help each child learn how to participate in a group.

Promoting Intellectual Growth

To provide an atmosphere where children discover and explore.

To provide a wide variety of activities within a routine where cooperative play is encouraged.

Facilitating Physical & Motor Development

To have each child use their body in a variety of ways by participating in small and large motor skill activities, indoors and outdoors.

To promote physical growth and competence at each developmental level.



Multicultural Equality

Our center is committed to multicultural equality and education. We strive to create a program that truly reflects the lives of our children, families, staff, and community. By recognizing the impact culture plays on families we will make every effort to provide culturally responsive childcare by affirming human differences. We seek to recognize, appreciate, and respect the uniqueness of each child. No person will be discriminated against because of race, sex, nationality, or religion.

Touching and Nurturing

It is our philosophy, belief, and practice that children require physical contact for their care and healthy development. This contact can be described in three ways:

1. Nurturance - This includes hugs, handholding, gentle tickling, carrying, cuddling, and back rubbing. This type of contact is never made against the expressed wishes of the child.
2. Safety and Guidance - This includes restraining children from harmful situations, separating conflicting children, guiding children, leading them, and administering medication or first aid.
3. Hygiene – This includes face and hand washing, diapering (including cleansing of genitals), assisting with toileting, examining rashes or unusual marks, nose blowing, and conducting necessary clothing changes.

In accordance with law and rules, and in accordance with our own philosophies, no child of God will ever be subject to corporal punishment.



Staff

The RELC Staff is committed to providing quality care and education. They are certified in CPR/First Aid and are all Mandatory Reporters (as described under Department of Child and Family Service policy).

Staffing

Minimum staffing as required by the Department of Children and Family Services will be maintained.

Infants	1 teacher to 4 children
Toddlers	1 teacher to 5 children
2 year olds	1 teacher to 8 children
3 year olds	1 teacher to 10 children
4-6 year olds	1 teacher to 10 children



Abuse and Neglect Policy

All caregivers must report to the proper authorities any suspected abuse (physical, sexual, or emotional) or neglect.

Indicators of Abuse

1. The child shows evidence of repeated injuries.
2. The history is not consistent with the injuries.
3. The child has unexplained and suspicious injuries.
4. The injuries are handprint or fingerprint markings, welts, scars and or burns.

Center Policy for Mandatory Reporting

When indicators appear, the staff member will notify the director of their concern, and consult the Department of Children and Family Services. Staff is obligated by law to report any suspected abuse to DCFS within 24 hours, and the telephone report will be followed by a written report.

Confidentiality

RELC respects the right of each family to have privacy and confidentiality regarding health, behavioral, and developmental records. No employee may disclose names of children involved in an incident. Department of Children and Family Services has the legal right to inspect the files of all children attending the center at any time.

Smoke Free Environment

In the best interest of the children and in accordance with state law, RELC maintains a smoke free environment. Smoking is prohibited within 15 feet of the building.

Pest Control

A pesticide management company inspects the facility monthly. Scheduling is handled through the building supervisor. All treatments are done when the children are NOT present and classrooms are professionally treated.



Hours of Operation

Childcare

Childcare serves children six weeks - six years of age and is operated Monday - Friday (7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. mid-August through May, and 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. June through mid-August)

Preschool

Preschool operates on a school year calendar with classes offered from 8:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. Monday through Friday. RELC has eight classrooms where the children have the opportunity to learn and grow in an environment that promotes God's love, self-confidence, social competence, and a lifetime love of learning.

Sign-in/Sign-out

As a registered center, we are required to document when children are attending the center, therefore, children are to be signed in and out at their time of arrival and departure. The person responsible for dropping off and picking up the child will be responsible for ensuring sign-in/sign-out is completed each day.

Late Pick-Up Charge

Any child picked up past the center's closing hours will be charged \$10.00 for every additional 15 minutes thereafter, and the late fee will increase in \$10.00 increments per child. After 15 minutes, attempts will be made to reach parents. If parents cannot be reached, emergency contacts supplied by parents will be notified. If contact is not made, additional calls will be made at five minute intervals. If there has been no contact by 6:00 p.m, outside authorities, such as police or DCFS will be contacted. The child will remain with childcare personnel until authorities arrive and will be shielded from blame and discussion about the incident.

