



FUTURE STARS  
**ACADEMY**

# Family Handbook Policies & Procedures

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## **Future Stars Academy**

Dear Parents,

Welcome! We would like to thank you for choosing Future Stars Academy and ensure you that we have a commitment to all parents and children enrolled in our Center. Our commitment is that the children will receive quality and loving care. We will also build up the children's self-confidence and self-esteem with praise and positive redirections.

It is our goal to provide a variety of exciting, stimulating activities each day so that your child can develop socially, emotionally, physically and mentally to the very best of his/her ability. This handbook has been prepared especially for you, the parent of the child enrolled in our Center. You will find many of our policies and operating procedures explained here. By reading this handbook you will feel more confident in your family's adjustment into our program. We suggest that you keep this handbook for reference throughout the year. Whenever you have questions, please feel free to call or stop by the office. My staff and I look forward to working with you and your child.

Thank you,  
Nicole Ramos  
Center Director/Owner

## **PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES**

**Future Stars Academy** is a leader in the child care profession, designing innovative and flexible opportunities that achieve superior outcomes for children and families. We strive for consistency in our program, be it in the style of interaction, richness and breadth of activities offered, or the reflection in our daily program of the diversity of families we serve. Our shared philosophy, goals and objectives provide a guiding framework from which teachers expand using their own experience and creativity. The goals of the program strongly reflect an abiding sense of respect for children, their unique cultures and individual development. We are committed to creating a culture that continually improves services, sustains a high quality, team-oriented work environment and provides quality child care. The Center's staff is committed to promoting the well-being of both children and their families. We provide a secure and happy atmosphere for children during these most important years of growth, development and learning. Children at the center are offered an opportunity to participate in a full program balancing the areas of intellectual, physical, social and emotional growth.

## **VISION**

The Center strives to be a dynamic, professional force dedicated to improving the lives of young children through providing: consummate care and early education for children, support systems and resources for families, model training, and development opportunities for early childhood educators.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Future Stars Academy has a program for every child. The following are some of the many programs we offer: half and full day preschool, childcare for children 6 weeks to 12 years available January through December, Monday through Friday 6:00am-6:00pm, summer camp, before and after school care, drop in care, and more. Children who attend morning care, must arrive at the center by 9:30am and must be picked up by 6:00pm.

## **PROGRAM CLOSINGS**

The center observes the following holidays and will be closed: New Year's Eve and New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Thanksgiving Eve and Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, MLK Jr. Day, President's Day. If the center closes on any additional days or holidays, parents will be notified in advance. Spring Break closings will be announced closer to spring break dates.

## **INCLUSION**

Future Stars Academy believes that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging in childcare. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program based on their individual capabilities and needs.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION**

At Future Stars Academy equal educational opportunities are available for all children, without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, or parent/provider political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation or special needs, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state or local laws. Educational programs are designed to meet the varying needs of all students.

## **OUR PROGRAMS**

The goal of **Future Stars Academy** is to provide comprehensive childcare for children and families. We believe that each child is an individual who deserves to be respected and appreciated for his or her own unique character. We believe that young children learn best by interacting actively with their environment. We believe that the best curriculum for young children is one that provides for growth in all areas of development:

-**Social:** Interactions with peers and adults

-**Emotional:** Affirmation, expression and understanding of a child's own feelings and others' feelings

-**Physical:** large and small muscle skills, awareness of his or her body's capabilities

-**Cognitive,** intellectual and creative: basic concepts and problem- solving skills that will lay the foundation for future learning

Copies of daily schedules are posted in each classroom.

### **Infant and Toddler Care**

Infant and toddler care offers an opportunity for our staff to share in a special relationship. Each baby has a crib and storage area of his/her own. Designated spaces are available for feeding, soothing and playing one-on-one with the caregiver. As infants grow, teachers socialize with the children and give them words for what they see, hear and feel. First opportunities for play are available on an individual developmental level.

### **Preschool Program/School Age Programs**

Children are taught on an individual basis unique to their own stage of development. Children two years of age and older participate in age appropriate activities which are planned to coordinate with specific weekly topics that are familiar to them. Each week topics and activities are rotated to keep children's interest at peak levels. Classrooms are arranged into learning centers, which allow children the freedom to play and develop skills.

The daily schedule is a carefully planned balance between self-directed and adult-guided activities and the rooms are arranged into learning and activity centers. During "free play" children have the freedom to choose activities and playmates. Each child is offered group experiences, one- on-one interactions and also time to play alone if s/he chooses. Children are encouraged to participate in activities but are never forced to do so. The activity plan for the week is posted, and we encourage families to participate in our curriculum activities as often as they can. We offer children an opportunity to play outdoors daily, weather permitting.

## **Television Time**

Our normal daily routine does not include television watching, but from time-to-time, we may record a television show without advertisements as a teaching aid and discussion stimulator. Television consumption will not be longer than [one] hour and the program will be screened prior to showing. Programs will consist of non-violent and high-quality educational material. Our focus is to provide your child a positive experience with increased understanding of the world.

