

Big Hearts Little Hands Childcare and Early Learning Center Parent's Handbook



Big Hearts Little Hands Childcare LLC

Welcome to Big Hearts Little Hands Childcare and Early Learning Center!

We are delighted that you have chosen our center to provide for the needs of your child. This Parent Handbook has been written to describe our program, philosophy, policies, and all the practical details that go into making each day as happy and successful as possible. Please carefully read this handbook and keep it for future reference. The staff at Big Hearts Little Hands Childcare and Early Learning Center would be glad to address any of your questions or concerns.

We encourage you and your family to visit our center prior to the first day of enrollment, to give our teachers, and your child, an opportunity to meet and become better acquainted. It will make separating on the first day a bit easier. Once again, welcome!

Big Hearts Little Hands Childcare and Early Learning Center

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Mission

Big Hearts Little Hands Childcare and Early Learning Center's mission is to provide an enriched learning environment for all children of all races, religions, family backgrounds, and cultures in our community. We are committed to preparing children for a lifetime of learning, by creating and maintaining a safe, supportive, and nurturing learning environment for all children. The staff will promote social/emotional competence as a foundation for developing the whole child. Big Hearts Little Hands is the place where every child wants to play, learn, and grow!

Operating Hours

Big Hearts Little Hands is open Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. -5:30 p.m. The center closes its doors promptly at 5:30 p.m. Childcare is provided in 10 hours increments and anything exceeding the 10-hour allowance will be billed at an hourly rate of \$25 per child for the first minute and \$5.00 per child for every minute after. The reason for the late fee is to ensure that the center closes at 5:30 p.m. The late fee should be paid in cash to the office, on or before the due date of the next tuition. Big Hearts Little Hands reserves the right to dismiss a child who is picked up late on a consistent basis.

Enrollment

Big Hearts Little Hands and the State of Tennessee Department of Human Services requires all children enrolled have a current immunization record on file and physical before attending. Big Hearts Little Hands require all paper work including the Parent/ Provider contract and receipt of Policy agreement are signed and completed, before attending. If your child has any special needs, their needs must be addressed before enrolling to be certain that we are able to provide the appropriate level of care for your child. Big Hearts Little Hands does not discriminate against a child or parent on the basis of race, national origin, or disability in any of its' policies services, or practices.

Curriculum

Our program consists of developmentally appropriate hands-on activities for all children 6 weeks to 5 years old. While implementing Tennessee Early Learning Development Standards, the children's day consist of activities that meets them on their level to support them on their path to school readiness. The activities are designed to engage children early in the love for science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics.

Regarding Discrimination

Big Hearts Little Hands Childcare and Early Learning Center does not discriminate against a child or parent on the basis of the race, color, national origin, religion, or disabilities in any of our policies, services, or practices.

Confidentiality

Big Hearts Little Hands Childcare and Early Learning Center values and respects the privacy of our families regarding their child and family situation. All personal information will be handled in a respectful and confidential manner. At times non-childcare agency staff will be in the center

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to complete observations of the children. We have attached a written parental permission for observation of children by non-childcare agency staff to our policy agreement.

Communication

Communication with our families is of the utmost importance. The time you spend in the center dropping off and picking up your child are the primary windows of time we have to communicate with you about your child. In order to make the best use of these opportunities, as well as to be attentive to your child and other children, we ask that you **NOT** use your cell phone at any time while visiting the center.

Your child's teacher will provide you with a daily note regarding their activity for the day. We are trying to maintain a paperless environment therefore we may send some information that does not require a signature via email and or our communication app. We ask that you download the parent engagement app to your phone in order to receive these communications. Please try to keep the center current with any phone number or email address that may change during the course of the relationship. Please check your child's cubby each day for take home work and additional information.

In the event of an incident, you will be contacted throughout the day via phone or email and will be provided an incident report. If for any reason you feel that you must meet with the director and/ or teacher please request a meeting and accommodation will be made for you within reason. You may make your request via email at bigheartslittlehandschildcare@gmail.com.

Drop off / Pick up Procedure

Big Hearts Little Hands opens its' doors at 6:30 a.m. and we ask that all parents and children stay in their vehicles until the doors are unlocked, if they arrive earlier than 6:00 a.m. In order to maintain a healthy environment every child must be taken directly to the restroom to handwash before entering into the classroom. We ask that parents who are dropping off multiple children do not leave their child unattended in hallway nor do they allow older children in the classroom with infants or toddlers. We are making this request for the safety of our children.

