Children’s Place Learning Center

Parent Handbook and General Information Guide

Western Michigan University
Children’s Place Learning Center
Respect, Learning and Relationships

www.wmich.edu/childcare (269) 387-2277
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Mission Statement
"The mission of WMU Children’s Place Learning Center is to create a safe, nurturing environment through the respect of the individual, intentional activities to promote the developmental growth of children and WMU students, and support a culturally diverse community of learners."

Core Values
RESPECT
Provide an environment in which each child and family feels respected and accepted.

LEARNING
Developmental play-based curriculum focused on the emerging skills of each child.

RELATIONSHIPS
Bridge the gap between home and school to meet the unique needs of the children and families.

Licensing
The center is licensed by the Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing through the State of Michigan:
- The center maintains a licensing notebook of all licensing inspection reports, special investigation reports and all related corrective action plans.
- The notebook will be available to parents for review during regular business hours.
- Licensing inspection and special investigation reports from the past two years are available on the Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing website at www.michigan.gov/michildcare

NAEYC Accreditation
The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) administers the nation’s largest professionally sponsored, voluntary accreditation system for all types of early childhood centers and schools. Our center underwent the intensive self-study process and peer validation. On April 30th, 2005 we were granted NAEYC Accreditation. The Criteria by which we were evaluation and additional information on accreditation can be found on NAEYC’s website at www.naeyc.org/accreditation

Great Start to Quality
Great Start to Quality is the State of Michigan’s quality rating and improvement system. Centers and child care homes are rated on 5 star system based on an evaluation process that encompasses all aspects of quality child care. The star system rates child care centers and homes from a one star level that denotes basic licensing requirements to a four or five star rating denoting highest quality.

The Children’s Place Learning Center is proud to have earned a four star rating.
For more information on the Great Start to Quality system, go to www.greatstarttoquality.org
Policies

ENROLLMENT POLICY
WMU Children’s Place Learning Center admits children from the ages of 15 months through 12 years old without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or ancestry.

The majority of children at the center are in care part-time, so we often have more than 70 children enrolled each semester—but we always adhere to the maximum licensing capacity for the center. WMU Children’s Place can have no more than 38 children at any given point in the day. State licensing also has different square-footage and staffing ratio requirements for separate age categories. The maximum number of toddlers is restricted to nine at any given point, the preschool capacity is restricted to 15 at any given point and the Pre-Kindergarten/School-age capacity is restricted to 13 at any given point throughout the day.

Enrollment priority dates for current and returning children are as follows:
Fall semester .........................April 25
Spring semester .....................November 25
Summer I session ....................March 25
Summer II session .................March 25

Additionally, priority for enrollment is based on the actual hours available and the following factors:
★ Returning children
★ Siblings of currently enrolled children
★ WMU student-parents, military connected families & GSRP eligible families
★ WMU faculty and staff parents
★ Community parents

Enrollment is restricted to the maximum licensing capacity for each age group and the hourly demand for childcare, with priority determined by the date of application.

The following forms will be completed and submitted at WMU Children’s Place Learning Center prior to the child’s first day of attendance. The information in these forms will remain confidential and will be shared with other caregivers only as required to meet the needs of the child:
- Application for Child Care Services - completed by parent or legal guardian.
- Child Health Assessment - signed by the child’s physician or certified registered nurse practitioner (CRNP).
- Child Care Emergency Contact Information - signed by a parent or legal guardian for each child enrolled.
- Child Care Agreement - completed by a parent or legal guardian.
- These forms will be updated by a parent or legal guardian, every year and whenever the information changes.

Inclusion Policy-Children With Addition Support Needs
When the parent or legal guardian of a child identifies that a child has special needs, the Manager and the parent or legal guardian will meet to review the child’s care requirements. The Children’s Place does not discriminate on the basis of special needs. The program accepts children with special needs as long as a safe, supportive environment can be provided for the child.

To help the program staff better understand the child’s needs, the staff will ask the parent or legal guardian of a child with special needs to complete a “Special Care Plan” in conjunction with the child’s health care provider(s). The program will attempt to accommodate children with special needs consistent with the requirements of the Americans with Disability Act. If the program is unable to accommodate the child’s needs as defined by the child’s health care provider(s) of the individual Family Service Plan/Individual Education Plan without posing an undue burden as defined by federal law, the Manager will work with the parent or legal guardian to find a suitable environment for the child.
Termination of Enrollment

WMU Children’s Place Learning Center staff is committed to working with children and their families so that each child’s experience is positive and rewarding. When circumstances prevent a child’s needs from being met at the center or when a child’s behavior is having a consistently negative effect on the well-being and development of other children, the child’s enrollment may need to be terminated. Conferences and parent consultations are a necessary part of this process.

