



Corning
Children's Center

Inspiring learners, leaders and dreamers since 1980



Parent Handbook 2009 - 10

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107 Arthur Street
Corning, NY 14830
607-937-5502

www.corningchildrenscenter.com

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Corning Children's Center 607-937-5502 Fast Facts



Location

107 Arthur Street, Corning, NY
1 block north of Corning Museum of Glass

Directions

From the corner of Centerway (Route 414) and E. Pulteney Street,
turn west onto Pulteney,
first right (before Citgo) onto Townley Avenue.
then left onto Arthur Street
and right into Corning Children's Center parking area.

Fast Facts

Ages: 6 weeks to 5 years

Hours: Monday – Friday, 6:45 am – 6:15 pm

Year Round

Licensed: New York State

Accredited: Middle States Commission on Elementary Schools

Holidays 2009 - 2010 - Corning Children's Center will be CLOSED on:

Staff Development Day	Wednesday, November 11, 2009
Thanksgiving Holiday	Thursday, November 26, 2009 Friday, November 27, 2009
Winter Holiday	Thursday, December 24, 2009 Friday, December 25, 2009
New Year's Day	Friday, January 1, 2010
Staff Development Day	Friday, April 2, 2010
Memorial Day	Monday, May 31, 2010
Independence Day	Monday, July 5, 2010
Staff Development Day	Friday, September 3, 2010
Labor Day	Monday, September 6, 2010
Staff Development Day	Thursday, November 11, 2010
Thanksgiving Holiday	Thursday, November 25, 2010 Friday, November 26, 2010
Winter Holiday	Thursday, December 23, 2010 Friday, December 24, 2010
New Year's	Friday, December 31, 2010



Weather-related closing or delay - We notify radio stations:

WCLI (1450 AM)

WINK (106.1 FM)

WCBA (98.7FM)

WSKG (91.1 FM)

Delays and closures are rare for us!

PLEASE CALL THE CENTER BY 9:00 AM IF YOUR CHILD WILL BE LATE OR ABSENT. Please call your child's classroom, or to leave a message before we open: **937-5502 x101.**



Welcome to Corning Children's Center!

We look forward to getting to know you and your child. We realize that choosing care for your child is a very important decision, and we appreciate the confidence you place in us by selecting Corning Children's Center as your child's home away from home. We strive to provide high quality, loving care for children and their families.

Under the leadership of an energetic Board of Directors and with the vision and support of Corning Incorporated, Corning Children's Center has been offering high quality care and early education to the children of our community since 1980. In the ensuing years we have grown considerably and in July 2009 moved to our beautiful, state-of-the-art home, built and maintained by Corning Enterprises.

This handbook will introduce you to Corning Children's Center— our philosophy, policies and activities. In it we offer information that will help you work with us to provide the best care possible. This is, however, only an introduction. If you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions or need additional information, we encourage you to ask any of our dedicated staff.

Thank you for choosing Corning Children's Center. We look forward to learning, growing and playing together.

Cordially,

The Corning Children's Center Staff



Who We Are



Our Mission

Corning Children's Center sets the standard in early care and education by inspiring learners, leaders and dreamers.



Our Values

High Quality Child Care and Early Education

- Utilizing developmentally appropriate practices which are informed by current research
- Developing, transferring and retaining staff knowledge to sustain high levels of care and education
- Retaining trained and committed staff
- Fostering and nurturing each child's growth
- Creating an environment that encourages staff to explore, grow and learn

Active Learning

- Protecting each child's right to play and discover the world in a safe, nurturing and stimulating environment
- Exposing children and staff to a wider world with rich and varied programming
- Encouraging children to try new things and fostering their individuality

Family Partnerships

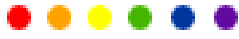
- Meeting the unique needs of individual families
- Developing Center-family partnerships
- Creating a sense of community

Diversity

- Embracing our common humanity
- Learning about differences
- Encouraging respect
- Maintaining a commitment to socio-economic diversity

Collaboration

- Seeking opportunities with individuals, businesses and organizations to expand resources
- Advocating for children and families



About Corning Children's Center

Established in 1980 to serve families throughout the greater Corning area, Corning Children's Center is a not-for-profit organization that provides high quality care and education for infants, toddlers and preschoolers (ages 6 weeks to 5 years). Our Center has a strong sense of community, and the environment we provide for children is positive, gentle, warm, diverse, inclusive, creative, stimulating, genuine – one that recognizes and appreciates the uniqueness of each child.

We also serve as a training site for college and high school students who are pursuing studies in early childhood education.



Accreditation

The Center is proud to have been one of the first Early Childhood programs to be accredited by the Middle States Commission on Elementary Education. The Middle States Commission grants accreditation to institutions that:

- Focus on the development of the whole child
- Are devoted to their mission
- Examine their vision of services to children, family, and community
- Meet Middle States' rigorous standards
- Demonstrate commitment to continuous improvement
- Engage in strategic planning
- Accept objective evaluation
- Seek validation by a recognized authority
- Demonstrate continuing capacity to increase the quality of learning experiences.



Who We Serve

The Center serves approximately one hundred and forty children from six weeks to five years of age. We are open to the public and give priority placement to:

- families who work for Corning Incorporated (up to 50% of enrolled families)
- siblings of children currently enrolled
- children of our staff.

Children in our programs are grouped by age, using the same cutoff day as schools in New York use, December 1st.



Our Curriculum

At the Center we believe that our job as teachers requires us to be *both* caregivers *and* educators. Research supports our belief that children are best able to grow and learn when they can freely explore a world in which they feel cared for and safe. Hence caring and security form the foundation of both the care we provide and the curriculum we create and deliver. A child's beginning weeks with us are devoted to building relationships and developing trust. This is the caregiver's role.

As educators we foster exploration and understanding of the world, so our curriculum planning focuses on expanding the child's knowledge and experiences in the world. We believe it is important to provide a rich array of experiences that develop children's skills and knowledge and stimulate their imagination. Programming is deliberate, purposeful, developmentally appropriate and individualized.

We believe that this combination of nurturance and stimulation will lead children to make friends, explore and learn about their world, have fun and ultimately develop their full potential as they grow toward independence with openness to the world and learning.

Each classroom team works together to develop weekly plans which reflect the interests and developmental needs of the children in their room. Staff members plan activities which are designed to help children grow in all developmental areas: physical, social/emotional, creative and cognitive. They also work with the Age Level Specialist to assure that their plans are developmentally appropriate and reflect current knowledge in the field of Early Childhood Education.

Each classroom is responsible for developing a weekly newsletter which keeps parents informed about happenings in the classroom and includes lesson plans for the coming week.

Continuity of Care and Traditional Classrooms

Corning Children's Center was the first in the area to offer *continuity of care* as an option for families. This enables children to stay with the same classmates and primary caregivers every year, from the time they enter the Center through their Preschool year. For their final PreKindergarten (PreK) year, children leave their primary caregivers and gain practice in moving to a new classroom and making new friends within the context of a safe, familiar



environment. Many parents find that this consistency over time gives their children a sense of comfort and stability as they form bonds with friends and caregivers who become like an extension of their family. Our continuity of caregiving option was developed in response to the increasing body of research demonstrating the many positive results of firm, sustained attachments in a child's early years.

