



# **PARENT HANDBOOK 2011-2012**

Little Learners at Washburn Tech  
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## **Welcome**

Welcome to Little Learners at Washburn Tech. We are excited you have chosen us to care for and teach your children.

We are fully licensed by the state of Kansas, and staffed with highly trained child care professionals dedicated to caring for and educating young children. In addition, we are fortunate to have students who are pursuing careers in Child Care to work with the children.

Our role is not only to facilitate the learning of children, parents, and one another, but also to work as partners to the important work of Washburn Tech staff and students. We are pleased to be a part of these endeavors.

Families are an important part of our center. We believe that good communication between our staff and parents is essential to providing quality care to the children we serve. Please feel free to contact us at any time regarding questions, concerns, or comments you may have.

Parents are encouraged to attend an orientation prior to their child/ren's first day of care. This gives the parents an opportunity to see the facility, meet the staff, review necessary paperwork, and have initial questions answered.

Please read this handbook carefully, and keep it available for future reference. When you enroll your child at Little Learners at Washburn Tech, you are agreeing to abide by the policies set forth in this handbook.

## Overview of Program

Little Learners at Washburn Tech was created to serve a distinct population. Our on-site child care center primarily provides child care services for the school's staff and students, although we welcome children of parents not affiliated with Washburn Tech as well.

Since our center is a child care lab staffed by not only child care professionals but also Washburn Tech Child Care students, we have a unique ability to provide much smaller staff/child ratios than other child care facilities which provides more individualized attention for each child. The Child Care students are receiving academic instruction and then being able to immediately employ their new knowledge and skills in the child care center. The students will plan learning experiences to help develop each child's physical, cognitive, social, and emotional skills.

Our center is proud to have knowledgeable, highly trained caregivers who are committed to providing a safe, warm, nurturing environment in which the children may learn, grow, and reach their full potential. The team carefully evaluates staff and student performance to insure that the children are being provided age-appropriate, enriching learning experiences that meet each child's developmental level.

Our facility also partners with other Washburn Tech programs. Students from other Washburn Tech programs, such as nursing students learning about pediatric care, may occasionally observe in our center. All employees, students, and volunteers are carefully screened, and their information is kept on file.

The center is set up with learning centers such as art, computers, manipulatives, block play, science, language arts, and dramatic play where the children are in small groups. We also have large group times when the children listen to stories, sing songs, and play active games. We have an outdoor playground for large motor development and a nutrition area with a full service kitchen to teach good eating habits.

## **Philosophy**

The goal of Washburn Tech Child Care Center is to provide a safe, nurturing environment where children can learn and grow at his or her own pace.

Developmentally appropriate activities are provided for both structured and free choice activities. We strive to foster an environment where children can develop a positive self-concept through their interactions with staff as well as their fellow playmates.

We believe in the dignity of each child and work to instill that respect for others in the children cared for at our center.

## Admission Policy

Little Learners at Washburn Tech is available to Washburn Tech staff and students. We also accept children of parents not affiliated with Washburn Tech, although preference for care openings is offered to those currently attending school at or employed by Washburn Tech.

If care is needed, but there are no available openings, parents may ask to have their child/ren put on our waiting list and we will contact them when an opening becomes available.

We are licensed for two separate units of care. Our toddler unit is designed to care for children from age eighteen months to three years of age until potty trained. Our preschool unit is attended by children from three years of age and able to handle their own bathroom needs to kindergarten.

Upon acceptance into the center, parents must complete an enrollment packet. This packet includes a parent and child information form, a medical record form, a physician's printout of all immunizations, a certificate of health assessment to be completed by a medical professional, an authorization for emergency care, a photo release form, and a Parent Handbook agreement form. **All forms must be on file with the center before the child is able to attend.** It is the parents' responsibility to notify center staff of any changes that need to be made (i.e. address, phone number, insurance) as well as providing us an updated immunization record when necessary. This information is essential in case of an emergency.

