

TLC Learning Center Family Handbook



Educational Services

Infant, Toddler & Preschool Program
Updated and approved July 2023

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WELCOME

Welcome to TLC Learning Center (TLC). We are happy to have your child with us and will do all we can to care for and encourage your child during these early years, while creating a sense of wonder and joy for learning. We recognize that all families come in different shapes and sizes, therefore, throughout this handbook the term “family” refers to a child’s primary adult caregivers who are responsible for caring for the child outside of the regular school day. We look forward to joining together as partners on this journey of supporting your child’s well-being and nurturing their growth through a sense of belonging within the classroom and TLC community.

HISTORY

Since 1956, TLC has been dedicated to maximizing the potential of neurodiverse children with developmental differences through specialized education and therapy, while also serving as a resource to their families.

In 1989, we expanded our program to include neurotypical children, as well. This has proven to be an extremely positive experience for all involved. As a result, we now strive to maintain a 40/60 ratio of neurodiverse and neurotypical children in our Preschool rooms and 20/80 ratio in our Infant and Toddler rooms. It is our goal to offer **ALL** children a chance to grow, play, and learn alongside one another in a nurturing, developmentally appropriate environment. In order to meet the individual needs of all children we offer a wide span of services in an integrated learning environment.

In 1997, TLC expanded its therapy program to provide Therapeutic Services to children from birth to 12 years of age. These services include occupational, physical, and speech and language therapy.

In 2014, we opened our doors to Infants and Toddlers. We are excited to be able to offer our exceptional programs to our community’s youngest learners.

While attending TLC’s outstanding program, your child will be nurtured by a dedicated team of highly qualified and experienced staff. The teachers, therapists, and assistants in all classrooms collaborate to offer a caring, enriching, and individualized high quality program to all children. We pride ourselves on providing ongoing, research-based, timely, and relevant professional learning to all staff to stay current and up-to-date in all programs.

VOLUNTEER HOURS

TLC was founded through the dedication and deep commitment of volunteer caregivers and it continues to thrive as a result of the incredible help we receive from caregivers, family members, and community volunteers. Service to the TLC community is one of the shared commitments and tenants that makes this program excellent.

Each family is expected to volunteer a minimum of 25 hours per year. There are many ways to be involved including but not limited to: joining the fundraising committee, donating needed items from our wish list, donating approved snacks, writing thank you notes, helping with general maintenance, and helping with special events. There is a volunteer list for you to choose from in the enrollment packet.

Volunteer hours are valued at \$12 per hour. Any donations that are purchased to cover volunteering will be credited at 1 hour for every \$12 spent. If there are any outstanding hours at the conclusion of the school year or termination of your family’s attendance, you will be charged \$12 per hour or ask to meet with Educational Services Manager (ESM). Volunteer hours are prorated based on months of attendance for families not attending the entire school year based on a start date after August.

I. General Overview

A. Mission, Vision and Diversity Statements

Mission Statement: TLC Learning Center exemplifies caring, comprehensive, inclusive early learning, therapeutic services, and family and caregiver support.

Guiding Principles:

- **Everyone Succeeds Together** Nurturing relationships between families, caregivers, staff, board and members of the community enable each child to attain their goals.
- **We Are Extraordinary** We strive for the highest quality of services and ethical standards in measurable and tangible ways, building upon our history, yet looking to the future.
- **We Have a Growth Mindset** We recognize where we need to go, build resilience in the journey, and celebrate accomplishments when we arrive.
- **We See One Another** We love and value one another as individuals with unique talents and gifts, having one another's backs. We meet families where they are and adapt to ability and interest.
- **We Strive for Sustainability** We ensure effective use of resources through fiscally sound practices and sustainable initiatives. We are committed to sustaining a community in which highly-skilled teachers, therapists, and staff are invested.

Diversity Statement: We honor and celebrate the diverse makeup of our community through an intentionally inclusive program that provides equitable learning opportunities and encourages the exploration, understanding, and appreciation of individual difference, perspectives, and cultures. TLC strives to provide a safe and inclusive learning environment for all members of our community so that every member feels welcomed, values, honored, and respected, regardless of ability, race, religion, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or age. We believe that embracing and celebrating our differences and commonalities is an integral part of the cognitive and social-emotional growth of each member of our community and is as important now as it was when our Center was founded in 1956.

Our mission is achieved by offering a safe, nurturing environment, which promotes mutual respect and allows for individual differences. We offer experiences that foster the development of positive self-esteem and creativity. Children will discover, learn, and develop to their greatest potential through a process of "hands-on" experiential opportunities and positive interactions.

B. Goals

The goals of TLC Learning Educational Services Department (ESD) are:

1. Program Goal:

To exceed the best practices as outlined by Colorado Shines Standards in the areas of social relationships, curriculum, assessment of children's progress, health & safety, teachers, families, community relationships, physical environment, leadership, and management.

2. Family Goal:

To establish and maintain collaborative relationships with each child's family to maximize the child's development in all settings.

C. Philosophy

“Children’s play is a primary vehicle for and indicator of their mental growth. Play also serves important functions in children’s physical, emotional, and social development.” ~ National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

We believe that parents are their children’s first and most important teachers, and that positive child outcomes in all areas of development are dependent upon successful collaboration between home and school, and the implementation of Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP).

DAP involves three basic principles:

1. The program is both age-appropriate and individually appropriate: that is, the program is designed for the age group served and implemented with attention to the individual needs and differences of the children enrolled.
2. The program effectively responds to families’ needs.
3. The program ensures positive adult-child interactions.

At TLC we adapt a developmentally appropriate environment to meet the needs of all students. Thus, our program reflects a wide range of choices to meet the various developmental levels of each child.

Each and every child, birth through age 8, has the right to equitable learning opportunities—in centers, family child care homes, or schools—that fully support their optimal development and learning across all domains and content areas. Children are born eager to learn; they take delight exploring their world and making connections. The degree to which early learning programs support children’s delight and wonder in learning reflects the quality of that setting. Educators who engage in developmentally appropriate practice foster young children’s joyful learning and maximize the opportunities for each and every child to achieve their full potential.

~ NAEYC

NAEYC defines “developmentally appropriate practice (DAP)” as methods that promote each child’s optimal development and learning through a strengths-based, play-based approach to joyful, engaged learning. Educators implement DAP by recognizing the multiple assets all young children bring to the early learning program as unique individuals and as members of families and communities. Building on each child’s strengths—and taking care to not harm any aspect of each child’s physical, cognitive, social, or emotional wellbeing—educators design and implement learning environments to help all children achieve their full potential across all domains of development and across all content areas. Developmentally appropriate practice recognizes and supports each individual as a valued member of the learning community. As a result, to be developmentally appropriate, practices must also be culturally, linguistically, and ability appropriate for each child. NAEYC’s guidelines and recommendations for developmentally appropriate practice are based on the following nine principles and their implications for early childhood education professional practice. These principles reflect an extensive research base that is only partially referenced here.

1. Development and learning are dynamic processes that reflect the complex interplay between a child’s biological characteristics and the environment, each shaping the other as well as future patterns of growth.
2. All domains of child development—physical, cognitive, social and emotional, and linguistic (including bilingual or multilingual development), as well as approaches to learning—are important; each domain both supports and is supported by the others.

3. Play promotes joyful learning that fosters self-regulation, language, cognitive and social competencies as well as content knowledge across disciplines. Play is essential for all children, birth through age 8
4. Although general progressions of development and learning can be identified, variations due to cultural contexts, experiences, and individual differences must also be considered.
5. Children are active learners from birth, constantly taking in and organizing information to create meaning through their relationships, their interactions with their environment, and their overall experiences.
6. Children's motivation to learn is increased when their learning environment fosters their sense of belonging, purpose, and agency. Curricula and teaching methods build on each child's assets by connecting their experiences in the school or learning environment to their home and community settings.
7. Children learn in an integrated fashion that cuts across academic disciplines or subject areas. Because the foundations of subject area knowledge are established in early childhood, educators need subject-area knowledge, an understanding of the learning progressions within each subject area, and pedagogical knowledge about teaching each subject area's content effectively.
8. Development and learning advance when children are challenged to achieve at a level just beyond their current mastery and when they have many opportunities to reflect on and practice newly acquired skills
9. Used responsibly and intentionally, technology and interactive media can be valuable tools for supporting children's development and learning.

Quality Rating: The State of Colorado offers an accreditation rating which is called Colorado Shines. TLC earned a Level 4 rating through Colorado Shines in September 2022.

D. Anti-Discrimination Policy

TLC shall not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, disability, veteran status, or any other protected classification in the provision of its services.

E. Therapeutic Services

TLC offers a variety of Therapeutic Services.

- Offered for children from birth to 12 years of age.
- Services include: Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Speech Therapy. A YogaKids program is also offered.
- Services are provided in the home and/or on site here at TLC. Therapeutic services may be requested through the Therapeutic Services Manager (TSM).
- **There is a fee for all therapeutic services.** This is paid for through private insurance, Medicaid, state approved funding sources, TLC Scholarships and/or private pay.

II. Organizational Structure

The Executive Director (ED), with the support of the Leadership Team (included but not limited to the ESM and Therapeutic Services Manager), is responsible for all issues relating to TLC's daily operations, including personnel, curriculum, family support activities, fundraising (including grant writing, overseeing fundraising events), public awareness, and marketing.

