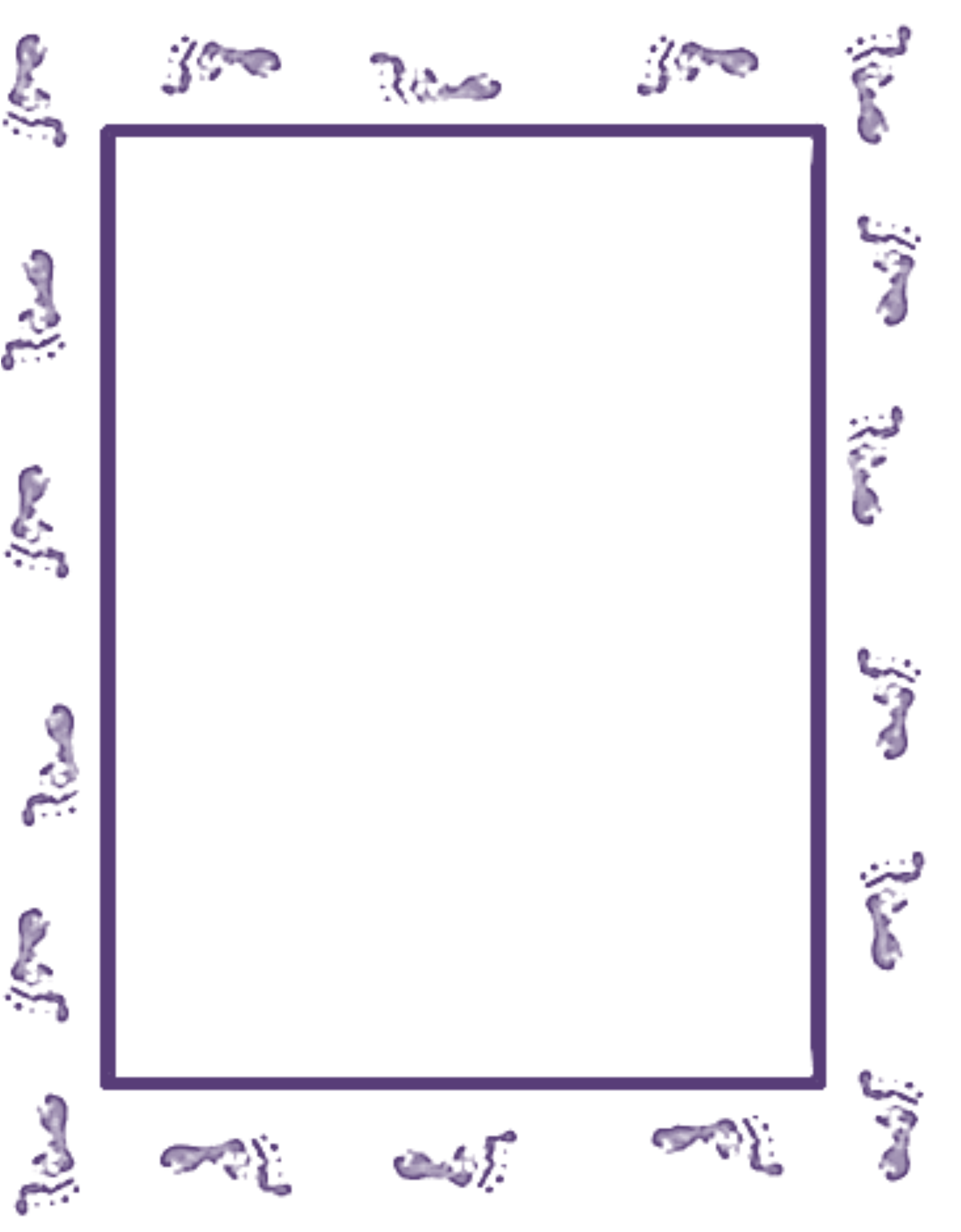
   

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Learning Center

Policy Hand Book

*“Where Step by Step We Learn”*

**Itsy Bitsy Steps Learning Center----- 803-938-5473**

873 Kingsbury Drive Sumter, SC  29154



Welcome to Itsy Bitsy Steps

We want to thank you for choosing Itsy Bitsy Steps for your child care needs. Itsy Bitsy Steps program is open to all children regardless of race, gender, color, national origin, religion or handicap. We welcome children from **6** weeks to school years of age.

We can understand how difficult it can be for working parents to balance all of their commitments and responsibilities in their lives. For this reason, we strive in putting your minds at ease and provide the best care possible.

Itsy Bitsy Steps strives to make safety its main goal. We create an environment where children are safe, nurtured, loved, and encouraged to learn. Children are provided with scheduled opportunities throughout the day so they can communicate with others, learn, grow, explore, and creative experience for life skills.

We implement these important values throughout our day. We introduce preschool activities such as alphabet, shapes, colors, & numbers and so much more. We also do our best to assist your child in developing important values such as good manners, sharing, patience, caring and responsibility.

It is our goal to offer families the quality child care experience they deserve. Please feel free to openly discuss any problems or concerns you may have. An open and honest relationship is the key to a happy child care for everyone involved.

Please help us operate our child care business in a professional manner by carefully reading through the parent handbook and filling out all the enrollment forms.

Again thank you for choosing Itsy Bitsy Steps. We look forward to providing your children with the best possible care. We want to welcome you aboard!

With Sincere,

*Hours of Operation*



Itsy Bitsy Steps operates Monday -- Friday 6:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. If a child is here before 6:30 a.m. or after 5:00 p.m. there will be an additional charge of $2.00 for every minute that the child is here.

