



Parent Handbook

2024-2025



*This document is subject to change

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PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

At Giving Tree Early Learning, we believe that every child has unlimited potential and a natural curiosity to learn. We recognize parents as the first teacher in a child’s life and seek to build a collaboration between teacher, family and child. Our classroom instruction and environments are inspired by the Reggio Emilia philosophy.

Giving Tree Early Learning will:

- Promote **positive relationships** for all children and adults to encourage each child's sense of individual worth.
- Implement a **curriculum** that fosters all areas of child development: cognitive, emotional, language, physical, and social.
- Use developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate **effective teaching approaches**.
- Provide **ongoing assessments** of a child's learning and development and communicate the child's progress to the family.
- Promote the **nutrition and health** of children and protect children and staff from injury and illness.
- Employ a **teaching staff** that has the educational qualifications, knowledge, and professional commitment necessary to promote children's learning and development, and to support families' diverse needs and interests.
- Establish and maintain collaborative relationships with each child's **family**.
- Establish relationships with and use the resources of the **community** to support the achievement of program goals.
- Provide a safe and healthy **physical environment**.
- Implement strong personnel, fiscal, and program management policies so that all children, families, and staff have **high-quality experiences**.

NAEYC Accreditation Standards; 2010

OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD AND OUT OF SCHOOL LEARNING

Giving Tree Early Learning is registered with the State of Indiana and the Office of Early Childhood and Out of School Learning (OECOSL). We are inspected annually to maintain this registration.

STAFF

Early Childhood staff are here with the best interest of your child in mind. We take full responsibility for the safety and care of the children we greet each day. Early Childhood staff are screened and chosen because of their motivation to do what is best for children. Teachers are trained in First Aid/Pediatric CPR, Universal Precautions, Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention and Detection, and Civil Rights training annually. Any staff members that have contact with Early Childhood children are screened with fingerprints, a drug test, and a check for a history of child abuse and neglect. National Criminal History checks are completed prior to employment and renewed every three years. Each teacher is also required to have a minimum of 20 hours of professional development each year on topics that affect early childhood. Should a staff member be absent for health or personal reasons, we will provide a substitute teacher who meets all guidelines of Early Childhood staff. We encourage all staff vacations to be taken during scheduled school breaks, but should a teacher be absent, we will find a qualified substitute teacher to cover the absence. In the event of a staff change, we ask that teachers provide a minimum of four weeks notice to allow us to transition classroom management effectively.

SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ENROLLMENT

Every child in Giving Tree Early Learning must have the following information on file before entering.

* Student Information Form

* Parent’s Notice – Ministry Form

* Child Care Center Health Record
(Includes updated immunizations)

* Handbook Agreement Form
* Record of Medication Order (if applicable)

Families will receive a tuition contract upon admission to the program. Your financial obligation will be outlined on this document at the beginning of the school year. Periodically you may wish to take your child out of school on days outside of the school's closing dates. Your financial obligation will remain unchanged. **Changes to contracts, such as adding days, will not be allowed after October 31st, 2023.**

Sick Leave

In the unfortunate event of an extended leave due to illness, continued enrollment in the program will be handled on a case by case basis. Please speak with Toni Scott regarding needs for an extended leave of absence from the program.

Withdrawal

Program withdrawals should be made in writing and submitted to the school administrator 30 days in advance. Requests made after the conclusion of the second week of the month, will be charged the remaining tuition for that month. We may ask for an exit interview in order to better understand the ongoing needs of our families and community.

POLICIES AND REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

** Confidentiality of information about the child and family will be maintained at all times. All forms and other information concerning the child and family are accessible to the parent/guardian, Giving Tree Early Learning school administration, staff and State of Indiana consultants. Information concerning the child will not be made available to anyone, by any means, without the expressed written consent of the parent/guardian. In the event of a divorce, separation, or custody ruling, please notify the school so that we may ensure that proper procedures are followed. Written documentation will be required.