Person Authorized to Pick up Child

At the time of enrollment, parents must provide the names of persons authorized to pick up their child. It is the parent or guardian's responsibility to inform the center of any changes in the names of the persons authorized. The center will release children to authorized persons only. If necessary, the center may request a photo I.D. or other official identification before the child is released. If someone other than an authorized person (as indicated on the enrollment form) is to pick up a child, the center must be notified in writing. Children will only be released to authorized adults. Copies of legal documents must be provided to the RELC Director before any staff member can actively prevent a parent or legal guardian from picking up their child.

Intoxicated parents or drivers will be discouraged from taking their child from the center. If a staff member suspects a parent or driver is intoxicated, the police will be called.



Tuition and Fees

Caring for children is a tremendous and challenging responsibility. First and foremost, RELC is a ministry, serving the Lord by providing a nurturing environment for His children. However, we also must run the center as a business in order to provide for our families. Tuition not only pays our staff to plan and implement the program, but it is also used to purchase food, equipment, toys, books, crafts, and supplies. It is extremely important that tuition payments are made according to the policies set forth.

Registration fee is due at the time of enrollment/re-enrollment. Registration fees are not refundable. Full payment is due whether child is present or not.

- Childcare statements are emailed on Thursdays.
- Preschool statements are emailed on the first day of each month.
- Members of Redeemer Lutheran Church will be given a \$10.00 discount on weekly and monthly payments.
- Family discount: A \$10 discount will be given per child for families with two or more children enrolled.
- All tuition/childcare payments will be collected by check, cash, or through the RLC App. If you choose to pay electronically you will need to include the service fee (1% for ACH bank transactions or 3% for credit card transactions).
- Childcare fees are due weekly and preschool tuition is due by the 10th of the month. If no funds are available on two consecutive occasions, RELC will require the account be brought up to date and the child will be dismissed until the account is current. There will be a \$30.00 NSF (non-sufficient funds) charge for declined credit cards.

Late Tuition Payment Policy

A \$25 late fee will be charged to your account if tuition is not paid by the end of the month.

Past due accounts will be addressed to the RELC board. The board and the director will discuss the appropriate actions to be made. Termination of services may result if payments are not paid regularly.

IRS Statement

Redeemer Early Learning Center will provide itemized statements for tax purposes. A statement will be available with the Federal I.D. number prior to January 31st upon request.

Sick/Vacation Days (*childcare families only*)

RELc understands that there are circumstances that may arise in which a child may not attend childcare. Each child has sick/vacation days based on your contract, and will receive equivalent days off based on your contracted days. For example, if your normal contract is three days a week, then you will receive three sick/vacation days. A sick/vacation day request needs to be emailed. If you use all of your days, you will be charged for days not in attendance.



Holiday and Billing

In the event the center is closed in observance of a holiday and your child is contracted to be in attendance on that day, you will be billed for that day. For example: If the 4th of July falls on a Thursday and your child would usually attend childcare on Thursday, you will be billed for the day.

The following are the Holidays the center observes:

- New Year's Day
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- Memorial Day
- 4th Of July
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Vacation-in between Christmas and New Year's (no charge)
- Two Institute Days

If a holiday falls on a Saturday, the center will be closed in observance of the holiday on Friday. If a holiday falls on a Sunday, the center will be closed in observance on Monday. The director will post reminders in the event the center will be closed for any of these holidays.

Weather/Evacuation Days

If it becomes necessary to close the center due to extreme conditions in the weather, a notice of closing will be given over local television stations. If Concordia Lutheran School closes, the Early Learning Center will be closed as well. The safety for children and staff is the prime concern and we ask for understanding in these situations.

In case of an emergency that requires the evacuation of the building such as a fire, earthquake, or bomb threat, a notice will be given over local television and radio stations as to where to pick up your child/children. A natural disaster will be the only time a child might be kept at the center overnight. The center staff talks to the children about safety and prevention in emergencies, and the children are instructed on procedures to follow when various situations occur. The center also stresses that families talk about and practice safety procedures for these situations at home.



