



Children's House of Miss Tammie
5480 S. Kenwood Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60615
Phone: (773) 329-8152
<http://www.chomt.org>

Parent Handbook Of Facility Operational Policies & Procedures

MISSION STATEMENT

The Children's House of Miss. Tammie, guided by the educational philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori, inspires the development of the individual child. We prepare students to be life-long learners. All children will be given the freedom – in a structured environment- to be responsible, supportive, culturally diverse, explorers, creative problem solvers, and risk takers. Montessori traditions are rooted in the joy of diversity. We inspire children to build their inner lives, lift up their voices, strive for a wonderful peace, and respect for everything natural and living. Our primary goal is to provide a loving, safe, stimulating environment for your child. It is important that we work together as partners and that we feel comfortable discussing your child's needs. We look forward to a long and rewarding friendship with your child and family. The real preparation of education is the study of ones self.

Policies and Procedures

The Children's House of Miss Tammie is an AMS Accredited year round preschool and after school program. We care for children ages 2.5-9 years of age. We offer a full day preschool program to children ages 2.5-9. Our after school program includes transportation from local schools. During the summer months, we offer Summer Program to children ages 3-9 that are enrolled in community schools.

Hours of Operation

Monday – Friday 8:00 a.m. – 5:45 p.m.

Illinois DCFS Standard for Child Care Centers

You are entitled to review a copy of the rules and regulations for childcare centers set forth by the Illinois Department of Child and Family Services, referred to as *Standard Rules for Child Care Centers*. We have a copy for your review.

Any questions or concerns should be directed to the Assistant Director. You may stop by during normal business hours, or you may email the assistant director, Duwana Branch at dbranch@chomt.org or call (773) 329-8152.

Reports of suspected child abuse may be directed to the Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-25~ABUSE.

Our Staff

Governing Body & Administration

Directress: Tammie Crutcher

Assistant Director: Duwana Branch

Teaching Staff & Staff Training

We believe that our teachers are the foundation to our success. Our teachers are carefully selected and come to us with high recommendations. Each Lead Teacher must have a minimum of five years childcare facility experience. Each teacher must maintain 15 clock hours of training per year. Our staff is carefully trained and yearly evaluations are conducted. Training is scheduled according to areas of needed improvement.

Curriculum/Enrichment Program

Curriculum

Our curriculum utilizes the traditional Montessori Method of teaching. Lesson plans and classroom schedules will be provided each month in our Newsletter. Monthly reports are provided for children 2.5 - 9 years of age upon parental request.

Parent Involvement/Parent-Center Communication

Parent Involvement

We strongly encourage parent involvement in all school and classroom activities. Your involvement is much appreciated and pertinent to the success of day-to-day operations and extra curricular activities.

Parental Communication

Effective communication between center and parent is our number one goal. Please make sure we have a current, actively used contact numbers on file. In addition, for preschool children, classroom news, conduct reports, and other classroom information are placed in “homework” folders. Homework folders are sent home every other Friday and Please inform the Director if you are not receiving your child’s “homework” folder.

Questions, Concerns, Comments

We encourage every parent/guardian to share his or her questions, concerns or comments with us. No matter how small you may think it is, please let us know. We want you to be confident in the care we give your child. Perhaps you do not have a question or concern to address—only compliments—we would love to hear those, as well. Concerns and suggestions help improve our program. Compliments help us steer in the right direction. We cannot make our center an outstanding facility without your input.

Safety Policies

Arriving at the Center

We ask that you accompany your child into our facility every morning. This provides a smooth transition and encourages communication between the parent and the teacher. We begin at 8:00 a.m. Should you arrive after 8:00 a.m., it is requested that you quietly escort your child to his/her seat. ***Our responsibility begins when you place your child in the care of a staff member and ends when you take your child from the care of a staff member.*** Please **do not** drop your child off in front of the building to walk in by themselves. Please **do not** leave your child in the lobby to walk themselves to class. It is imperative that you personally place your child in the care of a staff member. This leaves no ‘room for error’ or misunderstanding regarding supervision.

Transportation from Local Public Schools & Field Trips

We provide after school transportation from local public schools. As of now, transportation for field trips is through public transportation. Emergency medical transport authorizations, medical treatment authorizations and emergency contact information are carried for each child on each trip. Each outing we carry a first aid kit should an emergency arise. All staff members are certified in CPR and First Aid procedures.

Our center also enforces strict transportation behavior guidelines. For safety of all children being transported and the driver, each child must remain buckled, seated, face forward and speak in a “normal” speaking voice or signing only during transportation. Transportation Discipline Reports are used for any child who misbehaves on and in any vehicle. Continuous misbehavior on the van will result in transportation suspension.