** It is the policy of this program not to disclose the names of the children who may have caused injury to another child or children while attending the school. This ensures each family's privacy.

** Giving Tree Early Learning has an open door policy. You will need to contact the school to set up the best time possible for both parties and ask that you respect your child as separation may be difficult for all.

** Giving Tree Early Learning is required by law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services.

** If an authorized pickup person is intoxicated or impaired and insists on removing a child(ren) from the school, the school shall immediately report the incident to the local police agency.

** The use of tobacco, and the use or possession of alcohol, illegal substances, and firearms/weapons is prohibited on school grounds.

VISITORS

Visitor parking is available for your use. Parking is **not** allowed in the driveway in front of the school for the safety of all students.

HOLIDAYS

At Giving Tree Early Learning, we observe the Jewish holidays throughout the course of the school year as well as Labor Day, Memorial Day, and Thanksgiving. **We do not celebrate Halloween or Valentine's Day.**

HOURS OF OPERATION

Hours of operation are from 8:00 AM to 3:20 PM with dismissal concluding at 3:45 PM. Parents/guardians do have the option of extending the day for the child until 3:20PM or 6:00 PM* (end time subject to enrollment needs). It is important to be in school on time so that your child can maximize their learning experience.

Arrival

Drop off will be from 8:00-8:15 AM using the carline in front of the building. Teachers will not be available to take students before 8AM and walk-ups are not permitted for the safety of children and staff. If you arrive after 8:15, please park and walk your child into the building and to their classroom. **A strict deadline for entry will be enforced at 9:30 AM.**

3:20 Dismissal

Giving Tree students will be dismissed ten minutes before the rest of the school using the same carline procedures as morning arrival. Early Childhood students are NOT permitted to walk home with siblings or other students under the age of 18. **Parents must use carline for pick up and may not walk in to pick up their child. Dismissal concludes promptly at 3:45 PM.**

After School Care 6:00 PM Dismissal

After School Care is open until 6:00* (*November through February we dismiss earlier on Fridays due to observation of the Sabbath. Please see current school calendar for information). Parents/guardians are to enter through the front door and will pick their child up from classroom 133 or 134 as assigned by your child's age.

LATE PICK UP FEES

We ask that all parents and guardians respect the timeframe for designated pickup.

End of School day – 3:20-3:45

After School Care – 6:00

Any child not picked up by 3:45, or 6:00 will be assessed a \$1.00 per minute late fee. If the child remains 15 minutes after the designated pick up time, those listed on emergency contacts will be called. Please respect staff members' time and other responsibilities as well as your child and his/her ability to wait. If the pick up time becomes a problem, a conference will be called to discuss other options. Any fees assessed will be billed to you on a monthly basis. Thank you for being prompt.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Prompt and regular attendance at school is essential and cannot be over-emphasized. It is appreciated when medical and dental appointments are scheduled for after school hours or during school closings. Please phone the school when your child is going to be absent or late. This helps in planning the day and also ensures that we know your child is safe and well.

PLANS FOR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

In order to protect your child in the event of an emergency, we ask that you keep any emergency contact information for your child current. This includes:

- * Emergency medical authorization in case you cannot be reached
- * Phone numbers for yourself and at least 2 other people who are authorized to pick up your child
- * A list of your child's allergies (medication, food, etc)

In case of a tornado or severe weather warning, we will proceed to the classroom bathrooms for safety. In case of a fire, an escape route is posted in every classroom. In all emergency situations, the parents/guardians will be notified via phone as soon as the situation allows.

School Closure- If school should be closed due to inclement weather, emergency, or other unforeseen cause you will be notified via text message, email and social media. If this closure occurs during normal hours, you will be notified by

text message and email. Please arrange for alternate care and supervision for your child. In the event we are unable to care for your child, it is the parent's/guardian's responsibility to have a back-up plan in place. Parents/guardians are responsible for any costs that may be incurred to care for your child.

