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Infant & Toddler Care Parent Handbook 2017

We are an equal opportunity employer and provider.

PROMOTE Family Development Centers, Inc.

Dear Parents,

We want to thank you for allowing us the opportunity to care for your child. We understand children are a very precious gift of God and we take the responsibility of meeting their needs very seriously. We want to take a minute to share with you more about the ministry of Apostles Preschool & Childcare.

The goals of Apostles Preschool & Childcare is:

- To cooperate with each family to provide a supportive and comfortable atmosphere where each child can develop at this or her own pace.
- To meet the children's needs while they are away from home by allowing both structured and unstructured play as well as individual and group activities in a safe place.
- To offer to our children a positive, Christian environment in which they can become confident in their own special abilities and share those talents with others.

We are an extension of the family, not a replacement for the parents or guardians. As a ministry of PROMOTE Family Development Centers, Inc., we have access to many professional people, materials, and services that can help your family in many areas of need. We offer our services to you in whatever ways we can be of assistance and support.

I want to thank you for entrusting your child to our care. Please understand that if you have any concerns or questions we are here for you. Please keep communication open with your child's caregiver and with me. It is a privilege to serve you in this ministry!

In Christ's Love,

Apostles Preschool & Childcare Board of Directors

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Contents

PHILOSOPHY	3
DEVELOPMENTAL GOALS	3
PROGRAM OPERATION.....	3
TUITION AND FEES.....	4
REGISTRATION INFORMATION	4
GUIDING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOR	6
MEDICATION POLICY	7
HEALTH INFORMATION	7
PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES.....	8
CENTER'S RESPONSIBILITIES.....	9
INFANT PROGRAM	10
TODDLER PROGRAM	12
COMMUNICATION.....	13
PARENT HANDBOOK RECEIPT	15
SICK CHILD AND INFECTION CONTROL POLICY	15

PHILOSOPHY

We cherish and celebrate each child as a unique and precious creation of God with different needs, personalities, callings, experiences, and emphases. In our education of the whole child, we employ Biblically-centered curriculum and methods.

DEVELOPMENTAL GOALS

Physical Development - To provide ample opportunities through games and play for children to develop and control their large muscles. To develop small motor skills through age appropriate activities such as art, puzzles, play dough, beads, and small manipulative toys. To encourage healthy eating habits and proper rest.

Social Development - To give each child the opportunity to interact with their peers and mature Christian adults in order to stimulate social growth and relationships. This will be accomplished through free play, small group interaction, music, and by the supportive relationship between the staff and child.

Cognitive Development - To provide an environment of stimulating and challenging materials that will encourage each child to observe, interact, and seek solutions; therefore inducing learning. Some of the activities will include age appropriate games, stories, poems, and finger plays. Concepts such as numbers, shapes, and colors will be developed through learning centers.

Emotional Development - To encourage children to express but also control their emotions appropriately. To comfort children through stressful times. To be examples of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Spiritual Development - To teach children that God created them and loves them. Children will learn to apply the Bible lessons so that they are doers of the Word. We do not believe it is the responsibility of the childcare center to extensively teach doctrine

PROGRAM OPERATION

Staffing - The group size and ratio of teachers to children is configured to enable individualized and age appropriate programming. Teachers plan the daily activities to provide opportunity for growth in all areas of development. All staff members are qualified by training and experience to provide the best possible care for the child. In-service activities enhance the staff members' knowledge of safety and child development.

Infants 6 Weeks to 12 Months (1:3) - The infant room is designed to create a warm, nurturing and secure environment. Every moment of an infant's day offers opportunities for learning and routines are viewed as the curriculum for your infant's day. Diaper changing, feeding and other routines are viewed as vital times for communication, self discovery and socialization. Your child's caregiver will capture these moments and respond in engaging language rich ways such as singing, reading, talking and cuddling babies. We provide soft play areas designed to allow infants safe opportunities to explore and develop at their own pace. Toys are meant to be explored and are sanitized each day.

Waddlers 12 Months to 16 Months (1:4) - Waddlers are on the move, checking things out as if their curiosity has no bounds! The area of the Nursery is designed with this in mind. Children in the Waddler area are making the transition from infant to toddler. They transition to mats instead of cribs and eat at small tables and chairs instead of high chairs. Children play and explore with their caregivers acquiring skills needed for social interaction. Expressive language often emerges, and the children continue to develop fine and gross motor skills through repeated use of developmentally appropriate toys and props. At the end of the day your child's care giving team will provide you with a report highlighting your child's activities and routines.

Toddlers 16 Months to 24 Months (1:4)-Toddlers are active explorers, eager to try new things and use materials in different ways. Toddlers discover their world on a physical level by touching, dumping, dropping and walking. Children in this group are busy playing imaginative play, blocks, manipulatives, art, music and books. Expectations for behaviors are developmentally appropriate and allow the child to be challenged yet feel support from the teacher.