## **Electronic Media**

Electronic Media are limited to 20 minutes or less per day per child. Internet sites and software are pre-screened to contain non-violence and high-quality educational content.

## **Multiculturalism**

Multiculturalism is vital for all children because it sets social goals and promotes respect for all people and the environment we inhabit. We utilize books, music, games, and a wide range of activities as aids to teach our children respect for our world and the diversity of life upon it.

## **SAFETY AND SECURITY**

Your child's safety is a top priority at Future Stars Academy. The doors to our facility remain locked throughout the day. Children must be signed in and out upon arrival and departure. Children may be released only to those persons authorized in writing by the parent/guardian. Identification will be required when someone other than the parent or guardian will be picking up your child.

Video and Audio surveillance cameras are located throughout the Facility in order to increase the safety and security of all children.

## **ENROLLMENT/REGISTRATION INFORMATION**

Enrollment is open to all children ages 6 weeks through 12 years. Enrollment will be granted without discrimination in regard to sex, race, color, religion, or beliefs. The proper paperwork must be completed and submitted for enrollment. Medical reports and emergency contact information must be current at all times and is the responsibility of the parent to keep that information updated. The first week's tuition is due upon enrollment. Registration fees will be due as required for each program. No child shall be admitted for care to the center without enrollment records having been completed on the child in accordance with the requirements. Evidence of age-appropriate immunizations or a signed affidavit against such immunizations within 30 days of child's enrollment is required. Children are never to be dropped off without being escorted to and from the building.

## **WAITING LIST POLICY**

Applicants who wish to have their name placed on the Future Stars Academy waiting list must submit a completed enrollment form. No registration fee is required at this time. Admission will be granted on the basis of availability. Parents/Guardians will be notified by phone when space becomes available. Enrollment must begin within 1 week or the space will be forfeited and the client's name will be removed from the waiting list.

## **DROP-IN CARE**

Drop-In Care is available to registered families from 6:30 am to 7:00 pm as space is available. You may register your child for drop-in care only. You may use this service daily, weekly, or even monthly - there is no limit on the amount of time you may take advantage of this service. To ensure space availability, call to schedule your child as soon as you know you need us. We ask that you call before you bring your child, but if that is not possible, feel free to drop by.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Parents should notify Future Stars Academy at 470-355-1253 if a child will not be attending or will be late, arriving after 10am, on a particular day. We will be concerned if we do not hear from you.

## **WITHDRAWAL**

Two weeks written notice is required when withdrawing a child for any reason. Failure to give notice will result in additional fees. If the required notice is not given, parents will be charged for the two-week period.

## **TERMINATION**

Future Stars Academy reserves the right to discontinue service to a family if financial commitments are not met or if it becomes apparent that the program is not equipped to meet the psychological or developmental needs of the child. Written notification will be given to the parents to allow for ample time to find alternative care. The staff/director will make every effort to resolve any problems prior to termination. Documentation will be provided upon request prior to suspension or termination. Parents and children are given advance notification when suspension will take place based on child's behavior.

## **TRANSFER OF RECORDS**

When transitioning to the next program setting or to a new classroom, your child's records will be transferred internally.

If your child is transitioning to a new school, a written request from you is required with instructions on where the information should be sent.

## FEES AND PAYMENT SCHEDULE

<b>Infants (newborn-12 Months)</b>	<b>\$200.00</b>
<b>Toddler (13-36 Months)</b>	<b>\$180.00</b>
<b>3 year olds</b>	<b>\$165.00</b>
<b>Pre-School (4-5 Years)</b>	<b>\$145.00</b>
<b>Before and After School (5 Years and up)</b>	<b>\$85.00</b>
<b>Weekly Rate (5 years and up) summer/spring break</b>	<b>\$145.00</b>
<b>Part Time rate (5 Years and up)</b>	<b>\$65.00</b>
<b>Evening Care 5 years and up</b>	<b>\$180.00</b>
<b>Registration Fee (non refundable)</b>	<b>\$80.00</b>

Children that attend 2 or more days in a week are considered full time. Drop-ins are accepted at a rate of \$65 per day for children 5 years of age and up. The drop-in rate for children under 5 years of age is \$65 per day. If children will not attend during a holiday week, or any other week, there will be a holding fee of \$60 to hold your space. Transportation from school will be an additional charge of \$25/Week.

### PAYMENTS

Payments are due no later than close of business on Mondays for that week. Payments made after Monday will be assessed a \$25 late fee per day. If payment is not made by Wednesday, child will not be permitted attendance until payment is made including the late fee.

### LATE PICKUP

Late pickup is \$1 per minute/per child and is due upon pickup. Children cannot be present at the center more than 10 hours in a 24 hour period depending on the child's age.

