



# PARENT HANDBOOK

# TENDER YEARS, INC. CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTERS

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Tender Years, Inc. reserves the right to revise fees and/or policies upon written notification to the parents. Your center director will explain the services offered

# MISSION STATEMENT

At Tender Years, Inc., our mission is to provide families with the highest quality child care and early childhood education programs within a comfortable, clean and safe environment; and to care for children and their families as if they were our own.

## EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Tender Years, Inc. is a family owned and operated, private corporation. We understand the needs of the families in Central Pennsylvania. We pride ourselves in our family-like environment and personalized customer service. It is our top priority to make sure that the families and staff at our centers feel like part of our family! Our center is your “home away from home.”

Tender Years’ very own ACE Customized Curriculum is Adaptive to your child’s needs, Coordinated with local school districts, and focused on the Essentials that will help your child succeed in both school and life. Unlike nationally implemented curriculums taught by the big franchises, our curriculum is designed around the specific educational and developmental needs of our local communities and school districts.

**Adaptive.** Your child is unique... The Tender Years A.C.E. Customized Curriculum is rooted in established Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards and then tailored to each classroom. Teachers at Tender Years consider your child’s needs and learning style as they adapt and optimize each lesson.

**Coordinated.** Your school district matters... We coordinate lesson plans with your local school district. By taking the district’s education plan into account, we can better prepare your child for school within the district. And while your child is attending both school and Tender Years, we actively reinforce the lessons your child is learning at school.

**Essentials.** Your child is growing in many ways... At Tender Years, we don’t just prepare your child for school. We help prepare him or her for life. The ACE Customized Curriculum focuses on five essential areas for present and future success: Social, Emotional, Creative, Cognitive, and Physical.

Our teachers\* prepare lesson plans based on their knowledge, experience, and research. Each objective and planned activity within our curriculum is “cross-walked” with the PA State Early Learning Standards and designed to enhance valuable skills. Literacy is supported through reading, storytelling, language building, letter recognition and phonetics. As your child is preparing for Kindergarten, we will work with him/her on writing skills. Fine and gross motor skills are developed through a variety of strengthening exercises. Sensory awareness is gained through tactile play. Arts and crafts, music, and pretend play inspire creativity, expression, and imagination. Cognitive skills develop through science experiments, and math/number games (working with shapes, sorting,

graphing, counting practice, etc.). It is our educational philosophy that children learn best through a variety of experiences, including PLAY! We provide many academic based activities, as well as, plenty of time for self-directed play in the many “centers”, or interest areas in the classrooms. The children participate in several enrichment activities as part of our Tender Years Academy Program. These activities include: Spanish language, music instruction, science, and American Sign Language.

Your child’s education is also a partnership between the teachers, parents, and the child. Children’s interests and individual needs will be considered when designing lesson plans, and feedback from parents through scheduled activities (such as Meet the Teacher Night), questionnaires, and shared observations/evaluations all play an important role in your child’s academic achievement.

Ultimately, the opportunities provided here at Tender Years, Inc. Child Development Centers, the loving and nurturing “family environment”, and our personalized curriculum will allow for each individual child to develop a positive self-concept and to build upon their own strengths. Upon completion of our programs at Tender Years, Inc., children will be prepared not only for their future in academics, but will be assured of success in all areas of their lives.

*\*Preschool, Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten and Summer Camp teachers hold current PA Department of Education approved teacher certification*

## KEYSTONE STARS

Tender Years, Inc. participates in Pennsylvania’s Keystone STARS Program and is striving to attain a four star designation. STARS stands for Standards, Training/ Professional Development, Assistance, Resources, and Support.

Keystone STARS is:

- Pennsylvania’s program to promote continuous quality improvement in early learning and school age environments.
  - Quality environments help children to develop in ways that foster success in schools and life.
- An initiative with the research-based Performance Standards as its foundation.
  - The standards are tiered in levels that range from Start with STARS to STAR 4.
- An important part of Pennsylvania’s growing early learning system.
  - Keystone STARS works with DHS certified programs, family providers, school-aged programs, Head Start, school districts, and accrediting bodies.
- A valuable tool to increase parental and community awareness of the importance of quality early learning.
  - Keystone STARS is an easily recognizable indication that a program is working on continuous quality improvement.
- A state program that receives public funding.

Tender Years requests copies of any Individualized Education Plan/Individualized Family Service Plan that may be in place for any student. Tender Years, Inc. is an inclusive center, and as such, we support all programs designed to assist a child and their family with special needs. Social, mental health, educational, developmental, and medical services can be recommended as appropriate. We are also willing to participate in IEP meetings.

## ADMISSION ENROLLMENT POLICY

Tender Years, Inc. welcomes children from (6) six weeks to (12) twelve years of age. Our Tender Years program offers a DHS licensed program for infants through toddlers or age 3. Our Tenders Years Academy program offers PA Department of Education accredited Preschool, Prekindergarten and Kindergarten. We also offer Before and After School programs and Summer Camps for school aged children. We are currently participants in the Keystone Stars Program.

Prior to each child's enrollment, all paperwork must be completed and on file at Tender Years, Inc. These forms include the following: Emergency Contact/Parental Consent Form, Tuition Agreement Form, and Child Health Appraisal. Completion of these forms ensures your child's safety and is necessary in order to comply with Pennsylvania state regulations.

Children will be accepted into the program depending on available space. If there is no space in your child's age group, you will be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list. Children are accepted into the program on a first come, first serve basis.