TUITION and FEES

Annual Registration Fee - A non-refundable annual registration fee is paid at the time of registration. A second child discount is available. Make checks payable to: **Apostles Preschool & Childcare.**

New family	First child \$100	each additional child \$60
Returning family	First child \$75	each additional child \$50

Financial Agreement - Apostles Preschool & Childcare is a not-for-profit organization that relies on parent fees for operation, therefore monthly/bi-monthly tuition will be determined by the admission agreement.

Childcare tuition can be paid for monthly or bi-monthly.

- **Monthly:** If you pay the full monthly tuition, this is due no later than the 5th of each month or the preceding business day if the 5th falls on a weekend.
- **Bi-monthly:** Due no later than the 1st and the 15th of each month or the preceding business day if these dates fall on a weekend.

The financial commitment agreement section on the Admission Agreement Form indicating the monthly or bi-monthly payment for services, **must** be initialed by the parent/caretaker during the enrollment process.

Tuition - Tuition is not subject to discounts or credits for absences, vacations, holidays, or emergency closures (i.e., weather). Attendance days cannot be swapped for days missed.

Tuition is due on the due date even if your child is absent on this day. **There will be a \$10 late fee for all tuition payments received late.**

Returned Checks- There will be a \$35.00 charge for the handling of any checks returned due to insufficient funds.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Enrollment Agreement - The completed Enrollment Agreement Package with the Registration Fee can be mailed or brought to the center. When we receive them, we will set up an interview/orientation meeting.

Copy of Birth Certificate - A copy of the child's birth certificate must be kept on file at the center for official identification of the child. **The center must have a proof of identity before your child may start.**

Immunizations - Documentations of age appropriate immunizations must be provided to the center **before** a child may begin. All children two years and under must have physical/immunization updates every 6 months.

School Entrance Health Form - In accordance with Commonwealth of Virginia Licensing Standards, all children must have a physical examination within the following time frames:

- Children ages 6 weeks to 6 months, **within two months** prior to attendance.
- Children ages 7 months to 18 months, **within three months** prior to attendance.
- Children ages 19 months to 24 months, **within six months** prior to attendance.
- Children ages 2 years through 5 years, **within twelve months** prior to attendance.

The physician must complete the Medical Form **before** the child can be admitted to the childcare center.

Child Emergency Contact and Release Form - An Emergency Contact and Release Form must be completed for emergency information and details of who is allowed to pick the child up from the childcare center.

Developmental Health History Infant-Preschool-Parent's must fill out a Developmental Health History form and bring to the orientation meeting. **The Developmental Health History must be on file before the child may begin.**

Admission Agreement - The parent or guardian enrolling the child and the director of the center must sign this contract including the schedule and tuition rate agreed upon. The contract also states that the parents have read this handbook and agree to abide by the policies of Apostles Preschool & Childcare.

Court Papers – Please submit all applicable court papers regarding custody and/or visitation rights (if applicable). As required by 63.2-1813 of the Code of Virginia, we honor the custodial parent’s right to be admitted into the center.

Waiting List – As openings occur, enrollment of a child in any of the age groups is determined by the following in order of priority:

1. Moving a child from a younger to an older group on the basis of age, readiness, and availability.
2. Child on a "School Only" schedule requesting a full-time schedule.
3. Sibling of a currently enrolled child.
4. Child on the waiting list desiring a full time schedule.
5. Child on the waiting list desiring a "School Only" schedule.

Non-discrimination Statement – Apostles Preschool & Childcare admits children of any race, gender, color, religion, and nationality or ethnic origin.

Late Pick Up - Apostles Preschool & Childcare closes daily at 6:00 PM.

A per-child fee is charged any time parent/caretakers arrive after 6:00 PM. Teachers must be able to leave promptly. **You will be charged \$1.00 for every 1 minute past 6:00 PM.** If a child has not been picked up by 6:20pm, the emergency contact person will be called. If no contacts can be reached, we will call the police.

Anyone legally able to pick up a child from the childcare center that arrives under the influence of drugs or alcohol will be asked to wait while the other parent or guardian is notified and informed that it is not healthy for the child to be released. The police will be called if the impaired parent/caretaker takes the child from the center.

Weather/Emergency Closing – – If Chesapeake Public Schools close or delay due to the weather, the center will as well. If Chesapeake Public Schools are closed, the center will be closed also. If public schools are delayed one hour, the center is delayed one hour. The childcare center will close if the center is not safe for the children (i.e. Power out, floods, etc.) If the center must perform an emergency closing while students are in the center the parent will be contacted and asked to pick up their child. If the parent cannot be reached the emergency contacts will be called. If it is necessary to evacuate the center and the child has not been picked up the child will remain in the care of the supervising teacher or Director. They will be taken to Apostles Lutheran Church, a designated local shelter, the teacher or Directors home or the Red Cross. The parent will be notified of the location of the child as soon as they have safely arrived.

