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THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM

FAMILY HANDBOOK

Our mission is to strengthen each child's cognitive, language, social, emotional and physical needs as well as, moral development and individual learning styles. These essential building blocks to success are supported through our creative and nurturing child center environment.

**Through A Child's Eyes Pre-K is
funded by a grant from the
Illinois State Board of Education**

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Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

It is our pleasure to welcome your family to the THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM (TACE). The THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM offers the children of a high quality Pre-Kindergarten Program that promotes the social, emotional, cognitive, verbal, creative, and physical development **of eligible children ages 3 to 5.**

As professionals, we strive to work successfully together to meet our common purpose: the provision of a high quality Pre Kindergarten Program that responds to the needs of children and their families.

Using the Creative Curriculum as a framework along with the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards, teachers and teacher assistants emphasize literacy and social-emotional growth. TACE teaching staff also uses the Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment and the Ages and Stages Questionnaire-Social/Emotional (ASQ-SE) tools to help plan for each individual child. Each classroom has bilingual staff to meet the needs of the children.

In the fall of 2014 TACE will be visited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Our goal is to become re-accredited for another 5 years. We are excited about this as we hope you are too. If you like to learn more about NAEYC please visit them online at www.naeyc.org.

TACE is licensed by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.

As a DCFS licensed and NAEYC accredited program, our staff are held to high standards of professionalism and conduct at all times.

We invite you to participate through open communication, regular classroom visits, parent/teacher conferences, cooperation and support. TACE has an open-door policy to all of the parents whose children are enrolled at the preschool. The entire staff of the THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM looks forward to a warm and rewarding relationship with the families that are enrolled in our program. Together we will be making memories that last a lifetime for you and your child.

This handbook was created to assist parents with policies and procedures. Refer to this guide whenever you have a question regarding the program.

Iris Corral, MEd.-IDC III
Director

TABLE OF CONTENT

	page(s)
I. PROGRAM	7-9
For Your Child	
Creative Curriculum for Preschool	
What Happens After Enrollment into the Pre-Kindergarten Program?	
Sample of Daily Schedule	
II. GENERAL INFORMATION	9-12
Purpose/Goals	
History	
Licensing and Accreditation	
Enrollment	
Program Hours	
Program Schedule	
Emergency Closing	
Mandated Reporters of Suspected Abuse and/or Neglect	
Confidentiality	
Hand Washing	
Snacks	
III. GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES	12-17
Arrival and Departures	
Attendance	
Tuition and Fees	
Withdrawing Your Child from the Program	
Grievance Procedure	
Health Requirements	
Illness and Return from Illness	
Head Lice	
Traveling outside of the United States	
Medical Emergencies	
Medication	
Clothing to Wear	
Child's Personal Belongings	
Field Trips	
Birthdays/Special Occasions	

TABLE OF CONTENT (continued)

	Page(s)
IV. BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES/DISCIPLINE	17-19
Discipline as a Process of Teaching	
Biting	
Discipline	
Dismissal from the Program	
V. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	20-22
Communication	
Parent – Teacher Conferences	
Parent Group	
Volunteering	
Visiting	
Parent Newsletter	
Program Contact Information	
VI. CONCLUDING COMMENTS	22

I. PROGRAM

FOR YOUR CHILD

The THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM will provide your child with the opportunity to:

- Grow and develop their feelings of competence, self-worth, independence and success
- Develop an understanding of the natural and social environment in spatial and numerical relationships
- Develop their ability to express their emotions constructively
- Learn to feel psychologically safe, respond appropriately to peers and adults other than their own family members
- Build sound concepts and develop good intellectual habits such as the ability to problem solve, make decisions, persist in the face of difficulty, to reason, concentrate and think creatively
- Establish a foundation for good health and safety habits

Creative Curriculum for Preschool

The THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM is based on the Creative Curriculum for Preschool.

The Creative Curriculum for Preschool is aligned with the Illinois Early Learning Standards.

The Creative Curriculum is structured to provide the child with varied opportunities to learn in all areas: social, emotional, cognitive, creative, language, motor etc.....

The Creative Curriculum and the environment created are the result of careful and detailed planning based upon the best available knowledge of child growth and development.

