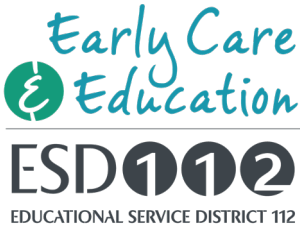


2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR

Parent Handbook



YOUR
community's answer to
Child Care

ESD 112 Early Care & Education provides individualized support to promote school readiness and benefit children.



Dear Parents,

Welcome to our program! We are looking forward to providing care to your child(ren) and working with your family this year.

The Southwest Washington Child Care Consortium (SWCCC) is open to all children and families, regardless of race, nationality, or creed. As a program of ESD 112, our mission is to “equalize educational opportunities for learning communities through innovative partnerships, responsive leadership, and exceptional programs.”

SWCCC operates centers in Clark and Cowlitz counties, serving over 1,800 infant-through school aged children and their families, with over 200 employees.

Our program strives to provide each child with a safe, healthy, stimulating and caring early learning environment. Activities and routines are designed around children’s interests and developmental needs. A child’s growth in the areas of social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development is greatly enhanced when caregivers, parents and schools work together to support each child’s developmental journey.

You are an important part of your child’s educational journey, and parents are always welcome to visit our programs. Your Center Director is also available to address any questions or concerns.

Please take time to review this handbook and keep it in a convenient place as it provides valuable information about our program’s policies, procedures, and other important information.

We appreciate you entrusting your child to our care and look forward to getting to know your family!

Sincerely,

Jodi Wall

Executive Director, Early Care & Education, ESD 112

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NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

It is the policy of this child care center that no person shall be subjected to discrimination because of race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, including gender identity, age, religion, creed, marital status, disabled or Vietnam Era Veteran status, or the presence of any physical, mental, or sensory handicap.

This policy is consistent with Titles VI and VIII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act; Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967; the 1974 Vietnam Era Veteran Readjustment Assistance Act; the Governor's Executive Order 85-09; and the Washington Laws Against Discrimination, RCW 49.60.

This child care center does not discriminate against children, families, or staff with disabilities. Children, families and staff with sensory, mental or physical disabilities are encouraged to participate in all the activities and opportunities at the center. We assess children on an individual basis to determine whether a child with special needs can be cared for at our center with reasonable accommodations. Some examples of reasonable accommodations may include:

- The revision of policies and procedures to be inclusive
- The removal of physical barriers
- The addition of adaptive equipment and
- The provision of additional staff training, as appropriate

We are committed to treating all families with dignity and respect for their individual needs and differences. This policy applies to every aspect of the agency's programs, practices, policies, and activities, including client services and employment practices. **This institution is an equal opportunity provider.**

PHILOSOPHY

ESD 112's SWCCC program helps young children ages birth through the end of fifth grade develop the key foundational skills they will need to be successful in school and in life. In addition to research, our values and philosophies guide and inform our practice. We believe:

- Families are their children's first and most important teachers
- Families want what is best for their children
- Strong, nurturing and responsive care-giving is the foundation for child development and growth
- Through these trusted relationships, authentic interactions, and safe environments that we gain insights about children's interests, strengths, and opportunities for growth
- Providing children with access to open-ended, natural items that are safe, inviting and encourage hands-on, open-ended learning opportunities through play
- Promoting continuity for children by ensuring that the environments and routines build on children's experiences and reflect the child and family culture.

- Strong child outcomes are achieved when the family and the staff leverage their respective expertise and work together to ensure children continue to make developmental gains.
- Learning is an on-going process in which children need to be actively involved with their environment, their peers and with trusted adults.
- The program provides a rich, warm environment in which children enjoy learning and feel confident. Children will be able to progress at their own rates and build on their strengths and interests. The program will include both structured and unstructured times during the day.