Tornado Warning-If the immediate area is under a **tornado warning** we are required to seek shelter. For this reason if a parent is just arriving to the center with their child, and we are under a **tornado warning** the parent may seek shelter in the building with their child. Once the warning has been lifted you may sign your child in for care.

Absence - If your child is going to be absent from the childcare center on any regularly scheduled day, parents must call and inform the Center. If your child has a contagious disease parents must call the Center so we may notify other parents of possible exposure to communicable disease. See Communicable Disease list for applicable illnesses.

Withdrawal- We require a **2 week written notice** if you will be withdrawing your child from the center.

Schedule Changes- Any temporary or permanent schedule change must be requested in writing on the schedule change form. We require a two week notice if you are planning a vacation or withdrawing your child from the childcare center.

Outdoor Activities- Children will go outside every day unless rain or extreme cold prevents their doing so. In cold weather, the time spent outside is adjusted to the temperature. Please think of the child's comfort and possible daily weather changes when you dress your child and in planning outer garments to wear or bring to the center. Infants and waddlers will go for stroller rides. Toddlers will play outside on the toddler playground.

GUIDING CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOR

Because infants, waddlers and toddlers are learning self-control, they sometimes engage in inappropriate behavior resorting to some kind of physical action to get their wants met. Caregivers recognize that this is a normal part of infant and toddler development. Caregivers use positive language so children will learn what they can do. We recognize your child is learning new social skills and may need gentle reminders about appropriate behavior. Actions that are humiliating or frightening to a child will not be used. Teachers will use redirection, positive reinforcement, and gentle reminders to encourage respect and caring among the children. In addition to this, staff will help children use language to help express their needs and emotions to foster positive relationships.

If the staff notice changes or have concerns about your child's behavior, the caregiver will meet with you to plan together on how to best meet your child's needs.

A child will not be punished for lapses in toilet learning.

Biting Policy: Biting can be a common occurrence in programs serving children under three years of age. Apostles Preschool & Childcare has carefully researched its policy concerning biting and uses the following procedure. First, the victim receives the first attention and any necessary first aid is immediately available. The biting child is dealt with firmly but kindly and briefly. The child is told that biting hurts and that biting cannot be allowed. Further response or action would depend on the reason for the biting incident.

- If the biter is an infant, usually the child is biting just as the child would bite a toy. The child gets response, so he/she bites again. Careful supervision is used to prevent bites, and many chewable toys are provided.
- Some children begin to bite because they imitate the kisses or playful bites of adults. Parents are warned that such "biting" play may very well encourage their child to bite in the future.
- If the biter is biting things, as well as people, and seems to have a need to bite, a substitute object such as a teething item is provided, and the child is told to bite the object anytime he/she wants.
- If the biter is verbal and communicating by biting rather than using language to get results, the biter is encouraged to use words instead. Appropriate words should be given to the child who needs them. The teacher can say, "Joe, use your words; say, 'No, that is mine.'"
- If a certain child seems to be chosen often as the victim, that child is encouraged to be more assertive.
- If the child seems to be biting for attention, teachers focus on other times during the day that this child can be given extra attention to meet that need. If the child is old enough to understand, a calm time is chosen later (such as diaper changing time) to tell the child why we do not want anyone to bite.

Our caregivers supervise very closely at all times. Everything possible is done to keep all the children safe and secure. However, just as all toddler falls cannot be prevented, all bites cannot be prevented. Accident reports are filled out on all bites that leave a mark. If the bite should break the skin, the parent will be notified. If a child is biting repeatedly, the Director will discuss the matter with the parents of the biter to assure that the child is being dealt with in a consistent way. The name of the biter is not given to other parents. The child must be protected from any negative reactions from others. Biting is a normal behavior for toddlers, but some people may look at a biter in a negative way. Toddler bites and infant bites are not intentional. Parents who have further questions about biting are invited to discuss the matter with the Director. Specific questions can be answered and written information is available.

PACIFIERS – Due to the latest research from the AMA and the ADA, the following procedures will be taken regarding pacifiers. (Exception- If a toddler is biting others, in some limited cases we may ask the parent to provide a pacifier while we work on new coping skills).

- Toddlers may have their pacifier at nap time.
- Infants and Waddlers may have their pacifiers.

MEDICATION POLICY

Medication -Parents must complete a **Written Medication Consent Form** for all prescription, over the counter and topical ointments including but not limited to, sunscreen, insect repellent, diaper ointment and lip ointments. All prescription and non-prescription medication must be in the original container with the direction label attached. The child's first and last name must be clearly labeled on the container. The instructions **cannot** conflict with the directions on the label of the medication container. If the medication is to be dispensed on an "as needed" basis the observable signs must be identified on the consent form. If there are possible side effects they must be included in the consent form. A copy of the package insert or pharmacy printout must accompany **ALL** medications and topical ointments. If a package insert is not provided when medication is purchased, the original box or packaging must accompany the medication in order to be photocopied and attached to the authorization.