It is extremely important that center staff be able to contact parents by phone in case of illness, injury, or other situations. It is the parent's responsibility to inform the center of changes in home, work, or cell phone numbers and home addresses. It is imperative that the center is able to contact a parent or guardian at any time their child is at the center.

Enrollment Forms

We are required by The Department of Children and Family Services to have the following forms on site and signed by parents/guardians:

- Enrollment Information
- Physical Examination-to be filled out by a doctor
- Immunization Form
- Copy of Official Birth Certificate (Public Health or Court House)
- Pick-Up Permission
- Abandonment Policy
- Travel and Activity Authorization Form
- Picture Release Form
- Parental Emergency Medical Consent
- Medication Authorization-if applicable
- Allergy Medical Form- if applicable
- Signed verification of the Summary of Licensing Standards for Day Care Centers
- Signed copy of Parent/Guardian acknowledgement statement

Discontinuation of Services by the Parents

When parents decide to terminate preschool/childcare, a two-week notice in writing is requested. This statement shall indicate the date of termination of care and the reason for leaving. We recognize that not every situation is appropriate for every child. If for any reason this center is found to be unsatisfactory for any particular child, we will make every effort to discuss this with the parents in order to determine the cause(s). Sometimes we can help the child or staff to make adjustments. If this is not possible, the parents may choose to terminate the contract immediately.

Discontinuation of Services by RELC

If the staff does not feel that the center is meeting the child's needs, we reserve the right to terminate the care arrangement on a timeline that is in the child's best interest. Other reasons that may result in the termination of a contract:

- Non-payment of services.
- Lack of cooperation from parents with the center's efforts to resolve differences and/or to meet the child's needs through parent/staff conferences.
- Abusive behavior and or verbal threats by parents toward center staff, children or other parents.
- Parents disciplining other children at the center.
- A child exhibits needs that the center can not meet.
- A child exhibits behaviors that are a threat to other children attending the center.



Private Property and Damage

Upon arrival, each child will be given a labeled hook and cubby for personal belongings and schoolwork. Any personal belongings brought to the center are to be placed in the child's personal cubby. At the teacher's discretion, their items may be brought out in the classroom. Toys and items of value should remain at home. We cannot and will not assume responsibility for materials brought from home. If the item is lost or stolen, we will assist in trying to locate the item, but will not be responsible for the item.

Supplies

Please mark all personal articles with child's name. Each childcare child needs the following items:

- Blanket (not too large please)
- Complete change of clothes to be on hand at the center
- Diapers
- Jacket

Lunch and Snacks

The center is required to follow the guidelines set forth by the Department of Children and Family Services and the Peoria County Health Department. In doing so, we provide the following:

- Breakfast: Served between 7:30-8:30 a.m. and will include fruit or 100% juice, bread/cereal, and 1% milk.
- Morning Snack: Served at 10:00 a.m. The snack will include a combination of two of the following components: fruit, vegetable, 100% juice, a milk component, or a bread/cereal component.
- Lunch: Served between 11:45-12:15 p.m. The lunch will include milk, fruit, vegetable, bread/grain component, and meat or protein serving
- Afternoon Snack: Served between 3:00-3:30 p.m. and will include a combination of two of the following components: fruit, vegetable, 100% juice, a milk component, or a bread/cereal component.

It is against the Public Health Department Policy to bring outside food into the center. The only exception is special dietetic foods which must be accompanied by a medical note from a certified Doctor. Treats for special occasions or preschool morning snacks are acceptable as long as the item is a store or bakery bought product, nut free, and there is enough for the whole class. Food from home is NOT to be eaten during a meal.

Parent Involvement

RELC encourages all parents to be involved in their child's preschool/childcare. We have an open door policy where parents/guardians are allowed in their child's classroom at all times. We encourage parents to visit, help teachers, attend field trips, read to the class, or just come play with their children. There are opportunities for parents to help with special events throughout the year. Please watch the newsletters for more information.