Sign In/Out Procedures

Parents are required to sign their child (ren) in and out daily. If someone other than the child’s custodial parent/guardian will be picking up the child from the center, please notify the center Director in advance. We will ask for proper identification (must be a photo I.D.) before releasing your child to someone other than his/her custodial parent/guardian. It is not necessary to go over sign in/out procedures with your guest. We will gladly assist them with this process.

Health Policies

Food and Nutrition

We provide breakfast, lunch and one snack per day. Breakfast is served from 8:20 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Lunch is served from 12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. Please make sure your child is on time if starting at 8:00 a.m. We will not stop our work schedule to accommodate your child. If you know you are going to be late, please have your child feed and ready to start their work upon arrival. All meals are served in the classroom and meet the nutritional guidelines of the USDA Child Nutrition Program. The daily menu is written on the chalkboard in the classroom. We regret that we are unable to make meal or snack substitutions. If you choose to bring your child’s meal, we strongly encourage you to send a nutritious lunch and or snack. Please notify the Assistant Director in writing of any food allergies, as they must be documented on file. Special dietary restrictions such as lactose intolerance must be accompanied by a physician’s note. This includes the need for soy-based milk. If applicable, please see the office for more details.

Immunization & Other Medical Records

For the safety of all children enrolled, each child enrolled or admitted into our center must meet applicable immunization requirements specified by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. All immunizations required for the child’s age must be completed by the date of admission. A current copy of your child’s immunization record must be on file at all times for the duration of your child’s enrollment with our center. A Child’s Health Statement signed by a physician must be provided upon enrollment for all children not currently enrolled in a public school.

Vision & Hearing Screening

Vision and Hearing screening for all children enrolled in childcare programs who are four years of age by September 1 or each school year (does not apply to school age children currently enrolled in a public school). Documentation of such screening by a licensed health care professional or a certified screener must be provided at time of enrollment.

Medication

Please read the following medication policies carefully. We must follow, according to State Licensing, all policies and regulations as outlined.

1. For child safety, all medication must remain in front office with management personnel. No medication is allowed in the classrooms.
2. **Medications are administered at 11:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. daily.**
3. All medications (prescription and over the counter) must be signed in daily on our Medication Authorization Form and submitted to front office. Medications must be in their original container and clearly labeled with your child's name, especially prescription medication.
4. Medications must not be expired. Any expired medication will not be administered. Any unclaimed expired medication will be disposed of.
5. Prescription medication will be administered as directed with written authorization and instructions that correspond with the physician's directions on the label. We cannot administer prescription medication to anybody other than the child for which it was prescribed. This includes sharing a prescription medication with a sibling(s).
6. Over-the-counter medications will be administered as directed with written authorization and instructions that correspond to the manufacturer's directions on the label.
7. Over-the-counter fever reducers and pain relieving medications shall not be administered for the purposes of 'disguising' a fever and/or an attempt to keep a child comfortable while in care. If a child requires medication to remain comfortable, they are considered too ill to attend and shall not be admitted into care for the day(s).
8. Over-the-counter medication and prescription medication shall be administered only for the period of time for which the medication indicates.
9. We will not deviate from either the physician or manufacturer's directions. We will not administer medication for which parent/guardian has altered the directions and/or dosage, unless directions are accompanied by a supporting physician's note indicating such alteration.
10. Medication shall be taken home daily. We do not have storage to keep children's medications beyond the day for which they are to be administered. The same applies to storing children's medications for "as needed" purposes.

The only exception to this policy (#10) is for children with medical conditions requiring special medication at a moments notice as a preventative, such as the use of an EpiPen or other medications, which would prevent a potential life threatening or otherwise serious condition.

Illness

We will not admit an ill child for care if one or more of the following exists.

1. The illness prevents the child from participating comfortable in childcare center activities including outdoor play.
2. The illness results in a greater need for care than the caregivers can provide without compromising the health, safety, supervision (and general consideration) for the other children in care.
3. The child has one of the following, unless medical evaluation by a health-care professional indicates that you can include the child in the school's activities:
 - a. Oral temperature of 100.4 degrees or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness;
 - b. Rectal temperature of 101.4 degrees or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness;

- c. Armpit temperature of 99.4 degrees or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness;
 - d. Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness such as lethargy, abnormal breathing, uncontrolled diarrhea, two or more vomiting episodes in a 24 hours, rash with fever, mouth sores with drooling, behavior changes, or other signs that the child may be severely ill; or
4. A healthcare professional has diagnosed the child with a communicable disease, and the child does not have medical documentation to indicate that the child is no longer contagious.