Applications for enrollment at Tender Years, Inc. are accepted without regards to race, religion, color, sex, or national origin. We follow the guidelines of the (ADA) American With Disabilities Act.

For families seeking assistance paying for child care, Tender Years, Inc. participates with ChildCare Aware of America. This organization helps families find programs through a variety of sources including government programs, Military/DoD programs, discounts and more. For more information, visit [ChildCareAware.org](http://ChildCareAware.org).

### **Hershey Center:**

Tender Years, Inc. will accept applications for enrollment from The Hershey Company Employees first, in order of priority, prior to accepting a public enrollment application. If the center is at capacity, two waiting lists will be created. One for The Hershey Company employees, the other for the general public. Any opening for enrollment within a particular age group will first be offered to The Hershey Company employee, in order of listed priority, before the opening is offered to anyone on the public's waiting list.

# DAILY SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES/CURRICULUM

Tender Years' ACE Customized Curriculum is based on the PA Early Learning Standards, while also providing our qualified teachers with the flexibility to adapt daily lesson plans to best meet the needs of their students. In each classroom (Infants-School Age), you will find Learning Standards posters for your reference, or you can visit [www.pakeys.org/pages/get.aspx?page=Career\\_Standards](http://www.pakeys.org/pages/get.aspx?page=Career_Standards) for more information. All of the weekly lesson plans will reflect activities that are linked directly to these standards.

We provide the children with a variety of play and learning activities every day. The teachers in your child's classroom will keep you informed about the activities and events planned for the class.

Along with this Handbook you will receive a Parent Packet, which includes a sample schedule for your child's age group, a letter introducing your child's teachers, and a list of materials you will need to bring in for your child.

As part of our schedule we take the children outdoors daily, even in winter. Outdoor play allows children to strengthen their motor skills and provides a change of atmosphere and fresh air. We feel temperatures between 25 and 90 degrees Fahrenheit are suitable for outdoor play. Our outdoor play periods are shorter at lower/higher temperatures. Please provide your child with the proper seasonal clothing, and the proper shoes for outdoor play. During cold weather, we request that families send gloves, hats, and warm coats. If a child cannot participate in the daily routine, they should not be in attendance that particular day.

The need for naps varies with each individual child. Some children find a quiet rest time essential each day. If a child is unable to sleep, they are still encouraged to rest. After a very active morning with the other children, most children benefit from a brief resting period. Toddlers, Preschool, and Prekindergarten children are provided with cots to rest on during nap time. Nap time is scheduled following lunch. Families must supply a crib sheet and blanket, or sleeping bag marked with the child's name. These items will be sent home for laundering each week.

## TENDER YEARS, INC. PROGRAMS

All Programs at Tender Years (Infants-School Age) follow an educational curriculum which meets the Keystone Stars guidelines & PA Early Learning Standards.

### **Infant:**

At Tender Years, we separate our infants into three individual sections of the nursery. This allows the teachers to provide developmentally appropriate activities, routines and care to children in their group. Transitioning from one section to another is determined based on each child's individual development.

Daily routines are primarily determined by the parents. Parents are asked to submit a written schedule upon enrollment as a guideline for staff to establish an individual routine for each child. A daily sheet is sent home detailing your child's day. Each morning the parents are asked to provide information about their child's night and morning.

We ask that parents bring in labeled, plastic bottles (with mixed formula or breast milk), ready to serve. We prefer the use of disposable diapers; however, we can allow the use of cloth diapers as long as the parent provides an individual diaper pail and liner for collection.

Staff/Infant Ratio is 1/4.

### **Toddler:**

The Tender Years Toddler program is grouped into four separate sections, which include 2 younger toddler classrooms, and 2 older toddler classrooms. The children are placed in the appropriate section based on their birth date and developmental level.

In our Toddler program, the children follow an age appropriate daily routine based on the PA Early Learning Standards. Their routine includes one nap after lunch. Potty training is introduced at age two or upon parent request. A daily sheet is sent home detailing each child's day. Staff/Young Toddler Ratio is 1/5 and Staff/Older Toddler Ratio is 1/6.

## **TENDER YEARS, INC. ACADEMY PROGRAMS**

In addition to a full curriculum based on the PA Early Learning Standards, the Tender Years Academy offers several extracurricular subjects taught by expert teachers such as Spanish Language, Sign Language, and Science.

### **Preschool:**

Tender Years Academy Preschool is taught by a PA Department of Education certified teacher. Our Preschool program welcomes children ages 3 to 4 who are potty trained. Preschool is an introduction to the academic setting and we begin building a strong foundation in letter recognition, phonemic awareness, counting skills, and social skills such as sharing and working together in a group. Staff/Child Preschool Ratio is 1:10.

### **Prekindergarten/Junior Summer Camp:**

Tender Years Academy Prekindergarten is taught by a PA Department of Education certified teacher. Our Prekindergarten program welcomes children ages 4 to 5 who are potty trained. Prekindergarten prepares your child for their Kindergarten year and their future in the elementary school setting. Our focus is on social skills as well as letter recognition, phonemic awareness, writing skills, and math skills (including 1:1 correspondence, counting, shapes and patterns).

After Prekindergarten graduation in June, our Junior Summer Camp provides a variety of educational and recreational activities for your school bound student. This program includes: fun learning themes, regular field trips, special visitors,



sports and recreational activities, swimming or water play, cooking activities, and crafts. Staff/Child Prekindergarten & Junior Summer Camp Ratio is 1:10.