Through the use of the Creative Curriculum, the teacher considers the group needs of the children, but is mindful that each child is a distinct individual with unique needs, ideas and interests.

The Creative Curriculum offers a balance between the following types of activities:

- Active and quiet times

- Free play and structured activities
- Large and small group activities
- Time to play alone and time to play with others
- Indoor play times
- Child–selected and teacher–directed activities

What Happens After Enrollment into The Pre-Kindergarten Program?

Your child has been determined eligible for enrollment into the THROUGH A CHILD’S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM.

Appropriate activities will be offered in the classroom to your child to ensure that your child’s individual needs and classroom goals are met. These activities will be incorporated into the weekly classroom lesson plans that will be posted in each classroom.

To document your child’s progress, samples of the child’s work (drawing, cutting examples, writing, etc.) will be collected throughout the year and kept in each child’s portfolio.

Your child’s teacher, in collaboration with the assistant teacher will assess his/her progress using Teaching Strategies GOLD. T.S. GOLD is an online assessment tool developed by the authors of the Creative Curriculum which allows teachers to document individual and group observations, store artifacts, complete the developmental continuum assessment and, communicate with families.

Parent Teacher conferences will take place twice a year: In November and in May.

Parents have the right to ask to meet with your child’s teachers any time during the school year.

Sample of Daily Schedule

The daily schedule of the THROUGH A CHILD’S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM is integrated with themes, units of study and seasonal topics that are woven into the children’s work in the classroom learning centers, individualized activities, and both small and large group activities.

A sample of daily schedule for your child would be:

- 15 minutes - children reading books-small group,
- 10 minutes - bathroom,
- 20 minutes - circle time,
- 60 minutes - learning centers,
- 10 minutes - clean up,
- 20 minutes - gross motor,
- 10 minutes – transition time(s)
- 5 minutes - get ready to go home

Total time - 150 minutes or a 2 1/2-hour session

During each of the 2 1/2-hour session, a minimum of two books are to read aloud to the children that focus on the classroom theme, unit of study and seasonal topics.

Each classroom will have learning centers. Learning center will be aligned to the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards and consist of both teacher directed and child directed activities. The activities of the learning centers will correlate with the classroom theme, unit of study and seasonal topics.

A language and literacy development program, based upon Scientifically-Based Reading Research aligned with Illinois Early Learning Standards, will be implemented for each child based upon that child's individual assessment.

II. GENERAL INFORMATION

Purpose/Goals

The purpose of THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM is to provide a high quality pre-kindergarten program that responds to the needs of children and their families in the Town of Cicero. Our goal is to provide a safe and nurturing environment that promotes the social, emotional, cognitive, verbal, creative, and physical development of the young child.

History

THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM is funded through a grant from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE).

Licensing and Accreditation

THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM is currently licensed by Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS).

THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM is current accredited by the National Association of Education for Young Children.

Enrollment

THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM provides services to children three years of age to five years of age determined eligible for pre-kindergarten at risk program services. Children will be admitted and accorded equal treatment and access to services without regard to race, creed, and sex, religious or ethnic affiliations.

Children with an original birth certificate showing that they are between the ages of 3 and 5 and 3 proofs of residence in Cicero are eligible for a screening. Screenings are completed using the Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of children, 3rd Edition (Dial-3).

Children are accepted in the program based on availability if they show a 3 to 6 month delay in one or more areas of development based on Dial-3 results and/or if the family scores high on the at risk criteria questionnaire.

Assessments

TACE uses the Ages and Stages-Social Emotion (ASQ-SE) and the Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment tool to assess the children in the program. These tools help the teachers plan appropriately to meet children’s individual needs.

Program Hours

The THROUGH A CHILD’S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM hours are as follows:

**MONDAY TO FRIDAY
AUGUST TO JUNE**

A.M. Session	8:30 A.M. to 11:00 A.M
P.M. Session	12:00 P.M. to 2:30 P.M.

Program Schedule

The THROUGH A CHILD’S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM should pretty much follow the schedule of Cicero School District # 99. A copy of the current schedule for the current school year will be made available to each parent.

Emergency Closing

The THROUGH A CHILD’S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM reserves the right to be closed in case of severe weather or in case of an emergency.

