



Quality Child Care

Early Learning Center

A Fun Place to Learn

Parent Handbook

Arkansas Better Chance Handbook

All of the information, policies, and procedures in this handbook are intended for everyone in our school family. However, if your child is participating in the ABC Program at QCC, please pay special attention to boxes like this one, as they contain information you will need to understand in order to participate in the program. (Locations that currently offer ABC program opportunities are the centers in Little Rock, Conway, & Fort Smith on Savannah Street.) This handbook has been written in accordance with Arkansas Department of Human Services Minimum Licensing requirements, Better Beginnings guidelines, and Arkansas Better Chance program requirements.



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About Our Program.....1

MISSION STATEMENT AND PURPOSE.....1

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY.....2

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT.....2

QCC Curriculum.....3

QCC's INFANT CURRICULUM: Connecting with Infants3

QCC's TODDLER CURRICULUM: Adventures for Toddlers.....3

QCC's PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM: Adventures in Learning3 - 4

A NOTE ON TRANSITIONING.....4

SCHOOL AGE PROGRAMS (Before and After School Programs)4

Arkansas Child Development and Early Learning Standards: Birth through 60 Months (CDELS).....4 - 6

BETTER BEGINNINGS.....6

EDUCATIONAL CARE PLAN.....6 - 7

Enrollment, Attendance & Billing.....7

HOURS OF OPERATION.....7

HOLIDAY CLOSINGS.....7 - 8

ENROLLMENT POLICY.....8

TUITION.....8

FORMS OF PAYMENT.....9

DHS VOUCHER PAYMENTS.....9

REGISTRATION FEES.....9

SUPPLY FEE.....9

RETURNED CHECK FEE.....9

LATE TUITION PAYMENT FEE.....9

MULTI-CHILD DISCOUNT.....9

MILITARY AND CIVIL SERVANT DISCOUNT.....9

TUITION CHANGE.....10

ATTENDANCE.....10

VACATION TIME.....10

WITHDRAWAL POLICY.....10

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY.....11

School Family & Partnerships.....11

CONFIDENTIALITY.....11

ORIENTATION.....11

YOUR CHILD'S FIRST DAYS.....11

PARENT INVOLVEMENT.....12

HOW TO ADDRESS CONCERNS.....12

COMMUNICATION.....12

BIRTHDAYS.....13

VOLUNTEERS.....13

PARENT/GUARDIAN/ GUEST CONDUCT.....13

Health & Nutrition.....13

HAND WASHING & SANITIZING.....13

ILLNESS.....14

IMMUNIZATIONS.....14

MEDICATION POLICY.....14

MEDICAL CARE PLAN.....15

ACCIDENTS & INJURIES.....15

SUNSCREEN.....15

CHILD NUTRITION.....15 - 16

INFANT NUTRITION.....16 - 17

INFANT & TODDLER CARE.....17

SHAKEN BABY INFORMATION.....17 & Appendix 29 - 30

POTTY TRAINING.....17

REST TIME.....18

Safety & Security.....18

PICK-UP & DROP-OFF POLICIES & PROCEDURES.....18 - 19

LATE PICK-UP.....19 - 20

DROP-OFF TIME.....20

TRANSPORTATION.....20 - 21

FIELD TRIPS.....21

OUTDOOR PLAY.....21

VISITOR POLICY.....21

EMERGENCY DRILLS & EVACUATIONS (Fire Drills/Tornado Drills)22

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE & MALTREATMENT.....22

GUN POLICY.....22

CUSTODIAL CARE.....22

FOSTER CARE.....22

INTERVIEWING STAFF & CHILDREN.....22

PHOTOGRAPHS & VIDEO.....22

Clothing, Supplies, & Personal Items.....23

CLOTHING.....23

CUBBIES23

PERSONAL ITEMS.....23

ELECTRONICS/TECHNOLOGY POLICY.....23

TOYS.....23

Behavior Guidance Policy.....24

CONSCIOUS DISCIPLINE.....24

DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY.....24 - 25

DISCIPLINE POLICY PROCEDURES.....25 - 26

BITING.....26

Appendix

Arkansas Department of Human Services Guidelines on Illnesses.....27

Safe Sleep Guidelines from the Arkansas Department of Human Services.....28

Shaken Baby Syndrome Information from the Department of Human Services.....29 - 30

USDA Nondiscrimination Statement.....31

Parent Acknowledgement Form.....32

About Our Program

Welcome to Quality Child Care Early Learning Center! We are so excited that you have chosen to partner with us to share these early years in your child's life. Good, quality Early Education is crucial in developing the academic, social, and emotional skills necessary to build a solid foundation for future success.

This handbook includes important program policies and information about Quality Child Care Early Learning Center. Please read it carefully. It has been written in accordance with the Arkansas Department of Human Services (DHS) minimum licensing requirements and the guidelines set forth by Better Beginnings.

Thank you for choosing Quality Child Care Early Learning Center. We're glad you are here and welcome to our School Family!

ABC PROGRAM

The Arkansas Better Chance for School Success Program, commonly known as the ABC program, was created for three, four, and five year old children whose family's gross income does not exceed the 200% of the Federal poverty level. Our objective is to provide a safe and nurturing environment that promotes development and enhances learning for each child. We strive to establish relationships with the families of the children in our care and to collaborate with our community members to deliver high quality Early Education services.

The program utilizes a written overall curriculum plan that covers topics like cultural diversity, social and emotional development, and language skills. Children participate in a daily schedule that includes indoor/outdoor activities, quiet/active activities, individual/group activities, fine/gross motor skill-building activities, and children/teacher initiated activities. A schedule of each days activities will be posted in each classroom. The curriculum was designed to maximize children's success when they start elementary school.

Early years are learning years and Quality Child Care Early Learning Center operates all of our programs, including ABC, with this in mind.

MISSION STATEMENT AND PURPOSE

Our mission at Quality Child Care Early Learning Center is not only to make a positive difference in the lives of the children in our care, but also be A Fun Place to Learn. Children are our world's greatest resource, which is why we take the responsibility of caring for the ones entrusted to us so seriously. We believe that helping to nurture children's naturally curious minds by providing engaging, hands on activities is the best way to lay the foundation for a lifetime of learning.

Playing is the complex work of children. It is how they learn to interact with their world and develop new skills. We provide an age appropriate curriculum that helps guide and nurture the learning that play offers. We hope to provide the tools and support necessary for children to build the knowledge and skills that will prepare them for kindergarten and beyond.

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

For many years, child care was simply thought of as daycare. As long as children were safe, happy, and healthy the job of the daycare professional was done. Research shows however, that even very young children's brains are far more complex than we thought and learning and cognitive development starts far before kindergarten begins. In fact, the foundation for learning some of the most important academic and life skills is built before the child turns five years old. What we used to think of as 'playing' is actually a crucial facet to building a wide variety of skills including gross and fine motor skills, hand-eye coordination, visual tracking, and cognitive skills like creative thinking, reasoning, problem solving, and listening. Simply put, when a child is playing they are also learning. This is why learning through play is central to QCC's educational philosophy and why you will find it in the core of all of our curricula.

Children are naturally curious and have a built-in desire to learn. They instinctively wish to learn about the world they live in, so we plan experiences that encourage exploration and development through play within a safe, secure environment.

Building trust between caregiver and child is crucial to nurturing their inquisitiveness. Research has shown that watching, listening, and talking to children during these important years helps build this trust and establishes the self-confidence they need to spur their natural desire to learn.

As Early Childhood Professionals, we recognize and respect that each child is unique and has interests and talents of their own. Of course, all children share the same basic developmental requirements and needs, but we recognize that they might not all be at the same level at the same time. As teachers, we must get to know each individual child's unique needs and then use our curriculum to meet those needs in the most optimal way for that child. We don't rush children through this time. Everything they do, from what they learn, the relationships that they build, and the problems and challenges they navigate helps to lay a foundation for their future. By integrating learning through play and social-emotional skill building, our goal is to help children learn self-regulation and self-discipline to prepare them for continued academic success.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

At Quality Child Care Early Learning Center we follow the National Association for the Education of Young Children's (NAEYC) Code of Ethical Conduct. We will strive to ensure that all staff, consultants, and volunteers abide by our program's strict standard of conduct, which are based on our commitment to the following core values:

- Appreciate childhood as a unique and valuable stage of the human life cycle
- Base our work on knowledge of how children develop and learn
- Appreciate and support the bond between the child and their family
- Recognize that children are best understood and supported in the context of family, culture, community, and society
- Respect the dignity, worth, and uniqueness of each individual (child, family member, and colleague)
- Respect diversity in children, families, and colleagues
- Recognize that children and adults achieve their full potential in the context of relationships that are based on trust and respect
- We will respect and promote the unique identity of each child and family and refrain from stereotyping on the basis of age, gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, or disability.
- We will follow program confidentiality policies concerning information about children, families, and other staff members.
- We will use positive methods of child guidance and will not engage in corporal punishment, emotional or physical abuse, or humiliation. In addition, we will not employ methods of discipline that involve isolation, the use of food as punishment or reward, or the denial of basic needs.

QCC Curriculum

QCC's INFANT CURRICULUM: Connecting with Infants

Connecting with Infants, a curriculum developed through a contract with the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education and endorsed by Better Beginnings, is designed for children from birth through 18 months. It is further divided into two infant age groups, Young Infants (approximate age is birth to nine months) and Mobile Infants (approximate age is from eight to 18 months). The goal of Connecting with Infants is to provide a path to building:

- Responsive care and positive relationships between caregivers and infants
- An environment that is nurturing, safe, healthy, and inviting for infants
- Positive relationships with families

While the activities are divided into the two age groups, we know that all young children follow their own unique timetables for development and therefore will learn at their own schedule. This curriculum was also designed to nurture growth in the CDELS domains of development and learning that are listed below and our teachers help tailor the activities and experiences the curriculum provides for each individual child's needs.

