

## *Welcome to Zion Lutheran Child Care Center*

Our entire staff is looking forward to working with you and your child. Our goal is to provide a safe and nurturing environment for your child while they are in our care. You are welcome and encouraged to stop by anytime you are able to and see us in action.

Our purpose is to provide the best possible care for your child in a Christian environment. We offer a program with a variety of activities to develop the Whole Child: physically, intellectually, socially, emotionally, creatively, and spiritually. We believe in providing an environment that is not only safe, clean and oriented to children, but also provides each child with a feeling of family. We believe that parents are the most significant adults in the lives of their children, and we strive to create a partnership between staff and parents. The strength of our program is in our well trained and dedicated staff.

This handbook will provide you with information about our center and our programs. Please take the time to read it through carefully. If you have any questions or concerns about our programs or policies, please don't hesitate to stop in or give the center a call.

## **ENROLLMENT**

The center is open to any child ages 6 weeks through 12 years of age. Enrollment is accepted without regard to race, religion, sex, national origin, or marital status. However, Zion Lutheran Child Care Center is operated by Zion Lutheran Church, and practices the teachings of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod in its programs.

New families are enrolled on a first come, first serve basis.

Upon enrollment, a non-refundable fee of \$40.00 per family will be due. This is an annual fee that is paid every January. Parents who enroll their child on or before August 22<sup>nd</sup> will be expected to pay the registration fee again in January for the following year.

Parents need to complete and turn in the necessary forms before the first day their child starts.

All information and records given to Zion Lutheran Child Care Center are considered confidential and will not be released or disclosed without written request from the child's parent or guardian.

Zion Lutheran Child Care Center reserves the right to cancel or suspend the enrollment of a child at any time if the center is unable to meet the needs of a child.

## **PAYMENT POLICY**

Payment is due on the first day that your child attends each week for services to be rendered that same week. For children who are hourly, please add up the amount of hours you expect your child to attend for the week and pay accordingly. If you schedule for drop-in care, we do require 24 hours notice if you decide to cancel. If proper notice is not given, you will be charged for the hours you signed up for. Instead of bills, statements will be given each week. These statements will reflect weekly charges for days/hours scheduled, payments received, outstanding balances and credits to your account. Checks and money orders are acceptable forms of payments. If you wish to pay by cash, then you must make arrangements with the center administrator. Please make your checks out to **ZION CHILD CARE CENTER**. Checks returned by our bank for "non-sufficient funds" will result in an additional \$25.00 fee. If more than two checks have been returned, then further tuition payments must be made with money orders, or cash only.

It is very important that we receive your tuition payment on time. A late payment fee of \$5.00 per week will be incurred when tuition is not paid on the first day of attendance for that week.

If a payment is more than five days late, your child may not return to the center until your bill has been paid in full, or arrangements have been made with the administrator.

### *V.I.P. DAY'S (VACATION, ILLNESS, PERSONAL)*

Upon enrollment, each family enrolled 4 & 5 full days will receive 10 VIP (Vacation, Illness, and Personnel) cards and 3 Sick Day cards. These days may be used at any time throughout a 12 month period for vacations, sick days, or personal time. A sick card is applied to a single child, while V.I.P. cards apply to a complete family. Part-time families will receive 5 V.I.P. cards. **Once your days are used up, then you are responsible to pay the full rate, for each missed day, per child, effective June 1, 2008.** This is to ensure that your child has a spot reserved in the center. The administrator will be keeping track of each families days used. Families are also encouraged to keep track for their own personal records. Your V.I.P. days will be renewed every January. V.I.P. days cannot be carried over from year to year.

### *HOLIDAYS*

The center operates 12 months a year; however, the center will be closed on the following holidays:

Fourth of July	Christmas Eve
Memorial Day	Christmas Day
Labor Day	New Years Eve
Thanksgiving Day and Friday after	New Years Day

If there are any additional days around the holidays that we may close, we will inform you of them with as much notice as possible. You will not be charged for the days the center is closed due to holidays or snow days.

In the event that Zion Lutheran School is closed due to the weather, the child care will also be closed. You can listen for closings on Channel 6 or 12 News and watch for **Zion Lutheran School-Menomonee Falls**, or see our website at [www.zionschool.info](http://www.zionschool.info).