Long term prescription and over the counter medications may be allowed as long as both the parent and the physician completes and signs the *Written Medication Consent Form*. **Note:** Long term medication authorizations including topical ointments such as sunscreen, etc. must be updated at least every 6 months.

All medication must be delivered to the director's office. **Do not leave medication in your child's diaper bag or backpack.**

When the authorization for medication has expired the director will inform the parent. If after 14 days the medication has not been picked up the director will dispose of it.

Sunscreen - Parents must complete a *Written Medication Consent Form* before sunscreen can be used. Sunscreen must be in the original container and have the child's name clearly labeled on the container. Sunscreen must be hypoallergenic and have an SPF15 or higher.

Insect Repellent - Parents must complete a *Written Medication Consent Form* before insect repellent may be applied. Repellent must be in original container with the child's name clearly labeled. Manufactures instructions will be followed. Insect Repellent must be sent to director's office in order to remain inaccessible to children.

Diaper Ointment or Cream - Diaper Ointments and Cream-Parents must complete a **Written Medication Consent Form** for all prescription, and over the counter diaper creams and topical ointments.

- All prescription and non-prescription creams and ointments must be in the original container with the direction label attached.
- The child's first and last name must be clearly labeled on the container.
- The instructions **cannot** conflict with the directions on the label of the ointment container.
- If the ointment is to be dispensed on an "as needed" basis the observable signs must be identified on the consent form. If there are possible side effects they must be included on the consent form.
- A copy of the package insert or pharmacy printout must accompany all creams and ointments.
- If a package insert is not provided when ointment is purchased, the original box or packaging must accompany the ointment in order to be photocopied and attached to the authorization.

In order to leave a medication or diaper crème at the center more than 7 days you must provide a physician's signature on the authorization. This authorization must be updated every 6 months.

HEALTH INFORMATION

Daily Health Check - The health of each child is an important factor in the childcare center. Each child in our program must be evaluated daily for signs of illness, injury and/or abuse. This health check will be conducted when the child first arrives each day and, again, whenever their behavior or appearance warrants another evaluation. The health check may include observing signs of illness or complaints of not feeling well, a change in the child's behavior and activity level or skin rashes, itchy skin, and itchy scalp.

Sick Children – For the welfare of your child, as well as the other children, make other arrangements in the event your child is ill. Call the center if your child will not be attending because of illness. Apostles Preschool & Childcare will notify all families in childcare center if a communicable disease breaks out. A notice will be posted on the classroom door. Please see the Sick Child and Infection Control Policy

A child may return to the childcare center after illness when:

- The fever has been broken for 24 hours
- Any nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea has subsided for 24 hours
- If prescribed, 3 doses of antibiotics have been given over a 24 hour period
- The child is feeling well again and normal behavior has returned

Apostles Preschool & Childcare reserves the right to request a doctor's written permission to return.

Illness & Injuries – All staff members are trained and certified in First Aid and CPR. All complaints of illness or injury will be taken seriously. The child's injury will be properly cared for. Continuous reassurance and prayer will be given to the child. In the case of an injury an incident report will be completed. Parents may request a copy. The original is kept on file at the Center.

Emergency Health Services - Written consent for emergency health care must be completed on the Emergency Information Card at the time of the child's admission to the center. In the event of a serious injury or illness, 911 will be called. Parent(s) will always be notified immediately. Transportation, if necessary, is designated to 911. A staff member will accompany the child until the parent or other representative is present.

Healthy Practices-Young children deserve a healthy environment in which to play and learn. To ensure this:

- Staff, children, parents, and visitors are asked to wash their hands with liquid soap and running water:
- Upon arrival at the center
- Before and after eating & food preparation
- Before and after diapering & toileting
- After removing disposable gloves
- After wiping noses or coming in contact with any body fluid (after coughing & sneezing)
- Before and after giving medications or administering first aid
- When they come inside from the playground
- Before and after using the sensory table
- After staff breaks
- Before you leave the room or the center
- Toys and surfaces in the classrooms are cleaned regularly with a disinfecting solution. Toys that are mouthed by children are removed immediately and cleaned.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Absence – Parents are required to call the Center if the child will be absent. If your child has a contagious disease call the center so that we may notify other parents of possible exposure to communicable disease. Please see Communicable Disease list for applicable illnesses.

Immunization Updates- Parents of infants and toddlers under the age of two years must provide the center with documentation of immunization updates once every 6 months.

Failure to obtain required immunizations as they are due is grounds for dismissal from the program.

Contact information Updates-Parents must keep all contact information up to date.

Sign In/Sign Out – Parents or authorized representatives **must** accompany the child into the center and sign the child in each day, then sign out when the child is picked up. Only pre-authorized persons will be allowed to pick your child up from school. Authorization must be in writing.

Update all Information - It is important to update changes in home or work addresses and telephone numbers, emergency contact information, and immunizations. This information is necessary for our records and for proper care of the child in case of an emergency.