SAFETY

Because we are all concerned with the safety of the children, we ask for the parents' cooperation in observing the following safety measures when arriving or departing from the school:

- Drive slowly and cautiously, please refrain from talking on your cell phone.
- Do not leave your car while it is in the carline.
- Children will be dismissed directly from the Front office (1:00 (if applicable), 3:20) to parents in the carline only.
- School personnel are not allowed to place children in car seats. We ask for your cooperation in buckling your little ones into their seats as efficiently as possible.
- Meeting with a teacher: During dismissal, all teachers are on duty and are not available for a conference or even a quick conversation as we need to quickly and safely attend to the carline. If you wish to speak with a teacher, please make an appointment for after the conclusion of your child's school day.
- Children must have the appropriate car seat for their age/size in order for the child to be dismissed to a parent/guardian or other approved person.
- Giving Tree Early Learning does not tolerate use or possession of controlled substances or weapons of any kind on the property except in the case of Law Enforcement Officers.

If parents/guardians need to change the normal transportation set-up for their child on any given day they need to notify the office. We cannot guarantee that a message of this nature will reach all the proper sources (teachers, dismissal personnel, etc.) when called in less than an hour before dismissal.

Children will be released only to those individuals listed on your emergency card. Staff members will request identification if the individual is unknown. If you need to add or remove names or make any other changes to your emergency card, please call the front office. If you need to change pickup for a specific day, a note (signed and dated) or phone call must be made.

FIELD TRIPS

The activities in our program for Early Childhood children may include visits to special places within our building and within walking distance in the community. We do not transport students off site in vehicles. Special precautions are taken to ensure the safety of children on these field trips. You will be notified in advance of planned field trips and asked to sign a permission slip form authorizing your child's attendance at each event.

In addition, our Early Childhood students participate in visits from local businesses and community helpers such as local dentists, firemen/women, meteorologists, librarians, parents, and other special guest speakers.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

HEALTH AND ILLNESS

A health examination is **required** for each child prior to admission to the school.

In an effort to control illness in our facility and to do what is in the best interest of our enrolled students, the following guidelines have been made.

Please do not send your child to school with any of the following. (Symptoms must improve before a child can return to school):

- | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| ♥ pink-eye | ♥ ear ache | ♥ diarrhea (2 episodes within a 4hr period) |
| ♥ skin rashes | ♥ swollen glands | ♥ vomiting (1 episode) |
| ♥ persistent runny nose | ♥ discharge eyes or ears | ♥ fever (100.4 and above) |

For rules on fevers or other COVID 19 symptoms- see COVID 19 Updates below.

If your child becomes ill during the day and is found to have any of the above-mentioned symptoms, or is not able to participate in the daily routine, we will notify the parents via phone and the child will be excluded from the classroom. Your child is to be picked up as soon as possible. If the parents cannot be reached or you are unable to pick up your child within 30 minutes, those persons on your child's emergency list will be contacted. **Please be prepared and have a back-up plan if your child were to become ill and you would need to make alternate arrangements for your child's care. Keep work, cell, and emergency phone numbers current. If the child is not picked up within 30 minutes, a fee of \$25 will be assessed, as we will be required to pay a staff member to keep the child in isolation, but under supervision.**

If your child requires EMS services, your child will be transported to your hospital of choice as listed on your student paperwork. If no hospital is selected, your child will be transported to the closest hospital that is able to meet the health needs of your child. Peyton Manning Children's Hospital, St. Vincent's is located on 86th street and Naab Road. In the event that your child needs to be transported to a hospital you will be notified as soon as it is safe to do so. If you cannot be reached, your emergency contacts will be notified.

If your child is in need of limited activity, a doctor's note is required. If this limited activity requires that your child may not go outside or needs more supervision than we are able to provide, you will need to keep your child home until those restrictions are lifted. Unfortunately we do not have the staff to supervise children in a separate area. Thank you for your cooperation in keeping all students and staff at Giving Tree Early Learning healthy and safe.

COVID 19 Updates:

Students and staff who test positive for COVID-19 are to isolate for 5 days following the onset of symptoms. Students and staff may return on day 6 if fever free for at least 24 hours and other symptoms have improved.