QCC's TODDLER CURRICULUM: Adventures for Toddlers

Adventures for Toddlers, a curriculum developed through a contract with the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education and endorsed by Better Beginnings, is designed for children from 18 to 36 months. This curriculum features 30 toddler topics in eight focus areas. Toddler topics introduce concepts like family and community that help children understand the world around them. Each toddler topic is introduced with children's books and can be supplemented with materials from other curricula in order to enhance each child's classroom experience. The activities planned for each topic are designated for two age groups, Younger Toddlers (YT) and Older Toddlers (OT).

Children learn best by exploring and manipulating their environment. A child's language skills can be greatly enhanced by describing events that he or she has experienced to their teachers and friends, listening to teachers read and retell stories, as well as by playing and interacting with their classmates. Your child will learn by using hands on materials, songs, and teacher lead instruction. Because so much of your child's learning is an active experience, there may not always be papers going home but do not mistake this for learning not taking place.

This curriculum was also designed to nurture growth in the CDELS domains of development and learning that are listed below and our teachers help tailor the activities and experiences the curriculum provides for each individual child's needs.

QCC's PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM: Adventures in Learning

Adventures in Learning Preschool curriculum was designed to teach children the skills they need to be ready for kindergarten. It is a comprehensive curriculum for children from age three to five and has been developed and revised as an approved curriculum through the state of Arkansas. It features 40 topics of study in the CDELS domains of development focus areas listed below. Each topic is introduced with mostly familiar children's books and has a strong emphasis on language and literacy. It is a flexible curriculum that allows teachers to choose when to explore certain topics based on their children's interests or specific needs during the school year. It can also be supplemented with materials from other curriculum to enhance to the children's learning experience.

Research shows that young children learn best through play. As quality-approved programs, each class schedule has time built in for students to play in free-choice Learning Centers with activities both indoors and outdoors. Best practice tells us that Learning Centers need

to provide a platform for hands-on activities with materials that are frequently rotated so children are constantly exposed to new ideas, different ways to solve problems, and build new skills. Further, Learning Centers enable us to teach your child in an informal, relaxed environment while meeting his or her individual needs.

Our Learning Center environment enables your child to remain a “child” rather than a “student” for an additional year, giving them time to mature before entering kindergarten. Research shows that children who participate in preschool programs that provide a flexible schedule, a play-based curriculum, and a nurturing staff are better prepared for success in their future.

Parents of children aged three to five years old must receive notification of links to the list of the KINDERGARTEN READINESS skills (or a Kindergarten Skills Calendar) developed by the Department of Education in accordance with ACT 825 of 2003. The following links are to assist you in finding this important information.

Calendar: <http://tinyurl.com/k5ns78k>

Checklist: <http://tinyurl.com/kk7dttp>

ABC PROGRAM

ABC classrooms follow the Adventures in Learning Curriculum.

SCHOOL AGE PROGRAMS

Our **AFTER SCHOOL** program for school age children is designed for continued learning with an emphasis on fun. After being in school all day, it is hard for children to go back into a classroom environment. Relaxation and play make up a majority of each afternoon's activities. Children will be provided a nutritious snack when they arrive from school and will be given the opportunity to engage in fun, hands on activities, as well as time to visit with their friends. There will be time for children to work on homework if they so choose, but we do not force children to sit down and do school work before being able to participate in other activities. Most QCC locations offer transportation to and from school. Please see our **Transportation** section on page 20 of this handbook for more details.

For families that need care for their children in the morning, our centers offer a **BEFORE SCHOOL** program. Please contact your center's director for more information. Most QCC locations offer transportation from school to the center. Please see our **Transportation** section on page 21 of this handbook for more details.

In the summer, we have a full day **SUMMER PROGRAM** for our school age children. Our staff and directors try to schedule and coordinate activities and field trips that engage the children's interest and create a positive learning experience. Parents will have to give written permission for EACH field trip their child attends. Each center is responsible for compiling a summer schedule and calendar that will inform the parents of upcoming events, needed items, cost if applicable, and time of departure and return.

ARKANSAS CHILD DEVELOPMENT & EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS

Quality Child Care Early Learning Center uses a curriculum that has been shaped by the **Arkansas Child Development and Early Learning Standards: Birth through 60 Months** (CDELS). These standards help to ensure that the most important parts of each child's growth and development are addressed and measured in developmentally appropriate ways. The standards are organized into nine domains of development and learning:

- **Social and Emotional Development** - There have been many important developments in our understanding of the importance of this domain. Research

shows that early relationships and social interactions have a dramatic impact on a child's academic performance and mental health, as well as on the success of their future relationships and career. The early interactions and influences in a child's life, such as family and Early Learning programs, help shape their identity by providing role models that influence how they should behave and regulate their emotions. For children with behavioral problems, their behavior could be understood as a form of communication. It is important to try to understand the needs that children are trying to express through their behavior and then react appropriately to support those needs. Social and emotional development also helps mold the way in which they communicate, cooperate, show empathy, and build relationships. As Parents and Early Childhood Educators, we must be able to build secure, nurturing relationships with children as a foundation for further learning by promoting their social and emotional health and growth.

- **Cognitive Development** - This is the way the brain helps children plan, focus attention, remember instructions, and handle multiple tasks successfully. The development of these skills are vital to a child's future success because learning requires that a child focus on specific tasks to take in information, connect different ideas, and use what they know to solve problems or build new knowledge.
- **Physical Development and Health** - Physical development will usually happen on its own but there are things that Early Childhood Professionals can do to encourage physical growth and coordination. This guidance is especially important during play. We want to ensure children have confidence when they play, that they are able to engage in fun physical activities, and can develop a strong foundation for a healthy, active lifestyle.
- **Language Development** - Children are processing the sounds of language even before they are born and engage in an immense amount of language learning before they learn to speak. Children's language learning is largely driven by the environment in which they are exposed. This is why our curriculum is full of language and literacy activities. High quality language experiences are as critical to children's brain development as food is to their physical development.
- **Language Development** - Children are processing the sounds of language even before they are born and engage in an immense amount of language learning before they learn to speak. Children's language learning is largely driven by the environment in which they are exposed. This is why our curriculum is full of language and literacy activities. High quality language experiences are as critical to children's brain development as food is to their physical development.
- **Emergent Literacy** - Research and testing shows that the most important predictor of high school graduation is a child's ability to read by the third grade. At birth we must begin building a solid foundation so that emergent literacy skills can be acquired at the earliest possible age. This is critical for future learning and literacy development. It is the foundation for reading and writing skills, which supports all other academic endeavors. As Early Childhood Educators, we must use this time to build the foundation for literacy in developmentally appropriate ways.
- **Mathematical Thinking** - The years before a child enters kindergarten are called the "years of promise" for mathematics because they are so crucial for developing math skills. Activities that seem like simple play, such as building block towers, creating and recognizing patterns, and comparing items are actually tremendously helpful at teaching children mathematical thinking and problem solving. As Early Childhood Educators, we must encourage and guide this kind of play, so the foundation will be set for learning more complex math when the child enters school.

- **Science and Technology** - All young children are natural scientists and engineers. Children observe the world around them and experiment with their surroundings. Children begin science and technology skills with the process of identifying problems, analyzing information they see or are told, and then using their own ideas to form conclusions. It is critical that we provide developmentally appropriate activities for children to help foster scientific thinking, because this is a skill on which all other domains of development are built.
- **Social Studies** - During early childhood, children begin to widen their circles to include not only their family, but also their friends, neighborhoods, and Early Learning setting. They begin to recognize their cultural heritage and see themselves as part of a wider community. Social studies is a broad discipline that incorporates concepts from history, civics, math, geography, and many other subjects that will be studied later in school. It is the job of the Early Childhood Educator to broaden a child's understanding of the world by introducing them to things through pictures, books, and technology that are not immediately present in their everyday environment. Seeing a broader view of the world and their place in it helps make them more empathetic, think more critically, and become better problem solvers.
- **Creativity and Aesthetics** - Music, art, and drama are serious topics of study. They are just as important as math and science. Through these topics, children are given the ability to develop and learn in ways that other classroom experiences may not offer. Just like in other domains, it is important that teachers provide activities that encourage exploration of different forms of artistic expression and provide opportunities to engage in paint, singing, and dramatic play activities.

It is important to point out that these standards are not a curriculum in and of themselves. Instead, we use a curriculum that was designed to align with these standards. As an officially licensed Early Learning Center, Quality Child Care is mandated to use a curriculum approved by the Arkansas Department of Education. Our curriculum must provide a path to meet these standards as well as an assessment system to measure what standards a child has met and how reaching the next milestone can be most efficiently accomplished.

BETTER BEGINNINGS

At Quality Child Care Early Learning Center, we use curricula endorsed by Better Beginnings, a program developed by the Arkansas Department of Human Services that provides families and child care professionals with the tools and knowledge to build better paths towards learning in Early Childhood Education. Better Beginnings also provides a voluntary quality rating system for child care centers, which allows participants to measure their efficacy and progress in several important areas of Early Childhood Education. Through evaluations and assessments of Arkansas child care centers and their teachers, Better Beginnings rates the quality of each child care facility by a three-star rating system. All six QCC centers are proud to participate in this distinguished program and we are so excited that four of our six centers have a Level two rating and the other two are at Level one. Our dedicated team of directors and staff members are continuously working hard to reach the next level and our goal is for all six of our centers to have a Level three rating.

EDUCATIONAL CARE PLAN

Early Childhood Education professionals play a key role in identifying social and emotional delays and behavioral issues before they become problematic. Although child development and Early Learning standards have been designed with the understanding that children's development can vary widely, we train our staff to watch for signals and behaviors that might indicate a developmental delay or behavioral issue.

Each of our centers use either a local co-op or other trained professionals to assist with assessments of the children in our care. They assist us in developing a plan if we feel that a child may need specialized help. In order to measure his or her progress, your child will be assessed through observations and work samples. You will be updated on their progress at regular

intervals and will be informed of any concerns we may have about their development. If it is determined that a child has special educational needs, our staff and the proper professionals, along with the parents/guardians, will complete and put into place an Educational Care Plan so that we can better support your child's individual needs. All of this will only be done with the consent of the parents.