Because we know that continuity of care is not right for all families or all staff, we also offer a more traditional approach, in which children move to new rooms as they reach milestone birthdays at 18 months and three years of age. Some families believe that making such transitions a part of their children's lives early on helps to prepare them for the changes they will encounter when they enter school.

Both approaches can be valuable for children. At Corning Children's Center, we are happy to be able to offer families a choice.

In our **Continuity of Caregiving** rooms, there are four age groups:

- Infant 6 weeks to approx. 12 months old
- Young Toddler approx. 12 to 24 months
- Older Toddler approx 24 to 36 months
- Preschool 3 and 4 years old

In our **Traditional** classrooms, there are three age groups:

- Infant 6 weeks to 18 months
- Toddler 18 months to 3 years
- Preschool 3 and 4 years old

In our **Pre-K** rooms, 4- and 5-year-olds get ready to enter kindergarten the following fall.



Visiting Artists

The Center offers a program that provides the children with an opportunity to experience fine arts in their classroom. Practicing artists are scheduled for four to six week sessions to share their art. In the past the children have had Drumming, Poetry, Song Writing, Painting and Poetry classes.

Performance Series

The Center has a series of performances that take place on Friday afternoons. All center staff, children and families are welcome to come. This is an opportunity for all of us to experience a variety of performance genres and for artists to



appreciate our young audience. We have enjoyed storytellers, dancers, puppeteers, and musicians representing a wide variety of styles including everything from *ska* to classical to old timey. Watching children feel the energy of live performance is an experience not to be missed!



Our Staff

Age Level Specialists (ALS)

The development of fundamental skills and individual personality occur very rapidly during the first five years of children's lives. Research has demonstrated that what children learn and experience during these early years provides the foundation for their attitudes and approach to learning for the rest of their lives.

For this reason, Corning Children's Center employs Age Level Specialists (ALS) to supervise the education of each age group. These experts in child development are experienced in working with their age level in a group care/education setting. We believe it is important for them to remain close to the experience of working with children, so each ALS works as part of a classroom team two days each week. They spend the other three days meeting with staff and families, observing classrooms and providing resources to their teams.

This is one more way we assure parents that when their children are in our care, they are in the hands of skilled, caring individuals with the expertise to help them learn and grow.

Our ALS staff:

Lisa Barrett	Infant ALS
Renee Warner	Toddler ALS
Anne Lamb	Preschool/PreK ALS

Classroom Staff

The staff in each room includes:

1 Lead Teacher

1 Co-Teacher

At least 2 Teacher Assistants

Additional staff, student helpers and volunteers as needed

All Teachers have schooling in Early Childhood Education or a related field (Child Development Associate certificate, Associates, Bachelors, or Masters Degree) and offer a wealth of experience and knowledge in working with young children.



All staff members go through an extensive hiring process which includes an interview, observed time in center classrooms, a medical screening, reference checks, a child abuse screening and a criminal record check. During the first three months of employment each staff member is required to take a minimum of 15 hours of in-service training and successfully complete a probationary evaluation prior to becoming a non-provisional member of our staff.

Regular Center schedules include a Teacher in each classroom at all times. In keeping with Department of Social Services regulations, there is *at least* one adult for every four infants, one adult for every five toddlers, one adult for every seven preschoolers and one adult for every eight PreK students. These ratios are a minimum standard and we make every effort to exceed that standard as classroom needs require.

Substitutes

Because taking care of young children takes a good deal of physical and emotional energy, the Center has generous vacation and sick leave policies to prevent staff burnout and reduce turnover rates. Consequently, there will be substitute teachers in the classrooms at times. Substitutes are required to submit a resume and go through the same hiring process as any of our staff. Prospective candidates are interviewed, and if successful, complete working interviews in at least two classrooms. During the working interview the teaching staff observes their on-the-job skills. Because many of our substitutes work in the building on an almost regular basis, we feel it is important to maintain these high standards. Good substitutes are often hired for permanent positions when they become available. Many of our regular part-time staff members act as substitutes as well. We try to limit the number of different people caring for your child because we value the importance of continuity of care and maintenance of routine.

Student Interns and Observers

Students from nearby high schools and colleges (e.g. Corning Community College, Elmira College, and Mansfield University) occasionally do observations and internships at the Center. Placements are made by the Center Director in consultation with the Age Level Specialists and classroom teachers. If they will be here for more than a brief observation each student must go through the same screening process as all of our other staff.

All students and volunteers are required to comply with the Center's confidentiality policy and are always under the direct supervision of Center staff.



These collaborations are an exciting opportunity for us to help train the next generation of early childhood caregivers.

Center Staff Caring for Your Child Outside Normal Program Hours

Center staff members are often asked to provide care outside Center hours. Please note that all staff members who work at the Center have been screened and hired based on their suitability to work in a group care setting. The Center cannot and will not endorse an employee's private agreements with program clients. Program liability coverage is only in effect during an employee's working hours.



Primary Care Givers

The Center assigns primary caregivers to all children entering the program. The assignment of a primary caregiver means that when a child first enters the program the family knows the person who is principally responsible for their child. This relationship helps children and families feel welcome and connected from the first day in the Center. Your primary caregiver will be either the lead teacher or teacher in your child's classroom. This does not mean that only one person cares for the child throughout the day, because there needs to be teamwork, but primary caregiving does mean that the family has someone special with whom to build an intimate relationship. Primary caregiving is a daily statement to families that relationships are the key to quality caregiving.



Our Facility

Our building was custom built for children to be interesting, fun and beautiful. The rooms are spacious and set apart by an abundance of natural light. All classrooms have child sized toilets and sinks in the classroom and direct access to the outside. Our fully fenced playground provides a variety of experiences for children, from climbing equipment or wide open spaces to wooded areas for imaginative play. Our convenient location allows us to provide the children with opportunities to experience their community.

Children's Library

The Center has a Children's library on site. Early literacy is important in early education and the library provides children with an opportunity to learn to love reading while exploring many different subjects. We have board books for the very young children and chapter books for the three and four year olds. We have a librarian that comes in and reads to the classrooms once a week.



At the Corning Children's Center we believe that:

- Facilitating a love of books and reading in early childhood provides the first and best incentive for children to learn to read.
- Having access to a variety of engaging, attractive books is vital to keep books interesting to children.
- Books are a wonderful way for people of all ages to learn about the world around us.
- A variety of engaging, attractive picture books expose children to the basics of plot, character, and a wide variety of artistic styles.