### Special Activity Fees

From time-to-time there will be additional fees associated with special activities or field trips. These fees are due prior to the event, activity or trip.

### ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

The designated pick up and drop off area is on the side of the facility and is clearly marked. There is a ten minute time limit on these spaces. Please use them only for dropping off and picking up your child. Children must be escorted into the building, signed in, and taken to their classroom. A fee of \$1.00 per minute will be charged for late pick-ups. Morning children must be at center by 10:00am. Evening children must be at center by 4:00pm. **Children may be at center NO LONGER than 10 hrs per day from the time of drop off.**

Separation can be stressful for both the parent and the child, especially in the early days. Please help us to make this time less stressful by adhering to the following guidelines:



- Please do not attempt to sneak out without saying goodbye to your child.
- Give your child a good-bye kiss and explain that it is time for you to leave and you will return later.
- As difficult as it may be, make your good-bye short and sweet, even if your child is crying. The longer the goodbye, the longer the child will cry.
- Future Stars Academy Teachers are trained to handle these difficult, but normal occurrences. They will comfort your child and involve him/her in an activity. Ninety percent of the time, your child will have stopped crying before you get out of the parking lot of the facility.
- Do not linger around after you have said goodbye, this can confuse your child and prolong the crying.

## **CELL PHONE USAGE**

The times you spend in the center dropping off and picking up your child are the primary windows of time we have to communicate with you about your child. In order to make the best use of these opportunities, as well as to be attentive to your child and other children, we ask that you NOT use your cell phone at anytime while visiting the center

## **PROTECTION OF CHILDREN**

In the event of an emergency, parents will be contacted. Emergency plans have been developed and are posted for parent viewing. This includes emergencies such as severe weather/tornado, fire, and physical plant problems, such as power failure, that affects climate control or structural damage. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Center Director.

## **AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE**

Children will be released only to those persons listed on the Authorization and Consent Form. Identification will be required of any person picking up the child. The Director/Lead Teacher should be notified in advance, in writing, if someone other than the parent, or authorized pickup on documents, is to pick up your child. In the event of a discrepancy, the child will be detained until the Director/Lead Teacher can contact the parent by telephone. Temporary changes for the child's release cannot be authorized over the telephone.

If a child has not been picked up after closing and we have not heard from you, attempts will be made to contact you, and the contacts listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. Provisions will be made for someone to stay with your child as long as possible, but if after 2 hours we have not been able to reach you or a person listed as an Emergency and Release Contact, we will call the local child protective services agency.

## **Right to Refuse Child Release**

We may refuse to release children if we have reasonable cause to suspect that any person picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way that may endanger the child. To protect your child, we may request that another adult

listed as an Emergency and Release Contact pick-up the child or we may call the police to prevent potential harm to your child. Reoccurring situations may result in the release of your child from the program.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Unless we receive your written consent, information regarding your child will not be released, with the exception of that required by our regulatory and partnering agencies. All records concerning children at our program are confidential.

## **MEALS AND SNACKS**

The center offers morning snack, lunch and afternoon snack and Dinner. If parents decide to provide food for the child, please view our weekly menu and send in nutritional foods in the same food groups as being served to other children. Meals and snack sizes are dependent upon the age of the child and shall meet nutritional guidelines as established by the United States Department of Agriculture Child Care Food Program. No outside food or snacks will be permitted unless there is a health or religious reason, which shall be in writing.

### **Food Prepared for or at the Center**

Food prepared for or at the center will be properly planned, prepared and portioned according to the Child and Adult Care Food Program and the state requirements for food service.

### **Food Allergies**

If your child has a food allergy, you must notify us in writing so that we can make appropriate substitutions. The written notification should list appropriate food substitutions and must be updated at least annually.

Food allergies can be life threatening and each child with a food allergy should have an action plan for emergency care completed by the family physician.

A signed written feeding plan for children less than one (1) year of age shall be obtained from parents. Instructions from the parent shall be updated regularly as new foods are added or other dietary changes are made. The feeding plan shall be posted in the child's assigned room and must include the child's feeding schedule, the amount of formula or breast milk to be given, instructions for the introduction of solid foods, the amount of food to be given and notation of any type(s) of commercially premixed formula which may not be used in an emergency because of food allergies.

The center accommodates dietary restrictions related to food allergy, food intolerance, religious, and cultural practices. Written notice from parents and/or doctors must be on file.

## **EMERGENCY CLOSINGS**

Future Stars Academy will make every effort to open on time and remain open during inclement weather. Should severe weather or other conditions (i.e., snow, storms, floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, blizzards, loss of power, loss of water) prevent us from opening on time or at all, notification to the families will be announced on the centers voicemail.

If it becomes necessary to close the school during the day, you or an emergency contact will be notified by phone. Your child's early pick-up is your responsibility, so please arrange for backup procedures. There are no refunds for emergency closings.