MEDICATION/SUNSCREEN

All medications must have written orders from physicians. Should your child need to be given medication, please do the following:

1. Fill out the required medication form indicating dosage and use.
2. Deliver the medication, in its original container, to the office. Never send with a student.
3. We will administer diaper creams, hand creams and sunscreen with parent's WRITTEN approval and instructions.
4. The medication will need to be picked up by an adult. It will NOT be sent home with the child.

Sunscreen should be applied to your child before leaving home. If your child stays for After School Care, please send in a labeled bottle of sunscreen to be kept in the classroom.

HEAD LICE

While head lice do not pose a health hazard, it is highly contagious, especially with young children. Children who have a live louse and/or 2 or more eggs/nits within 1 inch of the scalp will be temporarily excluded from school until treated with the appropriate medication. In order to readmit, after treatment, the child will need to report to the front office to be checked for a louse and/or nits before returning to class.

IMMUNIZATIONS

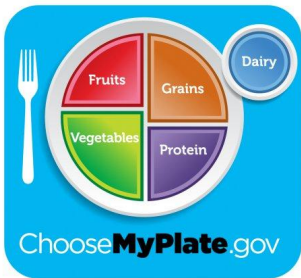
All children that enroll at Giving Tree Early Learning must have current, age appropriate immunizations. It is the parent's responsibility to keep the immunization records at Giving Tree Early Learning current. Parents will be notified, in writing, of any significant occurrences or problems that might affect your child, including exposure to communicable diseases. If you elect to opt out of immunizations, you do so with the understanding that should an outbreak occur, students will not be allowed admission until the outbreak has subsided. Please see Administration for forms and documents regarding immunization opt-out.

ACCIDENTS

When an accident occurs, an accident report will be completed by the classroom teacher and submitted to Administration. The school staff will see that your child has the appropriate care. Parents will be contacted via phone if the accident is deemed serious enough. In the situation that emergency care is required, your child will be transported to the parent requested hospital, unless medical staff deems it unnecessary.

NUTRITION

At Giving Tree Early Learning we strive to provide healthy food to our students by following all federal and state guidelines. All food available to the children is kosher and nut free, this includes items cooked in peanut oil. **Families must provide a morning and afternoon two component snack (protein, grain, fruit/vegetable) each day. If your child stays in Aftercare, you are required to send in an additional shelf stable snack. Lunches are also provided by the parent and must be transported in a lunch box with the child's name clearly located on the outside of the lunch box.** Children will receive milk or a dairy substitute (for allergy with proper documentation) each day at lunch. For more information, please consult the Snack and Lunch policy document. Additionally, hot entrees may be available for purchase. Please see order form emails for options or email aminzlaff@hhai.org for current program options.



FOOD ALLERGIES and SPECIAL DIETS

Any food allergies must be noted on your child's health record form. We must receive guidance from your child's physician with specific restrictions, an indication of what the known reaction could be, possible treatment, and information regarding who is to administer any aid needed in case of accidental exposure. Food allergy action plans are available upon request.

OUTSIDE TIME AND BIG MUSCLE PLAY

ALL children need fresh air and gross motor play time. All students will go outside daily, weather permitting (below 90 degrees Fahrenheit with the head index). During the winter months, we will take the children outside if both the windchill and outside temperature are above 25 degrees Fahrenheit. Rain or shine- we seek to connect our students with the outdoors. Please dress your child(ren) accordingly and provide the required rain gear or boots as requested by the classroom teachers.

GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE

We believe that all children should be treated with love and guidance. It is our objective to reinforce positive behaviors and redirect negative behaviors. We will help the child to problem-solve in order to be successful in the classroom with his/her peers and teachers. Giving Tree Early Learning uses *The Responsive Classroom and Conscious*

Discipline techniques as our framework in guiding children in the right direction. Providing a warm and welcoming environment that is conducive to student learning is the responsibility of the teacher. Caregivers will model conflict resolution techniques and encourage children to make positive choices throughout the school day.