Care of Environment/Children

The goal of the center's cleanliness policies and procedures is to maintain an environment that minimizes the risk of contraction or spread of illness. Maintaining a clean and sanitary environment is the responsibility of the custodial staff and Early Learning Center staff. RELC does ask that parents help stop the spread of illness by washing your children's hands frequently and bathing them regularly. Children's hands should be washed upon arrival in their classroom.



If your child has allergies, please discuss this with the director and the childcare provider at the time of enrollment. Please fill out an Allergy Action Plan that is available in the office. We will make every effort to accommodate your child's needs. If your child has a food allergy, a form completed by your doctor must be in your child's file.

Nap and Rest Policy

Naps and rest are appropriate and necessary activities of children. Upon entry to the childcare program, the parents and teacher will discuss the child's needs and habits. It is a DCFS requirement that each child participates in and cooperates with this part of our day. Children in all rooms will have a rest period.

Indoor/Outdoor Play

Children will play outdoors daily (including in the winter) as weather permits. Please provide appropriate clothing. If weather prohibits children from outside play, the children will be in either the Life Center (gym) or the green room.

Newsletters

Director newsletters are issued monthly to help keep parents informed of the activities that will be happening at the center. Information for the parents will include notices of meetings, fundraisers, and reminders. Preschool teachers will prepare a weekly newsletter for parents. Please read them carefully as there are important dates and information in them.

Field Trips

Field trips are an important part of learning. Children three years old and older will participate in field trips. Transportation for field trips will be provided by a contracted bus company. Parents will receive advance notice of field trips.

Accidents/Incidents

Staff will fill out an Accident/Incident report on any injury or incident that occurs involving your child while at the center. One copy will be given to the parents and the other will be placed in the child's file at the center. If your child received an injury at the center and you did not receive a report, please notify the center as soon as possible.

Toilet Training

The center believes the parents should start toilet training at home. We will support your efforts to help your child become trained and will make every effort to follow your directions to ensure consistency between home and the center whenever possible. It is not the responsibility of the center staff alone to toilet train your child. We must work as partners to accomplish this goal.

Soiled Clothing

The Center for Disease Control in the United States Public Health Services requires that clothing or cloth diapers soiled with bodily fluids (stools, urine, vomit, and blood) need to be placed, un-rinsed, in a sealed plastic bag, labeled with the child's name. Parents/caregivers need to pick up the soiled clothing by the end of the day. RELC follows these recommended precautionary guidelines for the safety of the children and the staff. You are asked to bring a change of clothing for your child in case of such a situation.



Authorized staff will dispense medication when a parent or guardian has completed a Medication Permission Form. This form includes both prescription and non-prescription medications and MUST be signed by the parent or guardian. Prescription medication must be in the original container with the doctor's instructions and name of the patient on it. Staff will keep a daily log of medication given. Over-the-counter medication must be in the original container with a signed medication administration form.

Sick Policy

Our policy for the care of ill children is based on ensuring that staff available can meet the needs of all children at the center. Children will be excluded if the child's symptoms or illness prevent the child from participation in routine activities; and/or

- The child has a fever of 101 degrees F or higher.
- The illness poses an increased risk to the child, other children, or adults with whom the child comes in contact.

Please do not bring your child to the center if they are not well enough to participate in normal activities, have been exposed to a contagious disease, or are diagnosed with a contagious disease. Should your child become ill during the day you will be notified as soon as possible. Upon notification, parents are required to make arrangements to have your child picked up within one hour. In cases where the parents are not available, persons listed as emergency caregiver will be contacted. In the event of a serious illness or injury, at the discretion of the director or the designee, paramedics will be called and your child will be transported to an emergency medical facility. If antibiotics are prescribed, your child must be on antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to school.