**Kindergarten/Kindergarten Enrichment:**

Tender Years Academy Kindergarten is a private, academic Kindergarten program and accepts children who are 5 years of age, or children who are ready for Kindergarten but may have missed the Kindergarten cut-off date for the public school system (the child must be 4 years, 7 months as of the first day of Kindergarten in our program). Tender Years Academy Kindergarten is licensed by the PA Dept. of Education and the teacher maintains PA teaching certification. Our curriculum follows the Kindergarten Early Learning Standards. A licensed Kindergarten program is offered in the mornings at the Camp Hill and Hershey centers. Kindergarten Enrichment is offered in the afternoon at all centers.

Kindergarten Enrichment is for public school Kindergartners that would like to continue their day with enrichment and learning activities. Students enrolled in our Kindergarten enrichment program will continue their work with word wall words, journaling, math and reading activities. They will participate in our Tender Years Academy Spanish Club, Science and Sign Language program (as available), and have time to play outside. Kindergarten Enrichment is offered at all of our locations. The Kindergarten/Kindergarten Enrichment Staff/Child Ratio is 1:12.

**Before & After School Enrichment Program:**

The Tender Years Academy Before and After School programs are led by our certified Kindergarten teachers. The public school bus picks them up and takes them to school in the morning, and will drop them off at our doorstep in the afternoon\*. Upon arrival in the afternoon, the children are offered a snack, and will receive assistance with their homework or school assignments upon request. Recreational activities and outside play are offered daily on our large age appropriate playground. Before and After School Staff/Child Ratio is 1:12.

\*We currently offer public school transportation from West Creek Hills Elementary School (East Pennsboro School District), Hershey Early Childhood Center, Hershey Elementary School (Derry Township School District), and Silver Spring Elementary School (Cumberland Valley School District).

**Summer Camp:**

Tender Years Academy Summer Camp is offered for all students who have completed Kindergarten and are at least 5 years of age. Summer Camp provides a variety of educational and recreational activities for your school aged child. The program includes fun learning themes, regular field trips, special visitors, sports and recreational activities, swimming or water play, cooking activities, and crafts. Summer Camp Staff/Child Ratio is 1:12.

## SUPERVISION POLICY

It is Tender Years' policy that children on the facility premises (including outdoor play spaces) and on facility excursions off the premises shall be supervised by a staff person at all times. Tender Years staff members follow the four critical points that define

supervision: the ability to see, hear, assess, and direct the activities of the students in their care.

Each staff person is assigned the responsibility for supervision of specific children, known as their primary care group. The staff person shall know the names and whereabouts of the children in his/her primary care group and shall be physically present with the children in his/her group at all times.

Staff members count children in their whole group and primary care groups when transitioning into different classrooms or outdoor play spaces.

Tender Years does not offer transportation, with the exception of field trips during our Summer Camp programs. Transportation for our Summer Camp programs is contracted through a third-party bus company.

## CHILD/STAFF RATIOS

The number of adults that must be present in the center and/or in the classroom is established by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services regulations for childcare. Our program meets or exceeds these ratios. The requirements are as follows:

Staff/Infant .....	1/4
Staff/Toddler (up to 24 months).....	1/5
Staff/Older Toddler (up to 36 months).....	1/6
Staff/Preschool .....	1/10
Staff/Prekindergarten .....	1/10
Staff/Kindergarten .....	1/12
Staff/Before & After School .....	1/12

We also utilize volunteers and student teachers in our program. These individuals are not counted as part of our child/ staff ratio.

## LICENSING

Tender Years, Inc. is licensed by the Department of Human Services in accordance with the childcare regulations established by the state of Pennsylvania. In addition, the Preschool, Prekindergarten, and Kindergarten programs are licensed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. A copy of our current licenses and/or certificates of compliance are posted in the lobby. All centers are active participants in the Keystone STARS program. The child care center regulations can be found online by searching, "PA Code 3270, Child Care Centers". The central region childcare certification office can be contacted by calling 1-800-222-2117.

## FEES

All families will sign a written Tuition Agreement prior to the child's attendance at Tender Years, which will specify the tuition amount for the care of your child(ren).

Tuition and other payments for service are processed electronically. You will have the option to elect weekly or monthly tuition payments, which will be debited to the bank account you provide. Weekly payments are processed each Wednesday for the following week and monthly payments are processed on the 1st of each month. Checks submitted for payment of services, will be processed electronically upon receipt. Late payments are subject to a \$10 late payment fee. Failure to pay tuition will result in the termination of care for your child(ren).

The weekly tuition fee is due regardless of whether the center is open or your child(ren) attends. Fees are not prorated for child(ren)'s absence or for days that the center is closed, and part-time schedules cannot be adjusted to compensate for these situations.

**Registration Fee**

A new student registration fee and your first week's tuition will be due upon initial enrollment. A re-enrollment fee, or returning student registration fee, will be collected to secure your spot for the upcoming school year in the Spring of each year. Registration fees are non-refundable.

**Academy Fee**

An annual Academy fee is charged to all families enrolled in our Certified Preschool, Prekindergarten and Kindergarten Enrichment programs. This fee is due in addition to the registration fee and should be paid upon initial enrollment and upon re-enrollment for the next school year. Academy fees are non-refundable. The Academy fee covers the cost of our supplemental subjects such as Spanish Language, Sign Language, and Science.