Food- Parents provide infant formula and foods as well as bottles and nipples. **Bottles must be prepared at home and brought to the center daily.** Parents must provide the number of bottles or sippy cups the child will consume that day (ex. if the child will drink formula 6 times in a day you must provide 6 prepared bottles).

Food Allergies

For food allergies, your child MUST have a written Food Allergy Plan on file at the center. This Food Allergy Plan is a written description signed by the parent and the doctor. This plan must be on file and updated every year. Center staff will take appropriate precautions. If at any time your child develops an allergy, please let us know immediately. **NUT-FREE ZONE: As of October 1, 2017 our center will no longer be a Nut Free Zone.** **Children with nut or other food allergies will have a Private Dining Space in the classroom. This is a table or highchair designated for children with food allergies to eat.**

Choking Hazards-A reminder to parents, the following foods can be dangerous and are considered choking hazards for children under the age of 3 years:

- | | | |
|------------------------|--|---|
| ➤ Whole grapes | ➤ thick skinned fruit | ➤ hot dogs-may be cut into small bite sized pieces to prevent choking |
| ➤ chunky peanut butter | ➤ trail mix | |
| ➤ snappy vegetables, | ➤ Grapes-may be cut into small pieces to prevent choking | |
| ➤ seeded fruits | | |
| ➤ popcorn | | |

Needed Supplies:

- Diapers, wipes (if your supply runs out a fee of \$2.00 per diaper and a \$.50 per wipe will be charged to your account for the use of Center diapers and wipes).
- Two or more complete seasonal changes of clothing including socks, replaced as needed.
- One outer garment suitable for outdoor play (seasonal)
- A hat for sunny days
- A blanket for crib (must remain at center M-F)
- All bottles, cups and eating utensils must arrive at center clean and sanitary.
- A can of formula in case the child needs an additional bottle.
- Lunch box or bags for daily lunch-Toddlers
- Toothbrush for children 16 months or older
- A backpack or diaper bag
- For waddler's and toddlers a bottom sheet for cot (standard crib sheet works best and a blanket for covering up. Child may have a soft snuggly toy to nap with. (one that will remain her M-F).

****Parents must label everything with their child's name. All perishables including bottles with formula or breast milk, sippy cups infant food and toddler lunches must be labeled with the date they are prepared.**

Clothing –Clothing in the infant, waddler and toddler rooms needs to be easy to put on and take off. Freedom of movement is crucial to the development process for a child. Children play outside every day that weather permits. It is the parent's responsibility to make sure their child is appropriately dressed for the weather. Label **all** belongings. Each child will keep a complete change of clothes at the center in case of spills or accidents.

Toys - Children **may not** bring personal toys to the childcare center. A special "snuggly" toy for naptime is acceptable. However, these "snuggly" toys must remain at the center M-F and taken home on Fridays to wash. This procedure cuts down on germs transferring from home to center to home.

CENTER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Along with the responsibilities outlined in this handbook such as providing qualified and trained staff, age appropriate activities for each child and a safe and clean environment the center also have the following responsibilities.

Supplies Provided by Apostles Preschool & Childcare- Cribs, cots, first aid supplies, art & craft supplies, and educational materials.

Communication/Conferences- A schedule of the week's activities in your child's classroom is posted on the bulletin board. In addition your child's teacher will communicate openly with you regarding any development, behavior adjustments and needs your child may have. All parents will have the opportunity to meet with the class teacher for a conference in the fall and spring or whenever requested by either the parent or teacher.

Snacks- Nutritious morning and afternoon snacks are prepared and served to children ages 16 months and older. Weekly menus are posted at the center for your information. Any food allergies the child has should be documented on the Emergency Information Card. Substitutions will be provided for those foods. All children will be encouraged to develop independent eating skills. Children may not bring in supplemental snacks unless the child has a food allergy and arrangements have been made with the Director.

In Case of Injury-Simple injuries will be cared for by the staff. A written incident report will be given to the parent, explaining what happened. In the event that a serious injury is involved, parents will be notified at once, and if necessary, the physician they have designated will be called or emergency service will be called. We must have the names and telephone numbers of other persons listed on file to contact in case the parent(s) cannot be reached. An unreported injury found by a teacher after the parent leaves will be recorded on a daily report form. The parent will be asked to sign the report at the end of the day.

Open Door Policy - Apostles Preschool & Childcare has an "open-door" policy. Parents are welcome to visit or call us at any time. We encourage parents to spend time with their children at the center. The interaction between the family and the childcare center staff is vital for the success of the program for your child. We ask you, as parents, to share information with the staff throughout the day. It is beneficial if the staff knows of happenings at home that would be of interest or require special attention for your child.

Security- Proof of ID is requested for all unfamiliar faces. The Emergency Information Card information is strictly enforced

Report Suspected Child Abuse- Paid staff are required to report suspected child abuse according to the Code of Virginia § 63.1-248.3.