Our center has an open door policy that parents can visit the center at any time doing business hours. We would appreciate your taking into consideration our schedule when dropping in or calling, and remember that visitors usually cause children to react in an excited manner. If you call during the day, please be aware that we may be busy with the children and may not be able to answer the phone. If you would leave a message, we will call you back as soon as possible.

*Holidays and Closings*



\*New Year’s Eve (Closes early 12:00)

\*New Year’s Day

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Good Friday

\*Independence Day July 4th

\*Memorial Day

\*Labor Day

\*Thanksgiving

\*Day after Thanksgiving

\*Christmas Eve

\*Christmas Day

Day after Christmas

Full fees will be due in the weeks in which these holidays occur.

\*If the holiday falls on a Saturday, Itsy Bitsy Steps will close in observance of the holiday the Friday before. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, we will be close the following Monday.

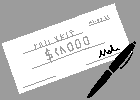
The parent is responsible for arranging for alternate child care for any child care closing and for emergency closing due to severe weather.

*Inclement Weather*

**

We typically follow the Sumter County School District (SCS) inclement weather closings and delays. Bad weather situations such as icy roads, floods, tornadoes, etc. may lead to the center closings. If SCS is closed or opening late due to inclement weather, the Center will close with the same schedule. You should also watch WLTX channel 19 and WIS channel 10 for closing and late openings announcements.

*Payments*

* *

Payments are due on Thursday. They can be made with cash, check or debit card. If payments occur after Thursday, you will receive a late fee of $25.

In addition to tuition there will be a registration fee of $65.00 due at the time of enrollment.

Charges are made on all contracted days, even if child does not attend.

Make all Checks payable to**:**

**Itsy Bitsy Steps**

****

Please sign name on the check. Checks need to have your name, driver’s licenses number, address, and a contact phone numbers where you could be reached. Checks must be dated for the day they are due, no post-dated checks will be accepted.

There is a $40 fee for all return checks. After 1st return check parent/guardian will be asked to pay only with cash or money order. When Itsy Bitsy Steps receives one returned checks from a client, Itsy Bitsy Steps will no longer accept checks as a method of child care payment from a client. Checks will be considered dishonored until farther notice.

In addition, all future child care payments must be made by cash only. Your child will not be accepted for care until all fees are paid in full.

*Termination of Child Care Services*



If you or Itsy Bitsy Steps decides that this center is not the place for your child, child care may be terminated by either the provider or the parent with a two weeks advance written withdrawal notice commencing on the first Monday after written notice is received. Your contract with us will then be terminated.

Withdrawal during the week still requires full tuition of payment for that week.

*Center Rules*



**We take Pride at Itsy Bitsy Steps and in your children! We wish to be good steward of the facility and property. No smoking and No littering** is permitted on the premises; this included parents and staff. **Smoke Free and Litter Free Environment! Please make sure that if you leave any garage in your vehicle.**

*Tracking of Children*

Staff will use tracking procedures to account for the whereabouts of each child. This is done after they are escorted into their classroom by a parent/ guardian each day. It is policy that parents make sure to let their child’s teacher know when their child is entering his/her classroom or when they are being picked up. Teachers will be tracking the child’s whereabouts as they move around the center throughout the day whether it be the hallways, bathrooms, outside for play, or drills.

Children shall be directly supervised at all times by a staff member. No child is to be left alone for any reason while in attendance at the center.

*Daily Signing In & Out*

Parents/Guardians please accompany your child to their classroom after signing them in for the day. The same procedure should follow at pick up time. Parents/guardians must remember to sign their child/children in & out each day. This helps us keep an account of all children in the building.

*Discipline*

Corporal punishment is not used here at Itsy Bitsy Steps. Timeout is a method in helping to correct a behavior. The use of time outs will be rare except when a brief cooling off period is needed. Read discipline policy.

*Staff Qualifications*

**

Directors and Staff caregivers must meet DSS licensing requirements which include a SLED background check and a physical exam (TB skin test included). They must have as a minimum: high school diploma or GED and at least 1 1/2 years’ experience working with children. Staff members must receive certification in INFANT/CHILD CPR, FIRST AID and BLOOD BORNE PATHOGENS TRAINING. Directors and Staff caregivers must also receive 15 to 20 hours of DSS training classes yearly. Our staff will be carefully screened under state and federal guidelines to work in child care.

*Provisional Hiring*

In the event of emergency hire, our center runs a central registry check along with a Sled catch on new staff member until fingerprinting has been completed and approved by DSS to work at our center. A Sign will be in plain view to make sure all parents are aware of the provisional employee is on the premises nor will this employee be left alone with any children until DSS approval has been received.In the event of emergency hire, our center runs a central registry check along with a Sled catch on new staff member until fingerprinting has been completed and approved by DSS to work at our center. A Sign will be place in plain view to make sure all parents are aware of the provisional employee is on the premises nor will this employee be left alone with any children until DSS approval has been received.

*Sign in/Sign Out*



Parents/Guardians please accompany your child to their classroom after signing them in for the day. The same procedure should follow at pick up time. A daily sign in & sign out sheet is kept at the front desk. Parents/guardians must remember to sign their child/children in & out each day. This helps us keep an account of all children in the building. Teachers will have a daily attendance tracking form to sign children in and out of their classrooms daily.

*Arrival and Departures*



Children are to arrive clean and fed (unless arriving just before a meal time). We will try our best to send your child home with a clean diaper, and would appreciate the same consideration when you drop off.  
It is normal for some children to have difficulty separating from parents, or cry when dropping off. Please make your drop off brief, the longer you prolong the departure, the harder it gets. A smile, cheerful good-bye kiss, and a reassuring word that you will be back is all that is needed. In our experience, children are nearly always quick to get involved in play or activities as soon as parents are gone.   
Please be brief at pick-up times, as well. This is a time of testing, when two different authority figures are present (the parent and the provider). All children will test to see if the rules still apply. During arrival and departure, we expect parents to back up our rules. Please be in control of your child during pick up times.