## **HEALTH POLICY**

### ***Immunizations, oral hygiene, vision and hearing screenings***

Immunizations are required according to the current schedule recommended by the U.S. Public Health Services and the American Academy of Pediatrics, [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org). Every January, we check with the public health department or the American Academy of Pediatrics for updates of the recommended immunization schedule. Our state regulations regarding attendance of children who are not immunized due to religious or medical reasons are followed. Unimmunized children are excluded during outbreaks of vaccine preventable illness as directed by the state health department. Immunizations due within 30 days of enrollment for ALL enrolled children.

Within 90 days of enrollment, parents must submit vision, hearing, dental screening and nutrition certificate (DHR Form 3300) for all children over the age of 4. It is important that all immunizations and health records are kept up to date (DHR form 3231). All children's health and well-being should be everyone's top priority and must be properly maintained at all times.

Child Health Policy: Children who are ill cannot be appropriately cared for in preschool setting. Parents need to have alternate care available for when this occurs. Examples of health symptoms that require exclusion from the center include (but are not limited to):

- Fever; Oral temperature above 101 degrees / Rectal temperature above 102 degrees / Axillary (under arm) temperature above 100 degrees
- Persistent diarrhea
- Conjunctivitis, which is an eye infection commonly referred to as "pink eye"
- Undiagnosed rash, except diaper rash
- Vomiting two or more times in previous 24 hour period, or any vomiting accompanied by other signs of illness
- Jaundice (yellow) skin or eyes
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Symptoms of strep throat or chicken pox
- Head Lice, scabies, or other parasitic infections
- Any condition in which the child acts ill and is unable to participate in classroom activities and which compromises the health and safety of others

### **Becoming Ill While in Care:**

Future Stars Academy will provide a child that has developed symptoms of illness a quiet place to rest that is in view of a childcare provider until the child is removed from the facility. The parent or emergency contact person will be notified of the illness by the child's teacher and must pick the child up within one hour.

#### Daily Health Check:

A Daily Health Check will be conducted by each child's teacher upon their arrival. The teacher will be checking for symptoms of illness, communicable disease, child abuse and maltreatment. Information will be documented in the Daily Health Check File. All cuts, bruises, and behavior changes (whether or not suspected abuse) must be documented. All teachers will receive training relating to recognition of signs and symptoms of illness and child abuse, administration of medication and taking temperatures, and emotional and physical needs of ill children.

#### Communicable disease –

If present in your classroom, provide each family with written information about the illness including symptoms and number of days the child should remain at home. Some examples of common communicable diseases are chicken pox, pink eye and lice. Please inform the office staff and sister classrooms of communicable illnesses.

#### ***Allergy Prevention***

Families are expected to notify us regarding children's food and environmental allergies. Families of children with diagnosed allergies are required to provide us a letter detailing the child's symptoms, reactions, treatments and care. A list of the children's allergies will be posted in the main area and kitchen. We are trained to familiarize ourselves and consult the list to avoid the potential of exposing children to substances to which they have known allergies.

Administering Medication: Whenever possible, we ask that all medication be given to children at home. We understand that this is not always possible. If medicine must be administered during Daycare, the following policy applies:

- Medication must be in the original container labeled with the child's complete name, the medication name, recommended dosage, time intervals for administration, method of administration, expiration date and, for prescription medication, the prescriber's name and license number.
- Medication must be stored according to the instructions on the label in a place that is inaccessible to children. Medication must be returned to the parent when no longer needed.
- Staff must document the dosages and time that the medication was given to the child.
- Noticeable adverse reactions to prescribed medications will be reported to parent immediately and medication will be discontinued immediately.

#### **Wellness Policy**

- Daily tummy time is provided for all infants.

- Toddlers are provided with 90 minutes of physical activity, and preschoolers are provided with 120 minutes of physical activity every day.
- Caregivers model healthy physical activity practices by participating in active play.
- Food and physical activity are not used as incentive or punishment.
- Nutrition and physical activity education are included in the weekly curriculum.
- No child is expected to remain seated or confined for more than 15 minutes, excluding meal time and nap time.
- Screen time is limited to 30 minutes per week for preschoolers, and is limited to commercial free and educational programs.
- Children under the age of two do not participate in screen time activities.
- Parents are partners in the task of fostering healthy physical activity habits for children.
- Caregivers are adequately trained about physical activity for children.

## **ACCIDENTS**

All accidents must be reported immediately to the Director/Assistant Director. Accident(s) reports must be written, signed by an administrator, given to parents, and copied for the child's file. Close supervision of children is the best anecdote to accidents. Use risk management to keep the environment safe and hazard free. Future Stars Academy strives to provide the best in equipment, that is kept maintained, and in overall good working conditions, so all children will be safe in the classroom or playground areas. Safety is a joint effort of all staff and employees requiring all of us to become risk managers.