Information on school closings can be obtained online at www.emergencyclosings.com.

THROUGH A CHILD’S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM may be forced to close due to unforeseen loss of water or electrical power. If this situation should occur, you will be notified to pick up your child early. If you can not be reached, we will contact the individuals listed on your child’s emergency form. It is important to keep your child’s emergency form up to date and accurate.

Mandated Reporters of Suspected Abuse and/or Neglect

All of the staff members of the THROUGH A CHILD’S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM are mandated reporters. If a staff member suspect’s possible abuse and/or neglect of a child, the staff member is required to notify the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) by calling the hotline (1-800-25-ABUSE).

The following is the THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM'S **POLICY on CHILD ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT**

1. All staff members of the THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM are required to report suspected child abuse and/or neglect in accordance with Illinois State law. The THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM is required to have a written policy indicating compliance with that law.

It is not the place of our staff to determine that a child is or is not being abused, but **ONLY TO REPORT SUSPECTED ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT.**

2. If a teacher or other staff member observes bruises, scars, burns, or other marks that might be the result of abuse, the staff notes this in a written staff observation and immediately informs the director of the situation.

3. A child is being neglected when he/she is not provided with adequate food, clothing, medical attention, or protection. **IF WE SUSPECT ANY OF THESE CONDITIONS;** the staff notes this in a written staff observation and immediately informs the director of the situation.

4. A staff member, under the direction of the director, may seek to inform the parent of the situation and try to secure parent cooperation in making this report. The parent's explanation of the child's bruise, etc. will be recorded along with the staff observation.

THE STAFF OBSERVATION WILL BE REPORTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES (DCFS) WITH OR WITHOUT PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

5. If a parent or family refuses to talk with the staff about the observed bruises, scars, burns, etc., or a child does not attend school after inquiries are made with the family, an additional report to D.C.F.S. may be made to share this information.

6. If a parent shares with the staff his/her concern that he/she may be abusing a child or children, the staff will work to help this parent get needed services and will support the family in reporting the situation to The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.

Confidentiality

Parents are permitted to examine any records or reports on their child that are on file with THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM. Any information contained in your child's file will not be released except with written consent of the parent/legal guardian.

The only exceptions to the above are for regulatory bodies that have responsibility to monitor our center and/or if they are court ordered. These include the Illinois State Board of Education and the Department of Children and Family Services.

Hand Washing

The THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM supports the concept that hand washing is a simple and easy way to stop the spread of germs. Children are instructed to wash their hands several times during the day:

- ✓ upon arrival at the center,
- ✓ before and after each meal and snack,
- ✓ after using the toilet or having diapers changed,
- ✓ after handling animals,
- ✓ after wiping or blowing his nose,
- ✓ after touching items soiled with body fluids or waste, (i.e. blood, drool, urine, stool, or vomit),
- ✓ before and after cooking experiences,
- ✓ after the gym, and
- ✓ before and after using the water table,
- ✓ as needed.

All children must wash their hand **UPON ARRIVAL** at THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM with soap and water before entering the classroom. This not only reduces the amount of germs coming into the school, it is a positive transition activity for the parent and child. This is also a DCFS requirement.

NAEYC also requires that children wash their hands with soap and water in the morning when they enter the classroom. Teachers will also continue having children wash their hands with soap and water during the day. If your child is too young to wash their hands by themselves, you must assist them. Your encouragement of this simple self-help skill will make it a healthy habit for your child. Using hand sanitizer or any other alcohol-based products are not an appropriate method of killing germs and is allowed in the school.

Snacks

THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM shall provide healthy and nutritious snacks. Families receive monthly snack menus.

III. GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

Arrival and Departure

The THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM has no provisions for transportation to and from the various program sites. When a child arrives or departs from the THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM each child must be accompanied by a parent, guardian, or other authorized person who is 18 years of age or older.

The parent, guardian, or other authorized person who is 18 years of age or older that is accompanying the child to school must bring the child to the child's classroom and they must sign the "sign-in" sheet and provide an emergency phone number. They must see the teacher to ensure that staff is aware of the child's arrival and waits until the teacher conducts a health check. Arriving late is not good for the child. He/she may miss an activity, and it may cause the child undue concern and also require additional staff time.

