



Family Handbook

6155 West Florissant St. Louis, MO 63136 314-389-1001

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Dear Parents/Guardians:

Thank you for choosing Hilltop Child and Family Development Center as the place for your child and family to learn and grow! We are committed to providing the highest quality of early childhood education and care for your child as well as meeting the unique needs of your family. Our time together will be full of hands-on learning that is both fun and challenging, so that your child is prepared for success in school and in life. We also hope to build connections with you beyond the classroom through services that strengthen and support your whole family. Hilltop is a proud program of Lutheran Family and Children's Services of Missouri that has been shaping our community for over 150 years with services such as Early Childhood, Behavioral Health, Foster Care and Adoption services. With Hilltop, you are making a valuable investment in your child's education and development. We are excited to join you on this journey! Welcome to the Hilltop Family!

Best Regards,

Julie McAfee
Hilltop Child and Family Development Director

OVERVIEW

Mission

To provide children and families the building blocks for a solid foundation.

Vision

Children and families thrive – in school, at home and across the community.

Key Pillars of Success

- Safety
- Stability
- Well-Being

Philosophy

To develop the cognitive, social and emotional well-being of young children in our program and to serve the diverse needs of each family. Hilltop provides a comprehensive early education program as well as on-site behavioral health and parenting services.

Hilltop provides quality childcare to families of any ethnic or religious background. We provide children with a variety of basic skills to prepare them for success through elementary school and beyond. Children are encouraged to develop their creativity, as well as their physical, intellectual, and social skills. Hilltop highly values the development of positive self-esteem, verbal and creative expressiveness, assertiveness, and a sense of personal responsibility that is age appropriate.

Each child is valued for their personal strengths and is encouraged to be self-directed in their learning by exploring their environment. This learning takes place in a warm, safe, nurturing, and stimulating atmosphere. Additional support is available to families through:

- Specialized learning plan for children based on their individual needs
- Diagnostic tools including: eye exams, hearing test, language and speech assessment, social emotional and developmental assessments and health screenings
- Referrals to other resources
- Individual and family counseling
- Pregnancy and parenting services

Our commitment to this philosophy will result in a “passion for excellence” about our work, measured by innovation, teamwork and collaborating to implement creative ideas. To fulfill our mission, Lutheran Family and Children’s Services of Missouri (LFCS) must be staffed by very productive and highly competent employees at all levels. Accordingly, LFCS seeks to provide employment conditions, which will attract, motivate and retain employees.

Hilltop, is a program of Lutheran Family and Children’s Services (LFCS) – an affirmative Action Employer, that follows strict recruitment, hiring and employment procedures and policies in which includes the following policy for hiring practices: HR-104 Equal Opportunity Employment Policy.

Accreditation

The Council on Accreditation and NAEYC nationally accredits all of our services at Lutheran Family and Children's Services and Hilltop Child and Family Development Center.



Client Rights and Responsibilities

You have the right to:

- Be treated with dignity, respect, and compassion.
- Receive services that are respectful of, and responsive to, cultural and linguistic differences and in a non-discriminatory manner.
- Receive the highest level of professional services with consistent enforcement of program rules and expectations.
- Confidentiality.
- Participate in all decisions regarding the services provided or recommended by your service provider, including to the right to set your own goals, to review your care, treatment and service plan.
- Be fully informed about the range of services available to you from the agency and to not be coerced to receive service.
- Be notified of the hours and location at which services can be provided.
- Be informed of any applicable fees, estimated or actual expenses, prior to service delivery.
- Refuse services offered or recommended, unless legally required to participate.
- File a formal written complaint regarding any services received and receive a timely response.

You have the responsibility to:

- Actively participate in planning your treatment or services you will receive.
- Provide your service provider with any and all information necessary to provide services.
- Follow through on any service recommendations or referrals agreed to with your service provider.
- Make timely payment for services rendered, or to provide the agency with the information necessary to pursue payment from a third party payer when applicable.

EEOC

Services are open to everyone regardless of race, faith, national origin, sex and age.

Grievance Policy and Procedures

It is the policy of Lutheran Family and Children's Services that all clients have the right to file complaints and reach resolution. Any complaint submitted in writing is considered a grievance.

Clients have the right to file a grievance without interference or fear of retaliation. All staff members are to be attentive and respectful to any grievance registered by a client and are prohibited from discouraging, intimidating, or seeking retribution against clients who seek to exercise their rights or file a grievance.

The client will be contacted within 48 business hours upon receipt of the grievance and have the right to a written response from the first level supervisor within 10 business days. In conjunction with the written response, clients will receive an explanation of any further appeal rights or recourse.

All clients have the right to appeal grievances to the next appropriate level of supervision if they are not satisfied with the resolution, up to and including, the President and CEO. In cases where there is an allegation of abuse or neglect or an illegal activity, a hotline call will be made and the police notified.

If a client has a grievance, the process will follow these steps:

- It is expected that before any written process is put in motion that an attempt has been made to resolve the issue through discussion with the appropriate staff within the agency. The staff person will try to help the client in resolving the problem. The staff person will inform their supervisor about the grievance as soon as possible.
- If the matter is not resolved satisfactorily, the client can file a written grievance to the staff member's immediate supervisor. The supervisor will contact the client within 48 business hours upon the receipt of the grievance. The supervisor will provide a written response to the client within 10 business days.
- If the staff person and/or the supervisor were not able to help resolve the grievance, the client may appeal the decision by contacting the supervisor's supervisor in writing. That supervisor will respond to the client in writing.
- If the supervisor's supervisor was not able to resolve the grievance, the client may submit a written grievance following the supervision chain of command. The next level supervisor, including, as appropriate, the Vice President of Operations, will attempt to resolve the grievance as soon as possible and will provide a written response to the grievance.
- If the grievance has been addressed by the Vice President of Operations and is still not resolved, it will be escalated to the President/CEO. The President/CEO's decision will be final.
- Any documentation related to the grievance will be kept in the client's case record. All instances of grievances, whether verbal or written, are entered into Apricot's Adverse Incident Report. The agency's Risk Management Committee will review all grievances and make recommendations, as applicable.

PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Program Goals

- To provide quality care for all children
- To provide a safe, structured, and free choice environment
- To support and strengthen the family unit
- To help children develop to their fullest potential

Program Objectives

Hilltop aims to provide a comprehensive early education where young children have opportunities to explore, question, and discover in a planned environment and to develop the skills necessary for school readiness.

Children learn best in an environment where they are loved and appreciated. They are more apt to take in new information by engaging in planned and spontaneous activities that allow them to explore and investigate real things while being surrounded by caring people. Hilltop educators will:

- Allow learning experiences to be child initiated.
- View children's individual interest rather than all children as a group.
- Allow children to participate in playful interactions with peers, to ask questions, to explore, to figure out how equipment works and discover objects in their real world surroundings.
- Develop weekly lesson plans that provide developmentally appropriate activities for children.