The Center asks you to keep your child home if he/she is experiencing any of the following conditions or illnesses preventing them from participating comfortably in program activities. Symptoms may be, but are not limited to, the following:

- Unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, or other signs of possible severe illness.
- Fever (oral temperature of 101 degrees F or higher). The child must be fever free for 24 hours without a fever reducer in their system.
- Pink Eye. Stay home until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.
- Diarrhea. Three or more loose bowels in one hour not associated with changes of diet or medicine. Child must be symptom free for 24 hours.
- Vomiting. Must be symptom free for 24 hours.
- Hand Foot & Mouth Disease. Must be fever free for 24 hours and all blisters gone or scabbed over.
- Undiagnosed skin rash
- Mouth sores with drooling
- Strep Throat. Stay home until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated and until the child has been fever free for 24 hours without fever reducer in their system.
- Chicken Pox (varicella). Remain home until all blisters have scabs.
- Whooping cough. Remain home until five days of antibiotic treatment has been completed.
- Mumps. Remain home until nine days after onset of parotid gland swelling.
- Measles. Remain home four days after disappearance of the rash.
- RSV/Croup. Return with a signed doctor's note.
- Any communicable illness.
- COVID – CDC has lifted the quarantine for those exposed to COVID-19. Rather, anyone exposed to someone with COVID should wear a well-fitted mask when around others at home or indoors in public for 10 days, monitor for symptoms and test if symptoms develop at least five days after your last exposure.

Head Lice

- Treatment must be completed. No live lice are seen. Before going into a classroom they must be checked by a staff member. Child will be checked again in two weeks to ensure the problem has been resolved.
- We enforce a "NO NIT" policy. If your child acquires head lice, they need to be free of any nits before they may return to daycare. This is required due to the fact that the current treatments may not destroy the eggs if they are not in the correct growth stage. Please consider treating personal items in your home to eliminate the nits and lice.

Behavior Guidelines



RELC promotes a Christ-like approach to managing and praising the behavior of all children. Discipline at the center has two primary goals. First, we strive to find a solution to the current situation. Second, we attempt to help the child process feelings, recognize consequences, explore alternative solutions/outcomes, and develop internal self-control with the help of God. To accomplish these goals, we use the following techniques:

- Set limits and expectations.
- Prevention. A well designed and equipped classroom with daily routines that provide enough time for play, a sense of security, little waiting, and few transitions.
- Positive Redirection. Redirecting unacceptable behavior to an acceptable alternative.
- Modeling. Teacher models appropriate behavior and communication.

Under NO CIRCUMSTANCES will there be any spanking, physical abuse, verbal abuse, name calling, or isolation used. Neither food nor sleep will ever be withheld from children as a means of punishment.

A child who continually hurts others will be removed from the program. The following steps will be taken before the child is removed from the program:

1. Parents will be notified of persistent behavior problems.
2. Parents will meet with the teacher and director to discuss the problem situation and come up with an action plan.
3. If, after one month or a time specified by the teacher and director, no improvement is evidenced, the child will be removed from the program.

Communication between the child, teacher, and parents is extremely important for self-esteem, trust, and growth to take place.



We incorporate a wide variety of teaching methods and materials in the Infant and Toddler rooms. Infant and toddlers learn directly through their senses operating within their environment. We create our weekly curriculum and monthly themes with this in mind. The core of our curriculum focus is on sensory input experience. We regularly go outside, go for walks, listen to a variety of music throughout the day, make art projects, sing silly songs, and read a lot of books!

Daily Schedules

The daily routine for children is based on the age of your child. Infants follow their own biological needs. They are fed, changed, and nap when they need it. Toddlers are changed/taken to the toilet before transitions in the day and as needed. Adjustments to the schedule are made as your child gets older and his/her needs change.

Formula & Milk

Parents may choose to provide formula or breast milk for their child. All formula containers must be labeled with child's name. Whole milk is provided for children over 12 months of age. At the age of 2 years old and over, USDA requires 1% or skim milk.

Breast Milk

Breastfeeding mothers are welcome to do so within Redeemer's setting. Staff supports the practice by willingly accepting bottles of breast milk, by allowing, even encouraging, the mother to drop by for feedings. Fresh breast milk will be stored up to 48 hours in the refrigerator. Parents may also bring breast milk to Redeemer to be stored for up to two weeks frozen. Containers must be clearly marked with your child's name and the date. Milk that exceeds this time frame will be discarded. Contents remaining in any bottle after feeding will be discarded within two hours.