In addition, young children learn and experience more social and academic gains when their early learning experience is:

Hands-on - exploratory, play-based learning involving all of their senses

Developmental -learning opportunities that honor children’s development following a predictable order and that new experiences should build upon previous learning as well as children’s interests

Real - children learn about things through the interactions with real objects and experiences

Relevant - children learn best when the experiences are important and meaningful to them and their lives

Our goal is to encourage children to explore, to wonder, to imagine, to experiment with language and materials, to play and to develop a lifelong love of learning.

CURRICULUM PHILOSOPHY

We place a strong emphasis on developmentally appropriate practices when working with children. This approach grounded in research reflecting how children develop and learn. Teaching staff use a variety of tools and resources including feedback from families, to understand children’s current developmental levels. We use this information to help children make gains and develop new skills by building on their strengths and interests. Additional resources include:

Creative Curriculum

This comprehensive curriculum is focused on supporting children’s development across six key developmental areas - including: social-emotional, physical, cognitive, language, literacy and math. Areas of young children’s development often intersect so this comprehensive curriculum and the corresponding instructional activities are used to support multiple areas of development at the same time.

Second Step

This social-emotional curriculum teaches children how to identify and label theirs and others feelings, to think about something from someone else’s perspective, and how to use these skills to effectively and respectfully resolve conflicts.

Washington State Early Learning and Development Guidelines

These guidelines are Washington State’s early learning standards. The curricula and approaches we use with children in the classroom are aligned with these state standards.

There is information in the guidelines for families about how to support continued growth and development at home, based on age and/or current skill level. For more information, visit Washington State Early Learning and Development Guidelines, birth through 3rd grade pdf: <https://tinyurl.com/ya8ltqwh>

Emergent curriculum

This is child-driven based on what children are interested in learning more about and is supported by the teachers. For example, teachers may bring in additional resources, materials and books to support children who are interested in learning more about something that may not be addressed in the formal curricula described above.

ASSESSMENT (Infant, Toddler, Preschool)

Every child in our program is an individual, with different interests, skills and strengths, and needs. Our goal is to get to know as much as possible about each and every child so that we can help you guide learning and plan experiences that are just right. To do this, we use an authentic, ongoing observation-based assessment system called Teaching Strategies GOLD to gather information on each child's development and learning. This kind of assessment simply means that we will:

- Observe your child during regular, everyday activities on a continuous basis;
- Document what both you and the teacher see and hear;
- Take notes, sample, photos or video clips;
- Compare the information collected to research-based, widely held expectations for child of similar ages;
- Use the information to support your child's learning and meet his or her need; and
- Share the information you with throughout the year.

ENROLLMENT

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

All families will receive an application packet. It is important that you read your application packet carefully. The packet will include a variety of information including forms and agreements that will need to be returned prior to starting care. ***All forms, including the registration fee (see Registration below) and one week's tuition need to be received by the billing specialist prior to the first day of care.*** For families receiving a subsidy, we must have the appropriate authorization paperwork on file before the child can attend care. Allow at least 24 hours for the application materials to be processed. We are unable to hold, reserve or guarantee a space for your child until this information has been provided to the center.

REGISTRATION

A non-refundable registration fee of \$75 is due before a child is enrolled in our program. Each additional child in the family will be charged a \$50 registration fee. This registration fee is charged annually each September.

BILLING & PAYMENT POLICIES

CONTRACTS

SWCC has one contract option for children 4 weeks - 5 years and one option for school age children. ***Please note that families will be required to contract for the same days each week. Rotating schedules are not allowed.***

Note: SWCCC reserves the right to cancel a contract at any time.

CONTRACT CHANGES

Any changes to your schedule requires a new signed contract that must be submitted by the 25th of the month and will go into effect the first of the next month. (For example, if a schedule change is received on September 12th, it will go into effect on October 1st. If change is received on September 29th, it would go into effect November 1st). Adding an occasional extra day of care is permitted if the center director is notified ahead of time and space is available.

DISCONTINUATION OF CARE

Termination of care requires a two-week written notice. Families are responsible for paying for care through those two weeks. If a family has credit days, they can be applied to cover a portion of the payment and families will be required to pay the remaining balance.

