

DREAM Infant & Toddler Parent Handbook

Our Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide academic, social, emotional, physical and intellectual development to children 14 months -36 months to ensure a successful start to our preschool programs and thereafter to elementary school. We offer an environment that encourages children to develop their capabilities and interests at their own pace and according to their individual needs. Our goal is to recognize the uniqueness of each and every child and provide positive encouragement for the child's continued growth.

WHO WE ARE ...

DREAM is a non-profit community based organization providing affordable childcare services that offer academic and enrichment opportunities to assist children with the necessary skills for student success. Financial support for our program is provided by paid tuition and grant funded through (ABC) Arkansas Better Chance Programs. Our program is open to the public and available to all students regardless of race, religion, gender, social status, disabilities, or academic level.

Eligibility

Tuition Paying Students

- Eligible children must be at least 13 months to enroll.

- There are no income guidelines for this program.

Enrollment

The following forms must be completed and signed by the parent/guardian and returned to the center before the child will be able to attend:

- Enrollment Application
- Immunization Records/Emergency Release
- Birth Certificate
- Signed Parent Handbook forms
- USDA Child Care Food Program Enrollment Form
- Tuition Agreement/ Child Care Arrangement Verification for Voucher

Infant & Toddler Environment

Our environment is set up to meet the needs of each individual child as much as possible in a group setting. Infants are fed, diapered and napped according to their needs. As you can imagine, in a room of 12 children there will inevitably be times the teachers are faced with multiple needs at the same time. We fully recognize this potential and tackle this challenge in many creative ways. We ask parents to provide us with information about your child's routines, before their first day, to help us become familiar with your child's schedule. We are aware that children's schedules change as they grow and we

make adjustments as needed. Please feel free to discuss with teachers any questions you may have.

Hours of Operation

Hours of operation are 6:30 am to 5:30 pm, Monday-Friday, according to the DREAM School Calendar. If your child is not picked up by 5:30 pm, the following policy will be in effect.

1st Offense: Verbal Warning and documentation to file.

2nd Offense: Payment of \$5.00 per minute after 5:30 p.m. according to our time.

3rd Offense: Dismissal for one-week plus payment of late pick-up fee.

4th Offense: Cancellation of enrollment in addition to payment of late pick-up fee.

Feedings

We have found that babies begin their day best with a full stomach. We ask that parents feed their child breakfast before they arrive. For safety reasons, as babies grow older, we encourage them to sit in a high chair while drinking their bottle. It is our request that each infant has a bottle, pacifier, blanket and formula to be kept at the center.

Please do not send in any glass containers!

DREAM will provide breakfast, lunch, and snacks to the children at the center. The menus follow the guidelines of the United States Department of Agriculture for healthy foods. Those children who have special dietary needs must provide a written notice to the director of the center from the child's physician regarding the special requirements. All children that attend our program are required to complete a USDA Child Care Food Program Enrollment Form.

As children are beginning to master their self-help skills, we encourage them to use sippy cups and utensils. As children progress and prepare for their next group teachers will work with the children and help them be more prepared for any meal time routines prior to transitioning to the next class. For example, when moving from Infants to Toddlers to have children drinking from sippy cups when possible rather than bottles.

Diapering

Diapers must be provided by parents. Children's diapers are changed every 2 – 3 hours and after every bowel movement. Staff, at every diaper change, uses disposable gloves. We also use disposable paper on the changing table that gets thrown out after each change. Furthermore, the changing pad is sanitized with a bleach and water solution after every change.

Potty Training

Potty training shouldn't be rushed; it is important that your child is psychologically and physically ready for training. Pull-ups must be provided by the parent/guardian during this transition period, no regular style training pants or underwear will be used until your child maintains 2 continuous weeks of bladder/bowel control; of course, if your child regresses after this 2 week period we will assess the next step.

Naptime

The younger Infants each have their own crib, toddlers will have their own cot. Crib sheets will be provided by the center and laundered daily. Parents are required to bring a blanket for their child.

Ages & Stages...

Jr. Toddlers (ages 14-24 months)

Our Jr. Toddler Classroom provides an individualized curriculum for all students, recognizing that each child is unique and special with differing talents and gifts. Our classroom setup is cheerful and nurturing, with hands-on activities that encourage creativity, exploration and learning.