Family Goals

- Respect and support the staff team
- Participate in family program opportunities, conferences, Parent Advisory Council and fundraising
- Volunteer to assist when able for the support and betterment of the program
- Follow all policies and procedures set forth by the program

Staff Goals

- Offer programming that reflects the interest of each child
- Provide developmentally appropriate activities that meet the needs of the whole child
- Promote children's self-esteem
- Provide a positive, creative environment that motivates a love for learning
- Dedication to professional growth

Importance of Play

Children at play are actively creating, exploring, and establishing relationships, solving problems and developing shared understanding. When children play together, they develop their muscles and coordination, gender identity, social power, rebellion against injustice and social rights.

The purpose of play is about learning fairness, following rules, respecting oral contracts and taking action against wrongdoers-things that help children develop a sense of ethical and moral behavior. One of the most surprising findings from child development research is that children's basic notion of morality appears to stem less from parental discipline or lessons taught in school, and more from social interactions with peers in the natural course of play.

Curriculum

Hilltop Child and Family Development Center provides a variety of safe, fun and diverse activities. Our program follows Creative Curriculum with the emphasis on choice and Trauma Smart Curriculum and practices to address the social emotional needs of our children. This curriculum is approved and accepted by NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children) Accreditation. Hilltop believes that children learn through play and structured activities. In addition, the program will include daily program enhancements. Planned physical fitness activities will be scheduled at least twice a week. Our schedule includes outdoor play each day, weather permitting (see weather guidelines).

Learning Centers

Each classroom will have the following interest centers:

Quiet area: Promotes written and/or oral language experiences which encourage experimentation with and improvement of communication skills.

Manipulative area: Puzzles, games, and manipulatives offer children lots of practice with fine motor skills, hand-eye coordination, and logical thinking skills. These all help promote language, literacy, and fine motor development.

Dramatic Play area: The Dramatic Play area is an area that allows children to participate in different role-play scenarios and engage in a variety of literacy rich experiences. As children plan, implement, and construct their play they have the opportunity to express their thoughts, feelings, and ideas with language.

Science area: In the Science area, children are able to explore new topics of interest, learn about the world around them, and develop their problem solving skills. They get to WONDER about things!

Sensory area: The Sensory area engages the child, encourages them to explore through his five senses, and discover the world around them.

Math and Number Concepts area: The Math and Number Concepts area encourages exploration of a concepts related to math, as well as, literacy. Children are able to practice counting, sequencing, matching, sorting, and classifying.

Block and Building area: In the Block and Building area, children have the opportunity to develop many cognitive skills as they experiment with the size, shape, color, number, and volume of the materials in this area.

Art area: In the Art area, children are given the opportunities to learn important art concepts and creativity as well as to practice decision making, learn about cause and effect, identify colors and shapes, refine hand-eye coordination, develop small and large muscle skills, express feelings, practice sharing and experience pride.

ABOUT THE CENTER

Hours of Operation

Hilltop operates year round, Monday through Friday from 6:00 A.M to 6:00 P.M with the exception of holidays and inclement weather.

Head Start School Year

September-May each year. Children in the Head Start program are able to attend the center year round. Additional fees may apply during the summer when Head Start is not in session.

Holidays

Hilltop Child and Family Development Center will be closed on the following holidays:

New Year's Day	Labor Day
Martin Luther King Day	Thanksgiving Day
Presidents Day	Friday after Thanksgiving
Good Friday	Christmas Eve
Memorial Day	Christmas Day
Independence Day	New Year's Eve

Additionally, the center will be closed for no more than two floating holidays and two all-staff meetings (dates TBD, determined by LFCS) throughout the year. If a holiday falls on a Saturday, the center will close on Friday. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, the center will close on Monday. **There is no reduction of tuition/fees for holiday closings.**

Professional Development Days

We are dedicated to employing talented staff. In order to be the best at delivering quality early childhood and families services, it requires staff training and development. We will average approximately six professional development days per year. Parents will be notified no less than two weeks in advance in order to plan for alternate childcare. We appreciate your support in helping our staff be the best they can be to work with your children.

Inclement Weather

Every effort will be made for the center to remain open. We do not follow public school closings. However, if the weather would pose safety issues for the families or staff, the center may close or operate on a delayed schedule. If the center will be closed or if a snow schedule is enacted, the director will strive to contact staff before 6 A.M. The center closing announcements can be found on KMOV Channel 4 and on our Facebook page. It is important to keep your information updated so you do not miss important announcements.

There is no reduction of tuition/fees due to inclement weather due to center closing. If the center closes mid-day due to bad weather, families will be contacted and given a reasonable time that the children must be picked up. Time will be determined on the ability to pick up the children while being concerned with the parent/guardians well-being during travel. If the child is not picked up by the time determined, the family will be charged a standard late fee, \$15 for the first 5 minutes and \$1 per minute after.

Program Services

Hilltop provides currently enrolled families access to behavioral health and parenting services onsite services through Lutheran Family and Children's Services (LFCS). Through counseling services, we aim to improve the well-being of children and families with caring and effective therapy. The goal parenting services is to maintain safe and stable home environments for families while decreasing risks of child abuse or neglect. To learn more, contact the director or your child's teacher.

STAFF REQUIREMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Hilltop Staff

- Staff are carefully and thoroughly screened through the Missouri Child Care Registry on an annual basis and fingerprinted by Missouri Highway Patrol every 5 years. This includes criminal, sex offender and child abuse screenings. No staff member may work alone with children until all appropriate background screenings have been returned in good standing.
- Staff must pass a physical and TB test. A TB test is conducted bi-annually thereafter. Hepatitis A shots are given to all staff that handles food in accordance with county ordinance.
- All new staff will attend a New Employee Orientation. Staff will not work alone with children until their initial new employee orientations are completed.
- The Department of Health and Senior Services requires that childcare employees complete a minimum of 12 clock hours of training per calendar year. Training topics include but are not limited to: Safe Sleep, medication administration, CPR, First Aid, Blood Borne Pathogens, Mental Health First Aid, Trauma Informed Care, Civil rights training for our CACFP food program, Child Abuse Prevention, Child Development, Behavior Management, Bullying Prevention, Working with Children with Disabilities, State Licensing Requirements, Effective Communication, transportation and Developmental and age appropriate curriculum planning.
- Volunteers must maintain and meet the same requirements as Hilltop Staff including background screenings.
- Staff and Volunteers will be alert to the physical and emotional state of all children and any sign of injury or suspected child abuse.
- Hilltop Staff are mandated reporters. An employee can make a good faith report to the Child Abuse and Neglect Hot Line (1-800-392-3738) if he or she has suspicion that child abuse may have occurred. The Department of Family Services (DFS) investigates these reports.

Director: Julie McAfee

The Director of Hilltop Child and Family Development Center is responsible for the on-site administration of the center. Parents are encouraged to use the “open door policy” to speak with the Director at any time. Also, parents are welcome to call the director with any questions or comments. The Director can be reached at 314-389-1001 x12 or by cell at 314-283-7844.