ABC PROGRAM

If necessary, your child may be referred to an educational cooperative behavioral specialist, the Arkansas Department of Education funded regional support network for early autism identification, community mental health centers and/or a private therapist.

If children demonstrate inappropriate tendencies or behaviors for their age, as indicated by the results of the DECA (Devereux Early Childhood Assessment) given by ABC staff, the ABC program shall consult with the Early Childhood Special Education program regarding classroom modifications and interventions.

For any ABC child receiving special education services, appropriate staff from the Education Cooperative or school district shall have access to the child at mutually agreeable times during the program day in order to provide services outlined in the child's IEP (Individualized Education Program).

For any ABC child requiring the intervention services of special education, the ABC program shall collaborate with special education professionals to ensure each party has access to necessary information to provide the appropriate services. ABC staff will provide Special Education teachers with any information in their possession that pertains to the child receiving special education services that would be necessary for reviewing and evaluating the child's progress in the general education setting. Access to this information is on a need-to-know basis.

Enrollment, Attendance & Billing

HOURS OF OPERATION

Quality Child Care Early Learning Center is open from 6:00am to 6:00pm, Monday through Friday.

ABC PROGRAM

ABC classrooms are open from 8:00am to 3:00pm, Monday through Friday. If your child needs care before or after these times, you may enroll him or her in QCC's before and/or aftercare program. Please see the "School Age Programs" section on page 4 of this handbook for more details. Ask your center's director for pricing information.

DAILY SCHEDULE

Breakfast...8:00am - 8:30am

Lunch...11:00am - 11:30am

Naptime...12:00pm - 2:00pm

Snack...2:00pm - 2:30pm

HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

New Year's Day, Labor Day

Memorial Day, Thanksgiving Day

Independence Day, Christmas Day

HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

Should any of these holidays fall on a weekend, we will be closed on the closest Friday or Monday. **Tuition is not waived or altered for closings.**

There will be other holidays, such as **Black Friday, Christmas Eve, and Spring Break** for which parents must sign up ahead of time in order for their child to attend. This allows us to plan the staff schedule and the children's meals. Depending on the number of kids that sign up, directors will schedule staff for those children only and it is possible that the center will close early. Each center will have this information posted, so make sure you check with your facility about the closing time on these days.

ABC PROGRAM

Children enrolled in the ABC Program will follow the local school district's calendar for holidays and school closings. If your child needs care when ABC classrooms are closed, please contact your center's director.

According to Regulation 23.04 in the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing the ABC Program, we will follow the Establishment Clause in the First Amendment. ABC materials must be neutral with respect to religion, and no religious activity may occur during the ABC Day.

ENROLLMENT POLICY

QCC is required by State Minimum Licensing to have certain information about the child and family on file. Before a child is able to enroll in our program, an Enrollment Packet must be filled out and returned to the center no later than three (3) days before the child's first day of attendance. Items that must be submitted include:

- A completed Quality Child Care Early Learning Center Application
- A copy of the shot record showing that all immunizations are current
- Completed and signed Special Nutrition Food Eligibility Form
- Doctor's note stating any known allergies
- Signed permission agreement form
- Any court orders or legal documentation
- Copy of parent/guardian's Driver's License
- Signed Tuition and Fee Agreement
- Signed acknowledgment that the enrolling parent received, read, and agrees to abide by the QCC policies, procedures
- Proof of a current, working telephone number and email address

ABC PROGRAM

In addition to the items listed above, parents who wish to enroll their children in the ABC Program, must also have the following documents:

- ☐ Completed ABC application
- ☐ Completed Well Child Screening
- ☐ A copy of their Birth Certificate or Social Security Card
- ☐ Proof of parent/guardians' income dated within the last 30 days
- ☐ Signed ABC Parent Agreement Form

To be eligible for the ABC Program, the following requirements set by the Arkansas Department of Education must be met:

- ☐ Children must be three years old on or before August 1st of the school year to enter the three year old class or four or five years old on or before August 1st to enter the four year old class.
- ☐ Gross family income shall not exceed 200% of the federal poverty level.
- ☐ The child must reside in an area where an ABC program is in place and a space for the child to attend is available. (Note: to receive special education services, a child must reside within certain district/co-op lines.)

TUITION

All tuition payments are due in full and in advance of the week services are rendered. This includes whether your child attends or is absent. Tuition credit is not given nor is it refundable for holidays, sick days, inclement weather days or any other absences that may occur. Tuition must be paid in full upon arrival on Wednesday mornings to continue to be enrolled and have access to the center. Our tuition rates are based on 10 hours of care, per the recommendation of DHS. If accounts become past due and not paid, Quality Child Care will pursue legal action and will send the account to collection.

FORMS OF PAYMENT

Preferable payment methods are credit/debit cards, but we will also accept personal checks and cash. All cash payments should be given to the director or associate director only. Be sure you get a computer generated receipt with all tuition payments paid by cash. Some of our centers are able to do auto draft, Rapid Tuition, or Tuition Express. Please check with the director to see if that is available at your site.

DHS VOUCHER PAYMENTS

Quality Child Care Early Learning Center will accept voucher payments for enrolled children when the following conditions are met:

- DHS voucher authorizations must be received BEFORE children can begin attending any QCC program, unless the tuition is paid in advance by the parent. This money will be refunded once DHS authorizes payments for those days.
- Parents are responsible for submitting the necessary paperwork to DHS in a timely manner to ensure authorizations are renewed before the current authorization expires. Parents/guardians will be charged for any days that a child attends after authorization has expired.
- Please note that DHS will only pay for a limited number of absentee days. If these limited days are used and absentees continue excessively, parents will be notified and could result in the child being dropped from the program.
- Vouchers will not cover additional expenses for enrolled children (field trips, late pick-up, etc.). Parents/Guardians will be responsible for these costs.
- Parents/guardians will be charged for days that are not covered by DHS if the child continues to attend the center.
- Parents/guardians are required to notify DHS and the center of changes in employment and/or school enrollment status.

No child will be guaranteed a spot in any QCC program without a current DHS authorization agreement in place or advanced payment of the following week's tuition.

REGISTRATION FEES

Quality Child Care has a non-refundable registration fee of \$40.00 per child that is due upon time of enrollment. If a child withdraws from the center, re-enrollment will require a new registration to be paid.

SUPPLY FEE

There is a \$30 supply fee for each child enrolled in our Infant, Toddler, or Preschool Programs. This fee is due once a semester (twice a year) in February & August. If enrolling mid-year, the supply fee will be prorated on a monthly basis.

RETURNED CHECK FEE

A fee of \$30.00 will be charged for insufficient funds and returned checks. Once notice of a returned check has been received, the amount of the check plus the returned check fee will be charged back to your account. You may not pay this amount with another check; it can only be settled with a credit/debit card or cash. The center will have the option to refuse further payments by check and may require payment by credit/debit card, cash, or money orders.

LATE TUITION PAYMENT FEE

A late fee of \$10.00 will be applied weekly to each overdue account.

MULTI-CHILD DISCOUNT

Quality Child Care offers a special discount for parents/guardians that are enrolling more than one child. There will be a weekly \$10.00 discount for each additional child.

MILITARY AND CIVIL SERVANT DISCOUNT

If one or more parents is on active military duty or is employed as a civil servant (such as a police officer or firefighter) a 10% discount will be applied to account.

TUITION CHANGE

Weekly tuition decreases when children reach the age of 18 months and then again at 30 months. Please notify us one week before your child reaches these benchmarks so your account can be properly adjusted. Our system does not automatically make these cost-saving adjustments.

ATTENDANCE

In order for children to learn from our program, they need to be here on a regular basis. As participants in the USDA Special Nutrition Program and the state assisted voucher program, we are required to keep a record of attendance along with reasons for absences.

- We will need notification if you know that your child will be out of school ahead of time. If you are not able to notify us prior to your child's absence, please call as soon as you can.
- In order to follow our schedule and best meet the educational needs of your child, we recommend that children arrive around 8:00 a.m.
- If a child does not attend school for 10 consecutive days and no successful contact has been made with parents or guardians, the child will be dropped from our program. Please notify the director as soon as possible if there are circumstances in which your family may move or you may need to drop your child from our program.

ABC PROGRAM

Children in the ABC program will be allowed 10 absences (excused and/or unexcused) for the school year. An excessive number of absences will result in a conference. A failure to comply with our policy could potentially lead to dismissal from the program. Extenuating circumstances, such as a death in the family or long term illness will not be counted as an absence.

In order to follow our schedule and meet the needs of your child, arrival time will need to be from 8:00-8:15 a.m. If your child arrives after 8:30, he/she will be counted as tardy. Three tardies will equal one unexcused absence. We appreciate your cooperation to ensure your child arrives at school on time.

VACATION TIME

Families that have been enrolled in the program for six months are eligible for a week vacation at no cost. Enrollment must be full time for six months straight with no breaks in between in order to qualify for your first week of vacation. Upon your first yearly enrollment anniversary, you will receive another full week of tuition. At the two year anniversary, and the consecutive years thereafter, you will be eligible for two weeks of vacation.

- Vacation weeks must be five consecutive days. They cannot be broken up throughout the year. Those with two weeks of vacation time may use those weeks at different times of the year, but each vacation week must be five consecutive days.
- In order to adjust your account to reflect your vacation time, QCC requests that you give a written two week notice prior to your requested time off.
- The annual enrollment date will begin a new year for each child and vacation does not carry over to the next year and is forfeited if not used.
- Children who attend only during the summer months or are part-time or drop-in only do not qualify for vacation time.