## TERMINATION

Zion Lutheran Child Care Center reserves the right to cancel or suspend the enrollment of a child for any of the following reasons:

- Failure to pay fees
- Failure to submit required health forms
- Failure to comply with policies of the center outlined in this book
- Failure to communicate frequent absences
- If disruptive/harmful behavior continues after 3 conferences

Parent/guardians may voluntarily terminate their child's attendance for any reason by giving a written two week notice. There is no refund of the registration fee, and you will be responsible for the full amount of tuition for the two weeks even if your child does not attend.

The center and parents/guardians may mutually agree that placement in the center is not appropriate for the child, budget or schedule. A termination date will then be agreed upon. There is no refund of the registration fee.

The administrator will determine a termination date based on the seriousness of a problem if one should arise. The reason for termination and the termination date shall be given in writing to parents/guardians. No refund of fees will be given.

## ARRIVAL & PICKUP

Arrival and pick up times are good opportunities for parents and staff to share pertinent information about their child from home or the center. Parents are required to bring their child to his/her classroom. No child is permitted to enter or exit the building without an adult or to use the entry code on the main door. Please do not let your children know the code. We ask this as a safety precaution.

Upon arrival and departure times, each child must be logged in and out by their parent/guardian everyday. There is a computer terminal located in the office to log your children in and out. Anyone who is authorized to drop off and pick up your child is also responsible to log your child in and out. Please make sure that the person is fully aware of this policy.

Any person dropping off children in the infant rooms must remove their shoes prior to entering. This ensures that the carpets and floors stay cleaner as the little ones crawl around.

Children will not be released to anyone the staff is unfamiliar with or whose name does not appear on the Emergency Contact Form; unless the parents have given written permission to the child care staff. At pick up times, the staff will ask to see photo identification in order to verify the individual's identity. Please inform the staff when someone else will be picking your child up.

Weather can be a huge factor, especially winter, when a parent is trying to get across town to pick their child up. Please give the center a call as soon as possible to let us know you will be late. However, parents who pick up their child after 6:00 p.m. will be charged \$2.00 per minute per child. This fee will be charged to your account.

### *NAPPING*

All children under the age of 5 are encouraged to rest. Nap time begins approximately at 12:30pm, and lasts until 2:30pm. Those who have outgrown their afternoon nap will be allowed to enjoy quiet activities until nap time is over. Restful music will be provided at this time. A cot, blanket and cot sheet will be provided for each child. The sheets and blankets will be laundered each week. We welcome special "snuggle items" for your child to sleep with. Remember to label all items with child's first and last name.

Here at the center, all infants will be put down to sleep on their backs only, unless there is a signed medical release form from the child's physician. Infants sleep in cribs that meet the safety standards of the State of Wisconsin. Only blankets (up to 2) will be allowed in the crib with infants, no bumper pads or toys of any kind will be permitted.

### *DRESS CODE*

It is important that your child wears comfortable yet washable clothes. Gym shoes are best for our kind of play. Dress your child in clothes that they can easily manage at bathroom times. Pants or shorts with elastic waists are easiest for young children. Teachers are always available to help, but we really encourage independence. Each child should have an extra set of clothes, including socks and underwear. These items

should be kept at the center just in case of an accident. Label every piece of clothing with your child's first and last name.

All clothing with monogramming, manufacturer's logo; college or school names will be permissible. Any clothing with pictures or lettering advertising tobacco, alcohol, drugs, rap or rock groups, or displaying vulgarity or suggestive writing or pictures may not be worn at any time, not even under other clothing. This is to the discretion of the child care staff. All shirts worn must cover the child's entire mid-drift at all times, (Shirts must reach past waist line). Pants must also properly fit at the waist. Belts are encouraged.

Please be aware of the changing seasons, and always dress your child for the weather. We do go outside everyday (weather permitting). We will keep children in if it gets to be colder than 25 degrees, or the wind chill is below zero. Please remember that we do go outside in winter so you are responsible to bring snow pants, boots, hats, and mittens. Don't forget to replace your child's extra set of clothing kept at the center according to the seasons as well.

**Any child that is well enough to attend our child care center is well enough to participate outside.**

### **FOOD & NUTRITION**

A midmorning and afternoon snack; along with juice, milk, and water will be provided for the children. We do offer a hot lunch program through a catered service. This service is operated on a monthly pre-pay basis for \$2.00 per lunch. A menu and order form will be placed in your family folder once a month and you indicate which days you would like your child to have the hot lunch. Please make lunch payments to: **Aldo's Catering**. If you choose to send a cold lunch for your child, please use a thermos to keep hot things hot and a cold pack for items needing refrigeration. No glass containers are allowed. When packing their lunch, please remember nutrition. We encourage the children to eat their "main dish" first, such as their sandwich, before they move onto their cookies and chips.