*Free and Full Access of Children*

This center permits the parent(s) of a child/children free and full access to their child(ren) without prior notice while their child receives care unless stated otherwise by court order.

*Authorization to Pick-up*

Our normal procedure is to release the child only to his/her parents, or someone else the parents designate on the authorized pick up and emergency contact form. If someone other than the parent is to pick up the child, please notify us ahead of time. A verbal notice is fine on that day, if this person is on the list of people who are authorized to pick up your child. If the person is **NOT** on that list, we **MUST** have written signed permission to release your child. Please inform emergency contacts, or people designated to pick up your child, that if we do not know them then we will need to ask for picture identification (I.D) and the family code. This is not meant to offend them. This is simply a measure taken for the child's protection and Itsy Bitsy Steps. Emergency contacts will be asked to sign a release the child to form.

Drop off and pick up are not good times to discuss serious problems. Little ears and minds hear and understand everything. Your director can set up a time where the issues can be discussed in private.

If someone is listed in your child’s file as “Unauthorized to Pick-Up” and attempts to do so, staff members will use the following guidelines (not necessarily in this order):

1.) Ask person to speak with administrator on duty.

2.) Call parent(s).

3.) Call 911.

4.) Take child as far away from person attempting to pick up as possible.

If a person **threatens Itsy Bitsy Steps staff**, we are required to release the child and call 911. **If the person attempting pick-up is a legal parent or guardian, we are required to release the child unless we have a copy of a court order stating otherwise.**

We must have a copy of the court order recognizing the parent who has legal custody of the child, as well as visitation schedules. Otherwise we have no choice except to release the child to his/her parent. In the event that there is a discrepancy, Sumter Police Department will be notified to sort out the matter. We are limited on what we can enforce.

*Absences*

**

Child care fees are based on enrollment, not on attendance. To maintain enrollment at Itsy Bitsy Steps, fees must be paid during the absence of a child due to illness, holidays, vacations, or for any other reason.

*Be Courteous*

Parents **do** call if your child will not be attending the center that day or if you are going to be arriving late. Or give advance notice if you know you are going to be out ahead of time. Notify us if child will be picked up early, or has an appointment and will be leaving, and returning again later in the day.

*Late Pick-Up Fees*



Itsy Bitsy Steps understands that there are family circumstances that may occasionally prevent a child from being picked up from the center on time at the end of the day. However, parents must make every effort to have designated persons pick up his/her child at the end of the day.

Parents must notify the center and the emergency contact(s) immediately if they are unable unavoidably detained to pick up their child on time. A local DSS representative or Sumter County police department will be contracted if no notice.

***Unauthorized*** *Early Drop-Off/Late Pick-Up*

Parents will pay a late/early fee per child in the event of any early drop-off before (6:30am) or late pick-up after (6:00pm) that is unauthorized outside of the contracted days/times. These fees must be paid during the time of early drop off/late pickup.

**Authorized** Drop-In Care//Overtime Early Drop-Off/Late Pick-Up

Parents will pay in 15 minute increments equal to $5 per child for approved overtime requests. 1-15 minutes early/late = $5 per child; 16-30 minutes early/late = $10 per child, etc. Unauthorized early/late fees apply.

*Registration Fee*

The non-refundable registration fee per child for all ages must be paid before children attend Itsy Bitsy Steps.

**The registration fee/child care tuition will also serve as a security deposit to secure a child’s space in a classroom for 30 days. At the end of the 30 days, the child will need to have started the program, or child care tuition will be due or the space will be lost. Tuition is to be paid weekly on Mondays or before care of child.**

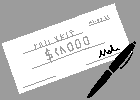
***Penalty Charges for Re-enrollment Fee***

**Re-enrollment fee of\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ will be charged when a child is dropped for more than 30 days from Itsy Bitsy Steps by the parent. If a client wishes to continue services, and if the slot is still available, the re-enrollment fee of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ must be pay upon entering Itsy Bitsy Steps.**

*Payments Procedures*

Parents must pay child care tuition prior to your child attendance. Payments may be made on a weekly basis on Monday of each week (52), bi-weekly basis due on the first day of the two week (26) period, or monthly basis due on the first day of the month (12). Child care tuition is ongoing and will not be reduced. Child care tuition is required if your child attends Itsy Bitsy Steps or does not attend, as long as the child is enrolled at Itsy Bitsy Steps.

*Methods of Payments*

* *

Payments can be made with cash, check or debit card.

Make all Checks payable to**:**

**Itsy Bitsy Steps**

Please sign name on the check. Checks need to have your name, driver’s licenses number, address, and a contact phone numbers where you could be reached. Checks must be dated for the day they are due, no post-dated checks will be accepted.

*Past Due Payments*

If payments are not paid in full on time the child care tuition in considered late, parents must pay a per day late fee if not paid **Tuesday by morning**.

If tuition and late fees is not are paid by Tuesday morning, the child will not be allowed to attend the facility until all fees are received in full tuition plus late fees of $5.00 per child per day not paid.

If any payment obligation is not paid when due, the parents are responsible for all costs of collecting including reasonable attorney’s fees, whether or not a lawsuit is started as part of the collection process.

Accounts that remain unpaid after 10 days will be referred to professional collection and reported to the three major credit reporting agencies.

Any continually late payments may results in the termination of child care services from Itsy Bitsy Steps.

Child care payments are used to provide the highest possible quality of child care and environment for children.

Itsy Bitsy Steps owners/operators have obligation that have to be met so we truly **expect** payments on time!

