

**ST. MARY VILLA
CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER**



PARENT HANDBOOK

(REVISED 2007)

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St. Mary Villa Child Development Center

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Parent Handbook of Programs, Policies and Procedures

Welcome to St. Mary Villa Child Development Center!

The following information is intended to inform and guide you as we work together to provide the very best child care experience and developmental opportunities for your child(ren).

We are dedicated to working with you and recognize the central importance of communication to our success. We encourage questions and comments. We invite compliments and criticisms.

All doors are open to you at all times; please visit when convenient, volunteer whenever possible and stay in touch with us.

OUR MISSION

St. Mary Villa, Inc. is a not-for-profit organization affiliated with the Catholic Church dedicated to providing affordable day care, after-school care and educational programs for infants and pre-school children of all faiths in a safe, healthy, nurturing and multicultural environment, promoting intellectual, physical, social and moral development of the child.

-Adopted by the St. Mary Villa Board of Trustees on April 25, 2006

History

The St. Mary Villa Child Development Center was opened to provide full-time day care in September, 1978 after having served the community as an orphanage for over 100 years. St. Mary Orphanage opened in May, 1864 and moved to the present White Bridge Road location in 1903. In 1922, St. Mary Orphanage became a charter member of the United Way, and funding today is still provided in part by the United Way.

General Program Description

St. Mary Villa is a private, non-profit corporation licensed and monitored by the State of Tennessee Department of Human Services. The local Metro Nashville Departments of Health and Fire also license, inspect and approve our operations.

A summary of the State licensure standards are included as an attachment in this handbook and complete versions are available in the administrative offices at the Center or online at http://www.tennessee.gov/humanserv/adfam/cc_main.htm.

St. Mary Villa participates in the Tennessee Star Quality Program, earning the highest three star rating for quality services that exceed minimum licensing standards; an annual report card that represents agency performance is issued and is displayed near the Center entrances.

St. Mary Villa serves over 200 children from six weeks of age to five years old in developmentally appropriate spaces from nursery to classrooms as well as offering plentiful outdoor play areas.

Our daily interactions and activities are based on age-appropriate developmental expectations and individual goals established for each child in conjunction with the family.

Communications

Parents can expect to receive daily verbal and written information regarding their child's experiences.

Conversation with the classroom staff at arrival and departure are casual but important opportunities to share your child's and parental expectations.

Conferences to set and review your child's individual developmental goals will be scheduled once a year; conferences to address specific developmental, academic, behavioral or other concerns will be requested when needed.

Parents and family members will be invited to participate in annual educational and awareness meetings on topics relevant to families and children, including child abuse prevention and recognition.

Daily and weekly activity and performance summaries will be available in the classroom.

Other communications may come via scrolling messages on the keypad when signing in or out; or written memos and notices in assigned mail slots.

Menus and activity plans will be posted for each classroom; activity schedules will include any planned video/movie presentations with notation of ratings when applicable.

Administrative and classroom staff is available whenever you have questions, compliments or concerns.

Volunteers Encouraged and Welcome

Parents are encouraged to participate in classroom activities and to collaborate with teachers to organize activities.

Birthday parties and special holiday or seasonal events are always center sponsored to eliminate pressure and expectations on family resources; however, family donations and participation are appreciated. Please collaborate with teachers to learn how to contribute.

Parents are urged to participate in spring and fall season playground maintenance days that include yard work such as mulching, planting and trimming as well as cleaning equipment.

Fees

St. Mary Villa fees are based on a “sliding scale” that changes with household income. A copy of the current scale is included in this handbook as an attachment.

Fees are determined on the basis of documented annual gross household income, including any funds received from employment, child support, alimony, family contributions and other sources. Pay stubs and Internal Revenue Service documents are accepted as verification.

Families are required to complete an annual income statement for purposes of qualifying children for federal food subsidies.

Families are expected to report changes in household income whenever they occur, including loss of income or increased income that would affect their fee determination.

A fee statement is prepared and delivered to your center mail slot the first of each month.

Fees are charged on a monthly basis. Fees are due the first of each month, however parents may choose to pay in two payments, half on the first of the month and the remainder on the 15th of the month.

Fees are charged and due regardless of absence due to illness or vacation.

Fee boxes located near the entrances should be used for checks or money orders. Cash payments are accepted in the business office between 7:30 and 4:00 Monday through Friday.

Families may request special fee consideration, such as a deferred payment plan, due to emergency circumstances and household problems affecting their ability to pay as agreed. Requests should be made to the Executive Director or Business Manager.

Failure to pay fees is grounds for dis-enrollment.

Application and Enrollment

A completed application and \$20.00 fee is required to begin the admissions process or place your child on a waiting list. A copy of the application is included as an attachment to this handbook.

At the time of enrollment, a \$30.00 registration fee and \$20.00 sleeping mat charge are required, except there is no mat charge for infants.

