

I, the parent of _____ have accessed the APPLE TREE ACADEMY program handbook at **appletree4kids.com** and have read the following information and policies:

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Welcome!

Apple Tree Academy wishes to welcome you and your child to our program. This booklet is designed to answer many of your questions about our program, policies, and procedures.

At *Apple Tree Academy* we are always glad to have parents or other observers drop by to view our program, and we encourage you to do so. We have special observation times so that the children's programs are not interrupted. Please call and schedule a time that is convenient for both our children and you.

Apple Tree Academy strives to be a valuable early care and education program for children of all ages. We assure you that the *Apple Tree Academy* program, personnel, content, and management excel in quality; our center exceeds licensure standards. Our team of professionals consistently works to attain *Missouri Accreditation Standards* within our learning environment, curriculum, and staff education.

Please keep this booklet or download a copy at **appletree4kids.com** for future reference.

History

Apple Tree Academy has been in existence since 1995 serving children from birth to 14 years of age. *Apple Tree Academy* is in compliance with all state regulations, meets the standards of *Missouri Accreditation*, and has been certified in the past. *Apple Tree Academy* strives to maintain these standards and follow all codes of ethics of the *National Association of Young Children*. *Apple Tree Academy* is a member of the *NAEYC*. *Apple Tree Academy* is also an active member in the *Missouri Association of Child Care Providers*.

In 2009 *Apple Tree Academy* expanded and opened up *Apple Tree Academy Preschool Enrichment* and *Camp Apple Tree*.

Description

Apple Tree Academy is a part of Brad and Karen Enterprises, L.L.C. and is governed by members within the Limited Liability Company who are interested and experienced in early childhood education. This company has been in the child-care business since 1985 and is the leading early care and education site in Jefferson City, Missouri. *Apple Tree Academy* has been awarded the Gold in *The Reader's Choice Awards* in our local community.

Brad and Karen Enterprises, L.L.C. is licensed with the *Missouri Secretary of State* under Tax ID Number 43-1717271.

Meeting State Licensing Requirements

- *Apple Tree Academy* is licensed by the *State Department of Health and Senior Services, Section of Child Care* which could allow *Apple Tree Academy* to care for up to ninety nine (99) children at one time with overlap. *Apple Tree Academy* has one announced and one unannounced state inspection each year. *Apple Tree Academy* has annual health and fire inspections. *Apple Tree's* renewal process is based upon a two-year cycle.

- ***Apple Tree Academy Enrichment Program*** is a license exempt program and has annual state, health, and fire inspections. The *Apple Tree Academy Enrichment Program* can care for up to 31 children.
- ***Apple Tree Academy Summer Camp*** is exempt from licensure according to *Missouri State Statute 210.211*. *Apple Tree Academy Summer Camp* can care for up to 100 children using the guideline of 35 square feet per child.

Contact Information

- ***Apple Tree Academy*** - 2810 E. McCarty St., Jefferson City, MO 65101, (573) 893-4712, (573) 893-4712 (FAX), www.appletree4kids.com.
- ***Apple Tree Academy Enrichment Program*** - 2002 E. McCarty St. (rear), Jefferson City, MO 65101, (573) 893-8012, www.appletree4kids.com.
- ***Camp Apple Tree Academy*** - 2002 E. McCarty St., Jefferson City, MO 65101, (573) 893-8012, www.appletree4kids.com.

Non-Discrimination Regarding Children

Apple Tree Academy admits children of any race, color, religion, national origin, sex and qualified children with disabilities to all rights, privileges, programs and activities of the Center and does not discriminate on the basis of any of these factors in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, fee payments, food service program and other school administered programs

Children with disabilities are also enrolled through *Apple Tree's* regular enrollment process if we are able to adequately meet the child's special needs. In many cases the necessary special services are available through *First Steps* or the *Special Learning Center* if the child is under three.

If the child is older than three, the Public School System is responsible. If *Apple Tree Academy* is unable to meet a child's special needs because necessary facilities, services, or staff are not available; we will assist the family in finding a more appropriate placement.

Diversity*

Apple Tree Academy is very fortunate to have families who represent a variety of cultures. We welcome their sharing of activities and customs with the classrooms. Many different types of families are represented in the center as well. Children learn to recognize and accept this type and other types of diversity, through social interaction and planned learning activities in the classroom.

Apple Tree Academy does not want any child to feel different, left out, or discriminated against because of race, nationality, family type, disability, or religious preference/non-preference. *Apple Tree Academy* is a child's world where everyone is special and respected.

**In order to simplify the text in this handbook, the term "parent" is used to mean a child's primary care giver – in some cases that person is a foster parent, a grandparent, guardian or co-parent.*

Non-Sexist Environment

Apple Tree Academy supports the elimination of sex role stereotyping in all activities and encourages children to (missing text?)

Confidentiality

Apple Tree Academy considers all information regarding enrolled children and families as confidential. *Apple Tree Academy* will not discuss a child with anyone other than pertinent staff, regulating bodies, accrediting agencies, legal guardians, custodial parents, or with those persons or agencies authorized by the family with a signed, written release of information. *Apple Tree Academy* adheres to federal and state statutes concerning a child's information.

No information requested by someone outside of *Apple Tree Academy*, other than parents or guardians, will be given over the telephone unless *Apple Tree Academy* has a written release signed by the parents.

Please do not ask teachers or part-time aides to discuss information about other children or their families. Our staff is expected to adhere to the ideals and principles included in the *NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct*. Confidentiality is an important part of this code.

Center Descriptions

Apple Tree Academy

- Open year round/full day services.
- Serves eighty-six children ranging from birth-fourteen years of age.
- Toddler Unit hours: 7:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
- Preschool and School Age programs: 6:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
- State licensed by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS), Section of Child Care.

Apple Tree Academy Preschool Enrichment Program

- Open September – May only.
- Serves thirty-one children ranging from two-five years of age.
- Limited to a four-hour day per child.
- Morning sessions: 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., afternoon session: 12:20 p.m. -4:30 p.m.
- Program subject to health and fire inspection by the *Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS)*.

Camp Apple Tree

- Open May-September.
- Serves one hundred children ranging from five-twelve years of age.
- Full-Time/Part-Time/Hourly services.
- Open from 6:45 a.m. -5:30 p.m.
- Program license-exempt under *State Statute 210.211*.

Notes

- Hourly care noted to be one-three hours

- half day care noted to be three-five hours/day
- five or more hours noted to be a full day.
- All parents charged a fee for late pick-ups (See *Late Pickup Policy* for amount).
Children may not be dropped off on premises prior to opening times.

Classroom Placement

Mixed-Age Classrooms

- There are currently three programs available at *Apple Tree Academy*.
- Room placement is made according to the age of the child enrolled as of August 31.
- Children are grouped into classes based on mixed-age grouping. The reason for mixed-age classes is simple: separating children by age denies them a whole range of social and intellectual stimuli.
- Children of various ages learn from one another; more experienced students present the knowledge they have acquired to their younger classmates which assigns them a socially responsible role and also results in more successful learning for both parties.
- In mixed-age classes, children experience both continuity and change in their social relationships as older children move on and younger ones take their place. Children's social skills improve as they help and support each other due to their developmental differences in knowledge and experience. In this way social behavior and respect develop naturally as a matter of course.
- Mixing ages leads to children assuming different roles during the years they spend at *Apple Tree Academy*, elementary school, adolescent programs, or high school respectively. As the youngest, they receive support from the more experienced children. At the middle stage they are more familiar with their surroundings and can help themselves. When they reach the oldest group, they can be a good example to others.
- Children remain in the same classroom unless a specific need arises.
- Preference is given to five day a week enrollment in all classrooms.

Apple Tree Academy Teacher-Child Ratios

- Birth - two years/1:4, maximum group size: 8
- Two - four years/1:10, maximum group size: 20
- Five - fourteen years/1:16, maximum group size: 32

Notes

- Summer time ratios may be up to 1:20 for school age children. This becomes a 1:10 ratio in the Counselor in Training (CIT) program.
- Ratios for field trips are increased whenever possible. Parents are encouraged to participate.

Communication

- Sign-in/sign-out books are located at the entrance of each center. Parents must sign their child in/out daily and record the time of their arrival and departure.

- Journals and daily notes are provided for each child and used as a communication device between parents and teachers on a daily basis.
- Daily messages are also displayed throughout the entryway and classrooms describing the activities of the day.
- Should parents need to contact them, teachers are available during their scheduled hours. If a teacher is *not* available, program administrators are scheduled to be in the building at all times.
- Administrators may be throughout the building in the different classrooms and are available for questions about the center.
- Please feel free to stop at the office at any time or call to make an appointment with a specific administrator.
- Though time throughout the day to do daily journal entries is not always possible; please check journals regularly. Please look for daily messages or reminders posted on the entry bulletin board, classroom bulletin boards and/or sign-in/sign-out sheets in classrooms and through our e-mail list.

Information for Families

An important part of Apple Tree's mission is to provide our families with information that makes the difficult job of parenting a little easier.

- *Apple Tree Academy* publishes a monthly newsletter containing reminders of important upcoming dates, deadlines, events, themes and activities. *Apple Tree Academy* also has a library of information which includes lots of useful, interesting information in the areas of child health, safety, nutrition, discipline, intellectual, social-emotional, and language development, as well as fun activities and great ideas for kid-friendly meals and snacks.
- Parents may join our e-mail list so that they can receive e-mail reminders concerning important deadlines and other *Apple Tree Academy* information. Please stop by our office and give us your e-mail address or notify us if your e-mail address changes.
- On our web site we have posted weekly lesson plans for your convenience. This is a wonderful way to enforce educational material at home and to start a conversation about your child's day.
- Notes, reminders and wish lists may also be found in cubbies throughout the school year.

Parking

Please keep everyone safe by driving slowly and carefully - there are many pedestrians (adults and children) as well as cars pulling in and out of spaces on both sides of our lots. Our posted speed limit is a maximum of 5 miles per hour.

Arrivals

Attendance

- If your child is unable to attend, please notify us by 9:00 a.m. to help us plan activities and allow teachers to go on walks or trips as planned without feeling “we should wait another ten minutes for...”
- *If your child is unable to attend due to illness, please describe his/her symptoms to help us stay aware of current health problems.*

Adjusting to school: Leaving Your Child

For children who are new to *Apple Tree Academy*, we suggest a brief visit before your child’s first day. We offer a half-day free of charge to help your child adjust to our program. After that, if your schedule allows, plan to stay ten minutes the first day or so of enrollment and/or pick up your child early.

Helpful Tips:

- If you remain in the room, try to discourage lap sitting and attempt to get your child interested in a toy, the teacher, or a peer.
- Never suddenly disappear – this can be quite distressing for your child.
- Tell your child you are leaving, that you will return, exchange hugs and kisses, and leave quickly with a smile.
- It is important not to give your child mixed-messages; be positive and happy as you leave. Forlorn or worried glances from parents convey to the children that this may not be a fun experience after all.
- Try not to feel guilty if you leave your child in tears; teachers are accustomed to this behavior and almost all children cease crying within a very short period of time.
- Please feel free to call *Apple Tree Academy* to check on how the day is going. Remember that it sometimes takes a week or two before a child feels comfortable and secure about coming to school. If it is taking longer for your child to adjust, we will begin a joint plan of action.
- If possible, initially pick up your child before 4:30 p.m. because the full-time classroom teachers begin to leave at this time. Children remain with a part-time aide from 4:30-5:30; your child will eventually become secure with this arrangement. These same procedures can be used for a child who is not new to *Apple Tree Academy* but having a difficult time due to changes at home or school.
- Please keep the teachers informed of all changes or of any distress your child may be experiencing.