If your child becomes ill while at school, we will call contact you. Your child will be kept apart from other children until you arrive. The parent/guardian or other designated individual must pick up a sick child that needs to go home within one (1) hour of parent/guardian notification.

If your child is sent home with a fever, (s) he must be free from fever for 24 hours or possess a physician's release statement before returning to school. So we can track and better control the spread of infections, please notify the center if your child becomes infected with a contagious disease or infection of any type.

Biting

Biting occurs as a result of a child's inability to communicate. When a child is bit or has bitten the following procedures will take place:

The bit child will be comforted.

The bitten area will be cleaned thoroughly with the help from the biting child.

An accident report will be filed.

The parent of the bitten child will be notified.

The biting child's parent will be notified.

The classroom environment will be assessed.

The biting child will be closely supervised.

The identity of the biting child will be kept confidential.

Please keep in mind that both families are affected in biting situations. Almost always, the parent of the child who bites is just as distraught as the parent of the child who is bitten. We want to consider the feelings of both children (and families) involved. Cooperation and understanding from both families is imperative. We assure you we will do everything we can to eliminate future occurrences.

We enforce the three limit rule for biting instances according to the Illinois State Board of Education policies.

Medical Emergencies

Should an emergency arise, we will attempt to contact the custodial parent/guardian in the order written on your child's enrollment form. If we are unable to contact the custodial parent/guardian, we will contact the person(s) named on the emergency contact portion of your child's enrollment form. If we are unable to contact anyone listed on your child's enrollment form, we will then contact your child's pediatrician. If all attempts fail we will act on behalf of the parent.

General Policies

Positive Guidance

Our staff focuses on the positive behaviors of the children. We also guide our staff to provide a fair and consistent environment. We feel that when consistent, age appropriate limits are in place, kids will become responsible for themselves. Children will be praised, rewarded and hugged daily. Children will be treated fairly and equally.

Discipline

“Discipline shall always be:

1. Individualized and consistent for each child;
2. Appropriate to the child’s level of understanding; and
3. Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.”

When inappropriate behavior does occur, we believe parent/guardian involvement is necessary for positive results. It is our position that discipline matters are family matters and should be handled accordingly. Only positive methods of discipline and guidance shall be used. Children are offered an acceptable, safe alternative to negative behavior. When positive redirection attempts fail, a brief, supervised separation period is use to redirect the child’s attention.

Disrespect demonstrated towards teachers, other children or materials will not be tolerated. In such cases, parent/guardian will be formally notified. Parents may be called to pick up a child who demonstrates disruptive, disrespectful and/or extreme behavior. Children who demonstrate such behavior may be suspended for a short period of time or indefinitely. This not a decision that is ever easy to make nor is it one that we want to consider, however, there are times when we feel it is necessary for the physical safety and emotional well being of the other children enrolled.

Parent-Teacher Conference

Either the parent/guardian or the teacher may request a conference. This may be done if there are behavior issues that need to be addressed or if there is a developmental or academic issue, which needs to be discussed.

The Parent-Teacher Conference is a means of addressing concerns and setting future goals regarding such or keeping informed of the child’s development and/or academic achievements. Please notify the Director if you wish to set up a conference.

Parent-Director Conference

If the Parent-Teacher Conference did not result in an acceptable solution or the discussed and planned goals did not result in reasonable improvement, a Parent-Director Conference will be scheduled.

**The goal of conferences are to keep everyone informed of current issues or situations, keep lines of communication open, and most of all, to ensure the children are getting the very best care and education possible. Please use this opportunity to speak with your child’s teacher even if there are no concerns at hand.*

Visiting Procedures

We encourage family involvement. You may visit the center any time to eat lunch with your child, observe your child in class, observe center operations, and/or program activities during normal business hours

Field Trips

Preschoolers enjoy periodic field trips during the school year and/or summer months. Permission forms are required and must be signed by the custodial parent/guardian prior to the scheduled field trip. Routine field trips are scheduled during the summer months and occasionally during the school. All field trips are posted at least one week in advance. In the event you forget to sign your child up, for liability reasons, your child will not be permitted to attend the scheduled field trip. Signatures are required for field trip attendance. Any child who misbehaves, or potentially places other children at risk due to behavior, may not be allowed to attend future field trips. Each child's safety is of the utmost importance.

Personal Belongings (Back Packs)

It is **required** that all personal belongings are kept in a backpack. Personal belongings should be able to fit in your child's backpack. This helps promote sanitary storage thus aiding in control of illness amongst children in care. All children enrolled, ages 3-6, must bring a change of clothing daily in their bag. Preschool children, especially, are embarrassed by accidents. A change of clothes will ensure that your child's needs are taken care of quickly and with minimal embarrassment. Extra clothes must consist of a complete outfit including undergarments and socks.