*Tuition/Other Fees*



Child Care fees are due on Thursday. Child care fees are strictly based on the scheduled hours contracted child care services. Itsy Bitsy Steps will not adjust your child care tuition for late arrival, early pick-up, or missed days. Childcare fees are due regardless of whether or not your child attends. You are paying for a spot, as well as service.

**Full-time** Child care is defined to be 40 hours per week.

**Drop-in** Parents acknowledge that Drop-In only care days are made on an as needed and space available basis. Parents agree to pay for drop-in care at the time of approved request. Parents agree that if they withdraw their request for care within 48-hours of the requested time, IBSLC will not refund payment.

You are allowed to use the child care without paying a registration fee up to the 4th use of the drop-in child care option. On the 5th use of the drop-in option, you will be charged the registration fee along with per hour drop-in fees. Drop-in child care is contingent on available space.

Parents acknowledge that if they do not use child care services for a period of 2 months or longer IBSLC has the right to cancel this agreement.

*Program Activities*



Itsy Bitsy Steps will provide daily activities, toys, and materials appropriate for each child’s age level to entertain the child as well as facilitate the child’s physical, intellectual, social, and emotional development.

A child should **not** bring toys from home. Toy weapons, such as guns or knives, are absolutely prohibited. Itsy Bitsy Steps is **not** responsible for lost or broken toys brought from home. Toys will be put away!

Itsy Bitsy Steps may occasionally take the children on a field trip. A child will not be allowed to participate in a field trip unless the parent signed a permission form. Parents will be given advance written notice of the dates and locations of all field trips. Additional fees may be charged to the parent for admission prices, transportation costs, and/or meal costs in connection with the field trip. If a parent chooses not to have his/her child participate in the field trip, the parent may be responsible for arranging alternate child care.

*Cleanliness/Hygiene*



We do our best to maintain strict cleanliness and hygiene standards. Children's hands are washed throughout the day to prevent the spread of germs. Hands must be washed before and after meals and after toileting. We use paper towels for drying hands, so children do not have to use the same towel. All employees are required to wash their hands frequently, upon arrival and also use antibacterial soap.   
**Infants sleep in separate cribs labeled with name and clean sheets used only by them. Beginning at toddler age, a sippy cup and 1 blanket and sheet if necessary are to be supply by the parent and labeled with the child’s name on it. Each child should have a separate nap mat; with a sheet and/or a blanket that are to be washed weekly by the parent and return on Mondays (unless soiled, then they are washed as often as necessary) and mats are wiped with disinfectant weekly by caregivers.**   
Children use separate cups, plates, bowls and eating utensils that have been thoroughly washed. High chair trays, etc. are disinfected after each use. We disinfect changing table, toilet seats and clean potty chairs between each use.

*Meals/Nutrition*



Itsy Bitsy Steps will post well balanced meals which meets USDA nutritional guidelines for the parent to review. Parents are asked to list some of their children’s favorite foods so that Itsy Bitsy Steps can incorporate some of these foods into its nutritional menus.

Your child meals will comply with USDA nutritional guidelines. There will be (3) meals served daily a breakfast, lunch, and pm snack. Sugar sweetened beverages shall not be served.

If your child will not be arriving until after any meal scheduled times, please feed them before they arrive. This helps the day run smoothly. Our meal schedule is as follows:

Breakfast: \_\_\_\_\_\_8\_\_\_\_\_\_am

Lunch: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_11:30\_\_\_am

Evening Snack: \_\_\_\_\_2:30\_\_\_\_\_\_pm

We prefer that children **do not** bring junk foods like candy, gum, cookies, any foods, or drinks, etc. from home.

**Please call to inform the center if you will not be attending. If you will be arriving late, please make sure your child has eaten.**

We never force a child to finish what is on his/her plate, but we do encourage each child to try one or two bites of everything. Sometimes they are surprised by what they like!

\*Please note that only skim or 1% milk is served to children 2 years and older.

*Infants*

**

Itsy Bitsy Steps follow the nutritional guidelines of USDA. Infants will be fed either formula or breast milk. Parents will need to provide 5 bottles labeled with child’s name on them. Infant bottles will need to be washed and sterilized daily by parents. Staff is encouraged to rinse bottles and place them back into bags. Please be advised that bottles need to be brought back ready for feeding the next day.

*Allergies/Special Diets*

**

If your child has allergies, and requires a modified diet, you must list it on the medical report. We will need to have a physician's written instructions describing any foods the child is not permitted to eat. This helps to ensure us if your child should eat at the center. If a child has so many food allergies, we require parents to provide his/her breakfast, lunch and snacks. (See packet)

*Birthday Parties*

**

Itsy Bitsy Steps will celebrate children birthday at the center. All food items must be made nutritional under the USDA standards. We will do birthday party on a month to month base. Example is January birthdays will be celebrated for all in that month by class.

*Religious Practices*

If you have any restrictions or concerns, please feel free to address them to us. We also usually have parties at Christmas, Easter, Harvest Festival, etc. If you do not wish to have your child participate in these, please let us know in writing.

*Toilet Training*



When you feel your child is ready for toilet teaching, we ask that you begin this teaching at home. We will follow through and encourage your child while in our care. The child must be showing signs of readiness. When a child is ready, the process should go pretty quickly. The child must be kept in pull-ups or 5-ply training pants at all times. Putting a child in diapers part time, and training pants part time, can be confusing and delay the training process. Please keep in mind that the activity level here can distract your child from responding to an urge to use the potty, more so than at your home. Therefore, we may continue to use diapers or pull-ups until your child can and will announce that he/she must use the bathroom (not just at home, but here, as well) and can control his/her bladder and bowels for a few minutes beyond that announcement.  
Parents need to supply training pants with plastic pants or pull-ups, plus 3 set change of clothing each day (don't forget the socks!).  
During toilet training, we ask that the child be dressed in "user friendly" clothing, as much as possible. The best items are shorts and pants with elastic waists, or dresses. Try to avoid really tight clothing, pants with snaps and zippers, and overalls. These are difficult for children to remove "in a hurry".