DROP-IN CARE

The center director must be notified at least one business day in advance and care is subject to availability. Drop in care is only available to currently contracted families. ***Drop-in care fees are higher than standard daily rates and are due on the day that care is provided.***

HOLIDAYS

SWCCC Centers are open Monday-Friday, all year except the following holidays: **New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, day after Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day.**

Tuition charges apply for these seven holidays. However, you may choose to use a credit day if a holiday falls on your regularly scheduled contracted day. (If a holiday falls on a Saturday it is observed on the previous Friday. If a holiday falls on a Sunday, it is observed the following Monday.)

If you reserve care for any other holiday not listed above, or a non-school day, **you will be charged regardless of whether or not your child attends and credit days cannot be used.** Space is limited for holiday care, so it is important to sign up in advance or care may not be available at your regularly attended center.

If you reserve care for any other holiday not listed above, or a non-school day, you will be charged regardless of whether or not your child attends and credit days cannot be used. Space is limited for holiday care, so it is important to sign up in advance or care may not be available at your regularly attended center.

CENTER CONSOLIDATION AND SIGN UP PROCESS

Programs may be consolidated based on demand for care.

- On all non-school days, parents have to sign up for care for school age programs.
- The center will post a sign-up sheet two weeks in advance and the sheet will be taken down one week prior to the non-school day. Child care will be provided on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Families who are signed up will be billed regardless of actual attendance.
- Families who are not signed up before the sign-up sheets are removed will not be guaranteed care. Talk to your Center Director to determine availability.
- We may consolidate our centers so it is possible that care may be provided at a different SWCCC center.

SCHOOL-AGE SUMMER CARE

Child care for school age children is available during the summer at selected SWCCC centers. *A summer program fee is charged (per child) to cover the cost of field trips, learning clinics, guest performances and special activities.* This program fee must be paid in full before summer care begins and is non-refundable once the summer programs has started. **School-age families must contract for a minimum of three days per week and it must be a fixed schedule.** Drop-in care will be available as space allows. School age families who do not need care during the summer may hold their enrollment for the Fall by paying the annual registration fee prior to the end of the school year.

EMERGENCY CLOSURE

If a school district or an elementary school closes for any reason, all SWCCC centers that operate within that district will also be required to close for the day. We will follow the district’s requirements for closing during late starts and early releases due to inclement weather and other emergency related events. Families will not be charged for these days.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CLOSURES

Our birth – 5 classrooms will be closed the last Friday in September and the last Friday in February for staff professional development. Families will not be charged for these staff professional development days. This only applies to birth-5 classrooms. School age care will be available on these days.

BILLING AND PAYMENT PROCESS

Statements will be accessible through www.myprocare.com by the 5th of each month and payment will be due by the 15th. If the 15th falls on a weekend, payment will be due by the following Monday. All adjustments for non-contracted early release days, non-school days, and days in addition to contracted days will be made on the following month's invoice.

DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS

Late Payments

A \$40 late fee will be added to any account with a balance of \$50 or greater by closing time on the 15th of the month (if the 15th falls on a weekend, it will be due the following Monday). Any account not kept current could result in the discontinuation of care until all past due fees are paid. Past due accounts are assigned to an outside collection agency. After accounts are sent to collections, care may not be available to families.

Late Pick-up Fee

Overtime charges are \$1.00 per minute, per child, for children not picked up by the center's closing time. If your child is not picked up within one hour of the center's closing time, and we are unable to contact a parent or authorized emergency contact, Child Protective Services (CPS) will be notified. It is very important that you keep emergency contact names and phone number updated. *There is a \$5.00 fee for any child who receives care for more than 10 hours.*

Returned Checks

There is a \$25 fee for returned checks. After receiving two or more returned checks, SWCCC will no longer allow payment in the form of personal checks. Payment will need to be made in the form of cash, money order, or a bank certified schedule.

CO-PAYMENTS

Prior to enrollment, written or verbal authorization to SWCCC from the authorized subsidy agency is required for parents who receive subsidy benefits. All subsidy co-payments are due no later than the 15th of each month (if the 15th falls on a weekend, payment will be due the following Monday).