**Returned Check Fee**

Tender Years, Inc. will charge \$25.00 on all electronic payments or checks that are returned to us from our bank. If we receive two or more returned checks from your account, we will only accept a certified check, money order or cash for all future tuition payments.

**Late Pick-Up Fees**

Tender Years, Inc. charges a late pickup fee of \$10.00 beginning at 6:01 p.m., and \$10 for each additional (15) fifteen minutes late, per child. The late fee will be drafted from the bank account designated on your electronic payment form. If no bank account is on file, the amount payable is due upon arrival. The late pick-up fee does not constitute an agreement to provide after-hours service. Regular late pick-ups may result in termination of service.

**Payment of Fees During Program Closings**

There is no adjustment to the weekly fee due when the program is closed for a holiday, weather condition, or an emergency. Additionally, schedules for children with part-time attendance cannot be adjusted to compensate for program closings.

**Vacation**

Each child is eligible for one (1) week of vacation at half tuition after (6) six months of enrollment per calendar year. These weeks cannot be broken down into individual days - they must be taken as a full week.

## **Referral Program**

When a Tender Years family refers another family to enroll at Tender Years the referring family will receive one week of free tuition for (1) one child. There is no limit to the number of free weeks you can earn. The new family must be enrolled for 30 days before you will receive your free week.

## **Sibling Discount:**

10% off lowest priced child.

# **DAYS AND HOURS OF OPERATION**

The hours of operation are Monday through Friday, as follows:

Camp Hill: 7:00 a.m. to 5:45 p.m.

Hershey: 7:00 a.m. to 5:45 p.m.

Mechanicsburg: 7:00 a.m. to 5:45 p.m.

Children may not be dropped off any earlier than the opening time and must be picked up prior to closing time. While some of our staff report for duty earlier than opening time, they are strictly forbidden from allowing families or children access to the facility until the center opens. Families who have not picked up children by the exact closing time are considered to be late. Late pick-up fees will apply in all cases where children remain in our care after close. Late pick-up fees are discussed in the Fee Section of this Handbook.

# **SCHOOL CALENDAR AND CLOSINGS**

Tender Years, Inc. Child Development Centers are closed on the following 10 days: New Years Day, MLK Day (In-service day - staff training), President's Day (In-service day - staff training), Memorial Day, Independence Day (Fourth of July), Labor Day, Columbus Day (In-service day - staff training), Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day. There is no reduction in tuition for holidays. If a holiday falls on a Saturday, Tender Years, Inc. will close on Friday. If a holiday falls on a Sunday, Tender Years, Inc. will close on Monday. There may be times when the program is closed due to severe weather conditions or other emergency situations.

## **Severe Weather Conditions:**

In the event of severe weather conditions, Tender Years, Inc. will generally follow local school districts to help us in determining whether or not to close our centers. Families are instructed to call your center (Camp Hill: 717-761-7113, Hershey: 717-533-1466; Mechanicsburg: 717-590-7050), or you can visit our website: [www.TenderYearsPA.com](http://www.TenderYearsPA.com), or our Facebook page [www.facebook.com/TenderYearsPA](http://www.facebook.com/TenderYearsPA) for a message explaining closing and delays at least one hour prior to opening. If the center must close after children arrive, parents will be notified by telephone to pick up their children. There is no reduction in tuition for center closings. You can also visit our website for up-to-date Urgent News.

**Other Emergencies:**

Other emergency situations, including but not limited to: electrical power failure, lack of water, lack of heat or air conditioning, hazardous road conditions, or other situations which may endanger the safety or health of children and employees, may result in Tender Years, Inc. being closed. Families will be notified by telephone if these conditions occur while your child is in attendance. If we are required to relocate the children to another location you will be advised as to where your child can be picked up. Each center has an up-to-date Emergency Operations Plan. Please ask your center director for a copy if you wish to review our current plan.

## ARRIVAL AT CENTER

Center hours are listed above (see Days and Hours of Operation). Although staff members may be present before opening time they are strictly forbidden to allow children into the Center until the designated opening time. All children must be accompanied by an adult when they arrive. Children are to be present with an adult while being brought to their classroom (or designated drop-off classroom), and the adult will need to sign in by indicating the time the child arrived. Children must be signed out by a parent or parent-designated adult before leaving for the day. Also, children must be signed out by an adult any time they leave the building, and signed back in upon their return. Please note that children will only be released to persons listed on the Emergency Contact/Parental Consent form, or only to those specified with written notification from a parent or legal guardian.

Families are permitted to park in the center parking lots behind the entrance, in the designated parking area for the purpose of dropping off children. An adult must accompany the child from the vehicle into the Center. We ask that for their safety, children should not be left unattended in vehicles during dropoff and pickup. In addition, we ask that you please not leave your cars running in the parking lot.

**Notification When Child Will Be Absent**

Families should call the Center whenever a child is not going to attend. Families should notify the center director between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m.

## DEPARTURE FROM CENTER

All children must be picked up before the center's closing time (see Days and Hours of Operation). As outlined above, children will only be released to persons listed on the Emergency Contact/Parental Consent form, or only to those specified with written notification from a parent or legal guardian. Please note the following:

- We require the names and telephone numbers of any adults who may pick up a child.
- Under no circumstances will we release your child to anyone who is not listed on the Emergency Contact/Parental Consent form or has not been authorized by a parent/legal guardian in writing.
- Any changes or updates to your Emergency Contact/Parental Consent form must be done by completing a new form. The form is available at

[www.TenderYearsPa.com/parent-resources/documents](http://www.TenderYearsPa.com/parent-resources/documents). We cannot permit a change in information, or the addition or deletion of a designated adult, by phone.