Keep in mind that during nap period children will/may need to wear a pull-up for the sake of a mishap!  
 *Napping/Resting*



Provisions will be made each day for each child to nap/rest period. A minimum of 3 hours per day nap/rest period will be available for each child. Please provide a small blanket to cover cots at nap/rest period. The linen should be picked up every Friday afternoon to be laundered and brought back to the Center on Monday mornings. Please label your child’s linen and all personal items with his/her name. It is helpful if parents do not drop off or pick up their child during scheduled nap/rest period. Label all items and store in a large zip lock bag.

*Photos/Videos*

**

We take pictures and videos of children on a regular basis as a way of documenting your child’s learning process. These pictures are used in your child’s portfolio and as materials for marketing and advertising Itsy Bitsy Steps. Pictures are always used and shared with respect. By signing the last page of this handbook, you will be giving Itsy Bitsy Steps permission to use your child’s images in an appropriate manner necessary. If you do not wish to have your child’s pictures and/or videos used for these purposes please note your exception. (See Packet)

*Emergency Cards*

Emergency cards are to be filled out by the parent/guardian and updated as necessary. Emergency contact information should be accurate. In case of an emergency, the parent should be notified first. If parent cannot be located, persons listed on the emergency card will be notified in the order that they appear on the card. Keep the information on this card updated at all times. Emergency cards will be placed in all classrooms in case of any emergency. (See Packet)

*Emergency Evacuation Plan*



Emergency evacuation plans for fire and tornados are posted in each classroom and every exit. The children will practice the evacuation plans monthly, so that your child is familiar with the drill and not alarmed in case of a real emergency.

In case of a real fire the children, will be taken to the farthest left side of the building near the front and parents will be contacted immediately, by a cell phone or a nearby location possible if phone lines are operable.

The nature of the emergency will determine whether or not the children will be picked up by a parent or guardian. In case of emergency, the center will evacuate to the nearest fire station.

*Medical Care Information*

**

Minor bumps and scratches are inevitable, but we make every effort to keep the children safe through supervision and childproofing. Please understand that with children minor injuries will happen from time to time.

Minor injuries receive basic first aid and Itsy Bitsy Steps will inform parent of treatment provided. The injury will be documented on the child’s daily report and parents will receive a copy if necessary. Parent will be notified when the child is picked up if injuries are minor.

In the event of an accident or injury occurring Itsy Bitsy Steps will act in accordance with CPR & First Aid Guidelines to minimize further complications.

*Medical Emergencies Plan*



If a more serious medical emergency injury or illness occurs, Itsy Bitsy will obtain the necessary emergency medical care for the child, including but not limited to transportation to the emergency room by an ambulance service or personal vehicle. Parents will be contacted as soon as possible. If necessary, your child will be taken to Tuomey Regional Hospital where you will be asked to meet a staff member that accompanies the child. A staff member will stay with the child until a family has joined the child.

If you are not going to be at your usual place of employment, or at home, please make sure that we have a number where you can be reached. A copy of the emergency card will be carried by the staff.

If the parent cannot be reached, Itsy Bitsy Steps will then contact one of the child’s 3 emergency contact person(s) as listed in the child care emergency card/contract.  
\*\*Parents are responsible for all costs involved in emergency medical treatment, including emergency transportation, if required. The owners of Itsy Bitsy Steps child care will not be held liable for any sickness/injury of either parent/guardian or child while on these premises. **Parents must provide Itsy Bitsy Steps a copy of Insurance Cards for medical emergency purpose.**

In the case of any dental emergency the parent of the child will be notified.

Medical information will be kept confidential. (See packet)

*Medications*



It is our policy ……there will be NO prescription or over-the-counter medication administered to children by Itsy Bitsy Steps*.*

*Illness*



Itsy Bitsy Steps is a "well-child care facility". At no time do we provide sick child care. The following illness policies will be strictly enforced, for the health, well-being and safety of all concerned.   
**Sick Child Policy**: Under no circumstances may a parent bring a sick child to child care, if the child shows any signs of illness (**see** [**SYMPTOMS REQUIRING REMOVAL OF CHILD FROM CHILD CARE**](http://www.ladc.us/policies.asp#symptoms)), or is unable to participate in the normal routine and regular child care program. Sick children will expose all children and staff members who they come in contact with. These people can in turn expose the other children. Sick children want care from their parents in the comfort of their own homes. If other children become ill due to exposure to your sick child, either because he/she was returned to center before full recovery or because he/she was not picked up promptly upon notice of becoming ill, other parents will be unnecessarily inconvenienced. Because this is disruptive to other children and their families, your cooperation on this issue is extremely important.  
Every effort is taken to reduce the spread of illness by encouraging hand washing and other sanitary practices (see [Cleanliness and Hygiene](http://www.ladc.us/policies.asp#hygiene)).  
**If your child is unable to participate in the normal activities of the child care (including being able to play outside), then your child MUST stay home.**  
Children will be visually screened when they arrive in the morning. In the event a child becomes ill and needs to be picked up, the parent(s) will be called and are expected to come pick the child up within one hour (60 minutes). If the parent(s) cannot be reached, or have not arrived within an hour, the emergency contact persons will be called and asked to come pick the child up. However, he/she will be separated from the other children. This helps to safeguard others in the child care. For the benefit of our staff and other children in our care, a sick child will not be permitted to return to care for 24 hours after condition has returned to normal. The child may return 24 - 48 hours (depending upon the illness) after they have received the first dose of an antibiotic. If a child receives an antibiotic for an ear infection, he/she may return to Itsy Bitsy Steps if he/she has been free of other symptoms mentioned for at least 24 hours. If you aren't sure about whether or not to bring your child to care, please call your onsite directors to discuss it. Allergy related symptoms, and non-communicable illnesses do not require exclusion if you have a note from your doctor. This is to help safeguards your child and all the other children attending the Itsy Bitsy Steps.