Enrollment will begin with an orientation to the information in this handbook, a tour and introductions to staff and teachers.

Upon admissions parents are required to provide a birth certificate and an up-to-date immunization record for children.

Parents will be requested to complete forms that provide contact and emergency information as well as information on their child's unique needs, expectations and issues to address in the transition. This is intended to be the beginning of a dialogue between staff and family that continues.

Withdrawal and Dis-enrollment

Notice of plans to withdraw a child from the program are requested as early as possible and in writing. A form included in this handbook as an attachment is provided.

A minimum of two weeks notice is required. Failure to provide the required two weeks notice will result in an additional two weeks charge being added to the final bill.

A child may be dis-enrolled from the program if, in the judgment of classroom and administrative staff, the child is at risk or places others at risk of harm due to physical or behavioral conditions that are beyond the control of the program. Parents will be involved in efforts to ameliorate such conditions but when necessary given adequate notice and assistance in finding alternative appropriate care.

Parking and Driving

Please observe the driveway speed limit directional signs.

Park only in areas striped for parking. Also we ask that you honor the orange cones that restrict auto access to areas of the driveway and parking lot.

A few parking spaces are assigned to parents only but all other parking areas are open to you as well.

It is dangerous to park on the roadway and exit to cross the drive especially with small children. Lock the doors and do not leave your car running while entering the facility.

Security

St. Mary Villa is committed to providing a secure and safe environment for your child as well as peace of mind for the family.

Entrances to the program are controlled by keypad locks with codes issued only to families and staff and subject to periodic change.

Areas of the premises are monitored by exterior and interior cameras.

Children are under the constant supervision of staff that is recognized as the first and most effective source of our security.

Holiday and Training Calendar

St. Mary Villa is closed for selected holidays and three days of in-service training each year.

The training days are scheduled within the year to coincide with professional and trade conventions and meetings; specific dates will be posted and families informed with sufficient time to make alternative arrangements.

The following holidays are observed:

- New Year's Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

Weather and Emergency Related Closings

Expect us to be open!

St. Mary Villa intends to be open during all seasons and weather conditions, however, the Executive or Program Director may determine when it is necessary to close or curtail operations because of winter storms, tornados, power failures, or other emergencies.

Information regarding closings will be shared with television, radio and print media.

If conditions or events require closing during a day of operations, parents will be contacted directly; however, children will remain in care under supervision in a safe setting until picked up by a responsible adult.

In the event that the St. Mary Campus must be evacuated due to an environmental or building emergency, teachers and children will be transported to the St. Ann's School gymnasium, located at 5101 Charlotte Avenue.

Arrival - Departure and Sign In/Out

The Center is open Monday through Friday, 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

There is a keypad at each entrance for parents to enter a unique code for their child when they arrive and depart.

A sign-in and sign-out sheet maintained by the classroom staff must also be signed when the child is transferred into or out of the care of the classroom staff.

Children will only be allowed to leave the Center with the parent(s) or authorized adults specified on the pick-up list. If an adult other than those specified arrives to pick up the child, the child will not be allowed to leave the premises except in emergency circumstances with specific, documented parent approval and proof of identity of other designated adults.

Late Pick Up

If a child is picked up after 6:00 p.m., a late pick-up charge of \$1.00 per minute will be assessed.

Notice of Absence or Late Arrival

Parents are requested to inform teachers as soon as possible of plans to be absent.

In the case of an unplanned absence or a late arrival, parents are expected to inform the center before 10 AM.

Children who arrive after 10 AM without prior notice may not be included in the lunch count for prepared meals.

Children absent without notice for two weeks may be dis-enrolled from the program.

Food

Nutrition is an important part of the program. A nutritious breakfast, lunch, mid-morning juice, and mid-afternoon snack are served each day. The menu and food are planned in accordance with State Day Care and USDA CCFP regulations. Weekly menus are posted on bulletin boards. If a child requires a special diet due to food allergies, *a doctor's written statement is needed*, along with a list of allowed and prohibited foods.

We will make every effort to accommodate religious and cultural dietary requirements. Please discuss your child's needs with the administrative staff.

Meals are served family style in the classroom at a common table and provide rich opportunities for learning and socializing.

Confidentiality

Personal financial, medical, family and child information will be held in confidence and not shared outside or in the center beyond those you have entrusted with the information as responsible for administrative and child caring functions.

Staff is, however, professionally and legally obligated to report suspected child abuse and neglect, including identifying information and specifics of their concern.

With parental consent on a form provided as an attachment to this handbook: 1) photographs of children may be used in public relations, website graphics, newspapers and other publications; and 2) pictures may be taken of center events such as birthdays, holiday activities and special celebrations.

Discipline and Behavior Management

The purpose of discipline is to help children gain self-control and understand their behavior including its' consequences for themselves and others.

