

ALL ABOARD LEARNING CENTER



PARENT HANDBOOK

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WELCOME & PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

Hello and welcome to the All Aboard Learning Center. Our child development center is a non-profit organization licensed through the State of Missouri. As a licensed facility, we must meet the licensing requirements and should you have questions, a copy of the Licensing Rules for Child Care Centers in Missouri is available at the reception counter for you to read and review. Licensing requirements are also available online at the State of Missouri website.

The center's mission is to provide a safe, structured and supportive program for the participating children; while at the same time, providing the opportunity for learning and functioning happily in an environment with others their own age.

All Aboard uses only research-based early care and education practices that meet the requirements of Missouri Accreditation and NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children). In addition All Aboard focuses on the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Pre-K Standards on Literacy, Math, Science, Physical Education, and Social-Emotional Development. MO Accreditation Standards, NAEYC Standards, and DESE Pre-K Standards are all available in the Director's office if you would like to see a copy. You can also obtain copies from their websites.

Our staff hopes to assist the children enrolled to develop a good self-image and genuine respect for others. All Aboard wants to provide multiple opportunities for the children to emphasize their creativity, build their self-confidence, and develop good social skills. The program will provide educational and cultural experiences for each child. The children will be given the chance to develop responsibility and the desire to care for others. Our center will meet the needs of your child on an individual level. Your child will gain real life experiences that will best prepare him or her for academic success in school.

We believe our facility to be a happy place where children can feel truly safe, accepted, and loved. This center is readily excited to share experiences with the children to help them find happiness here. You have full access to your child's bi-annual evaluations or their personal file, please see the Director.

We will attempt to develop a partnership between the center and the home. When the channels of communication are open, the welfare of the child is greatly enhanced. Our center has an open door policy which means you can come see your child at any time of the day, or access your child's file. The teacher's main responsibility is to meet the needs of the children, therefore, if you come at a time the teacher is with the children the director will be happy to talk with you. If you would like, you may schedule a meeting with your child's teacher.

ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE & ORIENTATION

Parents desiring to enroll their children should contact the center's Director at (573) 677-AALC (2252).

The Center's procedure for admitting children shall include a three step process, which includes a tour of the facility, the enrollment process, and introduction process. They are as follows:

STEP I:

- a) Tour of facility
- b) Discussion of center policy/review parent handbook
- c) Explanation of educational philosophy
- d) Introductions of family to staff
- e) Explain gradual admission policy (2-yr olds)
- f) Answer questions
- g) Give enrollment packet

STEP II:

- a) Enrollment form
- b) Medical examination form
- c) Income eligibility form
- d) Picture release form
- e) Current center newsletter and menu
- f) Parent handbook
- g) Classroom assignment card (parents complete and return to teacher)
- h) Family welcome letter

STEP III:

- a) Classroom specific calendar and newsletter
- b) Copy of classroom rules
- c) List of items needed for attendance
- d) Brief description of classroom curriculum
- e) Daily schedule

An individual file is kept to identify each child and enable the provider to communicate with the parents in case of an emergency. These records are due BEFORE a child can attend our licensed center:

- a) Completed enrollment form
- b) Completed medical examination (within 30 days of enrollment)
- c) CACFP Enrollment and Income eligibility form
- d) Picture release form
- e) Classroom assignment card (give to child's teacher)
- f) Up-to-date shot records
- g) Feeding preference form (for children under two years of age)

Parents wishing to view their child's bi-annual evaluations or personal files, please see the Director.

It is the parent's responsibility to notify the day care in writing of changes of jobs, addresses and people authorized to pick up a child. Annual updates in the enrollment forms, food program forms and other personal information will be completed each summer.

AGES

Our center offers year around care for children Birth-5 years of age. We offer before and after school care plus summer care for school age children ages 5-13.

ITEMS TO BE PROVIDED FOR PRESCHOOL AGE

The 2-5 year olds will need to bring their own paint shirt. Lead teachers will distribute a list of other items needed upon enrollment in class. The lead teacher will also send a note home when your child needs refills on items. Each item should have the child's name written on it.