If child is exposed to a communicable disease at Itsy Bitsy Steps, the parent will be notified. If the child is exposed at some place other than Itsy Bitsy Steps, the parents must notify the directors at once. This is for the protection of all children and in accordance to state guidelines.

\*We encourage proper personal habits such as having clean bodies, clean hair, and fresh clothes, etc.

**Symptoms requiring removal of child from child care center:**

* Fever: Fever is defined as having a temperature of 100°F or higher taken under the arm, 101°F taken orally, or 102°F taken rectally. For children 4 months or younger, the lower rectal temperature of 101°F is considered a fever threshold; (a child needs to be fever free for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to center, that means the child is fever free without the aid of Tylenol®, or any other fever reducing substance.)
* Fever AND sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, earache, irritability, or confusion. (excessive coughing)
* Diarrhea: runny, watery, bloody stools, or 2 or more loose stools within last 4 hours.
* Vomiting: 2 or more times in a 24 hour period. Note: please do not bring your child if they have vomited in the night.
* Breathing trouble, sore throat, swollen glands, loss of voice, hacking or continuous coughing.
* Runny nose (other than clear), draining eyes or ears. (pink eye)
* Frequent scratching of body or scalp, lice, rash, or any other spots that resemble childhood diseases, including ringworm.
* Child is irritable, continuously crying, or requires more attention than we can provide without hurting the health, safety or well-being of the other children in our care.

Just a note: Many times our center may get blamed for the illness of a child, meaning that we have "allowed" sick children to come here. Parents may not stop to think that when sick children are brought to our center, our entire staff is also at risk of exposure. How would you feel if another parent brought their sick child and exposed your child? We STRESS this again -- if you are not sure whether or not it is okay to bring your child, please call ahead to ask us. We require a doctor's decision as to whether or not the child should return after certain illnesses. We appreciate you cooperation in this matter.

*Personal Belongings*



We prefer that children **do not** bring toys from home unless it is something that can be shared with the entire group (i.e. appropriate books, music, etc.). Little ones have a difficult time sharing with others, and it is even harder with their own special toys. If toys are brought, please note that they will be put away because they will cause disagreements among the children. Exceptions to this policy maybe that children maybe ask to bring a favorite age appropriate toys maybe brought for show and tell activities. We are **not** responsible for any loss or breakage of personal items. All personal items must be clearly marked with the child's name. No hand held games, cell phones, I pads, etc.

*Destruction of Center Property*

If your child breaks or damages center property you may be asked to compensate for the destruction.

*Dress Code/Clothing/Attire/Shoes*

Children should arrive dressed for play. We like to have fun! Having fun involves outdoor play and lots of messy activities, so make sure that your child is dressed appropriately. You will be expected to supply an old t-shirt or art smock to protect clothes from paint or other art materials, and bibs to keep food stains to a minimum. Please don't dress your child in nice clothing and expect them to be spotless when you arrive to pick them up. Clothing should be comfortable and seasonally appropriate for outdoor play. Make sure to include hats, mittens, boots and coats for cold weather.

Your child’s attire first and foremost should be age appropriate. Clothing should never display inappropriate picture or wording. Underpants should be covered at all times. If a child is wearing a dress, they must have shorts or bloomers underneath. Also, should spaghetti straps be worn, they must fit correctly. If they constantly slip off and expose the child’s chest, a t-shirt will be placed over it unless alternate clothing is provided at which time we will have the child change. Clothing malfunctions, so to speak, often produce unnecessary, age inappropriate conversations.In regards to footwear, children are often building with large blocks, playing outdoors, etc. Because of this, it is preferable that all children wear closed toed shoes every day. Please remember that your children are here to learn. At this age, this is often accomplished through play. It is very difficult to explain to a child that they cannot play outside or ride cars because they have to protect their new shoes. They are here to have fun. Please dress them accordingly.   
Shoes should be comfortable and provide adequate protection for the feet during outdoor play. Flip-flops, slip-on shoes, open-toed sandals, crocs, jelly shoes and any shoes with heels are prohibited as they present a safety hazard.

*Supplies Needed by Parents to Ensure Quality Care*



We want to assure your child is properly cared for while in our care at Itsy Bitsy Steps. Parents must supply the following items to be kept in the cubby: Labeled all items and place in big zip lock bags.

**INFANTS**

Disposable diapers and diaper wipes-Bring every two weeks until instructed otherwise

Bibs

5 Bottles (if taken home must be brought back sterilized)

3 sets of extra seasonal changing clothes-at all times

2 clean socks

Pacifiers (preferably on a string), if used

Ointments (permission needed)

Please label **All** personal belongings with your child’s name to avoid mix-ups with other children.

**Toddlers:** **15 months to 24 months**

Diapers or Pull-Ups and Wipes –Bring every two weeks until instructed otherwise

3 sets of seasonal changing clothes – at all times

2 clean socks

A small blanket

2 Sippy cups- cleaned at center daily (to be left at center) (If taken home must be brought back sterilized)

Pacifiers (preferably on a string), if used

**Twos: 24 months to 36 months**

Diapers/ Pull-Ups/Training Underwear (if child isn’t potty trained)

3 sets of seasonal changing of clothes – at all times

2 clean socks

A blanket

(Pacifiers are not allowed)

No sippy cups

Note: When potty training begins, please dress children in clothes that will help increase

independence of this new skill. Clothes to avoid: overalls, Onesies, jumpers, & body shirts.