The ED is supported by a volunteer Board of Directors (BOD) consisting of community members, including current and alumni parents, who hold a special interest in supporting quality early learning and therapeutic services to children in our community. The BOD meets each month. A current list of

BOD is available upon request. The ED and BOD manage the goals and principles of the organization. Each BOD member serves a two-year term with the option to serve a maximum of six years.

Direct service staff members (teachers, therapists and teaching assistants) are responsible for the delivery of early childhood services and therapy to all children. Their responsibilities include: identifying specific goals and objectives for individual children, implementing research-based curriculum, assessment of children, meeting with families, and delivery of services in a developmentally appropriate manner. Please view our website for additional information about our staff. All staff members participate in an extensive “clearance”, orientation, and training process, which includes but is not limited to: FBI/CBI fingerprinting, Department of Human Services Background Investigation, and multiple trainings required by Colorado Child Care Licensing.

III. Specific Educational Services Information

A. Curriculum, Assessment, and Universal Screening

Our curriculum tools are research-based, and include all of the following:

Creative Curriculum[®] is the country's leading comprehensive, scientifically based curriculum for children birth to six years of age. This nationally known model for best practices provides the teachers with information on the strengths and needs of each of their students, as well as content on instructional practices. Teachers use the *Creative Curriculum*[®] for observation, assessment, planning, and implementation of a developmentally appropriate program that promotes children's social-emotional development and learning in the core areas of literacy, mathematics, science, and social studies. Children's progress is assessed throughout the year using the Teaching Strategies GOLD progress mapping system. You can find more information at www.creativecurriculum.net.

Teaching Strategies “GOLD” is an assessment tool used at for tracking student progress in the following areas of development: Social-Emotional; Physical; Language; Literacy; Cognitive; Mathematics; Science & Technology; Social Studies; and the Arts. Ongoing observation and GOLD benchmarks are used by the classroom team to select goals and to plan effective instruction for groups as well as for individual students. Goals and activities are based on each student's needs. Progress is checked three times throughout each program year, and teachers will share progress with parents at parent-teacher conferences. GOLD is part of the Colorado Department of Education *Results Matters* initiative. For more information, please visit: www.cde.state.co.us/resultsmatters.

Zoo-phonics[®] is an exciting, multisensory approach to learning all aspects of language arts. Children are introduced to letter sounds and names using animals which are of high-interest to young children. *Zoo-phonics* prepares children to become strong readers and writers through a whole brain approach: phonological awareness (hearing sounds), oral (speaking), visual (seeing), kinesthetic (moving), and tactile (touching). *Zoo-phonics* is currently used internationally as a highly effective language arts program for our youngest learners. Visit www.zoophonics.com for more information.

Story Book Journey Curriculum was developed by Sue McCord, educator and former director of the University of Colorado's Child Learning Center. She uses a magical approach to organizing children's learning around in-depth explorations of stories and all their possibilities. By anchoring a curriculum in a single story over an extended period, teachers can offer children opportunities to experiment, grow, and overcome challenges in new and exciting ways. More information about this curriculum is available in her book, *Storybook Journey: Pathways to Literacy through Story and Play*.

Learning Without Tears[®], the award-winning Get Set for School™ Pre-K program, uses lively music and playful activities to help young children build a solid foundation for school success. This upbeat program introduces a readiness curriculum full of developmentally appropriate activities that teach children about letters, body awareness, numbers, sequencing, and sharing in a fun, engaging, and informal manner. Families can easily access additional information, handouts, words to engaging songs and more on their website: www.lwtears.com

Pyramid Plus Approach is a positive behavioral support system that was specifically designed “to increase the use of evidence-based early childhood social-emotional and inclusive practices in early care and education settings.” It promotes social-emotional competence for all children, and ensures: nurturing and responsive relationships, high-quality supportive environments, and specific interventions for children with challenging behaviors. The success of Pyramid Plus relies upon collaborative partnerships with caregivers. To learn more, please visit the website: <https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/>.

Project Based Learning is a hands-on, in-depth approach to learning which integrates all areas of learning: motor, language, social-emotional, literacy, mathematics, social studies, cognitive, science & technology, and the arts. The students become “young investigators,” while the adults become learning “facilitators.” Through this highly-engaging approach to learning, children have the opportunity to collaborate, think critically and creatively, learn self-sufficiency, take initiative, and apply learning through active participation in a real-life project. “Children from preschool classes that are offered ample opportunity for child-initiated activity showed the greatest mastery of basic reading, language, and mathematics skills” (Marcon 1992, 1995, 2002). Families have the opportunity to actively participate in a project through becoming “expert visitors” in the classroom, providing tools for the young investigators, and participating in “site visits” with the children and staff.

Young Athletes is an inclusive program through Special Olympics for young children with and without disabilities. Young Athletes introduces basic sport skills including running, kicking, and throwing. Children learn how to share, take turns, and follow directions. Young Athletes is a fun way for children to get fit, setting the stage for a life of physical activity, friendships, and learning.

YogaKids classes combine storytelling, art, games and music to engage the whole child in learning through yoga. Coordination, balance, peer interaction, turn-taking, and self-regulation are all integrated into YogaKids. Children learn skills to use at school, home, and in their community.

Universal Screenings: With the assistance of families and community partners, TLC completes universal screenings on all students annually. This includes ASQ-3 (Ages and Stages), ASQ-SE (Ages and Stages-Social Emotional), Hearing, Dental and Vision screening.

B. School Calendar

The TLC’s school calendar is based on a 12-month program, August to August. Please refer to the calendar for more information. A copy of the calendar is provided in each enrollment packet and can be requested at the front desk at any time.

C. Family Visits

Prior to your child’s first day of school, teachers will contact families to set up an individual visit to discuss your child’s interests and strengths, as well as any concerns and goals for your child for a successful transition into school. Additional family visits are scheduled when children transition between classrooms.

D. Back-to-School Night

An orientation is scheduled in August each year for families. All families are strongly encouraged to attend as we review important information during this orientation that impacts your child at TLC.

E. Family Staff Conferences

Family staff conferences are scheduled two times a year. Families are the child’s first and most important teacher. Family participation in conferences is very important.

If, through observation and the GOLD check point process, we feel that a child will benefit from further developmental evaluations, we will meet with you to discuss our observations. Results of your child’s assessments remain confidential unless you have signed a Release of information form.

F. Family Toolkit Nights

Family Toolkit Nights are scheduled throughout the year and are based on topics of interest and need which are determined by family survey results collected in September of each new program year.

G. Program Hours

TLC is an inclusive early learning program that is founded on the diversity and uniqueness of each child and family. As a dynamic learning community, we strive to balance the needs of individual children with the needs of the whole classroom community. It takes great care and thoughtfulness as we work together toward this goal. We've learned over time that, while program hours at TLC run from 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM Monday through Friday, there are several considerations that support optimal learning. In general, children thrive with a balance of time in their family home and within the community. At TLC, we are eager to create a learning environment that promotes emotional, cognitive and physical wellness for every child. In order to do this well, we believe that no child should be in group care for more than nine consecutive hours on any given day. **We expect that all families respect this principle by committing to arrange for pick up if this 9-hour threshold is reached.** Please be proactive with this responsibility as families will be required to pay a fee if this rule is not met. Please see **Late Pick-Up Policy** below.

**** Please call the TLC office (303-776-7417) if your child will be absent for any reason. ****

Infants, Toddlers, and full day Preschool: These classrooms are open 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM. Families choose the drop-off and pick-up times based on their family's scheduling needs while also considering the needs of the classroom community. We ask that the drop-off and pick-up time is consistent from day-to-day, and we need **all** children to arrive by **9:00 AM** each day. This helps to ensure that your child has access to the majority of the community learning experiences offered during the day in their classroom. Consistency also helps the children with self-regulation, participation on all daily classroom happenings, and joyful, engaged learning experiences that are not interrupted unexpectedly.

Preschool A.M. (half day) Program: This classroom is held from 8:30 AM to 12:00 PM.

Families should notify the teacher at least 24 hours in advance if the drop-off or pick-up time will change. Failure to provide a 24-hour notice may result in charges based on the Late Pick-Up Policy (below).

H. Arrival and Dismissal Policies

Transition times are difficult for children. When routines are established, confusion diminishes.

Please follow arrival and dismissal policies:

1. All children and their families should enter through the main front doors and children must be accompanied by an adult to the classroom. You must clock your child in on the laptops in the front foyer or in the ProCare app. No child should be left unattended at any time in the hallways, parking lot, bathrooms, or classrooms.
2. For everyone's safety all exit doors are locked, and families are asked to ring the doorbell for entry into the building. Please do not open the door for others to enter.
3. Arrival:

Preschool half-day students should arrive at 8:30 AM and students should be picked up at 12:00 PM.

Infants, Toddlers, and Full Day Preschool students should arrive no earlier than 7:30 AM and be picked up no later than 5:30 PM. Families should ensure that the child's time at TLC is no longer

than **nine** hours on any given day. Families should inform the classroom staff about changes in drop-off and pick-up times for the following week in advance. Consistency is very important.