ITEMS TO BE PROVIDED FOR INFANTS/TODDLERS

Please provide diapers, wipes, diaper cream, bottles, sippy-cups, and bibs if needed for your child. Formula, cereal and baby food will be provided by the childcare using one type of formula for all infants and providing cereal and baby food according to FDA regulations. A parent who chooses to select a different type of formula or feeding schedule is required to provide the food and drinks for the child. When a child turns 1 year old, our center will provide the same food and drinks for your child as the older children. Formula bottles are mixed in the classroom. Bottles are not kept from one feeding to another. Nursing mother's will need to put into writing how they would like any unused breast milk to be treated.

HOURS OF OPERATION & FEES

The center will be open from 6:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. Monday through Friday. A non-refundable registration fee of \$15 per family is to be paid at the time of enrollment to guarantee your child(ren)'s spot.

Full-time infant room (6 weeks – 2 years)	\$114/wk
Full-time Toddler	\$109/wk
Full-time preschool room (2 –5 years)	\$81/wk
Preschool Only (8:00 – 12:00 M-F)	\$50/wk
Before School Only	\$17/wk
After School Only	\$33/wk
Before AND After School	\$44/wk
School age summer program	\$65/wk
Part-time child care for all ages:	\$21/day

* Fees reduce when the children are transitioned to the toddler room and again when transitioned to the 2-year old preschool room.

Transition times are as follows:

- A child will transition to the next older classroom at the beginning of the month following their birthday
- Exceptions or full enrollment may require a variation in transition dates. These variations will be agreed upon and in writing between the parents and AALC staff.

The parents are responsible for paying weekly tuition whether the child attends or not.

In the event that the public school dismisses early, or is not in session, All Aboard Learning Center will charge additional fees. For school age children, fees will not exceed full time rate of \$63 per week.

To maintain a structured program drop-ins will only be accepted with pre-approval and 24-hours notice

Fees are subject to change at any time with advance notice. These fees are reviewed periodically by the parent advisory board, and will be adjusted at their discretion.

PART-TIME CARE

Part-time care is only available as long as the days enrolled stays the same each week with a minimum of 3 days per week. If the days per week change, we require a 2 weeks notice. If the center should fill all full-time slots and your part-time slot is needed for a full-time spot, the center reserves the right to give you a 2 week notice to either start paying the full-time rates or find another child care provider. The parents will be held responsible for paying for the established days whether the child attends those days or not.

METHOD OF PAYMENT

Our center is a non-profit organization; therefore, due to payroll and food expenses plus other obligations, it is important that payment be made on a regular basis. Fees are due each Friday **before** a child is able to attend the center and are also payable in advance. Tuition can be paid by check, or cash. Please make payment at the front desk. There will be a \$20 service charge on all returned checks. If a parent does pay the center with a returned check, the parents will have to pay fees with cash, money order or cashiers check until further notice.

LATE FEES

If a parent fails to pay on time, they will be charged a \$5 late fee that will be due with the next week's fees. If this is not paid by Monday of the next week, the child cannot come back until all fees are paid. All outstanding accounts will be turned over to a collection agency after 30 days if there has not been any attempt to settle the account. If it is turned over to a collection agency, there will be a charge of 30% of the outstanding amount added to the balance to cover collection agency fees.

An additional fee is charged when children are picked up after working hours. After 6:00 P.M., there will be a fee of \$1 per child for each additional minute with a minimum of \$5 charged.

STAFF MEMBERS

The center feels that the need exists for loving care for children. Your child does need care and each member of our staff is a qualified and loving individual plus a fine example for

young children to follow.

If the Director, Teresa Switzer, has to be absent from work, please direct questions or concerns to Jessica Talamante . Jessica will be in charge for the day if a parent needs to speak to someone. In the event both are absent, an appointed staff member will be in charge of facility operations.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

If, at any time you feel your concerns have not been addressed appropriately, and in a timely manner by the classroom teacher, please see Ms. Teresa. If, after an appropriate amount of time, you still have concerns, please feel free to contact Jessica Christiansen, President of the Parent Advisory Board @ JChristiansen@mail.wallisco.com or (573) 289-1108.

