

CATERPILLAR DEVELOPMENT CENTER
“A safe, nurturing haven for children to begin life’s journey”

WELCOME

Caterpillar Development Center believes children should be loved first and then educated.

Caterpillar Development Center’s mission is to provide a safe and secure, friendly and educational-environment where children can grow, learn and develop the beginning of their early education.

We provide the opportunity for children to grow and learn, to develop their physical, emotional, social and intellectual needs while exploring and learning with others in a safe, secure, clean and friendly environment.

At Caterpillar Development Center, your child will have the opportunity to explore and grow, create and discover, build relationships with his or her peers, and become confident learners. As you know, in the first three years of your child’s life, he/she will go through some incredible developmental stages. Our goal is to meet the needs of all the children with positive experiences which will encourage their growth in all areas of human development.

We encourage family involvement and ask for your support and advice in helping us best meet the needs of our child. Our team at Caterpillar Development Center strives to provide a healthy, happy and safe environment for your child.

We look forward to being a part of your child’s early childhood development and educational journey!

Savannah Fountain

Owner and Director

INTRODUCTION

When a child is learning, growing, and exploring, they need a place to develop their physical and mental needs. Caterpillar Development Center watches children progress early, anticipating every inch of growth and each new developmental milestone along the way. From infants to five years of age, Caterpillar Development Center helps develop the mental and physical growth needed for children to progress to their next milestone.

A few things to help ensure that the children grow and develop are: enough rest, proper nutrition and adequate exercise. Even though the children may choose not to sleep, eat, or exercise, Caregivers motivate and promote good health and wellness.

This handbook is intended for the exclusive use by the parents of enrolled children. This handbook may not be copied or distributed to any third party without permission Caterpillar Development Center.

RESERVATION OF RIGHT TO CHANGE POLICIES AND/OR PROCEDURES

Caterpillar Development Center reserves the unilateral right to add, delete, modify, or amend the policies and procedures provided for in the program, or Parent Handbook, upon a ten day written notice to the parent and/or legal guardian of any child enrolled at the center.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

Caterpillar Development Center subscribes to a policy of nondiscrimination and will maintain and conduct all practices relating to recruitment and enrollment of children, discipline, and other terms, conditions, and benefits of the program in a manner that does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, or disability.

CHILD ABUSE

The State of Mississippi requires that all members of the childcare community report any suspicious of child abuse or neglect. The staff and administration of Caterpillar Development Center will file a report with the Department of Human Services and the local police any time abuse or neglect is suspected. An incident report will be filled out by caregiver and given to director.

STATEMENT OF INSURANCE

Caterpillar Development Center maintains adequate liability insurance on the children. Caterpillar Development Center is compliant with all State regulations as set forth by the Mississippi Department of Child Care Licensure. We strive to provide the highest degree of safety and supervision of the children entrusted in our care.

PHILOSOPHY OF PROGRAM

Childhood is a unique and valuable stage of human development. We are committed to supporting children's social, emotional, physical, and educational development, respecting individual differences, and helping children learn to live and play cooperatively. We strive to promote children's health, self-awareness, competence, self-worth, and resiliency.

As early childhood educators, we strive to offer a developmentally appropriate and stimulating curriculum in the classroom setting that seeks to provide the warmth and security of a child's home. The environment that children manipulate, carefully chosen toys that allow for creative play, and opportunities to create and explore with paint.

We believe that play is central to the young child's world. Through play, young children learn to make sense of their physical, social and cultural environment. Children develop cooperation; an enthusiasm for learning, creative thinking and problem solving through situations that are carefully structured by experienced teachers and caregivers. We encourage the children to express feelings such as sadness, fear, anger, love and happiness. We believe the development of such skills will assist children in continuing their education and forming peer relationships with confidence.

CHECK POLICY

If child does not show up for school, Parents or Guardians should call the center before 9:00 to let us know he or she will not be attending school that day. If parent does not call before 9:00, Caregiver will make phone calls to ensure of the child’s absence.

SECURITY

Please do not share the security code with anyone. For the security and safety of children and employees we do not give access for everyone and anyone to enter the building.

SCREENING OF STAFF

In compliance with Child Care Facilities Licensure of the State of Mississippi, Caterpillar Development Center does subject employees to an FBI fingerprint and Department of Human Services Central Child Abuse Registry check.

DAYS AND HOURS OF OPERATION

The hours of operation are Monday through Friday, from 6:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m.

The Center is closed in observance of the following holidays:

- | | |
|---|---|
| Memorial Day | Independence Day (the day before and day after) |
| Easter (Friday before and Monday after) | Labor Day |
| Mardi Gras Day | Thanksgiving Day (the day before and day after) |
| Christmas Eve/Day (Dec 24th--Jan 1st) | New Year’s Day |
| Martin Luther King Day | Juneteenth |

The Center will close the business day before and after Independence Day. If Independence Day falls on a Wednesday, the Center will close the following Thursday and Friday.

These holidays give the teachers the opportunity to have teacher workdays.