4. Dismissal:

Your child will only be released to you or another designated person for whom the school has written authorization. No child will be released to an unauthorized person. If your child will be transported by a person not recorded on the emergency contact form, you will need to notify the office in advance (or by phone in the case of an emergency). The designated person will then be required to show personal identification at the office prior to the child being released.

Please check your child's cubby at the end of each school day for projects and notes that need to go home. Children who attend full day classes should bring home their nap belongings at the end of each week to wash. Water bottles should go home daily to be washed/ sanitized, and brought back to school the following day.

If a child is not picked up at the end of your child's scheduled day, efforts will be made to contact the parent, designated pick-up person(s), and emergency contacts. If there is no success, the police department and/ or the Department of Human Services will be notified.

5. If there is an emergency and you will be late picking up your child, please call the office immediately.

I. Late Drop-Off/Pick-Up Policy

In an effort to honor all TLC staff's professional and personal time, TLC expects that all children will be dropped off and picked up at the beginning and end of their school day according to that child's schedule.

In order for classrooms to run smoothly and for teachers to implement our daily curriculum, teachers will start classes promptly at 9:00 AM each day. All children must be dropped off **prior to 9:00 AM** so that they can be in their classroom by 9:00 AM. As mentioned above, this is in the best interest of the classroom community and each child within the classroom.

We at TLC understand that occasionally an unavoidable problem arises that will delay drop off time by a few minutes (less than 10 minutes). If that happens, please call the office to inform TLC of the slight delay. We will notify the teachers so that they can be prepared for this change in plan.

Chronically late families who often experience many slight delays **will be asked to meet with the ESM** to devise a plan that may include changes in schedule, a written agreement between families and TLC regarding process for improving your child's attendance, late fees, or dis-enrollment if an arrangement cannot be reached or if families are unable to follow through on an agreed-upon plan.

When children have appointments that are scheduled at least 24 hours in advance, families may drop off after the appointment. Families may also pick up children and return them to class before and after an appointment as long as these pick up and drop off times do not occur during the class nap time.

Families arriving to TLC at or after 9:00 a.m. without a call or appointment will be asked to keep their child for that day.

- Any families who anticipate arriving late for their child's pick-up must call the office to inform TLC of the situation. This includes pick-up after the nine hours limit.
- TLC defines late pick-up as any pick-up one (1) minute after the end of the child's scheduled school day or over the 9-hour limit.
- If the family is late, **defined as 1 minute after the 9-hour limit or 1 minute after 5:30 PM (or 12:00PM for half day preschool)**, they will be charged **\$5.00 per minute** beginning with the first minute.

- A Late Pick-Up Form, indicating the child's name and late pick-up time, will be completed by TLC staff. Both the staff and family will sign this form.
- Completed Late Pick-Up Form(s) will be submitted to the ESM for review, submitted to the ED, and then forwarded to the Finance Department for billing.
- All late fee(s) will be added to the following month's tuition bill. Adjustments are not made for children receiving scholarship or other childcare/preschool subsidization. Failure to make a timely payment will be subject to the provisions of the handbook addressing the late tuition payment and the penalties thereafter.

J. Clock In/Clock Out

TLC is a facility licensed by the State of Colorado. According to our license, it is required that children be clocked in and out on a daily basis.

K. Parking

TLC's parking lot is one-way. Families enter the parking lot via the north driveway (behind The Flower Bin) and park in available spots on the south side of the building. Families should exit through the south driveway. Street parking is also available. Enter the building through the main doors on the southeast side of the building. Please respect the accessible spaces and **PLEASE DRIVE SLOWLY**.

L. Outdoor Play and Excessively Hot Weather

The children are scheduled to go outside each day except in cases of extreme weather. Extreme weather is described as below 20 degrees or above 90 degrees. Please remember to send appropriate clothing for weather conditions every day (i.e., boots, hats, mittens, sun hat, etc.).

Excessively hot weather: TLC is air-conditioned throughout, so school will not be cancelled unless the air conditioning fails when the temperature is extremely hot. In that case, families will be notified to pick up, and children will be kept comfortable through the use of water play in the shade or indoors, and hydration. If it is too hot for children to play outdoors (above 90 degrees F), additional gross motor equipment will be available for children in their own classroom and/or in the room designated for the YogaKids/Young Athletes program.

Due to allergies and sensitivities, families are asked to bring sunscreen if your child requires a specific sunscreen, and insect repellent to school for teachers to apply before going outside. If you provide sunscreen to be stored in the child's classroom, it needs to be labeled with your child's first and last name. TLC will apply *Rocky Mountain Sunscreen* with broad spectrum SPF 30 to children who do not have sunscreen from home.

M. Safe Sleep for Infants - Policy

All staff members who work with children 12 months and younger complete a course annually entitled "*Infant Safe Sleep Practices*". Under the age of 12 months, blankets cannot be used when children sleep, children will be put to sleep on their backs, and infants will be offered pacifiers for comfort. If children fall asleep in a space other than a crib, children will be moved to a crib. Sleep sacks are permitted.

N. Smoke Free Environment Policy

TLC is a smoke-free environment for the protection of our children. This includes no smoking in the parking lot (even in vehicles). We know that even smoke that lingers on clothing and other materials can be detrimental to children. If staff members are smokers, they will be required to change their clothing before entering a child's classroom. If a child's clothing or backpack smells like smoke when the child arrives, staff may change the child's clothing, and put the smoky clothing in a sealed container to send home with the family at the end of the day.

O. Supervision of Children

Your child will be enrolled in a class that has a lead teacher and teaching assistant (or co-teachers) who will support your child's learning journey throughout the school year.

After your child is dropped off and until the time they are picked up, your child will be under the direct supervision of the teacher, teaching assistant and/or therapist. At all times, it is the classroom teacher's responsibility to know who is supervising a child.

Once your child has been picked up, (released to family by TLC staff), it is the family's responsibility to supervise the child. Please be sure that your child remains with you at all times and that your child is always within your reach.

TLC's classrooms offer group care with low child-to-adult ratios throughout the day, in order to meet our children's individual needs. Additionally, there are therapists in classrooms supporting the children with therapeutic needs, and "floaters" are in and out of classrooms throughout the day. With these low ratios, we meet or exceed Colorado Shines and Department of Human Services child-to-adult ratio standards. TLC strives to consistently maintain the "National Association for the Education of Young Children" (NAEYC) ratios. To support our mission of inclusive classrooms, TLC does not offer one-on-one care for children and instead serves families and children in a group care setting.

P. Visitor Policy

All visitors must check in at the office and will be asked about the purpose of the visit upon arrival. After review of a current photo ID, visitors will be asked to sign the visitor log located on the counter in the front foyer. The visitor will then be given a visitor's pass and will be escorted to the appropriate area. If this is the individual's first visit, the visitor will also be required to sign a "Statement of Confidentiality". Before leaving TLC, visitors will check out with administrative staff, sign out, and return the visitor's pass.

IV. Enrollment Policies

A. Eligibility and Fees

1. Preschool Program:

The primary eligibility for this program is age. We provide early childhood education for children 2.5 years to kindergarten entry age in our preschool classrooms. We serve both neurotypical and neurodiverse children in an inclusive and enriching classroom environment.

2. Infant and Toddler Programs:

Children 6 weeks to 36 months of age are eligible to participate in our Infant and Toddler classrooms. Children will transition between infant, toddler, and preschool classrooms based on individual readiness and chronological age. Families will be included in the transition process.

3. Scholarship Grant Program:

A scholarship program is available to families who qualify, based on family size and income. Families may receive a reduced rate of their monthly fees. Families seeking financial scholarships must first apply for Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP). Students who are age-eligible for the Universal Preschool Program (UPK) are asked to complete the UPK application process. TLC serves both CCAP and UPK students. Please see the ESM for availability and eligibility guidelines.

B. Admission and Registration Procedures

The registration process begins with a tour of TLC. After the tour, the family will receive the registration form and intake inquiry form. Submission of this initial registration packet completes the initial registration process. If no space is available, a waitlist is maintained based on date of registration submission. Notification will be made once space is available which meets the requested class and

times. The enrollment process is completed with submission of all enrollment paperwork, one-time, non-refundable \$75 fee and participation in a family visit with the child’s teacher.

C. Enrollment Materials

Enrollment materials will be distributed with the family handbook. Included with the family handbook is a statement required by the Department of Human Services (CRS 7.702.61 b 1-3 of the Minimum Rules and Regulations for Child Care Centers) stipulating that “Parents signatures are secured indicating they’ve read and agree to TLC’s policies and procedures.”

ENROLLMENT MATERIALS MUST BE TURNED INTO THE OFFICE BEFORE THE CHILD’S FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL. Required enrollment paperwork includes an updated health appraisal (according to “Recommendations for Preventative Pediatric Health Care” from the American Academy of Pediatrics well-child-check schedule) and proof of up-to-date immunizations (based on “Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment Child Care Immunization Chart—Vaccines Required for Child Care, Preschool, and K-Entry”). Health appraisals must be updated and submitted after each required well-child check according to recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics schedule. The well-child check schedule and immunization requirement chart are posted on the Family Resource board and a copy is available upon request at any time.