PRESCHOOL READINESS & CURRICULUM

Depending upon learning abilities and age, we hope to help your child learn many things while attending AALC.

Please refer again to the Missouri Pre-K Standards information available in the Director's office or on the DESE website.

AALC uses Project Construct curriculum which is an approach to teaching based on the theory that children construct knowledge through interactions with their physical and social environments. Through "hands-on, minds-on" learning experiences your child will develop a deep understanding of their world, learn to work collaboratively with adults and peers, and prepare to be life long problem solvers.

CLASSROOM SCHEDULES

Upon enrollment, you will receive a copy of the current center newsletter, a classroom newsletter, a breakfast and lunch menu and a classroom schedule from the teacher. Each classroom has its own schedule and is posted in the rooms. The weekly lesson plans are also posted in each room.

Although your child will have a structured schedule, we always allow for flexibility in individual needs. As stated, activities will be child and teacher directed. Indoor and outdoor activities will vary.

TOILET LEARNING FOR TODDLERS

The teachers understand that research shows that most girls and boys are nearly the age of three when they are completely ready for toilet learning. Therefore, having the opportunity to place a one year old on the potty chair is not developmentally appropriate for the children in our toddler classroom. When a child graduates to the two year old room the facility is set up for toilet learning.

TOILET LEARNING FOR PRESCHOOLERS

The teachers in the two year old classroom will work with the parents on toilet learning with their child. If a child is genuinely ready and interested then the teachers will work with the parents on helping the child learn to use the toilet by him or herself. In the event a child is not developmentally able to use the toilet and diapering is still required after age 3, All Aboard will still consider allowing a child to graduate into the next classroom depending on enrollment.

NAPTIME

The infants will take naps as needed throughout the day.

The 1-5 year olds will have a nap/resting period at the same time each day.

These young children are required by state to rest for 30 minutes each day. The parents will need to send a crib sheet, blanket and pillow (optional). Bedding must be labeled with child's name. This bedding will be washed at the center every week by AALC staff. There will be a fee of \$5 per day for bedding that is not provided. Instead of naptime, the school age children will observe a minimum 30-minute quiet time with the use of art activities, games, puzzles, books or movies.

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

All Aboard Learning Center welcomes all families with various ethnic, cultural and spiritual beliefs. There will be a quiet moment of "reflection" at the start of meals for children ages 2-12. Reflection allows for our openness to diversity yet supports the children's ability to perform traditional routine followed by many cultures. On faith-based holidays religious meanings will be taught as well as the secular meaning. It will be our goal to remain sensitive to all cultural and religious backgrounds.

BREAKFAST, LUNCH AND SNACKS

Breakfast and lunch menus will vary and will provide food recommended according to the FDA Food Pyramid. Each meal will be well balanced, nutritious and will include food that the children will enjoy. The snacks will be light and nutritious. A menu is sent home each month by the teacher with the newsletter and are available at the Parent Information Center.

TOYS & OTHER ITEMS FROM HOME

Toys and play equipment will be provided by the center. We can take better care of your child without having to contend with distractive items such as toys, gum, candy and drinks brought from home. When toys are brought from home, fighting occurs, toys get

damaged, or toys get lost. This directs staff time to unnecessary items. If you chose to allow your child to bring in items from home, you do so with the understanding it may be broken or can be taken away for the day if it causes a distraction.

All Aboard Learning Center does realize that some children latch onto one item for security particularly at naptime; therefore, the children will be allowed to bring their security items for naptime. These security items need to consist of stuffed animals, blankets or dolls. Toys that distract children from taking a nap will not be allowed.

OUTSIDE TIME/PLAY

The Missouri outdoor play standard for childcare centers states: "All children must have time outdoors each day that weather permits." This includes infants. We are required by the state to take children outside at least an hour each day when weather permits. If you feel your child is not well enough to go outside, please consider that your child may not be well enough to come to the center that day. If allergies prevent him/her from going outside, a signed doctor's note is required.

