



Policies and Procedures Handbook

7651 Johnson Street

Hollywood, FL 33024

School: (954) 983-3516

epworthpreschoolfl.com

Facebook: Epworth United Methodist Preschool

Epworth United Methodist Preschool

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(954) 983-3516 Preschool

Welcome

Welcome to Epworth United Methodist Preschool, Where LOVE Spills Over. We are delighted that you have chosen us as your child's preschool. Our staff is dedicated to giving your child the personal attention and guidance they need to learn as they relate to the world around them. Our teachers are experienced professionals who are fully trained and knowledgeable in early childhood development and education. The policies and procedures in this handbook are strictly enforced. Please adhere to the policies and procedures to ensure your child has a wonderful experience in preschool.

Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide a safe, loving, and spiritually nurturing environment for our students, parents, and staff. We believe that preschoolers should learn through fun experiences. This will help engage the children and foster a love for learning, making their transition into elementary school an easier one. We encourage the family to participate throughout the school year, helping to cultivate the importance of education in your child's life.

Our Philosophy

We believe that each child is unique and has their own way of learning. We believe that each child has the right to grow into their full potential and develop their strengths and talents. We believe that providing a safe, loving, and spiritually nurturing environment, with the collaboration of family, will assist the child in becoming their very best.

Our teachers will provide your child with a variety of developmentally appropriate tasks, which will occur through play, teacher-led and child-led activities. Your child will be encouraged to problem solve, explore, create, and learn through these experiences. Our teachers will provide opportunities for your child to develop physically, cognitively, and social-emotionally. We want to build positive self-image, academic excellence, and active learning. We want to encourage collaboration between family and school in order to establish the importance of education early on and help to develop life-long learners.

Security and Cameras

For the safety of our students and staff, Epworth United Methodist Preschool has an automatic lock to the front entryway gate. Epworth United Methodist Preschool has 32 cameras covering all areas of the facility with the exception of the bathrooms. These cameras are monitored in the office and are NOT linked to the internet.

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Our Curriculum

Our curriculum is comprehensive, with an emphasis on hands-on learning and spiritual growth. Learning should be fun, interesting, and appropriately geared to the age and development of the child. The children are exposed to a variety of activities throughout the day, allowing them to experience information through play, books, singing, arts, direct instruction and more!

Epworth United Methodist Preschool utilizes Frog Street Curriculum. Frog Street Curriculum is a comprehensive program that uses research-based scope and sequence for literacy, math, and content domains. It also includes strategies to build strong social-emotional foundations to help children problem solve and learn about their emotions.

The curriculum is structured with thematic units which include learning activities in literacy, math, science, social studies, social-emotional skills, and more. The children will be immersed in a theme, where they may be scientists one day and artists the next. Children will learn new vocabulary and begin to make connections to their prior knowledge throughout their daily experiences.

Scholastic Magazine provides the students with weekly science and social studies articles that engage the children by utilizing current themes. The articles correlate to the current month providing information such as, classroom rules in the beginning of the school year, to seasonal changes and current holidays. The children love the bright colors, engaging pictures and the fact that they take a magazine home weekly!

Along with these curriculums, the children are given playground time and free choice time daily, where they get to play, make choices and build relationships with their peers. There are music and physical education classes twice a week. The children certainly look forward to all of these fun experiences. These activities and curriculums allow the children plenty of opportunities to play, learn at their own pace, and experience a variety of learning throughout their fun-filled day.

Visiting During School Hours

Epworth United Methodist Preschool offers many special event activities in which you can pre-arrange to volunteer and attend. Please look for the special event calendar given during the first week of school. Look for notes and messages on the Remind App regarding these events as they occur throughout the school year. Parents are also welcome to attend Chapel on its designated day and time. All families are invited to join the congregation of Epworth United Methodist Church on Sundays at 9:30 a.m. Parents are also invited to bring in special snacks (store bought only) to share with the class to celebrate birthdays. Please arrange time spent in the classroom directly with your child's teacher.

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Responsibility for Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

Epworth United Methodist Preschool shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in the program's care and custody. All staff members are mandated reporters of any suspected incidents of child abuse and neglect. All staff members will document objectively any suspicions of abuse or neglect. Staff will report concerns to the Director. The Director and reporting staff will objectively discuss concerns relating to observable criteria. If deemed necessary, the Director will place the call to the Department of Children and Families to report any concerns or findings.

Incident Reporting Policy and Procedures

Epworth United Methodist Preschool Staff must report all incidents that are listed below to the Florida Department of Children and Families/Licensing.

