



Parent Handbook

2016

(July 2016 Revision)

© Corning Children's Center, 2016

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

www.corningchildrenscenter.com

<https://www.facebook.com/CorningChildrensCenter>

Table of Contents



Fast Facts Including:

Directions.....	4
Holidays.....	5
Weather Related Closures.....	5
Key Contacts	5

Welcome to Corning Children’s Center!	6
---	---

Who We Are..... 7

Our Mission	7
Our Values	7
About Corning Children’s Center	8
Accreditation.....	8
Who We Serve	8
Our Curriculum	9
Continuity of Care and Traditional Classrooms.....	9
Visiting Artists.....	10
Our Staff.....	11
Center Staff Caring for Your Child Beyond Normal Program Hours.....	13
Primary Caregivers.....	13
Our Facility	13

Getting Started..... 15

Drop-Off and Pick-Up	15
Clothing	16
Meals	17
Things from Home.....	20
Outings and Outdoor Play	20
Nap Time.....	21
Holidays and Birthdays.....	22
Snow Days	22
Calling to Report Absence or Late Arrival	23

How We Work Together..... 24

Separation - Saying Goodbye.....	24
Parent Code of Conduct	26
Parent Participation	26
Parent Library.....	27
Parent Education.....	27
Diversity	28

Discipline.....	28
Transition to a New Group.....	30
Confidentiality of Records.....	31
Rights of Non-Custodial Parents.....	31
Photographs and Publicity.....	32
If You Have a Problem.....	32
Health & Safety.....	34
Health Enrollment Requirements.....	34
Daily Health Checks.....	34
Sickness Policies.....	34
Medications.....	37
Staff Health Professional.....	37
Immunization Requirements.....	38
Evacuation Drills.....	38
Shelter in Place Drills.....	38
Your Child’s Safety.....	39
Incident Reports.....	39
Children Hurting One Another.....	40
Child Abuse Reporting.....	40
New York State Licensing.....	41
Security.....	41
Finances.....	43
Tuition.....	43
Methods of Payment.....	43
Late Pick-Up Fees.....	44
Financial Policies.....	44
Past Due Payment Policy.....	44
Child and Adult Care Food Program.....	45
Special Considerations.....	45
Our Operating Budget.....	44
Why Do We Fundraise?.....	46

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



Fast Facts

Ages: 6 weeks to 5 years

Hours: Monday – Friday, 7:00 am – 6:00 pm Year Round

Licensed: New York State

Accredited: Middle States Commission on Elementary Schools

Location

107 Arthur Street, Corning, NY

Use Exit 46 from Route 86

Directions

From the corner of Centerway (Route 414) and E. Pulteney Street,

Turn onto Pulteney Street at the light,

First right (before gas station) onto Townley Avenue,

Then left onto Arthur Street,

And right into Corning Children's Center parking area.

Or

Coming from the west on Pulteney Street,

Turn left onto Baker Street at the light,

Then turn right onto Arthur Street,

Go to near the end of Arthur Street,

Turn left into Corning Children's Center parking area.

NOTE:

Parking spots facing the building are left open for clients. These spots are the safest places to park because they do not require that you cross a busy parking lot with your child(ren).

Traffic is One Way in our lot going from East to West

The Speed Limit is 5 mph

State Law requires that vehicles be turned off while unattended

State Law prohibits leaving children unattended in vehicles

Holidays – Each year Corning Children’s Center will be CLOSED on:

- January 1
- Good Friday closed for Staff Training
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day (July 4th or the closest Monday/Friday)
- Friday before Labor Day closed for Staff Training
- Labor Day
- Veteran’s Day closed for Staff Training
- Thanksgiving – Thursday and Friday
- December 24 and 25
(or the closest Monday/Friday if this falls on a weekend)

Weather-related closing or delay - We notify radio stations and use our One Call Now notification system:

- WCLI (1450 AM)
 - WNKI (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.**

Key Contacts:

