



A PLUS Childcare Family Handbook

Mission Statement:

"A Plus Childcare is dedicated to provide a *safe* and *nurturing* environment where *all* children may grow through developmentally appropriate experiences of play and learning focusing on their social, cognitive, physical and social-emotional growth."

Philosophy:

A Plus Childcare is a progressive learning environment wrapped in lots of T.L.C. We pride ourselves in providing every child with the opportunity to learn and grow through socialization, play, and fine and large motor skill activities. We believe in providing a place where children feel safe to explore and stretch their learning while building self-confidence and leadership. Our value is focused on accountability, care, trust, and integrity.

Hours of Operations: Monday- Friday 6 AM to 6 PM

If a parent is late (after 6 PM) picking up their child(ren) there will be a charge of **\$1.00 per minute** which will be paid directly to the childcare providers who have stayed late. If payment is not made at this time, all late charges will be applied to your next childcare bill.

Parents are responsible for calling their child(ren) in sick, late or absent by 9am. If your child is going to be

Registration: Registration fees are \$50.00 for 1 child and \$75.00 for a family of 2 or more children. Registration fees are non-refundable and do not apply towards tuition payments. The registration fee must be paid prior to being placed on the waiting list or enrolled into an available opening. If service is interrupted, a new enrollment fee must be paid prior to re-enrollment.

Tuition Policies: Tuition must be paid by Monday of each week for the current week in accordance with your fee agreement. A late payment fee of \$25.00 will apply to past due accounts. Payment must be received each week for service to continue the following week. Your child will not be allowed to attend the center if your account is not current and paid in full. There is a \$10.00 per family weekly discount (two or more children). Payments should be made each week on the first day of service for that week (Payment due on Monday for *full time* or a *Monday, Wednesday, Friday* and Tuesday for a *Tuesday/Thursday*). Families may also pay bi-weekly or monthly, only if done so prior to each respective payment cycle. Tuition fees are reviewed annually, and any adjustments occur in September of each new contract year. Tuition rates vary according to the age of your child and classroom assignment.

Payment Methods: Payment is accepted in the form of check, money order, cashier's check, or cash. Any returned checks will result in a \$30.00 additional bank charge fee. Parents may also pay online using our payment system through website www.apluschildcare.org (please note that processing fees do apply accordingly).

Holiday Closings: Our centers are officially closed on the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Fourth of July

- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving
- Christmas Day
- **PLEASE NOTE: If a holiday falls on Saturday this will be observed on the Friday before. If a holiday falls on a Sunday, this will be observed on the Monday after. If any *Observation Holiday* falls on a “school in session” day, then the holiday would be celebrated the Friday before.**

Emergency Daycare closings: In the event of an emergency or severe weather that puts any risk to our families and staff, A Plus closings will be posted on **WHAM13**.

Illness Policy: Children will not be allowed to attend the center with a fever, vomiting, diarrhea, rash of unknown origin, or any other communicable disease until 24-48 hours on an antibiotic or a physician’s note permitting them to return to daycare. The staff has been trained to observe for such illnesses and you will be contacted immediately if your child shows any symptoms of illness. Although your sick child will be kept in the director’s office until your arrival, your promptness is appreciated in picking your little one up. There is no daily discount given, but we will give a 50% discount for children who are ill for an entire week, with a Doctor’s note stating that your child was too ill to be in attendance.

Drop off and Pick up: We require that children be brought into the center and personally escorted to the classroom teacher by an adult. We also require that the child be signed-in on the roster.

At the end of the day, we will release your child only to parents or guardians with legal custody or persons over the age of 18 who are designated by you on the Emergency Contact form. Under no circumstances will a child be released to any person who is a registered sex offender nor a person who appears to be under the influence of drugs, alcohol, or mental distress. Under no circumstance will a child be released to a person who is not on the contact list or for whom the parent has not written an authorization note, even if the child and a staff member are familiar with the person. This includes parents of other children enrolled in the center as well as staff members. Adults other than parents or guardians will be required to show picture identification. The child must be signed-out by the person to whom the child is released. If you are unable to arrive at the center prior to our closing time of 6:00 p.m., it is your responsibility to contact your emergency pick-up person to plan for timely pick-up of your child.