1. **Lost or missing child** – The Director will be notified upon immediately knowing there is a lost or missing child. A school wide check will be conducted. Attendance will be taken and all children will be counted in each classroom to verify that each child is accounted for. Local law enforcement and licensing will be contacted immediately upon the confirmation that a child is lost or missing.
2. **Suspected maltreatment of a child** - All staff members will document objectively any suspicions of abuse or neglect. Staff will report concerns to the Director. The Director and reporting staff will objectively discuss concerns relating to observable criteria. If deemed necessary, the Director will place the call to the Department of Children and Families to report any concerns or findings.
3. **Injuries or illnesses requiring hospitalization, or emergency treatment** - In the case of serious accidents, injuries, or medical emergencies requiring possible hospitalization, 911 is called immediately for the care and protection of the child. If warranted, appropriate first aid will be provided while waiting for emergency personnel to arrive. Parents/guardians are notified immediately. Licensing will be notified of the accident, injury, or medical emergency as well.
4. **Death of a child or staff member** – Contact local authorities immediately. Contact nearest staff member if children are present. Relocate those children to a nearby and supervised area within the school. Take attendance and complete a head count to make sure all children are accounted for. Wait for local authorities. Contact licensing to inform them of the death of a child or staff member.
5. **Presence of a threatening individual who attempts or succeeds in gaining entrance to the facility** – Individuals who first witness the weapon use or hostage situation will immediately call 911 and inform other staff members through cell phone/two-way radio that there is a CODE RED. That calls for an immediate LOCKDOWN. Classroom doors will be closed and locked. Children will be positioned away from doors and windows. Take attendance and count the children. Notify Director and other staff if a child is missing or if you have a child from another class with you through cell phone/two-way radio. All communications will be conducted through cell phone/two-way radio. Take cover under tables if threat is imminent. Classroom doors will not be opened until the all clear has been given. The Director will notify licensing regarding the incident.

ALL STAFF MEMBERS ARE MANDATED REPORTERS AND MUST REPORT ALL INCIDENTS.

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Persons Appearing Intoxicated or Impaired

If a parent or other adult enters the school to pick up a child and appears to be intoxicated, smells of alcohol or their actions appear to be impaired, we will refuse to release the child to them and call another contact on the emergency contact list to pick up the child. If the intoxicated individual becomes aggressive or unruly, the Director will notify the local authorities.

Use of Television

Epworth United Methodist Preschool will follow licensing regulations regarding recommended screen time. However, Epworth United Methodist Preschool will utilize the television for special occasions or if inclement weather prohibits the use of scheduled playground time. In these cases, the programs or movies shown will be educational, theme related, and age appropriate.

Confidentiality

Epworth United Methodist Preschool respects and maintains the confidentiality of each child and family. Epworth United Methodist Preschool respects the family's right to privacy and will not disclose confidential information. However, by law, Epworth United Methodist Preschool must provide information pursuant to a subpoena or if a child's welfare is at risk to the appropriate agencies.

In addition, signed consent is given to all Epworth United Methodist Preschool staff to have access to your child's records at any given time. (Statue for Consent 7.3D)

Epworth United Methodist Preschool Child Discipline/Expulsion Policy

At Epworth United Methodist Preschool, our goal is to teach our children self-confidence, self-motivation, and self-discipline. Our daily routines include many opportunities for the children to practice building up these skills. Our teachers and staff utilize positive reinforcements, clear expectations, and teach age-appropriate problem-solving skills. Children's efforts will be acknowledged, praised, and encouraged. These strategies instill a sense of accomplishment.

Redirection is a strategy that is used to guide children from an unacceptable behavior to an acceptable activity. Teachers are monitoring behavior and intervening when necessary. When redirection fails, the teacher will suggest ways for the child to problem solve. This is done through modeling proper use of words to resolve peer conflicts and/or role-playing alternate ways to express emotions.

Sometimes even the most well-meaning positive guidance techniques fail to produce acceptable results. In these circumstances, a child may be sent to "Quiet time" for no more than 1 minute per year of age. After the time has ended, the child will be reminded of the infraction and will have a conversation about making better choices next time. Should a child's behavior turn aggressive or non-responsive to our methods, the parents will be contacted for a conference to discuss the problem. The director may declare a child ineligible to continue in the school if they require specialized care beyond the capabilities of the school. If the child does not respond to continual efforts to modify or improve behavior that repeatedly threatens the health or safety of other children or staff, obstructs regular activities or programs, or places the child beyond the

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Child discipline/Expulsion Policy continued

control of the staff, the school reserves the right to disenroll the child at any time at the school's discretion.

In addition, to the above information, if there are excessive late pick-ups, excessive tardiness, or lack of payment for childcare, the school reserves the right to disenroll the child at any time.

School Policies

Hours of Operation: Epworth United Methodist Preschool is open from 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Monday – Friday. If your child is enrolled in our full day program or VPK Wrap-Around Care, you may drop off your child any time before 8:30 a.m. and pick up promptly by 6:00 p.m. If your child is enrolled in half day K2, K3, or VPK, class is from 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

We follow the Broward County School Board calendar, except for: start/closing dates which may vary. We are open on Jewish Holidays and Teacher Planning days. We are closed the two weeks of winter break and one week of spring break, you will not be charged for those weeks. Regarding weather related emergencies, we follow the recommendations of the Broward County School Board.