Executive Director	Peigi Cook	937-5502 x 113
	pcook@corningchildrenscenter.com	
Finance Director	Eileen Huff	937-5502 x 112
	centerfinance@corningchildrenscenter.com	
Operations Director	Delores Folk	937-5502 x 114
	dfolk@corningchildrenscenter.com	
Program Director & PS/PreK Age Level Specialist	Shanna VanPatten	937-5502 x117
	svanpatten@corningchildrenscenter.com	
Development Director	Meghan Parsons	937-5502 x 123
	mparsons@corningchildrenscenter.com	
Infant Age Level Specialist	Lisa Barrett	937-5502 x115
	lbarrett@corningchildrenscenter.com	
Toddler Age Level Specialist	Renee Warner	937-5502 x116
	rwarnar@corningchildrenscenter.com	
Special Needs Consultant	Margaret Morford	937-5502 x101
	mmorford@corningchildrenscenter.com	
Front Desk Staff	Jessica Brown and Margaret Morford	937-5502 x101
	ccenter@corningchildrenscenter.com ; jbrown@corningchildrenscenter.com ;	
	mmorford@corningchildrenscenter.com	



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 strives to set 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 nonprofit organization that provides high quality care and education for infants, toddlers and preschoolers (ages six weeks to five years old). 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 150 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 classrooms are grouped by age, using the same cutoff day as schools in New York use (December 1st) in our Continuity of Caregiving rooms or using the age spans more typically defined by licensing regulation in C Wing.

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 and it remains important throughout our time with your child.

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 help them develop to 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

Continuity of Care – A and B Wings

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 the Lead Teacher/Teacher team (barring staffing changes) every year, from the time they enter the Center through their Preschool year. Typically, the Teacher Assistants will not move with the group. For their last year with us, before they leave for Kindergarten (called Pre-K in our setting), children move without their primary caregivers. This allows them to gain practice in moving to a new classroom, adapting to the expectations of new teachers, 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 2002 in response to the increasing body of research demonstrating the many positive results of firm, sustained attachments in a child's early years.

Traditional Classroom Model – C Wing

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 throughout life and 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 when openings allow.

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 believes that children (and adults) are inspired by the understanding that real people make art. We know that direct experience of the creative process can have ripples that last a lifetime. For these reasons, we offer 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, theater, song writing, painting and poetry classes. These sessions are offered when we are able to find folks who are both talented artists and have a talent for working with young children. We are always open to your suggestions so please let us know if you want to recommend someone.

Performance Series

The Center has a series of live performances that take place on Friday afternoons. All Center staff, children and families are welcome to attend. 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, jugglers and musicians representing a wide variety of styles including everything from opera to jazz 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 children in each age group. The Age Level Specialists are supervised by the Program Director who also acts as the Preschool/PreK Age Level Specialist. These experts in child development are experienced in working with their age level in a group care/education setting and are responsible for quality assurance, staff supervision and training as well as program support and guidance to their staff. The Program Director is not part of ratio in any assigned classroom but is in and out of all classrooms. The other two Age Level Specialists work 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
Shanna VanPatten	Program Director and Preschool/PreK ALS

Classroom Staff

The staff in each room includes:

- 1 Lead Teacher
- 1 Teacher
- At least 2 Part Time Teacher Assistants
- Additional staff, student helpers and volunteers as needed

All Lead Teachers and Teachers have schooling in Early Childhood Education or a related field (Child Development Associate certificate, Associates, Bachelors, or Master's 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 working in Center classrooms, a medical screening, reference checks, SEL and child abuse screenings, 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 an orientation evaluation prior to becoming a member of our staff. During this orientation period new staff members are not allowed

to be left alone with children. At the end of six months staff members are evaluated for their competence to open and/or close the classroom.

Regular Center schedules include a Lead Teacher or Teacher in each classroom. When a Lead Teacher or Teacher is out for any reason, their schedule is covered by the classroom Teacher Assistant(s) or a Substitute Teacher Assistant who has gone through the same hiring and training process as other staff. In keeping with Department of Social Services regulations, there is *at least* one adult for every four you 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 in the room observes the candidate's on-the-job skills and provides written feedback to the hiring team. 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 a familiar face and maintenance of routine.

Student Interns and Observers

We see training the next generation of early childhood educators as part of our professional responsibility. Therefore, 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 Executive Director in consultation with the Age Level Specialists and classroom staff. 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 share what we know.