The theme-based curriculum for toddlers focuses on providing opportunities for children to explore and discover their surroundings through hands-on activities. Children in the Jr. Toddler Class will stay busy with experiences that build on their social, emotional, cognitive, language and physical development. All skills learned in the Jr. Toddler class will assist in positively transitioning students to the Toddler Classroom.

Toddlers (ages 24 months – 36 months)

DREAM's Toddler Classrooms offers theme-based curriculum for 2-3 year-old children that focuses on providing opportunities for children to take a daily adventure of their surroundings through hands-on activities. The children are occupied with an adventure that builds on their social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development.

Our daily schedule is full of art projects, manipulative experiences, sand and water play, dramatic play, and object investigation. These daily skills will more effectively prepare and transition children to our preschool classes.

Group interaction consists of discussing the theme, color and shape of the week. Stories, songs and finger plays enhance their developing oral language skills.

Health Policies:

All centers follow the guidelines for ensuring the health and safety of the children in the centers as required by state law and by the accrediting body the National Association for the Education of Young Children. They must have a recent history & physical screening on file according to DHS guidelines.

Covid-19 Policy

Before allowing entry into the facility, all DREAM children and staff will be screened, to include taking the temperature of each person upon arrival at the facility each day. Any person who meets any of the following criteria will not be allowed to attend: • A temperature of 100.4°F or above; • Signs or symptoms of a respiratory infection, such as a cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, low-grade fever, or new loss of taste or smell; • In the previous 14 days has had contact with someone with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19.

Calendar:

DREAM hours of operation are 6:30 am – 5:30 pm Monday – Friday. A calendar displaying days closed and holidays will be provided to every parent upon enrollment.

In the event of special events or holidays, DREAM reserves the right to close early with written notification to the parents of the center at least one week in advance.

Inclement Weather Policy:

- Early Morning Closing – DREAM will be closed due to inclement weather. All DREAM scheduled activities will be cancelled in case of inclement weather. Parents will be notified through our Text Message Group, our Facebook Page, our Website and local media stations regarding school closings. Also, if in doubt please note that we follow the same inclement weather procedures as PCSSD, you may call us or log onto our website www.dreamarkansas.org for information about center operations during inclement weather days.
- Mid -Day Dismissal – In the event schools are closed during school hours, the DREAM staff will notify parents/guardians of early dismissal through our subscribed text messaging system. Upon receipt of this call or email, parents have one hour to pick up their child from the center.

Parent/Teacher Communication:

In efforts to communicate regarding a child's daily progress, a board in the classroom (Infant & Jr. Toddler) will be used to document your child's feedings, diapering and progress each day. This information will additionally be documented to a written log for reference. Daily Reports with parent/teacher communication notes are available upon parent request and will be filed in your child's personal file at the center. Progress reports will be sent home with 2-3 year old children as concerns may occur.

Illness: Any child showing signs of illness (vomiting, diarrhea, undiagnosed rash, flu or fever) will not be able to attend the center. This is to ensure that the best care can be given to the child and other children. Also, this minimizes the infecting of others who are working or attending the center. If a child becomes ill while at the center the child will be kept comfortable until the parent makes alternate arrangements. After any illness, a child must be symptom free for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to this facility.

Medications: Medications will not be administered without written authorization of the parent or guardian nor will it be administered without a labeled container with appropriate dosage on it. Medication must be prescribed by a physician and must be within 30 days of seeing physician.

Emergency Situations: During emergency situations, DREAM will make arrangements for a replacement caregiver to come to the daycare, so that he/she can accompany the child, with the emergency team, to the hospital. The parents will be informed immediately of the situation.

Fire and Tornado: Monthly practices will occur to help prepare in case of an emergency. Fire escape plans are posted in areas throughout the center. In the case of a fire/tornado, staff and children will go to a designated area and parents/emergency contacts will be advised.

Cancellation Policy: The parent or caregiver is required to give two weeks' notice for cancellation of services. Parents going on holidays with their registered child, for 5 days or more must notify the director at least two weeks in advance.