Special treats may be brought into the center. Please take into consideration any children with food allergies. You can talk with your child's teacher to obtain that information, along with the number of children attending for that day.

If your child is lactose intolerant and he/she must only have soy products such as soy milk, then you will need to provide that for your child. A refrigerator will be available for your convenience.

Infant formula and baby food must also be provided by the parent/guardian. All bottles that you bring must be pre-mixed. We are unable to mix the powder. All bottles must be dated for the day of their use. No extra bottles are allowed to stay in center overnight. New bottles must be brought on a daily basis. We heat all bottles and jars of baby food using a crock-pot filled with warm water. We will be happy to mix your baby's cereal together for you. Extra jars of baby food may be kept at the center for your child providing they have not been opened or used. Any unused portions of food must be sent home and not re-served at the center. **Remember to label all bottles and food with your child's first and last name.**

### **CHILD: STAFF RATIOS**

We always strive to maintain state recommended ratios to ensure the safety of the children in our care. To achieve this, there may be times when some age groups need to be mixed.

Infants & Toddlers (6 weeks-27 months)	4:1
Twos (28 months-30 months)	6:1
(31 months- 36 months)	8:1
Threes (must be potty trained)	10:1
Fours & Fives	14:1
Before & After Care (6 years- 12 years)	18:1

*When a child's birthday arrives, they will not be transitioned to the next room until they are developmentally ready. Furthermore, tuition will not change for a three year old unless they are potty trained and ready for the 3K room.*

### **HEALTH & MEDICATION**

The state of Wisconsin requires all children to have a medical report on file, as well as an up to date record of his/her immunizations. Non compliance of this can result in dismissal. All medical forms must be updated yearly.

As each child arrives, the teacher will watch for signs of injury or illness. Injuries will be noted in a medical logbook that is kept at the center. All staff is required by the State

of Wisconsin to report any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect of children under the age of 18. If the staff here at Zion has reasonable cause, a report will be filed.

Signs of illness may result in not allowing the child to remain at the center that day. A child is considered sick if he/she has one or more of the following:

- Diarrhea (Two or more in 1 hour's time)
- Temperature of 100 degrees or more (no exceptions)
- Eye infections
- Head lice
- Vomiting
- Unexplained rash
- Barking cough
- Profuse green discharge from eyes or nose
- Any signs of a communicable disease

If a child becomes sick at the center, the parents will be notified and arrangements will have to be made for the child to be picked up within one hour of the phone call. If neither parent is able to be reached, then an emergency contact you listed will be notified. The child must be symptom free for a full 24 hours, or have at least two doses of a prescribed medication before returning to the center.

There may be times when your child will be exposed to a communicable disease. A Health Alert will be posted if there is such a case. You must notify the center immediately if your child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease from his/her doctor.

When necessary, prescribed and over the counter medications may be administered by the staff with written consent from the parent/guardian prior to giving the medication. We will not administer any medications without this consent form. All medications must be in the original container with the child's and doctor's name on it. Only siblings may share the same over the counter medications.

Each school has the right to determine when a student who was infested with head lice or nits can return to school. **It is the decision of Zion Lutheran Child Care Center to implement a "No Nit" policy.** This means that all head lice and nits (eggs) must be removed from the head before the student can return to the classroom. An administrator must check the students before they are allowed to return to the center.

All parents and children who enter our center must follow our hand washing procedures.

Children must wash hand with soap and water:

- \*Upon arrival
- \*Before and after eating
- \*After using the bathroom
- \*After playing outside

Parents must wash their hands with soap and water:

- \*Before entering the Infant and Toddler rooms

We require that our staff be fully trained in first-aid and CPR. If a child is injured while at the center, first aid will be administered. If treatment by a doctor is needed, then we will make every effort to contact you and your doctor. In the event of a life threatening emergency, we will make sure that your child receives necessary emergency treatment. If your child is transported by an emergency vehicle, your child will be accompanied by a familiar adult.

Incident and accident reports will be filled out if your child exhibits any unusual behavior, or if they get injured during the day. These incidents and accidents are recorded in the centers logbook.