Staffing Changes and Turn Over

We know that trust is important to you and your child and that trust grows out of your relationships with staff. This is one of the primary reasons we instituted our Continuity of Care program. We are also proud of the longevity of our staff. However, turnover does happen. Some changes are internal as staff receive well-earned promotions, request changes to other age levels or as we work to create an appropriate balance of skills and experience in our classrooms. Other changes are beyond our control and are the result of staff making career or personal changes or when they experience family or personal

emergencies. Whatever the reason may be, parents will, whenever possible, be given two weeks' notice of any changes in staffing that affect their child. The exception to this is in emergency situations or when staff has failed to give us two weeks' notice.

Center Staff Caring for Your Child Beyond 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 Caregivers

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 feature an abundance of natural light. All classrooms have child-sized toilets and sinks in the classroom. The rooms have easy access to the outside, but can only be entered through a keypad entry to the classroom wing. Our fully fenced playground provides a variety of experiences for children, from climbing equipment, to wide open spaces, to wooded areas for imaginative play. Our convenient location also allows us to provide the children with opportunities to experience our community through walking field trips.

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 and learning 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.
- Exposure to published author/illustrators through our Visiting Author program helps children understand that real people write and illustrate the books they know and love.

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 their level, it is not unusual to find a group of children (sometimes as young as two years old!) 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! The kitchen's proximity to our Organic Gardens makes cooking with fresh ingredients convenient and adds a whole new dimension to understanding where our food comes from. As they cook, our concrete learners are busy:

1. Learning about nutrition and trying 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. and
8. Improving fine motor control.

Getting Started



Drop Off and Pick Up

- *Center hours:* The Center opens at 7:00 am and closes at 6:00 pm. While staff may arrive before our official opening time in order to set up, they are not prepared to greet children until 7:00 am. Please schedule your arrival time accordingly.
- *Late pick up:* Staffing patterns have been developed to respond to children's routine departure times. 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.
- *Late fees:* In order to pay staff for additional time, we will charge a service fee after 6:00 pm. The doors will be closed at 6:00 pm and you will be expected to have left the building at that point, so please plan your time accordingly. If you leave later than 6:00 pm our standard late fees will be charged. Please arrive with enough time to pick up your child and talk with staff - and still leave the building by closing time at 6:00 pm.
- *Sign in and sign out:* All children must be signed in upon your arrival in the building and signed out when you leave. Sign in/out occurs electronically at the Front Desk using your personal finger scan. Individuals allowed to pick up your child will also be scanned. In the event of an emergency this system can be bypassed by Front Desk staff with your stated permission and with photo ID provided by the individual you are authorizing.
- *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, please contact the classroom or front desk staff. When someone who is not familiar to our front desk staff will be picking up a child please remember that:

1. They must be authorized on the child's "Blue Card" to pick up.
 2. They will be asked to present photo ID, so please remind them to bring ID with them into the building.
- *Children's on-premises schedule:* Groups will remain on 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 to be 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. For outdoor play, shoes with closed toes and secure backs are required in order to 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 onesies, 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 with the child's name, is appropriate for the season and fits properly. During periods of rapid growth this will mean checking on a regular basis to ensure 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 labeled bathing suit, water shoes, water bottle 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 a contracted catering company to meet USDA requirements for a well-balanced diet. Menus are 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 an afternoon snack are provided each day.

Please make sure the staff in your child's classroom knows about any food allergies your child may have and make sure 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. Please take this seriously and make sure that foods that you send with your child are nut free.

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. All decision/requests for changes to infant feeding schedules or meal components need to be documented in writing.

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 cost for lunch is based on the current contract with our food service vendor. You may inquire at the Front Desk to know the current charge. This charge would be paid at the Front Desk.

If you are interested in providing food for your child or your child's classroom, please discuss this with the classroom staff before doing so. We ask that you do so in order to ensure that doing so is consistent with what the staff have planned and does not inadvertently expose another child to a food to which they are allergic.

Peanut and Tree Nut Policy

At Corning Children's Center we serve children who have been diagnosed with a variety of food allergies. Additionally, many children in our care may be diagnosed with allergies during the time they are enrolled. Peanut and Tree Nut allergies are the most common allergy in young children. Peanut and Tree nut allergies can be life threatening and the prevalence of peanut allergies among children in the United States has risen more than threefold in recent years.