Every child must also be signed in and out daily. Please do not allow your child to sign him or herself in at any time. Our sign in sheet is consider a legal record keeping document provided by Department of Human Services. Failure to sign your child in and out of the center will result to \$10 fee for every missed signature.

It is understandable that at times families get busy and a late arrival is unavoidable. Where at all possible, please be sure to drop-off your child on time. Late arrivals can disrupt daily routines for your child. The cut-off time for drop off is prior to 9:00 a.m., however children will be allowed to enter the building after 9:00 a.m. if they have a doctor's note and at that time the cut-off for drop off will be prior to 11:00a.m., there is no exception to this rule.

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We know that picking up can be a busy time for the educator and the parent, however it is imperative that your child is only released to the custodial parent or other person specifically authorized by the parent. This person must have valid identification and also be listed on the child's transportation list and emergency contact form.

Big Hearts Little Hands is required by law not to release a child to anyone that is noticeably intoxicated or incapable of driving. If this was to take place an approved contact person would be called to pick up the child.

Financial Responsibility

A registration fee as well as application fee is due upon enrollment with Big Hearts Little Hands Childcare and Early Learning Center. This fee is non-refundable and ensures your child's placement. The registration fee is due annually and is due every September. All tuition payments are due weekly on **Friday** for the next following week. Tuition is due regardless of attendance or holidays. All tuitions payments that are not paid on Friday by the close of business will accrue a \$50 late payment by 9a.m. Monday morning.

Payment can be made at the front desk in the form of a money order, cashier's check, or cashapp, or direct deposit.

If for any reason you decide to withdraw your child from our program, we do require a two-week written notice prior to your child's withdrawal or you will be responsible for the two-week tuition. This notice does not start until the next scheduled payment of the following week. Failure to provide this notice also forfeits your right to collect an end of the year tax receipt until all balances are paid. Overdue accounts will be turned over to our attorney and fees may apply. At that time the attorney will be provided with your end of the year receipt for your collection. Refunds for prepaid accounts, at the time of withdrawal will be at the discretion of the owner.

Mealtime

The center will provide breakfast, lunch, and snacks, Monday through Friday. If you will like your child to receive breakfast, please have them at the center prior to 8:15 a.m. No outside food is allowed in the center with the exception of food items for events held at the center. Big Hearts Little Hands is a nut free center. If you chose to provide your own meals, due to written dietary restriction advised by your child's pediatrician, please see the director for meal prep guidelines and allowances.

If there are certain items that your child may not eat or drink, please make sure that this information is in your child's file and that you have notified the teacher and director.

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All children that arrive prior to 7a.m. including infants are required to have their first meal prior to arrival.

Inclement Weather

Big Heart Little Hands will close if weather conditions are severe. This will be at the discretion of the director. The safety of our children and staff is very important to us. If we receive a bad snow storm or ice storm during operating hours, the severity of the weather will dictate our daily schedule. Children must be picked up within an hour of being notified.

Holiday Closure

- The center will close New Year's Eve
- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Fourth of July
- Labor Day
- Columbus Day
- The center will close the Wednesday before Thanksgiving Day, Thanksgiving Day, and the day after.
- Good Friday
- The week of Christmas (these dates will be provided prior to closing)
- Veterans Day will be at the discretion of management.

Please note if the holiday falls on a weekend, we will be closed the day before the holiday or the week day following the holiday. This will be at the discretion of the owner. Parents will be informed in advance of the closing date. When the center is closed for the holiday full tuition is still due. If the holiday falls on a Friday when tuition is due payment will be due at the time of drop on the next business day, otherwise it will be considered late and there will be a \$50 late fee added to your account.

Summer Withdrawal

If your job allows you to be off during the summer months and you will like to withdraw them and re-enroll them for the fall, you must follow the following step:

1. Notify the director of your intent. At this time the director will ask you to fill our withdrawal papers and your child will be placed on a waiting list for the upcoming fall school year. This waiting list is based on seniority.

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2. Your child must be re-enrolled by the first day that the Public-school system starts and a new registration fee must be paid to ensure your child will have a spot.

Withdrawing from the center during school breaks and such as Christmas, spring, and fall break is discouraged. Please note: we are unable to hold spots.