Children's Activity Kitchen

One of the unique features of our building is a kitchen built just for children. With counters and a sink at just their level, it is not unusual to find a group of two year olds enthusiastically measuring and stirring as they participate in making muffins or applesauce. As children measure, mix, and taste they are enjoying the world of sensory experience and learning so much in the process! As they cook, our concrete learners are busy:

1. Learning about nutrition and try new foods
2. Developing valuable self-help skills
3. Developing math concepts through counting, measuring, timing, and ordering events
4. Working cooperatively with others
5. Developing pre-reading skills by recognizing symbols
6. Learning to follow directions
7. Learning science concepts: temperature, volume, how something can change when it is heated, etc.
8. Improving fine motor control

Getting Started



Drop-Off and Pick-Up

- *Center Hours:* The Center opens at 6:45 am and closes at 6:15 pm. While staff may arrive before our official opening time in order to set up, they are not prepared to greet children until 6:45 am. Please schedule your arrival time accordingly.
- *Late pickup:* Staffing patterns have been developed to respond to children's routine departure times and both staff and children worry when parents are late. If you anticipate being later than usual, please let us know. We will call family members and emergency contacts if a child has not been picked up on time. In order to pay staff for additional time, we will charge a service fee after 6:15 pm.
- *Sign-in and sign-out:* All children must be signed in upon arrival and signed out at departure. Sign in/out occurs electronically at the Front Desk using your personal password.
- *Communicating with teachers:* Make sure a teacher is aware your child has arrived before you leave the classroom. It is helpful if you can spend a few minutes each day with the teachers to share any changes in routine, special needs, requests or observations that may help your child have a better day.
- *Supervising your child:* It is your responsibility to supervise your child at all times when you are dropping off or picking up. Please be sure that your child and his or her siblings stay with you at these times and that they do not run ahead into another part of the building. It is scary for everyone when a child is unsupervised in the building.
- *Written authorization for pickup:* All parents must fill out a form specifying those people who are authorized to pick up their child. We cannot release your child without this written authorization. Any time you have a change in routine, we must be notified in person or in writing.
- *Children's on-premises schedule:* Groups will remain on the premises before 9:30 am and after 3:30 pm unless you are notified otherwise. Between 9:30

and 3:30, the children may be out for a walk. If you need to drop-off or pick-up during this time, please notify your child's teacher in advance and they will adjust their plans accordingly.

- *Children's safety comes first:* As mandated child abuse reporters, we must place the welfare of the child first and will not automatically release a child to an adult who appears under the influence of drugs or alcohol. We will call local authorities to administer a blood alcohol test to determine any impairment in the person's ability to drive if an alternate driver cannot be contacted.



Clothing

Childhood can be a messy business. Please dress your child in clothing that is appropriate for all types of play and activities. In the course of a day your child may paint, experiment with water, play outside, tumble on the rug, spill juice or use a sleeve as a napkin. We do have children wear smocks for wet or messy activities but know that they are not always sufficient protection. We do not want children to feel they must restrict their play and exploration because they are afraid of getting dirty.

Comfortable clothing and shoes with non-slip soles are best for all ages. Shoes with closed toes and secure backs will prevent unnecessary injury.

Because learning to dress and undress are important abilities for young children to practice, we encourage them to develop self-help skills appropriate for their ages and skill levels. Young children find it easier to be independent if they are dressed in clothes which do not have complicated closures such as belts, buckles, suspenders or zippers in the back.

Please send extra clothing for your child. We will keep it in his/her cubby for the inevitable moment when he/she needs a clean set of clothes. If your child is learning to use the toilet, you may need to send several changes of clothing.

Please make sure that everything is clearly labeled, is appropriate for the season and fits properly. During periods of rapid growth this means checking on a regular basis to assure that clothes still fit and are appropriate for the season.

Should your child wear "borrowed" clothes home, please launder and return them as soon as is convenient.



In the summer, your child will need a bathing suit and towel for outdoor water play. These may be left at the Center.

In the winter you may want to leave snow pants, boots and other gear at the Center during the week.



Meals

All meals at the Center are planned and prepared by Corning Catering Company to meet USDA requirements for a well-balanced diet. Menus must be reviewed and approved by a registered dietician and by the NYS Department of Health. The weekly menus are posted at the front desk and in each classroom. They are also posted on our website www.corningchildrenscenter.com. Breakfast, lunch and morning and afternoon snacks are provided each day.

Please make sure the staff in your child's classroom knows about any food allergies your child may have and see that the allergy is noted on your child's physical form. Because of allergies, we do not provide any food containing nuts or nut oils, and we prohibit those foods from being brought into the Center.

Parents of infants should discuss the Center's ability to provide formula and baby food to infants in their first year and complete appropriate paperwork reflecting your preferences for how feeding will be handled. If your child's doctor asks that the child begin solid foods before then, the USDA requires that we have a written doctor's order on file.

You are welcome to join your child for lunch. Please let the classroom teacher know at drop-off in the morning so that we can include you in the lunch count. The charge is \$2.50 and should be paid at the front desk.



Things from Home

Each room establishes its own policy about bringing things from home. Personal objects (that special blanket, favorite stuffed animal, Mommy's scarf, etc.) often ease the transition from one location to another and are always welcome.

Check with one of your child's teachers before bringing other things from home. Please do not bring anything that is valuable or irreplaceable. We do our best to keep track of each child's belongings, but occasionally they are misplaced or damaged. Be sure that anything your child brings to the Center is labeled and is appropriate for his/her age group.

We do not insist that children share things from home unless they want to but it is always helpful if you have discussed this sensitive issue with your child before bringing things into the classroom where they may get broken or cause arguments.



Outings and Outdoor Play

NYS licensing requires us to provide periods of supervised outdoor play for all children daily except during inclement weather. Please dress your child accordingly! And, please understand that if a child is too ill to go outside, he/she is probably not well enough to be at the Center and would be more comfortable at home.

Only when weather is inclement do we forego this important part of our daily routine. The program has developed guidelines which define excessive heat and cold for each age level.

How Cold is Extreme Cold?

- For Infants, extreme cold is defined as a wind chill factor of 15° or below.
- For Young and Older Toddlers extreme cold is defined as a wind chill factor of 10° or below.
- For Preschool and PreK students, extreme cold is defined as a wind chill factor of 5° or below.

How Hot is Extreme Hot?

- For Infants at the Corning Children's Center we define extreme heat as a Heat Index of 90° or above.
- For Younger and Older Toddlers, Preschoolers and PreK students, extreme heat is defined as a Heat Index of 95° or above.

Staff are expected to use good judgment in determining how long to have children out in hot or cold weather. In doing so, they pay close attention to children's skin tone, activity level and body language. In hot weather they schedule time outside to protect children from the sun's rays during the late morning and early afternoon.

We include outings to the bank, market, post office and other neighborhood establishments in our curriculum, much like the everyday trips children take with parents. Rather than emphasize the destination, our journeys offer an

abundance of interesting and exciting experiences. Outings encourage language development and enhance sensory motor development as the children look, feel, smell, touch and taste the environment. Outings also provide children with the chance to form perceptions about the world, become acquainted with different people and activities, and begin to piece together an understanding of how the world operates and how they fit into it.

At your intake meeting you are asked to sign a permission slip for these local, walking trips. For other special trips parents are asked to sign individual permission slips for each field trip. Your child will not be able to participate without a signed permission slip.



Nap Time

Young children alternate between periods of intense activity and periods of rest. Naps periods are an important part of maintaining a child's health - and good humor! Therefore, naps are a part of the routine in each classroom.

