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# Welcome

Welcome Parents!

Studies and research have proven the vital role a quality early learning experience plays in the health and happiness of children as they grow and learn. The experiences and relationships formed during this period of vast brain development build a foundation for future learning and success. A supportive, engaging and challenging environment is critical to helping young children build competence, confidence, and self-esteem.

Atascadero Children's Center works in partnership with you to help shape the early years of your child. Our classes and curriculum are designed to support children in exploring and learning through daily activities and interactions. Our staff will use intentional language and lessons to build an environment where your child can ask questions and seek challenges to keep them excited about the world around them and all they can achieve. We know that the adult your child will someday become is the result of the thousands of times they are comforted when they cry, encouraged to try new experiences, and supported in social-emotional growth. Each of these acts gently shapes a child's growing sense of self.

Thank you for choosing Atascadero Children's Center to work alongside your family in providing a rich, engaging learning environment for your child.

This handbook will provide you with all the necessary information for a successful school experience.

This ACC parent handbook supersedes all prior versions that have been issued by Atascadero Children's Center and is effective as of July 2024.

Sincerely,  
Harvest Torrey and Sara E. Yost  
Co-Owners

## **Our Organization - A Brief History**

In 1985 Judy and Ted Young opened up Cabbage Patch Preschool. They had grandchildren in need of care and, noticing there was a lack of available services in the North County, decided they would fulfill the community's needs and their own family needs all at once.

In January of 1989, Janice Stevens purchased the business from the Young's. She implemented the school slogan "Teaching is Love made Visible" and designed a curriculum and philosophy, which followed that ideal. Over the following 30 years, Janice grew the program to the school you see now, encompassing three buildings and offering families a program that can serve their children from 18 months through fifth grade.

In June 2022 Harvest Torrey and Sara Yost, two long-term employees, purchased Atascadero Children's Center from Janice and Mark Stevens. Harvest and Sara plan to continue the same great experience all families have come to expect from ACC. We are proud to continue to serve Atascadero's families and see your amazing children grow and succeed!

## **Our Philosophy**

We believe all children have a right to quality care and education. At Atascadero Children's Center, all children are given the opportunity to learn through play, using a wide range of developmentally appropriate activities and classroom experiences. Our classroom environments offer constant opportunities to expand knowledge; supporting children in exploring the world, their social-emotional growth, and appropriate expressions of their feelings and needs. We are committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment for our children, staff, and families; offering families complete security and comfort when they drop off their child each day.

# **Programs**

Atascadero Children's Center is licensed by the State of California and is fully insured. Enrollment is limited to not more than 117 children per day, ages 18 months through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Atascadero Children's Center does not discriminate regarding race, religion, or national origin. Our school operates yearly from September 1<sup>st</sup> – August 31<sup>st</sup>. Monday through Friday; 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Children are grouped according to age. We have three buildings with a variety of programs to meet your childcare needs.

## **Beginning Preschool & Toddler Program, Building B:**

License Number 406216330

Ages: 18 months to 30 months Toddler Program  
30 months to 36 months Preschool  
(Non-toilet trained and toilet trained)

Bright Beginnings Class: 18-24 months

Small Wonders Class: 24-30 months

Early Years Class: 30-36 months

## **Preschool Program, Building C:**

License Number 406216330

Ages: 3 to 5 years  
(Must be toilet trained)

Early Years Class: 3 to 4-years old

Pre-K Class: 4 to 5-years old

## **School-Age Program, Building A:**

License Number 406216331

Grades: TK – 5<sup>th</sup> grade  
Before and after school care

Full-time is available on School Curriculum Days, Winter Break,  
Spring Break and Summer Camp.

## Ratios

The Preschool and Toddler Programs group the children according to age and ability. There is a 6:1 ratio for ages 18 months up to 30 months. For ages 30 months through 5 years, the ratio is 12:1. You have the option of entering the preschool program at age 2, with written permission. If you choose to exit the toddler program, your child can enter the classroom with up to a 12:1 child/teacher ratio, and thus you will pay a lower tuition rate. Ideally, to ensure quality care, our goal is to have a smaller ratio for the 2-year-olds. The School-Age program has a 14:1 child/teacher ratio.

## Goals and Objectives

### Academic and Intellectual Development

Atascadero Children's Center offers students an environment in which they are both challenged and allowed to develop their intellectual potential in which individual needs and development are recognized.

*We achieve these goals by the following:*

- Encouraging students to be creative and curious so they will develop a life-long love of learning.
- Providing opportunities for meaningful play that are based on the child's individual needs, interests, and abilities.
- Acknowledging the different modalities of learning and providing opportunities and activities which build important foundations for future reading, math, and other academic skills and pursuits.