Biting

Biting is a sensitive issue. Each time a child bites, the bite is recorded. The bite will be rated on a scale of 1-3 points in accordance with the severity of the bite. The number of points allowed is based on developmental age and are at the discretion of management. Parents of both child who bites and the child who is bitten are contacted to inform them of the incident. If your child bites frequently, we may request parent conferences to help modify the behavior. The center may provide the family with resources on biting or request advice from the child's pediatrician.

Discipline

We must work together to ensure that the proper social values and learning skills are instilled in your child. There will be no physical punishment of any kind used at the center. Good discipline is not just enforcing rules; it is caring enough about children to provide clear guidelines for them to follow. Children who seem to be having trouble cooperating or following the rules of the center will be redirected in a positive manner. Short periods of time out may be used if the classroom teacher feels it is necessary. Parent conferences will be scheduled if behavioral problems persist. Your suggestions on how to correct any problems are welcome. We also feel if suspension is necessary, you must willing assist the center and outside resources such as CCR&R, Tennessee Early Intervention Services and the Rip Program with developing and implementing a behavioral modification plan, in order for your child to continue to attend the center. In order for this to happen you must provide written permission for a non-childcare agency staff observe your child in the classroom. It takes a village to raise a child.

Dismissal Procedure

Big Hearts Little Hands has a two-week trial period for any enrolled child. The center reserves the right to request the withdrawal of a child during the trial period if one or more of the following conditions exists.

1. Child is not participating in or benefiting from the program.
2. Child is bullying another child after being redirected (3 strict policy).
3. There are no reasonable accommodations the center can make to provide adequate or safe care for the child.
4. There are no reasonable accommodations the center can provide adequate or safe care to other enrolled children due to the needs or behaviors of the child

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A child will also be immediately dismissed from the program if the parent/guardian or any other member that is associated with the enrolled child displays a hostile, threaten, or harassing behavior toward another child, parent, or staff member. Big Heats Little Hands will provide a written notice if we determine it is necessary to dismiss your child.

Special Needs and Disabilities

Big Hearts Little Hands Childcare and Early Learning Center serves children with special needs and disabilities whenever possible. Any eligible applicant with special needs or disabilities will be enrolled in the program if, after a careful evaluation of the child's care needs and Big Hearts Little Hands capabilities to meet those needs. If it is felt that the child can participate in and benefit from the services Big Hearts Little Hands will make reasonable accommodations to provide safe care to this child as well as to the other enrolled children. Big Hearts Little Hands will require the individual support plan or individual education plan to be kept on file. Big Hearts Little Hands will be part of the evaluation process and provide necessary developmental information to professionals working with your child. If Big Hearts Little Hands feels that your child may need special services, we will meet with you privately to discuss our concerns. We will provide you with local programs that may be of assistance in determining a developmental delay or special need.

Health and Safety

We strive to maintain a clean and safe environment for the children. The State of Tennessee Department of Human Services requires all children enrolled have a current immunization record on file and it must be signed or stamped by a physician or health care agency. A physical is required for all children before attending. Infants must have on file an official health record of the first medical checkup at eight weeks of age.

Upon arrival all children's hands must be washed and will be checked for any communicable diseases as required by the State of Tennessee Department of Human Services. Children with a fever or contagious illness may not be brought to the center. Teachers are responsible for reporting any signs of communicable disease immediately. Symptomatic children shall be removed from the group until parents are contacted and health issues are resolved. These symptoms maybe but not limited to a fever of 101 or above, diarrhea, or vomiting. Parents have **one hour** to pick up their child. Parents must bring a signed doctor's note stating that the child is not contagious. Please note that even if a child does not exhibit any of the symptoms that are mentioned above, but are still unable to participate within the group due to not feeling well, you maybe asked to pick them up for the day. In the event that your child requires immediate medical attention, we will first call 911 and parents will then, be contacted and informed of the situation and their child's condition. All children shall have on file permission granting Big Hearts Little Hands staff to seek emergency care if necessary.

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Medication

Medications prescribed by a doctor are permitted at the center. This only includes Epi pens and inhalers. If your child has a food allergy and an Epi has been prescribed by a physician, your child's physician must complete a Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan form. This form will be provided to you by the childcare facility. All other medications must be administered by parents or authorized persons. *Under no circumstances may medication be kept in diaper bags, backpacks, or in the classroom for any reason.*

Child Abuse and Neglect

Definition of *Child Abuse*: improper treatment that can harm a child physically, sexually, emotionally, and/ or mentally.