**Threes & Fours**

2 sets of seasonal changing clothes, socks and underwear included – at all times

2 clean socks

Please dress children in clothes to have fun in. Children should not have to worry about getting clothes dirty while they are playing, learning, and having fun.

**Note:** If you prefer not to supply these items to be left here, you may send them daily in a diaper or book bag. The option of leaving these items here is for your convenience and is not required. However, all of the above items are required for Itsy Bitsy Steps to care for your child, so they will need to be brought daily. Again, if you choose not to supply us with the required items like diapers or wipes, Itsy Bitsy Steps will purchase them for you and you will be responsible for the cost.

**\*All students are required to have a current annual physical and updated shot record on file.**

**\*Donations help us keep supply costs down**, so if you have any of the following items on hand and are willing to donate them, it would be greatly appreciated. This is not mandatory! A list of some things provided:

* Dress up clothing, costumes, jewelry, hats, etc.
* Paper of any kind, brown, white, colored, waxed, foil, etc.
* Crayons, water color paints, or any misc. art supplies, such as fabric scraps, glitter, pipe cleaners, paper plates, etc.
* IDEAS! We welcome any ideas that you may have for fun activities or crafts!!!
* Kleenex, paper towel, hand soap, Lysol, Bleach, toilet paper etc.

*Infants and Toddlers Schedule*



Infants and toddlers will not necessarily follow the same schedule as the preschoolers. They are not capable of sitting still for circle time, may need a morning nap, etc. Infants are always fed on demand. Breast feeding infants need to have an adequate supply stocked and properly labeled. Toddlers usually eat meals and snacks on a set meal schedule.   
A report will be prepared for each infant/toddler each day. It will include things such as, time of feedings, what was eaten, amount eaten, time of diaper checks and results, times of naps, any medication given, and various comments about the child's day.

Infants and toddlers have designated safe environment indoor and outdoor at all times.

**Media viewing (TV, video, and DVD) and computer use for children 2 years and younger is prohibited.**

*Parental Involvement/Concerns*



Parents and teachers support each other’s roll in the children’s development. Parents are encouraged to communicate frequently with their child’s teacher. Please bring any concerns or question.

There will be times and ways you can get involved in your child's classroom experience. You are welcomed and encouraged to participate in any or all of these. Some examples of ways to be involved include:

* Lending objects for units of study
* Coming and talking about your job, when asked
* Helping your child at home with the concepts we are studying here
* Helping your child prepare for "Show and Tell"
* Helping to provide treats or other items for our parties
* Attend parent meetings

*Change of Address/Phone Numbers*

* *

If at any time, your address or any phone numbers change, **please inform the administration and your child’s teachers immediately.** It is extremely important for both teachers and the office to have your current information to be able to reach you at all times. Information updated forms are available to do so.

Some of the forms must be updated at all times. Please notify us immediately of any changes in your general information. Forms will be provided.

*Discipline*



We maintain a positive discipline policy, which focuses on prevention, redirection, love, consistency and firmness. We stress two main patterns of behavior: respect for other people and respect for property. The children are explained the rules of the center frequently, so they are all familiar with the guidelines. Please keep in mind that there WILL be disagreements between children. Young children have a hard time expressing their feelings. Sometimes they hit, throw toys, bite, etc. We will try to prevent problems, redirect when appropriate, discuss inappropriate behavior, encourage making amends when offense involves another person, and sometimes withdraw privileges based on the principle of "natural consequences". An example might be where a child is misusing a toy then he/she will not be allowed to play with the toy for a period of time. The use of time outs will be rare except when a brief cooling off period is needed. Sometimes when children are fighting or throwing toys, we will put the toy in a short time out, and then bring it back into circulation a little later. This seems to work better than giving the child a time out.   
Under NO CIRCUMSTANCES will there be any spanking, physical abuse, verbal abuse, name calling or isolation used. Neither food, sleep nor physical activity will ever be withheld from children as a means of punishment.  
If a discipline problem arises that does not respond to the above mentioned techniques, we will hold a conference with the parents. Together, we will try to find a solution. You may be called to remove your child if his/her behavior prevents us from being able to properly care for the other children. If the problem continues, other arrangements for the care of the child will have to be made, for the safety and well-being of all.

*Discipline & Behavior Management Policy*

Children attending Itsy Bitsy Steps will **not** be subjected to any form of corporal punishment, by the Director or any other staff of the facility. Itsy Bitsy Steps instructors and other staff will provide Verbal Guidance by:

- Speaking kindly to children.

- Providing positive verbal praise when interacting with children.

- Giving clear instructions.

- Avoid making comparisons between children.

- Giving positive directions and suggestions.

- Modeling good values.

- Promoting positive self-esteem.

*Discipline & Behavior Management Policy (continued)*

Itsy Bitsy Steps instructors and staff will provide Behavioral Guidance by:

- Supervising children for all activities (indoor, outdoor, and field trips)

- Planning developmentally appropriate classroom activities.

- Ensuring that children know the consequences for inappropriate behavior.

- Providing consistency in discipline practices.

- Ensuring that teachers and staff will be positive role models.

- Giving children choices.

- Knowing and understanding the mental and emotional needs of the children.