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE



SIGN-IN/ SIGN-OUT PROCEDURES

Ensuring your children are safe while in our care is our top priority. As a result, we expect families to fully comply with state laws requiring that families sign their children in and out each day. This focus on safety also includes letting the staff member on duty know that your child has arrived and walking your child to the classroom. Repeated failure to comply with this legal requirement will result in cancellation of enrollment and services will be discontinued.

Upon arrival, we ask parents to assist children in washing their hands to help curb the spread of disease at the center. Occasionally, parents may authorize someone other than themselves to sign their child(ren) in or out of the center.

Anyone who picks up your child needs to be on the authorization form, have photo identification, and will need to have an account in Procure. Please ensure that your authorized contacts allow sufficient time to set up an account during their first pick up which could take up to 10 minutes. Contact the center director immediately when there are changes to address, phone number changes and emergency contact information. Please ask your director for a form to record the change(s) so we can update your file.

Children will not be released to any person who is not listed as authorized to pick up.

In addition, please note that we cannot legally deny any parent access to their child unless there is a current court order to the effect. Please work with your center director and provide copies of legal orders and other documentation to ensure there is a clear plan in place.

WHAT TO BRING FOR INFANTS THROUGH PRESCHOOL

The center provides most of the supplies and materials needed to ensure your child is well cared for throughout the day and is actively engaged in learning. We do ask that families provide the following items and replenish them, as needed:

- An extra set of clothing
- Diapers/pull-ups
- Breastmilk, formula, baby food, and infant cereal
- Bottles
- Comfort/nap items - including pacifiers and blankets. Blankets are never placed in infant cribs
- Coats, hats, gloves, sunblock, etc. (weather dependent)

In general, we request that your child leave all other items at home. There are circumstances when children and families are encouraged to bring other things

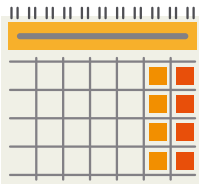
from home (examples include things needed for show and tell, items that help comfort your child, and items that help strengthen transitions). Check with your center director if you have any questions or need additional information. Please note; while every precaution will be taken to keep these items safe, the center is not responsible for missing or damaged items.

***Personal electronic devices are not allowed at any of our centers. ***

WHAT TO WEAR

Choose clothing for your child that is comfortable, washable, sturdy, and suitable for existing weather conditions. Label all items with your child’s full name. Although we do have children wear paint shirts or aprons during messy projects, there is no guarantee that clothing will not get soiled or stained. Please have children dress appropriately for these activities.

Program Overview



DAILY SCHEDULE

Each center includes a variety of materials and activities to keep children engaged, such as blocks, housekeeping, art, music, stories, and table games. Children also engage in active play outdoors for large muscle development. Quiet, rest times are also planned throughout the day. Activities are appropriate for each child’s age and development level. Each center

will post a daily schedule which includes structured teacher facilitated time as well as opportunities for children to make choices based on their interests. Examples include group circle times, structured activities, and blocks of open-end time for children to engage in child directed play with support from teaching staff.

CURRICULUM

The Creative Curriculum is the adopted curriculum for all child care programs in the Consortium. The Creative Curriculum is a nationally recognized framework for planning and implementing developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood setting. It is an effective way to help children acquire social competence and the skills they need to succeed as learners. This includes learning more about your family and culture. As a result, certain holidays may be celebrated in your child’s classroom, based on input and feedback from families. We value our partnership with families and want to ensure that our centers and services honor family culture and traditions while also being inclusive and respectful. These holidays will be celebrated without religious reference. Your center director can provide more information about what holiday may be observed and may ask you more questions about your family’s customs and traditions.

FIELD TRIPS

Occasionally, there will be an opportunity for your child to participate in field trips away from the center. Permission slips will be provided prior to the field trip for parent consent. Transportation will be provided by either ESD 112 or the school district buses/drivers. ***A separate fee may be charged for the field trip to cover admission and/or transportation costs.*** If your child does not participate in the field trip, care will be offered at another SWCCC site. We follow the requirements set by Washington State licensing for lunches while on field trips.