If a child is having difficulty in our educational setting, we will request a Parent/Teacher Conference. We will utilize data collection tools to help identify trends and patterns in the behavior to better support your child. Through parent/teacher collaboration we can work towards your child's success in our program including the use of a behavior modification plan for both school and home to work together to meet the needs of the child.

Our Giving Tree Early Learning policy dictates that any person while on the child care premises shall not engage in or direct any of the following actions toward children: inflict corporal punishment, hit spank, beat, shake, pinch, produce physical discomfort, or use cruel, harsh, unusual, humiliating, or frightening methods of discipline, including the threat of use of physical punishment. Discipline will never be associated with food, rest time, or toileting. Spanking or any other form of physical punishment is prohibited under all circumstances even if requested by the parent. Giving Tree Early Learning's policies on guidance, exclusion and expulsion are in compliance with Federal, State and Civil Rights laws. For more information, please see the Guidance/Discipline and Expulsion policy available in the front office.

BITING

Biting is a behavior both common and developmentally appropriate with toddler age children. Biting is often a way for children to express their needs or wants before communication skills have fully developed. Our staff will discourage biting, provide alternative outlets and model appropriate communication skills for students. If biting becomes an ongoing issue, the teachers will meet with the parents in order to problem-solve and find a solution. Children will be sent home after 2 biting incidents in one day.

HITTING AND PHYSICAL CONTACT

Hitting, pushing, shoving, or any other physical contact will not be tolerated by Giving Tree Early Learning. While we understand the developmental process of children learning to express themselves and define boundaries, we must ensure the safety of both the children and staff. Children who become overly aggressive during the school day, will be sent home after two incidents. If physical contact should become a consistent problem, teachers will request a parent/teacher conference in order to problem solve to best meet the child's needs.

CURRICULUM

We strive to provide developmentally appropriate practices that integrate secular and Judaic instruction into each piece of the day. Teachers develop lesson plans that are driven by the students' current interests and that are aligned with developmentally appropriate practices as outlined by the Indiana Early Learning Foundation standards, NAEYC and the Reggio Emilia philosophy.

NAEYC

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is dedicated to improving the well-being of all young children, with particular focus on the quality of educational and developmental services for all children from birth through age 8. NAEYC's mission is to serve and act on behalf of the needs, rights, and well-being of all young children with primary focus on the provision of educational and developmental services and resources. (NAEYC Bylaws, Article I, Section 1.1)

REGGIO EMILIA PHILOSOPHY

The Reggio Emilia Philosophy was adopted by our program in 2009. Each school year, the staff endeavors to learn and implement a different element of the Reggio Emilia teaching philosophy creating growth for both students and staff.

The key components of a Reggio-Inspired program are:

1. Children are viewed as capable learners and share in their learning
2. The environment is the third teacher
3. Learning occurs through provocation, guided discovery and hands-on experiences.
4. Educators are **facilitators** of learning
5. Belief in acceptable risk taking
6. Collaboration
7. Building meaningful relationships with students, their families and staff members.

SUPPLEMENTAL PROGRAMS

In addition to the Reggio Emilia philosophy, we seek to enrich our curriculum through the following educational programs.

- Handwriting Without Tears/Get Set for School (handwriting)

ASSESSMENTS

Assessments are completed on your child throughout the school year. Assessments used are developmentally appropriate and administered in the least restrictive environment to provide for authentic observations. Assessments are used to inform the teachers what your child is capable of and not what they have yet to master. Assessments will be used to help you better understand your child's development and to guide our curriculum. Your classroom teacher will maintain ongoing developmental records for your child, including work samples, observations of all developing skills (physical, language, social, emotional, and cognitive) and any information that you have shared with us throughout the school year. Teachers will keep all assessments in the student's portfolio which is available to you at any time.

ASQ and ASQ SE

Ages and Stages Questionnaire and Ages and Stages Questionnaire- Social/Emotional assessments are supplemental assessments used in further identifying student skill sets. These assessments are based on the child's age and can be filled out by both the parents and teacher.