VPK Students: Voluntary Pre-kindergarten (VPK) is a state-funded program with strict guidelines pertaining to attendance and tardiness. Your child must be in class on time daily. Class time is 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Excessive tardiness and absenteeism may result in dismissal from the program. Your child misses valuable instructional time and classroom experience when they miss class. VPK students are only allowed 3 absences per month. More than 3 absences a month, will require a doctor's note to return to preschool.

VPK requires a parent/guardian to print their full name and full signature (first and last name) on a "Long Form" on the first day of the entering month. This is for attendance data and will be brought to you in car line to sign during the appropriate days.

Illnesses: If a child is showing signs of illness, you will be notified at a telephone number(s) provided to us. You must have set arrangements for pick-up no more than one hour from the phone call. In case of an emergency, parents and paramedics will be called. You agree NOT to bring your child to school if they are showing any signs of illness. You agree to keep your child out of school for a minimum of 24 hours after signs of illness. Please note, this means that your child must be free of fever, vomiting, and diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school. This is for the comfort of your child and the general health of all students and staff. Please provide a doctor's note authorizing your child is free of illness, if they are absent 3 or more consecutive days. The director reserves the right to accept the child back in attendance despite the doctor's note. Please notify the school, (954) 983-3516, to inform us of your child's illness as soon as possible.

Head Lice – Return to School Policy

If your child has been diagnosed with head lice or nits (lice eggs), it is important to treat your child before they return to school. It is our policy to exclude your child from attendance at school until your child is free of lice and nits. Please report to the office to verify they are nit and lice free.

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Emergency Care Plan for Medical Concerns, including Allergies

If your child has any medical conditions, including but not limited to, chronic illnesses or allergies (such as: needing an Epi-Pen) requiring medical interventions, please be advised that **you are required to provide** Epworth United Methodist Preschool, **with a written Emergency Care Plan.**

This Emergency Care Plan can be written by the parent/legal guardian or your child's physician. It must include: diagnosis, describe symptoms/indications when medical intervention is needed, explain the proper steps to care for your child if a medical emergency should arise relating to your child's medical condition or allergies and signature of parent/legal guardian and/or physician completing the Emergency Care Plan.

Medication: Prescription and Non-Prescription

No medication shall be given by Epworth United Methodist Preschool Staff without the signed permission of the parent or legal guardian. All medication must be in the original container with the child's name, name of the physician, medication name, and medication directions written on the label.

Non-prescription medication brought in by the parent or legal guardian can only be dispensed if there is a written and signed authorization form from the parent or legal guardian to do so.

Medication which has expired or is no longer being administered shall be returned to the parent or legal guardian.

The Authorization for Prescription and Non-prescription Medication Form is located in the school office. Medication must be kept in the office. Please **DO NOT** leave medicine in your child's lunchbox or backpack.

Health Records

Upon registering my child, I understand I need to have complete Medical Records.

Medical records needed for my child are:

**Physical (statement of Good Health, free of communicable disease) Form 3040

**Immunizations (current up to date vaccination records) Form 680 with EXPIRATION DATE filled in or notification from the doctor in writing stating child is not physically able to receive vaccination at the present time

I understand that my child will not be able to attend Epworth United Methodist Preschool until all medical records are completed and submitted, prior to their start date. In addition, medical records must be maintained up to date. If your child's medical records expire, your child will not be able to attend school until the medical records are updated and submitted. The office staff will notify you when your child needs updated medical forms.

Please note, Epworth United Methodist Preschool does accept children who are not fully vaccinated due to medical reasons or religious beliefs with an exemption form from the Health Department or Doctor's office.

Please notify us of any allergies in writing on the registration packet. All allergies will be posted in the classroom for all staff members to see.

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Accidents, Injuries, First Aid

We work hard to ensure that your child is in a safe environment, however, accidents do happen. If your child is slightly injured during the day, such as, a scraped knee, stubbed toe, small cut, bumped head, bite, etc., our staff is equipped to provide first aid to the child. In these cases, you will receive a written and signed accident/incident report from our staff to inform you about what occurred. The original report must stay in the preschool's office.

It is at the discretion of the facility if they feel the injury is more than slight and requires notification to the parent via phone call. In the case of serious accidents or medical emergencies, 911 is dialed immediately for the care and protection of the child. Parents/guardians are notified immediately in case of an emergency. Licensing will be notified of the accident, injury, or medical emergency if hospitalization or emergency treatment is necessary.

Biting is Common

“Biting is quite common among young children. It happens for different reasons with different children and under different circumstances.” Please read the article entitled, “Biting Hurts” included in this Handbook. We work quickly and efficiently with our parents to resolve biting issues.

Excessive biting will result in suspension or termination from our program.

Backpacks, Lunch, and Nap Items

All students should bring a labeled FULL-SIZED backpack and water bottle to school every day. In this backpack, provide a full change of clothes, including underwear and socks in case of an accident. Please note that clothing that is soiled with stool, blood, vomit will be thrown out. Any other soiled clothing will be placed in a plastic bag. Please do not send in toys or other items from home. Please check your child's backpack daily for correspondence from teachers, administration, and any items of clothing that may have been soiled.