NUTRITION



We provide a variety of meals and snacks, depending on the center and your child's schedule. The weekly menus follow the nutritional components and guidelines outlined by the United States Department of Agriculture. These menus are posted weekly and a hard copy is available to you upon request. Contact your center director if your child has specific dietary needs or restrictions. For children who attend the before/after school program and attend child care on a non-school day, lunch will not be provided. If your child attends on non-school days, please provide your child with a nutritious sack lunch.

If you plan to bring food to share with all of the children, these items must be store bought and kept in the manufacturer's original container. This ensures we have the information we need so that we can make other accommodations for children with food allergies. *Please note that all Centers are nut-free.*

INFANT FEEDING

State licensing requires parents to develop a feeding plan with the staff following Developmental State/Act of Infant guidelines. Infants and toddlers cannot recline with a bottle unless it contains only water. Juice is offered only from a cup. State licensing requires formula to be labeled with the infant's full name and the date it was filled. All bottles that are not fully consumed will be thrown away within an hour. **Breastmilk:** state licensing requires frozen breastmilk must be labeled with:

1. Child's full name
2. Expressed date
3. Date of arrival to the Center

The center can only keep frozen breastmilk for two weeks, but can be returned to the family.

GUIDANCE POLICY

Leadership and classroom staff place an intentional focus on building relationships with children and families, creating consistent routines, setting clear expectations, and meeting children's needs. Strong relationships, respect and trust are central to our discipline policy and procedures. Under no circumstances will any form of corporal punishment be tolerated at the center. Instead, the focus is to understand children's developmental stages and needs so that we can implement strategies that address safety concerns while helping children label their emotions and resolve conflict. It takes time and support from adults for children to develop these skills in the same way it takes time and support from adults to develop other skills, like reading, writing, and mathematics.

Any time there are concerns about a child's behavior that falls outside the scope of what the center director and classroom staff are able to effectively address, we will schedule a conference with the family to develop and implement a plan. An individual care plan may be created to help ensure a child's success in the program.

This process will include collecting information from key adults to better understand themes, patterns and trends in order to develop an individualized plan based on the child's strengths and motivation. Regular, on-going communication among all parties is key to the plan's success.

We strive to continue working with children and families to help children be successful in care. In the event children continue to engage in serious and dangerous behavior, we may decide that the program cannot meet the child's needs and is therefore not a good fit. In these instances, we do reserve the right to terminate care in the event we are not able to help a child regain control consistently.

REPORT OF CHILD ABUSE

Any employee who has reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered abuse or neglect is required to immediately report directly to the proper law enforcement agency and/or the Department of Children Youth and Families, Child Protection Division.

Health Policies

HEALTHY HABITS



All of our child care centers are licensed by the Department of Children, Youth and Families. All centers are required to maintain a clean, healthy environment that meets all licensing requirements and minimizes the occurrence of illnesses.

SPREAD OF CONTAGIOUS ILLNESS

We ask for your cooperation in reducing the spread of contagious illnesses.

Please keep your child home if:

- **Fever of 100 degrees or above axillary (under the arm) AND one or more of the following:**
 - **Headache** ▪ **Earache** ▪ **Sore throat** ▪ **Rash** ▪ **Sign of irritability or confusion**
 - **Fatigue that prevents participation in daily activities**
- Vomiting on two or more occasions within the past 24 hours
- Diarrhea (three or more watery stools within a 24 hour period or a bloody stool)
- Rash, especially with fever or itching
- Eye discharge or conjunctivitis (pinkeye) until clear or until 24 hours of antibiotic treatment has passed
- Open or oozing sores, unless properly covered and 24 hours has passed since starting antibiotics treatment (if necessary)
- Scabies
- Fatigue that prevents participation in regular daily activities

Following an illness, children may return to the child care center when they no longer exhibit the above symptoms, are no longer experiencing significant discomfort and/or have a doctor's note.