Assistant Director: Corrine Hamilton

The Assistant Director is responsible for Head Start enrollment and documentation and maintains the administration of the facility in the director’s absence.

Administrative Assistant: Mychelle Chandler

The Administrative Assistant is responsible for enrollment, child and staff records along with other administrative duties and maintains the administration of the facility in the director’s and assistant director’s absences.

Therapist: Helmi Henkin

The onsite therapist provides individual child therapy and family therapy

Education Case Manager: Anthony Bedford

The onsite ECM offers parenting services as well as Hilltop graduate case management

Classroom Teachers:

The teachers are responsible for implementing curriculum, making observations and evaluating the progress of each child as required by the standards. The teachers have a wide range of experience and education. All teachers are responsible for continuing their professional growth in the field of early childhood through ongoing professional development.

Chef:

The chef must maintain certification in Applied Food Service Sanitations and be capable of preparing meals that meet USDA guidelines. The chef must also be ServSafe certified. This position is not to be counted in staff/child ratios.

Volunteers:

Volunteers work in our classrooms/center, as they are available. Volunteers do not work alone with children. They must be with and supervised by regularly scheduled teaching staff at all times. All Volunteers are required to adhere to the same background standards as employees of LFCS.

CPR and First Aid

All staff are CPR and Pediatric First aid certified as defined by licensing regulations. If a staff member is not certified in both CPR and First aid with an emphasis on pediatric practices that staff member may not be in a classroom alone with children until they are properly certified.

Ethical Conduct

Teaching staff and administrators are familiar with and follow the ethical practices of the early childhood profession and the agency's policies regarding exploitation of children, protection of the child, discipline, child management and behavior support. All staff are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner and follow the NAEYC Code of Ethics.

Supervision

Staff supervise children in the program by sight and sound at all times.

PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

Hilltop Child and Family Development Center values best practices, professional development, advocacy and community building through partnerships, collaborations and memberships in professional organizations which promote excellence in early childhood education. Hilltop partners with the United Way, Youth in Need Early Head Start, Urban League Head Start, St. Louis City Department of Health, First Steps, Center for Hearing and Speech, Affinia, Delta Gamma, Ready Readers, Lutheran North High School, St. Louis Area Diaper Bank, Parents as Teachers, St. Louis Public Schools, various health providers for training and leadership development, promotion of professionalism and advocacy.



REGISTRATION PROCESS

Enrollment

Enrollment is not finished until **all** forms have been completed in full (no blank spaces) and returned to the Administrative Assistant. Your child may not enter the program until the following forms are complete:

- **A medical form** completed by a physician. The medical form must state that the child is well enough for childcare.
- **A copy of your child's current immunization record**. Your child's physician can fax immunizations and physicals to us directly at 314-389-9879. **Immunizations must be kept up to date**
- **All other documents requested**.

Additional documentation that must be current and on file may include:

- Notification of any changes in address, phone numbers, authorized pick up, etc. is pertinent for your child's/children's welfare.
- A legal restraining order if biological/adoptive parent is not allowed to pick up a child.
- Legal documents regarding divorce/custody arrangements and restraining orders (i.e. original or notarized copy of custodian.)

Failure to comply will delay your child's start date.

Per Hilltop policy and Department of Health licensing regulations, children's enrollment files will be retained and remain property of Hilltop Child and Family Development Center and Lutheran Family and Children's Services. Hilltop reserves the right to require an official court ordered subpoena for release of records. **In the case of a legal court order or document Hilltop will allow and enforce the court order stated as written. NO EXCEPTIONS. Hilltop will not be a mediator in the case of a divorce or child custody situation.** Children's files will be kept confidential and viewed only by the childcare staff, Director, Department of Health licensing representative, parents or legal guardians and those persons so authorized by parents or legal guardians (after completing the required authorization/notarized forms.)

Registration

A completed enrollment packet registers your child for the program (space permitting), along with the registration fee and first week's tuition.

If your child has an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP), Individual Education Plan (IEP) and/or Behavior Management Plan (BMP), or a 504 Accommodation Plan, a copy must be given to the Hilltop Director with additional required paperwork to be reviewed before participation is authorized.

Inclusion

Hilltop Child and Family Development Center provides a fully inclusive educational setting. Children of all abilities (some medical restrictions apply) are welcome in our program. Should your child have special needs, we will need a copy of the IEP, BMP or 504 development plan.

Withdrawal

We require a minimum of two (2) weeks written notice prior to your child's withdrawal. **If proper notice is not given, you will be charged for two weeks of care.** Withdrawal forms can be obtained from the front desk.

Please also note:

- Personal belongings will be held for one (1) week after withdrawal.
- Based on demand of age level classrooms, temporary withdrawal must be arranged and approved by the Hilltop Director. If approved, a charge of \$30.00 per week will be required to hold the spot. The account must be paid in advance or paid in full prior to the child returning to the program.
- Should a child withdraw from the program without making these arrangements and wish to return later, the child will be put on a first come first served basis pending available space and a new registration fee due.
- If policies or agreements are broken, Hilltop reserves the right to dis-enroll your child from the center

FEE INFORMATION

Payment Agreement

A tuition agreement is signed at enrollment and when tuition fees change. Weekly tuition is due by drop off on Friday morning during the current week of care. Payment guidelines are strictly enforced.

- The person who signs the registration forms will be the designated person responsible for paying fees.
- Payments can be made by credit/debit card, cash, check, money order or online through My ProCare.
- Returned checks will be subject to a \$20 processing fee after two incidents and payments will no longer be accepted by check. Checks over the amount of \$105 will not be accepted.
- Fees will not be prorated for illness, suspension, holidays, inclement weather, scheduled closures, or for closures that are out of our control.
- Financial hardships can occur for families. Please reach out to the office staff as payment plans can be arranged to fit your temporary needs.
- Fees are subject to change.

Past Due Tuition

Past due tuition of two weeks will result in removal from the program. All past due fees must be paid in full before your child may reenter the program. In the event of a wait list, your child will be unable to return to the program until space is available. Payment arrangements can be made in advance if weekly payments are not possible, but are required to be ahead of services provided.

DSS Child Care Reimbursement Program

- Hilltop accepts childcare subsidy. (DSS)
- An official letter of acceptance from DSS must be on file prior to your child beginning the program.
- A registration fee and co-payment for the balance of tuition not covered by the DSS is required, except in special circumstances as outlined by the DSS.

YOUR CHILD & HILLTOP CHILD AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Absences

Please call the center (314-389-1001) if your child will be absent. **There is no change in fees for absence or illness.** We will call each day if we have not heard from you to check on the well-being of your child.