- Children will not be released to anyone under the age of 18.
- Any adult who picks up your child will be asked to provide positive photo identification to the staff. If the individual does not have photo identification we will not be able to release the child to them.

The designated adult will be required to sign the child out indicating the time the child was released from our care. Once the child has been released we require that the adult and the child promptly leave the Center. We will not be responsible for children once they have been released from our care, and we discourage families from lingering on our premises after the child has been released.

Parking is provided at each center for adults who are picking up a child. Please advise the adult who is picking up your child where they can park.

Anyone who picks up a child is required to have the age/weight appropriate car seat in their vehicle. We are required to report incidents where children are not in car seats to the police and/or children's protective services.

If your child is covered by a Custody or Court Order, the Director will need to receive a copy of the Order. We will only abide by the specific terms of the order. We cannot take instructions from you to violate the terms of a Court Order. If the Court Order changes you must provide us with a new copy so we can abide by the new terms.

Parents who have visitation rights are only permitted to be at the center during the visitation period established in the Court Order. We will not allow parents with visitation-only rights to be at the center for any reason other than those specified in the Order. Please be advised that we will not accept the responsibility of supervising a visitation, therefore we cannot allow supervised visitation to take place at our facilities.

Be advised that we cannot release a child to anyone who appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. We will contact the police in circumstances where, in our judgment, the individual who has come to pick up the child appears to be under the influence. We will contact another parent/legal guardian or designated adult to make alternate pick up arrangements. We are also required to report these incidents to children's protective services.

## CLOTHING & NAPTIME ITEMS

Our curriculum includes inside and outside active playtime and floor exercises, so we strongly recommend that the children be dressed in comfortable play clothes. Young children are prone to accidents and spills, so please leave an extra set of weather appropriate clothing at the center.

It is also important that children are dressed in clothing that they can manage.

When it is age appropriate, the child should be able to use the toilet without requiring staff assistance and be able to dress for the outdoors.

Children will need clothing and shoes that are suitable for outside play and for the weather. When it is cold they will need warm coats, gloves, hats and boots. In warm weather, you may wish to provide hats or other protective clothing. Tender Years will apply sunscreen when parents provide the sunscreen to be used and give permission for staff to apply it.

We want to keep every child safe while they attend our program. Therefore, we request families observe the following rules about clothing and attire:

- Children should not wear clothing that has stringed hoods that can be a strangling hazard.
- Children should not wear jewelry such as rings, beads or earrings that can fall off and become a choking hazard.
- Children should not wear necklaces, bracelets or other chains that can be a strangling hazard.
- Children should not wear beaded clothing or hair beads because of a possible choking hazard.

Parents are asked to provide naptime items. Please provide a crib sheet and blanket (or small sleeping bag/crib sheet and blanket for toddlers and older children) for your child to use at nap time. We ask our parents to take home naptime items used on a weekly basis to be laundered.

## CLASSROOM MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES

From time to time, families will be asked to provide materials from home for arts and crafts activities in the classroom. We encourage children to learn about recycling and repurposing items. Donations of paper and materials are welcome.

### **Toys From Home**

We ask that you leave your child's toys at home or in your car. If an item is brought to the center, we cannot be responsible for it during its time here. If toys are brought in for "show and tell", the toy must be shared with others and it must have the child's name on it. We appreciate occasional special books and DVDs for curriculum enhancement. Please leave toy guns, war toys, and other toys of destruction at home. These items do not belong in our centers.

## MEALS, USDA APPROVED SNACKS, AND BEVERAGES

Tender Years, Inc. provides a nutritious breakfast to all children arriving at the center prior to 9 a.m. If your child has any dietary restrictions and/or food allergies, you will be asked to complete that area on the Emergency Contact/Parental Consent form. Parents have the option to either pack a lunch or purchase

a nutritious lunch provided by an outside catering company. The breakfast and catered lunch menu is available on our website. Parents take turns on a rotating basis, providing a nutritious afternoon snack. Monthly afternoon snack menus will be handed out by your child's teacher indicating when it is your turn to provide afternoon snack.

Families are required to observe the following rules about food and beverages:

- Beverages provided for snacks must be in a sealed, non-breakable container. Positively no glass or open containers will be allowed.
- Snacks should be nutritious and low in sugar. Families should avoid providing cookies and candy for snacks.
- Please provide food that children can eat on their own (i.e. finger foods)
- Peanut butter is not provided at our program due to the significant number of children with peanut allergies. Parents are asked to avoid items containing peanuts or tree nuts due to these allergy concerns. Classrooms may post certain allergy-free zones when a child with a severe food allergy is present in the program.
- Families are required to label bottles for infants with the child's name. All bottles are to be placed in the refrigerator by the family when the child arrives.
- Families are to remove all bottles when the child leaves each day.
- Food items in lunchboxes should be labeled, and refrigerated in the appropriate area if necessary. Lunches cannot be heated for safety reasons. Please pack ready-to-eat lunches.

## FIELD TRIPS

Tender Years, Inc. does not use field trips as a regular part of our Infant, Toddler, Preschool, or Prekindergarten curriculum. Any field trip is a special occurrence and the details will be discussed with families well in advance of the trip.