The center may also terminate enrollment under the following conditions:

- Failure to provide the required forms for enrollment
- Non-payment of tuition and/or fees
- Consistent absenteeism
- Non-compliance with the center’s policies and procedures
- Unwillingness to work with the center staff on issues relating to the child

Care Schedule

The center is open 7:00 am – 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday, except during the University closure period in December and University holidays. The center is open between semesters and during spring break.

The Children’s Place Learning Center schedules by the hour or the week. Children must be scheduled for a minimum block of 4 hours and a minimum of 12 hours per week.

Once you have agreed to a particular schedule, that time slot is reserved for your child. You may bring your child when the time slot begins and pick up your child as late as the end of the time slot. We recognize that family needs or daily schedules may vary and encourage you to bring your child in later or pick your child up earlier than scheduled if you choose. However, fees are based on your reserved time.

Because it is essential that we have proper staffing ratios at all times, we ask that each family be on time when picking up and dropping off their children. Early drop-offs may create staffing ratio difficulties; therefore, if you arrive at the center before your scheduled time, please remain with your child until the scheduled starting time for your child. Please call WMU Children’s Place at 387-2277 if you realize you might experience any delay (see Fee for Late Pick Up policy on page 12).

We also ask that if your child will not be able to attend WMU Children’s Place or is ill, please call 387-2277 and let us know of the absence. Please notify the center within an hour of your child’s expected arrival time (you can also leave the information on our voice mail system). If your child is ill, we need to know the nature of the illness, so we can let other parents know if the illness is contagious. You will be responsible for tuition when your child is ill.

Back-Up Care

Back-Up Care is a service we offer families who may not need child care on a regular basis or already has other arrangements for their children. Once registered, families can call the center to secure care for their child when their normal arrangements change. Back-up care is most convenient when schools close for weather or teacher in-service. It’s also an option when you have an unexpected meeting or need to schedule a study group.
Curriculum
Our curriculum is based on the nationally recognized Creative Curriculum. The Creative Curriculum website (www.teachingstrategies.com) provides the following overview of the curriculum:

“Using exploration and discovery as a way of learning, The Creative Curriculum for Preschool enables children to develop confidence, creativity, and lifelong critical thinking skills.

The Creative Curriculum for Preschool
• Is based on 38 objectives for development and learning, which are fully aligned with the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework as well as early learning standards for every state.
• Presents knowledge-building volumes and daily practice resources in tandem, giving every educator the “what,” “why” and “how” of early childhood education.
• Offers daily opportunities to individualize instruction, helping teachers meet the needs of every type of learner.
• Addresses all the important areas of learning, from social-emotional and math to technology and the arts, and incorporates them throughout every part of every day.
• Offers daily, built-in opportunities for observation, helping teachers and administrators clearly see the strong relationship between curriculum and assessment.
• Offers complete support for working with English- and dual-language learners, including detailed guidance that helps to build teachers’ knowledge about best practices.
• Contains guidance for working with all learners, including advanced learners and children with disabilities.”

The curriculum is woven throughout the year by the use of “Studies” or investigations. These in-depth investigations will last roughly a month, and offer children opportunities to build on prior knowledge, make relevant connections, and learn about the real-life applications that are associated with the topic.

Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten Program
Our preschool program serves children from 2 1/2 years old through 5 years old. The main portion of the preschool runs from 8:45 a.m. until 11:45 a.m., Monday through Friday with enrichment activities provided in the afternoon. Children are expected to attend at least 3 days each week to take advantage of the preschool curriculum.

Our Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) program serves children who will be 4 years old by September 1st. The Pre-K program runs from 8:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Children are required to attend five days each week. The Pre-K program will follow Western Michigan University’s Academic Calendar for Fall and Spring Terms. This program includes children eligible for the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) and KC Ready 4s; both programs offer a discounted child care experience for eligible families. The goals of the program align with the readiness skills needed to be successful in kindergarten.
Sample Daily Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Daily Schedule</th>
<th>Toddler</th>
<th>Preschool</th>
<th>Pre-Kindergarten</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td>7 a.m.-8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>7 a.m.-8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>7 a.m.-8:30 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcome/Centers</td>
<td>8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>8:45 a.m.-9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large group</td>
<td>10:20 a.m-10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>9:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.</td>
<td>9:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning centers</td>
<td>7 a.m.- 9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.</td>
<td>9:25 a.m. – 10:55 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snack</td>
<td>9:40 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.</td>
<td></td>
<td>9:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Groups</td>
<td>10:45 a.m. – 11:10 a.m.</td>
<td>11:10 a.m.– 11:30 a.m.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside play</td>
<td>10:45 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.</td>
<td>11:15 a.m. – 11:45 p.m.</td>
<td>11:30 a.m.-Noon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean-up/Bathrooms</td>
<td>11:20 a.m. – 11:40 a.m.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>11:40 a.m. – 12:10 p.m.</td>
<td>Noon – 12:30 p.m.</td>
<td>12:15 p.m. – 12:45 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read-aloud</td>
<td>11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.</td>
<td>12:45 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Centers</td>
<td>12:10 p.m. – 12:30 p.m.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest time</td>
<td>12:45 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.</td>
<td>1 p.m. – 3 p.m.</td>
<td>1:15 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiet learning centers</td>
<td>1 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.</td>
<td>1:45 p.m. – 3 p.m.</td>
<td>2:15 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snack</td>
<td>2:40 p.m. – 3:20 p.m.</td>
<td>3 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor play/learning centers</td>
<td>3:45 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.</td>
<td>4:15 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.</td>
<td>3:00 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Centers/Good byes</td>
<td>4:40 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>5:15 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>3:45 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center closes</td>
<td>6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>6:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Schedule Changes