D. Tuition Policy and Payment

Program Fees:

Non-refundable Enrollment Fee (per student): \$75.00 One-time
 Annual Assessment Tool and Material Fee (per student): \$30.00 annually

PRESCHOOL

	<u>Daily</u>	<u>Weekly</u>	<u>Monthly</u>	<u>Annual</u>
Full Day 5 Days	\$67.00	\$336.00	\$1456.00	\$17472.00
Full Day 3 Days	\$79.00	\$237.00	\$1028.00	\$12336.00
Full Day 2 Days	\$86.00	\$171.00	\$743.00	\$8916.00
Half Day 5 Days	\$41.00	\$206.00	\$893.00	\$10716.00
Half Day 3 Days	\$48.00	\$145.00	\$629.00	\$7548.00
Half Day 2 Days	\$53.00	\$105.00	\$456.00	\$5472.00

TODDLER

	<u>Daily</u>	<u>Weekly</u>	<u>Monthly</u>	<u>Annual</u>
Full Day 5 Days	\$71.00	\$357.00	\$1549.00	\$18588.00
Full Day 3 Days	\$84.00	\$253.00	\$1095.00	\$13140.00
Full Day 2 Days	\$91.00	\$183.00	\$792.00	\$9504.00

INFANT

	<u>Daily</u>	<u>Weekly</u>	<u>Monthly</u>	<u>Annual</u>
Full Day 5 Days	\$77.00	\$386.00	\$1674.00	\$20088.00
Full Day 3 Days	\$91.00	\$273.00	\$1184.00	\$14208.00
Full Day 2 Days	\$99.00	\$197.00	\$855.00	\$10260.00

Tuition has been prorated for a 12-month period. The charge remains constant throughout the year **regardless of holidays, family vacations and breaks.**

1. A Tuition Agreement is part of the enrollment packet and must be returned prior to your child entering the program. Tuition agreements are revised three times annually (start of program year, start of calendar year and start of summer) and whenever a child's schedule changes.
2. Tuition is due the first day of the month and is considered late by the 10th. **A \$25 late fee will be applied if payments are received after the 10th of each month.** Interest at 1.5% per month may also be applied to accounts 30 days or more in arrears. A child may be subject to temporary exclusion to TLC effective the 15th of the following month, if a monthly payment has not been made by the end of the month. The family is liable for all third-party collection costs, including reasonable attorney fees, collection agency costs, and court fees, resulting from my late fees and/or past due accounts.
3. **Thirty days written notice must be given to TLC if you wish to withdraw your child** from any educational services (classroom) program. This written notice must be submitted to the ESM. Families will give at least a 30-day notice and be responsible for tuition fees through the last 30 days if they decide to withdraw their child from TLC.
4. **Thirty days written notice must be given to TLC to request a schedule change.** Please submit this request to the ESM. Schedule changes cannot be guaranteed, but TLC will always attempt to accommodate the changing needs of our families.

V. Medical Information

A. Health Appraisal (Physical)

Families MUST submit a dated statement of the child's current health status signed by a health care professional who has seen the child according to the well-child check-up schedule recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics. (2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 9 months, 12 months, 15 months, 18 months 24 months, 30 months, 3 years, 4 years, 5 years, 6 years) A health form is available in the enrollment packet. It is the family's responsibility to schedule a physical when well-child checks are due and to submit the updated health appraisal to TLC. Failure to provide proof of up-to-date immunizations and/or an updated physical as required may result in temporary exclusion. **Families will ensure that children's immunizations are up-to-date at all times and will provide TLC with a copy of updated immunizations each time immunizations are updated.**

B. Immunizations

All children enrolled in the infant, toddler, and preschool classrooms are required to have written proof of immunizations **prior** to their first day of attendance. It is the family's responsibility to ensure that immunizations are up-to-date, and that TLC receives proof of updated immunizations throughout the year. Required immunizations are based on the following: "*Child Care Immunization Chart—Vaccines Required for Child Care, Preschool & K-Entry*" through the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment. This immunization chart is posted on the Family Resource board and a copy is available for families at any time upon request. TLC can access your child's immunization records through CIIS, which is Colorado's immunization website. Please inform TLC if you do not want TLC to access your child's information.

TLC will *consider* accepting medical exemptions for immunizations and this decision is made on a case-by-case basis. In most cases, exemptions will not be accepted for the protection of our infants and medically fragile population. TLC does not currently accept immunization exemptions for personal reasons.

C. Illness

The family or other authorized party shall be notified immediately when a child has any sign or symptom that requires temporary exclusion from TLC. TLC reserves the right to require families to consult with the child's health care provider and request written diagnosis and release to return to school from the health care provider. TLC follows the "How Sick is Too Sick?" provided by CDPHE.

If the illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children is determined by the staff.

TLC shall temporarily exclude a child or send the child home as soon as possible if one or more of the following conditions exist:

- a) Fever is defined as an elevation of body temperature above normal. Any temperature above 100.4 degrees F is considered to be a symptom and families will be asked to keep the child home or to come get the child from TLC. The child should be fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medication (Tylenol or Ibuprofen) before returning to school.
- b) Diarrhea is defined by watery stools, decreased form of stool that is not associated with changes of diet, and increased frequency of passing stool, that is not contained by the child's ability to use the toilet. Children with diarrheal illness of infectious origin generally may be allowed to return to school once the diarrhea resolves or when the health care provider has determined the child may return to TLC. If your child has diarrhea during the school day, we will ask that you pick your child up and not return to school for at least 24 hours after the last time your child has had diarrhea or one entire school day.
- c) Vomiting is defined as the forceful expulsion of the contents of one's stomach through the mouth and sometimes the nose. If your child vomits during the school day, we will ask that you pick your child up and not return to school for at least 24 hours after the last time your child vomits or one entire school day.
- d) Purulent conjunctivitis is defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge. If the physician prescribes eye drops, the child may return to school 24 hours after this treatment begins. If eye drops are not used, the child may return to school when discharge from the eye is no longer present. In cases of non-purulent pink eye, exclusion is required only if the healthcare provider recommends it.
- e) Pediculosis is live head lice/nits. Child may return after treatment is complete, including removal of nits.
- f) Pertussis is whooping cough. Signs and symptoms of possible severe illness until medical professional evaluation find the child able to be included at the facility. Signs and symptoms of possible severe illness include:
 - lethargy that is more than expected tiredness,
 - uncontrolled coughing,
 - difficult breathing, or wheezing,
 - or other unusual signs for the child.

Families agree to keep children home when ill. Families understand that when, in the opinion of TLC staff, children are too ill to benefit from programming, the families will be contacted.

If a family is contacted and asked to pick their child up from school, the child MUST be picked up within one hour!

If your child has been diagnosed with any of the following, timelines must be followed before they return to school. The general rule is 24 hours **after** the symptoms subside:

- a) Pediculosis (live head lice/nits), they may return after treatment is completed and all nits have been removed. The child must be checked by staff upon returning.

- b) Scabies, they may return after treatment has been completed.
- c) Impetigo, they may return 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.
- d) Purulent conjunctivitis is defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge. If the physician prescribes eye drops, the child may return to school 24 hours after this treatment begins.
- e) Strep throat or other streptococcal infection, they may return 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and no fever present. The child must be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of Tylenol or Ibuprofen.
- f) Varicella-Zoster (Chickenpox), they may return after all sores have dried and crusted (usually 6 days).
- g) Pertussis (whooping cough), they may return after treatment has been completed.
- h) If your child has tested positive for COVID-19 or has developed symptoms after a known exposure, your child **MUST** stay home. Please contact TLC right away for a return to TLC date.

If there is an outbreak of a communicable childhood disease (i.e. chicken pox, pertussis,) those children who have not been immunized against those illnesses will be excluded from class and their families will be notified. They may not return to school until the outbreak is complete.

Children **without** a fever who have mild symptoms associated with the common cold: sore throat, croup, bronchitis, rhinitis (runny nose), or otitis media (ear infection), will be denied admission to the TLC or sent home from school, unless, or until these symptoms are significantly improving.

Treatment with antibiotics shall not be required or otherwise encouraged as a condition for attendance of children with mild respiratory tract infections unless directed by their health care provider.

TLC's Illness Policy is as follows:

If your child is showing any of the following symptoms, stay at home:

- Any upper or lower respiratory cold symptoms and/or shortness of breath
- Fever of 100.4 degrees or higher
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Fatigue/malaise
- Diarrhea
- GI issues
- Vomiting
- Headache
- Decrease in sense of smell or taste
- Have known exposure to COVID-19 within the household. **** Please call the TLC office (303-776-7417) if your child will be absent for any reason. ****

D. Medication and Other Healthcare Needs

Please see the ESM regarding the dispensing of medication and other healthcare needs. **Individual health care plans signed by a physician must be on file for children requiring additional support/intervention** (including, but not limited to asthma, seizures, diabetes, severe allergies, special diet, and g-tubes). Training of appropriate staff is provided by TLC's health consultant, who is a licensed registered nurse, and is on site at least monthly.

All medicines will be stored and administered according to the Medication Administration policy section 12-38-132 C.R.S. of the Nurse Practice Act. TLC's "Medication Administration" and "Storage of Emergency Medication" policies are available for review upon request.