ABC PROGRAM

Children enrolled in the ABC Program do not qualify for vacation time.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

It is mandatory and critically important that parents/guardians give a minimum two (2) week notice upon deciding to withdraw their children from our program. This allows us adequate time to inform parents on the waiting list of the opening. Families not giving a two week written notice shall be financially responsible for those two weeks.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

We make every effort to open our centers daily and to accommodate our parents and their work schedules. Should weather or road conditions become too hazardous for safe travel, QCC may delay opening or closing times for the day. If you are concerned about the weather, it is always wise to call the center first to see if any changes to the schedule have been made.

If the weather gets bad in the middle of the day and the director believes it is in everyone's best interest to close the center early, you will be contacted and you must pick up your child immediately. **Late pick-up policy (see page 20 of this handbook) also applies to early closings. Refunds/credits shall not be issued for days the center is closed in full or in part due to inclement weather.**

ABC PROGRAM

ABC Programs will follow their local school district for inclement weather closings. If ABC classrooms are closed while QCC classrooms remain open, ABC students may still receive care, but will be charged the regular daily rate.

School Family & Partnerships

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information about children, families, and staff is considered confidential. Staff members and volunteers will maintain the confidentiality of each family and of each child's educational records. We ask that each family do the same. If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact the Director of your center.

ORIENTATION

Selecting child care is important and we understand that you will have many questions for the people that will be caring for your child. We want to make sure that all new families have an opportunity to discuss and review our program, so please plan an orientation day with our facility director. Preferably, this should be scheduled before the first day of attendance so that we can cover our policies and procedures, answer all of your questions, and go over any necessary paperwork.

YOUR CHILD'S FIRST DAYS

Enrolling your child in an Early Childhood Education program can be a stressful experience. This is especially true if this is the first time your child has been in an environment away from home or a family setting. Hopefully, the following tips will make the transition easier for you and your child:

- If the child is old enough to understand, be truthful about what is going to take place. Let your child know about how long you will be gone and tell them what they will be doing while you are away.
- If it will be an added comfort, allow your child to bring a small, cuddly item or even a family picture to place in their cubby or on our Family and Friends board.
- Think about who should drop off the child. Many times, children are more emotional when leaving one parent than they are leaving the other parent. If possible, make arrangements for the one who will have the less dramatic impact on the child to be the one to drop them off until they become comfortable with the facility.
- We recommend coming to visit the center before the first day so your child may have the opportunity to meet the teachers, get to know the facility and help develop their drop-off plan.
- For older children, give a quick look around the room upon entering and try to find something your child would be interested in doing. Give a hug and kiss with a promise

to return, tell them good-bye, and turn around and leave. Most of the time, long drop offs can cause a tearful scene, either by the child, the parent, or both. This only delays the drop off and can sometimes make the departure worse. If your child refuses to leave your side, ask the staff to help you find ways to make the transition easier.

You may call the office number and check in as often as you would like. Most children that cry when parents leave in the morning get over it pretty quickly. For newer children, it may take a little longer at first, but they will get used to it. Our goal is to help them feel safe, secure, and loved to make the transition easier.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parent involvement is a very important part of our program. Learning starts at home, so you play a vital role in determining how successful your child will be in school. **You are your child's first teacher!** Quality Child Care Early Learning Center strongly recommends that parents be involved in their child's daily care. Parental responsibility and accountability are essential to your child's education and well being. We hope the recommendations set forth in this handbook are helpful in this regard.

We have an "Open Door Policy" at QCC, which means you are welcome in our classroom any time! We also encourage parents to attend class parties, field trips, and other school family events we offer at various times throughout the year.

Parents are encouraged to participate in the Parent Teacher Association (P.T.A.) or other parenting activities and classes that may be offered throughout the year. We will notify you about the scheduling of these meetings through notes home, our newsletter or our website.

HOW TO ADDRESS CONCERNS

If you are concerned things are not going as well as you would like in the program, please discuss the issue with us. If you feel that something is not right in the classroom, please talk to your classroom teachers. If they are unable to help you or you feel that the issue has not been resolved, please address your concerns to any member of management. Your opinion and viewpoint is important to us and we would like to hear your suggestions that might be helpful in improving our program.

COMMUNICATION

We use a number of methods to communicate between the center and your family. Here are a few ways you can keep in touch:

- Your child's teacher is available during drop off and pick up.
- Weekly lesson plans & daily schedules are posted regularly in your child's classroom.
- We have an annual open house at the beginning of each school year.
- Information on the parent bulletin board is readily available.
- Please feel free to send us notes, send us an email, or give us a call anytime
- Activities are posted all over the classroom walls.
- Be sure to bookmark our website (www.qualitychildcareinc.com) and like us on Facebook. These are both excellent sources of helpful information about our centers.
- Your child's cubby will occasionally contain notices.
- The keypad used daily to clock your child in/out can also be used to send you notices and information about your account.
- Directors will send out regular surveys to ensure we are meeting all of our parents' expectations.
- We have two regularly scheduled conferences for parents to attend each year. You will be notified of the dates and given the opportunity to sign up for a specific time to meet with your child's teacher. We strongly encourage you to attend these conferences.
- There is a Suggestion/Comment/Concern Box near the front entrance of each center.
- Visit the center! You are welcome to drop by anytime!

BIRTHDAYS

Your child's birthday is a special occasion to share with friends. If you would like to provide a simple snack for the group, please plan the date in advance with your child's teacher.

- Please remember that all food items must be store-bought to ensure compliance with licensing regulations and to prevent allergic reactions.
- Your child's teacher can suggest appropriate snacks that your child's friends will enjoy.
- For safety reasons and licensing requirements, no balloons are allowed in the center.

VOLUNTEERS

With multiple children in a classroom, things are bound to get a little crazy! We gladly welcome volunteers, but there are a few precautions we have to take to keep your child's safety our first priority. All volunteers who have routine contact with children must meet the following requirements:

- Must be 18 or older
- Must be cleared through the Central Registry of any child-maltreatment offense
- Must provide three personal references
- Must sign in and out each visit through front office and wear visitor's name badge
- There must always be a certain ratio of children to adults in each classroom. Volunteers will not be considered in this ratio and will not be given any disciplinary control over the children.

PARENT/GUARDIAN/ GUEST CONDUCT

- Smoking is prohibited on the premises of Quality Child Care Early Learning Center. Parents are asked to extinguish their cigarettes, cigars, etc., prior to driving on QCC property.
- Physical punishment of a child is not allowed at the center, even by parents/guardians. If you feel your child needs to be disciplined, it cannot take place on QCC property.
- Parents are permitted to address behavior problems with their child only. No parent is permitted to confront another child or parent concerning any problems or conduct. All children will be treated with respect. Remember, you are a role model.
- Parents will treat all staff members with respect.
- Please limit cell phone use in the building. Your child needs your undivided attention to ensure their safety and your ability to follow all of our safety precautions.
- Parents, guardians, or guests exhibiting aggressive behavior, verbal profanity, or any other forms of inappropriate conduct on school grounds will be asked to leave the premises and may not be allowed to return to the center. If further conflict continues, it is possible that it can result in an immediate dismissal of your child from our program. Standing accounts shall be paid in full, or legal action will follow.

Health & Nutrition

Your child's health is very important to us. If your child is not well enough to participate in all activities, including outdoor play time, then your child should be home resting. If symptoms appear during the day, we will call you to pick up your child immediately. If your child is exposed to a contagious illness we will post a health alert notice on the doors. Please let us know if your child has been exposed to a disease away from school so that we can watch for symptoms. Please ensure you notify us of any allergies your child may have so we can post them in the room.

HAND WASHING & SANITIZING

To prevent germs from spreading, students and staff are required to wash their hands upon arrival, before and after meals, after going to the bathroom, and after outdoor play. Group areas such as bathrooms, counters, tables and toys will be sanitized with a bleach water solution many times throughout the day.

ILLNESS

To protect our children and staff we have established policies regarding illness and other contagious conditions. These policies are in place to protect your child and comply with licensing regulations. Daily health checks are performed every morning by our teachers to look for signs and symptoms of illness. Please refer to the chart in the appendix of this handbook to see DHS's guidelines regarding illnesses.

State licensing regulations require that children with the following symptoms be excluded from child care:

- Fever over 101 (if measured orally), 100/axillary (or equivalent method)
- Diarrhea (2 or more watery stools in a 24 hour period)
- Vomiting (2 or more occasions within the past 24 hours)
- Rash that is not obviously associated with diapering, heat, or allergic reactions to medications
- Pink Eye with white, yellow, or green eye discharge, redness and/or swelling
- Impetigo, until treatment has begun
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has begun.
- Chicken Pox, until all lesions have crusted (usually 6 days after the rash appears)
- Ringworm
- Untreated scabies, head lice, or the presence of nits

It is our policy that the parents or legal guardians of students found to have lice or nits will be asked to pick their child up at school immediately. The parents or legal guardians will be given information concerning the eradication and control of head lice. Before students may be readmitted following an absence due to head lice, the director shall examine the student to confirm they are free of any lice or nits. The parents or legal guardians are requested to make arrangements with the director to arrive at school early so there will be adequate time for the examination. QCC follows a "no nit policy"- students are not allowed to return to school even if only one nit is found.

IMMUNIZATIONS

A photocopy of your child's current immunization record is required at the time of enrollment. To make things easier for our parents, we have access to The Arkansas WebIZ system. It is the statewide immunization registry. It is a web-based centralized birth to death database that maintains complete, accurate, and secure immunization records for all Arkansas residents. There is a form that you may fill out upon enrollment which gives us permission to pull up your child's shot records if they have received them in Arkansas. If you choose not to give us permission to get that information, then a complete copy of all immunizations must be submitted at time of enrollment. If for some reason you are unable to have it on the first day of attendance, you must have it 10 days from your child's start date or they will no longer be able to attend. Please remember to update your child's immunization records at least once a year, or preferably each time your child has been administered a new vaccine.

MEDICATION POLICY

Medication will only be given to a child when a signed medication form has been filled out and prescription instructions are made very clear. These instructions must match the instructions on the original medication container. Please ask your child's teacher or see the front desk to receive a copy of this form.