The staff of WMU Children’s Place recognizes that schedules occasionally need to be adjusted. If you need to make a change in your child’s schedule, please complete a Schedule Change Request form and return it to the center at least two weeks in advance. You will receive confirmation of your schedule change.

Note: Schedule changes are not final until you have received this confirmation, and tuition will continue to be charged according to your current schedule of reserved hours until confirmation of schedule changes.

Center Closure

INCLEMENT WEATHER

If Western Michigan University closes due to weather conditions, the center will also be closed, and this will be announced early in the morning on television and radio or you may call the WMU Closure and Emergency Hotline at (269) 387-1001. You will not be called directly from the center. There will be a message on the answering machine.

If the weather becomes severe while your child is at the center, and the center decides to close for the safety of all involved, we will notify you or an authorized person to come and pick up your child. The center will remain fully staffed and functioning until all children are in the care of their families.

UNIVERSITY HOLIDAYS

The yearly calendar for WMU Children’s Place matches Western Michigan University’s calendar. Although the center is open between terms and during spring break, parents whose children don’t attend are not charged for these times. Parents will be provided a schedule at the beginning of each academic term.

The center is closed during WMU’s winter closure period at the end of December and the following University holidays:

- Labor Day Recess (first Monday in September)
- Thanksgiving Break (fourth Thursday and Friday in November)
- Winter Closure (end of December, days vary yearly)
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day (third Monday in January)
- Memorial Day (last Monday in May)
- Independence Day (July 4)
WMU Children’s Place is also closed two days during the year (one in fall and one in spring) for staff training and development.

Keep Us Informed!
Information on the Child Information Record and all other information in your child’s file needs to be kept current for us to provide quality care for your child(ren) and the best service possible for you. It is your responsibility to inform the center of changes such as:

- Home phone and address of parent(s).
- Work place phone or day-time phone number of parent(s).
- Name, address and phone number of child’s physician.
- Person(s) authorized to pick up your child and their phone number.

Behavior Guidance Policy
The foundation of the center’s behavior guidance policy is the belief that an understanding and supportive environment helps children develop self-control and positive behavior. A well designed physical setting, age appropriate activities and a variety of equipment help children play and work cooperatively with one another. It is our goal to provide these crucial elements in the classroom to help children grow socially and learn to express their feelings appropriately and to develop effective problem-solving skills. We strive for consistency in setting clear and appropriate expectations while considering each child’s individual differences.

Child Guidance and Discipline
The philosophy of a child-centered classroom, with its freedom, independence and opportunities to make choices, does not overlook the importance of discipline. Safety and respect for the rights and feelings of children need to be incorporated into any method of discipline.

WMU Children’s Place staff will provide models of behavior for the children in care by following these guidance techniques:

1. Focus on “dos” instead of “don’ts” and outline for them how to handle the situation in a better way. Telling a child what “not” to do does not prepare him/her for what “to do” in the future.

2. Accept the child’s decision if the caregiver gives a choice. It is important for children to learn to make decisions, but it is poor training when decisions are not accepted.

3. Give the security of limits. Freedom and limits needed vary from child to child. It is important that limits be explained to a child in a language he/she can understand and that care givers are aware of these limits. Infractions of the limits set will be handled individually in an appropriate, compassionate manner.

4. Build feelings of confidence. It is important for a child to develop a feeling that he/she is able to do things and that he/she is a capable and worthwhile person. Verbal abuse (harsh tones of voice, insults, ridicule, threat, name calling, shaming, belittling) destroys self-confidence and is unacceptable.

5. Physical punishment (spanking, hitting, biting, slapping, shaking, pinching, tying) of any child by a care giver is unacceptable. Children are supervised so that they will not endanger themselves or others.

6. Refusal of snacks or threat of such as a form of punishment is unacceptable.

7. Unsupervised isolation of any child is unacceptable. Time out, away from the ongoing activities, can be a beneficial means of “cooling off” for both care givers and child. No child shall participate in a supervised time-out period for longer than three minutes. Time out is never used with toddlers.
General Information

MEDICAL INFORMATION

ILLNESS AND ATTENDANCE

Please do not bring ill children to the center. Children who have the following symptoms should stay home until the symptoms have subsided: a temperature of 100°F or above, severe coughing, diarrhea, vomiting, eye/nose drainage, sore throat, rashes or infected sores.