We try to make nap time a relaxing time when children can listen to stories and music. We do not insist that children sleep. We do, however, require they rest quietly so the other children are not disturbed. Toward the end of nap time, if your child is still awake, the teachers will provide quiet activities.

In our infant rooms each child follows his/her own napping schedule.

Each child is provided with a crib or mat for napping. Parents will be asked to provide a blanket. As required by New York State regulations, the children use the same labeled cribs and mats every day.



Holidays and Birthdays

We do not celebrate holidays as a part of our curriculum at the Center. It is our philosophy that every family has its own way to celebrate holidays and that holidays are best celebrated within the family unit. It is our goal to help you have more peaceful and joyous holiday celebrations by keeping you child's routine as familiar as possible during potentially chaotic times.

While there is no staff initiated holiday planning, we are a community of learners and, as such, are always pleased to have center families offer to come in and share elements of their cultural celebrations. If you would like to do so please



share your ideas with the classroom staff and coordinate your visit so that it works into the existing classroom plans.

A list of actual dates we are closed is published each year and distributed to all parents.

We do acknowledge birthdays at the Center. Families sometimes bring a special snack to share with the class. Please discuss your ideas with your child's teachers to coordinate any celebration and to make sure that it is consistent with classroom routines and goals and does not create a risk for children who may have food allergies.



Snow Days

It is the Center's policy to be open, despite winter storms, if our staff can get to work. This policy has resulted in few closures in our history but has occasionally resulted in delays or early dismissals. Closures or delays will be announced on the following radio stations:

WNKI	1610	AM
WNKI	106.1	FM
WCBA	98.7	FM
WSKG	91.1	FM



Calling to Report Absence or Late Arrival

PLEASE CALL THE CENTER IF YOUR CHILD WILL BE LATE OR ABSENT.

TEACHERS NEED TO KNOW BY 9:00 AM whether to expect your child so they can order the correct number of meals for the day. This insures that we are not paying for meals that are not eaten.

During the hours we are closed, you may leave a message regarding your child's attendance by calling **937-5502 x101** or leaving a message in your child's classroom's voice mailbox. You may also email us at ccenter@stny.rr.com .

How We Work Together



Separation - Saying Goodbye

Helping your child say goodbye to you is a key component of our program. This is often a family's first experience with group care and we are very sensitive to individual needs and feelings.

In order to ease the separation process, parents and teachers work together to create a bridge between home and the Center. We have found that when you feel comfortable in the Center so will your child. Building a positive relationship between parents and teachers is the foundation for your child's happiness and success.

For this reason, we urge you to spend time with your child at the Center, especially during the first weeks of your child's enrollment. The amount of time you spend will depend on your child's own developmental stage, previous experience with separations, and your own feelings about leaving your child.

You are welcome to spend time in the classroom playing with your child, assisting with daily routines, and helping your child establish relationships with the teachers. This time also allows teachers to observe and ask questions which enable them to offer consistent care in your absence.

All parents are asked to say "goodbye" to their children and to tell them when they will return. It may be helpful to establish a goodbye ritual. Many children find comfort in the predictable, reassuring nature of rituals. Parents should not sneak out in order to prevent a child from crying. When this happens, children feel abandoned, frightened and may find it hard to trust in future separations.

Sharing your feelings and needs is one of the most important things you can do to establish a working relationship with the staff and ensure the success of your child's experience at the Center. Taking the time to successfully resolve separation issues will make your life immeasurably easier in the days and years to come.



Parent/Teacher Communications

One of the joys of our work is the opportunity to get to know the families of the children we care for. Because we will be seeing at least one family member at drop off and pickup each day, most of the daily contact between parents and teachers will be through brief conversations at those times. Teachers also write regular notes about each child. This may take the form of “Cubby Notes” or daily entries into a child’s individual Journal. These notes help you know something about your child’s experience here. Since young children often do not have the language skills to independently relate their experiences, many parents use these notes as a way to initiate conversation with children about what happened in their day.

Classroom teachers provide a weekly newsletter and plans so that you know what kinds of learning are going on during the day. These are typically distributed electronically, but paper copies are available by request.

Teachers welcome your questions and any information you can share about what is going on for your child at home. You need not go into detail, but saying something like “we’re having a hard time at home right now” can help us understand your child better and provide the extra attention he/she might need. It’s also important for us to know when a parent is away or other significant changes in routine occur.

Child care works best when there is open and ongoing communication between parents and providers. Please make an extra effort to find out what works best for you and your child’s teachers. This might be scheduled meetings, written notes back and forth, daily conversations or occasional phone calls. Just let us know what works for you and we will do our best to oblige—communication is that important!

Weekly Parent Folders

Another way the Center is able to keep the lines of communication open is with our weekly “Parent Information folders” sometimes called “Wednesday Folders.” Once a week, staff will put this folder in your child’s cubby. The folder will have all important announcements that are not date sensitive for the week (all date sensitive materials will be handed out as soon as the classrooms receive them.) We welcome you to take the folder home and return it after you have had a change to review the contents. You may also use the folder to return any paperwork that needed your attention.



Parent Conferences and Meetings

Teacher/parent conferences are held twice a year or more often as needed. These meetings are a time to get better acquainted, exchange information about home and school activities, and set and review goals to support your child's development. Teachers or parents may request a meeting at any time, for any reason.

The parents in each room get together at least twice a year to socialize and discuss what changes to expect in the coming months. These meetings typically happen in the fall and spring.



Parent Code of Conduct

Corning Children's Center requires that parents of enrolled children behave in a manner consistent with courtesy and respect at all times. One of the goals of the Center is to provide an appropriate environment in which a child can grow, learn and develop. Achieving this ideal environment is not only the responsibility of center employees but is also the responsibility of each and every parent or adult who enters the center. Parents who violate the Parent Code of Conduct will have their services terminated immediately and will not be permitted on center property thereafter.

No parent or adult is permitted to curse or use other inappropriate language on Center property at any time, whether in the presence of a child or not. Such language is considered offensive by many people and will not be tolerated. If a parent or adult feels frustrated or angry, it is more appropriate to verbally express the frustration or anger using non-offensive language. At no time shall inappropriate language be directed toward members of the staff or children enrollment in the program.

Threats of any kind will not be tolerated and will be reported to the appropriate authorities. While apologies for such behavior are appreciated, the center will not assume the risk of a second chance. Parents must be responsible for and in control of their behavior at all times.



Parent Participation

Volunteer work at the Center encompasses three broad categories: classroom support, fundraising and advisory work. We encourage parents to participate in one or more of the following ways.

- **The Parent Staff Committee**, which meets approximately once a month, works to facilitate communication and offers families opportunities to get to know one another. Projects include the Center newsletter, Center wide picnics and other special events. The Parent Staff Committee also works to make sure that staff members know how much they are appreciated for their fine work.
- **Room Parents** provide help and support to classroom staff in many ways, ranging from organizing social events and field trips to getting information out to parents.
- The **Fund Development Committee** solicits funds from a variety of sources and in a variety of ways to support the Center's operating budget.
- The **Board of Directors** meets monthly and makes overall decisions governing the operation of the Center including fiscal and administrative oversight, setting policy, developing a long range plan and approving the budget. Board membership is by nomination and parent representation is an element of our Board development plan.