ISTAR-KR

The purpose of ISTAR-KR (Indiana Standards Tool for Alternate Reporting of Kindergarten Readiness) is to measure skills in children from infancy to kindergarten. A derivative of Indiana's Early Learning Standards (which are part of the Foundations to Indiana Academic Standards), ISTAR-KR is aligned to the Indiana Standards for kindergarten in the areas of English/Language Arts and Mathematics and includes three functional areas: physical, personal care and social-emotional skills.

-Indiana Department of Education

PORTFOLIOS

Upon entering our program, each student receives a portfolio. This portfolio follows the child throughout our program. Portfolios contain the following-

- Assessments and Progress Reports
- Observations, photographs and work samples in the areas of Language Arts/Literacy, Mathematics/Science, Creative Arts, Social/Emotional
- Parent/Student Info

CHILDREN WITH CHALLENGES OR SPECIAL NEEDS

Giving Tree Early Learning opens its doors to ALL children who wish to have a high quality secular and Jewish education. Some of our students may need additional support for learning, some may need assistance with the English language and some may need enrichment to ensure that they are learning at their highest levels.

Differentiating instruction within the classroom is important for all students to achieve. However, it is sometimes necessary to provide additional services. We strive to meet the educational needs of all children. Please note, should it become apparent that this program cannot meet the needs of your child, we will work collaboratively to help facilitate a smooth transition to the program of your choice.

MULTIAGE LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Giving Tree Early Learning has the unique opportunity to engage with students from different ages. These opportunities include middle schoolers reading to children, classes joining together for Shabbat celebrations, parades in the hallway, and celebrating outdoor classroom day together. Experiences do not usually exceed more than thirty minutes. During multi age learning experiences, there is always extra staff to support if necessary. Multiage experiences promote collaboration and social emotional skills.

JUDAICS

Giving Tree Early Learning provides opportunities for children to learn traditions, Jewish values, and Hebrew vocabulary through play-based explorations. Torah stories, holidays, prayers, and weekly Shabbat are explored through role playing, storytelling, art, and music. On Fridays, the children will bake challah to take home and to share during their class Shabbat party. Additionally, children in classrooms Almond through Oak will learn alongside Chana Grossbaum and Rabbi Grossbaum learning tefillah and parsha (Torah stories) throughout the week. These stories and songs teach children life skills, conflict resolution, and character building while emphasizing community and friendship.

CLASSROOM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

Entrance requirements for the classrooms at Giving Tree Early Learning are as follows:

Seedling-Children must be 12 months of age by August 1

Olive- Children must be 18 months of age and walking by August 1

Orange-Children must be 28 months of age by August 1

Almond- Children must be 30 months of age by August 1

Fig-Children must be 3 years of age by August 1, and actively working on toilet training.

Oak-Children must be 4 years of age by August 1 and toilet trained (must be able to take care of toileting needs and change clothes independently).

PARENTAL CONCERNS

If parents have a concern, we ask that you first discuss any issues directly with the classroom teacher. Classroom teachers are available following the school day. Please arrange an appropriate time to meet with your classroom teacher. If, after discussion, the issues were not successfully resolved, then please feel free to contact the Principal or Early Childhood Director.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

We do maintain an open door policy in our program. However, we ask that if you wish to spend more than 15 minutes in the classroom to then schedule a visit with your classroom teacher so as not to take away from the teacher's ability to interact with the children. Transitioning to a new environment can be difficult for young children. Keeping your visits brief allows your child to fully immerse into his/her environment giving your child the opportunity to interact with his/her peers and to grow into a confident and independent learner. If other arrangements are required, we will make

accommodations based on the individual needs of your child. If you are symptomatic, you will be required to wear a mask during your visit.