The Importance of Arrival Time for Your Child

- Please bring your child to the adult in charge and be certain the teacher or aide acknowledges you and your child’s presence before you leave.

- The person bringing the child should sign the child in (time and drop-off person's initials) on the sign-in sheet in the child's classroom and put all belongings in the child's cubby.
- *Never drop your child off at the door or leave him or her in a classroom if there is no staff person present* – if there is no staff person present, please check immediately with the office. This rule applies to school-age children as well as younger ones.

Departures

- When you come for your child, make a point of saying good-bye to the adult in charge.
- *Check your child's cubby daily for messages, artwork, or written work.*
- Sign your child out.
- If the class is on the playground, one of the teachers will have the sign-out sheet with her.
- Please remember that all persons picking up a child from *Apple Tree Academy* should have identification with them in case the supervising adult has not previously met them. *Apple Tree Academy* staff members are trained to never release a child to an unidentified person. Please keep your child with you at all times when leaving the classroom and the building.

Departures after 4:30

If you arrive after 4:30 p.m. , another teacher or a part-time aide will be supervising the children.

- At 4:30 p.m. , all children from the Preschool are combined.
- At 5:15 p.m. , children still in the center are brought to the central area for pickup.
- Late pickup fees are assessed from 5:30 p.m. These children will be either in the central area or the office, at which time late fee paperwork needs to be signed by you. Fees will be assessed on your account accordingly

Authorized People to Pick Up Children

- Only people that you authorize on your child's emergency treatment card may pick up your child. If it becomes necessary for an unauthorized person to pick up your child, we will need to receive your approval in the form of a note or phone call from you stating that person's name and telephone number.
- This person will need to sign a special form in order to take your child from the premises. If the individual is unknown to *Apple Tree Academy* staff, we will need to see some form of personal identification. *We can only release your child to those persons you designate in writing and that person must be at least 14 years old.*

Child Custody

- Parents should keep staff current with the latest developments of custody disputes. We will then inform the rest of the staff of any changes.

- The staff is aware of which policy to follow when there is a problem concerning custody.
- *A copy of the latest court order is to be in the file in order for staff and police to be compliant with the request.*
- In a threatening situation, or when the safety of others is at hand, the child may be released. *Apple Tree Academy will not be held liable if this type of situation should arise. We will not jeopardize other children and staff to this situation. Please keep your child at home if needed.*

Transportation

Apple Tree Academy's Fifteen-Passenger Van:

The main purpose for having the van is to transport pre-K children to our *Apple Tree Academy Preschool Enrichment Program* and school-age children to and from several elementary schools during the school year. The van is also used to transport children to and from a variety of activities, including swimming and other field trips.

- Parents must provide a car seat with harnesses for children who weigh less than forty pounds.
- In the rare case a toddler still weighs under twenty pounds, he or she will need a backward facing seat with harnesses.
- Booster seats are required for children who are between forty and eighty pounds, under age eight, and under four foot nine inches in height.
- *All car seats or boosters must have a sticker stating that the seat is federally approved; all of them come with one when purchased. This is Missouri law.*
- *All car seats or boosters should be in good repair, be properly functional, and be new enough to adhere to all current safety standards.*
- *Shield boosters (backless boosters with a shield that hooks in front of the child) will not be used under any circumstances as they have been discontinued from manufacture and are deemed very dangerous.*
- If a car seat or booster-age child is driven to a field trip destination by a family member, they must be driven back to *Apple Tree Academy* by that same family member.
- *Car seats and boosters will be installed only at Apple Tree.* This is due to the complex arrangement of seats, the safety skills of a trained installer, and the importance of teachers remaining in supervision while on a field trip.
- If a family has an inappropriate car seat for financial or other reasons, *Apple Tree Academy* can assist in finding a good seat at low-cost/no-cost.

Parent Permission

- A signed parent permission form is required for all trips that require van transportation.
- A signed parent permission form gives *Apple Tree Academy* teachers permission to take children on walking field trips.
- If a parent forgets to sign for each separate trip, we will make every effort to contact the parent to get permission.

- If you do not wish your child to attend the field trip, you will be responsible for care until the class returns.
- No child will be transported in a private car without a staff member present unless you are the parent or guardian or written permission is given by the parent/guardian.

Field Trip Supervision

- For all classrooms, there must be adequate adult coverage in order to leave the premises.
- When leaving the facility to go on field trips not in close proximity to *Apple Tree Academy*, there must be two staff members present at the place of activity to assist with supervision, specifically a lead teacher, an assistant teacher, a part-time aide, administrator, a CIT, or a volunteer.
- In some instances, at the discretion of the administration, one teacher may be authorized to accompany children to specified locations.
- All trips away from the building must be pre-approved by the administration. On most field trips our children will meet our partner facility (Big Top Child Development Center) so that two staff members are present.

Emergency Preparedness during Transportation

- Teachers take emergency treatment cards, children's health records, and a first aid kit on all field trips.
- Our emergency treatment release form will be taken on all field trips and shall be taken to the emergency room or doctor's office with the child should the child require immediate medical attention.
- In the event a child must be transported to a doctor's office or hospital and the parents or other designated people on the emergency treatment card are not available, an ambulance will be called.
- In the event of an emergency, the notarized emergency treatment card gives *Apple Tree Academy* staff permission to call an ambulance for transportation to the hospital and for the hospital to administer emergency care.
- The ambulance and emergency personnel fees will be the responsibility of the parents. Should the child need the services of an ambulance and the parents cannot be reached, an *Apple Tree Academy* staff member will provide the completed child health assessment form to the emergency staff.
- When a staff member accompanies a child to a source of emergency care, he or she will remain with the child until a parent or parent's designee assumes responsibility for the child.
- Any serious injury requiring hospitalization shall be reported by the next working day to the administration.
- *Apple Tree Academy staff will not drive a sick or injured child to a doctor's office or hospital.*

Guidelines for Referrals and/or Termination of Care

If serious adjustment or behavior problems occur after a child is enrolled, a conference will be scheduled so that the teachers and director can talk with the child's parents about the situation.

A written action plan will then be developed outlining steps to be taken to solve the problem/s. The director may set a short-term trial period or enforce the following:

- **Program Referral** – *Apple Tree Academy* may recommend supplemental services for a child with developmental, psychological, or medical problems. Jefferson City Public School, or surrounding school districts, will provide a complete developmental screening free of charge for preschool-aged children who are referred to them by parents or teachers. Areas tested include hearing, vision, speech/language, gross and fine motor skills, cognition (thinking and reasoning skills), and social development. If special services are needed, the staff of those facilities will provide them or the child will be referred to other agencies or programs.
- **Child Care Termination** – If a parent or parents refuse the recommendation, or if these services are provided and the child's condition does not improve satisfactorily, or if continued enrollment of the child does not represent the best interest of the child, *Apple Tree Academy*, the staff, or the other children, *Apple Tree Academy* administration reserves the right to give written notice to the parent or parents, indicating termination of all child care services ending in fourteen days. If the child's behavior is physically or emotionally dangerous to other children or staff, immediate termination may be necessary. Child-care services may also be terminated immediately if the behavior of a parent or other primary caregiver is verbally or physically abusive or disrespectful to a staff person or other children or parents in the program.

Grievance Procedure

- If an *Apple Tree Academy* parent or guardian has a grievance or wishes to appeal an administrative decision, the first attempt to resolve the issue should be by the parties involved.
- If a solution is not reached, a formal grievance may be filed in writing with the executive members of *Apple Tree Academy* for the purpose of reaching a satisfactory solution for all concerned.
- A letter should be sent to the members stating reasons for the appeal and other pertinent information. The committee will examine the issue as quickly as possible and notify the parties involved of their decision.
- *Apple Tree Academy* members have final authority in deciding issues relating to center policies and procedures. Appeals to any other entities or outside entities will not be considered.

Parent Liability Statement

If a child under the age of eighteen injures a person or damages property maliciously or willfully, the person so injured can recover damages from the parent up to \$1,000 as is provided by Missouri State Law), unless it is found that the malicious or willful

actions were the result of parental neglect, in which case there is no limit to the amount of liability. This law holds the parent, not the teacher or center, liable.

Emergency Closing Procedure

- The director will announce any changes in *Apple Tree Academy's* hours of operation via the media – KWOS and KRCCG, and *Apple Tree Academy's* official website.
- In the event there is an emergency affecting only *Apple Tree Academy* (no heat, water, etc.), we will be closed or will operate on reduced hours.
- If inclement weather necessitates canceling of the day's activities or if the weather is severe, *Apple Tree Academy* reserves the right to cancel services or alter hours if weather conditions are extremely dangerous.
- Because *Apple Tree Academy* incurs salary and other fixed costs when closed, we cannot refund fees for the rare days we must be closed.
- *Apple Tree Academy* does not follow the public school closings.

Emergency Preparedness

- Fire drills are scheduled once a month throughout the year. Each classroom practices using different escape routes.
- Tornado drills are held monthly from March through September.
- Fire and tornado drill procedures are posted in each classroom and all staff is trained to know what to do in these kinds of emergency situations.
- Classrooms serving children with disabilities have special emergency plans assigning responsibility for the disabled child.

Emergency Security Plan

In response to the increasing number of security concerns brought about by school violence events in other areas, we felt it was necessary to develop an emergency plan to assure the safety of both children and staff in the center.

- We now have the ability to contact the local police or sheriff's office immediately for assistance in case a dangerous situation is occurring in or near the center.
- There are also procedures in place to move all children and staff to the safest possible locations as quickly as possible.
- Drills will be held each semester so that children and staff can become accustomed to the procedures just as they do for our regular fire and tornado drills.
- *If a potentially dangerous situation exists at the facility outside of our building, we will follow our shelter-in-place procedures. All doors and windows will be locked and access to the building will be monitored closely. All children and staff will remain inside the building, but all other regular activities will go on normally.*
- We also have an evacuation plan in place in case there is a need to move all children and staff out of any of our buildings. *In situations like a suspected gas leak or bomb threat, staff will immediately move children to our designated evacuation site either in the Capitol Projects Building or the Seven-Up/Dr.*

Pepper plant – all of which are located on East McCarty Street - where they will remain until we know it is safe to return. Parents will be notified of the emergency situation by cell phone, the local media, and our website.