Children who stay a FULL DAY will have a naptime. It is a licensing requirement and part of a healthy child's development to provide young children with rest or sleep period after lunch. They are not required to sleep but must lie quietly and relax.

Please label and send a crib sheet, pillow, and blanket **ALL IN A LABELED ZIPPERED/SEALED BAG**. Please bring this on the first day of the week, it will go home on Friday for you to launder. If an accident occurs, the nap items will be sent home to be washed. Also provide a lunchbox, labeled with your child's name. Please provide foods which do not require warming.

In addition to the above items, K2 students will require several changes of clothing, extra underwear, socks, diapers, diaper cream, and wipes. If your child is potty training, also provide an extra pair of Crocs. Your child's teacher will notify you, either on a daily record sheet or verbally, if your child is running low on necessary items. Please replace any items needed no later than the next business day.

Please LABEL all of your child's belongings.

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Clothing

Please send your child to school in clothing that gives them freedom to move. Closed-toe and rubber-soled shoes are best. They will have lots of activity throughout the day. This can help prevent accidents. Please be mindful of the weather and dress your child accordingly.

Epworth United Methodist Preschool has T-shirts and Sweatshirts for sale. They are to be worn on designated Chapel days.

Toys From Home

Please do not bring toys from home. Epworth United Methodist Preschool is not responsible for lost, broken, or stolen items in school.

Student Drop Off/Pick Up

When dropping off/picking up your child, please stay in your car and join the car line. Epworth Preschool staff will unload/load your child in your car. No children will be released to parents walking up.

Please place car line tag visibly on your dashboard. This allows us to see which child is going in the car. This dismissal procedure was put in place to keep all students safe and to keep the car line moving.

Early dismissals, please park your vehicle in a designated parking spot and walk to the office. We will retrieve your child for you. We will release your child only to those you have designated on your registration form. A picture ID will be required for pick up. Please call us at (954) 983-3516 or stop by the office if you need to make changes to your registration form. Be prepared to give us the password you indicated on the registration form.

Please do not leave valuables in your vehicles. Epworth United Methodist Preschool is not held responsible for any lost, stolen items, or damages to personal property and/or vehicles. Please be aware that daycares, preschools, and schools are a target for car break-ins.

Please notify us in writing or via telephone if a person not listed on the enrollment form will be picking up your child. They will be asked for your password. A picture ID must be presented. Your child will NOT be released without your authorization and the above information.

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Custody

If there is an issue with custody, we must have a notarized court order on file outlining the custody arrangements.

Communication

Epworth United Methodist Preschool uses an app called “Remind.” Remind is a free messaging app that allows us to communicate quickly and efficiently. This is a great tool for regular reminders, upcoming events, and emergencies.

Please download the Remind app. Enter code: @7b42ad

In case of an emergency warranting evacuation, Epworth United Methodist Preschool will send information regarding the emergency and reunification procedures through the Remind App. Please be aware that it is your responsibility to download the Remind App. There is also a monthly calendar that provides reminders of upcoming events. It will be in your child’s backpack.

Epworth United Methodist Preschool also has a Facebook page, Instagram, and website, epworthpreschoolfl.com, where you can see information about events and view pictures of all the fun and learning your children are having while in our care.

K2 classes will provide a daily record sheet providing you with an overview of your child’s day. This will include daily activities and diapering/bathroom use throughout the day. Please look for this sheet daily, as it will let you know how your child’s day went and may also inform you of any items that are needed.

In addition, feel free to talk with or send a note in to the teachers and share any praises or concerns. If there is a need for any issues to be discussed in depth, please schedule a conference with your child’s teacher and/or the Director at any time.

Please check your child’s backpack daily for correspondence from teachers and administration.

Classroom Assignment

Placement of a child in a classroom is determined by age, developmental level, and availability. While we do accept input from parents about room assignments, it is at the Director’s discretion to make the final classroom assignment.

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Fees and Payments

Tuition Payments K2 & K3 Half Day

K2 and K3 Classes Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Your child's monthly tuition of \$400.00 is due the **FIRST OF EACH MONTH**. There will be no reduction, refunds, or credits made on the weekly tuition for absences, illnesses, vacations, emergencies/weather related emergencies, holiday closings or dismissal from school. All balances must be paid in full before withdrawing your child. There is a \$10.00 late fee for payments NOT received by the 5th of the Month.

The total tuition for the school year is \$4,000.00 payable in ten monthly installments of \$400.00. Payments begin in August and end after the payment for May. You understand and accept responsibility for the total yearly tuition of \$4,000.00 for your child.

A student with two months tuition in the arrears will not be accepted in school until the tuition is current.

Weekly Tuition Payments Full Day

K2 and K3 Classes Monday – Friday, care available 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Your child's weekly tuition of \$200.00 is due on **MONDAYS OF EACH WEEK**. There will be no reduction, refunds, or credits made on the weekly tuition for absences, illnesses, vacations, emergencies/weather related emergencies, holiday closings or dismissal from school. All balances must be paid in full before withdrawing your child. There is a \$10.00 late fee for payments NOT received on Mondays.