1. Emergency / Accident Procedures - In the event that a child is hurt and requires emergency medical assistance from a physician, the following steps should be taken to ensure the safety of the child:
  - Get assistance from another teacher and notify a PC or administrative person
  - Tell someone to call 9-1-1 (9-9-1-1 from Center telephones) and notify the parent
  - Remain with child, assisting with first aid, until emergency personnel arrive
  - Wear protective gloves and follow universal precautions
  - When emergency personnel arrive, ask where the child will be taken and notify the front office and parents
  - A staff person will follow in car to be with child until parent arrives
  - Upon return, complete an "Accident report" and notify your PC to ensure that follow up steps are taken (including "Unusual Accident Report")
  - Follow up with family as needed regarding outcome.

## **Lost or Missing Child**

In the unlikely event that a child becomes lost or separated from a group, all available staff will search for the child. If the child is not located within [10] minutes, the family and the police will be notified.

## **Fire Safety**

Our center is fully equipped with all fire safety items including, alarms, lights, fire extinguishers and rolling cribs.

Our fire evacuation plan is reviewed with the children and staff on a monthly basis.

## **Emergency Transportation**

In the event your child needs to be transported due to a medical emergency, if no other authorized person can be contacted and the need for transportation is essential, an ambulance will be called for transportation. A proper escort will accompany and remain with the child until a family member or emergency contact arrives.

## **NON EMERGENCY ACCIDENTS**

When a child does not require emergency medical assistance, but the accident is one in which parents should be notified (head injuries, excessive bleeding, open wound), the following steps should be taken to ensure the safety of the child:

- Administer first aid
- Make sure the child is comfortable and no further pain or injury
- Fill out an incident report, place a copy in child's file and a copy in his/her bag to take home

## **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT AND DISCIPLINE**

All teachers at Future Stars Academy manage behavior in their classrooms in a non-punitive, age appropriate manner. All staff receive ongoing training in the areas of discipline and behavior management. They are trained in the process of positive discipline, which instructs children as to what they should do rather than telling them what not to do. For example "We walk inside the building" rather than "No running".

Toddlers will begin to learn self-control by observing the natural consequences of their behavior. Teachers will quickly intervene if a problem does occur and redirect the child to a more appropriate activity. Language is utilized to help Toddlers begin to identify their feelings and learn to deal with them in a socially acceptable manner.

Preschoolers and school age children will be encouraged to learn problem-solving skills and become self-correcting. They will be given the opportunity to choose alternatives that will enable them to participate in a socially acceptable manner without reinforcing their negative behavior.

Staff will use positive enforcement while supervising children, encouraging them to cooperate and continue using appropriate behaviors. Children will be redirected to an alternate activity if their behavior continues to be inappropriate. An example is when a child is doing something that could hurt others, themselves, or destroying property and choosing not to use problem-solving

techniques. Teachers will continue to be an active listener and support the child with conflict resolution.

### ***Biting***

Biting is a normal stage of development that is common among infants and toddlers – and sometimes even among preschoolers. It is something that most young children will try at least once.

When biting happens, our response will be to care for and help the child who was bitten and to help the biter to learn a more appropriate behavior. Our focus will not be on punishment for biting, but on effective behaviors that address the specific reason for biting.

If a child bites more than once, they will be suspended from center for a day. If the behavior continues, the child will be suspended for longer period or removed from center.

### **CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR**

Children are guided to treat each other and adults with self control and kindness. When a child becomes physically aggressive, we intervene immediately to protect all of the children.

Our usual approach to helping children with challenging behaviors is to show them how to solve problems using appropriate interactions. When discipline is necessary, it is clear, consistent and understandable to the child.

No child shall be subject to physical corporal punishment, humiliated, frightened, verbally abused, or denied food, rest or bathroom facilities. Children will never be disciplined for toileting accidents, sleep habits, or food consumption. Any violation of this discipline policy should be reported to the Director immediately. All staff employed by Future Stars Academy is selected with the greatest of care.

### **DESTROYING CENTER PROPERTY**

When children become careless, or continuously destroy center property, the child's parent will be responsible for replacing the damaged items. Parents will receive notice of damaged goods and pricing and must replace the items. Furniture, equipment and goods in the center are provided for the children to utilize and enhance their learning and development. Children cannot destroy property when upset, angry or any other reasons.

### **NOTIFICATION OF BEHAVIORAL ISSUE TO FAMILIES**

Parents will be notified of the behavior management strategies used and receive an incident report. Individual behavior management plans will be implemented. If a child's behavior is unmanageable within a group setting, parents will be consulted and an individual behavior plan implemented.

If a child's behavior/circumstance is of concern, communication will begin with the parents as the first step to understanding the child's individual needs and challenges. We will work together to evaluate these needs in the context of our program.