Staffing

Professional and Support Staff

Apple Tree's Administrative Staff

- Executive Director
- Finance Director
- Program Director
- Assistant Directors

Support Staff

- Administrative Assistant
- Kitchen Cook/and or Kitchen Assistants
- Coordinator of Units
- Classroom Teachers

Full Time Lead Teachers/Assistant Teachers

Childcare staff members have a vital influence on a child's behavior and development so in most classrooms, our full-time lead teachers will have at least an Associate's Degree in Development, up to a Bachelor's Degree in a child-related field. Most assistant teachers have two years of college and/or years of experience. Care is taken to choose teachers who have knowledge of developmental needs of children and who are qualified to plan and direct activities which meet the cognitive, physical, and social needs of young children. Teachers work as a team jointly planning daily learning experiences which promote creative and intellectual expression, stimulate learning and build an accepting and comfortable climate for children.

Part-Time Employees

Apple Tree Academy employs many part-time aides and counselors in training (CIT) to assist in the classrooms. Part-time aides help supervise the children during rest-time while teachers have their breaks and planning time, and also assist teachers during all other parts of the day, particularly during late afternoon hours. Having an extra adult in the room allows teachers to plan walks, field trips, and other special activities that require additional supervision. Part-time aides also supervise children while teachers attend outside meetings and act as substitutes when a teacher is absent.

Our part-time aides are hired, trained, and supervised by the program director, while full-time teachers also assume responsibility for hands-on training in the classrooms with the children. Each aide must also complete approximately forty hours of in-service training with the program director before taking over the main supervision of a classroom.

Volunteers

Volunteers are a vital part of the *Apple Tree Academy* program; they serve as extra teacher's aides in the classroom. Their assistance allows classroom teachers to

individualize more of the curriculum for the children. Although most volunteers are students, people from the community are also encouraged to participate at Apple Tree. Parents are certainly welcome to assist classroom teachers; or if you have family members who would like to give their time, we would love it! Volunteers must be fourteen years of age, submit mandatory paperwork, and complete a required orientation.

Practicum Students

Education practicum students often help teach in some of our classrooms or are here to observe as a part of their course requirements. Teachers utilize the valuable services of these volunteers to enrich their program while providing them training and experience in inclusive classroom settings.

Classroom Schedules

Apple Tree’s schedule is designed to meet the needs of varying age levels and the needs of individual children.

Activities are also balanced between individual and group activities, quiet/listening oriented activities, and more action play periods. Our curriculum features cognitive development, fine and gross motor development, and social/emotional development through a variety of readiness skills, as well as arts and crafts. We have times when the children choose, along with planned teacher instruction. There is a rest time if appropriate. A sample pre-school schedule is below.

Time of Day	Routine	Possible Experience	Theme Activities: Nutrition
6:30-9:00	Arrival/Breakfast	Listening to stories, free choice activities	Reading stories about nutrition. Listing food groups and different exercises in the room.
9:00-9:15	Circle Time	Meeting/Discussion Organizing Data Personal Writing	Painting with potatoes, collages with food. Planting seeds, making a vegetable garden.
9:15-10:15	Learning Centers	Art Board/Card Games Construction Cooking Dramatic Play Planting Exercise Play Sand/Water Mud Pies	Using props such as farming tools, apron, gloves, etc. Seeing what happens when vinegar and baking soda mix. Singing songs like “Peanut Butter and Jelly”. Using computers, pen, pencils, envelopes, recipe cards. Sorting and counting bag of frozen vegetables.
10:15-11:00	Outdoor Play	Explore outdoor areas and outdoor activities	Using shovels, pie pans, rakes, wheel barrels, etc.
11:00-12:00	Lunch		Dancing to Music.
12:00-12:45	Large Group	Listening to stories, free choice	Making vegetable stick people
12:45-2:00	Nap		Pudding Play
2:00-3:00	Quiet Centers	Puzzles Books Listening Station Games Writing	Singing songs like “Fried Ham” and “Brush Your Teeth”. Reading Books like “Grandma’s Cooking” Playing with the Farmer’s Market set.
3:00-3:30	Snack/Large Group		
3:30-4:30	Centers	Cooking Sensory Music Personal Reading Personal Writing Block and Accessories	
4:30-5:30	Departure	Table Activities/Outdoor Play	

Curriculum

Emergent Language & Literacy Curriculum

Apple Tree Academy's Educational Program uses the *Emergent Language & Literacy Curriculum*, which is an approved curriculum by the State of Missouri, Department of Education. This is an approach to teaching that is based on what we know about how children learn. *Emergent Language & Literacy Curriculum* embraces teaching strategies and resources that are consistent with validated theories of learning and development. Through “hands-on, minds-on” experiences, students in *Emergent Language & Literacy Curriculum* classrooms attain deep understandings in the core content areas while they also learn to work collaboratively with adults and peers and to be lifelong problem solvers.

This curriculum and assessment is research-based and is linked to the *Missouri Show Me Standards*. The program is designed to address the whole child including the following areas: social, moral, cognitive, representational, and physical development domains. Comprehensive, ongoing training supports implementation of *Emergent Language & Literacy Curriculum* and participant-centered professional development programs while *Emergent Language & Literacy Curriculum Institutes* provide staff with opportunities for teachers and administrators to invent practical strategies which support children's ways of thinking and challenge them to construct new knowledge.

Overall, our program fosters children's literacy and language development, helps children develop scientific and mathematical knowledge, use art, construction, music, movement, and play to promote learning. Lessons are planned with both the individual child and the group in mind.

Children in all *Apple Tree Academy* classrooms will experience a well-rounded curriculum which draws from many areas of development including the following:

- Language and Memory
- Large and Small Motor Skills,
- Dramatic Play
- Art and Sensory
- Health and Safety
- Pre-Literacy
- Pre-Math
- Pre-Science

As part of creative development, children will be allowed to use materials freely and to move with spontaneity. However, this freedom does not mean the child functions without direction. Teachers will encourage children to develop the habit of observing, questioning, and listening by modeling these behaviors themselves. They will help children feel free to make choices, to experiment, to change, and to respect the feelings and rights of others.

Toddler Rooms

Toddler rooms also focus heavily all year long on self-help, independence, and social development. Children will gain experience and knowledge through both child-initiated and teacher-directed activities with a strong emphasis on curiosity, exploration, and fun!

The teaching staff strives hard to maintain a very warm, comforting and loving environment for our toddlers, as they are the youngest members of the Apple Tree Academy community. We work on sign language with the toddlers to help them express themselves.

Sample Toddler Room Daily Schedule

7:15 – 8:30 Arrival and Free Choice Areas - see lesson plans
8:30 – 9:00 Breakfast and Clean-Up
9:00 – 10:00 Free Choice Areas - see lesson plans
10:00 – 10:40 Outside Time or Indoor Large Motor Activity
10:40 – 10:45 Juice/Water Break
10:45 – 11:15 Art/Sensory Activity
11:15 – 11:30 Circle Time and Wash Hands
11:30 – 12:00 Lunch
11:45 – 12:30 Complete Diapering Rotation, Prepare for Nap
12:00 – Lights out for Nap
2:45 – 3:30 Waking Up, Quiet Activities, Complete Diapering Rotation
3:15 – 3:30 Snack (start time depending on naps)
3:45 Afternoon Circle Time (if there is time)
4:00 – 4:45 Outside Time or Indoor Large Motor Activity
4:45 – 4:50 Juice/Water Break
4:50 – 5:30 Free Choice Areas (see lesson plans), Late Day Diapering
5:30 – 5:45 Children who are still here transfer to the Butterfly Room, the gathering room for the toddler wing

Preschool Rooms

Preschool rooms build upon the skills from the toddler year, but will focus even more heavily on self-help skills, including toilet training and dressing. Children will also begin to experience more involved large group curriculum and will gain more exposure to making activity choices. As the children approach Preschool, activities will begin to naturally take a more structured shape, but the emphasis will remain upon fostering inquisitiveness, expression, and again, fun!

Sample Younger Preschool Room Daily Schedule

7:15 – 7:30 Arrival
7:30 – 8:15 Free Choice Areas
8:15 – 8:25 Clean Up Time
8:25 – 8:30 Wash Hands for Breakfast/Bathroom
8:30 – 9:00 Breakfast
9:00 – 9:15 Bathroom and Toy Time
9:15 – 9:30 Circle Time (Calendar, Weather, Helpers, Songs)
9:30 – 10:25 Morning Centers
10:25 – 10:30 Clean Up Time
10:30 – 11:15 Outside Play Time
11:15 – 11:30 Circle Time (Friendship Circle and Story Time), Washing Hands for Lunch
11:30 – 11:50 Lunch
11:50 – 12:30 Clean Up from Lunch/Bathroom/Looking at Books Quietly

12:30 – 2:15 Rest Time
2:15 – 2:35 Bathroom
2:30 – 2:55 Brushing Teeth, Table/Bucket Toy Time
2:55 – 3:00 Clean Up Time
3:00 – 3:15 Circle Time (Happy Grams), Washing Hands for Snack
3:15 – 3:40 Snack Time
3:40- 3:45 Bathroom
3:45 – 4:30 Outside Play Time
4:30 – 5:30 Afternoon Centers
5:30 – 5:45 Learn in Sunflower Room

Sample Older Preschool Room Daily Schedule

7:15 – 8:30 Arrival, Children’s Choice
8:30 – 9:00 Breakfast
9:00 – 9:15 Quiet Reading
9:15 – 10:00 Outside Play, Exercise
10:00 – 10:30 Morning Circle
10:30 – 11:30 Discovery Areas
11:30 – 12:15 Lunch, Clean-up
12:15 – 12:45 Tooth Brushing, Restroom, Quiet Reading
12:45 – 2:30 Rest Time, Quiet Activities
2:30 – 2:45 Transition to Outside
2:45 – 3:30 Outside Play, Exercise
3:30 – 4:00 Snack
4:00 – 4:30 Afternoon Circle
4:30 – 5:30 Discovery Areas, Children’s Choice

Pre-K Rooms

Pre-K rooms are designed to offer a stimulating learning environment in preparation for school, while maintaining a play-based approach with developmentally appropriate activities. The teachers work hard to plan engaging projects and use innovative ideas that address the diverse needs of each group while promoting creativity and exploration. Additionally, our older preschool rooms have a more pronounced emphasis on handwriting, pre-reading, and pre-math skills as they approach the transition to kindergarten.

These rooms also continue to build on the toddler and preschool rooms’ foundation of self-help skills, independence, and social development. There is a balance of child-initiated vs. teacher-directed activities and children have many chances to participate individually in small groups or as a large class. Children will also begin to do a great amount of choice making in the preschool classrooms, providing them with experience in controlling their own activities.

Summer Session

During the summer session, Apple Tree Academy offers a full day program for toddlers, preschoolers (needs development)

Apple Tree Academy Summer Camp

Apple Tree Academy Summer Camp offers programs for ages five to fourteen. These children participate in many field trips and outdoor activities during the summer. Some trips are by *Apple Tree Academy* van while others by walking. If temperatures reach ninety-five degrees and the heat index is in the dangerous range, outdoor activities, including swimming, will be restricted. If possible, the *Apple Tree Academy* van will be used to transport children to and from some field trip locations instead of having them walk during hot weather or if there is a sudden weather change.

Before/After School Programs

Apple Tree Academy offers a before and after-school program for kindergarten-sixth graders.

- We provide transportation from as many schools as possible, dependent upon enrollment and the closing times of the schools.
- School-age program teachers plan daily activities to meet the varied needs of young primary children.
- Care is also offered when the public schools are closed.
- During the summer, primary-age children may attend full days, part days, every other week, hourly or drop-ins. Preference is always given to applications for five-day enrollment.