The parent, guardian, or other authorized person who is 18 years of age or older that is picking up the child must pick up the child from the child's classroom and they must sign the "sign-out" sheet located in each classroom. They must see the teacher to ensure that staff is aware of the child's departure. Parents must call the office at (708) 222-1077 if they are running late. It is important to keep your contacts updated at least every other month. Parents must inform the office of any change in address, phone number, etc. to ensure that all current information is on file at all times. If we are unable to contact the parent of anyone on the Emergency Contact sheet (after various attempts), a call to the police may be considered.

Written permission must be provided for the child's file. If anyone other than parents will be picking up the child, that person's name must appear on the pick up sheet. Persons picking up child for the first time or who are not recognized by the staff must show photo identification.

If there are any restrictions as to who may not pick up the child, the THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM must be notified. It is the enrolling parent's responsibility to notify the THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM of any changes in custody, court orders, orders of protection, etc.

Parents must fill out an emergency contact form for their child. This form is completed at the time of the child's enrollment in the program and updated as needed by the parent. Listed on that form is an approved listing of people that can pick-up your child. It is important to keep your child's emergency form up to date and accurate. You as the child's parent are obligated to update the emergency form as needed. Parents can send or fax a letter along with a copy of their picture ID.

If for any reason the pick up person appears to be unable to transport a child in a safe manner (i.e. an appearance of being under the influence of alcohol, drugs, prescription medication or ill health), pick up will be denied. Pick up and transitioning your child from school to home is very important. Please, choose the people picking up your child carefully.

Attendance

All children enrolled in the THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM must be dropped off by the scheduled beginning of the class time and picked up by the scheduled ending of the class time. Any exceptions must be cleared with the director.

Families are given a 10 minute grace period to drop off children in their classroom. After 8:40 a.m. and 12:10 p.m., children will not be accepted in their classroom.

Tuition and Fees

No tuition or fees will be assessed for THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM.

Withdrawing Your Child From The Program

Parents are requested to give a two weeks notice when withdrawing their child from the THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM. A form is available in the administrative office for parents to sign. Any personal belongings left after the child's scheduled last day in school will be kept at the THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM for 30 calendar days after that date. After 30 calendar days the items will be donated to other programs or classrooms.

Grievance Procedure

We at the THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM will work hard to satisfy you by providing an accessible and customer friendly environment. With service as important and as complex as the teaching of children, differences may arise. If you are troubled by something that may have occurred in the classroom, or if you feel the quality of care your child is receiving has changed, or is being compromised, discuss it first with your child's teacher at an appropriate time and setting. If you feel that your concern has not been addressed appropriately, talk with the Director and, if necessary, schedule a date and time to meet with the teacher and the Director. If not resolved at that level, the parent may ask the Executive Director of Through A Child's Eyes to be involved. Our goal is to resolve conflict as quickly and completely as possible.

Health Requirements

THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM requires that at the time of enrollment, each child have a current physical & dental examination, current vaccination records, results of a Tuberculosis test as well as Lead testing. All health requirements must have been completed within six months of initial enrollment.

Illness/Return from Illness

If your child becomes sick or is unable to participate in the classroom with the other children while at the THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM, you will be called to pick-up your child as soon as possible. If the parents cannot be reached, the people listed on your child's emergency form will be contacted to pick-up your child. Emergency forms should be updated regularly. It is imperative that the information on the emergency form is accurate and current.

The following are indications of illness for which a child should remain at home, or will be sent home if observed while in attendance at the THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM:

Fever (101 degrees or higher)
Head Lice

Scabies
Vomiting
Diarrhea (three or more in a four hour period)
Communicable rashes (Chicken Pox, Roseola, Ringworm, etc.)
Impetigo
Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)
Strep Throat
Scarlet Fever
Thrush
Bronchitis
Pin Worms
Ringworm
All other communicable diseases that are considered contagious.

Your child **must be fever-free for 24 hours** before returning to school. If your child is absent due to a contagious illness/disease or due to an illness for three (3) days or more, a note from the doctor **will** be required. Cooperation with these guidelines will minimize your child's exposure to illness at school. Also, please alert school if your child contracts a contagious illness so that we may alert other parents to check their child for symptoms.