### Psychological and Social-Emotional Development

We assist parents in nurturing the emotional well-being of our students. Together with parents, we work to instill in each child a sense of importance and self-worth. Our school environment is disciplined and respectful of our students. We foster sensitivity for all people and cultures.

*We achieve these goals by the following:*

- Modeling acceptance of all.
- Providing opportunities for interaction with other children in support of building positive relationships and conflict resolution skills.
- Providing a warm, supportive environment in which children receive the nurturing and reinforcement they need to develop to their full potential.
- Providing opportunities for the development of autonomy, independence, and positive self-esteem.

### Physical Development

We promote an appreciation of appropriate physical development and the gift of good health. Students are exposed to the value of teamwork, cooperation, and joy in play.

*We achieve these goals by the following:*

- Providing opportunities for the development of fine and gross motor skills.
- Providing instructional opportunities for the development of motor and perceptual skills.
- Instructing students in age-appropriate developmental games and providing practice opportunities.
- Monitoring student behavior, encouraging sportsmanship, and fair play.

# Curriculum

Our curriculum is designed to give children the opportunity to explore a wide range of developmentally appropriate activities within a warm, supportive environment and to provide a balance of activities in the following areas:

- Indoor/Outdoor
- Quiet/Active
- Individual
- Small/Large Groups
- Child/Teacher Initiated

A wide selection of developmentally appropriate materials and activities are available for the preschool programs. Our staff provides alternating activities using different materials daily. Abundant time is provided for the children to interact with one another and use the provided materials. The need for children to spend quiet time in self-directed activities is also acknowledged. Teachers coordinate weekly lesson plans which are posted on bulletin boards located centrally to each classroom. The curriculum provides hands-on activities enabling children to achieve the desired goals and objectives of our school.

Our Pre-Kindergarten class not only incorporates the preschool curriculum but the *World of Wonders* program as well. This program is currently used in the Atascadero and Templeton Unified School Districts and in the Paso Robles Public Schools. *World of Wonders* is a research-based curriculum grounded in systematic, explicit instruction of:

- Phonemic awareness, phonics, and word knowledge
- Comprehension skills and strategies
- Inquiry skills and strategies
- Writing and language arts skills and strategies

The program creates a literature-rich environment which instills a passion for lifelong reading, a love of literature, and the written word. *World of Wonders* contains the keys to teaching children how to read and also read to learn.

We work both in large and small groups to help prepare the children for kindergarten following a list of guidelines the public schools provide us.

Our School-Age Program has been developed to meet the needs of children from transitional kindergarten through fifth grade. Children at this age are learning to master physical and cognitive skills and are putting energy into developing social relationships with peers and adults.

Our program includes recreational activities, arts and crafts, science, character-building activities, cooking, and homework time. These activities encourage a positive self-concept and feelings of worth. Each child's independence, while enrolled in this program, is developed by improving self-help skills and strengthening decision-making abilities.

The classrooms are divided up into three different age groups: Kindergarten; 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> grade; and 3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade; although this may vary depending on enrollment.

Our curriculum is designed to give children the opportunity to explore a wide range of developmentally appropriate activities within a warm supportive environment. We provide a balance of activities in the following areas: indoor/outdoor, quiet/active, small/large group, large/small muscle, and child/staff initiated.

## **Behavior Policy**

Atascadero Children's Center recognizes that the majority of behaviors encountered throughout the day are isolated incidents that are both normal and part of the maturing process. However, when a child's behavior becomes consistent, directly affects classroom compliance, is dangerous, and/or disrespects the other children/teachers, immediate action will be taken. If behavior interferes with safety, Atascadero Children's Center has the right to send the child home for the remainder of the day. We intend to maintain a safe learning environment for all and for every child to succeed in our program. Therefore, in alliance with parent/guardians(s) and according to our Behavior Policy intervention will be as follows:

1. The director and parent/guardian(s) agree to facilitate communication in a variety of ways. (Daily progress reports, phone calls, etc.)
2. A director/parent/guardian(s) conference involving both parents. A Plan of Action form will be filled out, which will outline goals and behavior modification ideas. Parent/Guardian(s) and director will sign the form agreeing to consistently follow the Plan of Action.
3. A team meeting between the director, teaching staff, and parent/guardian(s) will be scheduled. At this time, outside resources, such as private counseling, screening through the school district, and a visit to your child's pediatrician will be discussed and eligibility determined. Costs incurred by such resources will be at the parents'/guardians' expense.
4. When/if outside resources are obtained, a multi-disciplinary meeting will take place involving the professionals, the director, the teaching staff, and the parent/guardians(s).

