



## DREAM Parent Handbook for Toddlers

### WELCOME TO DREAM...

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 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. Formula and bottles can be brought daily.
- 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...

## **Our Mission Statement**

Our mission is to provide academic, social, emotional, physical and intellectual development to children 6 weeks -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 grants 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 6 weeks 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

## **Toddler Environment**

Our environment is set up to meet the needs of each individual child as much as possible in a group setting. As you can imagine, in a room of ten or more 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 6:00 pm, the following policy will be in effect.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offense: Verbal Warning and documentation to file.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offense: Payment of \$5.00 per minute after 5:30 p.m. according to our time.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offense: Dismissal for one-week plus payment of late pick-up fee.
- 4<sup>th</sup> Offense: Cancellation of enrollment in addition to payment of late pick-up fee.

### **Meals & Nutrition**

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 Jr. Toddlers to Toddler classrooms children will transition from sippy cups/cups with straws to a regular drinking cup.

### **Diapering**

**Diapers/Pull-Ups 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. Children are changed at a changing table on a changing pad that is sanitized with a bleach/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**

All children sleep on a cot with a cot sheet provided by the center. Parents are required to bring a blanket for your child to use at naptime, blankets will be sent home each Friday for parents to wash and return the following Monday.

### **Ages & Stages...**

#### **Jr. Toddlers (ages 18-24 months)**

Our Jr. Toddlers 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.

Our theme-based curriculum for toddlers focuses on providing opportunities for children to explore and discover their surroundings through hands-on activities. Children 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 2-3 classes.

### **Toddler 2-3 (ages 24 months – 36 months)**

DREAM's Toddler 2-3 Classrooms offer 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, 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.

### **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](http://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 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.

**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.

**Covid-19 Procedures:** To reduce the spread of the Covid-19 virus, parents will not be allowed to enter the facility. All parents will sign children in/out outside the front entrance and an Attendant will assist children inside the facility to calculate their temperature and escort them to class.

**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**

<b>REGISTRATION FEE</b>	\$30
<b>JR. TODDLERS/TODDLERS</b>	\$115 PER WEEK
<b>FAMILY RATES</b>	TBD

**Methods of Payment:**

DREAM accepts cash and debit/credit payments in the office. Tuition can be paid online by going to [www.dreamarkansas.org](http://www.dreamarkansas.org) and clicking on the My ProCare link. We must have an email address on file for you to make online payments, this email address is requested on the enrollment application.

**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 12<sup>th</sup> 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.

**Prorating:**

All enrolled participants are responsible for making weekly/biweekly payments. Each family will be allotted one free vacation week per year, all other weeks regardless of closing MUST be paid. Prorating will be at the discretion of the DREAM Director and Advisory Board.

**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 be cleared of FBI Check, Criminal Background Check and Child Maltreatment Check prior to employment, these checks will be resubmitted every three years for clearance.

**Volunteers:**

All DREAM volunteers must be cleared through an FBI, Criminal and Child Maltreatment Check to volunteer in any capacity. If 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 business 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 DREAM Toddler Parent/Child Handbook. 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 Toddler Program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **POTTY TRAINING COMMITMENT**

All children participating in our Early Childhood Readiness Programs are required to wear pullups or underwear to school daily. Children wearing diapers ARE NOT eligible to participate in classes 2 ½ and up. With parent participation, our goal is to ensure that all participants of this program are potty trained within the first semester of enrollment.

Please sign below that you will actively participate in assisting us with potty training. If your child is potty trained, please write N/A on the signature line below.

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Signature

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Date

## **DISCIPLINE STATEMENT**

With my signature below, I am stating that, I have read, agree, and understand the policies for discipline at DREAM. I understand that every effort will be made by the staff to correct behaviors that may distract or disrupt the learning environment. As a parent, I agree to attend conferences and assist with the improvement of my child's behavior in efforts to ensure that they receive the highest amount of academic assistance offered by the program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date