Adjustment Period

You and your child may need a period of time to adjust to the new surroundings, teachers, volunteers and other children even if your child has previously attended childcare. The staff will assist in the separation period. They are experienced in this situation and will be nurturing and caring. Feel free to call the front desk when you arrive at your destination to check on your child. Chances are that your child will be busy playing and you can ease your mind and concentrate on your tasks for the day. Depending on age and disposition, a child might “act out” during this transition by doing some of the following:

- cling to you and refuse to let go
- have a tantrum
- forget their toilet-training or experience bed-wetting
- loss of appetite
- revert back to old comfort (pacifier, favorite toy, thumb sucking)
- wake up during the night, bad dreams
- express a desire to stay home

Usually these problems are temporary. If your child is treated lovingly but firmly, these behaviors should dissipate. If you are enthusiastic, chances are your child will be too! During this adjustment period, staff will send notes home to inform you of your child’s progress. Please respond and let staff know how things are going at home.

Arrival Time

In order to include your child in all educational experiences, please make sure your child arrives no later than 9:00 A.M. For your safety and the safety of others, please do not leave your car running in the parking lot when dropping off or picking up. Children should not be left alone in a vehicle at any time. For your safety, Hilltop is contracted with Elite Force Security to have an officer on site from 6AM to 9AM and 3PM to 6PM during drop-off and pick-up times and staff arrival and departure. All doors to Hilltop are automatic locking doors once closed. In order to get into the building, please ring the doorbell so a staff member can let you in.

We ask parents to limit the time to no more than 5 minutes to depart from the classrooms to minimize disruption of children’s daily class routine. Should you wish to speak to your child’s teacher at length, please call at nap time when the children are napping.

Best Times to Call to Speak to Your Child’s Teacher

Infant/Toddler Room: 12:00-3:00	Group 3: 1:00-3:00
Group 1: 12:00-3:00	Group 4: 1:00-3:00
Group 2: 12:00-3:00	Group 5: 1:00-3:00

Child’s Clothing and Belongings

- Dress your child in clothing that is weather appropriate and suitable for our childcare environment.
- Select comfortable clothes that they can manage themselves. We discourage overalls, buttons, zippers down the back, and belts.

- We encourage rubber-soled shoes for your child's safety and clothing that can be exposed to paint, sand, ketchup, etc. No jewelry (i.e. necklaces, bracelets, or rings), sandals, open-toed, or platform shoes.
- Shorts or tights must be worn underneath dresses.
- All medication must be given to the front desk or your child's teacher upon arrival. Do not store these items in your child's backpack.
- Please do not send your child to school with money in their pockets.
- Toys/electronics from home are not allowed except during designated Show and Tell Days. Show and Tell toys may not include items of violent nature such as guns, swords or action figures.

Child's First Day Reminders

- For your child's safety and requirement of the Department of Health and Licensing, **parents must sign in and out each day.** Photo ID is needed for anyone who may be picking up for identification purposes.
- Bring a complete change of clothes (socks, underwear, clothing suitable for current weather conditions.) Please replace these items as they are sent home, outgrown or as the weather changes.
- Provide photos of you and your child for their locker.
- Bring a sheet, blanket, small travel pillow, and/or cuddly toy for naptime.
- **Please label your child's belongings. This will help reduce misplaced or lost items. Hilltop is not responsible for lost or misplaced items.**

Custodial Separation and Documentation

In the event of a parent's divorce or separation, we are required to release the child to either parent unless a court order states otherwise. To prevent an unauthorized pickup by the non-custodial parent, divorced parents must submit a copy of the court order, divorce decree, or other legal documentation which will be kept confidential and in the child's file. Any deviation from the child custody decree will require a formal written approval acknowledging "in direct contradiction to stated court order" signed by both parties and notarized prior to pick up.

A legal restraining order must be on file at the childcare center if biological or adoptive parent is not allowed to pick up the child. In the absence of a court order on file with the childcare program, both parents will be afforded equal access to the child as stipulated by law. Hilltop cannot, without a court order, limit the access of one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of reason. If a situation presents itself where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, Hilltop suggests that the parent keep the child with them until a court order is issued.

In the case of divorce or child support matters, sign in and out sheets will only be released by court subpoena. A reasonable length of time (minimum of 10 working days) to process the request must be given, as other children's information must be redacted on each sign in /out sheet for confidentiality.

Custodial parents may visit the site on occasion to see what your child is learning. Your visit will need to be limited as to not to disrupt the child's participation in the program and to ensure the safety of all of the children. Exceptions are planned, special events and planned family functions.

Escorting Your Child

Your child must be escorted into and out of the classroom, cafeteria and on the playground, to a staff member. NO EXCEPTIONS! For their safety, please do not allow children to run ahead of you. Any child not enrolled in the program and who enters the facility, must be supervised at all times by their guardian. Hilltop staff members are not responsible for visiting siblings.

Late Pick-up

Your child **MUST** be picked up by program closing time. Doors will be locked promptly at 6:00 P.M. If you cannot pick up your child by closing, it is your responsibility to make other arrangements. A phone call to Hilltop is required if you will be late due to an emergency. This will help reassure your child that they have not been forgotten.

There will be a late pick up fee of \$15.00 for the first 5 minutes and \$1.00/minute after. If you are late more than 3 times, your child will be dis-enrolled from the program. At closing, if staff have not heard from the family, they will attempt to contact you and any emergency contacts. If a child is left at the program 1 hour past closing time without contact from parent, guardian or emergency contact, the police will be notified to assist in locating a parent or guardian and possible charges of child abandonment may be filed.

Person's Authorized to Pick-up

If anyone other than the child's regular escort will be picking up, please notify the program in advance. Anyone not on your emergency list or who is not authorized in writing will not be allowed to take your child from the program, **even if your child appears to know the person.** Photo identification will be requested of anyone unfamiliar to the staff. **Permission for someone to pick up a child cannot be given over the phone.** However, a written note can be faxed to the program; it must be signed and dated. Please also call the center so that we are informed it was you who sent the fax.

Sign-In/Out Procedures

Per state regulations, parents/guardians are required to sign their child in and out as they enter and exit the building using the CCBIS System. Anyone dropping off or picking up a child must download the Kindersmart app to electronically sign the child in and out. Siblings may not sign out children unless they have a valid driver's license and are listed on the enrollment form.

- Emergency drills are conducted and your child's presence is verified by taking roll call from the sign in sheet.
- **Staff members are not allowed to sign out your child.**
- Your child will not be released to anyone who is not on your child's pick-up list. If someone new is picking up, you must provide a written/signed document to administration and the temporary pick-up person will need to present a valid photo ID before the child will be released into their care.
- ANYONE picking up a child from the program **MUST** have the proper child safety seat or they may not take the child until they obtain the proper safety seat. The program may have one we can lend out if they haven't already been loaned to another family.

Unusual Schedule

There may be days you change your child's schedule; please notify your child's teacher and also let them know if they will need lunch. A physician's statement is needed for late entry. If your child is absent without notification for two consecutive weeks, the child's enrollment will be discontinued. Re-registration is **REQUIRED** and placement will be based on availability of space.

Witness/Common Ground Exchange

Hilltop’s building, parking lot and staff members are not to be used or involved with any child custody “witness/common ground” exchange programs.

The State of Missouri provides a listing of approved exchange sites and Hilltop is NOT one of them. Parents who need this option may contact the courts to obtain a listing of said exchange sites.