The Center will close on the preceding Friday or following Monday if a holiday occurs on Saturday or Sunday. Advance notice in writing will be posted in each classroom.

Tuition rates remain the same during holiday weeks. There are no refunds or make-up days given for holidays.

The week that we are closed for Christmas is tuition free.

INCLEMENT WEATHER DISASTER PLAN

In the event of the Center has to close due to inclement weather, please be advised that the local television station and radio stations are not always able to announce closing for childcare facilities. Our plan during the school year (excluding summer) is to follow the Harrison County School System. If the Harrison County School System closed due to threatening weather conditions, Caterpillar Development Center will also be closed.

The Center will reopen as soon as the weather permits and conditions allow the staff to return to work. We will provide as much communication as possible through making phone calls and media. Please remember to provide a cell number and/or valid email address on the registration form to receive these important messages.

Woolmarket Center- In the event inclement weather requires an evacuation from the center, we will use the North Woolmarket School located on 16520 Switzer Road, or the North Woolmarket Fire Station located on 16237 Old Woolmarket Road. The Biloxi Center- We will relocate to the Margaret Sherry Library 2141 Popps Ferry Road Biloxi, MS 39532 or the Jerry Lawrence Library 10391 Auto Mall Parkway D’Iberville, MS 39540. The Civil Defense will assist in providing safe transportation to these areas. Notification will be provided by telephone to parent’s as soon as possible after evacuation and the children are in safe housing.

ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

At the time of enrollment, or reenrollment, a registration fee per child is required. There is a yearly registration fee that is required a year from the date of your child's enrollment. This fee is non-refundable. Enrollment begins when registration form is complete, registration fee and first week of tuition is paid, we receive a copy of child's form 121, and handbook is read and signed. Space is not guaranteed for currently enrolled children who do not complete the Registration Form and submit required registration fees.

Beginning July 1, all available space will be opened for general enrollment on a first come – first available basis. Space is only secure upon receipt of a completed registration form & payment of required registration fees.

The Mississippi Department of Child Care Licensure mandates that child care facilities maintain a Child's Record/File on each child enrolled. The record must include, but is not limited to:

1. Application for Enrollment (Registration Form) updated annually
2. Date of acceptance
3. Two emergency contacts
4. Form No. 121 – Certificate of Immunization Compliance (current to date)
5. Certification/Receipt by parent acknowledging receipt of a Parent Handbook
Containing all center policies & procedures and a copy of the Childcare Regulation
Summary for Parents

Probationary Period

All children are enrolled for a probationary period of one month to determine if the center and the child are a good fit. If at any time during the probationary period, the center determines that we cannot adequately meet the needs of your child, the center may give a one-day notice to terminate care. If during this time, the parents determine that the center is not a good fit for their child, they may give a one-day notice of withdrawal to the center. Payment will be prorated and money will be refunded to the family. After the probationary period, parents are required to submit a written two week notice of withdrawal.

Children with Special Needs or Delays

Caterpillar will accept children with special needs or delays if it is within our ability to do so. Children with special needs or delays should have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or an Individualized Accommodation Plan (IAP) provided to the center to be kept in the child's file. Parents are responsible for providing this documentation. Children may also receive outside therapy services at the center.

Behavior and Guidance

Caterpillar believes that it is the role of the teacher to provide children with a safe environment that allows for learning, exploration, and peer-interaction. Children should learn the importance of making good choices, self-discipline, and problem-solving skills through positive guidance from the adults they interact with.

Disciplining a Child

The center's means of discipline are redirection, verbal interaction/eye to eye contact and/or a "thinking spot". Our staff cannot restrain a child at any time. If needed, parents/guardian will be contacted to pick up their child due to uncooperating with Center's staff. Parents may be called for things like hitting, biting, scratching, throwing objects, hurting friends, hurting teachers, complete defiance, or temper tantrums. If behaviors like these continue, and there is no improvement with means of becoming a liability, child may be suspended, placed on probation, and/or possible dismissal of services. We must ensure the safety of all children and staff. We must have a successful learning environment.

FEES & WEEKLY TUITION

Registration fee and first week of tuition is paid during registration. Tuition is due every Friday for the following week. If tuition is not paid on Friday, there will be a \$5 late fee charge on Monday, additional \$5 charge on Tuesday and suspension on Wednesday. Caterpillar Development Center management reserves the right to suspend services at any time when tuition is overdue.

Caterpillar Development Center accepts automatic withdrawals only. Only under certain circumstances will there be allowed checks or cash. There will be a \$30 fee added in with tuition if there are NSF. Failure to bring tuition current during the same week of service will result in suspension of services until payment of all tuition and fees due are received.

Each child will be allowed one week vacation each school year in which fees are not charged. The year begins the first week of August and ends in the last week of July. Your child must be enrolled at the center for at least thirty days before using vacation. Accounts must be up to date and in good standing order to use vacation week. Vacation forms will be given prior to using vacation week and signed by the parent and the director.

Tuition is charged regardless of attendance. No refunds, make-up days or deductions are provided for holidays and absences. Caterpillar Development Center reserves the right to adjust all fees, including tuition. A thirty-day notice in advance written notice shall be provided to parents/guardians.