Atascadero Children's Center will monitor program/child compatibility and has the right to use any combination of these intervention techniques to resolve a child's behavior(s). Should any combination of these be deemed necessary and the parent/guardian(s) are not compliant, the child obtains professional help, or the program is not compatible with the child's behavior(s), Atascadero Children's Center reserves the right to terminate care.

# **Biting Policy**

Biting is a typical behavior often seen in infants, toddlers, and young preschoolers. As children mature, gain self-control, and develop problem-solving skills, they usually outgrow this behavior. While biting can be upsetting and potentially harmful, it is, unfortunately, common and developmentally typical.

Children may bite for a variety of reasons. We try to identify the reason behind the biting and help the child find other ways to meet her needs without biting. Some reasons children bite are:

- Relieve pain from teething.
- Experience the sensation of biting.
- Satisfy a need for oral-motor stimulation.
- Feel strong and in control.
- Get attention.
- Act in self-defense.
- Communicate needs and desires, such as hunger or fatigue.
- Communicate or express difficult feelings, such as frustration, anger, confusion, or fear (“There are too many people here and I feel overwhelmed”).

When a child bites we respond with the following steps:

1. In a serious, firm tone, say, “Biting hurts. You can bite food.”
2. Help the child who was bitten. Offer comfort through words and actions: “That hurt! Let’s get some ice.” To help the child who bit understand that biting hurts, we include them in the process of comforting the child and holding the ice pack. First aid will be performed if necessary.
3. Talk to the child who did the biting. Speak in simple words using a calm, firm tone of voice. Try to find out what happened that led to the incident. Discuss (when age-appropriate) how the child can respond to similar situations in the future.
4. Both families will be notified of the incident, via a written report in the sign-in sheet.
5. If a bite breaks the skin, both families will be notified immediately and the child who bit will be sent home.

If the biting continues, we will schedule a meeting with the child’s family and plan an approach for addressing the behavior so that there is consistency between home and school. Generally, our plans will include strategies such as shadowing the child, offering them a teething ring, and offering them words to use when they feel tired/hungry/frustrated/excited. Depending on the underlying cause of the biting, the plan will vary from child to child. It may take a few weeks for the plan to be effective – changing behavior takes time.

If the behavior continues, it may result in the child being removed from the program.



## Positive Guidance

The purpose of discipline is to help children learn ways of behaving that are acceptable to themselves and others. With very young children this is accomplished by setting limits for their safety, the safety of others, and the safety of property. Infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and even school-age children need to be reassured that the people who care for them will guide and protect them. At Atascadero Children's Center, we use positive discipline. Positive discipline does NOT include hitting, slapping, or spanking. We will never humiliate, tease, yell, or embarrass the children. We like to use the following techniques within the proper age and individual needs of each child.

Reminder:	The teacher reminds the child of the limits.
Verbal Redirection:	Redirect the child to another activity.
Praise:	Praising the child who is demonstrating appropriate behavior.
Indirect Praise:	Praising the child who is next to the child who is misbehaving.

We help the aggressor to understand the other child's feelings and talk about his/her own feelings. Older children are encouraged to talk to one another about their actions. However, we never ask the aggressor to apologize, as this may not be his/her true feelings.

When safety is concerned, we use a direct method: act quickly and calmly and talk later. If we feel it is necessary and we are concerned for the other children's safety, you may be asked to pick up your child and schedule a conference concerning the aggressive behavior, and together we will put together a plan of action to help work through this behavior.

\*NOTE: At no time will we take corrective action which includes corporal punishment, verbal abuse, extended exclusion or anything that would deny a child's basic need of nutrition, rest, acceptance, or love. Parents, you must refrain from any discipline that includes hitting, slapping, or spanking your child while on the premises.

# **Admission Procedures**

Before your child may attend our program, all state and ACC required forms must be completed. Forms may vary from one building to another, so you may receive additional forms that need to be completed and turned in before your child moves from one building to another. Along with the required forms, a non-refundable registration fee must be turned in before your child's first day.

## **Registration Fee**

A non-refundable registration fee will be due for all children enrolled. An annual re-registration fee of is due at the time of fall re-registration. In addition, a two-week tuition deposit will be due along with your first month's tuition upon enrollment. A four-week withdrawal notice is required, and your two-week deposit will be applied to the last four weeks.

## **Disaster Kit Fee**

Atascadero Children's Center has a disaster plan which we practice regularly throughout the year with the children to ensure the safety of all children in the event of an emergency. We recognize that having an appropriate plan of action as well as a good food and water supply is necessary. The three-day supply per child will be stored on-site. The disaster kit is required for each child and will stay on site for a complete shelf life of five years.