The total tuition for the school year is \$7,600.00 payable in 38 weekly installments of \$200.00. Payments begin in August and end in June. You understand and accept responsibility for the yearly tuition of \$7,600.00 for your child.

A student with two weeks tuition in the arrears will not be accepted in school until the tuition is current.

VPK Weekly Wrap-Around Care Tuition

Your child's VPK hours are 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. There is a weekly tuition of \$125.00 for the additional hours of 7:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Your child's VPK weekly wrap-around care tuition of \$125.00 is due on **MONDAYS OF EACH WEEK**. There will be no reduction, refunds, or credits made on the weekly tuition for absences, illnesses, vacations, emergencies/weather related emergencies, holiday closings or dismissal from school. All balances must be paid in full before withdrawing your child. There is a \$10.00 late fee for payments NOT received on Mondays.

The total tuition for the school year is \$4,750.00 payable in 38 weekly installments of \$125.00. Payments begin in August and end in June. You understand and accept responsibility for the yearly tuition of \$4,750.00 for your child.

A student with two weeks tuition in the arrears will not be accepted in school until the tuition is current.

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Summer Camp

Summer camp is available beginning the Monday after the last day of the academic school year until the week before school starts. Please check with the office for exact dates as these may vary. There is a \$50.00 registration fee for both FULL DAY or HALF DAY summer camp. FULL DAY summer camp hours are 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. for a tuition fee of \$200.00 a week. HALF DAY summer camp hours are 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. for a tuition fee of \$100.00 a week. Tuition is due on MONDAYS OF EACH WEEK. You are only responsible to pay tuition for the weeks that your child attends. There are NO DAILY RATES.

Other Fees

*Registration Fee for K2 and K3 only: \$150.00

This registration fee is nonrefundable. Application forms will not be processed until this fee has been paid.

*Activity Fee for All Students: \$100.00

This fee shall be paid upon registration. This covers all activities and on-site field trips for the school year. *This fee is optional for VPK students, if you would like them to participate in all activities and on-site field trips throughout the school year, please pay the \$100.00 activity fee.*

*Late Pick-Up Fee Full Day: Our center closes promptly at 6:00 p.m. There is a fee of \$1.00 per minute if you pick your child up after 6:00 p.m. Please note that excessive late pick-ups may result in expulsion from our center.

*Late Pick-Up Fee Half Day: There will be a fee of \$1.00 per minute if you pick up your child after 12:10 p.m. Please note that excessive late pick-ups may result in expulsion from our center.

* Non-Sufficient Fund Fee: \$25.00, if funds are not available, the tuition fee and non-sufficient fund fee must be paid in cash for the total amount due at that time. Please note that failure to promptly provide tuition may result in expulsion from our center.

Payments are preferred through Tuition Express utilizing Automated ACH Transactions, electronic payment. Payments are also accepted in cash, check, or money order. Please use the payment envelope provided to you and place payments in your child's backpack. Receipts will be returned in the envelope as well. Payments may also be given directly to staff.

Nutrition Policy

In accordance with the Broward County Child Care Ordinance, parents and the child care facility are urged to work cooperatively to assure that children are provided with nutritious snacks and meals where lunches are not provided by the facility.

	Breakfast	Mid-Morning Snack	Lunch	Mid-Afternoon Snack
Epworth Preschool		X		X
Parent/Guardian	X		X	

X indicates who provides the snacks/meals.

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Please note the following:

1. Epworth United Methodist staff cannot warm up food.
2. We are a nut free school. No nuts or nut products please.
3. All items for classroom events must be store bought.
4. I agree if my child has a food allergy, I will provide a snack/meal replacement for my child.

Please notify us of any allergies in writing on the registration packet. All allergies will be posted in the classroom for all staff members to see.

Emergency Preparedness Plan and Procedures

Fire Drills

Fire drills are mandatory by law and conducted monthly to prepare the children should an emergency situation arise. Our school has a fire alarm system and fire extinguishers. Each classroom has two fire exit routes posted. Each class will be escorted by the staff through the appropriate exits onto the playground or designated area. Staff will take their attendance records with them and count the children. Attendance will be taken again once they are in their designated area to make sure all children are accounted for. No one can enter the building until a final sweep and clearance has been completed. Then entrance to the building will be allowed.

In Case of Severe Weather/Hurricane Emergency Closings

Epworth United Methodist Preschool follows the Broward County School Board recommendations for severe weather/hurricane emergency closings. For example, if Broward County Public Schools are closed due to impending severe weather, we will also be closed. Please stay informed via news outlets regarding school closures and the Remind App.

Lockdowns

In case of a threat to Epworth United Methodist Preschool or a nearby facility, the local law enforcement will be contacted and a lock-down will occur. During a lockdown, all exterior doors will remain locked. Attendance will be taken and a head count will occur to verify that each child is accounted for. No one can enter or exit the building until the appropriate authorities have stated that it is safe to do so.