Court Orders-If there are any orders from the court (no-contact, protections, custody, etc.) regarding who can and cannot have contact with your child it is imperative that you provide the Director with a copy of the order. Without legal documentation the Center cannot prevent someone who has proof that they are, or is known as, the biological parent. All information will be kept confidential and will be shared with essential staff members only

Withdrawal- Apostles Preschool & Childcare has the right to terminate any child's enrollment if the child is unable to benefit from the program and/or is not contributing to it; if he/she exhibits inappropriate behavior that could harm other children, him/herself, or the staff; or if the child's tuition account becomes delinquent.

Lines of Authority

Communication is vital to the relationship between the school and the home. It is our desire to follow the biblical command to make every effort to live at peace. If any concerns or questions arise from your child's classroom, it is imperative that you first discuss the issue with the child's teacher. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of the communication with the teacher, then it should be brought to the director's attention. We will make every effort to resolve the issue. If, however, you are not satisfied with the response that you are getting to your concern, the final authority for the childcare and preschool is a board member from Apostles Preschool & Childcare.

1 - Your Child's Teacher 2 – Director 3 - Board Member

INFANT PROGRAM

Infants are those children between birth and about twelve months of age. This is a time of extremely rapid physical and mental growth. In these first twelve months, babies learn about the world through their senses and through motor activities of their bodies, they develop close bonds with special adults, and they begin to control more and more aspects of their behavior.

Developmental Goals- Self-awareness and positive self concept are fostered by caregivers through close personal contact, communication with positive reinforcement, permitting freedom of activity, and respect for the child as an individual. Communication skills are fostered through thoughtful speaking with the children during routine tasks such as diaper changing, and in stories, music, and through enumeration of objects and the description of activities occurring in their presence. Social development is largely a function of the babies' interaction with adults, however because the children are grouped together, their development is enhanced through physical contact, interaction in play, and structured group activities.

Developmental Health History- Upon enrollment into the infant program parents will complete an Infant/Toddler Developmental/Health History. This is where you will share information regarding your child with us in areas such as eating, sleeping and play activities.

Daily Reports-Daily reports provide an opportunity for communication between the parent and caregiver regarding daily eating, sleeping, diapering and developmental milestones. Parents must fill out any changes in the child's schedule; indicate medication needed and/or any rashes or health concerns. When dropping off your child, please remember to allow yourself enough time to complete your child's daily report.

Infant Room Health and Safety- Because infants spend so much time on the floor, we allow only slippers (with traction) or "inside shoes" (shoes left at the site only for classroom use) in our classrooms. Please remove your street shoes before entering. Shoe covers are available upon request; stocking feet are permissible for visitors if necessary.

For the safety of the infants, only adults are allowed in the room. Siblings and other young guests may wait in our lobby or outside the classroom doorway.

Infant Schedules- Our program believes that each infant has his or her own schedule. The day will include: napping, eating, diapering, quiet play, active play and outside time. Your child's daily report will reflect his/her day.

Play for Young Infants-Infants at this stage require very few toys. For these children, sights, sounds, and movements of the environment are stimulating enough. Once a baby begins to touch surfaces and move objects back and forth, we encourage exploration and curiosity by providing soft balls, squeeze toys, plastic rings and soft toys.

Play for Older Infants-At this age, most of their exploration is done with their hands, eyes, and mouth. We provide small dolls, balls of different sizes, and nesting toys. They enjoy objects that have moving parts and sounds. Toys with hinged doors and lids that open and close easily and books with cardboard pages are provided.

Infant Naps- Infants will nap on their own schedule. We provide cribs and crib sheets for infants. Parents must provide a top sheet or blanket. These linens are sent home on Fridays to be washed and should be returned on the following Monday. **Please label your child's blanket.**

In keeping with recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics to reduce the risk of SIDS, babies are placed on their backs when napping. Sleeping infants are checked every 15 minutes.

Infant Feeding-Parents provide infant formula and foods as well as bottles and nipples. **Bottles must be prepared at home and brought to the center daily. Parents must provide the number of bottles or sippy cups the child will consume that day (ex. if the child will drink formula 6 times in a day you must provide 6 prepared bottles).** A can of formula must be left at the center in case a child requires an additional bottle.

All foods and formulas must be labeled with the child's name and dated. We encourage parents to label and date their child's things at home. **If they have not been labeled at home parents must label and date their child's food and drink upon arrival at the center.** Tape and markers are available at the sign in table and the cubby area.

Used bottles and nipples are rinsed off but not washed. They are sent home at the end of each day with the parent to be thoroughly cleaned. Only clean bottles and sippy cups will be offered to a child.

All breast milk and formula is refrigerated immediately upon arrival at the center.

Infants are fed on demand, or as instructed by the parent. Infants will be held when fed until they are able to hold a bottle or drink from a cup. Bottles will not be propped.