- The form must include date/name of child/name of medicine/dosage to be given.
- Prescription medication must be in the original container with the correct child's name on the label.
- We will only dispense medications exactly in the manner described on the label.
- We will not dispense expired medications, dosages that exceed the recommendations, or to children younger than the recommended age listed on the container.

- All parents and guardians have the option of coming into our center to administer medications (both prescription and OTC) to their children.
- Medication will be stored in the director's office, unless it needs to be refrigerated, in which case it will be kept in the kitchen and under lock and key. Please remember to take your child's medication home at the end of each day. Please ask the front desk for assistance with this.
- An allergy list is posted in each room. In cases of severe allergic reactions that require Epi-Pens, parents, teacher, and the director will discuss the medical care plan for the child. This shall include when and how to use it, as well as when and if paramedics need to be called. Parents will be notified if medication is given for allergic reactions.
- Over the counter medications are only given in rare situations and only at 11:30am. This must be something that is discussed with the director and signed medication form will have to be filled out.

MEDICAL CARE PLAN

Children with special health care needs (e.g. asthma, seizures, diabetes) who receive scheduled daily medications or medications that need to be given on an emergent basis (e.g. Benadryl, Epi-Pen, rescue asthma medications) must have a Medical Care Plan on file at the center. This plan shall have clearly stated descriptions of symptoms and directions for giving the required medications. Medical Care Plans should be updated as needed, but must be reviewed at least once each school year.

ACCIDENTS & INJURIES

Growing up results in many bumps and bruises and we will make every attempt to inform you of every injury your child receives while in our care. Minor injuries will be treated with appropriate first aid and you will be informed about them on an accident report. The report will indicate the type of injury, the time and circumstance of the injury, and the type of care/first aid that was administered. You will need to sign all accident reports and leave them at the center so that they may be placed in your child's file. You may request a copy of the accident report. You will be called to the center immediately if your child sustains a more serious injury. In very serious cases, or if injuries occur that we perceive to be potentially life threatening, we will call an ambulance to transport your child to a medical facility and we will direct you to meet the ambulance. If the parent is unavailable, the emergency contact person on your child's enrollment information will be called. Parents are responsible for all costs incurred during emergency medical treatment.

SUNSCREEN

Children need to be protected from overexposure to the sun. Sunscreen shall be used if needed and as directed by the parent. We will keep generic Sunscreen on hand to use on the children. **Only spray sunscreen of SPF 30 or higher is allowed if it is supplied by the parent** and it must be labeled with your child's name. Sunscreen will be kept out of reach of all children and only administered with written permission. Permission to administer sunscreen is included in the blanket permission form that is included in the enrollment application.

CHILD NUTRITION

Along with making sure that we provide a safe and healthy learning environment, we also want to ensure that we meet each child's nutritional needs. We do this by establishing good eating habits that nurture and promote healthy development. Each day, nutritious meals and snacks are served "family style" with children and their teacher sitting and eating together at the table. Children are taught proper hand washing, participate in table setting, practice table manners, and learn to clean up after themselves.

Quality Child Care participates in the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Admission is open to all, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. Any complaints of discrimination should be submitted in writing to the Secretary of Agriculture in Washington, D.C. 20250. Parents of every child must complete the Free and Reduced Price Meal Application, which is included in the enrollment packet. In addition, parents of infants under the age of 12 months must complete an Obligation to Serve at the time of enrollment. These forms are mandatory and must be updated each July.

- If your child has a special dietary need, (e.g. nut or dairy allergy, other food allergies, religious preference) a special dietary prescription/note must be filled out, signed by a physician, and turned into the center. **Without the signed documentation, your child will receive the same food on the menu as the other children.** Menu items with equivalent nutritional value will be substituted for allergy-causing foods.
- Children will be encouraged to eat, but will not be forced. Meals shall be served at tables (except for those needing high chairs) so that each child may be comfortably seated.
- **No outside foods shall be brought into the center without explicit permission from the director and will only be allowed for special events and birthdays.** Per DHS licensing requirements, anything brought for these special events must be store-bought (never homemade).
- Every meal we serve will be high in nutrients and served in age appropriate portions sizes that are determined by the Special Nutrition Program.
- Serving times are:
 - Breakfast...8:00am to 8:30am
 - Lunch...11:00am to 11:30 am
 - Snack...2pm to 2:30pm (School age children will eat before leaving for school and upon arrival after school.)
- In order to comply with food regulations established by DHS, we cannot serve meals after our specified serving times. Therefore, any child coming in before or after meal or snack times will need to eat prior to arriving at the center.

INFANT NUTRITION

Infants are also included in our CACFP program and there are certain requirements for this age as well.

- Each center offers iron-fortified formula, cereal, and baby food to infants under the age of 12 months. These items are listed on the Obligation to Serve form. However, parents/guardians may decline what is offered and supply the infant's meals instead.
- If parents choose to supply their own formula, all bottles must be prepared in advance by the parent and brought to the center daily. Make sure that you bring enough bottles for each feeding time that your child might have for that day.
- Whether you use the formula supplied by the center or you make bottles at home, it is the parent's responsibility to make sure that each bottle, pacifier, and cup is labeled with the child's name. We do not have dish washing capabilities, therefore, empty bottles will be left in the proper place for pick up by parents upon departure. Clean bottles must be brought back each day and a separate bottle must be provided for each meal time during the day.
- **Breast Feeding** - We encourage all of our breastfeeding mothers to come to the center to feed your child. Because it is beneficial in so many ways, we will help and accommodate you in any way we can. For breast-pumped bottles, they will also need to be prepared in individual feeding bottles at home. Any "extra" bags of breast milk may be placed in the freezer for emergency situations. Please be sure each of these bags are labeled and dated.

- Infants under six months of age will be held during bottle feedings. When your child is over six months and can hold their own bottle, they can be placed in infant seats with trays, in high chairs or at tables to eat. Safety straps will be used at all times if they are included by the manufacturer. **Bottles will not be propped up for any reason and will never be allowed in bed with an infant.**

INFANT & TODDLER CARE

- A daily record shall be kept on each infant and toddler for the parent to pick up at the end of each day.
- Diapers shall be checked at a minimum of once every hour and soiled diapers will be changed immediately. It is the responsibility of the parent to bring a sufficient amount of diapers and wipes to allow their child to be changed at least once an hour.
- Per DHS licensing requirements, soiled cloth diapers and/or underpants will NOT be rinsed out by QCC staff. They will be bagged and must be taken home daily by parents.
- **It is preferred that diaper bags are not left at the center.** Sometimes parents leave items in diaper bags that might be unsafe for children (e.g. such as medications, cigarettes, lighters, wallets). We prefer that you bring the supplies needed for the day/week upon drop off and then take the bag back to your car.

SHAKEN BABY INFORMATION

Shaken baby syndrome is a serious brain injury that occurs when a baby is forcefully shaken, causing the brain to move inside the skull. Babies are usually shaken when the abuser becomes angry or frustrated that the baby will not stop crying and cannot be soothed. Per DHS licensing requirements, more information about this preventable child abuse is included in the appendix section of this handbook.

POTTY TRAINING

Most children will show the signs of being ready to potty train between the ages of 18 months and 2 years of age. Our staff will assist in your efforts to potty train your child and will let you know of any signs they may observe in regard to readiness. We would also like for you to let us know if you are seeing any sign of interest at home.

- Once the decision has been made to start potty training your child, you and your child's teacher will need to work together. Some children potty train within days, others can take weeks or months. It is important to be patient and consistent with your child during this process. Be prepared for good days and bad days. Consistency is very important in potty training. Once the decision has been made to put your child in underwear, you should stick with it.
- Most children will train quicker without the use of diapers/pull-ups. The absorbent properties of diapers prevent your child from the feeling and discomfort of having the wet clothing on. It also prevents your and the teacher's ability to immediately determine when a child has had an accident. Prompt changing from wet/soiled clothing can help the child realize that soiling themselves is uncomfortable and will help keep them on track for potty training.
- Once your child is no longer using diapers/pull ups, you will need to send several complete changes of clothing, including socks and shoes. All of these items should be labeled with your child's name. Per DHS requirements, QCC staff will not rinse out soiled clothing. The items will be bagged and must be taken home each day.
- Potty training can be very difficult or inconvenient at times. On weekends, when you will likely be at home all day, is the best time to start the process. This will get your child off to a good start and will make it easier for the teacher to work with him or her at the center.

REST TIME

Infants (children 12 months of age and younger)

Infants will be placed flat on their backs to sleep, in accordance with American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines, to lessen the risk of suffocation and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. (If a child rolls over on his/her own, the facility is not required to reposition the child.) If there is a medical reason a child cannot sleep on his/her back, then a signed statement from the child's physician must be in the file stating the reason, the sleep position indicated, and the time frame this is required.

- We participate in safe sleep practices for infants. Per DHS licensing requirements, information about these safe practices is included in the appendix section of this handbook.
- Infants in our care can rest at any time and at their own schedule.
- They will be carefully supervised at all times and sleeping children shall be individually checked no less than every 30 minutes.
- Clean sheets are provided daily and as often as needed.
- Pacifier clips or cords are not allowed for infants or children due to strangulation dangers and licensing regulations.
- Swaddling infants is not recommended and shall require a note from the child's physician if it is to be continued past the age of three months.
- Bibs, necklaces and garments with ties and hoods will be removed from children prior to rest/nap time to reduce the risk of entanglement and strangulation.
- Infants sleep space shall be free of loose bedding. Only a light, receiving type blanket can be used and it must be kept at or below the mid-chest area of the child. Pillows (including "boppy" or any propping or reflux type pillow), bumper pads, or any stuffed animals or toys may not be used in cribs at any time per Minimum Licensing Requirements.