E. First Aid Emergency Responses

In the event of an accident or sudden illness that staff feel requires emergency medical treatment, emergency technicians will be contacted first and then every effort will be made to contact families and inform them of where they can meet their child. It is the caregiver's responsibility to notify the office of any changes in phone number or address throughout the year. If it is necessary to take the child to the hospital, a staff member will accompany your child while being transported to the nearest hospital, unless you or your designee is available at the time of transport.

F. Allergies

It is essential for you to keep us informed of any allergies or sensitivities affecting your child. Although this is a question on your medical form, sometimes allergies develop as the result of illness or medications. Please make sure that you report all changes in your child's medical profile to the ES administration staff and classroom teacher. Consultation with TLC's health consultant may be necessary and a health care plan may be required.

G. Medical Insurance Information

Families are expected to turn in a copy of their child(s) insurance card with their enrollment packet. In the event that your medical insurance changes, it is your responsibility to provide a copy of your current insurance information. If your child receives therapeutic services and your information is not updated, the result may be personal responsibility for payment of services.

VI. Emergencies

All TLC employees are required to complete a Emergency Disaster Preparedness for Child Care Providers training upon employment.

A. Injuries

Most TLC staff members maintain current first-aid and CPR certification. In case of a medical emergency at TLC, appropriate first-aid will be administered. Families are called immediately. When required, TLC staff will dial the emergency unit of the fire department (911), transport to the hospital, and meet families and doctors there. As noted above, if transport is required, your child will be accompanied by a TLC staff member, unless you or your designee is available at the time of transport.

On the Statement of Responsibility Form, you are asked permission to follow emergency procedures, including use of a local hospital Emergency Room. TLC requests the names and telephone numbers of two other people other than yourselves to be reached as emergency contacts, as well as your child's health care provider's name and telephone number so they can be contacted.

On walking field trips and any activities outside staff carry a first-aid kit, children's emergency medications and health care plans (if applicable), family contact information, a cell phone, and we designate a staff person to be in charge if a child needs emergency transportation. For family field trips, families and students meet us at the location, so families are responsible for transport of the child and the medications, if applicable.

B. Fires

In case of a fire, the children will be immediately evacuated from the building. The fire department is automatically notified through our continual monitoring system. Evacuation maps are located in every room of TLC, and a written Evacuation Procedure is in effect.

C. Tornadoes

Tornado Watch (a tornado may occur): When a tornado watch exists, routines may be maintained until such time as skies become threatening. Then TLC staff will be posted to watch for more severe weather conditions. We also monitor local news/radio for weather emergency updates.

Tornado Warning (a tornado has been sighted): When the approach of a severe storm or tornado is noted or a tornado warning is announced, all students and staff will seek appropriate shelter. Location of tornado shelters are posted in every room. Children will not be released during a tornado warning.

D. School Closings Due to Weather

In the event of inclement weather, the ED will determine whether TLC will be closed. A decision will be made no later than 6:30 AM. Please check 9 News, Facebook, or TLC's website for closures. When possible, the answering machine at TLC will be modified to reflect the closure.

If the weather turns bad while your child is at school, you are welcome to pick up your child early. If bad weather causes you to be late picking up your child, please let the office know as soon as possible.

TLC is air-conditioned and would not be expected to close during excessively hot weather.

E. School Closings Due to On-site Emergency

If there is reason for an emergency evacuation of the building, arrangements have been made with the Flatirons Community Church (located within walking distance of TLC to the south at 1850 Industrial Circle, Longmont) to house the children. To the north Nixcavating will be the emergency evacuation site at 1821 Boston Avenue, Longmont. Children will remain supervised until their families can be notified and all children have been picked up. If a further removed evacuation site is necessary, children and adults will be transported to Traffic Signals Controls Inc, 255 Weaver Park Rd #100, Longmont, CO 80501. A Disaster Emergency Preparedness Plan is available on site for review upon request. All classrooms have an emergency "Go Kit." If evacuation to another location is necessary, staff will transport "Go Kits," first aid kits, roll call sheets, and individual child medications and health care plans. Families will be notified.

F. Lost Children and Procedure for Identifying Where Children Are at All Times

Lost children: During the current school year, we maintain a file on all enrolled children. While there has never been a "lost child incident" at TLC, we feel that it is important to always be prepared. Therefore, in the event that a child should become lost from the group, law enforcement agencies and parents/guardians will be immediately notified.

TLC's procedure for ensuring that we know where children are at all times is as follows: Once children enter the classroom, the teacher takes attendance on the roll call sheet. If children go for a walk, teachers carry a clipboard with the roll call sheet and emergency contact sheets and "sign out" at the front desk (leaving # of children, initials of children, cell phone of teacher carrying phone in case of emergency). Teachers are required to conduct name-to-face checks each time the children move locations throughout the day (to and from the playground, Activity room, etc.). Families are required to clock the child out before departing with the child at the end of the day.

G. Lock Down and Secure

Written procedures are posted, and the staff is trained on all procedures. Procedures are posted in every classroom, therapy room, bathroom, and office. TLC is on Secure mode at all times with all outside entrances locked.

H. Written Emergency Plans

Procedures are posted in classrooms, therapy rooms, bathrooms, and offices for all of the following: Evacuation, Secure, Lockdown, Active Shooter on Premises, Shelter, and Lost Child. These

procedures cover floods, impaired/intoxicated adults, bomb threats, chemical spills, suspicious items on premises, weapons, fire, tornado, and unauthorized adult attempting to pick up. Evacuation and shelter maps are also posted. TLC's Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Plan also includes an Exposure Control Plan. All emergency plans are available for review upon request.

VII. Transportation

A. Field Trips

Site visits are an integral part of Project-Based Learning. For some site visits, students, staff, and family chaperones may walk to the site together. This is a **Walking Field Trip**. For walking field trips family participation is strongly encouraged.

From time to time, there may also be a **Family Field Trip** scheduled. For Family Field Trips, families will be notified at least two weeks in advance. Family (or relative) participation is necessary because TLC staff members may *not* transport TLC children in their vehicles. Families will transport their own children to the trip location, participate in the field trip, and transport their children back to TLC following the trip. If there is a fee for the field trip, families will pay at the location of the field trip, or a designated non-TLC employee will be responsible for collecting all money needed for the field trip. TLC cannot be responsible for collecting and paying for field trips. If a child cannot attend a field trip, TLC will be open and available for normal business from 7:30-5:30 M-F. However, classrooms may be combined within licensed ratios.

For all site visits, staff will carry first aid kits, child emergency information, and cell phones in case of an emergency. Families should carry their own child's emergency medications if applicable.

B. Permission Slips for Site Visits

In the "Statement of Responsibility" that families sign as part of the enrollment packet, families are asked whether they want their child to participate in walking field trips (site visits). For all trips that require vehicle transportation, families will be notified ahead of time. Site visit arrival times will be announced in advance. Due to the fact that families transport their own children *to and from* site visits, no special signed permission form is necessary, though families are asked to inform the classroom teacher if the child will not be participating in a scheduled site visit. This allows the site visit experts to carefully plan for the appropriate number of children and adults. Families are asked to arrange child care for students' siblings, as it may be difficult for sites to accommodate a larger number of children.

VIII. Children's Personal Belongings

A. Personal Belongings and Money

Each child will have a designated place to put personal belongings, projects, notes to families, etc. Children are asked NOT to bring money to school unless specifically requested. Staff cannot be responsible for personal belongings and money brought from home. Bringing toys from home is discouraged unless approved by the classroom teacher in advance.

B. Change of Clothing

The children that attend TLC have fun and sometimes having fun gets messy! Please provide a complete change of clothing (socks, underwear, pants or shorts, shoes, and a top) that can remain at the school. We ask that families of infants and toddlers provide two changes of clothing. The clothes will be stored in your child's cubby. Please replenish the items when they have been used, during seasonal changes, and as your child grows throughout the year. ***Please be sure to label every article***

of clothing with first and last name.

C. Diapers/Toileting

Children are not required to be toilet trained to be enrolled at TLC. A toilet-training program can be discussed with the child's teacher regarding readiness.

If your child uses diapers, you are required to supply disposable or cloth diapers to ensure that staff are using the ones that are best for your child. If you provide cloth diapers, you must also provide a proper receptacle. TLC will place a note in your child's cubby when the supply is running low. Families of children in diapers or pull-ups are also asked to supply a container of wet wipes and to replenish as needed.

Infants are checked a minimum of every two hours and are changed as needed when the need for an additional change is evident. Toddlers are checked at least every 2.5 hours, and are changed when the need for an additional change is evident. Preschool children are changed a minimum of one time at least every three hours (or more often as needed). Staff are required to wear disposable gloves for each changing. Children are required to use appropriate hand washing techniques (with assistance as necessary) after changes of diapers and/or toileting.

Children can access the bathroom for toileting as needed. All children are encouraged to be as independent as possible, but assistance is available as needed for clothing adjustments and hand washing.

Staff will follow recommended procedures for hand washing and diapering as outlined in the Colorado Minimum Rules and Regulations for Child Care Centers (Department of Social Services).