# **Tuition and Financial Policies**

For your records, our Tax ID number is 42-1653805. Year-end tuition statements are emailed out in January, so it is important to keep your email address updated with both your program director and the bookkeeping email (acc.4bookkeeping@gmail.com) Here are a few guidelines for our financial policy:

- Your invoices and/or statements will be emailed to your email address(es) on file.
- Tuition is due based on your tuition payment plan.
- If tuition is not current, a late fee will be applied according to your tuition payment plan.
- If your entire monthly payment is made in full by the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month you will receive a 1% discount based on that month's tuition. The discount will be applied to the following month's tuition.
- Post-dated checks will not be accepted as pre-payment for any of the above.
- Tuition is charged for days we are closed. (please refer to the holidays page for days closed)
- If all payments are current, a discount will be given for the second child with the lowest tuition. Siblings must be legally related to receive this discount.
- We have an absence credit available to you upon request. See the next page for guidelines. This is not available to families on CCRC.
- Any fees not paid by the final school day of the month may result in your child being excluded from school until both the past due and current fees are paid in full.
- We also realize that problems may arise from time to time. Therefore, we offer a Tuition Payment Plan on a case-by-case basis. This plan may be arranged with your program director and a contract will be issued. A late fee will still be charged to your account until tuition is brought current. If the contract is not upheld your child will be withdrawn from the program immediately. You will still be held to the 4-week withdrawal notice policy and your child may not attend at this time.

## **Absence Credit Policy**

**Absence Credit-** approved for children under the following conditions:

1. The child has been enrolled for one month.
2. The credit may only be used for your child's contracted week.
3. You may use one day at a time, but not exceeding your child's contracted week.
4. Tuition must be current.
5. The child has not exceeded the per year\* credit allowance.
6. Absence credit must be submitted within 30 days of absence. This credit may be used for a holiday, vacation, or illness. When you turn in your request you will see the credit applied to your next statement.
7. Your request must be in writing to your director, either by email or by using this form.

## **School Holidays and Closures**

Scheduled holidays observed by school closure are as follows: (Reminder notices will be posted well in advance of each of these days.) \*\*These dates are subject to change so be sure to read all notices.\*\*

Labor Day

Indigenous Peoples Day

Veteran's Day

Thanksgiving and the day after

Christmas Eve

Christmas Day (depending on where Christmas falls, we may close 3 days)

New Year's Eve

New Year's Day

Martin Luther King Day

President's Day

Memorial Day

Juneteenth

Fourth of July (depending on where the Fourth falls, we may close 2 days)

Teacher Work Days (T.B.A.)

## **Birthdays and Celebrations**

We celebrate birthdays during snack or lunchtime. Your child will have special recognition at that time. If you would like to send a special snack for the occasion, please let your program director know a week before the birthday. We celebrate many holidays and will notify families through signs, newsletters, and emails when families are invited to join us for a celebration. Varying cultural observances will be made to recognize special celebrations from different cultures. Parents should feel free to suggest a wide range of activities pulling from their personal experiences and cultural backgrounds.

## **Attendance**

Please notify the school if your child is unable to attend that day. We appreciate knowing whether your child is ill or absent for another reason. If your child rides an ACC van to or from school you must inform the School-Age Program as early as possible in the day. This prevents our driving staff from being late to drop off or pick up children. You must NOTIFY US IMMEDIATELY if your child has a contagious disease. This enables us to let parents and teachers know that other children may have been exposed. We are required to post notices informing all parents of this.

We are licensed to serve a certain number of children per day, distributed between various programs. Therefore, we cannot grant opportunities to make up lost days or trade days as a result of absences. Please see page 13 regarding absence credits.

## **Drop-off Policy**

At the Beginning Preschool and Toddler Program and the Preschool Program, there are no drop-offs between the hours of 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Please understand that over the years we have found this to be too disruptive to the classes and a difficult transition time for the child arriving. We appreciate your cooperation. Please note this policy is strictly enforced. We do understand that appointments may come up, if they will require a drop-off during these hours, you must let the director know in advance. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause you.

At the School-Age Program, there are no set drop-off restrictions, however, if your child rides the van to school it is your responsibility to have your child at ACC 15 minutes before the van's scheduled leaving time.

## **Schedule Changes**

When you enroll your child, you will sign a Financial Contract, indicating your child's regular schedule. Your tuition fee will be based on this schedule. If your child's schedule changes, a new Financial Contract must be signed. A two-week notice is required for all schedule changes. These changes can only be accommodated within the limits of our capacity and must be APPROVED BY THE DIRECTOR in advance.

## **Withdrawal**

Our program is based on limited enrollment. As a result, there are waiting lists. In order to facilitate a transition from one student to another, we require a 4-week notice of the child's withdrawal from the program. The two-week tuition deposit, paid upon registration, will be applied to your final statement. Although CCRC only requires a two-week notice we require that you must also give us a 4-week withdrawal notice.