Very Important: Label your child's personal belongings with your child's first and last Initial. We will not be responsible for lost, stolen or genuinely misplaced personal belongings that were not previously labeled properly.

Recommended Attire

We recommend your child wear washable, comfortable **play** clothing and tennis shoes or other soft-soled shoes. Due to injuries, thongs, sandals are discouraged.

Absences

Please notify the Director if your child is going to be absent. If your child is ill, please let us know the nature of the illness, particularly if it is contagious. Please notify the center at least three (3) hours in advance if your child will not need transportation from public school for the afterschool program.

Withdrawal of Your Child's Enrollment

To withdraw your child's enrollment at our facility, we require two-week advance written notice so that we may contact a parent on our waiting list. If you withdraw your child's enrollment without given proper two-week written notice, your account will access early withdrawal fees. See "Fees" section for detailed information. Please note that written notice helps us address areas of needed improvement or situations, which caused dissatisfaction.

Holidays Our center observes the following holidays:

New Year's Eve
 New Year's Day
 Martin Luther King Day
 Memorial Day
 Independence Day
 Labor Day
 Thanksgiving Day
 Thanksgiving Day After
 Christmas Eve
 Christmas Day

Custodial/Non-custodial Parents/Legal Guardianship

Custody Issues & Court Orders Regarding Divorce/Legal Guardianship

In order to enforce non-custodial visitation and possession, you must provide the center with a certified copy of the Court ordered possession papers.

Custody Issues & CPS Placement Orders Regarding Foster Care

Foster parents must provide CPS placement papers and all mandated documentation regarding enrollment, including immunization records and Child's Health Statement.

Please Note: Illinois Family Law, section *Child Custody Interference*, prohibits anyone from interfering with child custody as the Court has ordered.

Fees

Note: reimbursements for student withdrawal is not an option after the first day of your child's attendance. This is whether the child is enrolled full, part time, afterschool or on a drop in basis. The funds will be allocated as soon as payment is made. This does not include deposits.

Deposit

Our school requires a deposit upon registration. The deposit consists of two (2) weeks tuition in advance plus the registration fee.

Tuition Fees

If your child routinely attends the school, tuition is due on Monday of the week your child is in care. If your child is attending on a "drop in" basis, fees are due at the time of drop off.

Returned Checks

As a courtesy to our families, we will re-deposit a returned check without notice to the parent/account guarantor, however, there will be a \$30.00 returned check charge assessed each time the check is returned to our bank by your bank. Upon the second (2) returned check in a six (6) month period, cash or money order payments will be required for a six (6) month period. If you do not want a check re-deposited, contact the Director as it will be automatic without notification. However, cash payment in the amount of the returned check plus \$30.00 is required.

Late Pick Up Fees

After Hours: Your account will be charged \$2.00 for each minute you are late beginning at 5:46 p.m. Illness Related: You have one (1) hour to pick up your child from the time of illness notification. After one (1) hour, late pick up fees will be assessed to your account at a rate of \$2.00 for each minute you are late. Late pick up fees are assessed regardless of circumstances. Late pick up fees should be paid directly to the staff member who is caring for your child on your behalf. Unpaid, accumulated late pick up fees may result in enrollment termination.

Late Payment Fees

A \$10.00 late fee will be assessed to tuition payments not received by Thursday morning. Also, a service charge of 1 ½ % per month (18% APR) will be added to all overdue accounts also liable for all legal and collection fees.

Delinquent Account/Collection Fees

If a balance is maintained on your account, we will notify you of the balance. We will give you sufficient time to dispute the charges, if necessary. Unless previous arrangements are made concerning payment arrangements, all transportation privileges to and from public school and to and from field trips will be suspended. If payment or payment arrangements are not made on undisputed charges, your account will be referred to the Cook County Court for collection. On the day all necessary paperwork is filed with the Cook County Court for collection proceedings, your account will be charged an additional collection fee of \$200.00 plus any postage fees incurred during the process. The additional \$200.00 collection fee is compensation for our time to file and appear in court. You will be responsible for all applicable court costs as well.

Withdrawal Fees

To withdraw your child's enrollment at our facility, we require two (2) week written advance notice. This allows us to contact a parent on our waiting list. If you do not give the required two (2) week written advance notice, it is required you pay for two (2) weeks tuition after the last date of attendance.

Vacation/Illness Policy

So that we can maintain the highest quality of education and care for all children, your child's tuition fees must be paid in full regardless of his/her attendance. This policy applies to absences for any reason including illness, family vacations and center closings such as observed holidays and severe weather closings.

Sibling Discount

When siblings attend the center at the same time a discount from the usual tuition fee of the oldest child is granted. Contact the Director for more details.