If your child is breastfed and a parent forgets to bring in breast milk or the frozen supply is depleted, the infant will be fed formula. We will try to get in touch with you first to see if breast milk can be supplied soon; however, if we are unable to get in touch with you and your child is hungry, we will feed him or her the formula served at the center.

Bottles

Parents of bottle-fed babies will need to provide 2-3 labeled plastic bottles, nipples, lids, and liners. Glass bottles are not to be brought to the center. Only breast milk, formula, or water will be placed in your child's bottle. No bottles will be served with cereal or any other food product in them.

We use Peoria city water to make the formula for the infants. Bottles will be warmed by placing them in warm water, rather than heated in the microwave, as this can produce "hot spots" in the formula or breast milk.

Infants and Meal Time

Young infants will be fed according to their own schedule. As they grow and start eating solid foods, their eating needs will change and the eating times will be adjusted toward the group schedule. During lunch, infants not yet eating table food will be served cereals and jarred foods.

As your infant grows and becomes more adept at eating, he will be using his fingers for eating "finger-foods" and working on using infant utensils. The center will provide table food according to our menu.

Older Infants and Toddlers and Meal Time



Children who are 12 months and older will be given the lunches and snacks that are being served and drink whole milk. At the age of 2 years old and over, USDA requires 1% or skim milk.

The Food Program allows one month after a child's first birthday to continue with formula. If formula is to be served past age 13 months, then a doctor's note must be in your child's file. Breast milk is considered the equivalent to cow's milk and does not require the note from your child's doctor to continue.

The older infants will be sitting in chairs with trays or a low table with chairs; toddlers will be at tables and chairs to eat their meals. Children in the Toddler Room (and some infants) will be using sippy cups and using utensils.

A child needs to have a medical condition specifying an allergy or intolerance to a food for the center to not be able to serve a particular food to that child. It is a goal of the RELC to provide nutritious menu items that are healthy food choices for children and still maintain Food Program standards.

Naptime

Infants nap according to their own schedules. If an infant should fall asleep while being rocked, lightly bounced, or taken for walk in a stroller, they will be put in their cribs to continue their sleep. When a child reaches 15 months, cot sleeping will be encouraged. Staff will position infants under the age of 12 months on their backs when placed in cribs to sleep unless there is a medical reason the child should sleep in a different position. Positioning infants on their back to sleep will decrease the risk of SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome).

Staff will:

- Lay infants on their backs to sleep
- Require a note from the child's medical doctor stating why an alternative sleep position is needed if families request other sleep positions, ex- swaddled, on side, on stomach, etc. Any positioning device will also require a note from the medical doctor stating the need.
- Use cribs only with firm, tight-fitting mattresses and no bumper pads.
- Remove all pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, stuffed toys, and other soft products from the crib.
- Keep the infant's head uncovered during sleep.
- Dress the infant depending on the room temperature and will not overdress the infant.
- Supervise sleeping infants.
- Allow infants that can easily turn over from the supine position to the prone position to be positioned on their backs, but allow the infants to adapt to whatever position they prefer to sleep.

Toddlers rest following lunch. Children will need their own blanket for rest and can bring a soft toy to cuddle. Teachers hold children, rock, rub backs, play soft music and help children relax at naptime.

Diapering

Parents will provide all diapers for their child(ren) in the Infant and Toddler classrooms. Redeemer will provide *the* wipes. If you prefer a different brand of wipes, you must provide your own and they must be labeled with your child's name. Your child will be changed at regular intervals throughout the day and as needed. For parents who wish not to use disposable diapers, cloth diapers are allowed at the Center.

"Shoe-Free" Environment for the Infant Room



With infants commonly on the floor, RELC wants to provide a clean, safe, and healthy environment in the Infant Rooms. We practice a "shoe-free" policy in this room. We ask that adults entering the infant room please slip a pair of shoe covers over their shoes or remove their shoes. We take this action to prevent outside contaminants from being brought into the room and spread onto the carpet, particularly during the cold weather with the snow and salt. The infants spend much of their time exploring on the floor, so it is best that these areas be kept as clean as possible.