CLOTHING

Children are always on the move! They work hard and play hard, so in anticipation of this, we request a complete change of clothing for each child. (Please make sure pants, shirts, socks, and underwear are clearly labeled) As children grow and the seasons change, the clothing may need to be swapped out. We will do our best to help remind you of this. In those cases where your child is in the process of learning to use the toilet, we request 2 changes of clothing and ask that you pay careful attention to notes sent home requesting new clothing. Children will have daily outdoor time, unless the weather doesn't cooperate. In anticipation of this, sandals, crocs, or open-toed shoes are not permitted and in the colder weather, send your child with a warm coat, hat, and mittens. Lastly, children should be sent in clothing that is easy for the child to work with independently. It can become frustrating for the child if there are complicated snaps, zippers, belts, and other contraptions.

DIAPERS AND WIPES

Children in the Seedling, Olive, and Orange classrooms have many diaper changes each day. These changes are logged on a daily report sheet. Parents are responsible for providing the necessary diapers and wipes. Diapers will not be borrowed from other children. When the supply is low, a note will be sent home, giving the parent a few days to bring in a new supply. If your child runs out of diapers and you have not renewed the supply, you will be contacted to bring in diapers immediately. If you have not brought diapers after three reminders, your child will be sent home until diapers are brought in. Please write your child's name on the outside packaging.

Almond, Fig, and Oak-If your child is in the process of potty training, we ask that you provide training pants (pull ups), several pairs of underwear, wipes and extra clothes to help your child stay successful throughout the day. All families are encouraged to begin potty training at home the summer before the start of the school year.

All diapers, pull ups or training pants MUST have reclosable tabs. Due to large group care, we cannot dress and undress each child to change their diapers. Thank you for your understanding.

TOILET TRAINING

When readiness signs for toilet training are observed, teachers will work with parents and children to support ongoing potty training efforts that begin at home. Readiness signs involve the child's ability to tell the teacher about a soiled diaper, to show signs of discomfort while in a soiled diaper, or to express an interest in using the toilet.

Toilet training means

- Your child can and does tell the teacher he/she has to use the toilet
- Your child is able to pull down his/her own clothing
- Your child uses the toilet independently
- Your child has had consistent success in the home environment

Please note-all classrooms have a bathroom that is accessible to children. If your child attempts to use the potty, they will not be denied access to the bathroom. The teachers will do their best to communicate if they see signs of readiness in the classroom. A discussion will occur between parents and teachers before teachers actively begin potty training in the classroom.

Children will never be punished or humiliated due to toileting accidents. Accidents and inconsistencies will occur at both home and school. After two accidents on the same day, the child will be placed in a pull-up or diaper (provided by parent) for the rest of that day. The next day the child will then be placed back in underwear. This is to help maintain a safe and healthy classroom environment. When accidents occur, the soiled clothing will be sent home in a plastic bag. Please remember to replace this clothing when needed.

KIPPOT

Kippot, or kippah is a head covering worn by male students during prayer. If you wish to participate in this practice, you should send in a bag of kippot from home to be kept in the classroom, specifically for your child. Extra kippot can be purchased in the front office for \$1.00.

ITEMS FROM HOME

Due to the safety of the children, **toys from home are not allowed at school unless requested**. Toys (due to choking hazards), medications, hand sanitizers, and lotions are not to be left inside student backpacks. If you have important items to send in, please place the items directly into the hands of a staff member.

BIRTHDAYS

As we know, birthdays are very important in a child's life. In school birthday celebrations must be arranged directly with your child's teacher. Parents are permitted to join the celebration if desired and may wish to read a book to the class. If you would like to share an activity or gift with the class in honor of your child's birthday, please consult with your child's teacher.

Gift bags for children are not permitted. Likewise, latex balloons are prohibited due to choking risks. Instead, we encourage donating a game or puzzle to the classroom or books in honor of your child may be purchased from the Library. Please email Tricia Berg for more information- pberg@hhai.org

NOTE: In order to be fair to all children and allow the parent to make a decision regarding a party, **NO invitations are to be passed out through/at school**. Parents cannot drop off invitations for teachers to distribute. Parents are not permitted to put invitations in other students' belongings. Please be sensitive to your child's classmates' feelings and do not schedule parties on Shabbat (Saturday) or Jewish holidays. If you need assistance in finding kosher food options so that everyone can celebrate with your child, please let us know. Please use the HHAJ and Giving Tree Early Learning Directory to send out invitations.