Optional Care

Optional care is provided for school age children on school holidays and scheduled breaks. They will be enrolled in *Apple Tree's School Age Program*, but will be off-site from 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Pre-Academics

There are countless opportunities at *Apple Tree Academy* for your child to learn new concepts, new vocabulary words and to be exposed to a vast array of educational toys, supplies and equipment. As children progress from classroom to classroom, there will be more and more emphasis placed on handwriting, pre-reading, and pre-math. However, if you desire formal reading instruction prior to kindergarten, we feel that parents should assume this responsibility at home.

Art and Sensory Curriculum

There will be many opportunities in the day for your child to engage in music, art, and dramatic play. To sing, dance, move, create, construct, or pretend is a very real part of a child's world. The teachers will provide a large number and variety of materials or props, show an interest in what the child is doing, and help when the child expresses need for assistance. Children will have the opportunity daily to get their hands messy, explore, and nurture their individual abilities for creative expression.

Please remember, when children bring home artwork it's vital to express an interest, but try not to impose adult standards or expect a child to tell you "what it is". We try very hard to focus on the process of the art experience, rather than the finished product.

Comments pertaining to color, texture, or lines tell the child you appreciate his/her art

without judging it or labeling it. We will date and display children's artistic endeavors here at the center; children will also enjoy having some of their work displayed around home for short periods of time.

Computers for Classrooms/Internet Policy

Preschool and school age classrooms have computers for the children to use.

A variety of educational programs and games are available for children who choose to use the computers.

School age children have access to the Internet after signing a usage agreement and the parent must sign a permission slip as well. If the child breaks the contract, they will be unable to use the Internet. Your child will only be allowed to visit sites which appear on a pre-approved list provided by *Apple Tree Academy*.

Classroom Procedures

Naps and Rest Time

Following lunch, a nap or rest period is provided for all children. Nap and/or rest time is scheduled from 12:30-2:30/3:00 with a great deal of variation from room to room.

Usually the younger the child, the more rest is needed. For older children who do not sleep, quiet activities are provided. You must supply a small blanket.

Toilet Training Requirements

We have excellent toilet training programs in the toddler and two-year-old rooms.

- Teachers and parents work together to determine when children are ready to begin training. Each child's readiness and needs are taken into consideration so that the training process is a positive one for the child.
- Parents who have children in the two-year-old rooms should work closely with the classroom teachers to ensure an effective training program, both at home and at *Apple Tree Academy*.
- Children accepted in the preschool program must be out of diapers and completely toilet trained, as some of these rooms are not set up for toilet training. We realize, however, that young three-year-olds, as well as some older children, may have occasional accidents, especially at the beginning of the fall semester. Pull-ups without Velcro sides are not allowed.
- Because of occasional accidents (and other possible "messy" incidents), parents are responsible for having a complete extra change of clothing in the child's box. *Apple Tree Academy* cannot be responsible for providing an extra set of clothes for a child, although the staff tries to have extras on site in case of emergencies. (Matching appropriate clothes with correct size and gender is very difficult.) If the child does have to wear such extras, it is important that the center's clothes be returned the next day. In some cases, a parent might be called to bring in a set of clothes for the child.

Birthday Celebrations

Please DO NOT bring invitations for birthday parties held outside *Apple Tree Academy* unless all children in a classroom are invited, since the feelings of children not included can be easily hurt. Please be sensitive to ALL children's feelings, and find another way to distribute such invitations outside *Apple Tree Academy*. If your child would like to celebrate a birthday or other special occasion with classmates, treats may be brought to share, generally at snack time. No food can be brought into the center that is homemade. Individually wrapped items or other food items must come from an inspected kitchen. Many families bring sweets, but we also suggest and encourage nutritious snacks. If you wish to furnish a drink, please provide 100% fruit juice only.

In the past some families have donated a book or other learning materials to the classroom for the use of all children instead of providing treats. This type of donation is always welcome. Please do not bring balloons, as there are safety regulations regarding choking to which we must adhere.

You and other family members are welcome to come and join the celebration or even plan games or activities. Please make arrangements with the classroom teachers so they can be prepared for the type of treat or celebration that will occur.

Television/Video Policy

Although videos and television are part of arrival and departure times, naptime, rainy days, and special activities, they are not regular parts of the daily curriculum schedule. If they are planned for occasional classroom use, they must be educational in nature. Any videos or movies proposed for use are first screened by the director or teachers and must be G-rated or family-oriented.

Observance of Holidays

Apple Tree Academy is very fortunate to serve families who represent a variety of cultures, faiths, and personal beliefs. Because we feel it is the parents' responsibility or prerogative to determine the extent that religion should play in their children's lives, we do not celebrate religious holidays at *Apple Tree Academy*.

However, throughout the year classrooms may learn about various holidays around the world and study them in relation to planned curriculum themes. Teachers who are trained to keep in mind the difference between *learning* about a holiday and *celebrating* it. While many of our families celebrate various holidays, both commercially and spiritually, *Apple Tree Academy* does not attempt to recreate them. Instead it is our goal to help children become aware of the many beliefs and celebrations which vary from their own.

We do plan some celebrations or projects around holidays such as Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Valentine's Day. Families who do not wish their children to take part in holiday or birthday celebrations at *Apple Tree Academy* should discuss possible options with the classroom teachers and the executive director. Alternative activities may be provided in the office or in another classroom, or the family may choose to keep the child home when these activities are scheduled.

Cell Phone Policy

Our classrooms are “cell phone-free environments”. This policy maximizes opportunities for parent-child and parent-teacher communication during drop-off and pick-up times. You are welcome to use your cell phone in building hallways, but not in our classrooms or cubby rooms. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

What to Bring to School/School Supplies

All children should bring

- a complete change of labeled clothing, including underwear and socks and two or more complete changes for toddlers and two-year-olds.

Children who nap should bring

- a small labeled blanket for rest time,
- a small pillow, optional.

Children in the toddler and two-year old rooms should also bring

- at least a one-week supply of diapers *or* three pairs of cloth training pants *or* regular underwear if the child is toilet trained. Pull-ups without Velcro sides are not used at *Apple Tree Academy*.
- wipes and ointments with proper permission slip.

Cot Sheets

Apple Tree Academy provides cot sheets for each child. These are laundered weekly/more often if needed. Please take your child’s blanket home at the end of each week for laundering.

Bringing Toys, Food, and Pacifiers to School

Because bringing toys, gum, or candy to school can frequently cause disagreements or misunderstandings among children, we prefer that these items remain at home. Teachers cannot be responsible for toys brought to school. *Friday Show and Share Time*, however is an exception, when favorite toys maybe brought to share or to complement a specific classroom theme.

Apple Tree Academy encourages parents to monitor the toys a child brings, as we promote non-violent interactions among children. (*Apple Tree Academy* provides toys that do not promote or imply violent actions.) A cassette, CD, or book to share with others is a great choice. Make sure items are labeled and picked up after school. If your child cares to share a video or an animal, insect or some other “discovery”, please make prior arrangements with the teacher.

Please do not bring baby bottles to the center. *Apple Tree Academy* allows pacifiers at naptime only during early fall transition in the toddler rooms. They will be left in the child’s cubby at all other times during the day.

Meals

Child and Adult Care Food Program

Apple Tree Academy participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program as administered by the Missouri Department of Health.

- *Apple Tree Academy's* meals and snacks meet or exceed the daily requirements set forth by the Department.
- The Missouri Department of Health audits the *Program* each year.
- *Apple Tree Academy* requires that parents sign an annual enrollment/income eligibility form.
- *All children receive the same food services regardless of income category.*
- *Apple Tree Academy* provides a hot breakfast, hot lunch, and an afternoon snack. Infants are provided with formula, cereal, jar foods, etc.
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in this program are on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation or marital or family status. To file a complaint of discrimination, write to: USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TTY). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.
- *Apple Tree Academy* fees automatically include breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack for all full day programs and breakfast and after school snacks for the before and after school program. (On full days, when school is out, school-aged children receive breakfast, lunch and snack). Please observe the scheduled serving times for your child's program. If your child arrives after the serving time in his/her classroom, please provide breakfast or lunch at home before coming to *Apple Tree Academy*.
- Food or drinks from home should not be brought into the classroom unless it is something prearranged to be shared with the whole group for a meal or snack. If your child brings food with him/her on the way to school, please have him/her finish it before entering the classroom.
- *Apple Tree's Enrichment Program* will serve a snack only.
- *Camp Apple Tree* provides a morning and an afternoon snack. The child will be responsible for the preparation of snacks if he/she chooses to eat. Parents must provide a nutritious sack lunch, which includes a drink. Lunch must be brought in daily. Sack lunches left from one day to another will be thrown away.

Health Requirements

Medical and Dental Requirements

- The Health Department requires a pre-entrance health assessment conducted by qualified medical personnel within six months prior to enrollment for all children attending a center. It is the parent's responsibility to fulfill this requirement on or before the child's first day of attendance or to have scheduled appointments by that first day.
- Parents who do not comply with these regulations will be asked to withdraw their children because they jeopardize Apple Tree's licensing status. *The completed medical form is due within the first thirty days of the child's entrance into Apple Tree Academy.*

****Immunizations required by the Missouri Department of Health are as follows:***

By the time the child is:	Immunization(s)
3 months, he/she should have -	1 DTaP/DT, 1 Polio, 1 or 2 Hepatitis B, 1 Hib
5 months, he/she should have -	2 DTaP/DT, 2 Polio, 2 or 2 Hepatitis B, 1 or more Hib
7 months, he/she should have -	3 DTaP/DT, 2 Polio, 2 or 3+ Hepatitis B, 1 or more Hib
19 months, he/she should have -	4+ DTaP/DTP/DT, 3+ Polio, 1 MMR, 1 or more Hib after 12 months of age, 3+ Hepatitis B, 1 Varicella

*The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) allows a four-day grace period, so public, private, parochial day care centers, preschools, or nursery school attendees may receive immunizations up to four days before they are due.

These timelines are critical! The immunization record is due before a child begins attending.

Other Recommended Immunizations

Immunizations that are recommended, but not required for toddlers and preschool age children include

- Hepatitis B Vaccine (HBV)
- Homophiles Influenza Type B (HIB)
- Varicella (VAR)

See schedules of vaccinations online with the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services.

- The Health Department also strongly recommends that children under the age of five (especially those enrolled in child care programs) receive at least one dose of the HIB vaccine.
- As your child receives additional immunizations, please bring in a statement showing the immunizations received and the date received.
- Be aware that if immunizations are given prior to the designated age, they will not be accepted by the Missouri Health Department’s licensing agency for childcare facilities.

Immunizations for Kindergarten Age Children

- Children entering kindergarten are required to have at least one dose of the DTP and one dose of the polio vaccine on or after their fourth birthday.
- A second MMR immunization, Varicella (chicken pox) and HBV (Hepatitis B Vaccine) are now required before a child enters kindergarten. A photocopy of the form you turn in to your child’s public school is acceptable.
- The Cole County Health Department gives immunizations for a small fee or you may make an appointment with your own physician.
- Special health forms are available from the Health Department or at *Apple Tree Academy*.
- Yearly dental check-ups are recommended for children 2 years and older.