On rare occasions, a child's behavior may warrant the need to find a more suitable setting for care. Excessive misbehaving may warrant suspension and/or termination. Examples of such instances include:

- A child appears to be a danger to others.
- Continued care could be harmful to, or not in the best interest of the child as determined by a medical, psychological, or social service personnel.
- Undue burden on our resources and finances for the child's accommodations for success and participation.

## **SOCIAL SERVICE REFERRAL**

If a child is in need of assistance in addition to what the teachers can provide on a daily basis, the Lead Teacher will notify the Director. The Director will hold a conference with the parent (s) to provide information about appropriate social service agencies which can meet the child's and/or family's needs. The center will make every effort to lead parents in the correct direction for assistance. The director/staff will also assist in any additional services. The parent/teacher/director will work together as a team to document any concerns. The parents will be notified immediately when concerns arise.

## **WHAT TO BRING**

Please provide your child with a clear ziplock to carry his/her belongings. It makes for a much easier departure. Children will be provided with a small blanket for rest time. Children may NOT bring personal belongings, such as toys, blankets or book bags to school. Please keep in mind that teachers will help the children to be careful, but cannot be responsible for loss or damage to items brought to school. Toy guns and weapons are prohibited. Diapers and wipes, if needed, should be sent in your child's bag daily. It is recommended that jewelry not be worn. If jewelry or any personal items are lost/stolen or damaged, the center will not be responsible. Small items such as jewelry, become a choking hazard and are not recommended. It is at the discretion of the Director whether to remove an item from a child if it is a safety hazard to other children. **ALL INFANTS/TODDLERS MUST HAVE BOTTLES, CUPS AND PACIFIERS LABELED WITH FIRST AND LAST NAME.** Parents must also provide bibs for children, which will be sent home daily to be laundered.

## **CLOTHING SUGGESTIONS**



Children 2 years old and up, are required to wear FSA uniform shirts with kaki, black or navy blue bottoms. Parents must purchase tops from the center upon enrollment. Parents have the option to purchase their own red polo shirts and have the logo embroidered on them, or they can purchase shirts with logo already on them directly from the center. Our playground is used as an extension of the classroom, and daily programs are conducted outside whenever weather permits. In order for your child to enjoy participation in the program, please have him/her dress for the weather. If it has just rained, please send boots for the puddles; if it is raining lightly, waterproof outer clothing is needed. In general, durable clothing that can withstand the energetic activity of young children is the best bet. If the day is extremely cold, send an extra sweater and hat. We will probably be outside for a brief time. Children need to run around, have some large muscle activity, and get some fresh air. If the child is well enough to come to school, he/she should be able to play outside as long as he/she stays dry. Therefore, we ask that you leave a complete set of extra clothing, especially socks, at all times. Also, if a child is newly toilet trained, it is helpful to keep an extra set of underwear on hand. Please replace the items when they become soiled. **Children may not wear open toe shoes. All shoes must be closed toe for playground safety.**

**PLEASE LABEL ALL CLOTHING WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.** The teachers are not responsible for lost or damaged articles.

## **REST TIME**

Future Stars Academy will provide a nap/rest time on a daily basis for children who are in care for four or more hours per day, as required. Your child does not have to sleep, but will be expected to rest quietly and not disturb other children. You may bring in a small blanket, pillow, and stuffed animal for your child to rest with. Blankets and pillows will be sent home every Friday for laundering. Please return them every Monday.

## **DIAPERING PROCEDURES**

All diapering areas shall be ventilated by functioning exhaust fans or by the required operable windows. There shall be a hand washing lavatory with running heated water located adjacent to the diapering area. Diapers shall be changed in a child's own crib or on a diaper changing surface that is used for no purposes other than changing clothes in each room where infants or any other children wearing diapers are served. Infants and children shall not be left unattended while being diapered or having their clothes changed on the diaper changing surface.

Staff shall wash their hands with liquid soap and warm running water immediately before and after each diaper change they perform. Staff with diaper changing responsibilities shall not be simultaneously assigned to kitchen food preparation duties. The area used for diapering shall not be used for food preparation. The above rules do not apply for school-age centers except for children with special needs who are school-aged but require diapering.

## **TOILET TRAINING**

Your child may be ready for toilet training if he/she:

- has a dry diaper for two or more hours and/or after naptime
- tells you when the diaper needs to be changed.
- Tells you when he/she is going in the diaper
- Shows an interest in using the toilet

Toilet training should begin at home on a weekend or Holiday. However you decide to train your child, consistency is important. Please provide us with at least three sets of underwear and clothes each day until your child is trained. We will assist in the training process, but be mindful that parents must be consistent at home in order to properly train. Children that are not properly trained, will not be moved to the next class, and can be discharged if too old for the current class. Children that are not trained when entering the 3 year old class will not be accepted.

### **SAFE SLEEP POLICY**

Infants, under the age of one, will be placed on their back to sleep and when placed on the floor or in the play pen, then allowed to turn as he/she wishes. If an infant is over the age of one and is not consistently turning over, the infant should continue to be put down on his/her back.