If the child is too ill to stay in childcare, the child will be provided a place to rest until the parent, legal guardian or designated person arrives. The child will be supervised at all times by someone familiar with the child.

In addition to fevers, the following are symptoms to be evaluated when determining if child is well enough to be in care.

- **Diarrhea** - If a child has three loose or watery stools, even if there are no other signs of illness.  
  *Exception:* This may occasionally be caused by new foods a child has eaten, but call the parents to find out if this is the likely cause.

- **Vomiting** - Any vomiting.  
  *Exception:* Some babies may “burp up” following a feeding – this is not vomiting.

- **Rash** - If the child develops any rash.  
  *Exception:* Mild diaper rash, already known to the parents is not a reason to call the parents.

- **Crying and complaining for a long time** - If the child is not him/herself and is complaining about discomfort or is just cranky and crying more than usual for that child.

Teachers and staff who are experiencing fever or any of the above symptoms will be excluded from contact with the children until they are no longer contagious and well enough to work with the children.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Parents are asked to notify the center within 24 hours if their child has been exposed to any communicable disease. The staff will post a notice at the center when any children in the center have been exposed to a communicable disease. The chart on page 15 shows guidelines for returning children to the center after an illness.

MEDICATION ADMINISTERED AT THE CENTER

The staff will administer prescription medications to your child provided a completed and signed medication permission form accompanies the medication (in the original prescription bottle). Over the counter, non-prescription medications are permitted when a signed request accompanies the medication. All medications must be in original containers. We ask that parents administer the first dosage of any medication. Staff will also apply sunscreen and insect protection if parents provide labeled products.

PRIMARY CAREGIVER - TODDLERS

You and your child will be assigned a primary caregiver. This primary caregiver establishes a caring, nurturing and responsive relationship with your child and provides continuity of care. In the classroom, this person will be the “expert” on your child and will keep abreast of all pertinent information about your child’s day and developmental needs.

DAILY REPORTS

To keep you informed on your toddler’s day, our staff provides you with a daily report of your child’s activities. This report will include your child’s diaper changes, meals, naps and other activities for the day.

DIAPERS

WMU Sincdecuse Health Center’s medical staff designed a comprehensive Health Care Services Plan for the Children’s Place; the plan outlines diaper changing procedures that are followed by our staff. It is your responsibility to supply disposable diapers. In addition to responding to your child’s fresh diaper needs, his/her diaper will be checked and replaced every 2-3 hours. Our staff will review diaper-changing procedures with you at the time of enrollment.
TOILET TRAINING
Toilet training is a major event in the life of a child. Our teachers will work with you in toilet training your child. We encourage open communication between teachers and parents in methods used for toilet training. For health and sanitation reasons, we do not use potty chairs. Our teachers will help your child feel comfortable on the toilet.

HEALTH CARE POLICIES
Keeping your children safe and healthy is as important to us as it is to you. We have policies and procedures covering the following health issues:

- Diapering
- Staff and children hand washing
- Cleaning and sanitizing of all equipment toys, and surfaces
- Handling children’s bodily fluids
- Controlling infection, including universal precautions

Our complete health care policies and plan is available for review in the lobby area. If you would like a copy, please see our Administrative Receptionist and she will be happy to supply you with a copy.

Safety Information

CHILD PROTECTION LAW
WMU Children’s Place adheres strictly to Licensing Regulations, written and enforced by the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs, as well as, the State of Michigan Child Protection Law, which require “childcare workers to report any child abuse and neglect” to Children’s Protective Services. Depending upon the severity of the abuse or neglect, parents may or may not be forewarned prior to our contact with Children’s Protective Services.

CHILDREN’S ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE
For your child’s safety, we require that you or an authorized adult accompany your child into the center at arrival and departure time. You will be issued a 4-digit PIN number to utilize with our computerized attendance system when dropping off and picking up your child. Each child has a folder by the sign-in computer that contains billing statements, daily reports (for toddlers) and other information for you. Please check your child’s folder daily. Please be sure that a staff member is aware of your child’s arrival and departure.

PERSONS AUTHORIZED TO PICK UP CHILD
At the time of enrollment, parents must provide the names and telephone numbers of persons authorized to drop-off and pick-up the child. It is the parent’s or guardian’s responsibility to notify the center of any changes in this authorization. If someone other than authorized persons indicated on the Child Information Record card is to pick up your child, the Children’s Place must be notified in writing by the parent and delivered by the parent in advance. We will release children to authorized persons only. Photo identification or other official identification may be requested by a staff member before the child is released. Copies of legal documents must be provided to the Manager before any staff member can actively prevent non-custodial parents from picking up their child.