Illness Reminders

When to Keep Your Child(ren) Home

Parents should keep children at home and notify *Apple Tree Academy* whenever there are signs of illness, including:

- a temperature of 101 plus one degree if taken from under the arm.
- an upset stomach within the last 12 hours.
- any undiagnosed rash.
- sore, discharging eye, ears, or running nose.
- a fresh cold, accompanied by sneezing, coughing, and congestion.
- lack of appetite, listlessness, irritability, unusual fatigue.

Children must be fever free without medication for a full 24 hours before coming back to school. If your child is sent home with a fever of 101 degrees or higher, he/she will not be allowed to come back to Apple Tree Academy the next day.

This policy will be strictly enforced. If a child's temperature is in the 100.0 -100.5 degree range, we will take the temperature a second time (approximately 15-30 minutes later). If the second reading is again above 100 degrees, the parents will be called. If the child has other significant symptoms or the temperature is over 101.0 degrees, the parent will be called immediately and asked to take the child home.

Illness Occurring at Apple Tree

- Upon arrival each day, your child will be observed by an *Apple Tree Academy* staff member for symptoms of possible illness, fever, or contagious diseases and will be sent home immediately if such symptoms are present.
- If your child becomes ill and/or has a temperature of 101 degrees and/or has two episodes of vomiting or diarrhea, we will call you to take your child home. We cannot care for sick children, as we do not have the facilities or the extra staff.

Contagious Disease Exposure

- Please do not give your child medication to reduce fever before bringing him/her to school. This masks the problem and your child could then infect others or become ill later in the day.
- If your child has been exposed to any contagious disease such as whooping cough, chicken pox, mumps, measles, diphtheria, or scarlet fever, please report it immediately to one of the teachers, administrators, or the office. If your child has one of these illnesses, we must report it to the Health Department.
- Children with chicken pox may return to school after an absence of five to seven days from the onset of illness, but may return to school before the recommended time period has elapsed if he/she has a written permission slip from the physician.
- When a child has more than one incident of vomiting or diarrhea, he/she should be kept home at least 24 hours after the symptoms disappear. We strongly suggest that normal eating habits and normal bowel movements have resumed before returning to *Apple Tree Academy*, even if it has been twenty four hours since the last episode.

- If a child has ringworm or impetigo, he/she can return to school when adequate treatment controls the spread. This is usually after being treated for at least twenty four hours.
- Children with pink eye should be kept at home until twenty four hours of treatment with antibiotics have been completed.

Head Lice

- If your child has head lice, please use an effective shampoo, wash and clean all bedding, furniture, rugs, toys, clothing, car seats, and call us.
- *Apple Tree Academy's* policy requires that all nits (eggs) be removed from the head before the child can return to school.
- A child will be sent home even if only a few nits remain. Please notify us if your child has been exposed to someone with head lice.

Healthy Practices

Hand Washing

Parents and teachers can help prevent the spread of disease by modeling frequent hand washing and by requiring children to wash their hands when arriving in the classroom, before eating, after going to the bathroom, and after blowing their nose/sneezing. Please practice these procedures at home; we will do the same at *Apple Tree Academy*.

Outdoor Play

Apple Tree Academy feels that it is far healthier for children to go outside every possible day rather than be confined indoors.

- When your child is not well enough to go outside, please do not send your child to school - we do not have the staff to have one teacher remain inside with one child. If a physician recommends it for a day or so, we will need a note in order to make arrangements with the office personnel while his/her class plays outdoors.
- Children in the toddler and two-year-old classrooms do not go outdoors if the temperature or wind chill is below twenty degrees. Children in other classrooms do not go out when the temperature or wind chill is below fifteen degrees.
- If the temperature or heat index is ninety-five degrees or higher, children do not go outdoors and swimming trips may be altered.

Clothing for Indoor/Outdoor Play

- All *Apple Tree Academy* children should be dressed in comfortable clothes. Teachers are dressed informally to allow participation in all types of activities.
- For safe climbing and walking, tennis shoes are recommended, rather than slippery shoes, flip-flops or cowboy boots.
- The children will be going outside almost every day, so please make sure your child is appropriately dressed. This includes mittens, hats, and boots so that he/she will enjoy playing for ten to thirty minutes in very cold weather. Fresh air and exercise are very important to your child's health and well being, but in order to

enjoy the outdoors, all children need appropriate clothes to help them feel more comfortable outside.

- Please avoid sending your child to school in expensive or special clothes that might be damaged during active or messy play.

Soiled Clothing

Please check your child's cubby or diaper cubby each day for soiled clothing.

- If a child has an accident or becomes wet for any reason and does not have extra clothing, we will call the parent to ask that either clothing be brought to school or that the child be taken home.
- *Apple Tree Academy* staff will not rinse out any soiled clothing due to health and sanitation guidelines. However, the staff will attempt to remove solid waste from the article of clothing as best as possible. The soiled clothing will then be wrapped in plastic and must be taken home by the family.

Sun Safety Policy

Apple Tree Academy wishes to encourage students to protect themselves from the sun.

Skin cancer is the most prevalent cancer in the United States, is linked to sun exposure in youth, and is preventable. *Apple Tree Academy* promotes practices that help protect children from the sun. Sunscreen is classified as an over-the-counter drug, with guidelines for safe and effective use. Because of risks such as stinging or irritation of the eyes or skin in applying it, we follow the policy below.

- Parents or guardians have the primary responsibility for their child's health, including his/her need for sun protection
- Children are not allowed to bring sunscreen to school. Sunscreen is not applied by *Apple Tree Academy* staff.
- Sunscreen is to be applied by parents before their child comes to school. One application (approximately enough to fill a shot glass) should be applied, even on cloudy days. Since in appropriate weather *Apple Tree Academy* begins the day outside, and since it takes approximately thirty minutes for sunscreen to take effect, it should be applied in a proper time frame before the child leaves home. Sunscreen used should be rated for eight hours of sun protection.
- Children should also protect themselves by covering up their skin with clothing, a hat, sun visor, or sunglasses, provided by parents. This applies to overcast days as well as sunny ones, since harmful UV rays can damage skin even when the sun is not visible. These practices could help children begin a healthful, life-long habit of skin protection.

Water Bottles

This policy applies only to our Camp Apple Tree Academy and Summer Programs.

The local Health Department has issued a memo recommending that students not share drinking containers such as water bottles, since many diseases can be passed through infected saliva.

Students may not share drinking containers during the day. This may happen either accidentally or knowingly. Teachers and parents should discourage this behavior with

children since illnesses such as viral meningitis, enteroviruses, rotaviruses, and influenza can be easily transmitted from one child to the next.

Our Policy

- Label drinking container with the child's name.
- Ensure that a new drinking container is filled daily and discourage sharing of drinking containers.
- Wash drinking container daily.
- Encourage regular hand washing, especially after bathroom breaks and before meals.

Accidents/Incidents

The term "accident" refers to an undesirable or unfortunate happening that occurs unintentionally and usually results in harm, injury, damage or loss. The term "incident" refers to an individual occurrence of an event, which is of seemingly minor importance but relationships are strained and individuals may be sensitive. This can lead to serious consequences.

Accident, incident, observation, and report forms are filled out whenever such situations arise. Parents, staff and the director sign these forms to be placed in the child's file.

Accident prevention requires continuous awareness and implementation of safe practices.

Teachers and parents must always consider the element of safety in everything they do with young children. This includes the environments they create, the selection of equipment, and individual activities.

All of our teachers have had first aid training and are able to attend to minor injuries. In case of head bumps, it is routine procedure to attempt to notify you of the accident by phone and to give you the details. We watch these children for symptoms associated with concussions, such as dizziness, dilated eyes, and vomiting.

All precautions are taken to avoid accidents from occurring. However, "children will be children"; they can trip over their own feet, lose their balance or put something into their ear or nose, etc - these types of occurrences are not paid for by *Apple Tree Academy*. We do have an accident plan, which covers out-of-pocket expenses incurred by the guardian to be paid after his/her private insurance claim has been paid.

We will contact you if we think a physician should see an injured or ill child, and we will prepare him/her to be picked up. In case of a more severe emergency, we will call an ambulance and notify you immediately. For minor accidents, teachers will note the incident on an individual accident report sheet, while more serious injuries that may require medical treatment will result in a more detailed two-page accident report being filed.

All families are required to give us a *detailed* schedule of where each parent is at all times of the day, including university buildings and room numbers so we can find you in case of emergency.

- Please notify us immediately if your home or work phone number changes..
- All families must also have an additional contact person listed on their emergency treatment card.
- If at any time a doctor, hospital or ambulance care is needed, the parent will incur the financial responsibility.

Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect

Missouri Law *mandates* that all personnel working in a licensed child care center *must* report suspected child abuse or neglect. In fact, there is a penalty for violation of this reporting law. This act protects the people reporting to Social and Rehabilitation Services (SRS) from any liability, civil or criminal.

- All records and reports concerning child abuse filed with SRS or the district court are confidential and will not be disclosed.
- All teachers at *Apple Tree Academy* are aware of their responsibilities regarding this act and will alert the executive director should they see any signs of abuse or neglect.
- The director will contact the SRS, reporting any suspected cases.
- An SRS representative may interview a child or staff member at the center; parents will be notified following the interview.

Child Sexual Abuse

Because the staff at *Apple Tree Academy* knows that every parent is concerned about child sexual abuse, we

- discuss child sexual abuse during staff orientation for teachers and aides,
- have several books on sexual abuse, some of which are suitable for reading to children which you may check out,
- comply with the Missouri law which states that the name, address, and birth date of every staff member and volunteer must be sent to the Missouri State Highway Patrol for felony and child abuse confirmation checks,
- urge parents to make unannounced visits to the center at any time.

Medications

Non-Prescription or PRN Medicine

Non-Prescription or PRN medicine will only be administered to children under the age of two, who are enrolled in full day programs. Such medication (as needed) will be limited to the following list of authorized medication

- non-prescription lotion
- petroleum jelly
- diaper cream
- teething gel

Children will be on medication at least twenty-four hours before staff administers dosage. Designated personnel are authorized to administer non-prescription medication according to a physician's instructions. These individuals will have received proper training.

Prescription medications will be administered only when there is no other reasonable alternative to the medical requirement for the child, i.e. EpiPen or an emergency inhaler. Written permission from the parent or guardian must be obtained before administering all medication. (Permission forms can be obtained from your child's teacher.)

No Blanket Medicine Forms!

A separate form must be filled out for each symptom for which medicine is to be used. *Staff are not permitted to make any exceptions to this policy.*

Emergency Only Medicine

- Emergency only prescription medications (EpiPens, emergency inhalers, etc.) are administered by designated personnel authorized to give such medications according to a physician's instructions. These individuals will have received prior training.
- Children will be on medication for at least twenty-four hours before personnel administer a dosage. Staff can administer only medications on the authorized medication list. The director must review medications not included on this listing.
- Medication must be in its original container with a childproof cap and the prescribed child's name labeled on the bottom of the bottle.
- Written permission from a parent or guardian must be obtained before administering such medication. Permission must be obtained using the Release of Liability to Administer Emergency Medication Form. This form must have specific directions, to be completed in full, and be signed by the health care provider/physician.