VACATIONS

During the first year of childcare when vacation is taken, the full amount is to be paid to hold a child's spot. This money is due when the parents have notified the center of vacation plans. After the first full year of care, each child will receive a free week of day care. A two-week notice is appreciated. Please be sure to verbally tell the Director or child's teacher *plus* write it down so it will not be forgotten.

SICKNESS

Please DO NOT bring a child when he/she:

- ❖ Has had a fever (100.4 degrees) within the last 24 hours
- ❖ ***Has more than 1 diarrhea within the last 24 hours***
(Exceptions may be made for toddlers based on other symptoms due to introduction of newer foods)
- ❖ Vomiting within the last 24 hours.
- ❖ Has been taking an antibiotic for less than 24 hours.
- ❖ Has a colored or heavy nasal discharge, ***accompanied by a fever or lasting longer than 10 days.***
- ❖ Is unusually cranky or tired even after plenty of sleep or appears to feel ill, ***or requires more care than staff are able to provide, therefore, compromising the health and safety of the other children.***
- ❖ Has a sore throat, ***trouble swallowing,*** chest congestion, constant raspy cough, ***or difficult or rapid breathing.***
- ❖ Did not sleep well the night before due to unusual circumstances.
- ❖ Has an unexplained rash, ***with drainage or severe itching.***
- ❖ Has matted eyes with green and/or yellow drainage, which could be pink eye or another infection. (regardless of if the eye is red or pink), they get matted and green and/or yellow before turning red or pink)
- ❖ ***Has a headache or stiff neck.***

Please phone the center to let us know if your child will not attend due to sickness. Make us aware if your child has been exposed to a contagious disease.

If a child becomes ill after arrival, the All Aboard staff will call you. You must pick up the child in a timely manner or have a designated person do so. If the parent cannot be reached, the first name on the enrollment form will be contacted and each name following until we find an alternate person to release your child to. (If no emergency contact is available on more than one occasion, you risk having your child's position at AALC terminated).

If your child is sent home with any of the symptoms above, he/she will not be able to return to the center for 24 hours after the symptoms have subsided (without the use of fever reducing medication such as Tylenol or Motrin). (NO EXCEPTIONS)

The center must charge the same rate each week; therefore, we cannot make allowances for sickness. A prolonged illness, which requires hospitalization, will be taken into account and the center will work with you if needed.

Weather permitting, we go outside every day and parents need to understand that if a child is too ill to be outside, he/she may be too ill to be at the center. The center will not deprive other children of outside play to keep one child inside.

HEAD LICE & CHICKEN POX POLICY

We have a nit free policy. We do a monthly head check for lice on the preschool and school age children. If any child in the center is found to have evidence of head lice or nits, the parent will be called to take the child and all other siblings at the center home. Your child will not be allowed to return to the center until the problem has been treated and no nits are found in the hair. This includes other bugs like fleas.

Any child who has chicken pox will not be allowed to return to the day care until the blisters have scabbed over and dried up. Missouri licensing requires all children in childcare to have the chicken pox vaccination or a letter from the parent stating when the child had chicken pox in the past.

MEDICATIONS

The parents may bring medication for an illness, such as ADHD, autism, asthma, coughs or runny noses. All Aboard Learning Center will not give a child fever reducing medications, because this would contradict our illness policy. The medication bottle/package must have the child's name, amount of dosage and times and dates (including a beginning and ending date) to be given somewhere on the container. A current medication form must be filled out with the same information as stated above, signed and dated before the staff can give any child medicine. A new form is to be completed each time a child begins a new medication. These forms are put in the child's file upon completion of the medicine.

INJURIES

Any medical attention a child receives while at the center will be signed by the teacher, Director, and parent, then recorded in his/her file. Parents will be notified immediately of any serious injury. In the event a 911 emergency call is made, the parent will be contacted after

the 911 call. Minor injuries will be reported to the parents at the time of pickup. At times, the center will have the parents sign an incident form to keep in the child's file. If injuries or accidents leaving marks occur during non-center hours, an incident report may be completed by a teacher to document child's health and safety. As a child care provider, our teachers are mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect. Our policy requires that we keep a record of all marks and bruises on the children in our care.