Evacuations

Should an evacuation be needed, due to an emergency warranting staff and children to be relocated to an off-campus site, each classroom will follow the evacuation route to Fletcher Park (7900 Johnson St., Pembroke Pines, FL 33024, Please see map at the end of the handbook). Emergency personnel will be contacted immediately. Staff will take the designated route to Fletcher Park (posted in the classroom). Staff will take their attendance records with them and count the children. Attendance will again be taken once they are in their designated area to make sure all children are accounted for. You will be notified through the Remind App with information regarding reuniting with your child. Re-entry to the facility will be cleared by the appropriate emergency personnel. **Please download the Remind App and enter code: @7b42ad.** It is your responsibility to have the Remind App.

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Riyla Wilson Act

Pursuant to s. 39.604, Florida Statutes, a child from birth to the age of school entry, who is under court-ordered protective supervision or in out-of-home care and is enrolled in an early education or child care program must attend the program 5 days a week unless the court grants an exemption. A child enrolled in an early education or child care program who meets the requirements of this act may not be withdrawn from the program without prior written approval of the Department or community-based care lead agency. If a child covered by this act is absent, the program shall report any unexcused absence or seven excused absences to the Department or the community-based care lead agency by the end of the business day following the unexcused absence or seventh consecutive excused absence.

Please read the **Riyla Wilson Act** Flyer that is attached in this Epworth United Methodist Preschool Handbook.

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Epworth United Methodist Preschool Handbook Acknowledgement

I have read, understand, and agree to the policies that Epworth United Methodist Preschool has put in place in the Parent Handbook. I agree to follow these rules, policies, and procedures. I understand that failure to abide by Epworth United Methodist Preschool's policies and procedures may result in my child's enrollment termination. Disregard of the policies can include, but are not limited to: ignoring state licensing rules and regulations; not keeping your account current; not following our sick child policy, etc.

Above all, Epworth United Methodist Preschool reserves the right to maintain a safe, loving, and nurturing environment for the children. Our goal is to build a relationship between home and school, to foster the importance of family involvement throughout your child's educational journey.

Please sign the Handbook Acknowledgment page which is included in the Registration Packet.

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Rilya Wilson Act

Pursuant to s. 39.604, Florida Statutes, a child from birth to the age of school entry, who is under court-ordered protective supervision or in out-of-home care and is enrolled in an early education or child care program must attend the program 5 days a week unless the court grants an exemption. A child enrolled in an early education or child care program who meets the requirements of this act may not be withdrawn from the program without prior written approval of the Department or community-based care lead agency. If a child covered by this act is absent, the program shall report any unexcused absence or seven excused absences to the Department or the community-based care lead agency by the end of the business day following the unexcused absence or seventh consecutive excused absence.

Educational stability and transition are key components of this act to minimize disruptions, secure attachments and maintain stable relationships with supportive caregivers of children from birth to school age. Successful partnerships are imperative to ensure that these attachments are not disrupted due to placement in out-of-home care or subsequent changes in out-of-home placement. A child must be allowed to remain in the child care or early education setting that he/she attended before entry into out-of-home care, unless the program is not in the best interest of the child. If a child from birth to school-age leaves a child care or early education program, a transition plan needs to be developed that involves cooperation and sharing of information among all persons involved, respects the child's developmental stage and associated psychological needs, and allows for a gradual transition from one setting to another.

This law provides priority for child care services for specified children who are at risk of abuse, neglect, or abandonment. *These children are also known as Protective Services children.*

Rilya Wilson Act Requirements:

- Protective services children **MUST** be enrolled to participate 5 days per week.
- Protective services children **MAY NOT** be withdrawn without prior written approval from the Department of Children and Families (DCF) or Community Based Care (CBC).
- If a Protective Services child has 7 consecutive excused or any unexcused absence, the child care provider **MUST** notify the appropriate community based care staff.
- The Department and child care providers **MUST** follow local protocols set up by the CBC to ensure continuity.
- If it is not in the best interest of the child to remain at the child care or early education program, the caregiver **MUST** work with the Case Manager, Guardian Ad Litem, child care and educational staff, and educational surrogate, if one has been appointed, to determine the best setting for the child.

Community-Based Care Lead Agencies Contact Information:

<https://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/community-based-care/docs/leadagencycontacts.pdf>

**** If you have concerns regarding any child that you may care for, please contact the Florida Abuse Hotline at 1-800-96-ABUSE****

STRATEGIES FOR FAMILIES

Ouch!

Biting Hurts

Biting by infants, toddlers, and two-year olds is a typical behavior. As children gain language, self-control, and problem-solving skills, they usually outgrow it. Yet, biting is often upsetting to families; understanding the whys and how to support your child is the first step in responding appropriately.



Why do young children bite?

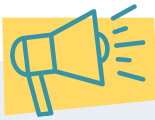
- Relieve teething pain
- Explore cause and effect
- Experience the biting sensation
- Satisfy oral-motor stimulation
- Develop self-control and problem solving skills
- Lack of verbal language skills
- Communicate or express needs or difficult feelings and emotions
- Feel strong and in control
- Imitate other children and adults
- Act in self-defense
- Get attention

How do I prevent biting?