At Corning Children's Center we take our responsibility in partnering with all families to provide a safe environment for their children seriously. However we also recognize that, due to the prevalence of nuts and nut products in our culture and the varying degrees of sensitivity in people with allergies, that we cannot guarantee that we can provide a truly nut free environment.

PROGRAM WIDE RESTRICTIONS – ALL AREAS OF THE CENTER

Corning Children's Center strives to limit possible exposure to nut products in all classrooms. Therefore:

- We expect staff, children and visitors to wash their hands upon entry into any classroom.
- We have worked with our food vendor to ensure that we do not serve food containing nuts, nut butters, nut oils or foods processed where nuts may be present.
- We ask that staff or families not bring food containing nuts, nut butters or any foods containing nuts/nut products into the building. Reference the list above.
- Because children under five years old cannot be expected to distinguish between "safe" and "unsafe" butters, we do not allow or serve nut replacement butters such as soy or sunflower butters.
- We will not knowingly serve any food containing nuts, nut butters or any other nut product.
- Staff in the room will inspect labels prior to accepting food and any foods containing nuts/nut products will not be accepted. When inspecting labels staff will not only be looking at the ingredients but also at the allergens listing which appears below the ingredients. Note that chocolate products and baked goods often pose the greatest risks to sensitive individuals so please read those labels with especially close attention.

HEIGHTENED ALERT

ROOM SPECIFIC POLICY IF A CHILD OR STAFF MEMBER WITH A DIAGNOSED NUT ALLERGY IS IN THE CLASSROOM

Children diagnosed with a peanut/tree nut allergy are at particular risk because, for some, the risk of death is very real and does not necessarily require that the allergen be eaten. Exposure can occur from inhalation of the nut oil or from ingesting food which does not include nuts, but which has been prepared in a space where nuts have been processed at any time. They can also be exposed by touching a surface which has been touched by someone who has handled a product including any of these products. Therefore, where the risk is highest, our practice must be more rigorous.

Although we cannot insure that no exposure will occur, we can implement a rigorous plan to manage that risk.

- Any room which includes a staff member or child diagnosed with a nut allergy will be clearly marked on the door leading into the classroom.
- Children requiring an Epi Pen will not go anywhere in the building without the Epi Pen easily available at a moment's notice.
- Children with nut allergies will NOT be placed in other classrooms without the explicit permission of the child's family, even for brief periods of time. Children from other rooms can be in the classroom of a child with a nut allergy – assuming they wash their hands upon entry.
- Staff will ensure that Program Wide Restrictions are carefully enforced.
- Staff in the room will carefully inspect labels prior to accepting any foods into the classroom. Any product containing nuts/nut products, made on shared equipment with nuts/nut products or made in a facility that processes foods containing nuts will not be accepted. Baked goods present the greatest risk to individuals with nut allergies; therefore products likely to be refused following this inspection include such items as commercially prepared cupcakes, cookies, granola bars, etc.

- **For shared celebrations – including Birthday celebrations - the following options are available:**
 1. Ice cream, sherbet, Italian ice or Jell-O so long as ingredient labels meet the standard above.
 2. Fresh fruit
 3. A planned cooking activity done in the Center's Nut Free Activity Kitchen, with ingredients that meet the standard stated above.
 4. A celebration which does not include food but may include special, age appropriate activities approved by the classroom staff.

All families are expected to work with classroom staff in planning for any celebration, including Birthday celebrations, in the classroom to ensure that the celebration:

1. Is developmentally appropriate
2. Meets the program's policies
3. Is a positive experience for all children
4. Keeps all children in our care safe.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Families of children with food allergies need to exercise appropriate oversight of what foods their children eat at Center-wide events such as picnics and potlucks. Oversight in these settings resides with the family.
- We recognize that in addition to nut allergies there are children who may have other allergies, or deeply held religious/dietary practices that may make implementation

difficult in some circumstances. In those cases, when children are bringing food from home to accommodate these needs, children will be seated at different tables. As is always the case in our setting, staff will ensure that there will be no segregation that interferes with a full, supportive social interaction for any child. Tables will be carefully disinfected before and after meal service.