The first three weeks of care is considered a trial period in which the child adjusts to the center and the children cared for. During this period of time, if the parents or the center decide that the child is not adjusting, either party may decide to terminate care without any notice. After the initial trial period, parents need to provide at least a two week notice if they decide to withdraw from the child care center. If a child permanently withdraws from care, unused days will be deducted from the billing.

## Hours of Operation

**STUDENTS:** Little Learners at Washburn Tech is open for care Monday through Friday from 7:45 a.m. to 3:10 p.m. for students. These hours provide students 15 minutes before and after classes begin and end to drop off and pick up their child/ren. If a parent needs care before or after that time in order to meet with a teacher, etc., staff must be notified the day before to assure that we are adequately staffed to care for the child. Students involved in clinicals will be allowed care for their child/ren 45 minutes before and after their scheduled clinical for drop off and pick up of their child/ren, but only on the days the student is actually participating in clinical training.

**STAFF:** Staff using our center will be able to drop their child/ren off at 7:30 a.m. and pick up by 4:00 p.m. to allow them preparation and clean-up time in their classroom before and after class.

**COMMUNITY:** The center is open for care from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. for community parents. This is to accommodate varying work schedules. Individual schedules will be determined by the working hours of each child's parents. If a parent needs care before or after his/her normally scheduled hours, staff must be notified the day before to assure that the center is adequately staffed.

Lunch is served to children attending all day at approximately 11:15 a.m. Snack is served at approximately 9:00 a.m. and 1:40 p.m. Breakfast is served to children of parents involved in clinicals at approximately 7:15 a.m. In order to adequately plan for meals, please notify the center as soon as possible if your child/ren will not be attending.

The center is open whenever the campus buildings are open. A schedule for the year as well as monthly calendars will be provided to parents. If it is a day in which classes are not in session, parents must notify the director at least a week in advance if their child/ren will be attending to make sure the center is adequately staffed. Although the center staff will attempt to contact parents in advance of these days to determine their child's attendance, it is ultimately the parents' responsibility to notify the center. Please keep the schedule handy so it can be referred to when necessary.

## Fees

Little Learners at Washburn Tech will bill for care on the first working day of the week. Actual fees differ based on whether the child is scheduled to attend on a full-time or part-time basis, whether the child is cared for in the toddler or preschool area, and whether the parent is a student, staff, or community member.

Little Learners at Washburn Tech does assess an enrollment fee equal to one full week of care for each child and is imposed when parents sign the parent agreement. This fee is non-refundable if the child does not attend, but is credited to the first week of care when the child begins. No spot will be held until this enrollment fee is paid.

Parents are charged for each regularly scheduled day of care the center is open regardless of whether the child attended. Billing for shortened weeks, such as Thanksgiving, will be billed for the number of days the center is open. If a child is absent for more than three consecutive days, arrangements may be made with the Director with regard to billing and will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Parents will be billed electronically for the services. Payments are made in the cashier's office in the STEP office. **Child care staff does not handle the fees.**

Payment must be made by the last working day of the week following the billing. A due date will be included on all bills. Failure to pay by the due date will result in termination of child care services until payment in full is made. In addition, a \$10 charge per week of delinquency will be assessed each Monday after payment is due. In addition, late fees will be imposed to parents arriving after their scheduled pick up time. Parents will be charged \$10 for every 10 minutes or portion thereof until they arrive to pick up their child. All late fees will be billed the following Monday with that week's billing. Program completion certificates will not be issued until all accounts are paid in full.

Little Learners at Washburn Tech does contract for services with SRS for qualifying parents. Contact child care staff for information.

## Communication

It is essential to the well-being of every child for parents and staff to function as a team. Please share any thoughts, concerns, or changes in your child's daily routine with center staff. Staff, in turn, will share as much information about your child's day as possible. At times, it may be necessary to schedule a short conference time. These may be held at any time throughout the year. Staff will use letters, calendars, and notes to share information such as upcoming events and supplies needed. Please check your child/ren's storage cubby daily so you can stay informed.

If your child/ren will be absent, please notify the center as soon as possible. Feel free to call the center at any time at 228-6359. If we are unable to answer the phone, please leave a message.