- **Understand your toddler's development.** Have age-appropriate expectations for your child's behavior based on his or her current skills and abilities.
- **Be consistent.** Keep your child's schedule, routines, and transitions predictable and consistent, especially at meal and bedtime.
- **Provide multi-sensory play experiences.** Offer activities and materials that allow your child to relax and release tension (e.g. yoga, deep breathing, playdough, foam balls, bubbles, soft music).
- **Provide items to mouth or bite,** such as teething rings or access to their pacifier. This helps children learn what they can bite safely, without hurting anyone else.
- **Talk about biting.** Read books together about biting, like "*No Biting*" by Karen Katz and "*Teeth Are Not for Biting*" by Elizabeth Verdick, watch shows, like Daniel Tiger, and sing songs that support alternative behaviors.
- **Support language development.** Model language with your child, giving him/her the words they need in the moment, like "Say 'I want a banana'" or "Tell him 'I don't like that.'"
- **Offer gentle guidance.** Use and encourage language to help your child develop self-control. Offer gentle reminders, phrased in a way that tells them what behaviors you expect.
- **Validate their feelings and emotions.** Being a toddler is hard! Use emotional language, like "You are so mad that you cannot have a cookie" and "I see that you do not want to be buckled. You are upset. Being buckled keeps you safe." Validate your child's feelings--responding with love, reassurance, and acceptance.

Supporting Your Child's Biting Behaviors

Biting by infants, toddlers, and two-year olds is a typical behavior. As children gain language, self-control, and problem-solving skills, they usually outgrow it. Yet, biting is often upsetting to families; understanding the "whys" and how to support your child is the first step in responding appropriately.



Why Children Bite

- Relieve teething pain
- Explore cause and effect
- Experience the biting sensation
- Satisfy oral-motor stimulation
- Develop self-control and problem solving skills
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Age & Development

Biting happens for different reasons and at different ages. Understanding your child's development and having age-appropriate expectations for your child's behavior based on their current skills and abilities helps parents provide the matching response when biting occurs.



Infants explore the world around them with their hands, eyes, and mouths; but babies often need help to learn what they should and shouldn't bite through calm and clear messages, like "No bite" and/or redirection.



Toddlers have many strong emotions they are just learning to manage. They may bite to express anger or frustration; they often lack language skills to express their feelings. With toddlers, the focus is on providing consistent limits while supporting the development of the missing skills, like language.

Child Care Resource and Referral Network
Powered by CHILD CARE ANSWERS

317-236-2727

Jb took your ball, and you felt angry. You bit Jb. I can't let you hurt Jb. No biting. Next time, tell Jb "That's mine!"



1. Move quickly to the scene and get down to children's level.
2. Respond to the child who did the biting. In a serious, firm tone make a strong statement. Help the child follow through on the choice if necessary.
3. Respond to the bitten child; Offer words or actions showing comfort. Perform first aid if needed. The child who bit can help comfort the bitten child, if both agree. Help the bitten child find something to do.
4. Follow up with the child who did the biting. Maintain eye contact. Use simple words in a calm, firm tone of voice. Find out what led to the incident. Restate the rule and model "feelings" words. Discuss how he can respond in the future.

No biting. Biting hurts. I can't let you hurt Ava. You can help make Ava feel better, or you can sit quietly until I can talk with you.

I'm sorry you're hurt. Let's get ice.

If baby takes an experimental bite on mom's breast or dad's shoulder, stay calm and use clear signals to communicate it's not okay for one person to bite another. A firm "no" or "no biting" is appropriate. Remove baby from the breast or briefly put baby down.

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Helping your child overcome biting

Young children bite--simply because of stage of development that they are in. Some infants and toddlers causally explore biting while others learn quickly that biting "works" for them.

Observe your child to see the situations where biting occurs most frequently. When we know when and where biting might occur, we can begin preventing it from happening.

Pay attention to signals. Stay close and step in if your child seems ready to bite.

Provide language supports. Help your child communicate wants and needs, giving them the words to use in the given situation ("no," "stop," or "that's mine").

Have **age-appropriate behavioral expectations.** Is your child's behavior typical for their age group?

Reinforce positive behaviors by acknowledging your child's appropriate words and actions. Provide opportunities for your child to practice skills like turn taking and gentle touches, making choices, and doing things independently.

Offer a **sensory-rich environment**, including texture-diverse foods, hands-on play materials, and items to chew and mouth. Consider delaying the removal of a pacifier until your child has the verbal and social skills problem solve without biting (closer to age 3).

Prevention. Creating environments that prevent biting behaviors before they begin.

Understand your toddler's development. Have age-appropriate expectations for your child's behavior based on his or her current skills and abilities.

Be consistent. Keep your child's schedule, routines, and transitions predictable and consistent, especially at meal and bedtime.

Provide multi-sensory play experiences. Offer activities and materials that allow your child to relax and release tension (e.g. yoga, deep breathing, playdough, foam balls, bubbles, soft music).