IX. Food Program

****NO NUTS (peanut OR tree nut) – Due to the severe allergies of some of the children and staff, TLC is a nut-free environment. Snacks and birthday treats brought in must be store-bought (with a list of the ingredients still attached). Before bringing in any food to share with the class, please ask your child's teacher about any specific food restrictions.**

A. Daily Snack Program

We serve a morning snack and an afternoon snack daily. The snacks will include healthy choices for children. Fresh fruits and vegetables are part of the monthly menu plans. There will be a family education component to the program as needed. Families can purchase snack items from an approved list and the cost will go towards volunteer hours. Check with the Volunteer Coordinator for the approved list of snack items.

Snack time is an important part of your child's day. Besides the nutritional value, snack time offers an opportunity to observe, learn, and practice self-help and socialization skills.

B. Special Diets

If your child is on a highly restricted diet such as gluten-free or multiple intolerances to food and food ingredients, it is important for you to contact the ESM directly to discuss options and fill out any necessary forms.

C. Homemade Snack Policy

Due to the large number of children with food sensitivities, homemade food items to be shared are not allowed.

D. Lunches

Toddler & Preschool Lunches: Families provide the daily lunch for their children. TLC encourages healthy lunches including milk daily and ask that all containers are labeled with the child's name.

Remember that TLC is a *NUT FREE FACILITY*. TLC requests that if you prefer to send a “warm” lunch, the lunch should be sent in a thermos because TLC does not utilize a microwave for warming food. Please send a cold pack for cold lunches. Please do not send fruit juice as a beverage, in support of our Healthy Eating, Active Living policy. ***Please do not send food in glass containers or plastic bags*** (for safety reasons).

Infants: Families of infants provide formula or breast milk in bottles daily. Each bottle must be labeled with the child’s name and must be dated. TLC encourages breastfeeding and provides a private room for mothers to breastfeed their babies, in addition to the infant room. TLC is certified as a “Breastfeeding Friendly” center through Boulder County Public Health. (See Breastfeeding Friendly Policy below.)

E. Birthday and Party Treats

Store bought items must come in the original packaging label to ensure compliance with our “No peanut or tree nut policy”, as well as other ingredients that could cause reactions. Fresh fruit and vegetables are always a welcome treat, when provided in the package from the store. A list of suggested snack items is included in this family handbook under the “Healthy Eating, Active Living” Policy.

X. Discipline Policy

A “discipline” policy is required by programs that possess a child-care license through the State of Colorado Department of Housing and Human Services. It is important to know that “discipline” is different than “punishment.” Discipline is a way to help children learn safe ways to participate in class, express feelings, resolve conflicts, and solve problems in a peaceful manner.

TLC has adopted the *Pyramid Plus Approach* model as a positive behavior support system. Pyramid Plus Approach promotes social-emotional competence for all children, and ensures nurturing and responsive relationships, high-quality supportive environments, and specific interventions for children with challenging behaviors.

TLC’s discipline policy is based on clear expectations and is built on children’s strengths. Clear center-wide expectations (rules) include the following:

- We keep ourselves safe
- We keep our friends safe
- We keep our things safe

TLC has developed clear expectations for transitions from one area of the building to another, and for the playground as well, to ensure the safety of all. All expectations are intentionally taught to the children, and practiced throughout the year.

TLC uses positive language (i.e.: “We use walking feet to keep ourselves safe” rather than “stop running”). We help students to identify and express their own feelings and recognize the feelings of others. We help children to find safe and acceptable ways to express their feelings.

Staff members are never permitted to use corporal punishment. Individual behavior plans, if necessary, are developed in collaboration with families.

XI. Reporting Child Abuse

Staff members of TLC are required by Colorado Licensing law to report any reasonable suspicion that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect. All TLC staff members are required to participate in annual training on identification and reporting of child abuse and neglect. If a report is necessary, the report will be made immediately to the County Department of Human Services or local law enforcement agency.

Also, families have the right to report concerns they may have regarding childcare providers for their children. Please read the letter at the end of the Family Handbook from the Department of Human

Services regarding your rights, or call: Boulder County Social Services (Child Protection): 303-441-1240. The statewide Child Abuse & Neglect Hotline is: 844-264-5437

XII. Communication Between TLC and Families

A. Routine Communications

The staff at TLC strives to foster an open line of communication between the school and home. Staff and families should determine what form of communication works best (e.g. email, notes, phone call, ProCare app, etc.). While teachers and therapists may not be able to respond on a daily basis, every effort will be made to keep you informed about your child.

In any school, there may be times when a family is not satisfied with a particular situation. TLC's goal is to foster a relationship between you and your child's teacher or therapist that will enable you to resolve concerns or differences. Therefore, you are encouraged to talk to your child's teacher or therapist first to resolve any concerns you may have. Generally, this discussion should be held when you identify the issue or concern, or within 3-5 days if you are responding to a specific incident. Discussions held in a timely manner will enhance the ability to address issues while they remain fresh in everyone's mind. Most concerns should be able to be resolved in this manner.

If your concerns are not resolved or you have concerns that you are unwilling or unable to talk about with your child's teacher or therapist, you are encouraged to take your concerns to the ESM or TSM. Should you not be satisfied after speaking with the ESM/TSM, you may take your concerns to the ED.

B. Newsletter

Our Family newsletter is sent home via email in August, October, January, March and June. This illustrates activities children have been participating in, upcoming events and important notices. Your teacher will post weekly lesson plans on the bulletin board.

C. Family Information Boards and Family Involvement

New information will be posted on a bulletin board near the front door. Please review this information on a regular basis. There is also a Family Resource bulletin board and if there is an article you are interested in, we would be glad to make you a copy. Help yourself to all available pamphlets. Also, if you have something you would like to share with other families, please bring it to our attention.

Medical information postings: If a communicable disease is identified at TLC, information will be posted on a red tag board in the front foyer and on the bulletin board near the front door.

There is also a Family Toolkit Night Resource bulletin board which will contain new information periodically. This board will provide families with very practical "tools" to use at home to support healthy social-emotional development. Please help yourself to all materials and articles.

Pyramid Plus Approach Leadership Team: We invite and encourage families to consider joining the Pyramid Plus Approach Leadership Team this year. This is an opportunity for families to become actively involved in TLC and all aspects of their child's early education experience in collaboration with TLC staff. Please see the ESM or TSM for more information.

D. Family Needs Assessment and Mental Health Support

The ED, ESM, and TSM are available to work with and assist families in accessing other community resources. Mental Health Services are available for families through the Kid Connects Warm Line 303/245-4418 (Mental Health Partners).

XIII. Concealed Weapons

Possession of a firearm of any kind inside TLC is strictly prohibited. Any firearm must remain inside an adult attended and/or locked motor vehicle and is secured in a closed and locked glove compartment, console, or trunk. Only sworn law enforcement is permitted to carry a firearm on the TLC campus.

XIV. Miscellaneous

A. Videotaping and Photography

Each year families give permission for their children to be videotaped and/or photographed. If you are taking video or pictures (for example, for your child's birthday party celebration) please check with your child's teacher regarding which children can be included.

If you are videotaping and/or taking pictures for professional or documentary needs, etc., please speak to the ED first, as a separate release for photos is required.

B. TLC's Policy: TV/Video and Media Usage

During classroom hours, TV and media usage will be educational in nature. Televisions, iPads, computers, and other forms of media will not be used for entertainment purposes.

C. TLC's Policy: Late Arrival of a Child and Class is Not on Premise

If a child arrives after the official start of class, and other students are not in the building or on the playground, the ESM or ED will assign the child temporarily to another classroom that is age-appropriate and within licensing ratios. If an alternate placement is not possible and the family did not make arrangements in advance, the ESM or ED have the right to make the decision to send the child home with the family.

D. TLC's Policy: TLC's Withdrawal of a Child from TLC

In the event that TLC determines that it is unable to provide the necessary services for a student or the family has not complied with written signed agreements, TLC will provide written notice of termination of services fourteen calendar days in advance of withdrawal of services. The type of services to be terminated will be included in the written notice.

E. TLC's Policy: Breastfeeding Friendly Policy

In recognition of the well-documented health advantages of breastfeeding for children and mothers, TLC provides a supportive environment to enable breastfeeding mothers and employees to express their milk. TLC subscribes to the following support policy for breastfeeding mothers:

- A private room is available for mothers to breastfeed or express milk. The room is private, sanitary, shielded from view, free from intrusion, is located near a sink with running water for washing hands and rinsing out pump parts, and has an electrical outlet. If preferred, they may also breastfeed or express milk in other comfortable locations agreed upon in consultation with the staff. Expressed milk can be stored in TLC's infant room refrigerator.
- Informational materials are available for all mothers and caregivers.
- We train staff annually.
- We inform women and families about the importance of breastfeeding.
- We provide learning and play opportunities which normalize breastfeeding for children.
- We ensure that all breastfeeding families we serve are able to store and label milk properly for child care use.
- We provide a breastfeeding friendly environment.
- We support breastfeeding employees.

- We ensure that each infant has an individual feeding plan that supports best feeding practices.
- We contact and coordinate with local skilled breastfeeding support and actively refer to community resources.
- We continue to learn about protection, promotion, and support of breastfeeding.
- We employ Certified Lactation Counselors. These staff members are available for consultation with families.