## Arrival/Departure

The State of California requires that all children are signed in and out daily. Atascadero Children's Center can be fined up to \$100 for any missing signatures. You must write the time and sign your first and last name for both arrival and departure. Parents on CCRC must sign in and out on both the CCRC form and our form daily. If you fail to sign in and out daily, you may be charged a fee of \$1.00 per day. If for some reason, you are unable to pick up your child at the usual time, you must let us know so that we can explain the situation to your child. Please be prepared to sign a late fee notice for the staff member on duty after 5:30 p.m. The late pick-up fee is \$1.00 per minute per child. Late fees are payable that evening or the following morning in order for your child to return. CCRC does not cover late fees and parents on CCRC will be required to follow the same policy.

No child will be released to a person other than the parent or guardian without authorization by the parent or guardian. These people **must** be on your child's emergency form or a separate note signed and dated with the person's full name and authorization for them to pick up from Atascadero Children's Center. No child will be released to anyone under the age of 18 or without a driver's license. Please inform anyone you authorize to pick up that they will be asked for identification if a staff member has not met them. This is for your child's safety. We will not release your child to you or anyone else if we suspect any alcohol or drug use.

**Do not leave any child in the car unattended while picking up or dropping off your children. This is a California State Law. The staff are mandated by law to enforce this law and report any violations to our local law agency.**

## Car/Booster Seats

ACC staff are mandated by California law to enforce and report any violations to our local law agency. In addition, children can not be unbuckled in a moving vehicle or left unattended at any time on our property. California law states:

- Children under 2 years of age shall ride in a rear-facing car seat unless the child weighs 40 pounds or more OR is 40 or more inches tall. The child shall be secured in a manner that complies with the height and weight limits specified by the manufacturer of the car seat. (California Vehicle Code Section 27360.)
- Children under the age of 8 must be secured in a car seat or booster seat in the back seat.
- Children who are 8 years of age OR have reached 4'9" in height may be secured by a booster seat, but at a minimum must be secured by a safety belt.

# Nutrition

## **Breakfast:**

We do not provide breakfast. However, children who arrive before 7:30 am can be served breakfast that the parent provides. For convenience, a box of cereal may be stored here, we will provide the milk.

## **Snacks:**

Two snacks will be served daily, once in the morning and once after naptime. The snack menu is posted in the lobby monthly, along with a list of the snack items needed. You must sign up once a month to bring in one or two items from the list for your child's class.

## **Lunch:**

You must provide lunch daily for your child. Please send your child's lunch in a bag or lunch box clearly labeled with the child's name. If your child's lunch needs to remain cold please pack it with an ice pack as we can not guarantee refrigerator space for lunches. Parents should send a sufficient amount of appropriate food for their child. The teachers will microwave a meal only if it is placed in a microwaveable container and ready to reheat. Microwaveable food is limited to no longer than 1 minute. Teachers are not licensed in food preparation and therefore are not allowed to open cans, cook food, or prepare food in any way. (i.e. no Cup of Noodles, Easy Mac or frozen entrees). Due to the Department of Health Regulations, once food is served, it may not be saved. Food not taken home at the end of the day will be discarded.

The Preschool and School-Age Programs (during spring break, winter break, and summer program only) offer a hot lunch option on Wednesdays and Fridays for an additional fee. The forms for this service are available for you in the lobby. You may pay that day or you may pay a month at a time.

If you forget your child's lunch, you may purchase it outside and get it to the center before 11:00 a.m. or you may purchase a lunch for \$5.00. **THIS IS FOR EMERGENCIES ONLY.**

## Lunch Time Guidelines

Guidelines to assist with a pleasant, smooth lunchtime:

- The child's first and last name should be clearly labeled on his/her lunch box or bag.
- Lunches should be placed on the shelves provided in each class.
- CANDY, GUM, and SODAS should remain at home, and will not be served if included in your child's lunch.
- Children may not share lunches.
- Thermoses are not recommended (leaky lids are quite messy!)
- Children should bring a clean and full water bottle to school each day, we will fill it up as needed.
- Please limit the amount of sweets you send.
- Take lunch boxes/bags and water bottles home daily.
- Glass containers pose a danger, please use a plastic container or bag for food storage.
- All containers MUST be labeled with your child's name.  
\*We are NOT responsible for lost containers.
- A microwave for heating lunches is available (limited to 1 minute per lunch). Children are not allowed to heat their own lunches.
- Baby bottles are not permitted.