- Because individual reactions to allergens can range from mild to fatal, and because the exposure route can range from ingestion to airborne, we expect families to be full partners in helping us understand each individual circumstance. We commit ourselves to a respectful, common sense approach to problem solving and making accommodations which are reasonable and enforceable in a group care setting.

Food restrictions are challenging for all of us, but the health and safety of all children in our care is a shared responsibility and is our highest priority.



Things from Home

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

Check with your child's teachers before bringing other things from home. Please do not bring anything that is valuable, irreplaceable or too large to fit in the child's cubby. 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. If your child brings something from home please work with your child to understand that we encourage children to share their toys from home or the item will need to stay in their cubby.



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! Please also 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 and Young Toddlers, extreme cold is defined as a wind chill factor of 15° or below.

- For Older Toddlers, Preschool and Pre-K students, extreme cold is defined as a wind chill factor of 10° or below.

How Hot is Extreme Hot?

- For Infants and Young Toddlers we define extreme heat as a Heat Index of 90° or above.
- Older Toddlers, Preschoolers and Pre-K 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 in the early morning or late afternoon to protect children from the sun's rays.

We include outings to the bank, farmers' 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 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. If permission is not granted, they will need to stay behind as a guest in another classroom if space is available or be kept home if space is not available.



Nap Time

Young children alternate between periods of intense activity and periods of rest. Nap 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, ask that they rest quietly until the other children are asleep. If your child is still awake, the teachers will provide quiet activities for them to do at tables in the classroom.

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

Each child is provided with a crib or mat for napping. Parents will be asked to provide a blanket and a bag in which to store the 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 your 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 and is congruent with program policy and educational in nature.

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 – as long as it is nut free. 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. Please reference the section on the Center's Peanut and Tree Nut Policy to ensure compliance and avoid disappointment or confusion for your child.



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:

WENY	1450	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 ensures 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 607-937-5502 x101 or leaving a message in your child's classroom's voice mailbox. You may also email us at ccenter@corningchildrenscenter.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.

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 pick up 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 regular emails 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.

Childcare 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, emails or occasional phone calls. Just let us know what works for you and we will do our best to oblige—communication is that important!

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 families 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 use threatening language on Center property at any time, whether in the presence of a child or not. It is also important to remember that some manners of speech may be considered offensive by others and try to moderate your language while in the Center and especially around children. 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 threatening language be directed toward members of the staff or children enrolled 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.

It is also important to understand that this is a smoke-free campus. According to the Pro-Children Act of 1994, it is the law that there is no smoking in the Center structure or surrounding outdoor grounds.



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.

- **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.
- Parents are urged to consider ways in which they can participate in the life of the classroom by being a **Classroom Volunteer**. This may be as regular as volunteering to come in to read on a regular basis, or as specific as sharing a special skill with the children such as cooking, singing, playing soccer or whatever reflects your passions.

- The **Development Advisory 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.

The Board of Directors does much of its work through **Committees** comprised of Board members and community volunteers. Committees currently include Communications, Human Resources, Playground Development, and Technology. If your skills and/or interests inspire you to volunteer on one of our committees please discuss available openings with the Executive Director.

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



Parent Library

The Center has a growing library of books, articles and videos 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 on the shelves above the car seat cubbies. 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 parents to learn more about this important job and to offer support to one another. Please feel free to use us as resources whenever you have questions – and feel free to suggest ways that we can help you and other parents during these critical early years.



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 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 appreciating 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, volunteers, 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 regulations.

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 parent(s) 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 is 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 Feelings into Words

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 Executive 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 who 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 Executive Director.

Parents should not seek out any other parent to discuss their child’s inappropriate behavior. These concerns should be brought to the child’s caregiver, Age Level Specialist and/or the Executive 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 staffs, Age Level Specialists and/or the Executive 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, even when you and your child are eager 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 work together to help the child (and themselves) through this transition.

In Continuity of Care wings (A and B) transitions typically occur in July or September respectively. 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. It will also include staff from the new room coming in to the child's existing classroom so that the child recognizes them and has spent time with them before moving into the new classroom.