Head Lice

As a preventative measure the THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM, all children will receive a daily head check.

If a child is suspected of having head lice, the parent will be notified so that the child can be taken home and treated. Information will be given to the parent about the necessary treatment.

The child must be symptom-free (free of nits and lice) before returning to the program. Proof of treatment is necessary (as indicated by label from bottle and receipt). An adult must accompany the child upon the child's return to school.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

In the event of a medical emergency, the THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM will take the actions necessary to respond to the child's medical needs.

In case of slight injury, the staff will clean the wound or apply ice or bandages, and fill out an accident report for the parent to sign. Parent will be called as soon as possible about the incident.

In the event of a medical emergency, 911 and the parent's of the child will be contacted immediately. Usually the child will be taken to the nearest hospital by the paramedics. The teacher or supervisor will accompany the child in the ambulance and will remain with the child until the parent arrives. Parents should go directly to the hospital emergency room, since the hospital will not administer treatment without parental permission.

Medication

The THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM is only allowed to administer 2 types of medication to an enrolled child which are for asthma and allergies. All other medication must be given to the child by their parent or guardian outside of the regular program hours.

For Asthma: The parent will provide the center with an Asthma Action Plan (completed by a physician), Medical Consent Form and medication. Once the forms are all completed and turned in, the classroom teachers will be informed and trained on how to administer the medication. A medication log sheet will be kept and all medication administered will be document and tracked. Asthma medication will be kept close to the teachers at all times and out of the reach of children.

For Allergies: Parents are required to provide the center with a doctor's note stating the allergy and instructions for the administering of the medication (Epinephrine). A completed Medical Consent form along with the medication will be turned in to the classroom teachers. Once the forms are completed, the staff will be trained on how to administer the medication. A log sheet will be kept documenting every single dosage given to a child. EPI pen(s) will be clearly labeled and kept close to the teachers at all times, especially when going outside. Parent(s) will be immediately informed when medication is administered. Medication will be kept out of the reach of children at all times.

Clothing To Wear To The Center

Children should arrive at the THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM dressed for comfort and messy play. Clothing should allow for self-help skills. Gym shoes are the appropriate footwear recommended for safety and socks must be worn at all times. Opened toe sandals are not permitted. Remember to always have an extra-set of clothing for you child at school.

The Department of Child and Family Services (DCFS) requires that we conduct monthly unannounced fire drills. It is therefore essential that children come dressed appropriately for the weather, especially during cold months.

Child's Personal Belongings

The THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM is not responsible for damage to or loss of personal belongings brought to the center. Please leave toys at home. Talk with your child's teacher about Show and Tell day. Guns, war toys, knives, or other violent toys will not be allowed. It is recommended that children not wear expensive jewelry to school.

Field Trips

On-site field trips and/or family night field trips are incorporated into the educational program provided by the THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM. Parents are

always welcome to attend any of these special activities. This is a wonderful sharing experience for you and your child.

Birthdays/Special Occasions

The THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM will recognize each child in a special way in the classroom on his/her birthday. The teacher may announce the birthday during group time, and plan to do something to make the day special for the child; i.e., make a crown for the child, decorate his/her chair, let the child choose the story for the day, etc. Parents are welcome to spend the day with their child.

Birthdays will be celebrated in the classrooms once a month. Please coordinate with the parents of the children whose birthdays are in the same month as your child. Together you can come to an agreement as to who will bring certain items. Birthday treats brought in any day other than the designated day will be turned away.

There is a list of approved foods that parents must follow. Healthy and nutritious snacks are encouraged. Health regulations prohibit home-baked goods, but store bought items in their original packaging are welcome. Sorry, no goody bags are allowed. **ALL OUTSIDE FOOD MUST BE IN THEIR ORIGINAL PACKAGING.**

IV. Behavior Management Procedures/ Discipline

Discipline as a Process of Teaching

We at the THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM view discipline as a process of teaching child self-control by setting consistent limits and if needed enforcing limits.