CLOTHING

Children should be dressed in comfortable play clothes. All children must have a change of clothes at the center in case of an accident like spilled food, paint or in the event of a bathroom accident. If clothes are not supplied, a parent may be contacted at work to bring in the needed clothing. Please write your child's name in the extra clothes, therefore we can wash items and this will reduce the risk of clothes getting lost. Please also write your child's name on coats, jackets, or shoes that will be worn at the center. Frequently these items are similar in appearance and can be accidentally taken home by the wrong child. It is helpful to the employees when putting on shoes and jackets for outside play.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

There may be days when a child has a special need that the parents want the staff to be aware of. The center will be better capable of caring for a child if the parent will write down whatever the need may be. Please do not just verbally tell the staff for they may become sidetracked shortly after the parent leaves and will forget to relay the message to the other employees. Your written message will free an employee's time to be with the children. The employee will post it in an area where the other staff members will see it when they come on duty.

DISCIPLINE

Positive reinforcement will be used at the center. At no time will the staff use physical punishment. The staff will allow the children several days of verbally telling them what they may and may not do. The children will be redirected, but after the staff feels the child has been given enough chances and should know the rules, the child will be taken out of play and sat with as they discuss the appropriate behavior (time in). The time in will last one minute per age of the child. The staff will always explain to the child why he/she was put in time in, what a better choice of behavior would be, and will stay with that child for the duration of the time in whenever possible.

No child will be allowed to intimidate, harm/threaten another child or teacher, themselves, or destroy property. Children who have trouble respecting authority, peers, the childcare center property/others property or whose presence is detrimental to other children will require a parent/teacher conference. While working together on these problems, the center and the parents can come up with solutions to benefit all concerned.

If a child is unable to adjust to the childcare setting or a child's behavior is not improving

in a reasonable length of time, outside help from an inclusion specialist will be recommended. It is the option of the Director to ask the parents to remove the child from enrollment even if it means waiving the 2-week notice.

BITING

Biting is a common behavior among children in group care, especially toddlers. Biting is not viewed as a “bad” behavior, rather an inappropriate behavior. When it occurs staff have a responsibility to both the child who bites and the child who gets bitten. Our primary goal is to support each child and family as we move through this developmental period. With this philosophy in mind, we practice many preventive strategies within the classroom. These strategies include, but are not limited to: providing an age-appropriate room arrangement & curriculum, multiples of toys, close supervision & observation, and redirection.

When biting occurs:

1. The child who has done the biting is told, “no biting” and redirected to another activity.
2. The child who was bitten is comforted, the area is washed with soap and water.
3. An accident report is completed.
4. A biting report form is completed.
5. The parents of each child are notified personally.
6. **INFORMATION ABOUT THE BITER AND BITEE IS CONFIDENTIAL. NAMES ARE NOT PROVIDED TO EITHER PARENT BY THE STAFF.**
7. The staff who work with these children meet to discuss the biting report form and to evaluate the incident and develop an intervention plan.
8. If repeated incidences (4+) of biting occur from the same child, the inclusion specialist from Child Care Resource and Referral will be called in to observe in the room and join the staff team.

Our goal is to find solutions that recognize the developmental nature of the biting behavior and provide solutions and demonstrate respect for each child.

CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT

In this profession, it is the law to report child abuse and/or neglect. Any staff member noticing unusual behavior or questionable bruises or marks on a child must report it to the director.

We encourage families in crisis to come to us for available resources

ARRIVAL & PICKUP

If your child is not at AALC by 9:00 am, then a phone call stating he/she will be coming is required in order for that child to be counted for lunch. If there is no phone call there will be a \$5.00/child for the child to receive lunch.

NEVER let a child enter the building alone and **NEVER** leave other children in your automobile while you are dropping off a child for preschool! The parents must notify the staff

member responsible for the child personally when the child arrives and leaves. If it is necessary for someone else to leave or pick up your child, please let the center know in advance. A written message or phone call will do. The center **WILL NOT** release your child to anyone not listed on the enrollment form. The center will request identification for a person that the staff does not recognize. The parents will be asked to update that list annually.