Our Junior Summer Camp and Summer Camp regularly schedule field trips as part of their program. Also, our Kindergarten classes may schedule a field trip on occasion. Camp students will be required to wear a Tender Years t-shirt (provided as part of the program).

Children on field trips are transported by a licensed school bus. There is a limited amount of space on each bus for adults and these seats are occupied by our staff. Families are encouraged to join us on our field trips; however, you may be required to provide your own transportation to the field trip destination if space is not available on the bus.

We do not permit children who are not enrolled with us to participate in field trips.



# BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE

All children have periods of time when their behavior is not appropriate for the classroom setting. Although inappropriate behavior is undesirable, it is part of the normal developmental process. Teachers attempt to deal with unwanted behavior by utilizing standard acceptable practices in the early childhood education setting. Our staff will advise you if your child's behavior becomes problematic. The staff will offer suggestions for methods of working together to correct the undesirable behavior so that a degree of consistency is achieved both at home and in the classroom.

From time to time, a child's behavior may require that we suspend the child from the classroom. In those instances, the family member will be consulted and options will be discussed to correct the behavior problem.

We may consider dismissal for a child who presents a direct threat to the safety of other children, the staff, or themselves. We carefully consider each situation to determine if the dismissal would violate the child's rights. Your child may be affected by the behavior of another child. The staff will advise you if there is any accident or injury, however, we cannot discuss another child or their behavior with you because of the child's and the family's right to privacy.

Tender Years, Inc.'s behavior and discipline policies and procedures are guided by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Education Policy Statement on Expulsion and Suspension Policies in Early Childhood Settings. For more information and further resources, please visit: <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/school-discipline/index.html>.

## BITING

If you are enrolling a toddler you will need to be aware that some toddlers go through a "biting phase." Although biting is undesirable, this is a typical toddler behavior. Often, everyone overreacts to biting, and the overreaction to it fuels the toddler's inclination to keep biting.

Usually, toddler's bite impulsively, as a result of overwhelming feelings that he/she has not yet learned to master. For example, the toddler is developmentally unable to verbally express himself, "I want that toy" or "I don't want you to go away, I want you to stay with me". And so, he bites his peer to get a reaction. Often, biting in toddlers is a result of oral sensations that the child finds pleasurable. The following steps are taken by our staff to avoid overreaction, which leads to more biting:

- Stop the child quietly, and say, "I don't like that" (without overreaction).
- Put the child down in a safe place and walk away (ignoring a behavior is the ultimate in limiting a toddler's behavior).
- Quietly say, "When you bite, it hurts your friend".
- Comfort the biter and the child that was bitten. Both feel overwhelmed by the behavior.
- Offer a safe object for the child to bite on, particularly if the child is teething.

In order to protect the privacy rights of our children we will not release information to any family member regarding the identity of a child involved in a biting incident. However, we will advise you of your child's involvement in such an incident through a standard incident report. Please do not ask our staff to violate another child's privacy rights by asking who bit your child, or who your child bit.

We may consider dismissal of children who become habitual biters and who present a direct threat to the safety of other children. We will carefully consider each situation and determine if the dismissal would violate the child's rights. While we understand the biting incident may have been traumatic for you and your child, we can not acquiesce to demands of dismissal of a child who bites your child.

If you have questions or concerns we will be glad to discuss this matter further, or supply you with information to help you better understand the toddler developmental stages.

## FAMILY AND TEACHER CONFERENCES

Classroom staff will keep families up-to-date on the child's progress and interests during informal conversations during drop-off and pick-up times. Your child(ren)'s teacher will complete formal assessments of your child periodically throughout the school year and offer a Family and Teacher Conference to share the results of the assessment, other information, or any concerns that we may have. There may be other times that a teacher will request a formal conference with the family to address an issue of particular concern. Likewise, if a parent has a concern that they would like to discuss in a formal conference with the classroom staff, they should notify the Director who will schedule the conference as soon as possible.

## FAMILY PARTICIPATION

Family members are welcome to volunteer in our program from time to time. We use volunteers in the classroom and for special events. All volunteers must have current volunteer clearance. Clearance can be obtained at <http://www.KeepKidSafe.pa.gov/resources/clearances/index.htm> If you have an interest in volunteering, please speak to your Center Director. Tender Years, Inc. will not permit parents who are subject to a Custody Order to volunteer at times that do not fall within their visitation periods as specified in the Custody Order.

## PARENT NEWSLETTER

A Director's newsletter or individual classroom newsletters are written monthly. These letters provide you with information concerning the center and its activities, as well as special events. In addition, memos may be sent out in your child's cubbies or posted in the center lobby or parent information board. Please visit our website, [www.TenderYearsPA.com](http://www.TenderYearsPA.com) for reminders. Please complete an email request form if you'd like electronic messages sent to you directly.

# HEALTH ISSUES

The following practices, with the help of our professional cleaning service, minimize the spread of germs: Children are taught to wash their hands after using the bathroom and before eating. Staff members wash hands after each diaper change/toileting a child, after coming in to contact with any bodily fluid, and prior to handling food. Changing areas and eating areas are disinfected after each use. Toys are routinely sanitized. We are continually cleaning all surfaces.