If a child becomes sick at the center, the parent will be notified. The child will be moved to a separate space where they will wait with a caring adult. The parent is expected to pick up the child within an hour. Children who are not well enough to participate in scheduled indoor and outdoor activities should remain home.

Licensed child care facilities are required to report communicable disease outbreaks to the Health Department. If there is such an outbreak at the center, this information, along with the medical handouts, will be posted at the Center. For information regarding which diseases will be reported to the Health Department, see SWCCC's Health Policy. The consortium's comprehensive health policy is reviewed and updated yearly by the Clark County Health Department. Copies are available from your center director.

Head Lice Policy

Since head lice have not been shown to spread disease, they are not considered a medical or public health hazard. Children with lice are allowed to remain in program. Staff will work with families to encourage treatment and the program will take precautions to minimize the spread of head lice. Please let your center director know if you need help accessing additional resources to treat head lice.

Tooth Brushing

We promote effective oral health hygiene by ensuring all children are assisted by appropriate staff or volunteers, if available, in brushing their teeth. Child care staff will brush their own teeth to model the desired behavior. Staff training will be provided yearly on the etiology of tooth decay, oral health promotion, and tooth brushing protocol.

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION

All medications must be brought to the center in the original container and given to a staff member in charge.

SWCCC centers do not allow children to keep medications of any type in their possession. (For further clarification, see SWCCC's Health Care Plan which is available at the center).

Prescription Medications

State licensing requirements permit the center to administer medications to children only with a doctor's written authorization and a written and signed directive from a parent. All prescription medications can only be given as specified on the prescription label or as authorized in writing by a physician or other person legally authorized to prescribe medication.

Non-Prescription Oral Medications

State licensing requires a written and signed directive from a parent or an authorized physician in order to administer non-prescription oral medications to a child. Non-prescription oral medications can only be given at the dose, duration and method specified on the manufacturer's label for the age and weight of the child needing medication. *Please see your Center Director for a Medication Authorization Form.*

INDIVIDUAL HEALTH CARE PLANS

If you have a child with an allergy or certain medical diagnosis (i.e. asthma, diabetes, seizures), it is a state licensing requirement that we develop a plan describing what to do in the event of a specific medical emergency. We train all staff on the plan to ensure we can properly care for your child. This Individual Health Care Plan must be signed by the parent (and in some cases the child's doctor) and Plan will be updated every six months.

IMMUNIZATIONS

One dose of MMR is required for all children age one year and older to attend child care or preschool. Two doses of MMR vaccine are required for all students in kindergarten through 12th grade. If a child needs both doses, the two doses must be given at least 28 days apart. This means someone needing both MMR doses will need one dose given as soon as possible, followed by another appointment scheduled a month from the first MMR dose. Children catching up with the MMR immunization schedule are considered to be in conditional status until 30 days after dose two of the MMR vaccine comes due. Conditional status means the student is in the process of getting their vaccinations completed or turning in the rest of their required paperwork. Per state law, any child who is not either fully vaccinated or on conditional status, will be excluded from care until the family provides proof of vaccinations and/or immunity.

HERBICIDE/PESTICIDE USE

Herbicide and pesticide will be applied as needed at child care facilities. Parents will be notified at least 48 hours in advance. A list of the ingredients will be available by request at any time.

Disaster Preparedness

Each center has a comprehensive, written disaster plan. This plan is posted in each classroom and copies are available from the center director. We ask that all parents review and become familiar with this plan. The plan includes procedures for handling medical, dental, fire, earthquake, emergency lockdown, and other emergency situations.

Parent Advisory Group

Established in 2017, the Parent Advisory Group consists of parent representatives from each SWCCC center and provides an opportunity for parents to have a voice and provide valuable input into our programs, policies, and procedures. If you are interested in serving on the Parent Advisory Group, please talk with your center director.

MISSION STATEMENT

ESD 112 equalizes educational opportunities for learning communities through innovative partnerships, responsive leadership, and exceptional programs.



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