Medication Storage

- Medication must be stored according to instructions. All medications will be stored in a container inaccessible to children.
- Medication requiring refrigeration will be isolated within the refrigerator in a separate, secure container.
- Medication will be returned to the parent or guardian at the end of the specified time or upon termination of the child's attendance.

Medication Documentation

- All medication administered will be recorded using the "Record of Medication/Consent to Administer" form.
- Each medication to be administered will require a separate form. A new form must be filled out each time a medication needs to be given, even if the child has been on the medication on a previous occasion.
- Nonprescription medication or PRN medication will only be updated semi-annually. The form will be put in each child's file upon completion of the medication period.
- The time of each dosage and the initials of the person administering medication will be entered at the time the dosage is administered.
- Nebulae treatments will not be given unless an alternative solution cannot be found.

Special Diets, Restrictions, and Allergies

Apple Tree Academy participates in the Department of Health Child and Adult Care Food Program, which requires that a child be served milk two times daily and that certain food requirements are met daily.

If your child is allergic to an item on the menu or has a medical condition that restricts certain foods, we *must* have a physician's written statement with suggested alternatives. In some cases, *Apple Tree Academy* may not be able to provide the alternative and parents will need to bring the alternate food items.

If your child is on a restricted diet due to a religious preference, please give us a list of these foods with *suggested alternatives for each food item listed*. You will need to share this with your classroom teacher and the kitchen manager. We may not be able to accommodate certain requests due to cost or preparation time required.

Food Allergy Awareness

With the increasing number of school aged children having food allergies, Apple Tree Academy would like to share some information about food allergies as well as ways we can assist these children during the school day.

Food Allergy Facts

- Approximately eleven million Americans suffer from food allergies.
- Approximately two million school-aged children have food allergies.
- All of these individuals are at risk for anaphylaxis, a potentially life-threatening allergic reaction.
- Eight foods account for 90% of all reactions in the U.S.: milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts (walnuts, almonds, cashews, pistachios, pecans, etc.), wheat, soy, fish, and shellfish.
- Trace amounts of a food allergen can cause a reaction. This may be from traces left on someone's hands, cross contamination when preparing food, or from traces left on a table. Some individuals are so sensitive that they can react to traces in the air.
- Home baked and non-packaged items are particularly difficult because they could have "hidden" ingredients or traces of an allergen due to "trace elements".
- For those individuals with food allergies to peanuts or tree nuts, they need to avoid foods such as anything containing nuts, including most baked goods and chocolate. They also need to avoid certain foods which have a higher incidence of containing nuts. This includes foods such as soups, sauces, certain international foods, and sunflower seeds. As you can see, some of these foods may not be thought of as an "unsafe" food.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the common symptoms of a reaction? An allergic reaction to food can involve the skin, respiratory tract, gastrointestinal tract, and cardiovascular system. Symptoms can vary from one person to another, but these are some common symptoms of an allergic reaction:

<i>Skin Symptoms</i>	<i>Respiratory</i>	<i>Gastrointestinal</i>	<i>Cardiovascular</i>
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	<i>Symptoms</i>	<i>Symptoms</i>	<i>Symptoms</i>
Hives, swelling, itchy, red rash, eczema flare-up	Itchy, watery eyes, runny nose, stuffy nose, sneezing, coughing, itching or swelling of lips and tongue, difficulty swallowing, tightness of chest, wheezing, shortness of breath	Diarrhea, cramps, nausea, vomiting	Reduced blood pressure, lightheadedness, increased heart rate, shock

Can an allergic reaction be serious? Some reactions are mild, and only result in hives or gastrointestinal problems. Other reactions are very serious, and can be life threatening. Symptoms can appear immediately or appear over a number of hours after an exposure. Some reactions can cause anaphylaxis.

What is anaphylaxis? Anaphylaxis is a sudden, severe allergic reaction which involves several body systems.

Can someone die from anaphylaxis? Yes, anaphylaxis can be fatal. That is why it is so important to act quickly to identify and treat an allergic reaction.

What foods should be avoided? Individuals with food allergies need to avoid all food containing the foods they are allergic to. This may seem simple but it is quite confusing and time consuming. Careful reading of all food labels becomes vital for these individuals.

What can parents do to help avoid an allergic reaction?

- Never take food allergies lightly!
- Be aware of children in your child’s classroom who have a food allergy. Your child’s classroom teacher, with permission from the allergic child’s parent, will notify parents if there is a child in a classroom with a food allergy.
- Ask your child’s teacher for any guidelines on safe birthday treats as well as safe foods when planning parties or any offered food items during the school day. This includes special celebrations which involve food.
- Teach your children about food allergies and the seriousness of potential allergic reactions. Teach them not to share food with their food-allergic friends.

What can children do to help avoid an allergic reaction?

- Never take food allergies lightly!
- Don’t share food items with food-allergic friends.
- Wash hands after eating an item which is a known allergen to their classmate.
- Ask what their friends are allergic to and help them avoid it.
- If an allergic schoolmate becomes ill, get help immediately!

Parental Involvement

Parents are encouraged to become involved in their child’s program and to actively participate in activities and functions at Apple Tree Academy. They are also encouraged to observe at any time and to become acquainted with the teachers.

Apple Tree Academy Online

Parents may also sign up for our e-mail list so that they can receive e-mail reminders concerning important deadlines and other *Apple Tree Academy* information. Please stop by the office to give us your e-mail address or notify us if your e-mail address changes. We post weekly lesson plans for your convenience on our website (www.appletree4kids.com). This is a wonderful way to enforce educational material at home or start a conversation about your child's day.

Apple Tree Academy Happenings

News and notes of interest to *Apple Tree Academy* families, including information about community programs and resources, are posted in the front entry area. (Reminders about important fee payment and enrollment deadlines are posted in the central area.)

Apple Tree's Parent Advisory Board

Apple Tree Academy parents are invited to become board members. Parent board member elections are generally held in the fall. This is an important way families can support the program and be involved in the decision making process. Board members are selected from among parents of *Apple Tree Academy* children, personnel, and persons interested in and experienced with early childhood education.

Open Houses and Parent Workshops

Open House is scheduled each fall so families can become familiar with the school, the teachers, and their child's classroom. Each year *Apple Tree Academy* tries to offer workshops for parents based on their interests. These workshops include speakers who discuss topics centered on early childhood education.

Apple Tree Academy Family Events

Apple Tree Academy encourages families to take part in a variety of center events, including our annual *Donuts for Dad*, *Muffins for Mom*, *Story Hour*, etc. along with classroom parties and field trips.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-Teacher conferences will be scheduled at least twice a year to report your child's progress in many areas. A sign-up sheet will be posted in your child's classroom with time and date choices. A written copy of the conference report will be kept in your child's file.

In addition to two scheduled conferences per year, special conferences may also be arranged at any time during the year upon parent or staff request. Please contact the lead teacher or director if you would like to schedule a meeting should you have any concerns or problems so that we can work together to solve. We are always open to questions, concerns, and suggestions.

Possible Parent Groups

Parents may request and help organize any type of parent group that interests them. Please talk with an administrator if you wish to organize or participate in such a group. We welcome ideas and involvement of this kind!

Parental Visits

Parents are welcome to visit or have access to *Apple Tree Academy* at any given time and are encouraged to do so.

Family Evaluation

Family feedback information is an important part of the evaluation process for all staff. At least once a year you will be asked to fill out a parent evaluation form. This is your opportunity to provide input into your child's program, to praise the teacher's efforts, to provide constructive criticism, to evaluate the total program, etc. *Apple Tree Academy's* teachers, administrators, and Board of Directors take these evaluations very seriously, so please, let us hear from you!

Parental Concerns

Apple Tree Academy is your center; we are here to give you and your child the best possible service. Please don't delay in voicing your concerns: small worries tend to grow if they are not addressed. Please stop by and talk to an administrator at any time – if one is not available, leave your name and phone number, someone will contact you. Teachers are also available to talk with you, either in the morning, afternoon, or during their planning periods. Parents are encouraged to give suggestions on the family feedback form or they may drop them by the office at any time.

Parental Input Regarding Safety

If at any time you should observe a safety hazard in any of *Apple Tree Academy's* buildings, playgrounds, or during walks/field trips, please speak with the director immediately!

Babysitting by Apple Tree Academy Staff

Apple Tree Academy families looking for childcare away from the center (outside of center hours) should approach employees directly or post requests in our office. (*Apple Tree Academy* provides the opportunity to post babysitting requests with the understanding that the program has no responsibility for the actions or behavior of any staff when that person is away from the center.)

Employees who are interested in babysitting can then contact the family requesting care. It is the family's responsibility to make all arrangements with the staff person.

Apple Tree Academy staff are not allowed to solicit babysitting jobs by posting information about themselves in the center; we do not circulate a list of names and phone numbers.

Full time teaching staff may provide in-home childcare as long as the family does not have a child currently enrolled in the teacher's classroom. The personal relationships that are formed when teachers baby-sit for families make it difficult for teachers to remain

objective. Real or perceived favoritism can become a problem along with the differing roles of babysitter and teacher. It is hard for them to “share” the special person who comes to their home to play with and entertain them. Please do not put our full-time teachers in this difficult situation by asking them to care for a child enrolled in their classroom.

Financial Agreements and Center Liability

Make all checks payable to Apple Tree Academy

To meet the goals listed earlier in this handbook, it is essential that *Apple Tree Academy* maintain financial integrity by establishing and following sound financial principles and practices (incomplete)

Application/Re-application Fees

Families may enroll or have their child placed on the waiting list accordingly. An initial registration fee is charged at the time of application for admittance is made. When a child is withdrawn from *Apple Tree Academy* and the parent re-applies at a later date, another application fee is required. This process is called re-application.

Security Deposit

A deposit of one week’s childcare fee is required at the time an acceptance to *Apple Tree Academy* is received. This deposit guarantees the child’s enrollment in the center for a specific stating date. The security deposit is held throughout the child’s continued enrollment at *Apple Tree Academy*. When a child is withdrawn from *Apple Tree Academy*, the security deposit is refunded within thirty (30) days after the last day of the child’s enrollment IF:

- fees have been paid in full according to the family payment plan included with the fee agreement.
- additional charges incurred have been paid in full at the time billed.
- written notice of withdrawal has been given according to the designated deadlines.

Withdrawal Notice

A written notice of withdrawal is required according to the following deadlines:

- a. A written notice of withdrawal is required at least twenty-one days prior to the withdrawal date; otherwise the security deposit and any fees paid to date are forfeited.
- b. *Apple Tree Academy* will not accept a request to withdraw a child from the summer session after the session has begun. The person(s) signing the summer fee agreement are responsible for full payment of all fees listed on the agreement.
- c. Should the administration of *Apple Tree Academy* terminate a child’s enrollment due to a child’s adjustment problems or parent behavior, the security deposit will be refunded if all fees have been paid in full up to the date of termination and all additional charges incurred have been paid in full

Fees

Fee Schedule

Fees are set by the Members of the Board and are based on the classroom age and the family fee level according to state subsidies based on family size and income.