HEALTH AND MEDICAL PROCEDURES

Child Injury

If a child is injured, an incident report will be completed the same day with a copy given to the parent and a copy kept in the child's file. Parents will be notified of all incident reports per licensing regulations.

- **Minor injuries:** Injuries that require no more than washing, bandage or ice pack
- **Major injuries:** Injuries that require more than washing, bandage or ice pack. The staff, after evaluating the situation, will take whatever steps deemed necessary to obtain the appropriate medical attention. This may include: contacting the parent or an authorized person to pick up the child or transporting the injured child to the nearest hospital via ambulance.

If 911 is called and the child is sent to the hospital, the director/administrative staff will contact the parents/guardians as well as the Chief Program Officer at Lutheran Family and Children's Services. A Hilltop staff member will accompany your child to the hospital and will remain with your child until the you arrive.

Chronic or Severe Health Conditions

To establish a safe environment for your child and our staff members, the following procedures must be followed for your child's medical care and treatment should your child require the use of nebulizers, inhalers, epi-pens, diabetes testing, acid reflux or other chronic or severe condition.

- An Identification of and Authorization for Treatment to Children with Chronic and Severe Health Conditions form must be completed by the child's physician
- An action plan is required for all children diagnosed with a chronic illness (Asthma, Epilepsy, etc.)
- A Department of Health and Medical Authorization form completed in full
- It is the parents' responsibility to monitor and track prescription expiration dates, replace said medication, and educate staff in the use of any necessary equipment as needed

Failure to disclose ALL necessary information will void enrollment and be considered falsification of records.

Contagious Disease Guidelines

The following diseases are communicable:

- Chicken Pox
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- COVID-19
- Fifths Disease
- Giardiasis
- Hand Foot and Mouth Disease
- Impetigo
- Lice
- Thrush/Candida – if not being treated
- Measles
- Novel Influenza (H1N1)
- Pinworm or ringworm
- Rash
- Rosella
- Scabies
- Strep or possible strep
- Shigellosis

Physician's recommendations and written authorization are required for children who have been diagnosed with a communicable disease to return to Hilltop. Physician's written recommendation may not supersede Hilltop policies or director's discretion.

A parent or guardian will be notified by phone when a child displays symptoms of any of the above. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the emergency party designated by the

parent/guardian on the enrollment form will be contacted. The ill child will be isolated from the other children and **must be picked up with in 1 hour of call**. The late pick up policy will apply at the end of the one-hour grace period. If the parent cannot be reached, the emergency contact persons (listed on the enrollment form) will be called until someone is reached to pick up the child. **Sign out is required**. A cot and the child's bedding will be provided to the child to keep them comfortable.

Communication between Hilltop and the families is the best communicable disease prevention. Please notify the Director immediately of any communicable diseases and the center will notify families of any outbreaks. Hilltop will be respectful to families and will not name the symptomatic child to other families.

Exclusion of Sick Children

Any staff person may evaluate a child exhibiting any of the following symptoms per State Health Communicable Disease Guidelines before being accepted or continuing in the program:

- **Fever** - Licensing regulations consider it a fever if 100° or above by mouth or 99° under the arm, auxiliary or accompanied by other symptoms such as vomiting, diarrhea, behavioral change or undiagnosed rash. Children must be fever free (without fever reducing medications) and symptom free for 24-hours before they can return to the program.
- **Respiratory Symptoms** - Wheezing that occurs suddenly and is unexplained; congestion that is severe.
- **Vomiting** - If a child vomits and has any other symptoms such as fever, behavioral change, abdominal pain or diarrhea.
- **Diarrhea** - Loose, watery stool, if it is not food related, if it is accompanied by symptoms such as fever, abdominal pain, or vomiting. If your child has two loose, watery stools within one hour, s/he will be sent home.
- **Behavior** - if your child wants to sleep most of the time, does not eat, cries and generally acts miserable, your child may be coming down with something. Please check your child for these symptoms before bringing him/her to the center.
- **Congestion or Excessive Coughing** - Excessive mucus from ears, eyes, nose or mouth.
- **Other Symptoms** - Such as fever, rash, swollen glands, vomiting, or stomach accompanies sore throat or possible strep throat.

The director will evaluate any unusual symptoms and has final authority to exclude a child from care. The Assistant Director will evaluate and have authority in the Directors absence. If a child is excluded from care, an exclusion form will be completed and given to the parent and a child may not return to care until they are fever/symptom free for 24-hours without medication or intervention.

Hand Washing

It is Hilltop policy for all staff, volunteers, children and adults to practice hand washing in order to prevent the spread of germs and disease. Staff, volunteers, children and adults wash their hands when:

- Entering the program
- Before and after meal times
- After changing a diaper
- After using the restroom
- After touching an animal
- After handling bodily fluids
- After playing in water shared by 2 or more people
- When moving from one group to another
- After cleaning up
- Before and after feeding a child
- Before and after administering medication
- After assisting a child in the restroom
- After taking out the trash

Hand Washing Procedures

- Use liquid soap and running water
- Rub your hands together vigorously for at least 20 seconds, including the back of hands, wrists, between fingers, under and around jewelry, under fingernails and rinse well
- Dry hands with a single use towel and avoid touching faucet with just washed hands
- Use paper towel to turn off the water and use the same paper towel to open the bathroom door to prevent the spread of germs
- Staff do not use hand washing sinks to bathe the children or for removing smeared fecal material

Health Checks

Staff members are required to check your child for illness or injury upon arrival and are authorized to deny care for the day if needed. Your child will not be accepted into the center with symptoms of a contagious disease, illness or injury that might require medical attention.

Staff members have the right to take a child's temperature prior to being admitted for care.

Hygiene

Parents are expected to ensure their child's proper hygiene at all times. If there are any concerns the Director or Teacher will discuss this with the parent or guardian confidentially.

Immunizations

As a condition of enrollment, parents must keep current on child immunizations. Failure to do so will be grounds for termination from the program. Children who do not participate in being immunized must have a medical exemption card on file and renewed annually. Any child who is under-immunized will promptly be excluded if a vaccine-preventable disease to which children are susceptible occurs in the program and will not be able to return to school until the ill child is released by doctor's statement to return.

Medication Administration

Medicine must be handed to a staff member by the parent. **Do not send medication in a child's bag.** A medication authorization form must be completed and appropriately filled out by the parent/guardian the day the prescription is brought to the program.

The staff member may dispense only prescribed drugs in the original container, which bears the original label displaying legible information stating the following:

- Prescription number
- Prescription name
- Strength and quantity of the prescription
- Expiration date and any time dated prescription
- Direction for use
- Child's name
- Physician's name
- Date of original issue, or with refill, most recent date of issue
- Name and address of licensed pharmacy issuing the medication

Each time the medication is given to the child the staff will complete the information on the medication form. When the child is no longer taking the medication, the medication will be returned to the parents and the medication form placed in the child's file. All medications must be stored in a locked box out of reach of the children. Refrigerated medications will be stored in a sealed box that is clearly labeled in the kitchen.