REPORTING ACCIDENTS
If an injury occurs at the center, a form will be filled out for parents. This procedure is to ensure that you have all information regarding the incident. Any time a child falls and/or experiences a situation that could cause injury (whether or not an injury is readily apparent), the parent or guardian will be notified immediately so the parent can assess the situation and make the appropriate decisions for his/her child.

FIRE SAFETY
Fire safety is a regular theme of the curriculum. Evacuation routes and actual staff responsibilities during evacuation are posted in each room. Fire drills will be held for both children and staff throughout the year.

Confidential Data
Your child’s records: enrollment forms, health records, observation records, written parent-teacher conference reports and all other information about your child is confidential and will only be accessible to you, center personnel, teaching staff who need the information to perform their jobs and a person designated by the Department of Human Services to review our records for licensing purposes. Child and family records will not be
disclosed except as previously listed without written consent of the parent or legal guardian, except as needed when child abuse or neglect is a concern.

Parent Conferences
One parent/teacher conference is scheduled each semester. This conference gives staff members an opportunity to share their observations with you regarding your child’s development. Additional conferences can be arranged by either the parent or teacher as the need arises.

Family Participation
We welcome you anytime you wish to visit; however, we encourage you to come before or after nap time. If you would like to share a meal or snack let us know in advance and we’ll plan for the extra meal.

Outdoor Play
Daily outdoor activity is very important for young children and is a regularly planned activity. We feel that a child who is well enough to be in the center is well enough to play outdoors. This provides the fresh air and movement needed daily for your child’s general well-being and healthy development. You can help your child enjoy outdoor activities by making sure that he/she is properly dressed for the weather. In winter, this includes boots, warm coat, sweater, snow pants, mittens and hat.

Field Trips
Occasionally, we go on walks or visit different areas on campus. There is always a teacher who remains at the center to greet arriving children. Unfortunately, it is too difficult for a center with flexible scheduling, such as ours, to plan more involved field trips.

Rest Time
All children in the center participate in rest time in the early afternoon. Each child will have a cot or mat and will be encouraged to rest quietly. Each child needs to have his or her own bedding and a pillow case in which to store it. Children are welcome to bring security objects from home if needed at rest time.

Clothing and Supplies
Please clearly label all clothing worn to the center with the child’s name. Children have a personal bin for their belongings. We request that you keep at least one complete set of clothing (shirt, pants, underwear, socks, sneakers) at the center in case the child needs a change of clothes.

A change of clothes is critical in allowing the staff to provide comfort and relief in the event your child has an accident. Potty training and newly potty trained children should have more than one set of extra clothing. If your child runs out of extra clothes, we may need to call you for more to be brought to the center.

Each toddler has a bin in the bathroom for diapers and supplies. Parents must maintain one week’s supply of diaper changing products in your child’s changing bin. Our staff will notify you when your child’s supplies are getting low. You will need to bring the following to stock your child’s changing bin:

- Disposable diapers
- Diaper wipes
- Powder (parent’s choice)
- Plastic changing pad
- Ointment (parent’s choice)
- Powder (parent’s choice)

Diapers and diaper wipes are kept at the center and will be used should your supply run out. You will be notified of any inventory supplies used for your child and you are expected to replenish those supplies.

Personal Storage
Preschool and school-aged children are each assigned a locker in which to store personal items. Toddlers have a small personal storage bin in the toddler classroom and a changing bin in the bathroom. Preschool and school-aged children share assigned lockers for personal items. All personal storage areas are clearly identified with
children’s names. Personal storage areas are provided for blankets, a favorite nap friend, and a change of clothes (pants/shirt/underwear/socks). Each clothing item needs to be clearly labeled with your child’s name. In consideration of your child’s locker partner and the limited size of our lockers, a small blanket is preferable to a sleeping bag.

TOYS
Please do not send toys. Toys brought from home become lost very easily at the center. We would like to encourage children to use classroom materials as much as possible.

BIRTHDAYS
Children enjoy celebrating their birthdays in the center with their friends. We will have a simple birthday celebration on or near each child’s birthday. If you wish to send a healthy treat on this occasion, you are welcome to do so.

Food Service
WMU Children’s Place participates in the Michigan Child and Adult Care Food Program. Food service is provided by WMU Dining Services. We provide each child with a nutritionally balanced breakfast, lunch and two snacks. Our meals include “child-friendly”, healthy foods. Please let the Manager know if your child requires a vegetarian meal. Our menu is available for viewing both in the center and on our website. If your child has food allergies please discuss substitution options with the Manager or Head Teacher.

If baby food is required, parents need to provide it. Meals must meet the guidelines set forth by the Michigan Child and Adult Care Food Program. Please see the Toddler Teacher for additional information. Unused food will be returned to you only upon your request.

BOTTLES
The Children’s Place will supply milk in cups for all children. If a bottle is required, parents need to supply a completely filled, ready-to-serve bottle. Bottles may be used only once and contents will be disposed after one feeding. The bottle will be returned to you for cleaning.