If you choose to withdrawal your child from the center, please give at least two weeks' notice. If two weeks' notice is not paid in full, your account will be sent to collections.

The Department of Human Services, Child Care Payment Program shall be notified of all certificate qualified accounts enrolled at Caterpillar Development Center who fail to pay the required monthly co-pay and/or overage fees due. Accounts are subject to suspension of an active certificate by MDHS for non-paid balances.

Tuition is paid with the option of monthly which is pulled on the 1st or weekly which is pulled every Friday for the following week. Tuition is calculated to 51 weeks of the year excluding the tuition free Christmas week. Tuition calculated rate in Brightwheel will include the tuition free week that we are out for Christmas.

Yearly registration fees are paid in the month of June for the following school year. It may be paid in full or partial payment from the first week of June to the last week of June. For each additional child, registration is \$25.

FEE SCHEDULE

Registration fee..... \$75/yr due last week of June
Additional children..... \$35/yr
Holding fee.....\$60/wk

Full Time: M-F

Infants..... \$185/wk
Toddler's and Two's.....\$175/wk
Three's and Four's.....\$175/wk
None Sufficient Funds..... \$30
Late Fee (per day)..... \$5
Late pick up fee (every min)..... \$1

Holding Fee

Caterpillar will hold a spot once the registration fee has been paid for that child until the spot becomes available.

When the spot becomes available, tuition at the full rate is due whether the child is attending or not. Spots will only be held as long as full tuition is paid.

Holding fee is only charged during the summer months of June and July. Child may not attend when paying holding fee.

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

Arrival at the Center:

- Staff is on hand to welcome families at 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- MS Childcare Regulations require a documented method of a child's arrival and departure from the center in order to comply with this requirement, parents **MUST** check their child in upon arrival to the center.
- Children should arrive no later than 9:00 a.m. We prefer children to be here by 8:45a.m. If a child needs to be checked-in after 9:00 a.m., arrangements must be made in advance with the director. No child will be accepted between 11:00am-2:00pm due to lunch and naptime. Doors will be locked after 9:00 a.m. and will not allow any others to access.
- If you have two children enrolled, please take the oldest child to his/her classroom first. Rooms may be combined in the morning and afternoon during drop-off and pick-up times.
- Ensure that the caregiver has complete control of your child before leaving the classroom.
- Do not allow your child to leave the classroom, Caterpillar staff are not allowed to restrain children at any time.
- Parent/guardian is responsible for child/children upon arrival/departure at the center's property. Please hold child's hand upon picking up and dropping off until he or she enters the building or car in parking lot.

Pick-up time:

- Children must be picked up directly from the classroom. Children must be picked up by parent/guardian.
- Parents must check their child out.
- If you have two children enrolled, we request that you pick-up the younger child first. To ensure safety, siblings cannot be brought into an infant classroom.
- Anyone other than a parent picking up a child must be listed as authorized on the registration form.
- Authorized persons will need to carry a picture ID for positive identification when picking up a child from the Center and report to the office first for positive ID before proceeding to the classroom.
- Children cannot be released to meet their parents in the parking lot. Children are considered under the supervision of Caterpillar Development Center staff only when the parent/guardian is not onsite. For the wellbeing of your child, never leave them unattended in the Center or parking lot.
- **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WILL CATERPILLAR DEVELOPMENT CENTER STAFF RELEASE A CHILD TO A PERSON NOT LISTED ON THE REGISTRATION FORM. ANY ADDITIONAL AUTHORIZED PERSONS MUST BE ADDED TO THE REGISTRATION FORM BY THE PARENT PRIOR TO BEING PICKED UP.**
- Please call the center if you are running late in the afternoon and will not arrive prior to 5:30 p.m. A late fee will be charged one dollar per minute per child. If 30 minutes occur after closing time and cannot get ahold of anyone on contact list, DHS will be contacted to pick up child.

Open Door Policy

Caterpillar has an open door policy which means parents are allowed to visit the center throughout the day. However, we strongly discourage visiting in the classroom unless you are volunteering to aid the teachers. Parents should take care to stay out of sight of their child if it will be upsetting to the child.

Parent Bulletin Board

Caterpillar provides a parent bulletin board to help keep parents informed of necessary information. On the parent board you will find copies of the current menu, newsletter, calendar, evacuation plans, exclusion criteria for illnesses, promotional materials, etc. We keep extra copies of the menu, newsletters, calendars, and promotional materials for parents to take home.

Most teachers also have a parent bulletin board inside the classroom to keep parents informed of classroom information.