- Cribs that are approved in compliance with Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and (ASTM) safety standards shall be provided for each infant.
- The mattress will be firm and one that is manufactured for sale as infant sleeping equipment and meets the standards of the Consumer Product Safety Commission.
- No objects will be placed in or on the crib with an infant. This includes, but is not limited to, covers, blankets, toys, pillows, quilts, comforters, bumper pads, sheepskins, stuffed toys, or other soft items.
- No objects will be attached to a crib with a sleeping infant, such as, but not limited to, crib gym, toys, mirrors and mobiles.
- Only sleepers, sleep sacks and wearable blankets provided by the parent/guardian and that fit according to the commercial manufacturer's guidelines and will not slip up around the infant's face may be worn for the comfort of the sleeping infant.
- An infant's face and head should remain uncovered while sleeping.
- Classrooms should be kept at a temperature that is comfortable for the caregiver in a short-sleeve shirt or smock.
- The use of a pacifier has been linked to a reduction in the risk for SIDS. Encourage your families to speak to their doctor about the use of a pacifier.
- If a parent feels that there is a medical reason the infant should not be placed on his/her back, a note from the doctor is required.
- If a parent has a question regarding this procedure, please have them speak to the Infant/Toddler Coordinator or Director and or refer them to their Parent Handbook for more information.
- Cots and mats shall be provided for each child who is two years of age or older and who is required to take a nap. Cots and mats shall be of sound construction and of sufficient

size to accommodate comfortably the size and weight of the child. Each will be marked for individual use daily.

- The center shall provide safe sleep environment in accordance with American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) recommendations as listed above.

## **BIRTHDAY PARTIES**

Birthdays are a special time and we like to celebrate them by holding birthday parties for each child. You are welcome to bring a special snack for your child to share at school. You are welcome to join your child during his/her birthday party. If you choose to send party bags to school, please make sure there is one for every child in the class. Gifts for the birthday child are strictly optional. If you choose to provide a gift for the birthday child, please make it an inexpensive one. **Healthy and nutritional snacks and treats only.**

## **FIELD TRIPS**

As part of Future Stars Academy, field trips will be planned occasionally. Prior to each trip, information will be sent home detailing the date, time, cost, location, chaperones, etc. The permission slip must be signed and returned to the teacher in order for the child to attend. We welcome parents to join us for trips. All children will be placed in safety-approved car seats as required by law. Children will be transported in the center van and or staff vehicles when necessary. If you do not wish for your child to participate in the field trip, notify his/her teacher so that other arrangements can be made for the day.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Those children who are signed up and registered to be transported from school to the center, will also be transported in the center van. Parents will have to register and return transportation agreement before a child can receive transportation to/from school. In the case that no authorized person is present at the drop off location, child will be brought back to center and parent will be contacted to pick up child at the center. There is a \$25 transportation fee which is due Monday of each week. If the fee is not paid, transportation will not be provided.

## **COMMUNICATION & FAMILY PARTNERSHIP**

Communication between home and school is extremely important in order to ensure the success of your child. Please feel free to discuss any concerns you have with your child's teacher or the Center Director. It may not be possible for you to have a long conversation with your child's teacher at drop-off or pick-up times as the teachers are responsible for supervising all of the children in their care. If you have a special concern, a meeting or phone conference may be arranged. Future Stars Academy provides many opportunities for parents to receive information on the progress of their child as well as the activities and events at our Center. The following details the types of communication that parents will receive:

- Daily Reports: A daily report will be prepared if requested by the parent / guardian. Mandatory of infants and toddlers. This will provide parents with an overview of the child's performance throughout day. Information on meals, toileting, sleep, and child's overall mood will be included on this form.
- Parent Conferences: Parent/Teacher Conferences will be scheduled two times per year, or more often by request. This conference will summarize each child's progress in our program. Conferences will be scheduled in November and May. Parents are welcome to schedule a conference at any time.
- Information Board: Information about upcoming activities and events will be posted on the information board in the classrooms. Classroom schedules and special classroom events will be posted on the information board in each classroom. Please check the boards regularly to keep informed about our upcoming events.

## **PARENTAL ACCESS**

The custodial parent(s) of the child shall at any time the child is in attendance be permitted access to all child care areas of the center and shall make his or her presence known to center staff prior to removing the child from the center.

## **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

There will be many times and ways you can get involved in your child's preschool / daycare experience. You are welcomed and encouraged to participate in any or all of these. Some examples of ways to be involved include:

- Chaperoning on field trips
- Lending objects for units of study
- Coming and talking about your job, when asked
- Helping your child at home with the concepts we are studying here
- Helping your child prepare for "Show and Tell"
- Helping to provide treats or other items for our parties
- Attending your child's birthday party
- Coming in to read to the class
- Volunteering to help with projects or games

Please speak to your child's teacher about becoming involved and he/she will set up a schedule for you. Parent participation and involvement is highly encouraged.