Using “Time Out” immediately following physical aggression, hitting with objects,

kicking, or biting. (You received a copy of the Disciplinary Policy and an explanation of time out with your application packet). (See Packet)

*Indoor/Outdoor Play/Physical Activity*



Indoor play: We provide a variety of age-appropriate toys for indoor play. Toys may be rotated or placed temporarily out of use so that the children do not become bored. Younger children have less-developed organizational skills and can get easily frustrated or upset when there are too many toys to choose from. It is also more difficult for them to help with clean up when there are toys everywhere, because it is so overwhelming to them. For this reason, during free play times, each child may select one or two things at a time to play with. They will be shown how to put those things away before selecting something else. A variety of play materials that promote physical activity indoors are provided (scarves, bean bags, balls, CDs).  
Outdoor play: We will be playing outdoors every day that weather permits. Please make sure that your child is appropriately dressed (see [Clothing/Attire](http://www.ladc.us/policies.asp#clothing) section) for outdoor play at all times. Our activities will include walks, playground, water play, hoops (ex. sprinkler in summer), and others. **We do not go outside when the temperature is below 20 degrees (including wind chill), or above 90 degrees (including heat index).** We are mandated by state law to take the children outside. Parents who feel that their child is not well enough to participate in outdoor activities must keep them out of child care until they are able to participate in all activities.

Children are encouraged to be physically active indoors and outdoors at all appropriate times.

*Center Rules*

There are certain center rules that all children will be taught and expected to follow. Follow directions given by parents or teachers. This is for the safety and well-being of everyone. In addition, we realize that we may encounter a certain amount of wear and tear where children are concerned, we do not want to have our center "demolished". There will be no running permitted in the center. Hitting, pushing, biting, grabbing, kicking, spitting, wrestling, or pinching etc. by other children/infants/adults will NOT be allowed. No standing or climbing on chairs or tables. There will be no use of obscene, derogatory or disrespectful language. Children are expected to use inside voices, and good manners.  
Children will not be allowed to walk around the center at meals time with food, cups or bottles. Children of age will always clean up after them self. Respectful treatment of other people and all property, toys, and furniture is expected. Willful destruction of property will be charged to the parent at the cost to replace the item. Please support us in the enforcement of these rules, in order to create a better environment for all.  
**No smoking and no littering** is permitted on the premises; this included parents and staff. **Smoke Free and Litter Free Environment!**

*Health/Safety Tips*

**

Hair beads, hair beads, clamps (barrettes) and jewelry (earrings, finger rings, charms, etc.) are potential choking hazards for young children; therefore, they should not be worn to the center. If worn, they will be removed and placed in children’s bag.

\*Parents, please beware of what your child has in his/her book bags or pockets before coming to the center etc.

\*Open toe shoes should not be worn to the center.

*Taking Safety Precautions*

Take all safety precautions when dropping off or picking up children. Please be in control of your child during arrival and departure. At departure, please do not let your child leave the center until you are leaving. Children are not permitted to go outside unattended. DO NOT ALLOW your child the freedom to run or roam the building, classrooms, parking lot, or hallway.

1. Please turn your car off and take the keys out of the ignition before entering the center in the morning and afternoon.

2. Please turn off or turn down loud music.

3. Please drive very slowly when approaching the building.

*Child Abuse Reporting*



Itsy Bitsy Steps is required by state law to report any incidences of suspected child abuse or neglect. Our first concern is the safety of your child, and if we suspect he/she has been subjected to abuse, we will file a report to the Sumter County Department of Social Services. This Center will abide by this law. Failure to do so could result in a fine and/or imprisonment.

*Year-End Statement*

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A year-end statement of all child care fees paid during the year will be given to you end of January in the next year for tax purposes if needed.

*Rate Increase*

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Itsy Bitsy Steps reserves the right to review child care rates and to raise them periodically to accommodate increasing business costs as we deem necessary. We will provide a two weeks written notice to parents in the event of rate increases. The rate depends on how many hours your child will spend at Itsy Bitsy Steps.

*Confidentiality*

Itsy Bitsy Steps employees are required to maintain strict confidentiality in regard to all information about staff, children and families we serve. Only authorized personnel will have access to files with director’s consent.

*Revisions to Handbook and Contract*

If there be a revision to this handbook and the accompanying contract if we see fit, all families will then need to sign new policy/contract forms. We reserve the right to make any changes or any corrections in these policies as we deem necessary. You will be notified, in writing, of any changes that may occur. Every attempt will be made to give at least two weeks’ notice of changes.

All child care services will be contracted. The contract is a legal document obligating Itsy Bitsy Steps to provide a service for you and obligating you to pay Itsy Bitsy Steps for that service. We urge you to thoroughly read the contract and realize that it is legal and you will be held liable for all requirements of the contract. By signing it, you are accepting all its terms and the terms of the Parent Policy Handbook.

NOTE: Parents and staff shall sign and date an agreement, maintained on file and updated annually, that both parties have read and understand all policies relating to the operation of our facility.

I/We Understand All Policies………..

I (we) have thoroughly read and understand **all** that is outlined in the parent policy handbook of Itsy Bitsy Steps.

I (we) also will agree to abide by these policies and procedures as stated in the handbook.

I (we) understand the financial obligations of which I (we) are responsible.

I (we) will bring concerns and suggestions to the attention of the director at hand in order to safeguard my/our children well-being.

The information in this parent policy handbook is extensive and coming from experience.

The South Carolina Department of Social Services enforced many of these regulations for you and Itsy Bitsy Steps to follow.

Itsy Bitsy Steps is expected to be treated as a business. We are here to provide quality care for our children. We can do this with your cooperation. We have goals to be met.

It is our expectation to provide wide range of curriculum to meet our children needs.

Parents are assured that the director and staff will maintain strict confidence in regards to the children and families that we serve.

Remember we are here to serve you with your child care needs, so if there is anything we can do when it pertains to the care of your children, we here to assist you. Thanks for giving us the opportunity to care for our future!

We deserve the right to make any corrections or changes to this policy. We hope that you have read and understand and will abide to these rules and regulations. They are for your protection as well as ours.

Enrollment Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Child (ren): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Mother: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Father: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Director: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

And again…… Thank You for choosing to be a Part of the Itsy Bitsy Steps Family!