Parent-Teacher Communication

Parents are expected to communicate daily with their child's teacher. Parents and teachers should work together as a team with the child's best interest at heart to ensure that both parties are knowledgeable and understanding of any and all issues affecting the child. Parents are encouraged to communicate with their teacher via Brightwheel or scheduled meetings. Parents should understand that holding a conversation in the classroom is a distraction for the teachers, and should be done during a more appropriate time. Teachers are not allowed to use their personal cell phones during working hours so parents should contact the office to speak with a teacher or leave a message. If your child has a difficult morning you may contact the office to check on your child.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parents are responsible for meeting with teachers when a parent-teacher conference is requested. During these conferences' teachers will review the child's developmental assessment, discuss any concerns or issues in the classroom, and parents may ask any questions or discuss any concerns they may have. Parent-teacher conferences may be requested throughout the year by either the teacher or parent if needed.

Move Up Policy

Each August we start our new school year. Children are moved up and grouped according to their date of birth. Move ups are not always easy. Please try to remember that we do also consider what is best for your child socially and developmentally. Move ups may also occur in January or May due to enrollment changes. Children may also be moved at various times throughout the year if it is deemed necessary to ensure full enrollment.

Reports

Daily Reports

Infant and one year old classes provide daily reports of the child's day to the parent. Daily reports include information about what the child ate and how much, diaper changes, nap time, and the child's mood of the day. Reports should be reported through Brightwheel each day.

Accident Reports

In the event that a child is injured, the teacher supervising the child will fill out an accident report. A copy of the report is provided to the parent and the Director. Accident reports are kept on file in the Director's office.

COURT ORDER RELEASES

In cases where an enrolled child is the subject of a court order (Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order) Caterpillar Development Center must be provided with a **Certified Copy** of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed.

In the absence of a court order on file with Caterpillar Development Center, both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. Caterpillar Development Center, without a court order, cannot limit the access of a parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself, where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, Caterpillar Development Center management shall reserve the right to require the parent to keep the child home until a court order is issued.

QUESTIONABLE RELEASES

Until custody has been established by a court order, a copy of which must be on file with Caterpillar Development Center, neither parent may limit the other parent from visiting the child at the center or from picking up the child.

Caterpillar Development Center staff is not trained to make assessments relating to intoxication or impairment and therefore assume no responsibility to assess the competency or condition of any individual appearing to pick up the child.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT REGULATIONS

Any fines incurred by the facility from the State Department of Health due to fault of parent/guardian, will be charged to the parent. Example-smoking in parking lot.

RELEASE VERIFICATION

Caterpillar Development Center staff reserves the right to ask anyone, parents/guardians included, who may be picking up a child for picture identification. Refusal to show proper identification will result in Caterpillar Development Center refusing to release the child and possible dismissal from the center.

NO SOLICITING OF EMPLOYEES

Caterpillar Development Center does not refer or recommend any Caterpillar Development Center employee for private duty. If a parent contracts an employee for private duty, Caterpillar Development Center assumes no responsibility for any injury or harm to the child who is being cared for by an employee on off-duty hours and/or premises.

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PARENTS AND TEACHERS

Parents and teachers at Caterpillar Development Center should communicate in person or through the Brightwheel app. There should be no communication concerning child/children through any form of social media or personal phones. Parents are welcome to call the center anytime.

TRANSPORTING CHILDREN

Caterpillar Development Center employees will not, under any circumstances, be allowed to transport a child before or after care on any given day from the center.

COMBINING CLASSES

Children arriving between 6:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. and leaving after 4:00 p.m. may not be with their teacher all day. The center is staffed for twelve (11) hours per day. Staff shifts change throughout the day and classes are likely to combine in the morning and late afternoon during drop-off and pick-up times.

WITHDRAWAL NOTICE

Caterpillar Development Center requires a two week written notice of your intention to withdraw your child from enrollment at the center. Failure to provide the required two week written notice will result in a charge equal to one week of tuition.

EMERGENCY DISCHARGE SITUATIONS

Caterpillar Development Center reserves the right to terminate services with no notice if any of the following circumstances have occurred:

- Tuition is past due
- Habitual NSF
- Habitual late pick-up
- If your child's continued participation in the program creates a direct threat to other children, teachers, administrators, or the child's safety (examples: excessive/uncorrected biting and/or aggressive behavior)
- If your child's behavior causes ongoing disruptions in classroom or on playground (examples: screaming tantrums, climbing tables, climbing fences/gates, opening classroom doors). Dismissal under these circumstances would be a final option.
- If the services you require of the program and staff violate licensing or accreditation criteria set forth by the Mississippi Department of Child Care Licensure.

TEMPORARY WITHDRAWAL

On occasion, due to family, work or medical circumstances, a parent/guardian may be forced to withdraw their child on a temporary basis. Proper termination notice and procedure must be adhered to. Once a child is withdrawn, Caterpillar Development Center cannot guarantee reserved space for reenrollment at a later date.

ILLNESS POLICY

For the protection of your child's health and the health of others, please do not bring your child to the center if they show signs of illness. If your child becomes ill at Caterpillar Development Center, you will be notified to pick them up promptly. Children must be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to Caterpillar Development Center. Children who are returned to Caterpillar Development Center in less than 24 hours must supply a written note a physician stating that the child is not contagious and the child can participate in classroom activities.