If medication is requested to be kept on hand "for emergencies only" (i.e. asthma attacks, severe allergies, seizures, etc.) a Chronic Health Form must be completed by a physician prior to enrollment in the program and an action plan must be on file.

Medically prescribed diets for a child enrolled in the program shall be provided as ordered by a physician. Such diets shall be on file and adhered to in preparation and service. Records of food intake shall be maintained when indicated by a physician. Physician will need to complete a food substitution form as mandated by CACFP.

Any over the counter medication administered by our staff need a prescription label that included the child's name, dosage amount and directions.

Medication, Testing and Other Procedures

Hilltop provides childcare programming only and is not staffed by individuals trained to perform invasive medical procedures. In order to protect the health and safety of all children and employees, Hilltop employees will not perform invasive procedures including, but not limited to, administering shots, drawing blood, catheterization or diabetes testing.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Birthdays

Please notify staff if you want to bring a special snack for your child's birthday. **Per State regulation, only store bought, pre-packaged snacks are allowed. No candles please.**

Breast Feeding/Formula Feeding Procedures

Breast Feeding: To meet OSHA Regulations parents who are breastfeeding infants and toddlers may provide expressed milk to be given to your child per the following guidelines:

- Milk must be in sealed bottles/approved storage bags clearly marked with child's name and date milk was pumped.
- Bottles must be individually sealed in zip lock bags with child's name and date.
- Bottles will be stored in a refrigerator in the room.
- Full and used bottles must be picked up each evening.
- Breast milk can only be used or restored after 1 hour and must be discarded.

Based upon space, a quiet, comfortable area will be offered to coordinate feedings with mom.

Formula Feeding:

- Canned formula will be provided by Hilltop. Parents may provide their child's formula if they wish.
- Bottles must be labeled with child's name.
- Teaching staff do not offer solid foods or fruit juices to infants younger than 6 months of age. All fruit juices served at Hilltop are 100% juice.
- Formula cannot be saved after 1 hour, unused will be discarded.

Child Abuse Prevention and Reporting

Child abuse is the mistreatment or neglect of a child by another person, resulting in injury or harm to the child. Child abuse may be physical, verbal, emotional or sexual. Child abuse is damage to a child for which there is no "reasonable" explanation. Child abuse includes non-accidental physical injury, neglect, sexual abuse and emotional abuse.

All Hilltop staff are mandated to report suspected child abuse. Hilltop will make a report to the child abuse hotline at 1-800-392-3738. The call is made in "good faith" and is only reporting a suspicion. It is the responsibility of Division of Family Services (DFS) to investigate a case. No person who is an employee, volunteer or student and who is alleged as a perpetrator in an incident of child abuse or neglect, or both, shall have direct contact with children until a critical incident review is complete, unless the Chief Program Officer determines the safety of the children is not threatened.

Communication

Communication is an important component to providing quality care for your child. We have the following mechanisms in place to ensure good communication between you and the Hilltop staff:

- **Hilltop Website**: A great space to view upcoming events, menu, documents and resources
- **SeeSaw**: Allows staff and parents to communicate about the child's day, send reminders and share class photos
- **Parent Boards**: Contains important classroom specific info (located in each classroom)
- **Newsletter**: Distributed monthly; includes reminders of upcoming events as well as information about the classroom and your child's experiences

- **Lesson Plan:** Posted weekly in your child's classroom on the parent board to keep you updated on your child's learning experiences.
- **My-Day:** Children of any age with special feeding needs, and for all infants a My-Day sheet will be sent home daily to inform you of what your child ate, diaper changes, medications given and activities for the day
- **Parent Communication Binder:** Located in each classroom near the parent board; designed to be a space where you can leave your teacher a message in the event that they have not arrived at your child's drop off time; teachers will check it upon arrival and respond accordingly
- **Suggestion Box:** Located by the front door; comment card are available for any questions, comments or feedback; you may also speak directly to the director
- **Social Media:** Give us a "Like" on Facebook and keep up to date with what's new at Hilltop (@LFCSMO.Hilltop)
- **ProCare:** Admin will communicate with you via email and text for important reminders and school closings. Please keep your email and phone number current at all times to not delay communication

Diapering/Toilet Training

- **Diapers and wipes are provided in the Early Head Start Classrooms only.**
- Parents are responsible for bringing diaper and wipes until their child uses the bathroom independently. Staff will notify the parents when the child is running low on these items which must be replenished before they run out. In an emergency, diapering items will be provided by Hilltop to be reimbursed or replacement charge incurred. If the parent has not complied in 3 school days, the child will not be allowed to return to the program until the items are brought to the center.
- All diapers and pull-ups must be commercial unless a child has a medical excuse. The usage of cloth diapers requires written documentation from the child's health care provider. All cloth diapers must have a completely contained absorbent liner with a waterproof outer cover that prevents the escape of feces and urine.
- Soiled clothing is placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home the same day for laundering.
- Staff will NOT launder dirty clothing
- Staff check children every two hours for diaper changes or in between as needed, as well as when a child wakes from nap.
- Only proper changing areas are used in the classrooms when changing soiled diapers and underwear.
- To ensure the safety of our children, one hand is kept on the child at all times when being changed on an elevated surface.
- Staff members, whose primary function is preparing food, do not change diapers until their food prep duties are done for the day.
- Surfaces used for changing and on which changing materials are placed are not used for any other purposes, including temporary placement of other objects especially not for any object of food or feeding.
- Staff will partner with parents in toilet training when the child reaches two years of age and is developmentally ready.
- Teachers will communicate with parents daily during the toilet training process to report the child's progress.
- Proper hand washing and hygiene will be followed at all times.

Discipline

There are three specific rules at Hilltop Child and Family Development Center

- Act in ways to keep yourself safe and unharmed.
- Act in ways to keep others safe and unharmed.
- Act in ways to keep property safe and unharmed.

Our program's philosophy is based on respect for the child's self-esteem, setting reasonable limits, and creating an environment that encourages self-discipline, problem solving and conflict resolution. We see the opportunity to teach values of getting along with others, solving problems in a positive way, and learning self-control as the keys to a successful program. The staff is dedicated to working together with the children and parents to resolve any concerns that may arise. Our methods of discipline are:

- Setting an appropriate environment for programming
- Having a well-planned program
- Redirecting behavior by giving choices
- Encouraging group consensus on problem solving
- Discussing problems to discover causes, and guiding the child or group of children to find ways to resolve it
- Assigning special tasks and responsibilities that will help to build their self-esteem (for example: special helpers)
- Reflecting children's successes and accomplishments.
- **The uses of physical punishment, psychological abuse, or coercion are never permitted**
- Discipline or threat of discipline will not be associated with food, rest or toilet training
- If a child endangers themselves or others, they will promptly and appropriately be guided away from the situation (**See under separate copy- Hilltop Behavior Management Guidelines**)

Email Addresses

In our effort to enhance communication, families are requested to provide a current email address to assist in ongoing correspondence between Hilltop and families. Email addresses will be used for Hilltop purposes only.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

Hilltop has a state approved Emergency Preparedness Plan (EPP) that we will follow in case of an emergency. All classrooms and offices are equipped with the plan. Parents may request a copy of the EPP.