A copy of the TLC Breastfeeding Friendly packet is provided to families of all infants and any parent may receive a copy on request. The packet includes details of each of the above components. Copies are also available in the family resource center at all times for all families.

F. Primary Caregiving and Continuity of Care

Most classrooms have two full time teachers and/or teaching assistants. Though both teachers provide care to every child in the classroom, a primary caregiver is assigned to each child. This individual is the teacher who takes the lead responsibility for ongoing assessment and ongoing communication with families.

TLC uses a “continuity of care” model. This reduces the number of transitions for children and families, and helps to build strong relationships with children and families over time. When children transition from the infant classroom to a toddler classroom (between 12 and 18 months of age), our goal is to have the child remain in the care of that toddler teacher team and the same community of learners until the child’s transition to preschool (2 ½ years to kindergarten readiness).

Occasionally, more than one transition may be necessary.

G. Mixed-Age Classroom Philosophy

TLC uses a mixed-age, continuity of care approach to creating classroom communities. The benefits of mixed-age classrooms are numerous and include:

- Mixed-age groups mimic family structures and neighborhood groupings, providing opportunities to interact with others outside of their age.
- Older children are encouraged to take leadership and mentoring roles with younger children. They are often seen helping younger children while also modeling social skills that help prepare all the children for kindergarten.
- The science of learning recognizes the importance of the “more capable peer” in addition to adults in supporting children in that space between what they know and can do on their own and what they know and can do with assistance. In that space children are appropriately challenged, willing to take risks, and learning is deepened. A mixed-age classroom offers increased exposure to “more capable peers.”
- Mixed age classrooms support TLC’s commitment to inclusive classrooms by helping adults view each child in relation to the full continuum of development regardless of whether the child has therapeutic needs or not. Teachers are better able to individualize their curriculum to meet each child’s needs.
- Mixed-age classrooms support TLC’s commitment to the “continuity of care” model, giving preschoolers at least two full years with the same teachers.

More about mixed-ages: <https://bingschool.stanford.edu/news/mixed-age-classrooms-provide-optimal-learning-environment>

H. Farm to Early Care & Education Program

TLC participates in the “Farm to ECE” Program offered through Boulder County Public Health. This provides a toolkit for early education providers, which incorporates farming, gardening, and nutrition into our education program. The program includes weekly gardening activities, weekly nutrition activities, and communication to parents regarding nutrition and program activities. Goals of the program are:

- To increase access to nutritious food and experiential opportunities in an effort to grow healthy children.
- To positively influence the eating habits of young children while their food preferences are forming.

I. Translation—Procedures Supporting Communication in Family’s Primary Language

TLC will make every attempt to communicate in the family’s primary language. Currently we have translation in Spanish available. The following procedures are in place:

- Phone calls: If a family calls TLC and it is apparent that the caregiver’s family language is other than English, the staff member receiving the call will request the person’s name, and phone number. One of our bilingual staff members will return the phone call and respond to the family’s needs/questions as soon as possible. That staff member will share pertinent information/questions with the ESM/TSM and will initiate further communication, as needed.
- Tours: If a non-English speaking family schedules a tour with TLC, we ask the family to have a translator if possible. If not available, TLC will attempt to provide a bilingual staff member to participate in the tour to translate for the family if able.
- Registration and ongoing communication: TLC’s registration/enrollment form asks for the family’s primary language and asks the caregiver whether the family needs a translator. If the family responds “yes”, one of our bilingual staff members will be available to translate all of the following upon request: monthly newsletter (read to the family and answer any questions); registration and enrollment paperwork (complete paperwork with the family); family-teacher conferences (translator present); family visit (translator present); Family Handbook (reviewed with family at family visit; and Back to School Night.
- Classroom transitions: If a child enrolls at TLC, and the family’s primary language is other than English, TLC will attempt to provide a bilingual staff member for the home visit and family-teacher conferences.
- Family Handbook: TLC is in search of a volunteer to translate the TLC Family Handbook into Spanish. If you are able to assist with this project, please let us know.

J. TLC’s Healthy Eating Policy

TLC supports your child’s healthy food choices by:

- Gently encouraging children to try fruits and vegetables and giving positive reinforcement when they do.
- Role-modeling positive behaviors by eating fruits and vegetables in the presence of children.
- Observing and supporting hunger and fullness cues.
- Providing opportunities for nutrition education for families and staff.
- During celebrations and holiday parties, TLC will offer fruits and vegetables and other healthy foods.
- Not using food as a reward.

Providing good nutrition and ensuring food safety for your child is a priority and is a partnership between home and school. We at TLC ask for your support:

- For packed lunches, please include fruits, vegetables, grains and a protein, in addition to milk, daily.
- Please do not provide “fast food” for your child’s lunch.
- Please provide milk for your child with every lunch.
- Foods containing nuts of any kind will not be served to children at any time. *TLC is a nut free facility.*
- For packed lunches, do not include sugary food and drink (including juice).
- For packed lunches, please send warm food in a thermos, and please provide ice packs in the lunch box for cold food. Do not send food in plastic bags or in glass containers.
- For celebrations and birthday parties, please provide healthy foods (especially fruits and vegetables). TLC can provide you with a list of acceptable celebration food alternatives at your request.
- Snacks made in a home will not be accepted or served. All food provided for celebrations must be prepared and packaged by a commercial bakery.
- Children and adults will refrain from “sharing” food from each other’s lunches.

TLC understands the importance of providing age-appropriate food and beverages for infants, toddlers, and preschool children. At TLC:

- If a mother wishes to breast feed exclusively, the program will make every effort to provide breast milk to the child and supplement only when breast milk is gone.
- We will continue supporting families who are breastfeeding beyond 12 months.
- We are recognized as a “Breastfeeding Friendly” facility. The Breastfeeding Friendly Policy is included in the family handbook, and additional resources are available for families at all times.
- We provide a private space for families and staff who are breastfeeding or expressing milk.
- We will follow the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations and not serve any food or drink other than breast milk and/or iron fortified infant formula in a bottle unless medically necessary.
- We will only serve 1% milk for children aged 2 years and older.
- Water will be clearly visible and available to the children at all times (indoors and outdoors).
- We plant, harvest, prepare, and eat food from the TLC garden each year. Children are actively involved in these activities as part of our Project-Based Learning.
- We participate in the Farm to ECE program.

TLC is committed to our children’s health and nutrition. We recognize the importance of the staff as positive role models for the children as they learn to live healthy lives. Therefore:

- Staff will not drink soda and sugary beverages in front of the children in their care.
- Staff will model drinking water throughout the day.
- During functions or meetings with parents at TLC, we will serve water.

K. TLC’s Nutrition and Physical Activity Policy

NUTRITION

At TLC we offer a morning snack for part time students, and both a morning and afternoon snack for full day students. TLC is a nut-free facility (including tree nuts), so no food containing nuts of any type will be served to students at any time. Staff members will not offer additional food items to students without family permission.

Families provide lunch and are asked to provide a nutritious, balanced lunch, free from nuts of any kind. Staff and students do not share their lunches with each other.

The following is what we hope will be helpful information about our snack menu, and guidelines for celebrations at TLC. The snack menu is posted in the bulletin board near the front door.

Fruits and Vegetables

- We offer fruit to children weekly as part of our snack menu.
- We offer fruit canned in its own juice, fresh fruit, and/or frozen fruit as part of our snack menu weekly.
- We offer fresh vegetables to children weekly as part of our snack menu.

Grains

- We offer whole grain choices at snack weekly.
- We offer beans monthly at snack.
- We offer only a “sweet” option in the form of pudding, graham crackers, or animal crackers no more than once per week.

Dairy

- We offer dairy at snack weekly, such as cheese, yogurt, and milk.
- Milk served to preschool students is low fat (1%) milk.

Beverages

- We make drinking water freely available so children can serve themselves both inside and outdoors. Families provide individual water bottles for their children. Children are encouraged to drink throughout the day.
- We do not offer sweetened beverages.
- We serve only 1% milk to children age 2 or older.

Menus and Variety

- Our snack menus include healthy items from a variety of cultures.
- Our snack menus include a combination of new and familiar foods.

Feeding Practices

- Our staff help children determine if they are full before removing their plate.
- Our staff help children determine if they are still hungry before serving additional food.
- Our staff gently and positively encourage children to try a new or less preferred food.
- We do not use food to encourage positive behavior.

Foods offered Outside of Regular Meals and Snacks

- We provide and enforce written guidelines for healthier food brought in and served for holidays and celebrations (see below).
- We celebrate holidays with mostly healthy foods or non-food treats.

Supporting Healthy Eating

- Our staff joins children at the table at snack time.
- Our staff often talks informally with the children about trying and enjoying healthy foods.
- We encourage families to provide fruit, vegetables, protein, whole grain, and dairy (including milk) for their children’s lunches.
- We plant a garden at TLC every year. Children enjoy fresh vegetables from the garden.
- We participate in the Farm to ECE program.

Nutrition Education for Staff, Children and Families

- We provide training opportunities for staff on nutrition 1X per year or more.

- We provide nutrition education to caregivers 2x per year or more.