Fees and Tuition
A non-refundable enrollment fee of $45 per child ($75 per family) is assessed when children are officially enrolled in the program. Parents who withdraw their children and then re-enroll, will be assessed the enrollment fee with each enrollment.

Tuition is based on the number of hours per day for which the child is enrolled at the rate schedule listed. Children must be enrolled for a minimum block of 4 hours and a minimum of 12 hours per week. Parents will receive a payment schedule each semester. Rates include breakfast; lunch and snacks (provided the child is in attendance during the times food is served).

The enrollment fee is not billed to your account until your child is enrolled. No charges are applied to your account as long as you are on the waiting list awaiting enrollment. Tuition is billed bi-weekly. Payments are due according to the dates listed on your Child Care Agreement, which you will receive on the first day your child attends the center. You will sign and receive a new Child Care Agreement each semester your child is enrolled at the center.

Payments for child care may be paid at Bronco Express with cash or check or online through your GoWMU portal by credit card. Checks need to be made payable to Western Michigan University. You may mail your check to: Customer Account Services, 1270 Siebert Administration Building, Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5210.

Student-parents who are waiting for financial aid disbursements should plan to keep their childcare payments current until their financial aid disburses. It’s sometimes possible to defer payments; see the Manager for information.

Tuition is based on enrollment, not attendance, therefore, no credit is provided for absences due to illness or other times the child is not in attendance. Families have the option of two rate packages; hourly and weekly.
Generally, if your child attends more than 30-35 hours per week, it may be beneficial for you to utilize the weekly rate, however, there are some distinct differences between the hourly and weekly packages and care should be taken in choosing your rate package. The center reserves the right to revise the WMU Children’s Place tuition. A 30-day written notice of any tuition change will be given to parents prior to its implementation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Care</th>
<th>Rates</th>
<th>WMU Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Toddler-Hourly (15 mos. &amp; 2 ½ years)</td>
<td>$7.65</td>
<td>$6.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toddler-Weekly (15 mos. &amp; 2 ½ years)</td>
<td>$229.00</td>
<td>$229.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool &amp; School-Age -Hourly</td>
<td>$6.90</td>
<td>$5.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool/ School-age-Weekly</td>
<td>$207.00</td>
<td>$207.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back-Up Care</td>
<td>$8.50/hour</td>
<td>$8.50/hour</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DHS AND OTHER OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE**

The WMU Children’s Place Learning Center does accept childcare assistance payments through DHS. Generally, DHS payments do not cover the entire childcare balance. You will be responsible for any difference between our billing and DHS payments. If you have any questions, please talk with the Manager.

**Late Payment Policy**

Although the vast majority of our parents pay for their childcare in a timely manner, others chronically pay late, and others leave the center with an unpaid balance. These unpaid balances can contribute to a budget deficit at the center. Your Child Care Agreement lists the due dates for each billing cycle.

A late fee of fifteen dollars ($15) will be assessed on Monday billing at any time there is a balance due from a prior billing cycle regardless of the amount of the balance due. The late fee will be assessed each billing cycle in which there is a carryover balance.

The University may withdraw enrollment by written notification whenever a parent is not current with tuition payments. When tuition is not paid, the University may place a “hold” status on the student account, which could affect a parent’s ability to register for classes, obtain transcripts, graduate, etc., until such charges are paid. If your child is removed from enrollment due to lack of payment, you will be required to pay the forty-dollar ($40) non-refundable enrollment fee in order to re-enroll for childcare at the center providing space still exists.

**FEE FOR LATE PICK UP**

You will be assessed a $5 per child late fee for every 15 minutes (or fraction thereof) you are late picking up your child(ren). We understand that circumstances occasionally prevent a parent from arriving at the center on time to pick up his/her child. In such instances, please notify the center as early as possible so both the staff and child can be advised. (The late fee is still assessed even if you notify us you will be late.)

A persistent problem with timely pick up (defined as three or more instances of late pick-up per semester) will result in a higher late fee. The rate is $10 per child for every 15 minutes (or fraction thereof) you are late picking up your child(ren) and will require that you meet with the Manager to develop a plan to resolve the problem.

**Payroll Deduction**

WMU faculty and staff parents can elect payroll deduction for childcare fees. A Payroll Deduction Authorization form (available at the center) should be completed and returned to WMU Children’s Place. In order to facilitate automatic deductions, you need to compute how much you need deducted each pay period to cover your current schedule of reserved hours.
Schedule changes require two week’s advance notice. To change your schedule, you must fill out a Schedule Change Request form. If the schedule change results in a permanent change in the amount authorized for deduction, you need to fill out a new Payroll Deduction Authorization form. One-time charges, such as a late fee or temporary schedule changes for additional hours of care, will be noted on your billing statement. Payment for one-time charges not covered by your payroll deduction can be made at Cashiering/Customer Account Services.