Field Trips

- Parents will be notified of field trips and must sign permission slips for child to attend
- A parent or guardian must accompany child for child to participate in field trip

Home Visits

- Occur twice per year
- Review parent/child goals
- Family needs assessment completed, reviewed and updated

Infant Safety

For the safety of the infants/toddlers/twos in our program, it is our intention to keep the children with the same caregiver for no less than nine months. This allows the children to have a caregiver who is in tune to their needs because of the nurturing relationship they are able to build over time.

Other safety measures include:

- Baby walkers are not used in the Infant/Toddler classrooms.
- All infants will be placed on their back when put in their cribs.
- The use of pillows and heavy quilts will not be used in the cribs.
- Infants unable to sit are held for bottle feeding.
- Bottles or sippy cups will not be placed in cribs or cots.
- Children are not allowed to walk, crawl, etc. with a sippy cup or bottle.
- Children will drink from a regular cup when developmentally ready.

Information Board

The Information Board is located by the front door where you will find important phone numbers, center information, licensure, etc.

Licensing Review

The Hilltop Child and Family Development Center program is licensed through the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, Child Care Division (DHSS) and must meet or exceed all state requirements identified for quality childcare. You may view childcare program sites state compliance and inspection reports at www.dhss.mo.gov.

Naptime

- Naptime is between 12:00 and 3:00 P.M for groups 1, 2, 3 and infants/toddlers
- Naptime is between 1:00 and 3:00 P.M for groups 4 and 5
- All children are encouraged to rest.
- No child is forced to stay on his or her cot
- Quiet areas and activities are provided for “early risers” and “non-nappers” after 30 minutes of tried rest.

Non-Smoking Facility

Hilltop is a non-smoking facility.

Nutritional Program

Your child's daily nutritional needs are met through planned, balanced meals that follow CACFP guidelines. Menus are posted weekly in the resource room parent board and in your child's classroom on the parent board. **Please do not bring your child to the center with food, drinks, etc.** Only staff may serve children due to Department of Health and Sanitation regulations and only center prepared food is allowed to be served with the exception of physician prescribed dietary needs, birthday celebration treats, or classroom party treats. If your child has a medical or religious nutritional need, we must have a statement explaining this need signed by your physician on a medical substitution form.

Staff do not offer children younger than four years old the following foods: hot dogs, whole or sliced into rounds, whole grapes, nuts, popcorn, raw peas, hard pretzels, peanut butter, chunks of raw carrot, or meat larger than can be swallowed whole. Staff cut food into pieces ½ square inch for toddler/twos and according to each child's chewing capability. All fresh fruits and vegetables will be washed thoroughly prior to consumption. All fruit juices served at Hilltop are

100% juice. In the event a child's food would need to be reheated, it may not be reheated on plastic plates, Styrofoam containers or in a bag when a microwave is used to reheat.

Outdoor Play

The Department of Health and Senior Services requires that children receive outdoor play opportunities each day weather permitting. Please send your children with weather appropriate clothing. On cool/cold days, children will be required to wear jackets and coats. Please mark all items with your child's name. Your child will get dirty when they are outside, so please send them in appropriate clothing. If we aren't getting dirty, we aren't having fun!!!

Outside Agency Requests

To protect your privacy, confidentiality, and the safety of all children, Hilltop will NOT allow outside observations or agency requests without written consent. All children's health and safety files are confidential, but may be immediately released upon request to administrators, teaching staff who have parent consent, parents/guardians, or regulatory authorities.

Parent Code of Conduct

Hilltop requires parents of enrolled children to behave in a manner consistent with courtesy and respect. One of the goals of the program is to provide the most appropriate environment in which a child can grow, learn, and develop. Achieving this ideal environment is a shared responsibility between staff and every parent or adult who enters the program. Parents are required to behave in a manner that fosters this ideal environment. Parents who violate the Parent Code of Conduct may be dismissed from the program. Here are our rules:

- **Swearing:** No parent or adult is permitted to curse or use inappropriate language at the program, whether in the presence of children or not. Such language is considered offensive and will not be tolerated.
- **Threatening of Staff, Children, or other Parents and Adults:** Threats of any kind will not be tolerated and can be grounds for termination of enrollment.
- **Other Children:** For the purpose of correction or discipline, parents are prohibited from addressing or punishing a child who is not their own. If a parent should witness another parent's child behaving in an inappropriate manner or is concerned about behavior reported to them by their own child, it is most appropriate to share concerns with staff.
- **Confidentiality:** It is inappropriate for one parent to seek out another parent to discuss their child's inappropriate behavior. All behavior concerns should be brought to the staff's attention and the staff will address the issue with the other parent. Although you may be curious about the outcome of such a discussion, staff is strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you.
- **Violations of Safety Policy:** Parents are required to follow all safety policies at all times. These procedures are not designed to inconvenience you, but to protect the welfare and best interest of the children and staff.
- **Staff/Parent Conflict:** Should a conflict arise between staff and parents; parents are instructed to bring the issue to administration. Disrespect when a conflict arises is unacceptable. A conversation will be had with the staff member and a staff/parent meeting will be scheduled with administration to address the concern if needed. Should the situation warrant further action, appropriate steps will be taken. Parents who bring concerns to administration will not retaliate against by program staff.

Parent Resource Area

The Parent Resource Area is located between the director's and assistant director's offices. There, you can find applications for state programs, GED information for parents, parent resources, community events board and a resource book for the St. Louis Area. Other center forms (medication forms, vacation forms, withdrawal forms) can be found in the parent resource area. Hilltop is committed to helping families and directing parents to resources to better the family unit.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

- Two conferences are held per year
- Discussion includes developmental portfolios
- It is required for parents/guardians to attend
- Informal conferences can be initiated by parents or teachers

Photo Release

It is understood and agreed that Hilltop reserves the right to take and utilize pictures, likenesses videos, and testimonial of participants for promotional purposes including, but not limited to reports, publications, brochures, emails, website, and social media.