The safety of your child is our highest priority. For that reason, we require that all children be signed in and out each day, be escorted to and from the classroom by an adult and be always supervised in the center, in the parking lot and on A Plus Childcare property. Please make sure that you or your designee has contact with your child’s teacher both at drop-off and pick-up times. If your child will not attend on a given day, or arrive late, please notify the center no later than **9:00 a.m.**

Personal Items: Our center provides fun, educational toys, equipment, and activities. Therefore, we ask you to keep your child’s toys or special personal items at home to avoid loss or breakage. For occasional sharing times planned by a teacher, your child may bring in an item if it is safe, appropriate, and labeled with his/her name. If you are encouraging your child to bring games/toys/items from home, please know that it will be with understanding that that child will share with others. If you do not want others to have access, then please leave at home. A PLUS Childcare and staff are not responsible for any lost, stolen or damaged personal play items from home.

Diapering: Families will provide diapers and wipes for children. All diapers will be changed at least every 2 hours or more frequently if necessary. Within childcare centers, the Department of Human Services recommends use of disposable diapers for health and sanitation reasons. However, A Plus will partner with families preferring to use cloth diapers. In this case, A Plus cannot accept the use of diapers with safety pins or closures that could injure any child. Soiled cloth diapers cannot be cleaned by A Plus staff and must be put directly into a lined garment bag, provided by the family. Clean diapers and garment bag must be provided daily to ensure the continued use of cloth diapers.

Toilet Training: Toilet training is usually initiated around the age of 2 years and ideally accomplished prior to a child’s transition to the preschool classroom around the age of 3 years. Toilet training is approached in accordance with requests of the child’s parents and in a manner that is consistent with the child’s physical and emotional abilities. Once you start at home, we will make every effort to coordinate our program with yours. We ask that you supply us with at least two complete changes of clothing, and an ample supply of training pants or underwear for each day your child attends. If your child has just started toilet training, he or she may still wear a diaper at rest time. Children learning to be self-sufficient in the bathroom will have an easier time if they wear clothing that

they can pull off and on by themselves. Your child's teacher will provide written communication daily regarding your child's toileting progress.

Meals and Snack: A Plus Childcare provides an AM snack for children each morning. This consists of, but is not limited to; oatmeal, multi-grain cereals/bars, bagels, waffles, pancakes, and served with fruit/yogurt and 1% milk. Our menu is approved by a certified dietician through the Child Care Council. Parents are required to provide lunch and afternoon snack daily. Please make sure that meals are brought in lunch boxes with ice packs for cold items, as well as drink. ALL food must be prepared at home. We are happy to warm up already prepared food.

Holiday Celebrations: Holiday themes will emphasize multi-cultural traditions. The children in our care represent many different religions and ethnic groups. The folklore and customs of each are an important part of our collective culture and are presented as such. The spirit of joy and happiness is the common theme. We do not emphasize religious themes or one tradition. Parents are encouraged to share their traditions and customs with other children and their families. Please offer your suggestions to the Supervisor or your child's teacher.

Medications: Medication will be administered only with written consent of a parent or legal guardian on a medication permission slip. Medications will be given by a caregiver who has completed medication administration training provided by A PLUS Childcare. When possible, it is preferred that medication be given at home. BID (twice/day) medications most often preclude distribution at the center.

All medications must be given to your child's teacher for safekeeping in a locked cabinet. Prescription medication must be supplied in the original container, complete with the pharmacy label including child's name, date, and name of medication, prescription number, required dosage and schedule for administration. **ALL** over the counter medications require a written physician's order. Physician documentation must include child's name, name of medication, required dosage and time to be given, time frame for treatment, and reason for the medication. We cannot dispense over-the-counter medication on an "as needed" basis.

Medications must be taken home at the end of the authorization period. Any medication left in the center without a current consent permission slip will be disposed of.

Rest/Naptime: For the health and well-being of every child, a rest time is provided every day. If you would prefer your child not nap, they will be directed towards a quiet-time activity of puzzles, games, or video. We provide a cot and ask that the sheet (a crib sheet fits perfect) and a blanket be provided by the parents. We ask that you bring all bedding home on Fridays to have laundered and brought back with your child upon their return.

