

# Parent Handbook

## Mission Statement

To provide quality child care that meets the educational and emotional needs of children. To give children a home away from home, that is loving and nurturing. To give each and every child the proper social, emotional and moral development that will last a lifetime.



## Hours of Operation

Regular hours are Monday - Friday 6:00am - 6:30pm. (regular rates apply)  
Extended hours are Monday - Friday 6:30pm - 9:00pm and Saturday care. (ask about availability)

## Days HELC is Closed for Business

We are closed for business on the following days: New Years Day, Memorial Day, 4<sup>th</sup> of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.  
We are open during snow days and holiday breaks.

## Childcare Daily Rates

Infant	\$42
Toddler (12mos - 2 ½)	\$42
Preschool (2 ½ - 5)	\$39
Half Day of Preschool	\$28
School Age ( 5 and up)	\$34
Before and After School	\$10 per session
Drop In Care	\$40 (all ages)
Summer Camp	\$34/day all field trip fees & meals included

## Enrollment and Withdrawal Policy

Howell Early Learning Center is an Equal Opportunity Provider.

A \$50 registration fee is due at time of registration. First week's tuition is also due at time of registration.

We kindly ask parents to provide a two-week notice of any cancellation of care. In the event that after registration is paid, you need to withdraw your child's enrollment, the registration fee is non-refundable.

## Paperwork Required for Care

Child Information Card

Immunization Record

Physical form - physical must have been done within the last year

Signatures for Releases and Parent Handbook

Food Program forms

Enrollment Agreement

## Items Needed

See our Food Program for details, but your child will not need to bring any meals or snacks. If you have a preference on Formula or baby food, please see the Program Director to find out what type we are supplying in case it's the same kind you are using.

Items below are needed

A blanket for quiet time, to be kept at the Center

A pillow for quiet time, to be kept at the Center  
Any clothing needed for outdoor activities - to be sent home at end of the day  
We highly recommend that personal items and toys are not brought to the Center.  
We cannot guarantee they will not be lost or broken.

## **Weekly Schedules**

Weekly Schedules must be turned in by 5pm on Fridays. Please be timely as we are trying to make sure that teachers have their schedules in advance as much as possible.

## **Drop In Care**

Drop In Care is available based on availability and by reservation only. Child must be enrolled in program and have all completed forms turned in prior to the first drop in visit. All payment for Drop In Care must be made at the time of drop off or care cannot be given.

## **Payment and Late Fee Policy**

Each family is given a payment contract at time of enrollment that they can pick what type of payment schedule they would like to be on. Due dates on invoices are based on these contracts. Payments are due by the due date on the weekly invoices. There is a grace period that we do allow and there is a date on the invoice that a late fee will be posted to your account if the balance is not paid. Failure to contact us to make arrangements with us prior to the date that the late fee will be added to the account, will result in a \$25 late fee. This late fee must be paid along with the account balance in full for care to continue. Payments must be placed in the drop box in the Infant Classroom. Castaway Play Café Staff is not allowed to accept daycare payments. All payments must be made by either Cash or Check, placed in the drop box and noted on the envelope or check what dates payment is being made for.

Please make all checks payable to Howell Early Learning Center.

There is a \$25.00 fee for returned checks.

## **Absent/Tardiness Policy**

If your child is absent on a day that they were scheduled, you will still be charged for care that day. In the event that your child is absent and no attempt was made to contact our teachers to let them know, a \$10 fee will be assessed on top of the daily rate. In the event you are late picking up your child, any pickups after 6:30pm will incur a \$10 charge and \$10 per hour for every hour after 6:30pm.

## **Sick/Vacation Days**

Once you have turned in the schedule for your child for the following week you will be charged for the days that your child was scheduled to be in care. Any special allowances to this policy must go thru the Program Director ONLY. Special allowances would be based on us being able to cancel a teacher prior to them driving into work, etc.

Notice is preferred in the case of vacation or if care will be temporarily suspended. If care is stopped, your child's vacancy will be filled in the event that we have another child needing care. We ask that you call to ensure that there is still a spot available for your child upon their return.

## **Child Illness Policy**

If a child is in our care and they begin to feel ill we will do our very best to make them feel comfortable and will work to separate the child from the group.

We will notify you if we observe changes in your child's health, they experience accident or injury, or if they are too ill to remain in the group.

## **Fever policy**

We classify a fever as 101 degree underarm temperature. If a teacher or director contacts you to inform you that your child has a fever you must make arrangement to pick up your child from Howell ELC. This policy is strictly enforced to prevent the spread of communicable disease.

## **Medication Policy**

You must fill out a medication permission form for each day that we give prescription medication to your child.

All medication must be in its original container, clearly labeled with the child's name.

Nonprescription medication including, but not limited to, sunscreen and insect repellent, requires written authorization annually.

## **Suspected Abuse and Neglect**

The well-being of the children that attend our Center is very important to us. In the event that we feel a child is not receiving proper care at home, we will first talk to the parents about the situation, but if the situation is not resolved, we are obligated by law to report the situation to Child Protective Services. In the event that there is suspected/substantiated evidence of physical abuse it will immediately be reported to Child Protective Services, as we are required to do by law.

## **Food Program**

Howell ELC participates in Feeding the Future Food Program. We do require that all paperwork is filled out for this program at the time of registration. Your child will be provided a morning snack, lunch meal and afternoon snack each day that is free of charge when part of this program. If you do not wish to be part of this program, you will be charged \$4.50 per day for us to provide these snacks and meals outside of our Food Program.