## Immunizations

All children from the Toddler and Preschool Program are required by the Health Department to have all mandatory medical examinations and required immunizations in a timely manner.

All immunizations must be up to date, or a written letter from the doctor stating the reason for the delay and when the child is expected to be immunized must be on file at the center. If you do not obtain the missing immunizations in a timely manner, your child will be excluded until the requirement is met.

With the passing of the Senate Bill 277 in 2015 the only accepted form of opting out of all or any immunizations is a Medical Exemption. You may obtain one from your physician if they feel there is sufficient reason your child should not follow the immunization schedule. We will make a copy to keep in your child's file, you keep the original. In accordance with the Health Department regulations, any child not immunized will be excluded from attendance whenever anyone at the center contracts a contagious disease for which they have not been immunized (except for the covid vaccine, which is not mandatory). The period of exclusion will be until the incubation period of the specific disease is complete.

## Health Policies

All children in attendance at the center are considered healthy enough to participate in ALL activities. Upon your child's arrival, a welcoming staff member will perform an informal health check. Upon your child's arrival, a welcoming staff member will perform an informal health check. Your child may be sent home if they appear to have symptoms of illness. A child who develops any symptoms and/or fever will be immediately isolated from other children and the parent/guardian will be contacted and expected to pick up the child within one hour. **WHEN A CHILD IS SENT HOME WITH SYMPTOMS OF ILLNESS THEY MAY NOT ATTEND SCHOOL THE FOLLOWING DAY. THEY MUST BE SYMPTOM-FREE FOR 24 HOURS WITHOUT MEDICATION** (acetaminophen, ibuprofen, or aspirin may mask fevers). If you are in doubt about your child's health, please keep your child at home and give them the opportunity to rest and recover.

Children with 3 bouts of diarrhea in one day or any amount of vomiting will be sent home. Please keep your child at home until they have had a solid bowel movement and 24 hours after any vomiting. Any type of rash will require a physician's release stating what the rash is and that it is not contagious.

### **KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME:**

- If they have had a fever in the preceding 24 hours.
- If they have a heavy nasal discharge.
- If they have been pulling on ears and complaining.
- If they have vomited in the last 24 hours.
- If they have diarrhea.
- If they have pink-eye.
- If they have head lice, nits and/or bugs.
- If they have a rash.
- If they are fussy or cranky and simply "not themselves."

Help us to keep both our staff and children healthy by abiding by these policies. Please note that all health policies are strictly enforced and a physician's note upon return to school may be requested by the school at any time for any reason.

## **Medication and Medical Services**

The health and safety of your child is of importance to us all. We will work with you and your child's physician to provide all necessary medical services we are trained for. These include administering oral prescription medications, epi-pen, inhaler, nebulizer treatments (a separate form needs to be filled out), ear and eye drops, and a general daily health check. For all medical services, we need a note from your physician AND an authorization form from you. All medications and related equipment are stored in a locked cabinet located in our kitchen. We also have a separate area in our refrigerator labeled for any medications that require refrigeration. They will stay there unless they are being administered or need to be transported with the director in case of a disaster evacuation. All expired or unused medications need to be removed. We will document every time we administer medications on the authorization form. In the event of an emergency, we will contact the parent/guardian, call 911 if needed, and notify Community Care Licensing if needed.

**We can ONLY give PRESCRIPTION medication and only when a Parent Consent Form is filled out by the parent/guardian and we have a Medical Authorization Form from a physician.** All medication must be stored in the original prescription bottle and placed in the locked medicine cabinet or in the refrigerator on the medicine shelf. Please bring a medicine measuring spoon in a plastic bag marked with your child's name. A separate form for children requiring Nebulizer Treatments must be filled out.

NO medications are to be left in the classroom, backpack, cubbies, lunch pails, or diaper bags at any time. This includes sunscreen and topical ointments.

## **Accident/Incident Reports**

We will make immediate attempts to reach a parent/guardian in the event of a head injury or other serious injuries. If we are unable to do so, we will contact the family physician and/or paramedics. It is your responsibility to keep all your emergency phone numbers up-to-date and keep the school informed of any changes in emergency information.

Accident reports will be made for all injuries. One copy will be sent home and one kept in your child's file. Incident reports are written to notify parents of behavioral or inappropriate incidents. One copy will be sent home and one kept in your child's file.

## **Rest Time**

All preschool children that attend full days must rest on their mats from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm. Regulations require that all children in our care have a rest period. Most of our children fall asleep because they are so active during the day. While some children may not sleep, they must rest quietly so as to not disturb the other children. *We cannot make individual exceptions to this activity.*

You will need to provide a labeled crib-size sheet and a small blanket. Because of limited storage facilities, all large blankets and pillows must remain at home. Also, for precautions against spreading lice, pillows are not recommended. Sheets and blankets will be sent home weekly to be laundered. It is a health requirement that a sheet covers mats. Therefore, if your child should not have a sheet and/or blanket, one will be provided. We charge a laundry fee of \$1.00 per item daily.