A note from the child's health care provider will be required if an infant is to be on limited food/formula intake, diluted formula, Pedialyte, or any type of elimination (allergy) diet.

Bottle feeding will be discouraged after 18 months of age. Children will not be allowed to walk around with bottles.

The following practices **WILL NOT** be followed at the Center even if requested by a parent:

- Children will not be made to wait for a timed feeding if they are hungry.
- Bottles of sugar water, soda, or other sweetened drinks will not be given.
- Solids will not be fed from a bottle.

Cereal may NOT be mixed with breast milk or formula.

Breast Feeding-Research has shown that breast-feeding has a positive effect on the health and emotional development of children. A quiet area with a rocking chair and privacy is available if you would like to come in a nurse your baby.

Diaper Changing Policy-On arrival caregivers will ask parents when child's last diaper change was. Caregivers check diapers every 2 hours. Parents supply all diapering needs for their child (diapers, wipes, cream, and powder). There should be enough of a supply for at least three (3) full days. If your supply runs low, your Caregiver will give you a reminder to replenish your supply immediately. Please label all of your child's items including; diapers, wipes, creams, powder, pacifiers, bottles, blanket, etc.) with his/her name.
Diapers must be disposable

Waddler Meals- Waddlers sit in chairs at a low table during meal and snack times. A caregiver sits at each table with the children, providing a role model. Children are never forced to eat or drink. Waddlers will not be allowed to walk around with a bottle, sippy cup or food.

Waddler Naps- Waddlers will also be allowed to follow their own rest schedule, but classrooms will institute a quiet/nap time after lunch. Waddler nap on rest mats provided by the center. Parents must provide a crib sheet and top sheet or blanket. These linens are sent home on Fridays to be washed and should be returned on the following Monday. **Please label your child's blanket.**

TODDLER PROGRAM

Children ages 16 months to 24 months are growing rapidly in every area of development, socially, physically, intellectually and emotionally. Developmentally appropriate activities and routines are planned and offer each child many opportunities for challenge and success. Our curriculum includes both child and teacher directed activities in areas such as art, language development, science, drama, math readiness, social skills and music.

Our program offers opportunities for fostering independence, creativity and self esteem. Children have the freedom to make choices in a safe and stimulating environment that has been designed to meet all of their needs. Improving self-help skills and strengthening decision-making abilities develops independence. Lesson plans are posted near the parent area

Developmental Health History- Upon enrollment into the toddler program, parents will complete an Infant/Toddler Developmental/Health History. This is where you will share information regarding your child with us in areas such as eating, sleeping and play activities.

Daily Reports- Daily reports provide an opportunity for communication between the parent and caregiver. This is where you will share information about your child in the areas of eating, rest time, activities, and potty training. When dropping off your child, please remember to allow yourself enough time to complete your child's daily report.

Naps- Children benefit from a rest time during the day. It gives them a chance to recharge after play. Toddlers will also be allowed to follow their own rest schedule, but classrooms will institute a quiet/nap time after lunch. Children who are awake after 30 minutes may play quietly on their cot if other children are still sleeping. Toddlers nap on cots provided by the Center. Parents must provide a crib size sheet and a small blanket. These items will go home on Fridays with the child to be washed and should be returned on the following Monday.

All linens must be labeled. There will be a \$2.00 linen charge for every day that linens are not provided from home.

Potty Training- We realize that each child is unique and develops at his/her own rate. After much study of child development and new research published, the Center does not start potty training until a child is 24 months old. At this time, we will be glad to work with the parents and child to make potty training as smooth and successful a transition in their developmental growth

Diaper Changing Policy-On arrival caregivers will ask parents when child's last diaper change was. Caregivers check diapers every 2 hours. Parents supply all diapering needs for their child (diapers, wipes, cream, and powder). There should be enough of a supply for at least three (3) full days. If your supply runs low, your Caregiver will give you a reminder to replenish your supply immediately. Please label all of your child's items including; diapers, wipes, creams, powder, pacifiers, bottles, blanket, etc.) with his/her name.

Diapers must be disposable unless a medical problem exists. In this case, a prescription from a physician is needed.

Toddler Schedule- While the developmental issues for infants, waddlers and toddlers are similar, certain differences are addressed in the toddler program. Toddlers are more mobile, more capable, and experiencing significant language development. Group activities are begun featuring singing, playing musical instruments, playing movement games, and hearing stories. Because toddlers' attention spans are short and rapidly shifting, the program is highly flexible and individualized.