## **POSTINGS AND BULLETINS**

Parents should check classroom and center bulletin boards for current and ongoing notices as it pertains to licenses, rules, review of evaluation report, communicable disease charts, parental access, names of individuals in charge, current weekly menu, emergency plans for severe

weather and fire, and statements for visitors. Please become familiar with the bulletin boards, as staff will update them regularly to keep our families up to date and informed.

## **Transitions**

Your child's transition in child care should be a positive and exciting learning adventure. We will work with you and your child to ensure the smoothest possible transition occurs as new routines and new people are introduced.

**Transition from home to center.** Prior to your child's first day, you will have an opportunity to tour the center, meet with your child's teachers, and communicate any anticipated concerns. At this time please let the teacher know the best way to reach you.

**Transition between learning programs.** Children are transitioned to the next program based on age, developmental readiness, state licensing requirements, and space availability. During the transition, current and future teachers will meet with you to propose a plan to introduce your child into the new program.

**Transition to elementary school.** Transition activities such as a field trip to a local elementary school, creating a mural of special friends and special times at our center will be part of your child's education at our center. We will provide you with information on local schools, what to expect, and ideas on how to talk to your child about going to elementary school.

## **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

Staff are prepared to deal with a variety of emergency situations. During all circumstances, teachers will remain calm and stay with the children. In the case of a weather related emergency, such as a tornado warning, children will be evacuated to the designated shelter for their building. In cases of structural damage to the building, staff will follow the directions of the emergency plans.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

If an emergency arises, a qualified staff administers first aid care, calls the parent, and if necessary emergency medical personnel. Staff will accompany the child to the nearest hospital, South Fulton Medical Center, where emergency treatment is administered. The staff will remain with the child until the parent arrives. In the event neither parent can be reached, the child's physician will be contacted. It is essential for parents to provide information on where you can be reached, physician name and phone number, signed emergency waivers, and updated emergency contacts and waivers.

An accident report log is kept at the front desk with detailed information on any injury to a child. An incident report is kept in the log, in the child's file, and a copy given to the parent within 24 hours of any injury.

## **Child and Center Safety**

### **Smoking**

The poisons in secondhand smoke are especially harmful to infants and young children's developing bodies, therefore the indoor and outdoor center environment and vehicles used by the center are non-smoking areas at all times. The use of tobacco in any form is prohibited on the center's premises.

### ***Prohibited Substances***

The use of alcohol or illegal drugs is prohibited on the center's premises. Possession of illegal substances or unauthorized potentially toxic substances is prohibited.

Any adult who appears to be inebriated, intoxicated, or otherwise under the influence of mind-altering or polluting substances is required to leave the premises immediately.

### ***Dangerous Weapons***

A dangerous weapon is a gun, knife, razor, or any other object, which by the manner it is used or intended to be used, is capable of inflicting bodily harm. Families, children, staff or guests (other than law enforcement officers) possessing a dangerous weapon will not be permitted onto the premises.

In cases that clearly involve a gun, or any other weapon on our premises, the police will be called and the individual(s) involved will be immediately removed from the premises. This policy applies to visible or concealed weapons.

### ***Child Custody***

Without a court document, both parents/guardians have equal rights to custody. We are legally bound to respect the wishes of the parent/guardian with legal custody based on a certified copy of the most recent court order, active restraining order, or court-ordered visitation schedule. We will not accept the responsibility of deciding which parent/guardian has legal custody where there is no court documentation.

### ***Suspected Child Abuse***

We are required by law to report all observations of child abuse or neglect cases to the appropriate state authorities if we have reasonable cause to believe or suspect a child is suffering from abuse or neglect or is in danger of abuse or neglect, no matter where the abuse might have occurred.

## **SUMMER CAMP**

Future Stars summer camp will run from the end of May to August for a total of 10 weeks. Camp sessions will be available full day or extended day. Children will enjoy a fun filled summer participating in activities such as outdoor play, crafts, sports, games, music, and so much more. Please view fee schedule for rates

**At Will**

This handbook is prepared to provide you with information, policies and guidelines for Future Stars Academy. It is a contract between the academy and you (parent(s) or guardian(s)). Enrollment with Future Stars Academy is not for definite term. The academy may terminate services at any time, for any reason or no reason.

**Parent Acknowledgment Form**

I certify that I have received, read, understand, and accept all of the terms and conditions described in this *Family Handbook*. I understand the facilities policies and procedures. I understand that the facility will advise me of my child’s progress and issues relating to my child’s care as well as any individual practices concerning my child’s special needs. I also understand that my participation is encouraged in facility activities. It is my responsibility to understand and familiarize myself with the Family Handbook and to ask center management any questions I may have regarding any policy, procedure or information contained in the Future Stars Academy Family Handbook.

**Parent Signature:**

**Date:**

**Director Signature:**

**Date:**