EXCLUSION GUIDELINES FOR ILL CHILDREN

- Fever of 100 (under the arm w/ added degree)
- Diarrhea (more than three abnormally loose stool)
- Severe coughing (the child red or blue in the face or makes a high pitched, "croupy" or "whooping" sounds after coughing)
- Tearing, irritating, and redness of the eyelid lining, followed by swelling and discharge of pus (conjunctivitis) also called pinkeye
- Unusual spots or rashes
- Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing
- Infected areas of skin with crusty, bright yellow, dry or gummy areas
- Vomiting
- Unusual behavior (crankiness, listlessness, crying more than usual, obvious general discomfort)
- Loss of appetite
- Severe itching of body or scalp
- Children with specific infections such as but not limited to: Whooping Cough, Strep Throat, head lice and scabies, Hand, Foot and Mouth disease, Chicken Pox, impetigo, mumps, measles, Rubella, Hepatitis A

During certain outbreaks, it may be necessary for Caterpillar Development Center to put into effect additional or more stringent policies and procedures for the wellbeing of all children and families

MEDICATION

Medication will be given under the following circumstances:

- A. Your child must feel well enough to be at school and be able to participate in all group activities. They should be completely free of fever and symptoms listed under illness exclusions listed above.
- B. You must sign your child's full name, your full name and the date on the medication form authorizing medication be administered. Medication forms are located in the office.
- C. Medication should not be left in your child's bag or cubby. Medication must be turned into the office with

the completed medication form

- D. Each dose must be in a separate, sealed container with the child's first and last name.
- E. Medication is given at lunch time
- F. Medication that needs to be refrigerated must be sealed and stored in the kitchen where children do not have access.
- G. Medication requiring a medicine spoon or dropper must be supplied by the parent
- H. Caterpillar will not administer bug spray and sunscreen. These products must be applied prior to your child arriving at the center.

INJURIES

Staff members are trained and certified in CPR and First-aid.

- When a child is injured, regardless of the nature of the injury, an accident report is filled out at the time of the incident. First-aid is administered following specific guidelines.
- If an injury requires further evaluation and/or treatment (non-emergency), a parent will be notified immediately.
- In the event of a medical emergency, a staff member will make every effort to first notify parents/guardians before transporting a child in an ambulance.

BITING POLICY

Caterpillar Development Center recognizes that biting is a developmentally appropriate behavior for children in the infant through 3-year-old classrooms. Parents with children in these classrooms should expect that their children may be bit or will bite another child. The staff understands that parents are concerned and can be upset when their child is involved in a biting incident. We ask that you remember this is a developmentally appropriate behavior, and that the staff is working to identify situations, which, provoke, or elicit this behavior so it can be prevented in the future.

“Bite” is a work that brings to mind all forms of fears and worries. Please be aware that children especially toddlers (1 – 2 ½) are not very verbal and do not or cannot verbalize feelings. Too often toddlers show their feelings physically. This is age appropriate, however it is not acceptable. The Caterpillar Development Center staff will not punish, or harshly discipline children for biting behavior; they will simply redirect the children to different activities in separate areas of the classroom. Parents are expected to work with staff to identify methods and strategies to curb this behavior. If a child bites in the face, the child will be sent home. If child bites three times in one day, child will be sent home. A child that is sent home for biting may return the following day. The staff may not discuss with either parent the identity of the other child involved in the incident. This information is considered to be confidential and cannot be disclosed.

In the event all acceptable measures, prevention and or positive redirection are unsuccessful in correcting the biting. The parents of the child responsible for the biting may be asked to remove the child from the center for 1-3 weeks. Parents are expected to work with their child to improve the behavior.

Any child who continues to bite frequently with no improvement in the behavior will be excluded from services at Caterpillar Development Center.

There are no real solutions or immediate fixes to stop a biter from biting again. Most biting incidents are usually provoked. We understand that parents do not like to see bite marks on their children. Please keep in mind that to the child the bite is no greater or less than being hit by another child or having their hair pulled. Children quickly overcome the incident and continue playing together the same day.

No parent wants his or her child to bite another child or to be bitten, hit or be a hitter. Pushing and shoving as well as scratching and pulling hair are all normal behaviors with the toddler age group. Biting is a natural/normal occurrence in a child care center, just like toilet training, temper tantrums, accidents and separation trauma. Understanding it will help tremendously, but will not prevent it from happening.

A NOTE ABOUT HIV AND BITING:

At this time the Center for Disease Control states there have been no reported cases of a child becoming infected with HIV from a biting incident in a child care center.

TODDLER CHARACTERISTICS THAT LEAD TO BITING

TODDLERS ARE ORAL BEINGS:

Toddlers are in the sensorimotor stage of development, which means everything is explored with the senses. They put just about everything in their mouths for examination. We will provide sensory/motor experiences such as painting, play dough, sand/rice table, and water play, as well as time to crawl and tumble over a variety of hard, soft, and smooth surfaces. We will also provide a colorful array of chewable toys.

TODDLERS HAVE NOT DEVELOPED SOCIAL SKILLS:

Toddlers do not have an understanding of what it means to hurt someone. They also do not have the vocabulary or language skills to express their strong feelings. As a result, these feelings are often expressed in negative ways. We will try to give toddlers the words to express their frustrations.