Toddler and Preschool Children

Children are not required to go to sleep but will be placed on mats or cots and are expected to lie quietly while the other children rest. Non-sleepers may rest quietly with a book, while laying on their cots/mats. After a period of rest time, children will be offered alternate quiet activities if he or she chooses not to sleep.

Safety & Security

We strongly believe in the importance of security and safety for all of the children, parents and staff at Quality Child Care Early Learning Center. We have strict policies in place that must be followed in order to protect the children in our care. We make every effort for teachers in each classroom to have current First Aid and CPR certification and be familiar with proper medical emergency procedures. Each center strives to provide a safe environment by conducting safety audits, monthly emergency storm/fire drills, and teaching children safety rules. If a child does experience an injury, an accident report will be completed by the staff and signed by the parent/guardian. In spite of our efforts, an emergency may arise. For this reason, QCC requires that parents/guardians complete emergency contact information and sign a release for emergency medical treatment.

PICK-UP & DROP-OFF POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Arrival and departure times are the very busiest hours of the day. For safety purposes, please hold your child's hand in the parking lot and do not allow them to run or move away from you in the hallways. Do not enter the playground using the front or rear playground gates to pick up or drop off your child.

- **Door Codes** – Some of our centers have locked doors that require a code to enter. Each person on a child's pick-up/drop-off list is given a security code at the time of enrollment. There is a note posted by the keypad with specific instructions on how to enter the code. There is also a call button to notify someone in the office if you are having difficulty with this process.

Visitors or anyone without a door code may use the call button to speak with someone in the front office. They will have to be given approval and buzzed into the building. The phone number to the center is also posted outside in case there are any issues reaching someone in the center with the call button. We are working diligently to get this feature added to all of our centers.

- **Check-In/Out Key Pad** – Upon entering or exiting the building, parents/guardians must check-in/out by entering their code on the keypad that is located near the front entrance. This keypad is attached to our child care computer operating system. It is important that each person uses their own assigned code. **Sharing codes is strictly forbidden!** Also, please do not allow your child to operate any of the keypads, as this will allow us to better monitor the proper use of the systems so that there are fewer problems and maintenance issues.
- Checking in and out must be done daily for security and bookkeeping purposes. Licensing requirements mandate that children are signed in and out of the center each day.
- It is very important for security, policy, and licensing regulations that **ALL** children are with an adult at **ALL** times. After children have been checked-in, it is mandatory that the parent/guardian **physically escorts** each child to their classroom and properly transfers care to their teacher. Likewise, checking-out any child requires that a parent/guardian **physically escorts** each child out, once care has transferred back to that authorized person.
- Anyone picking up a child will be asked for a photo ID until that adult becomes familiar to the staff. If there is a change or substitution in staff and they are not familiar with a parent/guardian, they are required to ask for a photo ID.
- Individuals taking children from the classroom must be at least 18 years of age.
- A safe, functioning car or booster, appropriate for the child's age must be in every vehicle a child is leaving our center in. We are mandated by the state to report to DHS or law enforcement officials if we believe a child is being driven around without proper safety restraints.
- If a parent needs to authorize a person who is not on the pick-up list to temporarily pick up their child, advanced notice must be given in writing and will be approved at the director's discretion. If there is an emergency and a note has not been left, someone on the list of contacts must call and speak with the office. They will be asked to verify their identity by answering questions about the child. It is then at the director's discretion to confirm the information and allow the temporary guardian to pick up the child. A photocopy of their photo ID will be made.
- If at any time during the program year, the parent wishes to change who is on their pick-up list, they may do so by coming to the center and changing the information in their child's file. For safety reasons, we request that these changes are kept to a minimum.
- An outside agency representative (e.g. special classes, therapists) will not remove a child from any QCC class without the written consent of that child's parent or guardian, except during a child abuse and neglect investigation. In such case, staff may release a child to an authorized Child Protective Services worker or law enforcement representative with agency picture identification.

LATE PICK-UP

Children must be picked up no later than 6:00pm. If a child is still in the center after closing time, a late fee of \$1.00 **per minute, per child** will be charged to your account. Time is always determined by the center's clock. Excessive violation of this policy may lead to your child being dropped from the program.

ABC PROGRAM

ABC children must be picked up no later than 3:00pm. If a child is still here at 3:00pm, a late fee of \$1.00 per minute, per child will be charged until they are picked up. This cost is not covered by the ABC Program. Time is always determined by the center's clock.

If a child has not been picked up at closing time and the center has not been contacted regarding the parent/guardian's delay then the following procedures will be followed:

- Parent/Guardian will be called on their personal phone.
- If we are unable to contact you on your personal phone, we will attempt to contact you through your place of employment.
- If we are still unable to reach you, the emergency contact person listed on your application will be notified to pick up the child.
- At 30 minutes past the closing hour, if no contact has been made by parents or someone authorized to act on the child's behalf, DHS or local law enforcement will be contacted.

When a parent/guardian fails to contact the center regarding delays in picking up their children, it is considered neglect and is something that we do not take lightly.

DROP-OFF TIME

We ask that all children are dropped off at the center by 10:00am.

- To better assist us with staffing needs and lunch counts, you must call in by 9:00am if your child will be arriving after the 10:00am drop-off time.
- Please note that from 11:30am and 2:00pm children are either prepping for nap time or sleeping. Dropping your child off during this time is strongly discouraged. This is not only disrupts other children that are trying to rest, but it may also upset your own child if they have to lie down for a nap as soon as they arrive.

TRANSPORTATION

Most of our centers have transportation to and from the local schools in the area. (Check with your director to see if it is available in your center).

- **We will expect your child to be on the van everyday, unless you tell us otherwise.** This is to guarantee the safety of your child.
- Parents must notify the center at least one hour prior to school dismissal time if their child will not be riding the van in the afternoon. Ideally, a note should be written and given to QCC staff stating the dates of the days you know your child will not be riding in the van from school to the center.
- Please do not assume that we will know your child is not riding the van if they did not ride in the morning or if a sibling is not at the center.
- Roll is checked at the school and upon arrival at the center. You will be called to verify your child's location if your child does not get on the van when expected.
- Refusal to call and let us know your child will not be riding the van could result in a \$5.00 fee for each offense.

Transporting children requires the full attention of the driver. Appropriate behavior is necessary to ensure this. Please go over the following van safety with your child:

- All children are required to wear seat belts at all times. Each child under the age of six and/or 60 pounds will be required to sit in a booster seat provided by the parent.
- All children must buckle their seat belt immediately upon sitting. They must make sure it fits "snuggly" and leave it until a staff member tells them it is safe to unbuckle. If there is a shoulder strap, it must be left across the chest. It cannot be put behind their back or under their arm.
- No hitting, kicking or throwing things in the van.

- If a child will not follow the rules and their behavior may cause safety issues on the van, the driver will pull over until the child begins to follow directions. If the child does not comply, the director and/or the parent will be called to pick up and remove the child from the van.
- Absolutely NO food, candy or drinks are allowed on the van. If an emergency happened and a child started choking it could be difficult for a staff to get to the child in a timely manner to assist.
- Everything that is being taken to or from school or a field trip must be kept in a backpack. There should be no toys, loose jewelry, hair ties, folders, school work, etc. out of backpacks. This helps to keep things from getting lost and helps us keep a clean van. If the child does not have a backpack, or if something will not fit in the backpack, the van driver will keep the child's things upfront until they arrive back at the center.
- Children should never touch the safety alarm button in the van. This alarm is in place as a safety measure to ensure no child is accidentally left in the van. It will be the staff member's responsibility to walk through the van after each trip to ensure each child is accounted for.

FIELD TRIPS

- Field Trips may be scheduled periodically for preschool and school age children. They are a privilege and require children to listen closely and follow directions from their teacher.
- Field trips may have additional charges that will need to be collected before your child will be able to attend.
- Permission slips must be signed by a parent/guardian for **each** field trip that children attend.
- If a child has been having recent issues with following directions or being disruptive, it may be required that a parent or another adult family member attend in order to allow the child to participate.
- If on the morning of the field trip, a child starts having difficulties with following directions or other behavior issues, the director may make the decision to have the child stay at the center. If this happens, the parent will be notified of the decision. If behavior issues continue, the parent may be asked to come pick up the child for the day.
- If a parent does not want their child to attend a field trip, there may not be a place for them to stay at the center. Please discuss this with the director of your center ahead of time.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Outdoor play is not just recess, but it is an extension of our indoor learning opportunities. Weather permitting, all children will play outdoors for at least one hour each day, per licensing requirements.

The length of outdoor play time is adjusted according to the weather. Factors such as humidity, wind, and extreme high or low temperatures are considered in determining whether children will be able to play outdoors and how long they will be able to stay out. If children are healthy enough to be at the center, they are healthy enough to go outdoors. Please dress your child for the weather, especially cool mornings in the fall and spring. Sneakers with socks, or other similar shoes, are best for running, climbing, and enjoying the outdoors.

VISITOR POLICY

All visitors must sign in and out of our visitor log located in the front entrance and state the purpose of their visit. To ensure the security of all involved, picture identification is required for all unfamiliar visitors. In addition, visitors are required to be accompanied by a staff member and are never to be left alone while in the center.

EMERGENCY DRILLS & EVACUATIONS (Fire Drills/Tornado Drills)

Evacuation procedures for fire and other emergencies are practiced monthly to ensure our children are readily prepared in case of an actual emergency. Severe weather drills are also conducted every month. When severe weather is in the area, the director monitors weather reports and alerts staff to be prepared to quickly move children to safety. Emergency procedures are posted in each classroom.

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE & MALTREATMENT

According to Arkansas Law, “child maltreatment” means abuse, neglect, sexual exploitation, or abandonment. “Neglect” is defined as abandonment, lack of food, utilities, shelter, or lack of supervision. QCC staff and ABC teachers are mandated by state law to report any and all reasonable suspicions of child abuse, maltreatment, or neglect. The teacher will immediately notify the director of the center as well as the program’s DHS Licensing Specialist. If they are unavailable, the teacher is to call the Child Abuse Hotline (1-800-445-5316) right away and inform those previously mentioned as soon as possible. Reporting abuse will not be delayed for any reason. We are not required to inform parents/guardians of this report, but we will place documentation in a confidential folder in the child’s file.