Parent Involvement and Communication

We have an open door policy in our classrooms. Parent/guardians are encouraged and welcome to visit and spend time with their child. For some children, a second goodbye is more than they can handle. If your leaving is stressful to your child, it may be best not to come visit unless you are planning to take your child with you when you leave.

Parent/guardians receive a daily report concerning diaper changes, eating, and napping using the Bright Wheel app.

Belongings

Each child will have his/her own cubby. That is your space to use for extra items. This is also a place where teachers/directors will be putting children's artwork, newsletters, and other information. Please only put items in the cubby that fit, and check it each day. For diapers, wipes, and extra items that do not fit in the cubby, we have a closet where we will happily store items for you. Please remember to label all your child's belongings with first and last name.



Biting Policy

Children biting other children are unavoidable occurrences of group childcare, especially with toddlers. It is a common happening in any childcare program. When it happens, and sometimes continues, it can be scary, frustrating, and very stressful for children, parents, and staff. It is important to understand that because a child bites, it does not mean that the child is “mean” or “bad” or that the parents of the child who bites are “bad” parents or they are not doing their job as parents to make this stop happening. Biting is purely a sign of the developmental age of the child. It is a developmental phenomenon and it often happens at predictable times for predictable reasons tied to children’s ages and stages.

Why do they bite?

Every child is different. Some bite more than others; or some may not bite at all. The group care setting is where the biting derives its significance. If a child has not really been around other children very much, he probably would not bite because neither the cause nor opportunities for biting have presented themselves. There is always the possibility that any child, including your own, can either be a biter or be bitten. Group care presents challenges and opportunities that are unique from home. The children are surrounded by others for hours at a time.

Even though there are plenty of toys and materials available for all the children, two or three children may want that one particular toy. The children are learning how to live in a community setting. Sometimes that is not easy. Biting is not something to blame on the child, parents, or caregivers. Confidentiality is also practiced with biting. We cannot tell a parent who bit their child. There are many possible reasons as to why an infant or toddler may bite:

1. Teething.
2. Impulsiveness and lack of control. Babies sometimes bite just because there is something there to bite. It is not intentional to hurt, but rather exploring their world.
3. Making an impact. Sometimes children will bite to see what reactions happen.
4. Excitement and overstimulation. Simply being very excited, even happily so, can be a reason a child may bite. Very young children don’t have the same control over their emotions and behaviors as some preschoolers.
5. Frustration. Frustrations can be over a variety of reasons: wanting a toy someone else has, not having the skills needed to do something, or wanting a caregiver’s attention. Infants and toddlers are simply lacking the language and social skills necessary to express all their needs, desires, and problems. Biting will often be the quickest and easiest way of communicating.



What do the teachers do in response to children who bite?

It is our job to provide a safe setting in which no child needs to hurt another to achieve his or her ends and in which the normal range of behavior is managed (and biting is normal in group care). Again, the name of the child who bites will not be released because it serves no useful purpose and can make a difficult situation even more difficult. Punishment does not work to change a child who bites: neither delayed punishment at home, which a child will not understand, nor punishment at the center, which will not be used and would make the situation worse.

There are several things the teachers do to assess the biting situation and what can be done to prevent it from happening again. Teachers can try to minimize the behavior by:

- Letting the biting child know in words and manner that biting is unacceptable.
- Avoiding any immediate response that reinforces the biting, including dramatic negative attention. The teachers will tell the child that "biting hurts" and the focus of caring attention is on the bitten child. The biter is talked to on a level that s/he can understand. The teacher will help the child work on resolving conflict or frustration in a more appropriate manner, including using language, if the child is able.
- Examining the context in which the biting occurred and looking for patterns. Was it crowded? Too many toys? Was the biting child getting hungry/tired/frustrated?
- Not casually attributing willfulness or maliciousness to the child. Infants explore anything that interests them with their mouths, and that includes others' bodies and limbs!
- When biting changes from a relatively unusual occurrence (a couple times a week) to a frequent and expected occurrence, it will be addressed with added precautions.
- The teachers will keep track of every occurrence, including attempted bites, and note location, time, participants, and circumstances.
- The teachers will "shadow" children who indicate a tendency to bite. This technique involves having a teacher with a child who bites. This teacher would be able to then anticipate biting situations and to teach non-biting responses to situations and reinforce appropriate behavior in potential biting situations.
- The teachers may consider changes to the room environment that may minimize congestion, commotion, competition for toys and materials, or child frustration.