- Clear rules and limits are explained in a basic nonjudgmental manner.
- Children are encouraged to verbalize their feelings.
- Children are offered alternatives to unacceptable behavior, redirected, encouraged stopping and thinking about their choices
- Children are verbally rewarded for acceptable behavior.
- Staff members encourage the development of language and verbal expression, and sharing feelings. This assists children in using words rather than physical aggression to solve difficulties.
- Parents will be notified of any ongoing behavior problems to discuss how to motivate their child toward acceptable behavior.

If a child displays violent, aggressive or inappropriate behavior that adversely affects the whole group, the child may be placed in time out, if necessary, or removed from the classroom by a staff member.

Biting

Biting is a common developmental behavior for young children. There are several reasons why a child may bite. These reasons include:

- Young children explore by placing objects in their mouths.
- Young children may not have verbal skill to express themselves.
- Biting often results from frustration.
- Children may be hungry, tired, or irritable.

When biting occurs:

- The biting child is calmly removed from the situation and redirected to another activity.
- Statements such as "You do not bite. It hurts." or "Biting is not allowed. It hurts people." are used.
- The bitten child is consoled and the bite is quickly cleaned. Ice is placed on the bite to decrease the likelihood of swelling or bruising.
- The child who has bitten is "shadowed" to help staff understand what may be causing the child to bite so that further incidents can be prevented.

Things we will not do

- Bite the child back,
- Encourage the other child to bite the child back,
- Call the child names such as "bad", "naughty", or
- Tell other parents who did the biting.

DISCIPLINE

The philosophy of the THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM on discipline is that no physical or mental punishment is ever acceptable.

We at the THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM view discipline as a process of teaching child self-control by setting consistent limits and if needed enforcing limits.

1. Consistent reminder of simple rules
2. Redirect child to another activity
3. Time out, if necessary and no more than 1 minute per year of age.

It is the policy of the THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM to discipline children with firmness, fairness, and kindness.

A child may be given a short time-out if his/her activities are inappropriate in a group setting. He/she may be removed from the group and the teacher will suggest that he child think about their actions and let the teacher know when he/she is ready/able to rejoin the group

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT OR THE WITHHOLDING OF FOOD AS PUNISHMENT IS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN.

Parents will be encouraged to follow this policy when dealing with their children within our programs/building.

The philosophy of the THROUGH A CHILD’S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM on discipline is that no physical or mental punishment is ever acceptable.

Teachers will meet with parents if this type of discipline is not effective in order to work with them in the best interests of their child.

Dismissal from the Program

Dismissal from the THROUGH A CHILD’S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM may occur if a child is not ready for a group experience because of developmental, emotional, behavioral, or learning problems. Every effort will be made to avoid dismissal. However, the decision rests with the Director after efforts, including parent-teacher conferences, have failed. The center reserves the right to take immediate action if there is an issue of safety.

If it becomes necessary to dismiss a child from the center, the Director will give the parent advance notice and will offer assistance in making alternative arrangements for the child. Reasons for dismissal include, but are not limited to a child's lack of readiness for group experiences due to severe developmental, emotional, behavioral and/or learning problems

Suggested Guidelines for Dismissal from the Program

1. Parents are kept informed of specific concerns through phone contact, conferences, etc. by teacher and director.
2. A meeting is scheduled with staff and family to discuss and plan for possible solutions for continued placement.
3. Once all resources are exhausted and no feasible alternatives can be provided in the present program, a last day will be scheduled within two weeks.
4. Known available resources are shared with parent. Parents will be asked to participate throughout the entire process,
5. In the event that emergency conditions require a dismissal procedure which does not meet the above criteria, reasons for the departure must be presented clearly in written form and approved by the Executive Director of Through A Child’s Eyes. Reason for immediate dismissal must be presented to the child's family. A written summary of such action is placed in the child's folder.

V. PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Communication

The THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM believes that families are the primary caregivers and educators of their child. Family participation, including both the mother and father, is a foundation of the program. In order to build a positive environment for young children, a strong connection between families and teacher is essential. One way to establish this strong connection is through effective communication with each other.

Parents are encouraged to:

- Talk with your child's teacher on a daily basis about eating habits, behavior, activities, learning of new skills, friends, or other "happenings" in your child's day.
- If you are troubled by something that may have occurred in the classroom, discuss it with your child's teacher at an appropriate time and setting. Open, respectful communication often clarifies a situation before it becomes a problem.
- If you feel the quality of education your child is receiving has changed, or is being compromised, talk with your child's teacher or the Director.
- A child's behavior can be affected by upsets in the home routine such as a death of a pet, illness of a family member, moving, etc. Talk with your child's teacher about events at home that change family routines.
- Let your child's teacher know you appreciate the teacher's efforts.