Notice of Change in Fee Schedule

Families will be notified forty-five days in advance of any change in the fee schedule unless a change is necessitated by a substantial change in a major funding source or a catastrophic event.

Fee Agreements

A completed, signed fee agreement is due no later than the first day of enrollment for fall and summer sessions. A child may not attend *Apple Tree Academy* until a fee agreement is on file. The agreement is written according to the information provided at the time of enrollment starting date, as to payment plan, and determined fee level.

Optional Care Sessions

Optional care weeks and attendance dates need to be confirmed with your child's teacher or the director as to possibly available openings.

Changes in Enrollment during the School Year

A written request for a change in the days/times of a child's enrollment during the school year must be given at least fourteen days prior to the requested date of change. If the change can be granted, a revised fee agreement will be issued. Written withdrawal from the program must be received twenty-one days in advance.

Fee Payments

A fee schedule showing the payment amount due and the due date is provided in your family fee agreement. Please read your fee agreement carefully!

Fees may be paid by check, cash, or money order. Credit or debit cards are not accepted.

- Fees are payable in advance. Generally fees for the first half of the month are due on the first and are considered late after the fifth of the month. Fees for the second half of the month are due on the sixteenth, and are considered late after the twentieth of the month.
- However, for the months of August, December, January, and May, all fees are due in one payment. This is due to the shorter schedule for these months. All fees for August are due the first day of enrollment.
- All fees for December and May are due on the first of the month. All fees for January are due on the sixteenth of the month. Parents may pay monthly or by the semester by adding together semi-monthly payments on their fee agreement.
- Families whose childcare is partially funded by the DFS must pay the family share on or before the fifth day of the month. Parents must notify *Apple Tree Academy* of any changes in their DFS plans.

Late Payment Fees

Late payment fees are assessed when the scheduled payment date plus the five-day grace period do not make a payment. If a payment is still unpaid two weeks after the due date, the family may no longer use *Apple Tree Academy's* services. A five-day grace period will be allowed to provide the family an opportunity to secure funds for payment during which time the child may not be present at *Apple Tree Academy* but fees will continue to accrue. If payment has not been received by the end of the five-day grace period, your child is considered to have been withdrawn and becomes ineligible for future enrollment. As soon as fees are paid in full – but no later than the fifth day of the grace period, the child may return to *Apple Tree Academy*. Thereafter, the next time fees are in arrears by the payment due date, services are immediately discontinued. In extenuating circumstances, appeals may be made to the Board.

Late Payment fees are as follow:

- First time each year* - \$15.00
- Second time each year* - \$15.00
- Third time each year* - \$30.00
- Fourth time each year - \$40.00
- Fifth time each year*– discussion with the Executive Director and Finance Director regarding enrollment of the child.

**A year is September 1-August 31.*

Unpaid Fees

Apple Tree Academy will take action to recoup unpaid fees through Small Claims Court or by a collections agency.

Returned Check Charge

There is a charge each time a check is returned for non-payment. Currently the amount is \$30.00 per incident. This charge is set by the bank and the fees associated with bank service charges. The check must be redeemed in cash or money order within five (5) days of notice of returned check. Notice is placed in your child's cubby. If a pattern of returned checks continues, the family will be notified that they may no longer use *Apple Trees Academy's* services. The security deposit is forfeited at time of notice.

Late Pick Up Fee

There is a late pick-up charge if a child is picked up after 5:30 p.m. The amount is \$5.00 for being late and \$1.00 a minute thereafter. Please do not expect or make staff feel guilty as they ask you to sign the late fee form. They are only doing what is expected of them. Also, please don't arrive at 5:30 p.m and linger within the facility. The staff deserves respect and have other obligations after their shift ends.

Receipts for Payments

Receipts will be placed in the family message cubby.

When making payments, drop the payment off in the gray payment box in the front area. If payment is made in cash, you must give it to a staff member for a cash receipt. Later you will receive a permanent receipt.

Forms for cafeteria plan reimbursement of dependant care expenses should be turned in at the front desk or have your child's teacher sign the form. The director/teacher will review the dates and amounts of the claim, sign the form, and place it in the child's cubby. Additional receipts will not be issued unless specifically requested.

Supply/Activity Fee

There is a supply/activity fee charged per semester during the fall and spring semesters and per month during the summer program.

Emergency Closing Policy

Because *Apple Tree Academy* incurs salary and other fixed costs even when closed, *Apple Tree Academy* cannot refund fees for those rare days when *Apple Tree Academy* must be closed due to emergencies.

Holidays

Because *Apple Tree Academy* incurs salary and other fixed costs even when closed, *Apple Tree Academy* families are charged for holidays when *Apple Tree Academy* is closed. The included holidays are:

- New Year's Day,
- Memorial Day,
- Independence Day,
- Labor Day,
- Thanksgiving and the day after,
- Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

If these days fall on the weekend, they will be observed on the closest working week day.

End of Year Statements

Statements of receipts for the calendar year are available from your child's teacher after January thirty-first. If you have left *Apple Tree Academy*, you will need to call or come by to pick up your year-end tax receipt.

Liability/Insurance Policy

Student Accident Coverage provides enrolled students full excess medical and dental coverage for accidental injuries obtained during school-sponsored activities. Coverage includes field trips and auto coverage for fifteen-passenger vans.

Any injuries on Apple Tree Academy premises should be brought to the attention of the Director or immediate teacher for assistance.

All charges should be submitted to your primary medical or dental provider. (See "Accidents/Incidents", page 33.)

Enrollment

Enrollment Vacancies

As vacancies occur, children are accepted from the waiting list in the following order:

- children of *Apple Tree Academy* full time staff,
- siblings of children currently attending *Apple Tree Academy* according to the date of application,
- non *Apple Tree Academy* families currently on the waiting list.

Preference is given to requests for care for five days a week. Requests for part time MWF/T-Th enrollments will be filled only if there is a corresponding enrollment for the alternate time and there is no request for full-time care.

Note: These options are not offered in some programs:

- kindergarten and after-school fall/spring enrollment (five days a week enrollment required)
- summer session (preference is given to five days a week enrollment)

Before And After School Programs

Enrollment accepted for before and after school programs will be in the following order:

- siblings of currently enrolled *Apple Tree Academy* children,
- others according to date of application

Two Children from the Same Family

As a general policy, two children from the same family will be placed in separate classrooms if possible.

Enrollment Acceptance – Children Funded by DFS

Apple Tree Academy will accept full day enrollments funded by the DFS if the DFS plan is written for five hour or more a day, or if the parent agrees to pay for the hours not included in the DFS plan. Prior approval in writing from the assigned DFS caseworker is required for enrollment.

Requests for Change in Enrollment

During the school year, requests or changes in enrollment must be received in writing at least fourteen days prior to the date of change. If the change can be granted, a revised fee agreement will be prepared. If the change cannot be approved, the child's name may be placed on a waiting list until the requested enrollment is available. *If the child must be withdrawn from the program, they may be accepted after May first for Summer, after July first for fall session or after December 1 for spring session.*

Summer Only Enrollments

If a child has been accepted for the summer session only and the parent must withdraw the child prior to the first day of the session, notice of withdrawal must be given by April fifteen in order to have the security deposit returned.

After the session has begun, a withdrawal request cannot be accepted, and all fees shown on the fee agreement are due in full.

Fees are payable as designated in the fee agreement. Fees are payable for all days in the contract period whether or not the child is present.

Optional Care

Apple Tree Academy provides optional care for school-age children during holiday and scheduled breaks from 7:00 a.m. -5:30 p.m.

Enrollment and Acceptance for Optional Care

- Enrollment will be accepted according to the date and time of the application.
- The number of teachers available will determine the number of children accepted for each classroom.
- Optional care enrollments may not be cancelled or changed after the signed application/fee agreement has been returned.
- There can be no refunds for cancellation of optional care enrollment after the fee agreement is signed.
- Parents are responsible for paying optional care fees as specified in the fee agreement.
- Fees for optional care are in addition to the standard fee agreement.

Optional Care Enrollment Guidelines

These guidelines may be put into effect at the discretion of the administrative staff.

- If a field trip is scheduled during optional care, your child may or may not go on the field trip depending on age, grade level, maturity, behavior, etc. Classrooms may be combined in each room in order to meet parent requests and adequate cost-effective teacher/child ratios.
- An attempt will be made to employ at least one regular classroom teacher for each optional care time. When this is not possible, aides will be hired to substitute for the teacher.

Withdrawal

Canceling Enrollment Prior to Beginning a Semester*:

- Fall semester – notice required by June fifteenth
- Spring semester – notice required by November fifteenth
- Summer semester – notice required by April fifteenth

**If the date falls upon a national holiday, Saturday, or Sunday, the date of notice is due the next working day.*

- After fall or spring semester has begun, but before the deadline as listed above, a written notice of withdrawal is required twenty one days in advance of the date of withdrawal in order to have the security deposit refunded (see Financial Policy section).
- A request to withdraw a child from the summer session will not be accepted after the session has begun.

- There will be no refund of deposit on withdrawals of enrollments received after June fourteenth for the fall semester, after November fifteenth for the spring semester, or after April fifteenth for the summer session.

Re-Admittance After Withdrawal

If a parent withdraws a child from *Apple Tree Academy* and later wishes to re-enroll the child, a new application for admission must be completed and the application fee paid. The child is placed on the waiting list according to *Apple Tree Academy* admittance priorities. The date of the new application is the date used for placement in the waiting list.

A child currently enrolled in the center who is withdrawn from the next semester and then applies for readmission the *semester immediately following the non-enrolled semester* shall have enrollment priority after children with continuous enrollment. The child is placed on the waiting list with priority after children who are enrolled continuously (i.e., children who are new and attend *Apple Tree Academy* in the summer have priority for enrollment in the fall over those who have withdrawn for the summer.) Parents will be notified of placement or non-placement immediately after July first, December first, or May first. This policy does not apply to those who complete the withdrawal/re-application process after June fifteenth for fall semester, after November fifteenth for spring semester, or after April fifteenth for the summer session.

Discipline

Positive Discipline

Webster's Dictionary defines discipline as, "Training that develops self-control, character, or orderliness and efficiency."

Discipline is an essential part of childcare.

- Discipline helps children feel secure, meets their needs, and builds self-control and self-esteem.
- The objective of discipline is to promote behaviors that are beneficial to the child's development and welfare and to change and/or eliminate behaviors that are harmful or distressing to a child/others.

Discipline is different from punishment.

- Corporal or negative verbal punishment may change children's behaviors, but often through fear.
- Punishment stresses what children should *not* do, but rarely teaches them *what* to do.
- Children controlled by punishment such as spanking or severe consequences may "behave" to avoid a penalty chosen by the adult.
- Punishment often teaches children to hide their mistakes, and does not build long lasting inner controls or cooperation.
- Punishment may also cause children to focus on revenge rather than on changing behavior.

Before we examine various techniques adults may use when disciplining, we must first look at the environment. How the environment is set up has a great deal of influence on how most discipline problems can be prevented, greatly reduced, or even eliminated.