If you are interested in helping any of these ways, please tell the Director or your child's teacher. There are also many opportunities to help with special projects throughout the year.



Parent/Staff Library

The Center has a growing library of books, articles and video tapes for parents and teachers. The library addresses all aspects of child care, parenting, children's health issues, child development, teaching and curriculum. Parents are encouraged to use the library for their own needs. It is located in the front lobby and materials may be checked out at the front desk.



Parent Education

We envision the Center as a community of learners which includes children, staff and parents. Because children don't come with an instruction manual, we try to make opportunities for groups of parents to learn more about this important job and to offer support to one another. Parents will receive flyers regarding upcoming parenting skills workshops and we welcome your ideas on topics you would like to explore.



Diversity

The Corning Children's Center population — families, children and staff — comprise a kind of extended family that offers a network of mutual support and caring. We take pride in the diversity of our population and find both hope and joy in working with young children whose nature is to be open-minded and accepting. We do not believe multiculturalism or valuing diversity is something that can be taught as a lesson or a theme but rather must be reflected in the way we conduct ourselves every day. Young children learn best when they can relate new experiences directly to their own lives. Therefore, we try to make each classroom reflect the world at large in the things the children use every day — toys, books, music, photographs, dress-up clothes, snack and lunch foods, musical instruments, paints and other art supplies.

Studies show us that fear of the unfamiliar and low self-esteem play critical roles in the development of intolerance. We strive to help children develop cultural awareness and sensitivity by celebrating differences and likenesses on global and individual scales. We work hard to expose children to a wide variety of people, experiences and everyday objects, while helping them develop a strong sense of self. Young children may have a difficult time understanding the common humanity we all share, but they can understand that although someone looks different, he or she may share experiences and preferences for food, music or story with others. When children naturally learn to value differences as well as sameness, there is no need to specifically teach children to value diversity.

Because this is a large task, we value the ideas and suggestions of all our families. We hope you will feel free to participate in the program by sharing your child's cultural heritage with us. This is an area in which we are constantly growing and welcome your help in doing so.



Discipline

Discipline helps children to cope with the challenges of daily living, interpret their world and learn social skills.

By setting firm, consistent rules we instill values and help a child develop a conscience. These are the basic rules we apply at Corning Children's Center: You are responsible for yourself and your actions.

1. Respect each other.
2. Respect yourself.
3. Respect your surroundings.

Because the goal of discipline is self-control, we reinforce appropriate behaviors, redirect children by providing appropriate alternatives, encourage children to talk about their feelings and provide a model of interacting with others in a positive and supportive manner.

Physical punishment of any kind by staff or parents/guardians is not permitted at the Center. Methods of discipline which frighten, demean or humiliate a child are considered punishment and are prohibited by our licensing standards.

In our classrooms there are times when children engage in inappropriate behavior. If we find that the approach outlined above is not working we will:

- Request a meeting with the child's parents to develop a consistent plan for implementation in the home and the classroom.
- Establish a schedule of meetings to evaluate progress.
- If progress is not noted, we will make referrals for outside support. Continued enrollment may be contingent upon a family's cooperation in following through on referrals made.

We urge you to talk to Center staff if you have concerns or questions. This area is a challenge for all of us, and we have a variety of strategies and resources which may help.

Parents and caregivers frequently talk about how, why and when to set limits and help children develop self-control. As you work through the challenges of discipline with your growing child at home, you may find these thoughts useful:

Young children do not yet understand the consequences of their actions: that hitting hurts, or that they should be "nice or polite." However, they can



understand that hitting, grabbing toys, throwing objects other than balls and biting are not allowed.

It's important to remember that power struggles take two and are unproductive, regardless of how much children seem to want them! The advice to "pick your battles" is particularly helpful in disciplining young children. If you "don't sweat the small stuff," succeeding on larger, more important issues is much easier.

Putting Words into Feelings

Good communication skills are the best tool available for conflict resolution. At the Center children are encouraged to use words to express feelings as well as to work out difficulties.

Even the very youngest children should be exposed to verbal problem solving. Teachers try to put non-verbal child's feelings into words, "It looks like you are angry because....," or "Tell him no. I don't like it." We also believe that it is important to allow children to express their feelings verbally no matter how negative they may sound because an appropriate verbal expression of feelings can prevent an inappropriate physical outburst.

Physical or Verbal Punishment of Your Child or Other Children at the Center

Corning Children's Center does not support or condone corporal punishment of children and such acts are not permitted in the facility. While verbal reprimands may be appropriate, it is not appropriate for parents to verbally abuse their child. Doing so may cause undue embarrassment or emotional distress. Parents are always welcome to discuss a behavior issue with their child's caregiver, Age Level Specialist and/or the center Director and to seek advice and guidance regarding appropriate and effective discipline techniques.

Parents are prohibited from addressing, for the purpose of correction or discipline, a child that is not their own. Of course, no parent or other adult may physically punish another parent's child. If a parent should witness another parent's child behaving in an inappropriate manner, or is concerned about behavior reported to them by their own child, the parent should direct their concern to the child's caregiver, Age Level Specialist and/or the center Director.

Parents should not seek out another parent to discuss their child's inappropriate behavior. These concerns should be brought to the child's caregiver, Age Level Specialist and/or center Director. At that point, our staff will address the issue with the other parent. Although you may be curious as to the outcome of such a



discussion, classroom staff, Age Level Specialist and/or the center Director are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you. All children enrolled in our center have privacy rights and are protected by our Confidentiality Policy. You may be assured that we will not discuss anything about your child with another parent or adult visiting the center



Transition to a New Group

Children may grow and move through as many as four different groups in their tenure at the Center—especially in our non-continuity of caregiving classrooms. Transition from one age-level group to another carries with it all the excitement and pitfalls associated with change. Leaving the security of a familiar room and teachers you know can be daunting, however eager you and your child are to meet the challenges of a new group.

One of the Center staff's most important jobs is making these transitions as smooth as possible for everyone involved. As the time for the transition approaches parents will be asked to meet with the child's current and future teachers, to get acquainted and for an orientation to the new group. It is essential that parents and all staff involved work together to help the child (and themselves) through this transition.

In Continuity of Care wings (A and B) transitions typically occur in September or July. In the Traditional Care Wing (C), these transitions may occur up to three months before or after the child reaches the new group's guideline age to allow for the individual pace of each child's development. For instance, while preschool is defined as 3s and 4s, a toddler may "graduate" anywhere from 33 to 39 months, depending on readiness and space availability.

The transition period generally begins with the child visiting the classroom for longer and longer periods until the point that he/she is comfortable staying through lunch and nap.