Children should know what is expected of them and limits to acceptable behavior before activities and events.

The application of discipline is recognized as an important teaching and learning opportunity.

Methods of discipline used include:

1. Reinforcing acceptable behavior (I like the way you are climbing).
2. Reasoning (when you run inside you may fall down).
3. Removal from an activity with redirection (when you hit someone with a block, you can't play with blocks).
4. Taking away privileges if close to the time the inappropriate behavior occurred.
5. One on one attention, separated from the group until self control is achieved.

Rewards can be used to reinforce positive behavior (ex. stickers and stars, praise, being a helper, first to do something special).

Food, toileting, or outside play (which includes swimming) should not be used as part of any disciplinary action.

Corporal punishment in any form is not used under *any* circumstances.

Referral for Evaluation

Children presenting medical, behavioral, learning or emotional problems that challenge their ability to participate in and benefit from the St. Mary Villa program may be recommended for evaluation by an appropriate professional or organization, such as the Metro Nashville Public Schools in their Special Education program.

The purpose of the evaluation is to determine the child's needs and identify the best service site and provider to meet those needs.

St. Mary Villa is committed to serving a wide range of children with special needs and will work with families and other professionals to provide the care needed.

Children who have needs beyond the competence of the center or who present risks to themselves or others that are beyond the control of the center will be dis-enrolled with adequate notice and assistance in obtaining recommended care elsewhere.

Illness and Medical Treatment

If a child becomes ill or injured while in our care, every possible effort will be made to contact parents or other designated emergency contacts.

With your signed consent on a form provided with this handbook as an attachment, we will administer first aid, including CPR by trained staff, and involve qualified medical personnel when considered necessary. Also with your consent, we will also administer an acetaminophen such as Tylenol, if a child's temperature is over 101 degrees Fahrenheit and someone is on the way to pick them up.

If necessary, St. Mary Villa carries insurance for injuries that occur on the campus.

- 1) Our programs will not keep actively sick children, and it is the parent's responsibility to make alternative arrangements in the event of illness. A sick child must be picked up within an hour from the time a parent is called.
- 2) A written statement of good health from your child's pediatrician will be required in order to return when:

- a. A child has had a diagnosed communicable disease (strep, head lice, pink eye, impetigo). We do not require a statement when a child has had chicken pox but we will do a visual check to make sure that all the pox are dried.
- b. A child has undergone surgery or has been hospitalized.

Please do not bring a contagious child into the program when picking up a sibling. If your child becomes sick over the weekend or in the evening, please call and let your child's teacher know that his/her absence is due to illness.

FEVER OF 101+ DEGREES (not related to immunizations):

- * Child cannot return until he or she has been free of fever for 24 hours.
- * We do not give fever suppressants without a written note from the doctor.

FEVER DUE TO IMMUNIZATIONS:

- A shot record will serve as verification of an immunization, and we will give Tylenol for a 24-hour period.

DIARRHEA & VOMITING:

- * We will call parents after two episodes of diarrhea or vomiting.
- * Child cannot return until 24 hours after last episode of diarrhea or vomiting.
- * If diarrhea is a result of medication, teething, or allergies, the pediatrician must specify this to us either in writing or through a phone call before the child can return to school.

EAR INFECTION:

- * Child can return to school the next day if fever is below 101 degrees, but needs to bring medication and verification of doctor visit.

COLDS:

- * If child has: constantly runny nose, persistent cough, or green mucus from nose, we will request medication.

RASHES:

- * If child develops rash and the cause is not known, we will ask that the doctor check out the rash and verify in writing or through a phone call that it is not contagious.
- * We will request lotion or salve to treat poison ivy, poison oak, or bad chigger, flea or mosquito bites.

Condition	Return Policy
Chicken Pox	Return when poxes are dry and crusted
Diarrhea	Return when symptom free 24 hours
Fifth Disease (slapped cheek disease)	Return with MD statement approving return
Giardia	Return when symptom free 24 hours
Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease	Return with MD statement approving return
Herpangina	Return when symptom free 24 hours
Head Lice	Return with treatment when nit free
Impetigo	Return with MD statement of antibiotic treatment
Influenza (Flu)	Return when symptom free 24 hours
Pharyngitis, Viral	Return when symptom free for 24 hours
Pink Eye	Return with MD statement of treatment
Pinworm	Return with MD statement of treatment
Pneumonia, bacterial	Return with MD statement
Ringworm	Return with treatment
Roseola	Return with MD statement not contagious
Rotavirus	Return when diarrhea free for 24 hours
Respiratory Virus	Return when fever free for 24 hours.
Scabies	Return with MD statement of treatment
Scarlet Fever	Return with MD statement
Shigella	Return when diarrhea free 24 hours
Shingles	Return with MD statement
Strep Throat	Return 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins
Thrush	Return with MD statement during treatment