TODDLERS TEND TO BE TERRITORIAL:

Toddlers most often engage in solitary (alone) or parallel (sitting next to, but not interacting with another child) play. They are not mature enough to engage in sustained, meaningful play with other children. Toddlers tend to be territorial and do not like other children moving into their personal space. They will often bite to keep another child out of their space. We will play beside each other. The teacher will notice and comment on positive peer interaction such as hugging each other or sharing a toy.

TODDLERS ARE IMPULSIVE AND LACK SELF CONTROL:

Toddlers have not learned to think about the consequences of their actions...they just do it. Toddlers are working to establish autonomy and self-control. Biting gives them a sense of self-control. We will help toddlers achieve a balance between their need for control and their need for loving firm limits, by giving them time to explore and make choices.

TODDLERS ARE TEETHING:

Toddlers are often teething and biting on anything that gives needed pain relief. We will provide an array of teething toys. We may have to attach the teething toy to the child's clothes in a safe manner (pacifier clip). We will encourage the child to bite their tethers whenever they have the need to bite.

STEPS TAKEN WHEN A CHILD BITES

1. When a bite occurs the teacher will immediately console the child that has been bitten.
2. The bite site will be cleaned, and an ice pack will be held on the bite area while the teacher holds and sympathizes with the bitten child.
3. The teacher will turn to the biter and give verbal feedback, for example: "No biting people, biting hurts." The teacher will allow the biter to stroke the bitten child and encourage the bitten child to tell the biter "You hurt me."
4. The biter will be placed in a highchair when the caregiver is diapering and cannot intervene immediately. This method of separation is not used to punish the child, but as a preventive measure. He or she will be given toys or books to entertain them until the caregiver is able to be in a mobile position again.
5. The biter and the child who has been bitten will both receive an accident report.
6. If a child bites three or more times in one consecutive day, the child will be sent home. The child may return to school the following day. If child bites in face, child is sent home for the day.
7. If child continuously bites through out the week, child may be suspended up to five days.
8. After three day suspension, If child continues to bite and no improvement, we will suspend five days.
9. After five days of suspension and no improvement, we have no choice but to dismiss services.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

It is the philosophy of Caterpillar Development Center that your child's experience should provide for the development of a strong, healthy self-concept and self-image. We believe in positive reinforcement and redirection.

The words discipline and punishment are often used interchangeably to mean the same thing. Discipline means teaching children acceptable behavior. Good discipline techniques give children the opportunities to gain self-control, the ultimate goal of discipline. Punishment refers to inflicting a negative consequence that control behavior through fear and intimidation. Not only does punishment cause poor self-esteem, but it does not teach children acceptable behaviors or self-control. It is important to separate discipline from punishment when caring for young children.

Our teachers must lovingly guide and redirect the children to help them learn to cooperate with their peers and to have positive, educational experiences to encourage and enhance their growth and development while in our care. This can best be accomplished by:

- Providing a variety of planned activities for the children
- Have a curriculum and/or daily schedule
- Use a positive approach with the children
- Give praise for appropriate behavior instead of focusing on the inappropriate or negative behavior
- Give a knowing look or touch on the child's shoulder will let the child know that you are aware
- Redirection- If a child is not cooperating, the child is redirected to another area. If group behavior is a problem then the activity is canceled and the children are redirected to another activity
- Thinking Chair – Children under the age of three (3) will not be put in time-out. If a child is still not behaving appropriately the child will be asked to sit in a timeout or a thinking chair. At this time the child will be asked to think about what they have done. The teacher will ask the child what he/she could have done different or what a better way to (play) is interact with other children. A child's time on the thinking chair will be no more than 3 – 5 minutes depending on the child's age. (one minute of each year of age)
- If a child has consistent difficulties though out the day or becomes distracting to the entire group, the child will be sent to the office. The director will speak with the child about their behavior. A note will be sent home and a copy of the note will be placed in the child's record.
- The director may call a conference with the parents if a child receives three (3) behavior notes. The director will discuss the inappropriate behavior with the parent and the plan that will be taken to help correct the behavior. Parents will be kept informed of the child's progress of the plan.

A child that continues with unacceptable behavior including but not limited to; create disruptions in the classroom, causes harm to their selves or other children, including abuse and destruction of toys or equipment will be suspended and excluded from services at Caterpillar Development Center.

PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Caterpillar Development Center requires the parents of enrolled children to behave in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy, and respect at all times. One of our goals is to provide the most appropriate environment in which a child can grow, learn and develop. Achieving this ideal environment is not only the responsibility of the employees of Caterpillar Development Center but, is the responsibility of each and every parent or adult who enter the Center. Parents are required to behave in a manner that fosters this ideal environment. Parents who violate the Parent Code of Conduct will not be permitted on the property thereafter.

SWEARING AND CURSING

No parent or adult is permitted to curse or use other inappropriate language on Caterpillar Development Center property at any time. Such language is considered offensive by many people and will not be tolerated. At no time shall inappropriate language be directed toward members of the staff.