Because the layout of the Center purposely encourages impromptu mixed age groupings, your child may begin visiting an older classroom well before transition time. This helps make the new room and its teachers familiar and welcoming. Similarly, it is common and appropriate for a child to visit his/her old room after the transition has taken place. Our wings serve as "neighborhoods" that encourage camaraderie and cooperation among adults and children alike and we encourage children to maintain the relationships that have helped them grow in their time with us.



Confidentiality of Records

We know that trust is the foundation on which our business is built. Therefore, confidentiality is central to all our operations.

All information pertaining to your child's educational, health and financial records is kept in locked files. We do not release any information from our files without parental written consent.



Rights of Non-Custodial Parents

The Center encourages the active participation of all parents in the education of their children and recognizes that non-custodial parents have an interest in the educational and emotional progress of their children. However, our administrative policy provides that mailings, parent/teacher conferences, emergency contacts and authorizations used in case of accident will be as directed by the custodial parent.

It is important to understand that child custody is a legal arrangement. If a custody order or restraining order specifically naming the child is not on file, we legally must allow both parents access to the child. In cases of shared custody, both parents will have equal access to all information relating to their child.

Custodial parents will be given access to their children's educational records. All parents are encouraged to attend parent/teacher conferences but it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to communicate the date, time and place of such meetings to non-custodial parents.

Communication is critical in these situations. Please let us know if there are changes in circumstances at any time.



Photographs and Publicity

Photographs of the children participating in our programs will be taken from time to time and may appear in newspaper, magazines, brochures, our website, or other publicity materials. Permission to use photographs including your child without compensation is part of the enrollment package. We honor the requests of those who do not want us to take pictures of their child. Use of photos whose distribution may be outside the center community will be by specific written



permission. Photos taken by the center are the property of the Corning Children's Center and we are committed to taking reasonable care to manage and safeguard use of those images. The program and staff of the Children's Center understand that we have no rights to publish or sell these images without the specific written consent of the child's family.



If you have a problem

We work hard to provide an environment that is safe, nurturing and stimulating for your child and welcoming for you. If you have questions or we fall short of these goals, please let us know. Communication is the first step in problem-solving.

If you have concerns about your child

Talk to the lead teacher in your child's classroom.

If you are not satisfied with their response you should follow this problem-solving sequence:

- Talk to the Age Level Expert for your child's age level.
- Talk to the Executive Director.
- If still dissatisfied let the Executive Director know that you would like to take it further and you will be referred on to the Chair of the Parent/Staff committee.
- The last step would be a referral to the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors.

If you have concerns about a staff member:

Talk to the person directly. Again if you are not satisfied with the person's response follow the problem solving sequence above.

If you have questions about finances:

Talk to the Director of Finance.

If you are not satisfied with her response please talk to the Executive Director.

Whatever the problem, please share your concerns with us so that we can work together to understand them and solve them whenever possible.

Health & Safety



Health Enrollment Requirements

Prior to enrollment and yearly thereafter, each child's parent/guardian must submit:

- A *Medical Report on Child in Day Care* form completed by his/her physician
- Written consent of emergency health care with emergency names and phone numbers
- An official up-to-date immunization record for your child and, as your child receives additional immunizations, a written note stating the date and type of immunization

Immunizations and physicals must remain up-to-date for a child's enrollment to be continued.



Daily Health Checks

Corning Children's Center staff members are all mandated by NYS law to report child abuse and neglect. Therefore, each child is evaluated daily upon arrival for any health issues. Staff will look for symptoms of illness and communicability to others, as well as unusual bruising or injuries. All findings are recorded in a health check log and will be brought to your attention. This process helps us determine if the child is well enough to be in care, if there are conditions we should monitor throughout the day, and if there are any signs of child abuse or neglect.



Sickness Policies

Our goal is to keep all of the children in our care healthy. We are careful in our hand washing (staff and children) and attentive to disinfecting surfaces, toys and furniture. In addition to these measures it is also important that children with potentially contagious conditions be excluded from care. A sick child recovers more quickly when given prompt attention. Therefore, we ask your cooperation in keeping your child home if he/she displays any of the following symptoms:

- **High Fever:** Defined as a fever of 101°F (Axillary) in a child younger than six months old or 105°F (Axillary) in children over six months old.

- **Diarrhea:** More than three unexplained watery stools in a two-hour period.
- **Head lice:** The Center has a "Nit Free" policy. This means that a child cannot return until they are completely free of all nits.
- **Scabies or Ringworm:** Symptoms or physical evidence of possible scabies or ringworm
- **Inability to Participate in care:** Is defined as a *combination* (more than one) of the following symptoms:
 - Fever (any temperature above normal: Axillary 97.6). A child may stay in the program with a low-grade temperature as long as they are able to participate and have no alarming symptoms.
 - Glazed eyes
 - Lethargy (unusually inactive)
 - Drainage from eyes or nose
 - Pulling or poking at the ears
 - Hacking cough
 - Vomiting
 - Diarrhea
 - Clingy/irritable behavior
 - Inconsolability
 - Unexplained rashes
 - Not eating or drinking
- **Labored Breathing:** Due to the increasing incidence of childhood asthma, if a child shows signs of labored breathing, parents/guardians will be notified to evaluate the situation personally as soon as possible.
- **Red Eyes with Discharge:** The white of the eye is pink *and* any of the following conditions exist – tearing or discharge of any color. A child may not return until the condition has been diagnosed by a health care professional and (if positive) has received 24 hours of treatment.
- **Vomiting:** Not associated with cough. For infants – vomiting of more than one half of two feedings or more than 2 times in 24 hours.
- **Unusual Symptoms:** Such as neck pain when the child's head is moved or touched, a severe headache, a seizure for the first time, acting unusually confused, unequal pupils, a rash which appears suddenly and spreads quickly, or other symptoms which may be indicative of a seriously declining physical condition.



If your child develops any of these symptoms while in our care, we may ask that you remove your child from our care. There will also be times when we call parents about developing symptoms. These calls are for your information so that you may respond as best meets your family's needs.

In order for return to day care, your child must no longer meet the dismissal requirement and be able to participate in care. Please understand that a child who is suffering pain from ear or throat infection, has diarrhea or is lethargic cannot participate in Center activities, regardless of fever symptoms.

If a child needs to leave the center due to illness, the teacher will:

- Notify the parent/guardian regarding child's symptoms and decision to have child go home.
- Obtain information from the parent/guardian regarding who will be picking up the child and at what time.
- Provide a quiet area for the child to rest until they are picked up.
- Log the symptoms and action taken in the Daily Health Check log.
- Notify other families in the room of exposure to a contagious illness and provide written information regarding that illness.

Children may return to care following diagnosis and treatment when:

- They no longer meet the dismissal requirements
- Are able to participate in care
- Have been fever free without the use of fever reducing medication for 24 hours.
- Conjunctivitis: The child may return with a doctor's note
- Impetigo: The child may return with a doctor's note
- Strep throat: The child may return with a doctor's note
- Scabies: The child may return with a doctor's note
- Ringworm: The child may return with a doctor's note
- Chicken pox: The child may return 6 days after onset of rash or sooner if all lesions are crusted and dry.
- Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV): The child may return with low-grade temperature and behavior change with a physician note that says the child is clear to return.
- Head lice: The child may return to care when identifiably nit free.