Because the layout of the Center intentionally 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. Electronic files are carefully segregated and secured. We do not release any information from our files without written parental consent.



Rights of Non-Custodial Parents

The Center encourages the active participation of all parents in the education and care of their children. We recognize 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 must legally 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 and/or Facebook page, or other publicity materials.

Your photo and recordings permission could include, but is not limited to, the following: fundraising efforts like the Blue Moon Ball; social media such as Facebook; marketing materials such as our website or Annual Report; and photographs or recordings (video or audio) as part of local news coverage (newspapers, TV and radio stations).

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. At the time of intake you will be asked to sign a Photo and Recordings Release form. You will be given the option of giving us blanket permission, requesting approval before publishing anything through external sources or refusing permission for any use. The parent/guardian is responsible for updating this form at any time you wish the change your elected authorization.

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 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 Specialist for your child's age level or the Program Director.
- 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 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. A failure to provide these documents in a timely manner will be cause for the Center to deny enrollment.



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. If a child exhibits signs of illness which would indicate that they meet the criteria listed below, you may be asked to keep the child home.



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 (taken under the arm or in the ear) in a child younger than four months old or 105°F in children over six months old. Temporal scans

are used as a means of quick screening on a daily basis. A fever of any kind in a child under two months of age should be evaluated by the child's physician.

- **Cold Sores and Fever Blisters:** Children are allowed to be in group care if fever blisters and cold sores can be adequately covered or when the sores are crusted over.
- **Diarrhea:** Stools that are unformed – loose/watery; that are not easily contained in the diaper or toilet.
- **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 their normal temperature): 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 two 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.

- Any illness that results in a need for care that is greater than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children.

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.

If a child has been exposed to a contagious illness, parents/guardians should notify the classroom staff. When a child exposes the other children in the Center to a contagious illness, the staff (after approval) will notify the other families in writing (without disclosing names) and will provide written information regarding the illness(es).

With highly contagious illnesses (ex. C-Diff), the Center reserves the right to make the decision on when a child needs to be excluded or can return to care after consultation with our Health Consultant.

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.
- Fill out the Ill Child Form to have the parent sign and log the symptoms and action taken in the Daily Health Check log.
- Notify other families in the room of exposure to a contagious illness (after appropriate approval) and provide written information regarding that illness.

Children may return to care when they:

- No longer meet the dismissal requirements
OR
- Have written permission from a health care provider indicating that the child is free from communicable diseases and may return to care.

For specific contagious conditions, the following policy is in place:

- Conjunctivitis: The child may return with a doctor's note, 24 hours after the course of medication has begun.
- 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 six 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 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 using the form provided by the Center
- 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 maintains individual health records and may be contacting you to assure that your child's immunizations and routine well-child checkups 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.



Emergency 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. 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.

Each month we also do unannounced drills for other types of emergencies as outlined in our Safety Management Program such as Bomb Threats, Abduction, Aggressive or Hostile actions, lockdowns, weather safety etc. If you are interested in seeing a copy of that plan please ask an Age Level Specialist, the Executive Director or the Office Manager for a copy.

Shelter in Place Drills

Shelter in Place drills are done at least twice a year. Per licensing requirements, parents will be notified before each drill is conducted.



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 regular staff members 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. When a medical box has been pulled, an amber strobe light will flash at the Front Desk and in the Executive Director's Office, a small alarm will sound only in the lobby with a signal going to Eastern Security.

The staff directly involved will call 911. The receptionist will send help to the room and assist as needed. Every effort to contact a parent, guardian or authorized emergency contact and the child's physician will be made. Until the arrival of medical assistance, the Executive 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 being 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."

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 self-control 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 okay 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 have rarely had to ask children to leave our setting.



Child Abuse Reporting

In accordance with provisions of Section 432 of New York State Social Services law, all day care Center staff members 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 while in our care, 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, you may request a copy from the Executive Director, or you can access them online at the OCFS website listed below. 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://ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/looking.asp>

Electronic access to the regulations can be found at

<http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/regs/418-1%20DCC%20effective%206.1.15.pdf>



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 Eastern Security which means that a quick phone call immediately activates their response system in the event of medical or building emergencies. Eastern Security immediately dispatches trained EMTs and calls the local ambulance service.