Many times changing the routine, the activities, the room arrangement, or the use of space has a profound effect on how children get along with each other. We work on trying to satisfy each child's need for individual space, for social interaction, for quiet and rest, for movement and stimulation, for new materials, for self-directed or teacher-directed activities, for age appropriate materials and behavior expectations, or for an abundant amount of love and affection.

Apple Tree's guidelines for creating a healthy and positive environment are as follows:

- provide a developmentally appropriate curriculum and environment,
- be a positive role model with a positive attitude,
- explain situations ahead of time,
- provide choices and following through,
- use a soft voice,
- have a variety of rainy day activities available,
- tell the child "thank you"/praising the child,
- watch the child's diet,
- foster self-esteem,
- smile!

The purpose of behavior management is to teach correct behavior. Discipline is concerned *with* and focuses *on* the future. We discipline in order to teach correct behavior, a much more positive approach than punishment. Children don't have to learn through being penalized – they can instead learn through being firmly, lovingly, patiently, and calmly taught by the adult. The result is that children will have a greater knowledge of what is expected, what their limits are, and will feel a sense of security because their world is orderly.

The following are from the Discipline Policy given to Apple Tree Academy Staff

- Use distraction, suggestions, or a re-direction ("Have you tried..."). Distraction works wonders with small children.
- Use quiet, brief private talks away from other children. Make sure you don't lecture or accuse.
- Use positive statements ("When... then." Or "As soon as... then..." "When we finish putting away the blocks, then we can go outside.") "If you don't... then we can't..." is a negative statement, which will not win cooperation.
- Remind children of appropriate behaviors, ("We do not throw. If you have trouble remembering, then you will have to leave the area.", "We walk inside.", "Remember to use your inside voice.") Model a soft voice.
- Use logical or natural consequences; point out the consequence and why it happened. Abuse a toy/lose the toy is a logical consequence. Consequences should be related to the misbehavior and should be fair.
- With the child's help problem-solve and brainstorm for solutions – then help the child select a solution to try.
- Ignore annoying, unimportant behaviors.

- Remove the child from the area (“It appears you cannot play in the area right now. You can come back later.” You will have to leave the area for ____ minutes or for the rest of center time.”)
- Separate children (“It appears that you two cannot play together right now. You may either find a solution to your problem or you will need to find different activities.”). Some teachers use a timer. When it rings, children can play together again.
- Remove a toy. A child may lose the opportunity to play with a toy for specific periods of time.
- Give a choice (“Here are your choices: you may share the blocks or find something else to do. You decide.” “You may leave the area by yourself or I’ll assist you. You decide.”). Choices stated in a fair, firm, but friendly way are usually very effective.
- Use positive statements. Tell the children what they should be doing instead of focusing on the negative. Only use “No” or “Don’t” in cases of emergencies.
- Use calming music, stories, books, or songs.
- Avoid sarcasm, threatening, name-calling, accusing, or disclaimers. A disclaimer is a statement such as, “Why can’t you always do that?” after a positive statement.
- Avoid commands or demands that “back a child against a wall”. Many children want to appear brave or tough around others; to save face they must defy a teacher. After a calm, implicit direction, break eye contact, turn away briefly and give a child a few seconds or longer to comply. Try to avoid power struggles.
- Use a great deal of positive reinforcement and encouragement. Be specific and descriptive. (“I see you are really working hard on the puzzle.” “Thank you for picking up the blocks.” “I’m glad that you remembered to share the book.” “I appreciate it when you tell someone you are angry.”) Statements such as “use your words” are sometimes too vague. The children always appreciate unconditional statements such as, “I think you are a neat kid.”
- Use love and physical affection. Touch the child’s arm, pat a head, give a hug, and allow a child to sit on your lap or knee. However, some children want you to exclude all the other children, so don’t play favorites or overdo the lap sitting to the exclusion of others.

If the preceding is not effective, we use the following

Sit and Watch

A child may stand or sit away from the group for several minutes or until he/she is calm. The purpose is to give the child an opportunity to see appropriate behaviors or appropriate use of materials or to settle down before joining the group (“You can join us when you feel you can...”). The child is sometimes given the responsibility of when to return to the group, but sometimes must be invited to rejoin by a teacher. The child must be in view of an adult.

Time Out

A child who doesn’t respond to the above methods or is repeatedly disruptive or aggressive may need to be further removed from the rest of the class. After a few

minutes, the child is encouraged to rejoin the activity after a teacher has redirected the child and briefly discussed appropriate behaviors to that the inappropriate behaviors are not repeated. For severe or repeated problems, a child may be brought to the office to calm down or to be removed from peer attention for inappropriate behavior. All consequences for misbehavior should be logical, developmentally appropriate, and as immediate as possible.

***Acts of Aggression**

***Apple Tree Academy* rules are displayed and known by the children. There are class discussions to establish individual group rules.**

Apple Tree Academy's established guidelines for staff and children are in place for dealing with acts of aggression and fighting by children. This policy includes

- separation of the children involved,
- immediate attention to the individual child or caregiver who has been hurt,
- notification to the parents of children involved in the incident. If an injury requires first aid or medical attention, as specified, it will be documented,
- review of the adequacy of the caregiver supervision and appropriateness of facility activities,
- setting an administrative policy for dealing with recurrences

If a child is involved in this type of behavior on any given day, he/she will lose their privileges, which may include field trips. *No credits or refunds will be issued if a child is sent home/ removed from the program due to disciplinary problems.*

We reserve the right to deny or remove your child from our program due to disciplinary problems.

**Some of these behaviors include but are not limited to: biting, hitting/punching, stealing, bringing a weapon to school, running away or exiting a facility without an adult, lack of respect for authority, revealing or touching private parts of themselves or others, profanity, bullying, and racial intolerance.*

Biting

“Bite” is a word that brings to mind all forms of fears and worries. We try to catch the deeds before they happen, but, unfortunately, it is not always possible. Children, especially toddlers and some preschool-age children, are not always very verbal, they cannot verbalize feelings and often show their feelings physically. With our help and guidance, they will learn to replace biting with appropriate responses.

If your child bites, all it means is that he or she has found this to be an effective response. Biting is usually provoked. Some children choose hitting, pushing, or other responses. Some never do any of these. A lot of it comes down to personality, reinforcement, environment, or chance.

This problem has never failed to come up in almost all the classes many of us attended. We are not alone in trying to cope with this problem. Understanding and support for the other parents can only help. No one wants his or her child to bite/be bitten, or to hit/be hit, or pushed, shoved, or scratched. These are “normal” children with normal problems.

Handling Biting Incidents*

1. Attend first to the child who is hurt. Comfort the child and strengthen the concept that you care and will keep him/her safe.
2. As much as possible have the “biter” stay with you so he/she may observe and assist with attending to and comforting the hurt child.
3. Attend to the bite as needed. A cool cloth or ice pack will usually soothe the bite. If the skin has been broken, first aid steps must be followed.
4. Remove the child from the play area for a brief period of time. The child has lost his/her privilege to be with the other children. Explain and simply reason with the child the basis for your actions, “When you bite it hurts people. Biting hurts”.
5. Remain calm and firm. Speak in your natural voice and with authority. Convey to the child that you will not let children be hurt. The child must also know that you still like him/her but you do not like the biting.
6. Be consistent with your interventions. The child will learn to count on the same behavior from you, which will aid the child in gaining self-control.
7. Report biting incidents to the parents of the children involved.
8. Reinforce the child as soon as possible for positive interaction with his/her peer.
9. Information about the biter and bite are confidential. We will not share this information with other parents.
10. The director or a member of management will be notified when biting incidents occur.

**If a child bites twice in one day, the parent of the biter will be called to pick their child up from the center. This will allow protection of the children in the classroom. Cases of more than one bite in a day are very rare. We appreciate everyone’s cooperation as we are ensuring the safety of all children.*

School Age Discipline

“Peace chairs” have been adopted for the school age children. These are designed to allow the children to resolve a lot of their own conflicts. It teaches them to talk out problems and how to compromise in various situations.

Everyone wants a safe environment for his or her child. School age children should be capable of controlling their behavior and refrain from hitting and hurting others. At this age, they are old enough to really hurt someone; no one wants their child hurt.

A contract will be issued to the school age child who has hurt another person, etc. This is a joint effort in which we need your cooperation. Weekly contracts will be sent home for the first time they hit and their privileges will be taken away for the day. You and your child must agree upon a reward to work towards. You must sign and bring the contract back to school. If they break the contract, they will lose all *Apple Tree Academy* privileges for the week as well as forfeit their reward with you. Some reward examples include staying up late on Saturday, having a friend come over, going to the movies, anything at all that you know your child would like. If your child is given a contract and breaks it more than 3 weeks in a row, parents will be asked to pick up their child and keep him/her home for a few days until the child is ready to cooperate. If the problem still exists and their presence is detrimental to others, you will be expected to remove your child from *Apple Tree Academy*. This constitutes our zero tolerance policy.

Disciplinary Action and Dismissal*

A serious “discipline problem” is defined as one in which a child is hampering the smooth flow of the program by either requiring constant one-on-one attention, is continually inflicting physical or emotional harm on other children or themselves, is physically abusing staff, or is otherwise unable to conform to the rules and guidelines of the program.

When conflicts and inappropriate behaviors occur which disagree with Apple Tree’s goals and have not been resolved through positive techniques, it is then Apple Tree’s aim to work further with individual children. We strive to listen and learn more of what each child has to say, thereby hoping to resolve the conflict through effective communication.

If conflict still remains, or a request to conform to a rule is ignored, possible actions include:

- A child will not be allowed to participate in a particular activity for a short period of time, or the child will be asked to sit quietly until he/she is ready to resolve the conflict and return to the class. Field trips may be taken away with no reimbursement from the school. For younger children from two to four years of age, ignoring and redirection will also be used. A child’s particular stage of development is always taken into consideration.
- If there is still an unresolved conflict, parents will be asked for ideas and teachers will give suggestions to resolve the conflict through an individualized plan or the child.
- If the problem still exists, parents may be asked to pick up their child and keep him/her home for a few days until the child is ready to cooperate.
- If conflict continues, it will be determined to be a “discipline problem” by the teachers and the supervisor and/or the director. Parents will then be asked to seek an outside resource, such as family counseling, to help all involved work through the conflict. Parents will be given two weeks to secure help (*Apple Tree Academy* will help with referrals). During this time, the child may or may not attend school, depending on the assessment by the Supervisor and/or Director and teachers based on the nature and seriousness of the situation. If parents reject the above-described process, they will be expected to remove their child from *Apple Tree Academy*.
- The State of Missouri adheres to and allows *Apple Tree Academy* the right to discharge a child from the facility after attempts have been made to meet a child’s individual needs.

Any child who demonstrates an inability to benefit from the care offered by the childcare provider or whose presence is detrimental to other children. Care of a child may be discontinued if the provider and the parent(s) cannot establish a mutually satisfactory working relationship.

- *Apple Tree Academy* encourages parents to talk to their children about the kinds of play, behavior, and touching that is appropriate for their level of development.
- *Apple Tree Academy* appreciates everyone’s cooperation as we are ensuring the safety of all children.

**No refunds will be offered for these days.*