6:30-9:00	Arrival and large group play	11:45-2:30	nap
9:00-9:30	potty/diapers/hand washing	2:30-2:45	potty/diapers/hand washing
9:30-9:45	snack	2:45-3:00	snack
9:45-10:15	table Activities/Circle Time	3:15-3:45	circle time, large group play
10:15-10:45	outside play (weather permitting)	3:45-4:00	art
10:45-11:30	diapering/toileting/hand	4:00-4:30	outside Play
washing/Lunch		4:30-4:45	potty/diapers/hand washing
11:30-11:45	hand washing/brush teeth	4:45-6:00	large group play/parent pickup

Toddler Feeding:

Parents provide toddler lunches. Parents are asked to send healthy foods, low in salt and sugar. Parents are asked to cut foods into appropriate size portions. **Meals cannot be refrigerated or reheated.**

Toddlers sit in chairs at a low table during meal and snack times. A caregiver eats at each table with the toddlers, providing a role model for the children. Children are never forced to eat or drink. Toddlers will not be allowed to walk around with a bottle, sippy cup or food. *Grace is said over each meal.*

Snacks-The Center will provide a snack in the morning and afternoon. While whole milk is not recommended for children under 12 months of age. Whole milk is encouraged for children aged 12 months through 23 months. Therefore whole milk or 100% fruit juice is served at snack time. The snack schedule is posted on the parent bulletin board. *If your child has a food or milk allergy, we must have a doctor's note on file.*

COMMUNICATION

Open communication is vital to your child's successful experience in the infant and toddler rooms. We have an open door policy. Parents are welcome visitors at any time. We welcome your comments, suggestions and concerns. Several communication channels are established so we encourage you to take advantage of these or make additional suggestions.

Parent Board-This bulletin board or information area is used for information such as menus, daily_schedules, and general announcements. There is a parent board in each classroom as well as in the lobby. Some classrooms also use a dry erase board to communicate the highlights of the day to families.

Infant, Toddler, and Preschool Daily Reports-Daily reports provide feedback to parents on their child's eating, sleeping,_diapering/use of toilet, and activities their child participated in that day.

Remind- We use the Remind App for communication regarding closures, reminders about events and supplies needed. Upon enrollment a request will be sent to you to sign up and receive our Remind Communications.

Email-The Director sends out regular emails to communicate events, reminders and activities.

Parent File- Each family has a parent file located in their child's classroom. Communications from the center, receipts for payment and Scholastic Book order forms can be found in your parent file. **Please check your file daily.**

Parent/Teacher Conferences-Conferences are held in November and March. The parent or caregiver may also ask for additional conferences as needed.

Face-to-Face Conversations-It is always helpful for teachers to know when major changes happen in a child's life. These changes could include a family death, moving to a new residence, loss of a parent's job, a parent away for business, someone from the immediate family moving out of the home, etc. Children often are worried about these incidents but do not know how to express their concerns. The child's behavior may be affected. We are better able to assist your child when we are aware of these changes in the home. Staff is available and open to your comments and suggestions. We are here for you and your child, so do not hesitate to communicate with them frequently. Please check with the Director as to the best times for extended conversations.

Parent Handbook Receipt

Please Sign & Return with Registration Materials

I have received and will read over all policies set forth by Apostles Preschool & Childcare. Should I have any questions, I will ask the Director to clarify them.

Signature

Date

Sick Child and Infection Control Policy

It is inevitable that children will get sick, no matter where they are. As children begin to have contact with the world outside that of their own families they are exposed to viruses and bacteria that are foreign to their bodies. This is the way they build immunities. We cannot, nor would we want to shield a child completely from the outside world. If we did the natural immunities a child gains through contact with others would not develop.

In a childcare and school setting, children come into contact with groups of other children outside their families. It is in this situation that the illness of one child can spread to others.

For this reason, our staff takes constant precautions to prevent the spread of disease including careful hand washing of both children and staff, sanitizing toys, and eating areas, separating sick children from those that are well, and extra precautions while diapering or toilet training children.

You the parent can help us in our effort to keep children healthy. We ask your cooperation in the following ways:

1. If your child has been exposed to any of the diseases listed on the accompanying chart we ask that you notify us of the exposure within 24 hours.
2. If your child shows any of the following symptoms you will be called and asked to come immediately. Your child will rest in a separate area while waiting for your arrival. Please help us protect other children by responding promptly. If your child has any of the following symptoms at home, we ask that you keep him/her out of the center until symptoms are gone or until your physician says it is all right to return.

The symptoms include:

- Fever greater than 101
- Severe coughing-child gets red or blue in the face
- High pitched croupy or whooping sounds after coughing
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Pinkeye-tears, redness of eyelid lining, followed by swelling and discharge of pus
- Unusual spots or rashes
- Sore throat or trouble swallowing
- Infected skin patches
- Headache and stiff neck
- Vomiting/diarrhea
- Severe itching of body or scalp or scratching of scalp
- Or as recommended in the Virginia Department of Health's current communicable disease chart.

For the welfare of your child, as well as the other children, make other arrangements in the event your child is ill. Call the center if your child will not be attending because of illness.

Apostles Preschool & Childcare will notify all families in the childcare center if a communicable disease breaks I have read and understand the attached Infection Control and Sick Child Policy and I agree to abide by this policy for the protection of my child as well as the other children and staff members at Apostles Preschool & Childcare.

Parent's Signature

Date