THREATENING OF EMPLOYEES, CHILDREN, OTHER PARENTS OR ADULTS ASSOCIATED WITH CATERPILLAR DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Threats of any kind will not be tolerated. While apologies for such behavior are appreciated, Caterpillar Development Center will not assume the risk of a second chance. Parents must be responsible for and in control of their behavior at all times.

ADDRESSING OF OTHER CHILDREN AT CATERPILLAR DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Parents are prohibited from addressing, for the purpose of correction or discipline, a child that is not their own. Of course, no parent or other adult may physically punish another parent's child. If a parent should witness another parent's child behaving in an inappropriate manner, or is concerned about behavior reported to them by their own child, it is most appropriate for the parent to direct their concern to the classroom teacher and/or the Director.

Each concern reported shall be discussed with the child's parent(s). At no time shall the outcomes or details of the confidential director – parent(s) conference be discussed with another child's parent.

Caterpillar Development Center staff is strictly prohibited from discussing anything confidentially related to another child other than the child's parent(s).

CONFRONTATIONAL INTERACTIONS WITH EMPLOYEES OR OTHER PARENTS OF CATERPILLAR DEVELOPMENT CENTER

While it is understood that parents will not always agree with the employees of Caterpillar Development Center or the parents of the other children, it is expected that all disagreements be handled in a calm and respectful manner. Confrontational interactions are not an appropriate means by which to communicate a point and are strictly prohibited.

SMOKING

For the health of all Caterpillar Development Center employees, children and associates, smoking is prohibited anywhere on agency property. Parents are prohibited from smoking in the building, on the grounds, and in the parking lot of Caterpillar Development Center.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEOS

Photographs and/or video taken by Caterpillar Development Center may be used for the following examples, but not limited to: Caterpillar Development Center Newsletter, public advertising, Caterpillar Development Center Facebook page, Caterpillardevelopmentcenter.com, display in the center, etc.

If you **DO NOT** want your child included in any photos and/or video taken by Caterpillar Development Center, you must indicate so on the Registration Form.

Consent and authorization gives Caterpillar Development Center permission to use such materials without compensation.

Meal/Snack Schedule

Children are served all meals and snacks in their classroom at the following times:
Infants, Ones, and Two-year-old classes:

Breakfast 8:00
Lunch 1100
PM Snack 1 2:30
PM Snack 2 5:30

Pre-K classes:

Breakfast 8:30

Lunch 11:30

PM Snack 1 2:30

PM Snack 2 5:00

Please have your child at school before meal time if you wish for them to eat at school.

MSDH & CACFP Nutritional Guidelines

The following are MSDH and/or CACFP guidelines and regulations that all parents should be aware of and will be followed by Early Encounter's staff:

- Parents of infants must bring all bottles and cereal prepared each morning. MSDH requires that bottles and cereal are premixed by the parent. Parents should not bring formula powder or dry cereal to be left at the center.
- All infant bottles must be labeled and dated.
- Infant cereal must be premixed by the parent, and must be spoon fed to the infant. Cereal may only be added to an infant's bottle with a physician's written permission provided.
- Children over the age of two will receive fat free milk.
- Children requiring a special or restricted diet must have their child's physician or clergy complete a form which states why the child cannot have certain foods, and acceptable alternatives the child may have. We must have this completed form on file to offer any alternatives to your child.
- Parents must notify teachers and the Director of any food allergies the child may have, and must be provided on the child's enrollment form. The parents must have the child's physician fill out a form (provided in the Director's office) stating their food allergies and any acceptable alternatives that may be provided. We must have this completed form on file to offer any alternatives to your child.
- If a child is unable to eat a specific food served, the parent may be required to provide a similar substitute (i.e. replace fruit with another fruit). Most often Caterpillar can provide an acceptable substitute.

Menu

Caterpillar menu follows the recommended dietary guidelines of the Child and Adult Care Food Program and MS Department of Health and is approved by both the CACFP and the MSDH CCL. Copies of the menu are provided at the beginning of each month by Caterpillar Bulletin Board. Menus are posted on the Caterpillar parent bulletin board, the kitchen, and in each classroom. Menu substitutes will be posted if made. Parents with children transitioning to table food are encouraged to use the monthly menu to let the teacher know which foods their child may be served.

Outside Food

Children will NOT be allowed to eat/drink outside food in the classroom unless they have a medical or religious exception. This includes breakfast, snacks, candy, etc. Please throw away any food or drink before entering the building.

PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR CHILD CARE

It is normal for your child to have some fears and misgivings about being away from you. Children like adults, need time to adjust to a new situation. Try to prepare our child for the changes as far in advance as possible. Talk to your child about some of the new people he/she will meet and the new things he/she will do at school. If you are enthusiastic with the communication about his/her new school this will help your child adjust quicker.