Teachers will provide parents with:

- A weekly oral or written progress report on their child's progress.
- A checklist and a written report will be completed by the teacher on each child two times a year. The checklist is aligned to the Illinois Early Learning Standards, to report on your child's progress.
- The opportunity to attend parent-teacher conferences two times a year.
- The ability to meet with their child's teacher, on a one on one basis, any time during the school year, when requested by the parent, to review their child's progress.
- Let the child's parents know that the teacher appreciates the parent's efforts.

Parent–Teacher Conferences

The THROUGH A CHILD’S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM will have Parent-Teacher Conferences that will be held two times a year (in November and in May). During these Parent–Teacher Conferences, the parents and teachers will discuss the child's present and future progress, interests, learning, as well as any problems or difficulties the child may be experiencing. Along with the conference, the teacher will have prepared an individual developmental checklist. Individual goals will be developed during the conference with the parent's input. If the parents are unable to attend this conference; a telephone conference may be scheduled.

Parent Group

The THROUGH A CHILD’S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM recognizes that raising a child in today's world can be very stressful. The THROUGH A CHILD’S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM will provide parents with support groups and parent workshops. The support groups and the parent workshops will be offered in a comfortable, nonjudgmental atmosphere in which parents can learn effective ways to deal with their children.

Parent workshops will be offered once a month. Each parent workshops, designed for both the mother and father, will focus on the developmental areas for a child as well as other identified topics of interest with an emphasis on:

- literacy,
- positive behavior approaches and social interactions,
- the transition to kindergarten, coping with a multicultural society, and
- connecting families to community organizations.

Each parent workshop will be offered at 11:00A.M.on the scheduled days.

Parental Visiting/Volunteers/Parent Committee

The THROUGH A CHILD’S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM strongly believes that the connection between home and the school is an extremely important component in a child's educational experience. Statistics on this topic appear to indicate that parent involvement is an important indicator of a child's success in school. There are many ways that parents can be involved in their child's pre-kindergarten experience and we hope to be able to maximize the level of each parent’s involvement.

The THROUGH A CHILD’S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM has an open-door policy. Parents are always welcome to visit the center and their child's classroom. **Remember: Parents who volunteer in a classroom on a regular basis must have a current T.B. test on file at the school.** We encourage parents to visit their child's classroom as frequently as possible. By having parents visit their child’s classroom we can bridge the gap between home and school.

Parents are also encouraged to volunteer in their child's classroom at least once a month. Volunteers can engage in a wide variety of tasks such as: helping in the classroom,

making materials to be used in the school, serving as a tutor, assisting in field trips, bringing in cultural items, serving as Parent Representatives, etc.

Parents will be encouraged to serve, as a volunteer or as Parent Representatives. As a Parent Representative, you will be able to provide feedback and ongoing evaluations of the program. The Parent Committee will assist the program to make changes that will enhance the quality of the program provided and plan activities for the next school year.

FAMILY NEWSLETTERS

The THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM will provide a monthly newsletter for the families.

Families will also receive a classroom newsletter by the first Friday of every month.

Program contact information:

Through a Child's Eyes Pre-K
5310 W. 24th Place
Cicero, IL 60804
(708) 222-1077
Fax (708) 222-1862

VI. CONCLUDING COMMENTS

We at the THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM hope this handbook will be of use to you as an initial orientation to our center and for future use.

We at the THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM want you to know, to understand, and to discuss our goals with us.

We at the THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM want you to look often into our busy, happy, noisy, creative classroom and see your child at play.

We at the THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM want you to realize the validity of the play-taking place in the classrooms and the importance of what your child is learning through that play.

We at the THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM firmly believe that parents and teachers working together can help children to fully develop.

If you need additional information, talk with your child's teacher or the Director. Your suggestions, comments, and feedback on the program provided by the THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES PRE-K PROGRAM are always welcome as we continually strive for the highest quality of care for children and families.