REST TIME

We encourage all children to take a rest time. This is a great way for children to unwind. Children are not required to sleep, but are given a moment to decompress between the morning school activities and afternoon programming. All Seedling, Sapling, Olive, Almond, and Fig age children will be required to rest in their classroom per State regulations.

Oak children will be given the opportunity to rest shortly after 1:00. Students who fall asleep will be given cots to rest on. This rest time will be between 20 to 30 minutes long, although sleeping students will be allowed to rest until waking. Students will be allowed to engage in quiet activity during this time. We ask that students are sent with a lovey or blanket. Items will be sent home at the end of the week to be laundered.

Each child is required to have nap items sent from home (crib sheet, blanket, pillow or lovey if desired) These items are to be brought each Monday (or first day of the new week) and will be sent home to be laundered each Friday (or the last day of the week).

COMMUNICATION

WEEKLY COMMUNICATION

The school has a weekly newsletter called **Weekly 5-Shabbat Shalom** that is sent out electronically each week and posted to the school website, www.hhai.org. Upcoming events, lunch menus and important information is shared through this document.

Additionally, each classroom provides a daily/weekly blog. Your teacher will email out the link or classroom blogs can be found on the school website. This is a great way to view your child's learning first hand. Please visit your classroom's blog often.

Classroom blogs can be found by visiting www.givingtreehhai.org under the CLASSROOMS tab.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parents are requested to attend the March parent/teacher conferences for the school year. Since your child's progress will be discussed, we ask that you make alternative arrangements for your child during your scheduled conference time. Please see the school calendar for dates. Conferences are scheduled for 15 minute increments. If you have additional concerns to discuss, please schedule additional time with your teacher. At any time a parent may request an additional conference and as always, teachers are available for on-going communication.

DAILY COMMUNICATION

Daily sheets will be sent home each day with children in Seedling, Olive, Orange and Almond. Once children turn 3 years old, daily sheets will no longer be used. Teachers can be reached through email throughout the day or by calling the school main office. If you need to communicate with your child's teacher, we ask that you email their school email addresses. **Please refrain from texting and calling teacher's personal phones outside of school hours.** During the day, keep texting to a minimum so that teachers can give their undivided attention to their students.

SPECIAL SCHOOL EVENTS

From time to time during the school year, special events are held at school in the evening. Many of these events are programs held in the Cultural Arts Center auditorium. We encourage our families to attend these events and to bring siblings, relatives, or friends of the performers. These events are very important to the individual students and the class as a whole and should be respected as such.

We ask that parents carefully supervise their children and observe the following guidelines:

- Children should not be running in the auditorium, lobby, or hallways at any time.
- Children should remain with their parents at all times.
- If an event is taking place in the auditorium, the rest of the building is "off-limits."
- Please make sure that your children do not play with the microphone or climb on the stage.
- Food or drink is never allowed in the Cultural Arts Center auditorium.

AFTER SCHOOL CARE

Aftercare is available from 3:20-6:00 PM* (November-February we will close early on Fridays in observance of the Sabbath). Any drop-in arrangements for After School Care should be made through Alethia Minzlaff, aminzlaff@hhai.org space permitting. A drop in rate of \$25.00 per day will be billed to your account. If for any reason you are late picking up your child from aftercare, after two late pickups drop-in care will no longer be available.

AFTER SCHOOL CARE SNACK

Please send in an additional shelf stable snack to be eaten between 3:20-6:00 PM. Please make sure it is clearly labeled so that it is not eaten during the school day.

EXTRA CLOTHES

ALL children in After School Care must have 1 change of clothes labeled with the child's name to be kept in that classroom. Extra clothing includes: shirt, shorts/pants, socks, and underwear.