Parents are free to visit the center at any time, but please consider if this will cause undue stress to your child/ren or disrupt the daily routine of the children.

At the beginning of the year, arrival time can be a stressful time for both the parents and the children. When you drop off your child/ren, please give staff any necessary information, remind them you will be back later, tell them goodbye, and quietly leave. Lingering can make transitioning into the day more difficult for the child. Usually the child will adjust to the activities going on very quickly once the parents have departed. We will help that transition and contact you if needed.

Upon drop off and pick up, parents must sign their child/ren in and out of the center. Sign-in sheets will be posted in the entry way for the preschoolers and inside the toddler entrance for the toddlers.

Remember it is essential that all information is kept current. We must be able to reach you at all times. If on any given day you will not be available to pick up your child/ren in an emergency, please let us know who to contact first. Make sure that contact person knows he or she needs to be available at the contact number you provide.

## **Behavior Management and Discipline Policy**

Little Learners at Washburn Tech uses a positive approach to discipline. We promote and model instructive behavior guidance that will establish positive behaviors to assist each child's development and sense of self-worth. Positive reinforcement, redirection, verbalization, natural consequences, and calm-down times all work together to promote a safe environment for all the children.

All of the discipline methods serve to teach the child self-regulation and positive choices. The center complies with the state licensing regulations. No corporal punishment or discipline deemed harmful to the child will be used.

In general, no child will be allowed to hurt themselves, others, or property. If a child is being disruptive or violent, a parent will be notified and the child will be supervised in an area away from the other children.

All efforts to correct a child's inappropriate behavior will be made by the staff. It is vital that parents and staff work together to maintain open communication channels and a cooperative atmosphere in order to assist the child in learning alternatives to inappropriate behavior.

Little Learners at Washburn Tech does reserve the right to discontinue service at any time for behavior that threatens the safety of the other children, staff, or students.

## Health and Illness Policies

All medical conditions, allergies, etc. need to be noted on the medical record form. This includes any food allergies your child/ren may have.

The center's illness/exclusion policy focuses on the needs and behavior of the ill child and the ability of the staff to meet those needs without compromising the care and health of the other children. Children should be fully able to participate in all activities, including outdoor play. If a child is not well enough to go outdoors, he/she is probably not well enough to be in school.

Children should be kept at home if they are running a fever, have diarrhea, or any signs of a contagious or infectious illness. These may include, but are not limited to, rashes, conjunctivitis (pink eye), mouth sores, lice or scabies, severe coughing, or congestion. Please be respectful of the other children and families, and do not send an ill child into the facility.

Guidelines for exclusion of children from childcare are set by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, and must be followed. A copy of this form is provided upon enrollment.

If your child becomes ill during the day, you will be called to come and pick up your child immediately.

Children may be readmitted to the center under the following conditions:

A. With a physician's statement that the child is free from communicable disease, and that returning poses no risk to the child or others.

OR

B. If visibly free from communicable disease, free from fever without benefit of fever reducing medications for 24 hours, and free of vomiting and/or diarrhea for 24 hours while on a normal diet.

## **Safety and Emergencies**

It is important that parents list anyone authorized to pick up their child on the medical record form. Children will be released only to the persons listed in the child's file. It is helpful if the parents inform the staff if someone other than the usual person will be picking up the child. For the child/ren's safety, staff will ask for identification of anyone they do not recognize.

The center has monthly fire drills and monthly tornado drills during tornado season. Our emergency evacuation plan is posted by each exit.

Basic safety rules are reviewed regularly with staff, students, and children. Children are never unsupervised and there is always a supervising teacher present in each unit.

In case of a medical emergency, one staff member will stay with the child while another contacts the parent, administration, and ambulance, if needed. If the parent does not arrive before the ambulance, a staff member will go to the hospital with the child. That staff person will have the child's file as well in order to present necessary information to the hospital. Someone will stay with the child until a parent arrives and all questions have been answered for the hospital staff.