## **Clothing**

We ask that you dress your child in comfortable, sturdy play clothes. We encourage lots of creative play and the children love messy activities! Children learn by doing. Put them in clothes that will allow them to participate in our creative activities. Send them in sturdy footwear so that climbing and other large motor activities can be done safely.

Be sure that ALL clothing, including socks and shoes, are CLEARLY MARKED with your child's name or initials. Anything that comes to school unmarked may be labeled by your child's teacher. We have a lot of things to keep track of and many times there are multiplies of the same clothing. This helps us not to confuse items of clothing. Our staff are not responsible for any lost or exchanged items and tracking down unlabeled items is often impossible to do.

You must keep at least one set of clothing (weather-appropriate) in your child's cubby or backpack at all times. Occasionally toileting accidents, vomiting, food spills, and messy play occur, which may cause soiling of clothing. We want your child to be warm, dry, and comfortable!

\*Jewelry, watches and any other valuables should be kept at home. These items are cute but not appropriate for school. We will not be responsible for lost or damaged items.

## **Items from Home**

We encourage each child to bring a soft resting toy/animal to use at rest time (Toddler Program and Preschool Program only). This can be a comfort when resting away from home, the chosen toy must be small enough to fit inside your child's cubby.

All other items from home are to be kept at home or in the car and NOT to be brought into the building. We are not responsible for lost or misplaced items.

## **Parent Information**

In our parent/staff team approach, good communication is essential to your child's care and education. Atascadero Children's Center has a variety of ways to promote quality communication between school and home:

Parent boards located near the entrance to each class, with the classroom curriculum

Daily notes

Informal conversations at drop-off or pickups,

Scheduled meetings outside of the classroom as requested by parents/guardians or school staff.

## **Toddler Daily Reports**

(TODDLER PROGRAM ONLY)

In addition to the above, the toddler reports will be found in the lobby sign-in and out area. At drop-off, you must fill out the top portion of these forms, and the teachers will fill the rest out throughout the day. These reports help us to communicate your child's diapering/toileting, food intake, and napping times, along with reminders and a space for you to communicate with us!

# Subsidized Child Care Child Care Resource Connection (CCRC)

Parents in the subsidized child care program must do the following:

The parent or designee must sign the child in and out each day, showing the actual time of arrival and departure. You need to sign the CCRC form as well as our Sign-in-out sheet. This is a state requirement. Your FULL signature is required daily in black or blue INK.

Parents must fill out the CCRC form when their child is absent. THE NATURE OF THE SPECIFIC ABSENCE, (i.e. doctor's appointment, visiting parent/grandparent, fever, flu, etc.) must be stated, "illness" and "sickness" are not acceptable explanations of absences. Remember... be specific! If your child is absent for more than three days you must return with a doctor's note.

CCRC forms MUST be completed at the end of the month. Failure to complete your form on time can result in termination of childcare services. It is the parent's responsibility to keep up on their CCRC forms and make sure they are filled out correctly.

Parents attending school will be responsible for tuition charged when the parent is not in school. Spaces will NOT be held for parents on school break.

Failure to report any changes such as work status or eligibility status will cause your child to be dropped from the program.

The parent is ultimately responsible for all forms and payments not provided by CCRC.

Most families will still have tuition (co-pay) that is due based on your tuition payment plan. A late fee will be charged if no payment is received. If tuition is not paid in full by the end of the month your child will be dropped from the program and late fees will still be assessed for late or missed payments.

*PLEASE NOTE: Your copay is separate from your family fee. If you have any questions regarding your family fee please contact CCRC.*

## Disaster Plan

Atascadero Children's Center has developed plans and preparations for any major emergency. In the event of any disaster or emergency, our primary concern is for the safety and welfare of your children.

We practice our emergency drills with the children throughout the year, so they are prepared for any event. All school personnel are trained in First Aid/CPR and we will be in immediate communication with the local emergency services, and families through all modes of communication available.

## **Kid's Night Out**

On the third Friday of every month, Atascadero Children's Center hosts a "Kid's Night Out" for the Beginning Preschool and Toddler Program (children ages 2 and up), Preschool Program, and School-Age Program. Dinner and an evening of entertainment is provided. This evening can be a great time for your children to enjoy their friends and teachers while you plan your own special evening.

**TIME:** 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Please note that for safety reasons two staff members must be present at all times. Therefore, if you are late there is a \$1.00 per minute fee due at the time

**WHO:** Students and siblings from the age of two and older only, attending the Toddler, Preschool or School-Age Program.