Safe Sleep Environment

- Room temperature will be kept between 68 degrees and 85 degrees when measured two feet from the floor. Infants are supervised to ensure they are not overheated or chilled.
- Infants' heads and faces will not be covered during sleep. Infants' cribs will not have blankets or bedding hanging on the sides of the crib. **We may use sleep clothing (i.e. sleep sack, sleepers) that are designed to keep an infant warm without the possible hazard of covering the head or face during nap/sleep time.**
- No blankets, loose bedding, comforters, pillows, bumper pads, or any object that can increase the risk of entrapment, suffocation or strangulation will be used in cribs, playpens or other sleeping equipment.
- Toys and stuffed animals will be removed from the crib when the infant is sleeping. **When indicated on the Infant/Toddler Feeding and Care Plan or with written parent consent, pacifiers will be allowed in infants' cribs while they sleep, but cannot have cords or attaching mechanisms.**
- Only an individually assigned safety approved crib, portable crib or playpen with a firm mattress and a tight fitting sheet will be used for infant napping or sleeping.
- Only one infant may occupy a crib or playpen at a time.
- Sitting devices such as a car safety seat, stroller, swing, infant carrier, infant sling, and other sitting devices will not be used for sleep/nap time. Infants who fall asleep anywhere other than a crib, portable crib or playpen must be placed in the crib or playpen for the remainder of their sleep or nap time.
- No person shall smoke or otherwise use tobacco products in any area of the childcare facility during the period of time when children cared for under the license are present.
- Home monitors or commercial devices marketed to reduce the risk of SIDS shall not be used in place of supervision while children are napping and sleeping.
- To promote health development, infants who are awake will be given supervised "tummy time" for exercise and for play.
- Hilltop prohibits the use of any equipment such as a sound machine that may interfere with the caregiver's ability to see or hear a child who may be distressed.
- Lighting in the room must be at a level that allows staff to see all children clearly while sleeping in the event the child is in distress.

Safe Sleep Policy

The purpose of the Safe Sleep Policy is to maintain a safe sleep environment that reduces the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and sudden unexpected infant deaths (SUIDS) in children less than one year of age. Missouri law (210.223.1, RSMo) requires all licensed childcare facilities that provide care for children under one year of age to implement and maintain a written safe sleep policy in accordance with the most recent safe sleep recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). Missouri childcare licensing rules require licensed childcare facilities to provide parent(s) and/or guardians who have infants in care be provided a copy of the facility's safe sleep policy.

SIDS is the sudden death of an infant less than one year of age that cannot be explained after a thorough investigation has been conducted, including a complete autopsy, an examination of the death scene and a review of the child's clinical history.

SUIDS is the sudden and unexpected death of an infant less than one year of age in which the manner and cause of death are not immediately obvious prior to investigation. Causes of sudden unexpected infant death include, but are not limited to, metabolic disorders, hypothermia or hyperthermia, neglect or homicide, poisoning and accidental suffocation.

Childcare providers can maintain safe sleep environments for infants that help lower the chances of SIDS/SUIDS. Our goal is to take proactive steps to reduce the risk of SIDS/SUIDS in childcare and to work with parents to keep infants safer while they sleep. To do so, this facility will practice the following Safe Sleep Policy:

- Infants will always be placed on their backs to sleep. When, in the opinion of the infant's licensed health care provider, an infant requires alternative sleep positions or special sleeping arrangements, the provider must have on file at the facility written instructions, signed by the infant's licensed health care provider, detailing the alternative sleep positions or special sleeping arrangements. Caregivers will put the infant to sleep as specified by the written instructions.
- Per the American Academy of Pediatrics, when the infants can easily turn from their stomachs to their backs and from their backs to their stomachs, they shall be initially placed on their backs, but shall be allowed to adopt whatever positions they prefer to sleep. We will follow this recommendation by the American Academy of Pediatrics.
- Sleeping infants shall have a supervised nap period. The caregiver shall check on the infant frequently during napping or sleeping and shall remain in close proximity to the infant in order to hear and see them if they have difficulty during napping or when they awaken.
- Steps will be taken to keep infants from overheating by regulating the room temperature, avoiding excess bedding, and not over-dressing or over-wrapping the infant. Infants should be dressed appropriately for the environment, with no more than one (1) additional layer than an adult would wear to be comfortable in the environment.
- All caregivers will receive training on infant safe sleep based on AAP safe sleep recommendations. This training must be completed within 30 days of employment or volunteering and completed every three years.

All parents/guardians of infants shall be informed of the facilities written safe sleep policy at enrollment.

School Pictures

Hilltop organizes school pictures to be taken at least annually. Please be on the lookout for notices within the classrooms and parent boards.

Screenings

All children will be provided the opportunity for age/developmental screenings on an annual basis, including:

- Vision
- Speech
- Hearing
- Social Emotional
- DIAL
- Dental
- Physicals
- All other recommended screenings

Smart Connections

We invite you to join us for our monthly Smart Connections parent meetings. Here, you can learn parenting tools and techniques, self-care and parent networking. Each session includes childcare, prize giveaways and snacks.

Temperature Guidelines and Outdoor Play

95° and Above	Limited time, quiet activities
90°- 95°	10-15 Minutes (Depending on heat index levels)
32°- 90°	Unlimited time
20°- 32°	10-15 Minutes
10° - 20°	5 Minutes
10° and Below	DO NOT GO OUTSIDE

All children will go outside. Please dress your child appropriately during winter weather (heavy socks, coat, boots, gloves or mittens, and hat.) Please mark all items with your child's name.

If you feel your child's health does not permit them to go outside, your child is not healthy enough to be at the center at this time.

Sunscreen will be administered to your child when your child is exposed to the sun. Parents must complete a medication form in order for staff to apply sunscreen to your child. Sunscreen should be 15 SPF or higher and will only be applied to exposed skin.

Parents will supply sunscreen in a non-aerosol can and will clearly label the bottle of sunscreen with their child's name.

When public health authorities recommend use of insect repellent due to a high risk of insect-borne disease, only repellents containing DEET are used. Staff will only apply insect repellent no more than once per day with a signed medical form.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Fundraisers

Hilltop conducts fundraisers from time to time to help pay for field trips, materials, etc. You will be notified when fundraisers occur and we look forward to your participation. We always welcome your fundraising ideas.

Parent Advisory Committee

Hilltop has a parent advisory committee that meets a minimum of quarterly. If you would like to be part of a group comprised of the director, parents and other Hilltop staff see Julie for more information. This group decides on fundraisers and help plan family events at Hilltop. It is also a time to share questions, comments and suggestions!

Parent Volunteers

All parents are encouraged to volunteer their time and services in our program. Parent participation is a rich tradition here. You can visit anytime, dine with your child, share your cultural heritage, make small repairs, go on field trips, etc. See an administrator for more details on how you can sign up to volunteer.



TEMPORARY EXCLUSION FROM CARE

Dear Parent(s):

_____ is being sent home on _____ at _____ with
(Child's name) (Date) (time the child is picked up)
symptoms of _____
(Describe reason for exclusion)
that are averse to your child's classmates and the staff in the Hilltop Child and Family
Development program.

Your child **MAY NOT** return to school until s/he is fever free without fever-reducing medicine and/or symptom free for at least 24 hours and the rest of the following day or following day. **Staff have the right to take the child's temperature prior to re-admittance.**

Determination regarding re-admittance to school when your child suffers from symptoms will be made on a case by case basis. However, if your child's doctor determines your child is not contagious and can rejoin group care and consent is given by the early childhood director, a fax or note from your child's doctor will be required. Your child will then be re-admitted to school prior to the 24-hour time period.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

Hilltop Director Signature

Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature

Items in the parent handbook are subject to change. Written notification of changes will be provided to parents and will supersede handbook.