All children must have current immunizations and a current health assessment on file as of the first day of attendance. All Little Learners at Washburn Tech staff and Washburn Tech students are required to meet Kansas Licensing requirements including training in first aid, illness, and abuse and neglect. They also must pass a TB test and KBI check.

## **Medications, Dietary Considerations, and Nutrition**

Prescription and over-the-counter medications can be given only if the parent signs a center-supplied authorization form. Prescription medication must have a prescription label with the child's name and date on it. All medicines must be in the original containers. Medications will not be accessible to children and will be stored in a locked container or cabinet. Medication(s) cannot be left in bags or cubbies. Chapstick, sunscreen, diaper rash medications, etc. must follow these same guidelines and require a parent authorization form. Sample medications require written instructions from the doctor on a prescription form.

If a child's diet must be modified for health reasons, a physician's written statement is required. If a child's diet is modified for cultural or religious reasons, the parent is asked to put the request in writing. The center staff may not be able to accommodate every dietary restriction. If this occurs, parents may be asked to provide a substitution which staff will gladly serve.

The center provides two snacks and lunch every day. In addition, children of parents involved in clinicals will be provided breakfast before the rest of the children arrive. Center staff and Child Care program students plan and make the snacks and breakfast for the children. Our lunches are provided by the Culinary Arts department at Washburn Tech. These meals meet Kansas requirements and are nutritionally balanced.

No outside food or drinks are to be brought into the center. This includes candy and gum. If a child arrives with food items, he/she will be asked to sit at the snack table until the child is finished. For health and safety reasons, food may not be stored in the child's cubby.

On your child's birthday, parents are invited to provide a special "treat" for everyone to help us celebrate the special day. Please visit with staff with regard to quantity and appropriate items.

## Clothing

Please dress your child for a busy day of play. We will be painting, digging in dirt, climbing, crawling, and running. While we try to protect the children's clothing, accidents do happen, and children do get messy.

Clothing and shoes should be seasonally appropriate and provide safety on the playground and on walks. Appropriate play shoes are very important for your child's safety and comfort.

Parents must provide diapers and wipes for their toddler children.

Preschool children need to be able to handle their own bathroom needs. Their clothing should be easy for them to manage. Simple clothes, in which preschoolers can dress themselves, help build self-esteem and give them confidence to succeed in all areas of development. Pay close attention to any fasteners your child may have difficulty manipulating.

Licensing regulations require every child to have at least two changes of clothing in their cubby at all times. These clothes must be seasonally appropriate and include a shirt, pants/skirt, underwear, and socks. Take care to check the clothing regularly to ensure that size and season are appropriate. All clothing must be clearly marked with your child's name.

Since we are required to spend an amount of time outdoors daily, please remember to provide appropriate clothing. These may include hats, mittens, sweaters/jackets, and boots. For warm weather, dress your child in lightweight clothing so that he/she does not become overheated.

## **Outdoor Play**

Weather permitting, children will have outdoor play time each day as required by the state licensing regulations. Outdoor play is an integral part of each child's healthy growth and development so it is important that children have seasonally appropriate clothing and footwear at all times so they can safely enjoy this activity.

If the playground is too wet, children will take walks on a designated route on campus. This allows them to get much needed fresh air and change of scenery.

## **Naptime**

All children will rest quietly for at least one hour every day at approximately 2 p.m. Children who do not fall asleep may play quietly at 3 p.m.

Cots and bedding are provided for each child. If your child/ren rest best with a special blanket or soft toy from home, that item may be brought and kept in the cubby until naptime.

When arriving to pick up your child/ren, please be respectful of this rest time by entering quietly. If you need to speak on your cell phone or to staff, please do so in the office, classroom, or entry area.

## **Personal Possessions**

With the exception of a naptime item, please do not allow your children to bring personal items from home. By bringing them into the child care center, they are at risk of being damaged by another child which can lead to hard feelings.

Show and tell opportunities will be provided periodically for the children. The children may bring something from home on those days to talk about with the other children. Before and after show and tell, the item will be stored in the cubby.