SUPPLIES

- Parents of children in our Infant/Toddler & Two Rooms must provide an adequate supply of diapers, baby wipes and food (if applicable).
- Extra clothing to keep your child comfortable at all times
- Every child (excluding infant room) will need a pillow and small blanket
- Each child will be provided a cubby for their personal belongings. Cubbies will be marked and identified with the child's name

All supplies related to the classroom learning environment, arts & crafts, indoor play and outdoor activity play are supplied by Caterpillar Development Center.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Outdoor play is an integral part of our curriculum and MSDH requires at least 2 hours of outdoor play time during operation hours. All children, including infants go outside on a daily basis, weather permitting. Please ensure that your child has a jacket and/or layered clothing for cooler weather.

Proper footwear- Please do not send your child in flip flops, heels or platforms. These types of footwear can cause your child to slip and slide and during spring/summer months there can be ants and bees on the playground. We prefer socks and shoes to avoid accidents.

If a child is not dressed appropriately for outdoor play, a staff member will notify the parent to return to Caterpillar Development Center with the appropriate articles of clothing.

SUMMER SUN SAFETY

Your child will need sun screen applied before arriving each day before taking them outside.

FENCE/GATE CLIMBING

If your child continuously tries climbing the fence or gate, parent/guardian will be notified to pick child up.

TOYS FROM HOME

Children should not bring toys from home. Toys brought to the center may get broken or lost. Caterpillar Development Center will not be responsible for toys that are not the property of the center.

OUR PROGRAM

INFANTS AND TODDLERS

The infant and toddler program (ages 6wks – 24months) is geared to the development of a small child. Individual beds are provided for infants (age 6 wks. –1 yr.). Also provided are high chairs and age appropriate toys. Swings, bouncers and other floor activity devises are provided in the infant room.

This age group thrives on “hands on” care and interaction. Expect that your child will experience lots of holding, hugging, talking from their caregiver. We feel these are most important for the nurturing and security of your baby. Our caregivers will work with your child on vocabulary building, muscle tone and development, mental awareness, feeding habits and toilet training when the child shows an interest. Emphasis is to provide your child a safe, healthy and caring atmosphere.

Two year olds- Caterpillars

This unique age will begin to develop social skills and play habits. They gradually advance to a basic sequential learning program with lots of fun and games, which will encourage mental growth and social involvement. Their program will include toys, activity centers, working with hands-on materials to develop both large and small motor skills, reading and picture books, use of music to extend movement and memory skills and circle time activities.

CATERPILLARS & BUTTERFLIES (3 & 4 year olds)

Our preschool program is based on the philosophy that children learn best by doing. Our hands-on approach includes a balance of child-initiated and teacher-directed activities each day. It is our goal to address the needs of the child in a way that makes learning fun and meaningful. The 3 and 4 -year old program is designed to help your preschooler explore the world around them. Letters, colors, shapes, and numbers are just a few of the important skills your child will learn as they work through the Learning Without Tears Curriculum.

MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CHILD CARE REGULATIONS SUMMARY FOR PARENTS

Dear Parents,

The *Regulations Governing Licensure of Child Care Facilities* require that child care providers supply you with a summary of the Child Care Regulations that govern the licensure of child care facilities. You will find that information below.

The Child Care Regulations are the rules and regulations that each child care facility in Mississippi must follow in order to maintain their Child Care License. You, as a parent, are entitled access to these regulations. Among the Subjects covered in the Child Care Regulations are:

Licensing Requirements

Right of Entry and Violations Facility Policies and Procedures Personnel Requirements Records

Reports

Staff Requirements

Program of Activities Equipment, Toys and Materials Buildings and Grounds

Health, Hygiene and Safety Nutrition and Meals Discipline and Guidance Transportation

Diapering and Toileting

Rest Periods

Feeding of Infants and Toddlers Swimming and Water Activities Children with Special Needs Night Care

School-Age Care

Summer Day Camp & School

Age Programs

Hourly Child Care

Hearings, Emergency

Suspensions, Legal Action and Penalties

Release of Information

APPENDICES

Appendix A - Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting
Statutes.

Appendix B - Reportable Diseases

Appendix C - Nutritional Standards

Appendix D - Playground Safety Standards

Appendix E - Dishwashing Procedure

Appendix F – Hand washing Procedure

Appendix G - Diaper Changing Procedure

Appendix H - Cleaning and Disinfection Procedure

Appendix I- Communicable Disease/Conditions and
Return to Child Care Guidelines

A full copy of the Child Care Regulations should be located in the Director's office of your child care facility. It should be available for your examination upon request. You may also access the Regulations at www.msdh.state.ms.us (from the left menu, select License info then Child Care). You may direct your Child Care Licensure office in Jackson at (601) 364-2827.

Should you have a **complaint** concerning a child care facility, contact our Child Care Licensure Inspector, Anna Walters at 228-762-111

PARENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

I _____ (*printed name*) do hereby certify that I have been provided a copy of the Caterpillar Development Center Parent Handbook defining the policies and procedures set forth by Caterpillar Development Center.

I also understand that a copy of the Mississippi State Department of Health Child Care Regulations Summary for Parents is included in this handbook.

This the _____ day of _____, 20____.

PARENT SIGNATURE