## **Enrollment Health Appraisal:**

All children who are enrolled in Tender Years, Inc, must have a health appraisal completed by a qualified medical professional within 60 days of starting any program. Families will be provided with a Health Appraisal form when the child is accepted into the program. The PA DHS regulations for childcare require an updated Health Appraisal every 6 months for Infants and Young Toddlers and an annual updated Health Appraisal for Older Toddlers through School Age.

## **Immunizations:**

All children who are attending Tender Years, Inc. must have current immunizations as prescribed by the American Academy of Pediatrics unless medically exempt. Families with religious or strong beliefs against immunizations need to submit a statement in writing as to why their child does not receive immunizations. Families with questions or concerns about the Health Appraisal or Immunizations should contact the Director.

## **Illness:**

Tender Years, Inc. does not have the capability of providing care for sick children. Families should not bring children to the Center when they are ill. Childcare staff will deny care to any child who arrives exhibiting symptoms of illness such as fever, vomiting or diarrhea. Children may be excluded from care until they are symptom free for 24 hours or until a qualified health care professional notifies the program, in writing, that the child may resume attendance.

## **Exclusion & Fever Policy:**

Exclusion is recommended and the parent must be notified to come and pick up their child when:

- The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities as determined by the staff of the child care program.
- The illness results in a greater need for care than the staff of the program determine they can provide without compromising their ability to care for other children.
- The child has any of the following conditions, unless a health professional determines the child's condition does not require exclusion:
  - Fever of 100°F axillary (under the arm) with behavior change or other signs and symptoms (such as sore throat, rash, vomiting/diarrhea). A temperature of 100°F axillary in a child 4 months or younger should be medically evaluated (an infant younger than 2 months with a fever should seek medical attention within an hour).

- Diarrhea - stool that cannot be contained by a diaper or controlled by a toilet trained child.
- Vomiting more than 2 times in the previous 24 hours.
- Abdominal pain that continues for more than 2 hours.
- Mouth sores with drooling.
- Rash with fever or behavioral changes.
- Pink or red conjunctiva
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has been started. Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment has been started.
- Head lice or nits, until after the first treatment and the child is nit-free.
- Appears to be severely ill.
- Respiratory distress

### **Dispensing Medication:**

Child care centers, licensed by the Pennsylvania Department Of Human Services, ARE NOT REQUIRED to administer medication to the enrolled children. Tender Years, Inc. does administer medications to enrolled children for the convenience of the parents. However, in order for the medication to be administered to the child, Tender Years must have the FULL cooperation of parents in regard to the following policies for administering medicines to the children.

1. Only the Director, or a staff member designated by the Director, shall administer medication.
2. Each child must have a completed medication log. A log can be obtained from the center Director or your child's teacher. If the medication log is not completed completely and correctly, we will not be able to administer the medication.
3. Medication cannot be stored at the center overnight. Please take the medication home each evening.
4. Any medication, prescription or not, must be in its original container.
5. Parents must supply the medicine spoon, dropper, or cup for measuring and dispensing. Please label these items.
6. Written instructions for administering prescription medicines must be provided by a physician (prescription must be included).
7. Non-prescription (OTC) medications must include the dosage amounts for the age and/or weight of the child on the label. Otherwise, the medication must be by prescription only.
8. Tender Years will only administer one medication once per day.
9. Tylenol, Motrin, or other pain/fever reducing medications will only be given for the discomfort from teething and shots with a prescription from a physician. We cannot administer these types of medications to reduce a fever or pain, as this will mask symptoms that may indicate a more serious illness.

### **Health Insurance:**

Families are responsible for providing their own medical insurance for their child. We require that families provide the health insurance coverage information on the child's Emergency Contact/Parental Consent form. Families are responsible for reporting health insurance changes/updates to the Center Director, which will be maintained in the child's file.

**Incident Reports:**

Tender Years, Inc. notifies parents of all injuries by providing detailed incident reports. Our staff strives to maintain a safe and happy environment at all times.

## SAFETY AND EMERGENCY EVACUATION

Tender Years, Inc. strives to keep every child safe while they are in attendance. The entrance to each center is locked at all times. Each center has a security system in place. Each family will have their own access code or key fob to gain access to the center throughout the day. Anyone without an access code or key will need to ring the bell at the front door to gain access to the building. A staff member will greet the party at the door and will only allow appropriate visitors to enter. If a staff member is not familiar with the person at the door, or is unsure of their business at the center, they will be questioned before they are admitted to the center and escorted to their destination. Tender Years will deny access to any party that is determined to not have appropriate business at the center.

Tender Years, Inc. has regular fire drills in accordance with state law. We also have drills for other emergency situations. Please ask your center director if you wish to review the Emergency Operations Plan.

In the event of an actual emergency, the children and staff will be relocated to specified locations. Families will be notified that the children have been relocated and should report to that location to pick up their child. If the nature of the emergency does not allow us to relocate the children, families are asked to comply with the instructions of emergency personnel.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

The individual dignity of children, families, and employees will be respected and protected at all times in accordance with the law. Information about children, families, or employees will not be divulged to anyone other than persons who are authorized to receive such information. This policy extends to both internal and external disclosure.

Staff members are not permitted to give a family any information about another child or family in the program. This includes even those situations that appear evident, such as discussing why a child uses a wheelchair. Staff may not discuss a matter about another child with you. This would also include information about an incident in which your child was involved. Please do not put a staff member in the position where they may violate policy and be subject to disciplinary action by asking for any information about another child or family.