Celebrations

Consider celebrating with favorite stories, music, games, age-appropriate “trinkets”, or activities. The most important thing to your child is that you took the time to help plan something special. Please talk with the ESM if you have questions or need ideas. We know that it’s hard to break old habits like cake, ice cream and candy, but let’s give it a try!

Thank you for helping to support Healthy Eating and Active Living at TLC!

PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES POLICY

Our physical activity policy uses the mnemonic 5-2-1-0.

5 – Encourage **5** or more Fruits & Vegetables each day

2 – Limit screen time to **2** hours or less for children over 2 years

At TLC, we understand that TV and other electronic media can get in the way of exploring, playing, and interacting with others. Limiting screen time encourages learning and healthy physical and social development. Therefore, we will restrict screen time by:

- Having ZERO screen time (iPad, video, and computer) for children under the age of two years for entertainment purposes.
- Not allowing screen time during meals and snacks
- Allowing no more than 15 minutes of educational computer/ iPad time per day
- Allowing a maximum of 30 minutes total per week of educational and age appropriate screen time
- Non-educational screen time will not be used at TLC.

1 – Having **1** hour of active play daily

At TLC, we understand that active play is important for healthy growth and development of young children. Therefore:

- All preschool students at TLC will participate in the “Young Athletes” program. Toddlers will have access to the equipment (as age-appropriate) and the indoor gross motor space.
- All full day, full time preschool and older toddler students will participate in YogaKids (with a certified instructor) weekly.
- If weather is permissible, children attending a full day program will receive at least 60 minutes of outdoor play daily, in addition to 45 minutes of indoor gross motor activity (active play). If weather is not permissible, full time students will receive at least 90 minutes of active indoor play. Students who attend a half day program will participate in a *minimum* of 30 minutes of active gross motor activity daily. If weather permits, the majority of this activity will be outdoors.
- We will **not** withhold physical activity as a punishment/ consequence.
- We will provide opportunities for physical activity education for families and staff.
- We will consider physical activity as a positive consequence.
- We encourage children to be active, and staff members join children in active play

0 – Have **0** sugary drinks (and more water & milk). At TLC, we are committed to our children’s health and nutrition. We recognize the importance of the staff as positive role models for the children as they learn to live healthy lives.

Therefore:

- Staff will refrain from drinking sugary beverages in the presence of children.
- We will not serve sugary drinks to the children during the program day.

L. Family and School Partnerships Policy and Procedure

Rationale/Research supporting Family-School Partnerships

Creating a Family and School Partnership is a key to success. Here at TLC we continuously work to develop, foster, and nurture that beneficial relationship. Here are two studies that offer insight into the benefits of family-school partnerships:

Researchers at the University of Oxford found that children whose parents participated in the Peers Early Education Partnership (a program geared towards supporting families of children ages 0-5) "made significantly greater progress in their learning than children whose parents did not participate." These strides were found in children ages 3-5, and included progress in vocabulary, language comprehension, understanding of books and print and number concepts. In addition, these children also exhibited higher self-esteem in comparison to children of non-participating parents (Evangelou & Sylva, 2003).

A study published in the *Journal of Instructional Psychology* reported that improving parental involvement in the classroom can also improve schools in general (Machen, Wilson & Notar, 2005). The authors describe how everyone within the school community can benefit when families and teachers work as partners.

Our Beliefs

We know that families are their children's first and most important teachers. We, therefore, believe:

1. It is critically important for families to be actively engaged in their child's learning, and to establish and maintain ongoing and productive communication with teachers and therapists.
2. It is important to celebrate the successes, big and small, with the families.
3. At times, difficult conversations need to happen, to ensure the success of the child in the classroom and beyond. These conversations may need to occur when a child is not making the desired progress in any area of development, such as language, sensory processing, or behavior.
4. Early, intense intervention, when deemed necessary, is most effective. (This is supported by multiple research studies.)

Opportunities for family-school partnerships occur through family visits, informal conversations at drop-off and pick-up time, email communication, reading the newsletter attending family/teacher/ therapist conferences, attending Center-wide events, and through volunteering.

Throughout the year teachers and therapists use developmentally-appropriate assessment tools for all students, including Teaching Strategies GOLD, and ongoing observation in multiple settings to monitor progress in all areas of a child's development. In collaboration with families, individual goals are created based on observations at school and at home, and specific strategies are implemented to aid in success. The greatest success stories for all children occur when families partner with staff to implement similar successful strategies in the home.

Universal Screening, Assessment, Planning, and Intervention/ Implementation Procedure

When it becomes evident, through universal screening, ongoing observation and Teaching Strategies GOLD data, that there is a need for additional classroom support for a child to be successful, the following procedure will be followed:

1. An *initial conference* will be held, during which all team members will meet to share observations, thoughts, questions, successful strategies, and need for additional support. A successful team *must* include the primary caregiver and teacher, as well as the teaching assistant, therapist(s), manager(s), and other parties as appropriate, based on the individual child's need for additional support. It is expected that all members of the team disclose and discuss all pertinent information, including outside testing results as applicable.
2. All team members will work collaboratively to establish *goals* and agree upon a *plan*. This plan may include further therapeutic assessment, direct therapeutic services, adult participation in training, gathering of data, and implementation of agreed-upon strategies in the home and school settings. All members of the team agree that they share responsibility for successful implementation of the plan, and ultimately the success of the child. The family is always an integral part of the team. (See "Positive Behavior Support Plan" template.)
3. Any changes to services and supports will be discussed as a team and *decisions will be made as a team*.
4. If strategies have been put into place and the TLC team continues to document that a child is struggling due to *challenging behaviors* that interfere with the safety of self and/or others or require intense and/or frequent one-on-one support at school, the team will meet to create a *Behavior Support Plan*. A successful team *must* include the primary caregiver and staff members who work directly with the child. The team will reconvene, as often as necessary, to review progress and make changes to the plan. All members of the team agree that they share responsibility for successful implementation of the plan, and ultimately the success of the child. The caregiver is always an integral part of the team.
5. Knowing that open communication and collaboration between home and school are critical components for a child's success, the following is understood and accepted by all members of the child's team: If team members are unable to agree upon and implement a plan successfully, it may be determined that TLC is not a "good fit" for the individual child. In this case, a 14-day notice to withdraw may be provided in writing by the members of the team. If there is disagreement regarding termination of services and/or the date for termination of services, a decision will be based upon the recommendation of the majority of the team members.

NOTICE TO FAMILIES AND CAREGIVERS

TLC is licensed by the State of Colorado, Department of Human Services. Our License number is 45117. The current license is posted at the front desk.

Licensing Inspections

The most recent Fire, Health, and Child Care Licensing inspections are available for review upon request. Inspections are maintained by TLC's Child Care Director/ESM, in the Child Care Director/ESM's office.

Reporting Licensing Complaints

If you have a complaint concerning suspected licensing violations at TLC, you may file a complaint at:

Colorado Department of Human Services
Division of Child Care & Licensing
Attention: Complaint Intake
1575 Sherman Street Denver, CO 80503-1714
Phone: 303-866-3755



TLC Learning Center

611 Korte Parkway • Longmont CO 80501 • 303-776-7417 • www.LearningWithTLC.org

Receipt & Acceptance of Family Handbook, Policies, & Procedures

My *initial* beside each policy and procedure indicates that I have received, read, understand, and will abide by all of the following policies and procedures as outlined in the TLC Learning Center Family Handbook.

- Welcome and History (page 4)
- Volunteer Hours (page 4)
- General Overview (pages 5-7)
- Specific Educational Services Information (Program Hours, Late Pick-Up/Drop-Off Policy, Safe Sleep for Infants, etc.) (pages 8-13)
- Enrollment Policies (Fee, Tuition Policy, etc.) (pages 13-15)
- Medical Information (Health Appraisals, Illnesses, etc.) (pages 15-18)
- Emergencies (Injuries, School Closing Due to Weather, etc.) (pages 18-20)
- Transportation (page 20)
- Children’s Personal Belongings (pages 20-21)
- Food Program (Daily Snack Program, Lunches, etc.) (pages 21-23)
- Discipline Policy (page 22)
- Reporting Child Abuse (pages 22-23)
- Communication Between TLC and Families (pages 23-24)
- Concealed Weapons (page 24)
- Miscellaneous (TLC’s Withdrawal of a Child from TLC, Breastfeeding Friendly Policy, Healthy Eating Policy, Family and School Partnership Policy, etc.) (pages 24-31)

I, the primary caregiver of _____, acknowledge that all information
(Child’s name)
provided to TLC (registration form, intake inquiry form, all enrollment paperwork) is accurate. I understand that failure to disclose information at the request of TLC, and/or providing false information may result in exclusion of my child from the program.

Primary Caregiver Printed Name Primary Caregiver Signature Date

Educational Services Manager Printed Name ESM Signature Date

Document Revisions

Revision	Item	Date and Name
1	Updated rates, COVID Addendum	March 2021 Lisa Stratton
2	Annual Updates	July 2021 Lisa Stratton
3	Tuition updates	July 2022 Matt Eldred
4	Annual Updates	July 2022 Lisa Stratton
5	Statements of Responsibility Updates	October 2022 Lisa Stratton
6	Annual Updates	July 2023 Lisa Stratton, Shari Karmen, Amy French-Troy