Outdoor play: We consider children's outdoor experiences an important part of our curriculum. Our playgrounds include equipment and spaces designed for active play and discovery to provide children with exercise, fresh air, and extended learning activities. Daily outdoor activities will occur, weather permitting. Parents are responsible for sending children in adequate clothing and footwear to maintain good health during outdoor play in all suitable weather conditions, including normal winter temperatures. Please do not ask us to keep a child inside because of a cold or other illness, except for recuperation from bronchitis or pneumonia, as ordered by a physician. A child who is too sick to go outside is usually too sick to be in a social situation with other children. Parents must provide UV protection for each individual child labeled with their first and last name.

Behavior Management Policies: Our goal is to provide an environment that provides the children with the opportunity to make choices, learn social skills through encouraging guidance, to teach them to function independently, to respect the needs of others and to adjust to routine and rules that govern the center. Through this environment we hope to provide an approach that teaches children positive behaviors rather than punishing for misbehaving. If discipline is needed, the following guidelines would be followed:

- Redirecting a child to an alternative activity.
- Hurdles shall be met with gentle encouragement and positive reinforcement.
- Provide an example for the children by speaking and interacting with them in a positive manner.
- Always show respect for the children.
- Encourage the children to talk about their feelings.

In **NO** situations will corporal punishment, verbal or physical abuse be used. The only time a child would be physically removed from a situation is if he or she endangers the safety of himself or others. All personnel are informed of these guidelines and failure to follow will result in their discharge.

If a child demonstrates verbal or physical aggression or is struggling emotionally that day, A PLUS Childcare will call parent to discuss behavior. A PLUS Childcare reserves the right to ask to have the child picked up for the day for that behavior if it continues. If the child shows consistent behavioral problems, A PLUS Childcare is dedicated to work with the parents and other professional support staff to find the appropriate support and resources for that family. In the unfortunate event, that A PLUS Childcare no longer feels as if we can accommodate a child due to behavior that interferes with Teacher: child ratios or the health and safety of all stakeholders, we ask the family to find alternative care.

Child Protection: It is the policy of A Plus Childcare that all staff are mandatory reporters and under NY state law, must report observed or suspected abuse or neglect against children or dependent adults to the Child Protective Services Agency.

Accidents/Injury to child: We take every precaution to protect the safety of your child. This includes routine inspections and maintenance of our facilities, playgrounds and equipment, a safety awareness program, and monthly fire drills. We follow SIDS prevention practices in our nursery. All staff receives first aid training and are certified in CPR. Any accident or injury is reported to the supervisor and is documented. You will be informed of any injury, will be asked to sign an incident report, and will receive a copy of the report when you pick up your child.

Because children will be children, accidents may happen. When they do occur, and we determine that medical attention is needed, we will call you or your designated emergency contact. If a child experiences a medical emergency, A Plus staff will take the action that is in the best interest of your child, including calling emergency medical personnel if necessary.

Emergency Evacuation/Fire Drill Procedure: A PLUS Childcare practices monthly fire drills and safety inspections. Stay in Place drills are exercised every 6 months and fire drills are done monthly.

If A PLUS Childcare must evacuate the children from the building, we have partnered with Caraglio's Pizzeria (585-426-0270) across the street. They have allowed us to use their facility as an emergency evacuation location where parents may safely pick up their children. All teachers will grab hold of binders with emergency contact information cards to contact parents/guardians or the most readily available emergency contact pick up person.

Parent Resources:

- Office of Children and Family Services: 585-238-8531
NYS OCFS Regulations may be accessed by visiting www.ocfs.ny.gov
OCFS COMPLAINT Line: 585-238-8546 If you have any concerns about any child's health and safety. You may also contact CPS at 1-800-342-3720
- Childcare Council: 585-654-4720 The council is available for an abundance of resource guides and support in meeting needs of all children and their families.
- Information on healthy food and beverage choices and the prevention of childhood obesity:
www.health.ny.gov>nutriton and www.health.ny.gov>obesity prevention.

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