In the event of a pandemic illness the Center may implement more stringent exclusion policies to protect the health of the children and staff in the program. All families would be notified in writing were that to occur.

We know this is an area of concern for all parents and we ask your cooperation if/when you receive a call from staff asking that you make alternate arrangements for your child's care. The most powerful tool we have to assure the health and well-being of every child is a prompt and appropriate response when a child does get sick.



Medications

If your child needs to receive over-the-counter or prescription medication while at the Center, parents/guardians must provide:

- a written order from the physician
- a parental authorization form
- medication in the original container with the following information: child's complete name, medication name, recommended dosage, time intervals for administration, method of administration, expiration date, prescriber's name and license number and possible side effects or adverse reactions that have been noted.

Note: We suggest you ask the pharmacist to divide your child's prescription into two containers so that one can be left at the Center.

Topical ointments may be applied as needed for protection against the sun or diaper rash under written instructions from the parent. Parents are responsible for providing topical ointments labeled in the original container with the child's name.



Staff Health Professional

The Center employs a Health Care Consultant to review the Center's Health Plan, train staff and oversee our health practices.



Immunization Requirements

The Center's Administrative staff maintain individual health records and may be contacting you to assure that your child's immunizations and routine well-child check ups are done according to the schedule required by New York State for children participating in licensed child care facilities.

New York State currently requires:

- 3 doses of **Diphtheria** Toxoid-Containing Vaccine administered at age-appropriate times and intervals.



- 3 doses of **Tetanus** Toxoid-containing vaccine and **Pertussis** Vaccine (DTaP, DTP) administered at age-appropriate times and intervals if the child is born on or after 1/1/05.
- 3 doses of **Polio** (IPV or OPV) administered at age-appropriate times and intervals.
- 1 dose of **Measles, Mumps and Rubella** (MMR) vaccine administered at the age-appropriate time.
- 3 doses of **Hepatitis B** vaccine administered at age-appropriate times and intervals.
- **Pneumococcal** Conjugate Vaccine (PCV): For children born on or after 1/1/08 4 doses by 15 months of age, administered at age-appropriate times and intervals.
- Varicella (**Chickenpox**) 1 dose administered at an age-appropriate time.

We urge you to work with your child's physician to schedule immunizations and physicals on an appropriate schedule.



Evacuation Drills

Evacuation drills are conducted on a monthly basis. We try to vary the time and type of drill so that we have experience evacuating under all possible circumstances. All drills are unannounced. We post notice of any evacuation drills at the front desk, for your information.

If you are ever at the Center during an evacuation drill, please stay with your child and evacuate as directed by the classroom staff. This will eliminate confusion and ensure a safe evacuation.



Your Child's Safety

We have made every attempt to provide your child with an outside and inside environment which is stimulating, attractive and safe. Staff members have first aid kits available at all times and will treat minor injuries such as bumps and scrapes. All staff, including substitutes, are expected to have current Child and Adult CPR and First Aid training.

In case of an accidental injury that warrants further attention, we follow an established emergency procedure. The receptionist or Corning Security will be asked to call an ambulance and we will make every effort to contact a parent, guardian or authorized emergency contact and the child's physician. Until the arrival of medical assistance, the Director or designated person in charge will make all decisions about the care of the child. You will be expected to assume full responsibility for any expenses resulting from accidental injuries.

It is imperative that you keep all emergency contact information current, including your whereabouts and phone numbers, additional contact names and phone numbers, etc. There is nothing worse than being with a child in distress and be unable to reach that child's parents or emergency contacts.



Incident Reports

If your child is injured while at the Center, the teachers complete an incident report which describes how the injury happened and what action was taken. These forms are completed for any incident that requires "more than a hug." You will be asked to sign this form. Incident reports are monitored by the program administration to identify any trends and take action to reduce any identified risks.

Some incidents, which we refer to as Level 1 and Level 2 incidents, require immediate parental notification. These include, but are not limited to, head injuries, biting incidents and bee stings. The reason for the call is to give information to the parents so that they have the opportunity to decide if they want to take further action. For Level 3 incidents parents will be notified at pick-up time. All incident reports need to be signed by parents.

Incident reports are monitored by the Age Level Specialists and the Executive Director to identify any trends and take action to reduce any identified risks.



Children Hurting One Another

It is expected that young children who lack the verbal and social skills to express their needs will occasionally strike out. As educators and parents we must work together to teach your child to use words rather than his/her body to express needs or emotions. This is a skill that evolves over time as a child becomes developmentally able to internalize complex feelings and ideas. Because it cannot be imposed from without but rather needs to be developed from within, the process cannot be hurried and will take time. In the meantime, parents can



anticipate that their child will hurt others and be hurt in a group situation with other young children. Our staff works hard to minimize aggression by modeling problem solving techniques and anticipating volatile situations but cannot completely prevent such incidents.

Any child with a physical injury caused by another child will receive an incident report explaining the situation. It is our policy, however, to exclude the name of the child who did the hurting from this report but to record it in our files for future reference. We ask for patience and understanding in the difficult circumstance when your child is hurt by another, as well as your patience and understanding in helping your child learn that it is not ok to hurt someone else.

In group care there are times when a child's behavior becomes a concern to the staff and the family. The staff at the Center works closely with families to resolve behavior issues that may be affecting the entire classroom. Altering staffing schedules, changing routines and outside counseling are among the problem solving techniques that may be used. We are proud of the fact that we work with families to help resolve behaviors, and that we do not ask children to leave.



Child Abuse Reporting

In accordance with provisions of Section 432 of New York State Social Services law, all day care center staff are mandated reporters to the New York State Child Abuse and Maltreatment Register. Whenever there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected, a report must be made.

If you suspect a child has been abused or neglected, report your suspicions to the New York State hotline for parents: 800-342-3720.

Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. Child care center employees are considered mandated reporters under this law. Teachers and child care administrators are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior or condition prior to making a report.



Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. This responsibility is taken very seriously and we will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities. No one, including center management and/or a child's parents, can interfere with this reporting requirement. As mandated reporters, the staff cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in "good faith". The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children.



New York State Licensing

The Center follows all regulations as listed in the New York State Department of Social Services (DSS) Day Care Regulations. A copy of these regulations can be found in each classroom or you may request a copy from the Center Director. The Center's license number is 00042396DC.

Parents have the right to report any licensing regulation violation to the Regional Licensing Division of DSS (585-238-8531) or to a NYS "warm line" for parents at 800-732-5207. They will investigate the claim and take action if warranted.

Their website is <http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/be/cs/>
Electronic access to the regulations can be found at
http://www.ocfs.state.ny.us/main/be/cs/regs/418-1_CDCC_regs.asp



Security

We know that parents cannot go to work without knowing that their child is being cared for in a safe and secure place. Security is fundamental to the care we offer.

The Center is tied to Corning Incorporated Security which means that a quick phone call immediately activates their response system in the event of medical or building emergencies. Corning Security immediately dispatches trained EMTs and calls the local ambulance service.