Big Hearts Little Hands' staff is required by law to report any suspected abuse or neglect to the Department of Children's Services. Staff may not attempt to investigate or determine the validity of abuse. All staff members receive extensive training on the subject of child abuse throughout the year. Parents are welcome to attend child abuse training offered by Big Hearts Little Hands as well.

Child care facilities licensed through the state of Tennessee are required to incorporate a state approved personal safety program into the curriculum. Keeping Kid's Safe, the program used by Big Hearts Little Hands is an age-appropriate curriculum using short stories and to convey safety topics that pertain to preschoolers, including stranger danger and safe touches. Parents are provided an opportunity each year to meet with management to view the curriculum and ask questions regarding this sensitive subject.

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome

Department of Human Services licensing regulations have specific criteria for child care agency that must be met and followed in regarding SIDS PREVENTION, each child must have his or her own crib and no blankets of any kind other than a mini fitted crib sheet is allowed in or on the crib. The crib must also be free of hanging objects and toys. All infants must always be placed on their back to sleep and must be touched every 15 minutes. If your child is required to sleep on his/her tummy or side at any time it must be documented by a physician and placed on file in our office.

Prohibited Practices and Products

Smoking is prohibited on Big Hearts Little Hands property. Licensing states that smoking should not be permitted in the presence of children. This includes the parking lot. Please refrain from smoking during drop off and pick up.

State licensing and Big Hearts Little Hands do not permit under any circumstance Firearms on the premises of the child care agency.

Corporal punishment is not permitted on Big Hearts Little Hands property.

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Diaper Changing

Big Hearts Little Hands Childcare and Early Learning Center must follow state standards for diapering. Diapering standards require that children be changed with a certain time frame and that we use adequate supplies. Please take note that we may use more diapers than you do at home due to these standards. Universal precautions, such as the use of gloves and proper hand washing techniques, are maintained to ensure that sanitary conditions are met.

Potty Training

Big Hearts Little Hands will begin the potty-training process when the child is showing signs of readiness. We do understand that children do not potty train at the exact same time. We will positively encourage your child to go to the restroom and request that you also assist with the process.

During this time, please be sure that you have provided all of the requested items on the supply list such as pull ups, training pants that are leak proof, and extra clothing.

Parent Involvement and Volunteers

Parents are welcome to enter the facility at any time during operating hours. We feel that your participation and involvement in parent conferences, parent council meetings, open houses and center functions is very important for you and your child.

Volunteers add in the quality of our program and we encourage parents to volunteer in the classroom for special projects and parties. Quality students from area high schools and colleges may volunteer as part of their course work; however, they do not count in the child to teacher ratio and may never be left alone with a child. *Volunteers are only used to enhance the curriculum and provide a additional set of hands for fun activities.*

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I have received an emailed copy or paper copy of the parent's handbook

Child name _____

Parent's signature _____ email address _____

Date _____

Director's signature _____

Date _____

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POLICY AGREEMENT

Please carefully read, sign and return the following form to the center director.

I have read and **received an copy of** the Big Hearts Little Hands Childcare and Early Learning Center Parent Handbook and agree to abide by all the policies and procedures therein.

I agree to pay the following tuition amount and understand that these may change de- pending on schedule and rate adjustments during the course of enrollment.

Starting Tuition _____ I choose to pay: Weekly _____ Monthly _____

Registration Fee paid on _____ Approved Start Date _____

Weekly Schedule/Days _____ Hours _____

Child(ren)'s Name _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Director's Signature: _____ Date _____

----Discipline and Guidance Policy

I have read and agree to the Discipline and Guidance Policy for Big Hearts Little Hands Childcare and Early Learning Center.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Director's Signature: _____ Date _____

Photography & Videography

I understand that photographs/videos of the children in our programs may appear in news- papers, magazines, brochures, publicity materials and/or educational trainings. Your child's photo will also be posted on our Facebook site, Procure app and around the center. I understand that they are to be used without compensation'

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

I do not consent to my child being photographed.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Director's Signature _____ Date _____

Thank you for selecting Big Hearts Little Hands Childcare and Early Learning Center as your child care provider.

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**Policy Agreement
Child Observation Permission Form**

I _____ (parent's name) gives written permission for a non-childcare agency staff member or outside resource to observe my child(ren's), at Big Hearts Little Hands. I understand that all written and verbal information obtained on my child(ren's) will remain confidential.

Child(ren)'s Name _____

Child(ren)'s Name _____

Child(ren)'s Name _____

Child(ren)'s Name _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Director's Signature: _____ Date: _____