CHRISTMAS, SPRING & SUMMER BREAKS

Parents will be required to pay for children even if the children do not attend during Christmas and Spring Break. The teachers are still here and will still get paid for working these three weeks.

TERMINATION OF DAY CARE

All Aboard Learning Center requires a 2 week notice before a child is to be taken out of the center. If the 2-week notice is not given, you will be charged for the 2 weeks beyond the child's last day.

HOLIDAYS & CLOSINGS

The center will be closed on all the following major holidays:

News Years Day Memorial Day Independence Day Labor Day
Thanksgiving Day & Fri. after Thanksgiving Christmas Eve and Day

If any of these falls on a weekend, the center will close the adjacent Friday or Monday for the holiday. The parents will receive notice prior to each holiday closing. Regular fees will still be charged for these weeks in which holidays fall, because our teachers will be paid for these seven holidays each year.

The center is usually open when the Elementary school is out for snow days. If the center should ever be closed due to extremely dangerous weather or power failure, KTTR will broadcast the closing. Fees will still be charged for these days.

There will be preschool on days when the elementary school is out for snow, however, the scheduled material will depend on the number of children present at the center.

IMMUNIZATIONS

The Missouri Department of Health requires every public childcare facility caring for 10 or more children to keep an immunization record of every child enrolled. Each child must be adequately immunized according to the Missouri Immunization Schedule or a physician must sign a medical exemption statement to be kept on file for each child exempted. In order to comply with this legislation, the center requires the parents to bring in a copy of each child's shot record. The record can also be brought in for the All Aboard to make a copy. Children

who do not comply with this regulation will not be allowed to attend this center. You will need to bring in an updated shot record each time your child receives another/new immunization.

FIELD TRIPS

Trips may be taken to various locations in the community and state throughout the year. Parents will be notified well in advance. The parents will be asked to sign a detailed permission slip allowing the children to go on the field trip and ride on the All Aboard Learning Center bus. Parent volunteers are always welcome to accompany the children on these outings. Each child is required to have a signed permission to leave the facility form in their file, which is for walks and other non-transported activities the teachers may do with the children.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents are encouraged to drop in and observe the center at any time. The center will frequently invite parents to take part in field trips. The parents will receive a monthly newsletter designed to keep them up to date on the center's activities. You can also check the parent information boards for notices of current interest and information. The website will include the newsletter, meal menu and special notices. There is an Open House each October and Spring Celebration each May. These include a potluck dinner, video of activities, and a one-on-one activity with child-parent. Preschool graduation will also be held in May.

PARTIES

Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentines and Easter will be celebrated with parties. All Aboard Learning Center will observe those that have religious meanings as well as the secular meanings.

Birthdays are also special days. You may provide a treat (homemade or store bought) for the children to celebrate your child's birthday. Let the center know if you choose to do this.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD (BIRTH-5)

1. To provide a safe and loving environment in which the children can develop.
2. To increase the children's self-concept and self-worth.
3. To provide a social and peer interaction with the other children of varying ages.
4. To work towards healthy bodies through nutritious meals and snacks and having fun with a developmentally appropriate fitness program.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES FOR SCHOOL AGE (AGES 5-12)

1. To provide safe, quality and affordable before and after School care for patrons of the Crawford R-II School District.
2. To provide structured activities to meet the developmental needs, interests, and academic needs of the enrolled children.

SCHOOL AGE SUMMER PROGRAM

All Aboard Learning Center offers a summer program for children ages 5-12. There will be a planned activity for each day of the week plus organized field trips. The workers will develop some of the activities. Other activities might include skating, swimming, movies at a local theatre, 4-H Science, photo classes, etc. The field trips might include going to the Zoo, Discovery Zone, Magic House, Grants Farm, Six Flags, etc. An activity fee will be charged for each child. The amount of the activity fee will vary from week to week depending upon the expense of the activities and field trips. All Aboard has a 50-mile radius limit on all field trips.

QUESTIONS

If a parent should ever have any questions or concerns regarding the center, please feel free to call or drop by the center at any time. All Aboard Learning Center hopes each child will enjoy developing a healthy relationship with our teachers and the other children at the center.