Corning Security staff are trained to respond quickly and appropriately to a wide variety of crises including terrorism, threats against persons and abductions. The Corning Security office is located in Houghton Park B Building, just across the street from the Center.



If you need to contact Corning Security, their business number is 974-8407. In an emergency, call 974-6911. These numbers are posted next to every phone in our building.

We know that there is no better action than prevention. Our front desk staff is an important part of the Center's daily security. The front desk is staffed from before we open until after we close. The most important part of the front desk job is to monitor everyone who enters or leaves the building. From her office to the left of the building entrance, the Director also has direct visual oversight of all who enter.

In the event that no one is available to screen those entering, the front door is locked until staff return. If you find the door locked, please use the phone to the left of the main entrance. With the exception of the main door, all doors are locked at all times as are the gates to the fence surrounding the facility. Entry to the building from the play area is by keypad access at specified doors. Direct entry to the classrooms from the outside is not possible.

All guests are asked to sign in at the front desk and are escorted to their destination. Anyone unknown to staff on duty will be asked to show identification. Staff members are trained to be alert to security and it is not uncommon for new parents or family members to be greeted in the hall and asked where they are going and if they need help. We trust you will appreciate this as a sign of our commitment to your child's security.

Communication is the key component in assuring your child's security. Any time there is a change in routine, please let Center staff know. Changes to the list of persons authorized to pick up must be made in writing.

It is important to alert staff to any changes in custody or potential conflicts related to custody arrangements so that we can respond appropriately.

The sign-in/sign-out system is our tool for knowing who is in the building at any given time. In the event of an emergency evacuation it is critical that these records be accurate. Its accuracy depends on you. Please remember to sign your child in and out any time you arrive at or leave the Center.

The program has an extensive Safety Management Plan defining practice for any of a variety of emergencies. If you are interested, policies are available for review in every classroom.



By working together we can all be confident that your children are safe and secure while in our care.

Finances



Tuition

Tuition is charged on a weekly basis (including when the Center is closed for holidays, staff training, unexpected closings or weather closings) as agreed upon at enrollment.

Fees are determined according to a sliding fee scale which is based on family size, income and the age of the child. All financial information is kept confidential.

It is the parents' responsibility to inform the Center when there is a change in income or family size. Each year the Center will request proof of each family's income which will be reviewed to keep tuition current with the sliding scale.

We reserve the right to change tuition fees at any time with a minimum of six (6) weeks notice. Tuition increases or changes in the scale typically occur in May. Increases are determined as part of the Center's annual budget process.



Methods of Payment

You may pay by the following methods:

- Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)
- Check or money order
- MasterCard or Visa debit or credit card
- Cash

EFT is the preferred method and offers extra benefits to clients who have a Flexible Spending Account to use pre-tax dollars to pay for child care. EFT is administered by Core Systems which will manage the funds transfer and will also automatically file all Flexible Spending reporting, resulting in more timely reimbursements for the client. EFT tuition payments can be made weekly, bi-weekly or monthly, depending on the client's preference. The Center pays the enrollment fee for all Core Systems families. For more information, please see the Finance Director.



The front desk staff will provide a receipt for payments upon request. Those paying by cash will always be given a receipt.



Late Pick-Up Fees

Parents who arrive after the 6:15 pm closing time will be assessed a late pick up fee. This fee will be \$5.00 per child for every five minutes or any portion of five minutes.



Financial Policies

In order to continue to offer the high quality care we strive for, it is important that we operate as a fiscally responsible business.

The Center is audited each year by an independent auditor for compliance with financial reporting standards and business procedures. In order to meet audit requirements for a formal procedure for the collection of parent fees, the following fee collection process has been established:

- Parent fees are due in full for the current week no later than 5:00 pm each Monday. Payments should be left in the wooden payment box at the front desk or given to the front desk staff and a receipt is generated for each payment. Prepayment of fees is encouraged.
- Payment is recorded by the Front Desk on a daily basis and passed on to the Finance Office at the end of each day. Payments are recorded by the Finance Director the day following their receipt.
- A monthly statement of accounts is provided to each client. Statements will be distributed by Front Desk staff to clients. You are urged to review those statements carefully and promptly address any discrepancies with the Finance Director. A statement can be generated at any time upon request.



Past Due Payment Policy

If payment for the current week is not received by Monday at 5:00 pm, the client will receive a letter notifying them of their past due status. If a payment is not made by Wednesday at 5:00 pm, the client will receive a second letter outlining termination procedures. Failure to make payments will result in forfeiture of the child's placement.



Checks returned to the Center for insufficient funds will be assessed a \$20.00 service fee. In addition, the account will be considered overdue by one week and the procedures outlined above will apply. A pattern of receiving bad checks may require that all future payments be made in cash, cashier's check or money order.

This policy is intended to ensure prompt payment and reduce the risk of incurring bad debts which would need to be passed on to all parents in the form of higher fees. This policy also serves to clearly define each parent's responsibility with respect to payment for services.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Finance Director or the Executive Director.



Child and Adult Care Food Program

The center participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) sponsored by the Department of Health. We abide by the policy of enrolling children without discrimination based on age, sex, handicap, race, religion, national origin, or color. CACFP reimburses the Center for a portion of our food costs based on the current income levels of families enrolled in the Center. In order for the Center to qualify for this funding, all enrolled families must complete a form annually stating their household income level, number of people in the household, their names and social security numbers.



Special Considerations

Changes in a family's routine, due to maternity leaves, temporary job lay-offs or extended illnesses are stressful enough without having child care add to your worries.

It is important to young children that consistency be maintained as much as possible during times of change at home. To help families through disruptions in normal routine, Corning Children's Center allows a family to temporarily reduce enrollment to part-time without the risk of losing the child's full-time position during periods of unusual need. Families who have been enrolled full-time for at least six weeks prior to the change may reduce their schedule to two days for up to eight weeks or three days for up to ten weeks before the full-time slot is forfeited.



If you are unable to return to full-time care after the temporary part time period ends, you may go on the waiting list for a priority placement in the next full-time slot that becomes available. Continued part time enrollment cannot be assumed and will only be possible if a part time position is available. Families may access this privilege only under unusual circumstances and only once each year. Applications are available at the Front Desk.



Withdrawing from the Center

If a family decides to withdraw its child from the Center, a minimum of two weeks written notice is required. If a child is withdrawn without adequate notice, two weeks tuition beyond the date that we received notification will be required.

Clients who leave the program owing money will be promptly turned over to our collection agency.



Our Operating Budget

The Center is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization whose primary sources of income are tuition, grants, CACFP reimbursements and fundraising. We receive a significant operating grant from Corning Incorporated which allows us to offer a higher quality of care than reliance solely on parent fees would allow. That grant also allows us to offer infant and toddler care to the community – levels of care that are typically prohibitively expensive. We also receive occasional special project grants.

We set aggressive fund development goals each year to keep tuition as low as possible. We hope you will support our fundraising efforts in the ways that best reflect your ability and enthusiasm.

The Board of Directors is actively engaged in budget development and oversight of the annual budget and assists with fundraising.