Tuition & Fees

FULL DAY PROGRAM INCLUDES BREAKFAST, LUNCH, SNACK
(APPLIES TO ALL NEW ENROLLMENT EFFECTIVE AUGUST 15, 2019)

REGISTRATION FEE	\$30
JR. TODDLERS	\$ 115 PER WEEK
TODDLERS	\$100

Fees are based on a weekly rate of service. All fees are due on Monday or Friday, weekly or biweekly and can be paid in cash, check or money order at the front Check-In Desk, through the MyProcure Link at on our webpage at www.dreamarkansas.org or in the office by debit or credit card. State Childcare Vouchers are also accepted.

Late Fees:

DREAM will not accept past due balances beyond 11 days. We offer excellent services to our families and have the most affordable rates in our area. **Past due balances will result in cancellation of services after the 12th day of non-payment.** Hardships and Payment Arrangements for past due balances will be at the discretion of the program director and/or DREAM Advisory Board.

Service Charge:

For all participants, there will be a **\$28** service charge on all returned checks. The returned check and service charge **MUST** be paid in **CASH** in order to clear the debt.

Rate Changes:

Parents/Guardians will be notified ON OR BY August 1 of any rate changes that will be effective the following August.

Employees:

All employees of DREAM must submit to a FBI Check, a criminal background check, and a child maltreatment check.

Volunteers:

All DREAM volunteers must submit to a criminal background check. In a child becomes upset or misbehaves, the teacher/assistant will follow the Guidance/ Discipline Policy procedures. **Under no circumstance is the volunteer permitted to discipline any child in care at DREAM**

Child Maltreatment:

All caregivers are responsible for reporting, to the appropriate authorities, any concerns about the occurrence of abuse towards a child in our care. Child Maltreatment Hotline 1-800-482-5964

Custodial Dispute Policy:

DREAM will only release children to authorized persons listed by the parent(s)/legal guardian. It is the parent's / legal guardian's responsibility to inform us of any and all changes to this list. DREAM reserves the right to exclude our company from being involved any custodial disputes that do not have a court order with specific instructions regarding us releasing a child to a non-custodial parent.

Please Sign and Return this Page

Parent/Child Handbook Agreement

With my signature below, I am stating that, I have read, agree, and understand the Kindergarten Readiness Academy Parent/Child Handbook for the DREAM Program. I understand that it is my responsibility to comply with the policies and procedures of the handbook. I have been given a copy of the handbook for reference of all policies and procedures of the Kindergarten Readiness Program.

Child's Name

Parent Signature

Date

Payment Policy

DREAM will not accept past due balances beyond 11 days. We offer excellent services to our families and have the most affordable rates in our area. **Past due balances will result in cancellation of services after the 12th day of non-payment.** Hardships and Payment Arrangements for past due balances will be at the discretion of the program director and/or DREAM Advisory Board.

With my signature I agree to pay my child's tuition within the required 11 days.

Parent Signature

Date

MEDIA RELEASE

With my signature below, I give permission for DREAM to photograph my child for the purpose program advertisement for the DREAM website and program bulletins recruitment, newsletters and media that promote student and program success.

I understand that it is my responsibility to update this form in the event that I no longer wish to authorize one or more of the above uses. I agree that this form will remain in effect during the term of my child's enrollment.

Parent Signature:

Date:

DREAM Parent Handbook for Infants & Toddlers



Before opening this handbook to view the policies, procedures and requirements for DREAM...We would like to first inform you that DREAM is not your usual Daycare. We are an Early Childhood Preparatory Academy with the goal to provide a learning experience for both child and parents that will establish life-long learning and academic accountability...and this begins when you walk through our doors.

If you are willing to commit to participate in our efforts to ensure that your child's daily experience at DREAM is filled with love, nurturing, skill development and social interaction, then there are a few things we would like to focus on before you turn this page...

- It is recommended that all children age 2 and up arrive to school by 8:30 am to ensure their participation in daily academic instruction.
- Parents must bring enough diapers to last for the week.
- All children must have a weather appropriate change of clothing (including underwear and socks) to be kept at the center.
- All parents must keep their account current to continue services.
- All parents are required to submit all enrollment forms and responsible for keeping their child's file updated.

Thank you for choosing DREAM and committing to participate in your child's educational experience. Feel free to turn the page...