PARENT/GUARDIAN ACKNOWLEDGMENT STATEMENT FOR HANDBOOK AND DISCIPLINE POLICIES

I/We, the undersigned, acknowledge the receipt of a copy of RELC's Parent Handbook. I/We have read and understand the policies and procedures contained therein, and agree to those terms for the admission of our child(ren) to the school. We have also read and understand the Guidance and Discipline policies contained therein, and agree to these terms for the admission of a child(ren) to the school. I acknowledge and agree to cooperate and assist the staff and personnel to promote and further the development of my/our child(ren) while in the care of Redeemer Early Learning Center.

Child's name: _____

Parent(s) / Guardian(s): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Date



SECTION 407.270 GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE

This section comes from the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. Redeemer is required to supply you with the Guidance and Discipline Procedure.

The day care center shall develop a guidance and discipline policy for staff use that is also provided to parents. Staff shall sign the guidance and discipline policy at the time of employment and parents shall sign the policy when their child is enrolled. The policy shall include:

1. A statement of the center's philosophy regarding guidance and discipline;
2. Information on how discipline will be implemented by staff;
3. Information on how parents will be involved in the guidance and discipline process;
4. Information on how children will be involved in the guidance and discipline process; and
5. Written procedures for termination of a child's enrollment in the day care center because of disciplinary issues.

Written rules for all children shall be established and available to children, parents and staff. These rules shall set the limits of behavior required for the protection of the group and individuals. The rules shall:

1. Pertain to important situations;
2. Be understandable to children;
3. Be stated in the positive form whenever possible; and
4. Be enforceable.

Child care staff shall help individual children develop self-control and assume responsibility for their own actions.

1. Limits and consequences shall be clear and understandable to the child, consistently enforced and explained to the child before and as part of any disciplinary action.
2. Discipline shall be developmentally appropriate and logically related to the child's act and shall not be out of proportion to the particular inappropriate behavior. The child shall be made aware of the relationship between the act and the consequences.
3. Firm positive statements about behaviors or redirection of behaviors shall be the accepted techniques for use with infants and toddlers.
4. Removal from the group to help a child gain control shall not exceed one minute per year of age. Removal from the group shall not be used for children less than 24 months of age.
5. Children shall not be disciplined for toilet accidents.

The following behaviors are prohibited in all child care settings:

1. Corporal punishment, including hitting, spanking, swatting, beating, shaking, pinching and other measures intended to induce physical pain or fear;
2. Threatened or actual withdrawal of food, rest or use of the bathroom;
3. Abusive or profane language;
4. Any form of public or private humiliation, including threats of physical punishment; and
5. Any form of emotional abuse, including shaming, rejecting, terrorizing, or isolating a child.
6. Preschool and school-age children shall have reasonable opportunity to resolve their own conflicts.
7. Discipline shall be the responsibility of adults who have an ongoing relationship with the child.
8. When there is a specific plan for responding to a child's pattern of unacceptable behavior, all staff who affect the child shall be aware of the plan and cooperate in its implementation.
9. Clinical behavior management plans may be developed to meet the needs of a particular child if developed with the parent and a professional clinician. This must be documented in the child's file. All staff working with the child shall receive training on implementing the plan.

(Source: Added at 22 Ill. Reg. 1728, effective January 1, 1998)

Once again, we welcome you and your child/children to Redeemer Early Learning Center. We hope you have an enjoyable experience with us! If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me in the office.

Sue Skahill

Director

(309) 691-2333 ext.115

sue.skahill@redeemerlutheran.com



Preschool & Childcare

REDEEMER

Early Learning Center