Provide items to mouth or bite, such as teething rings or access to their pacifier. This helps children learn what they can bite safely, without hurting anyone else.

Talk about biting. Read books together about biting, like "No Biting" by Karen Katz and "Teeth Are Not for Biting" by Elizabeth Verdick, watch shows, like Daniel Tiger, and sing songs that support alternative behaviors.

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Offer gentle guidance. Use and encourage language to help your child develop self-control. Offer gentle reminders, phrased in a way that tells them what behaviors you expect.

Validate their feelings and emotions. Being a toddler is hard! Use emotional language, like "You are so mad that you cannot have a cookie" and "I see that you do not want to be buckled. You are upset. Being buckled keeps you safe." Validate your child's feelings--responding with love, reassurance, and acceptance.

What should I NOT do?

- Label a child as a "biter"
- Bite back
- Get angry, yell, or shame
- Give too much attention after a child bites
- Force a child who bit to say sorry
- Punish a child who bites

Adapted from the National Association for the Education of Young Children



Next Steps

- Track developmental milestones for your child's age
- Record when your child tries to bite
- Consult with your pediatrician or our Family Support Specialist by scanning the QR code.

 CHILD CARE ANSWERS

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Parent's Role

A parent's role in quality child care is vital:

- Inquire about the qualifications and experience of child care staff, as well as staff turnover.
- Know the facility's policies and procedures.
- Communicate directly with caregivers.
- Visit and observe the facility.
- Participate in special activities, meetings, and conferences.
- Talk to your child about their daily experiences in child care.
- Arrange alternate care for your child when they are sick.
- Familiarize yourself with the child care standards used to license the child care facility.

Quality Child Care

Quality child care offers healthy, social, and educational experiences under qualified supervision in a safe, nurturing, and stimulating environment. Children in these settings participate in daily, age-appropriate activities that help develop essential skills, build independence and instill self-respect. When evaluating the quality of a child care setting, you should consider the facility's quality indicators related to activities, caregivers, and environment.

Quality Activities

- Activities are children initiated and teacher facilitated.
- Activities include social exchanges with all children.

Quality Caregivers

- Caregivers are friendly and eager to care for children.
- Caregivers accept family cultural and ethnic differences.

Quality Environments

- Environments are clean, safe, inviting, comfortable, and child-friendly.
- Environments provide easy access to age-appropriate toys.

www.myflfamilies.com/childcare



For additional information, please visit www.myflfamilies.com/childcare or contact your local licensing office.

This brochure was created by the Department of Children and Families in consultation with the Department of Health.

KNOW YOUR CHILD CARE FACILITY

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Know Your Child Care Facility - General Requirements

Every licensed child care facility must meet the minimum state child care licensing standards pursuant to s. 402.305, F.S., and ch. 65C-22, F.A.C., which include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Valid license posted for parents to see.
- All staff appropriately screened.
- Maintain appropriate transportation practices (if transportation is provided).
- Provide parents with written disciplinary and expulsion practices used by the facility.
- Provide access to the facility during normal hours of operation.
- Maintain minimum staff-to-child ratios.

Health Related Requirements

Emergency procedures that include:

- Posting Florida Abuse Hotline number along with other emergency numbers.
- Staff trained in first aid and pediatric cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) on the premises at all times.
- Fully stocked first aid kit.
- A working fire extinguisher and documented monthly fire drills with children and staff.
- Medication and hazardous materials are inaccessible and out of children's reach.

Ratios



Age of Child	Child: Teacher Ratio
Infant	4:1
1 year old	6:1
2 year old	11:1
3 year old	15:1
4 year old	20:1
5 year old and up	25:1

Training Requirements

- 40-hour introductory child care training.
- 10-hour in-service training annually.
- 0.5 continuing education unit of approved training or 5 clock hours of training in early literacy and language development.
- Director Credential for all facility directors.

Food and Nutrition

Post a meal and snack menu that provides daily nutritional needs of the children (if meals are provided).

Record Keeping

Maintain accurate records that include:

- Children's health exam/immunization record.
- Medication records.
- Enrollment information.
- Personnel records.
- Daily attendance.
- Accidents and incidents.
- Parental permission for field trips and administration of medications.

Physical Environment

- Maintain sufficient usable indoor floor space for playing, working, and napping.
- Provide space that is clean and free of litter and other hazards.
- Provide sufficient outdoor play area.
- Maintain sufficient lighting and inside temperatures.
- Equipped with age and developmentally appropriate toys.
- Provide appropriate bathroom facilities and other furnishings.
- Provide isolation area for children who become ill.
- Practice proper hand washing, toileting, and diapering activities.



To report suspected or actual cases of child abuse or neglect, call the Florida Abuse Hotline 1.800.962.2873

EVACUATION ROUTE to FLETCHER PARK

Administration will stop traffic between intersection and crosswalk.

EPWORTH PRESCHOOL
7651 Johnson St.
Hollywood, FL 33024



FLETCHER PARK
7900 Johnson St.
Pembroke Pines, FL 33024