Withdrawal of Enrollment and Refunds
The only fees refunded are those for the withdrawal of a child from the center, when the family has paid for more than two weeks in advance. Parents are required to provide a two-week written Notice of Termination of Enrollment when withdrawing their child. If the two weeks’ notice is not given there will be a charge for two weeks tuition in lieu of notice. This charge will help offset the expenses of an empty space while the child’s slot is being filled and will help keep tuition fees low for everyone.

Required Forms
We are required to maintain a file on all registered children. The following forms must be completed and returned to the center prior to your child’s first day. It is your responsibility to notify the staff of any changes that need to be made.

ENROLLMENT FORM
This form provides the center with general information needed to process your application.

CHILDCARE AGREEMENT
The Childcare Agreement lists the terms of the childcare contract, tuition, schedules and payment requirements. The initial agreement must be signed and returned to the center prior to the first day the child attends the program. Parents will sign a new agreement each semester.

EMERGENCY CARD
The Emergency Card must be completed and signed by the parent(s) or guardian(s) for each child enrolled, on or before your child’s first day at the center. It is important that all phone numbers and addresses be kept current.

IMMUNIZATIONS
When a child is enrolled, documentation of current immunization status, a signed notarized statement of parental objection to the immunization or a medical exemption must be submitted. The completed Certification of Health is required on the child’s first day at the center.

HEALTH APPRAISAL FORM
The State of Michigan requires health related information for all children enrolled in childcare programs. The health appraisal form needs to be filled out and signed by your child’s source of medical care and returned on the child’s first day at the center.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT FORM
This form provides the program staff with information about your child so they can tailor programs to meet the child’s developmental stages. This information is confidential and is reviewed only by center personnel.

FOOD PROGRAM FORM
We participate in the Michigan Child & Adult Care Food Program, see page 12. This form is required by that program and helps ensure your child receives nutritionally balanced meals while attending the center.

Communicable Diseases and Illnesses (U.S. Public Health Service 1998)
Staff

STAFF: CHILD RATIO

WMU Children’s Place maintains a minimum staff to child ratio in compliance with Michigan licensing requirements. However, our staffing ratio generally exceeds licensing requirements.

The ratio of teachers to toddlers never exceeds 1:4. WMU Children’s Place more frequently provides a 1:3 ratio, allowing a stronger bond between teachers and children.

The teacher:student ratio for preschoolers the ratio is 1:8. The teacher:student ratio for the Pre-Kindergarten room is 1:8 during the pre-k program time. Before and after the program, the ratio will not exceed 1:12.

The teacher:student ratio for school-age children (those having completed kindergarten) never exceeds the licensing limit of 1:18. WMU Children’s Place strives to provide at least a 1:12 ratio to provide more flexibility, more individualized attention and better quality care for the school-age children.

Staff Training

Trained, skilled teachers are the hallmark of a quality center. All of our staff and College of Education Interns attend regularly scheduled staff meetings that include a training session. Additionally, twice a year, the center closes for a more intensive staff training day. Topics covered in the training program include:

- Observing and Recording Children’s Development
- Language Development
- Cognitive Development (academic and thinking skills)
- Social/Emotional Development (making friends, self-concept)
- Physical Developments
- Diversity
- Safety
Non-Discrimination Policy
Western Michigan University prohibits discrimination or harassment which violates the law or which constitutes inappropriate or unprofessional limitation of employment opportunity, University facility access, or participation in University activities, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, protected disability, veteran status, height, weight, or marital status. (Revised April 2006.)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. (Rev. 6/2013)

University Sexual Assault and Misconduct Policy
Western Michigan University encourages all members of our community to participate in the process of creating a safe, welcoming and respectful environment on campus. With the Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment and Violence, Intimate Partner Violence, and Stalking Policy and Procedures, we affirm the commitment of the university and our community to the values of transparency and timely communication, and accountable and responsible behavior within an ethical, compassionate, diverse and respectful environment.
Read the full policy in its entirety at http://wmich.edu/sexualmisconduct

SS

Kathy Gilbert, Manager
Kathy Gilbert brings many strengths to her position as Manager of WMU Children's Place Learning Center. She has been with the center since it opened in 1996, and her experience and educational background have helped shape the philosophy and organization of the center. Kathy graduated from Indiana University with a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education and master's degrees in Educational Technology and Early Childhood Education from Western Michigan University. Kathy has worked in the childcare profession for over 25 years.

Kathy says this about her role at WMU Children's Place, “The most important skill I can impart to children is a sense of competence. By allowing children to be an active part of the curriculum, children gain a comfort with their abilities. I work hard to provide a safe, non-judgmental atmosphere where children can experiment with new ideas and skills without the fear of failure. The competence they gain here will help them succeed in school in the years to come.”