Tender Years, Inc. will only release information about your child with your express written consent. If you want records provided to another facility or school you must sign a request form from the receiving institution before we can provide the information.

Staff members are also strictly prohibited from discussing information about another staff member. For example, there may be a time when an employee is absent from the center. This could be due to a serious health condition or even termination. Staff may not discuss this information with you. Appropriate information about staffing will be communicated to you through the center's Director. Our staff is trained regularly about confidentiality. We will do everything to protect your child's and family's right to privacy and we ask that you respect the rights of others.

## REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Our staff is required by state law to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect. Staff who fail to make a report of suspected abuse or neglect are subject to disciplinary action, including termination, and may also be subject to criminal prosecution.

Our staff is trained regularly about abuse and neglect and their obligation to report suspected abuse or neglect.

Staff are not permitted to discuss their suspicions with a family or to disclose that a report was made. Reports of suspected child abuse or neglect are made to Childline & Abuse Registry 800-932-0313. If you have questions or concerns about this policy please contact the Director.

## FAMILY CODE OF CONDUCT

We believe that people are individuals who have differences. It is the role of every person at Tender Years, Inc. to treat staff, families, and children with respect and dignity. We expect that all adults in our program settings conduct themselves in the following manner:

- With courtesy,
- With respect,
- With patience,
- By dressing appropriately,
- By treating people the way you want to be treated,
- By modeling how we want our children to treat others, and
- By acknowledging and celebrating the cultures and practices of other people and families. Under no circumstances will the following behaviors be allowed:
  - Physical or verbal punishment of children,
  - Threats to staff or parents/guardians,
  - Swearing and cursing,
  - Smoking,
  - Quarreling, verbal fighting, raising of voices with other staff or parents/guardians,
  - Violating safety practices,

- Bringing drugs, alcohol, or weapons to centers or events, and
- Violation of any program policy.

If the any of the above prohibited above behaviors occur, the offender will be asked (privately if possible) by a staff person to stop the inappropriate behavior. If the offender continues to engage in the prohibited behavior, they will be asked to leave the premises immediately. A Tender Years staff member will call the police if necessary. Tender Years, Inc. reserves the right to terminate service to any family who violates this Code of Conduct.

## SUSPENSION/EXPULSION POLICY

Unfortunately, there are sometimes reasons we have to ask that a child be removed from our program either on a short term or permanent basis. We want you to know we will do everything possible to work with the family of the child(ren) in order to prevent this policy from being enforced.

### **When a Child Is Having a Problem In The Classroom:**

- Staff will try to redirect child from negative behavior.
- Staff will reassess classroom environment, appropriateness of activities, supervision.
- Staff will always use positive methods and language while disciplining children.
- Staff will praise appropriate behaviors.
- Staff will consistently apply consequences for rules.
- Child will be given verbal warnings.
- Child's disruptive behavior will be documented and maintained in confidentiality.
- Parent/guardian will be notified verbally.
- Parent/guardian will be given written copies of the disruptive behaviors that might lead to expulsion.
- The director, classroom staff and parent/guardian will have a conference(s) to discuss how to promote positive behaviors.
- The parent will be given literature or other resources regarding methods of improving behavior.
- Recommendation of evaluation by professional consultation, such as Early Childhood Mental Health.
- Recommendation of evaluation by Intermediate Services/Early Intervention Services.
- Ages and Stages Questionnaires completed by teachers and given to parents to complete and return.
- Parent completes request for services forms as needed.

### **Schedule of Expulsion:**

- If after the remedial actions above have not worked, the child's parent/guardian will be advised verbally and in writing about the child's or parent's behavior warranting an expulsion. An expulsion action is meant to be a period of time so that the parent/guardian may work on the child's behavior or to come to an agreement with the school.

- The parent/guardian will be informed regarding the length of the expulsion policy.
- The parent/guardian will be informed about the expected behavioral changes, or supports, required in order for the child or parent to return to the school.

**Parental Actions For Child’s Expulsion:**

- Failure to pay/habitual lateness in payment.
- Failure to complete required forms including the child’s immunization records.
- Refusal or failure to complete forms requesting community services such as Early Childhood Mental Health, Intermediate Unit/Early Intervention.

**Child’s Actions For Expulsion:**

- Failure of child to adjust after a reasonable amount of time.
- Uncontrollable tantrums/angry outbursts.
- Ongoing physical abuse to staff or other children.
- Unable to toilet train in our three-year-old program.
- Continued display of safety concerns, such as: running out of classroom or away from the group.

## TERMINATION OF SERVICE

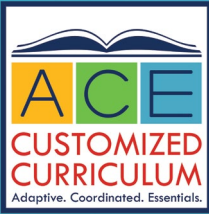
Families are required to provide three weeks written notice of their intention to withdraw their child from the program. If the family fails to provide the three week notice they will be obligated for the fees for that three week period, unless we are able to fill the child’s slot before the expiration of the three weeks. In that case, the fee due will be prorated to include only those days when the slot was empty.

Tender Years, Inc. reserves the right to terminate service at any time to any family for failure to pay the fees as outlined in the Tuition Agreement.

Tender Years, Inc. further reserves the right to terminate service at any time, and without notice, to any family who violates program policy.

If you have questions about this policy please contact the Director.





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& Tender Years Corporate Office  
(717) 761-7113

Tender Years Hershey  
(717) 533-1466

Tender Years Mechanicsburg  
(717) 590-7050