ALCOHOL & DRUG POLICY

Quality Child Care Early Learning Center has a zero-tolerance policy for the use of alcohol, illegal substances, or the misuse of prescription medications on QCC property or the presence of these substances in the body while on QCC property regardless of when they were consumed. This policy applies to staff, visitors, and parents of enrolled children. If a staff member suspects a parent may be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, we are mandated by the state to report such suspicions.

GUN POLICY

Guns are not allowed inside any QCC facility by anyone other than law enforcement officers.

CUSTODIAL CARE

QCC requires copies of all custodial agreements and visitation schedules for our enrolled children. By law, we are required to follow all existing court orders and court imposed visitation schedules.

FOSTER CARE

For enrolled children that are in the foster care system, Quality Child Care Early Learning Center will need to receive a copy of the foster care paperwork. QCC will release the child only to the foster parents or to the child’s Division of Child and Family Services worker, who must sign the child in and out on the visitor’s list and provide proper identification. The DCFS worker must verify any additions or changes in writing (by letter or fax). This letter should be written to the attention of the Director.

INTERVIEWING STAFF & CHILDREN

Staff members and children in attendance at QCC may be interviewed by Child Care Licensing, by the Division of Child and Family Services, and/or by law enforcement officers for the purpose of investigations or to determine compliance with licensing requirements. Child interviews do not require parental notice or consent, per DHS mandates.

PHOTOGRAPHS & VIDEO

Teachers may sometimes use cameras and digital video to record children’s activities. Documentation of children’s activities is used for families to see what their children are doing in the center and also for children to review what they have been learning. With permission, photos and video may also be used on our website, advertising materials, or submitted to local media outlets. During the enrollment process, parents will sign a release for their children to be included in photographs and video. If you wish for your child’s photograph or image not to be used, please let us know. Because not all parents want their child photographed, we ask that you do not take pictures at the center.

Clothing, Supplies, & Personal Items

CLOTHING

Children in our program are active and creative. So that your child can fully participate in all the activities, please follow these guidelines when dressing your child for school.

- Children need to be fully dressed (with a fresh diaper) when they arrive in the morning. We do not have time to change each child out of pajamas each morning.
- Dress your child in clothing that they can easily manage for toileting. For example, be sure they are able to fasten and unfasten buttons, zippers, snaps, buckles.
- Clothing should be washable and durable enough to permit vigorous play.
- Clothing should be inexpensive so that soiling, damage, or loss will not cause great concern.
- Shoes should be sturdy enough to protect the child's feet. Sneakers with socks are the best choice. Flip flops, sandals, and open toed shoes can be hazardous.
- Clothing should be appropriate for the weather conditions. Children will spend time outdoors every day, so be sure to send jackets, sweaters, coats, gloves, and hats as needed.
- All clothing needs to be labeled with the child's name before it is brought to school. The program is not responsible for lost clothing items.
- Please leave at least one full set of extra clothing. (Two extra sets of extra clothing are required if your child is currently in a classroom that is toilet-training.)

CUBBIES

Each child in our program will be assigned their own cubby, where they can keep all of their personal belongings. Please check your child's cubby each day for notes, art projects, and other items that need to go home.

PERSONAL ITEMS

- Be sure to leave an adequate supply of diapers and pull ups each day. Teachers will communicate with parents regularly to ensure your child has all the necessary items.
- It is the parent's responsibility to check the cubby area for notes notifying them of missing supplies their child will need. If parents do not provide items they are asked to bring, they will be called to drop off the supplies. If this continues to be a problem, parents will be asked to pick up their child until supplies can be brought.
- For nap time, parents are required to bring a fitted crib sheet, a small blanket, and small travel pillow that will fit in a cubby.

ELECTRONICS/TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Children are not permitted to bring electronic devices to the center. This includes gaming devices, cell phones, iPad, iPod, MP3 players, and all similar devices. This policy is intended to promote more social interactions among the children. It is also to protect the privacy of individual children and to respect the wishes of parents that do not want images of their child made available to the public. For more information about this issue, please refer to the Security and Safety section of this handbook.

Occasionally, there will be special days for school age children to bring electronic devices. Please ask your child's teacher for more information about these special occasions. **QCC is not responsible for lost or broken items.**

TOYS

We have many materials for the children to play with and explore. Please have your child leave his or her toys (except for their soft toy for nap time) at home. It is often difficult to share a toy with a group and the toy may get broken. **Toys that resemble weapons are strictly forbidden.**

The only other time something may be brought from home, will be on special days when items may be specifically requested by the teacher. These requests will be made in a note or in the newsletter that goes with the weekly learning curriculum. Again, **QCC is not responsible for lost or broken items.**

Behavior Guidance Policy

CONSCIOUS DISCIPLINE

The heart of Quality Child Care Early Learning Center's Discipline Philosophy is to encourage self-control, self-esteem, and respect for all children and adults. For this reason, we are training our staff to implement the principles of "Conscious Discipline" by Dr. Becky Bailey. This program takes a different approach to traditional classroom management. It is based on the basic idea that **developing discipline with** children instead of **applying discipline to** them, will help them become more emotionally healthy and happy adults.

The program is designed to help teachers take everyday discipline issues and turn them into teachable moments that convey the importance of impulse control, anger management, and conflict resolution. Conscious Discipline gives children the tools to understand that their emotions are not only important and deserving of attention, but they are also controllable and the power to control them lies within the child. We are striving to teach children how to progress from physical or verbal aggression to calm self-regulation, how to make better choices with cooperation and compassion, and the importance of respecting and empathizing with others.

We would encourage you to check out the website www.consciousdiscipline.com to see how Dr. Bailey's brain research is changing the way we think about discipline and classroom management.

DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY

We believe that all domains of learning are supported during play and through strong, positive interactions with adults. Promoting healthy social and emotional development, including self-control, is one of the fundamental responsibilities of our program. This is a critical time for children to learn to control their thoughts, feelings, attention, impulses, and behavior. They are learning how to get along with others and how to be a friend. Children are not born with these skills. Teachers and caregivers must teach social and emotional skills just as they teach washing hands or learning colors and shapes. We know that when children are given the opportunities and support to develop self-control and other social and emotional skills, it gives them the foundation needed for academic and life success.

We support this development through:

Our Environment

- We provide children with interesting materials and engage them in activities that are appropriate for their age to keep them focused and attentive.
- We develop schedules that meet the needs of young children by avoiding long periods of wait time without activity.
- Our schedule is flexible enough to follow the children's interests as well as their cognitive, physical, and biological needs. We do our best to not let any child get bored or disinterested.

Our Teachers

- We work to develop a relationship with each individual child, including those needing higher levels of support.
- Teachers always speak to children in a calm tone, especially during redirections.
- We help children put words to their emotions. (For example, "Billy, I can tell you were mad when James took your block.")
- We use stories about young children in social situations to teach healthy social skills.

Our Families

- We ask parents to communicate regularly with staff to ensure consistency in guidance between home and school.

- Parents understand and acknowledge that we do not expel children as they are learning these skills. We strive to serve individual needs of each child, while ensuring the safety of young children.
- To best serve children, we may need to partner with social and emotional experts to help give a child the best foundation for academic and life success.

DISCIPLINE POLICY PROCEDURES

We have found that behavior concerns usually indicate that a child needs more time, support, and practice to develop their social and emotional skills. When serious concerns arise, we will partner with parents and professionals who specialize in supporting children's social and emotional health.

When a child continues to be unable to control their actions, one method we use is called "safe place." When children are upset, angry, or being disruptive, they may be sent to or asked if they would like to go to the "safe place." This is a quiet spot in which they can allow themselves to take the time to relax, breathe, and try to get their emotions under control. Teachers will continue to watch children while they are in the "Safe Place" to make sure they are not hurting themselves or others. They will encourage the child to talk about their feelings and help with calming techniques so the child will be able to return to the classroom setting.

If a child is unable to use these calming techniques and continues to be disruptive, the teacher will then notify the office and the director will be called in to help the child. We might also reach out to parents so they can speak with the child and/or be notified of the circumstances.

If further guidance is required, actions taken will always be individualized, consistent, and appropriate to each child's level of understanding. **No physical punishment of any kind will be administered on QCC property. This policy restricts parents and staff from using physical punishment on their own children while on QCC property.** In addition, staff may not yell at, shame, or humiliate a child in any way. Our goal is to correct children's behavior in a way that will help mold and perfect a child's mental faculties or moral character. The terms "bad" or "naughty" shall not be used about a child.

When any child in our program, including ABC students, presents with challenging behavior, teaching staff shall follow the standards of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC):

- Observe the children, and then identify events, activities, interactions and other factors that predict and may contribute to challenging behavior.
- Rather than focus only on eliminating the behavior, teaching staff shall focus on teaching the child social, communication, and emotional regulation skills and using environmental modifications, activity modifications, adult or peer support and other teaching strategies to support the child's appropriate behavior.
- Teaching staff shall respond to challenging behavior, including physical aggression, in a manner that provides for the safety of the child and the safety of others in the classroom. Our response will be calm, respectful and provide the child with information on what is acceptable behavior and what is not.
- We will document the challenging behaviors and the intervention methods that were attempted in a behavior tracking log.
- Teacher-parent discussions regarding a child's behavior shall be held in private and shall focus on working as a team to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports the child's inclusion and success.
- If necessary, intervention shall ensure each child has access to professional services, such as referrals to the educational cooperative behavioral specialist, the ADE-funded regional support network for early autism identification, community mental health center and/or a private therapist.

ABC PROGRAM

If a child in question has a disability and is in the process or has been identified under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the ABC program shall follow state special education rules and regulations governing suspension/expulsion.