Jenny Johnson, Preschool Teacher
Jenny Johnson is a graduate of Western Michigan University who is excited to be a part of the staff at the Children’s Place Learning Center as the Preschool Teacher. Jenny graduated from WMU with a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education with an Early Childhood Endorsement and minors in Math, Science and English. Her four years of previous teaching experience at Hilltop Preschool have helped prepare her for the joys and challenges that working with young children brings.
Jenny strives to create a classroom atmosphere that is welcoming and stimulating for young children. She believes that daily hands-on activities encourage children to explore in a natural way, and is essential to their development and individual growth. Jenny is committed to promoting creative thinking and self-expression in the classroom. She hopes to inspire children to be confident and genuine in all that they say and do.

**Jeff Geromin, Toddler Teacher**
Jeff Geromin is a graduate of Western Michigan University, who loves being a part of the Children's Place Learning Center staff as the Toddler teacher. Jeff graduated from WMU with a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education and a specialty in Early Childhood Education, as well as minors in both Mathematics and Language Arts.

Jeff believes in creating a warm and welcoming environment in which all children feel comfortable exploring new interests and developing new skills. He strives to create a safe environment for all children, and provide the support needed for children to express themselves and their interests. His goal is to help children develop self-confidence and self-help skills that will provide the building blocks for a lifetime of learning.

**Shari Glaser, Off-Site Administrator**
Shari Glaser is the Off-site Administrator for WMU Children's Place Learning Center, a department in the Division of Student Affairs. Shari's office is located in the Faunce Student Services Building. Shari's responsibilities at the Center include serving as the childcare center license designee and providing administrative oversight for the center.

Shari has worked at Western Michigan University since 1994 in several different capacities. In 2006 she became the Director of Parent and Family Programs, an office that serves parents and family members of prospective, incoming, and current WMU students. Shari graduated from Kalamazoo College with a Bachelor of Arts in Music Performance and Music Education. She is currently completing her Master's degree in Communication and is an active member of the WMU community. Shari is devoted to ensuring the safety, quality and stability of the center and its staff for the families served.

Shari is always available to talk or meet with parents to discuss the Center and can be reached via email at shari.glaser@wmich.edu or phone at (269) 387-4820.
Location of WMU Children’s Place Learning Center

- **Stadium Drive (from downtown, northeast)**
  Take Stadium Drive until you come to the stoplights at the Stadium Drive and Howard Street intersection. Turn right onto Howard Street. Turn right at the stoplight at the Howard Street and W. Michigan Avenue intersection. Once on W. Michigan Avenue, follow the circle drive to the left and head straight. You will now be on Rankin Avenue. At the first stop sign on Rankin Avenue, turn right onto Business Court and proceed straight ahead to Wilbur Avenue.

- **Stadium Drive (from US 131, southwest)**
  Take Stadium Drive until you come to the stoplights at the Stadium Drive and Howard Street intersection. Turn left onto Howard Street. Turn right at the stoplight at the Howard Street and W. Michigan Avenue intersection. Once on W. Michigan Avenue, follow the circle drive to the left and head straight. You will now be on Rankin Avenue. At the first stop sign on Rankin Avenue, turn right onto Business Court and proceed straight ahead to Wilbur Avenue.

- **Oakland Drive (from I-94, southwest)**
  Take Oakland Drive until you come to the stoplight at the Oakland Drive and Howard Street intersection. Turn left onto Howard Street. Go straight through the Stadium Drive intersection until you reach the stoplight at the Howard Street and W. Michigan Avenue intersection, turn right. Once on W. Michigan Avenue, follow the circle drive to the left and head straight. You will now be on Rankin Avenue. At the first stop sign on Rankin Avenue, turn right onto Business Court and proceed straight ahead to Wilbur Avenue.

- **West Main Street (from US 131, northwest)**
  Take West Main Street until you come to the stoplight at the West Main Street and Solon Street intersection. Turn right onto Solon Street. (Solon Street becomes Howard Street.) Turn left onto Valley Drive. At the first stop sign, turn right onto Rankin Avenue. Once on Rankin Avenue go straight until you reach the stop sign, take a left onto Business Court and proceed straight ahead to Wilbur Avenue.
Receipt of Handbook (Handbook Revised December 2016)

I hereby acknowledge that I have received the Parent Handbook and General Information Guide. I understand and agree that I am responsible for knowing and complying with all WMU Children's Place Learning Center policies and procedures and I will take special note of sections indicated with this symbol.

- The center maintains a licensing notebook of all licensing inspection reports, special investigation reports and all related corrective action plans since May 28, 2010.
- The notebook will be available to parents for review during regular business hours.
- Licensing inspection and special investigation reports from the past two years are available on the Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing website at www.michigan.gov/michildcare

Name of Child ________________________________________________________________

Name of Parent __________________________________________________________________

Signature ______________________________________________________________________

Date __________________________________________________________________________

Please include any comments below.

WMU Children’s Place Learning Center
2210 Wilbur Avenue
Kalamazoo MI 49008-5228
Phone (269) 387-2277
www.wmich.edu/childcare