We do not allow snacks or meals to be brought in from home and served due to licensing restrictions while our Center participates with Feeding the Future. If your child is a picky eater our teachers will work with you and your child to ensure that your child is receiving meals and snacks that will accommodate their personal choices. We, however, need to make sure that we are providing healthy, well balanced meals and snacks.

If you would like a copy of our food menu, please see the Program Director. All of our menus are posted on the parent boards in each classroom.

## **Health Care Policy**

Toys and equipment are sanitized daily. High chairs, countertops and tables will be sanitized before and after each use.

Universal precautions will be taken to ensure our part in protecting children and staff from communicable disease.

## **Outdoor Play**

We are required by State Licensing Regulations to ensure that the children are getting outside at least 2 times per day. Please make sure that you are sending them in weather appropriate clothing. Ex. Not heavy sweatshirts during the summer, and hats, gloves, winter coat and boots during the winter. In the event that we feel the weather is not appropriate to take the kids out in (below 10 degrees, heavy wind and rain) we will be allowing the children to play during that time on the Play Structure inside Castaway Play Café instead. We will do our best to get the children outside into fresh air as much as possible.

## **Safety Policy**

Your child's health and safety is our number one priority. The release of a child will only be granted to an individual who is on the child's emergency release card with parental permission. In the event that someone arrives to pick up your child who is not on the release form, they will be asked to leave the daycare room(s). If a parent/guardian arrives at pick up time and appears to be in an altered state, the Program Director or Administrator will call all emergency contacts to see if anyone is available to pick up the parent and child and encourage the parent to wait for an alternate ride.

In the event that your child is dropped off before or after the business hours of Castaway Play Café, our Facility doors will be locked, along with the entrance and

exit door to our drop off room. The door will need to be opened by a teacher, who will verify the identity of the person trying to enter. Once CPC employees have arrived, we will unlock the main door for entry for our parents.

## **Emergency Medical Policy**

If your child becomes ill or an injury occurs our teachers will perform basic first aid to treat the illness or injury. If the illness requires more than basic first aid, you will be contacted and asked to pick your child up immediately and transport them home or to a medical facility.

In the case of an emergency, we may contact EMS. In the instance that we cannot get a hold of you, we will continue contacting all of the emergency contacts on your child's emergency card. In the severe case that the child is being transported by EMS and an emergency contact is not on site, your child's teacher will accompany your child and remain with them until a parent/guardian arrives, to ensure that your child remains safe, comfortable and well taken care of.

## **Discipline Policy**

Children will NEVER be physically punished or restrained.

We do not give "time outs". Instead, we encourage the children to talk to each other and try to resolve issues rather than letting a problem fester and become a long-term concern.

Children will not be scolded. When and if it is necessary to speak with a child about inappropriate behavior, steps will be taken to protect the child's privacy and self-esteem.

In the event, that we are have behavior problems with a child that put our teachers or other child's safety at risk, we will notify the parent/guardian of the child and they will be expected to pick up their child immediately. If we cannot make contact with the parent/guardian, our teachers will start making contact with those listed on the emergency contact card.

## **Biting Policy**

When a child bites, it is typically due to frustration. We train our teachers to find the source of frustration if a child has been bit, so we can determine why that child has bitten another child. If the child continues to bite other children, we will call the parents in for a meeting. If it is determined that we cannot stop the behavior after meeting with the parents, we may determine that we can no longer continue care for your child.

## **Staff to Child Ratios**

Infant 1:4

Toddler 1:4

Preschool 1:8

Preschool (older than 2  $\frac{1}{2}$ ) 1:10

Latchkey/School age (5 and up) 1:16

## **Staff Screening Policies and Qualifications**

All staff members employed by Howell Early Learning Center have received DHS background checks through the State of Michigan along with ICHAT background checks.

All staff members will receive a tuberculosis test prior to contact with the children. All daycare staff members are CPR and First Aid certified. All staff members regardless of position are required to complete 24 hours of professional development every year.

## **Parent Participation on our Classrooms**

Howell Early Learning Center encourages our parents to be an active part of our Program. We encourage parents to participate on Field Trips and if you have a talent or trade that you would like to share with our Center, please contact the Program Director and let them know, and we are more than willing to let you share with your child's classroom.

## **Cultural Competence**

Cultural competency is a broad concept that impacts student self-worth and acceptance in the classroom environment. Howell Early Learning Center strives to provide culturally sensitive environments in which all families and children feel welcomed and accepted. We will show respect for the cultural, home language, and family composition for all children. We strive to provide cultural awareness within our classrooms by providing materials reflecting the cultures within our classroom and supporting children who speak multiple languages. Every measure will be made to understand and reflectively respond to families and children from all cultures.

## **Special Needs**

Howell Early Learning Center strives to provide appropriate developmental learning opportunities for all children. During our Fall/Winter Programming we partner with parents to complete developmental assessments to ensure all children are achieving appropriate developmental milestones. If a delay presents itself, we will help parents partner with the appropriate agency to obtain resources for helping their child. We work with EIP's and provide an environment that will take into consideration the specific special needs of your child.

We do enroll children with special needs at our Center. We will do everything we can to accommodate those special needs both medically, physically and emotionally. If you are enrolling a child with special needs, we do ask that you complete a quick questionnaire so that we know how to care for your child best. In the event, we are having an issue behaviorally, we will contact the parents and try to work out a plan for additional support for those behavioral needs.