Eastern Security staff is trained to respond quickly and appropriately to a wide variety of crises including terrorism, threats against persons and abductions. The Eastern Security office is located at 11928 State Route 352 in Corning.

If you need to contact Eastern Security, their business number is 607-937-8500. In an emergency, call 315-422-4141. These numbers are posted next to every phone in our building.

We are also tied to Corning Incorporated (CI) Security in the event of alarm trouble within the building. CI Security is trained to respond quickly and appropriately to these alarms. CI Security is located in the Houghton Park B Building just across Pulteney Street from the Center. If you need to contact CI Security their business (non-emergency) number is 607-974-8407. For an emergency call 607-974-6911.

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 their offices opening onto the lobby, the Executive Director and Office Manager also have 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. Access to the classroom wings is possible with a code only known to Center staff. All others can gain access from the playground only to the Administrative Wing.

All guests are asked to sign in at the Front Desk and those who are unknown to us 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. Electronic copies are available by request to the Office Manager.

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
- Cash

EFT is the preferred method and offers extra benefits to clients who have a Dependent Care 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 reimbursement claims, resulting in more timely reimbursements for the client. EFT tuition payments can be made weekly, bi-weekly or bi-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

In order to pay staff for additional time, we will charge a service fee after 6:00 pm. The doors will be closed at 6:00 pm and you will be expected to have left the building at that point, so please plan your time accordingly. If you leave later than 6:00 pm our standard late fees will be charged. 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 tuition, the following fee collection process has been established:

- Tuition payments are due in full for the current week no later than 5:00 pm on the last day of the current week of service. 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 tuition is encouraged.
If a specific payment schedule is desired, please contact the Finance Director who will work to develop a mutually agreed upon payment schedule,
- 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 statement of accounts is available to each client through your ProCare page at a Front Desk Computer any time. You are urged to review your account routinely and promptly address any discrepancies with the Finance Director. A printed statement can be generated at any time upon request.



Past Due Payment Policy

If an account is past due more than seven days, the client will receive a letter notifying them of their past due status. If payment is not made by the end of the week in which that notification is made, a phone call will be made to the clients and arrangements will be confirmed for payment of the outstanding balance due. If payment is not received in accordance with the

confirmed arrangement, the client will then receive a letter outlining termination procedures. Failure to make payments after receiving a termination letter will result in the forfeiture of the child(ren)'s enrollment.

Checks returned to the Center for insufficient funds will be assessed a \$15.00 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 New York State 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 are encouraged to complete a form annually stating their household income level, number of people in the household, their names and the last four digits of their 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 added 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.



Withdrawal 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.



Why do we Fundraise?

Corning Children's Center is a non-profit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization. According to the IRS website, "To be tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code, an organization must be organized and operated exclusively for exempt purposes set forth in section 501(c)(3), and none of its earnings may inure to any private shareholder or individual." It also means that we can raise funds to support that work.

We know the cost of early-age care and education can be one of the most significant expenses in a family's budget. That is why we work so hard to make care accessible to families across the socio-economic spectrum. It is also why we dedicate so much effort to building ongoing support throughout our community. On average, tuition income represents 66% of our program operating income. The remaining 34% of our budget is covered through other sources:

- Grant support and fundraising contribute roughly 31% of our income.
- Corning Incorporated continues to support our mission with a generous operating grant and by underwriting many of the costs associated with our building. We are deeply grateful for their long-standing assistance.
- Investments, registration fees, and state reimbursements for families eligible for free and reduced-price means combine to cover the remaining 3% of expenses.
- The program's ambitious fundraising efforts underwrite the cost of care by at least \$160,000 each year.

We take our fiscal responsibilities very seriously and try to operate both professionally and frugally. Every special activity we offer – art, music, science, poetry – and all of our books and equipment depend on available financing. Financial contributions help to fund all of these important aspects of our program.

Fundraising also allows us to introduce more people to the Center, which enhances staff recruitment, volunteer participation and community partnerships. Building relationships with donors and supporters is crucial to the survival of Corning Children's Center. We appreciate all who give in so many ways.