The following steps will be completed when a child must be removed temporarily for challenging behaviors that constitute an imminent danger to the child or others:

- Make a referral to BehaviorHelp and the agency responsible for early childhood special education services in the local area. If a child's behavior is such that it necessitates temporary removal on a repeated basis, there should be sufficient documentation for consideration of special education services.
- Maintain documentation on file of the outcomes of the incident, subsequent parent conference, and plan developed that includes appropriate intervention strategies. The purpose of the parent conference is to develop a plan jointly with the family and available resources, to address the specific behaviors which constitute an imminent danger (recurring violence, behavior, or aggression).

ABC PROGRAM

If an ABC student must be temporarily removed from our program due to behavioral issues, we will notify the DHS and the ABC Program Specialist via email within 24 hours. We will include notice of the action taken and the specific reasons for the removal as an imminent danger to the child or others.

When all means have been exhausted to help a child who continues to have problems, it may be decided that our program can no longer meet their needs. We will notify the parent of this so that they may seek a more appropriate or specialized care for their child.

BITING

Biting is a normal part of early childhood development. Babies and toddlers bite for a variety of reasons, such as teething or exploring a new toy or object with their mouth ("mouthing"). As they begin to understand cause-and-effect, they also might bite a person to see if they can get a reaction.

Biting also can be a way for toddlers to get attention or express how they're feeling. Frustration, anger, and fear are strong emotions and toddlers lack the language skills to deal with them. So if they can't find the words they need quickly enough or can't articulate how they're feeling, they may resort to biting as a way of saying, "Pay attention to me!" or "I don't like that!" Biting tends to occur most often between the first and second birthday. Biting is a normal part of early childhood development, however, biting that continues past two and a half to three years of age is not appropriate. Parents may be called to pick up their child from school and may be excluded for the day if he or she continuously exhibits this behavior past the age of two and a half.

Please note that refunds/credits shall not be issued for days in which the child was sent home for behavior issues.

Arkansas Department of Human Services Guidelines on Illnesses

Disease/Health Condition	Health Requirements as Outlined by DHS	When Can My Child Return?
Fever	(104 degree/oral) (100 degree/axillary Infant younger than 6 months (100 degrees)	Must be fever free for 24 hours (24 hours from start of being fever free) or a doctor's note stating the condition is not contagious
Diarrhea	2 or more watery stools in a 24-hour period	Must be diarrhea free for 24 hours (24 hours from last diarrhea) or a doctor's note stating the condition is not contagious
Vomiting	2 or more occasions within the past 24-hour period	Must be free from vomiting for 24 hours (24 hours from last vomit) or a doctor's note stating the condition is not contagious
Rash	Body rashes, not obviously associated with diapering, heat, or allergic reactions to medications	Rashes must be completely gone before returning or a doctor's note stating the condition is not contagious
Sore Throat	If associated with fever or swollen glands in the neck	Must be free from symptoms for 24 hours or a doctor's note stating the condition is not contagious
Severe Coughing	Episodes of coughing which may lead to repeated gagging, vomiting, or difficulty breathing	Conditions must be minimized significantly or a doctor's note stating the condition is not contagious
Pink Eye	Pink Eye Pink or red eye(s) which may be swollen which white or yellow discharge	Must be on antibiotics for a minimum of 24 hours. A doctor's note is required before the child may return to our center.
Head Lice, Nits	Tiny insects that live on human scalps and nits (eggs) are found on the hair shaft	May return after treatment and removal of ALL bugs and nits. Child's infected area must be checked and approved as clear by an administrator the morning the child returns to our center.
Scabies	Tiny mites that burrow into the skin causes severe itching and rash	Health care provider determines the condition is non-infectious. A doctor's note is required before the child may return to our center.
Mouth Sores	Multiple sores in mouth with drooling	Health care provider determines the condition is non-infectious. A doctor's note is required before the child may return to our center.
Ring Worm & Molluscum	A fungal infection of the scalp or skin	After treatment by a health care provider has begun. The infected area must be covered at all times while at school. A doctor's note is required before the child may return to our center.
Impetigo	Skin infection – bumps or large patchy areas	May return 24 hours after treatment has been initiated. The infected area must be covered at all times while at school. A doctor's note is required before the child may return to our center.
Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease	Blisters around mouth, feet or hands, not obviously associated with heat, or allergic reactions to medications	May return back to our center when fever free and blisters are dry with no pus to avoid the spread of disease to other children.
Other	Any contagious disease, illness, or health condition	May return based on doctor's recommendation

What Does **Safe Sleep** Look Like?



- Always place your baby on his or her **back** to sleep for naps and at night.
- Use a firm sleep surface, such as a mattress in a safety approved* crib, pack and play, or bassinet.
- Do not use pillows, blankets, sheepskins, or crib bumpers anywhere in your baby's sleep area.
- Keep soft objects, toys, and loose bedding out of your baby's sleep area.
- Do not smoke or let anyone smoke around your baby.
- Dress your baby in sleep clothing, such as a one-piece sleeper, and do not use a blanket.
- Baby should not sleep in an adult bed, on a couch, or on a chair alone, with you, or with anyone else.
- Breastfeed your baby to reduce the risk of SIDS.
- Give your baby a dry pacifier that is not attached to a string for naps and at night to reduce the risk of SIDS.
- Make sure nothing covers your baby's head.

**For more information on crib safety guidelines, contact the Consumer Product Safety Commission at 1-800-638-2772 or <http://www.cpsc.gov>*

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Choose Your Baby's Caregivers Wisely:

Before leaving your baby at any day care or with someone else, ask yourself:

- Does this person want to watch my baby?
- Is this person good with babies?
- Will my baby be safe with this person?
- Have I shown this person my Crying Plan?

Don't Leave Your Baby With Anyone Who:

- Is impatient or annoyed when your baby cries.
- Says that your baby "cries too much."
- Becomes angry if your baby cries or bothers him/her.
- May treat your baby roughly because they are angry with you.
- Has a history of violence.
- Uses drugs and/or alcohol.

Prevent Shaken Baby Syndrome

- Babies need attention most of the time.
- Babies cry for many reasons. Learn to read your baby's cry.
- Some babies cry more than others.
- It's okay to feel frustrated when a baby won't stop crying.
- It's NOT okay to shake a baby to stop the crying.
- You can't hold a baby too much.
- Babies cry. Have a plan.



Helpful Resources

www.arkansasctf.org
www.kidshealth.org
www.dontshake.org



4815 West Markham
Little Rock, AR 72205
www.healthy.arkansas.gov



You Can Prevent Shaken Baby Syndrome





What is Shaken Baby Syndrome?

- It's a serious brain injury
- It's a form of child abuse that can be prevented
- It happens when the baby is forcefully shaken, which causes the brain to move inside the skull
- Babies are usually shaken when the caregiver becomes angry or frustrated that the baby won't stop crying and can't be soothed. This is child abuse and must be prevented!

A crying baby can be very frustrating when nothing you do stops the crying! All babies cry – some more than others. They cry because they are hungry, uncomfortable, in pain or sick. Babies also cry to be held. You can't spoil a baby who is less than 6 months old by holding him too much.



*You Can Prevent
Shaken Baby
Syndrome with a
Crying Plan*

Here's a Crying Plan You Can Follow

To Calm Your Baby:

- Try rocking, cradling or cuddling your baby close to you.
- Use a close-fitting infant carrier or gently swaddle your infant in a baby blanket.
- Rock or swing your baby in an infant swing.
- Take the baby for a car ride with the child securely fastened in a car seat.

- Play soft music or sing to the baby in a soft, soothing voice or make shushing sounds.
- Hold your baby and bottle upright so that as little air goes into your baby as possible.
- If your baby is formula fed or has been successfully breast feeding for 3 weeks, sucking on a pacifier can trigger a calming reflex.

- Switching from breastfeeding to formula, or vice versa, rarely helps; but if you think changing the formula might help, discuss it with your doctor.

- If you've tried these steps and the crying hasn't stopped, put your baby in an empty crib on her back to cry while you take a break or call a family member or friend for support.

To Calm Yourself:

- Leave the room
- Take 10 slow deep breaths
- Wash your face
- Do sit ups or walk up and down the stairs a few times
- Take a walk outside for five minutes



Remember, if your baby is not soothed or hurt but continues to cry, it's never okay to shake a baby. It's more important for you to stay calm than stop the crying.

What are the Signs of Shaken Baby Syndrome?



- Limpness
- Trouble breathing
- Poor feeding and sucking
- Fussiness
- Seizures
- Vomiting
- Pale or bluish skin
- Unresponsiveness, will not wake up



Never shake your baby! It could cause a brain injury or even death.

USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law as well as the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights, regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, employees, and all other institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age. Reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA is also strictly prohibited.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a complaint of discrimination complete the **USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (AD-3027)**, which can be found online at www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html or at any USDA office.

Alternatively, you may choose to write a letter of complaint and mail it to the USDA. Please ensure that the letter provides all of the information that is requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992.

You may submit the completed form or letter to the USDA by:

(1) mail:
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442

(3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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PARENT ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

I, the enrolling parent/guardian, have received, read, & understand Quality Child Care’s Parent Handbook and I agree to comply with all policies and requirements set forth in it.

By signing below I also agree that i have received and understand the shaken baby syndrome information provided in this handbook.

FOR ALL PARENTS OF 3, 4, & 5 YEAR OLDS, signing below indicates you have received a copy of the link to the Kindergarten Readiness Calendar and/or checklist provided by the AR Department of Education.

Print Name (Parent)

Signature & Date

Print Name (Witness)

Signature & Date

Arkansas Better Chance (ABC) Program Parent Acknowledgment Form

I, the enrolling parent/guardian, have received, read, & understand the ABC Program-specific information contained in Quality Child Care’s Parent Handbook and I agree to comply with all policies and requirements set forth in it.

Print Name (Parent)

Signature & Date

Print Name (Witness)

Signature & Date