### ***DISCIPLINE***

At Zion, we believe in positive reinforcement and redirection. These methods help build self esteem and self-control in children. We use praise, role modeling, set clear limits, and promote consistency. We also believe that it is important to guide children in making choices that are appropriate, and we encourage children to use their communication skills rather than physical aggression to solve problems.

If a child has difficulty with unacceptable behavior or is uncooperative, he/she may be temporarily removed from the group for a "quiet time". If disruptive behavior continues, parents/guardian will be contacted, and the child will be sent home for the day. When positive discipline and guidance are not effective, a parent/teacher conference will be held with the administrator to determine the need for further intervention. Teachers will communicate with you regarding any behavior concerns.

## *WHEN A CHILD BITES*

Biting occasionally happens in child care settings. Biting is a common developmental behavior for children ages 18-26 months of age, and sometimes in an older child. When your child bites, or has been bitten by another child, there is a high emotional response. The feelings of anger, frustration and guilt are overwhelming. There are several reasons a child may bite. These reasons include:

- Young children explore by placing objects in their mouths. Sometimes a child "accidentally" bites another in the process.
- Young children do not have verbal skills to express themselves.
- Biting often results from frustration.
- Child may be teething
- Child may be hungry or tired
- Territorial: The child is protecting his/her play space
- Defensive: A child grabs for another's toy.
- Stress: Occasionally a child responds to stress by biting. Causes of stress may be due to a move, divorce or a new sibling.

Here at Zion we have many ways to discourage biting and they include:

- Teaching children to use their words
- Planned activities that allow children to release frustration
- Age appropriate toys are available that stimulate and decrease frustration and/or boredom.
- Providing biting substitutes such as teethingers.
- Teaching children the rules for sharing. Constantly praise cooperative behavior.
- Constant supervision

When a biting does occur, the biting child is calmly removed and given "quiet time". Statements such as "You don't bite. It hurts." or "Biting is not allowed. It hurts people." are used. The bitten child is consoled and the bite is quickly cleaned. Ice is placed on the bite to decrease the likelihood of swelling or bruising. The child who has bitten is "shadowed" to help us understand what may be causing the child to bite so that further incidents can be prevented. Tactics we will not use include: biting the child back, encouraging the other child to bite back, call the biter names such as "naughty" or "bad", tell the other parents who did the biting.

If a child does bite another three times in a day then the parents will be notified and the child will be sent home. A parent/teacher/administrator conference will then be arranged to discuss further ways to prevent the child from biting. If biting cannot be controlled, then the child's enrollment may be terminated.

## PARENT INVOLEMENT & COMMUNICATION

As parents, it is important to keep current with what is happening during the times that your child is in our care. Whenever possible, we encourage parents to involve themselves through children's worship services, open houses, class parties, etc... We want to make this the best environment for both you and your child, and we can do this when we work together.

Please check your parent file on a daily basis, as well as your child's cubby. A monthly newsletter is distributed at the beginning of each month. The newsletter contains information about upcoming events with Zion Lutheran Church, School, and Child Care Center. Scheduled closures for holidays will also be noted in the newsletter. Please familiarize yourself with our parent boards. On these boards you will find weekly lesson plans, what the children learned for the day, a copy of the daily schedule, and any health alerts. If anytime you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the administrator. We believe that parents are the most significant adults in the lives of their children, and we strive to create a partnership between staff and parents.

### Child Education Policy

Our qualified staff will strive to meet the education needs of all children with a curriculum designed for the development level of each individual child. What you can expect per age is as follows:

#### 6 wks.-2 years

- \*Provides safe, appropriate equipment
- \*Encourages self-help & language development
- \*Encourages exploration
- \*Supports development of social skills

#### 4-5 year olds

- \*Encourages creativity & self expression
- \*Well rounded curriculum that includes:  
language arts-math-social studies-  
science-computers-physical ed.-  
music-art-pre reading & writing skills

#### 3 year olds

- \*Encourages cooperative play
- \*Appropriate curriculum areas include:  
math-science-music & movement  
fine motor skills-large muscle-  
dramatic play-social needs  
appreciation of books & reading

#### 6-12 year olds

- \* Program designed to enhance what school-aged children are taught in their elementary schools. Including extras as:  
\* Children are allowed to participate in both quiet and active activities.  
\* Field trips are often planned on days when school is not in session.  
\* Equipment, materials and activities are geared toward the interest and age of child.