**WHAT TO BRING:** Pajamas, a sleeping bag, a pillow and a stuffed toy. ALL ITEMS CLEARLY MARKED WITH CHILD'S NAME. We will not be held responsible for missing or lost items.

**HOW:** Children must be signed up and prepaid by Thursday morning of that week. All forms must be turned in and completed. Due to staffing requirements, no refunds will be made after Thursday morning. There must be a minimum of 8 children to have this fun-filled event.

**FEES:** \$40.00 per child

Kid's Night Out checks should be kept separate from tuition. If you have any questions, please contact your program director. We are looking forward to lots of fun with your child at KID'S NIGHT OUT!!

# Acknowledgment of Parent Obligations

## **For all Programs:**

*I understand that-----*

ACC staff are mandated reporters. They are obligated and insist that all families follow California state laws. Since this is a private school on private property, we have additional requirements. All current California state car seat laws must be followed. In addition, for the safety of all children, engines must be turned off and no child under the age of thirteen may be left unattended anywhere at any time.

I must give a four-week written notice to withdraw from the program.

Absence credits must be submitted within 30 days of absence.

I will be charged for holidays if my child's scheduled day lands on a holiday.

Tuition is due bi-weekly and must be paid in advance (the first day of my child's scheduled week). Unless other arrangements have been made and authorized by your program's director.

A fee will be charged for late tuition.

No credits will be given for missed days or weeks unless I have submitted an absence request form and meet the requirements. There will be no transfer of days or weeks. All absence credits must be submitted within 30 days of my child's absence in order to be applied.

It is required by the State of California that my child must be signed both in and out by me (or a pre-designated adult substitute at least 18 years old with a photo ID) and note the arrival and departure time and with a full signature. My Child will not be accepted into the program until I have signed in.

If I am on **CCRC**, I must sign in and out on their form as well. If I fail to sign daily I will be charged \$1.00 per day. If I am on CCRC and fail to sign both forms I will be responsible for any part of tuition not paid by CCRC. I am responsible for any payment not paid by **CCRC**. This includes registration fee, tuition, laundry fees, lunch fees, late tuition fees, etc. It is my responsibility to check with my child's caseworker to see if my child's absence (during school breaks, etc.) will be paid for. If **CCRC** does not cover this, then I am responsible for payment.

All communication with staff and other ACC families will be conducted in a discreet and courteous manner. Any communication that is disruptive to our environment may result in immediate termination of care.

No medication, vitamins, any ointment is permitted on site without a doctor's notice and the ACC medication release form completed.

I need to fill out an Extra Day Form - or send an email to the director and give ACC at least a 24 hour notice to be able to add an extra day - extra days must always be approved by the director.

It is my responsibility to provide my child with a nutritious lunch and a full water bottle. I will be charged a \$5.00 lunch fee if I do not provide lunch for my child.

I will be charged a late pick-up fee of \$1 per minute, every minute after my child's scheduled pick-up time.

The use of corporal punishment is strictly prohibited by staff and on ACC property. Discipline procedures are understood as outlined in the Parent Handbook. Staff and Parents/Guardians will maintain a safe program for the children.

ACC has a behavior policy and a child can be sent home if this policy is not adhered to.

All registration forms must be completed and returned before my child's first day of attendance.

ACC has a 24-hour health policy and I will keep my child home if they are showing any signs of illness. I need to inform the school if my child has been diagnosed and/or treated for any communicable disease to allow for any necessary precautions to be taken to prevent any spread.

In the event of a shutdown due to health dept. regulations, weather emergencies, or natural disasters, there will be no tuition refunds.

I understand that there is a 6:1 ratio for ages 18 months through 30 months, a 12:1 ratio for ages 30 months through 5 years, and a 14:1 ratio for school-aged children.

### **Toddler and Preschool Programs:**

*I understand that-----*

I will be charged \$1.00 for each item if I do not bring a clean sheet or blanket for my child.

I will be charged a fee of \$2.00 per diaper and/or wipes if I have not provided these items for my child.

### **School-Age Program:**

*I understand that-----*

I need to notify ACC by 7:30 am (during the school year) and 9:00 am during summer and breaks if my child is absent from the program for any reason.

My child needs to bring a backpack to school each day for personal items and schoolwork.

*I have read and agreed to follow the Atascadero Children's Center program policies and procedures as stated in the Parent Handbook.*

***Failure to comply with these obligations may mean termination of your child's enrollment at Atascadero Children's Center. This form supersedes all previous Parent Obligation and Acknowledgment Forms. All ACC policies and procedures are subject to change with a 30-day written notice.***