

Monument Square Early Childhood Center

PARENT HANDBOOK



**A NAEYC Accredited Early Childhood Program of
Child Care of the Berkshires, Inc**

(413) 664-4657

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

On behalf of the staff and myself, I would like to welcome you and your child to the Monument Square Early Childhood Center. Please be assured that we recognize the importance of this time for each of you and how difficult it is to select childcare. We will do all that is possible to help you enjoy your experience with us.

We are a high quality childcare program, accredited by the National Academy of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) in Washington, D.C., and are licensed by the Department of Early Education and Care (D.E.E.C). Our teachers have been carefully chosen for their high standards and caring qualities. They are well trained in the areas of childcare and child development, certified in First Aid and CPR and are continuously involved in professional development training.

Child Care of the Berkshires, Inc. provides childcare for all members of the community. We welcome you to visit your child during the day and perhaps share your lunchtime with him or her. We also look forward to your opinions, feedback, and suggestions for our programs and will try to incorporate them when possible. We constantly strive for program improvement and it is with your help and input that we can ensure that your child will have an enriched, enjoyable, learning experience during the time in which you must be away. If you would ever like to speak with me, I am usually available between 9:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, or leave a message on my voice mail. Kelly Phillips, Assistant Program Director, hours are 8:30 A.m. to 4:30P.M., Monday through Friday, or you can leave a message for her on the voice mail.

We also ask that you become involved as parents while your child attends the Center, by participating in various planned functions, parent meetings, social events, parent conferences, or perhaps serving on the Board of Directors. Please read through your Parent Handbook carefully, as it contains important information regarding the Center's policies, regulations, and procedures.

Lastly, we wish to thank you for the privilege of working with and caring for your child. Should you have any questions or concerns at any time, please feel free to let us know.

Sincerely,

Linda Cellana, Program Director
Kelly Phillips, Assistant Program Director
Monument Square Early Childhood Center

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND ORGANIZATION	1
History	1
Administration	1
Staffing, Groupings and Ages of Children	1
2. ENROLLMENT	2
Non-discrimination Statement	2
Part-time Enrollments	3
Length of Enrollments	3
Enrollment of Children with Special Needs	3
The Initial Visit and Separation Issues	4
3. OPERATING SCHEDULE	4
Hours of Operation	4
Calendar and Holidays	4
Snow Days and Emergency Closings	4
Loss of Power, Heat or Water	5
4. PROGRAM AND CURRICULUM	5
Philosophy	5
Program and Curriculum	6
Attendance, Arrival and Separation	7
Late Pick-up and Fees	7
Release of Child(ren)	8
Outdoor Play	8
Naptimes	8
Communicating Pertinent Information and Telephone Contact	8
What to Wear and Bring Every Day	9
Toys From Home	9
Guidance and Discipline	9
Biting	10
Toilet Training	10
Special Events and Celebrations	11
Field Trips	11
Snacks and Lunches	11
5. FINANCIAL MATTERS	12
Subsidies and Dependant Care Assistance Plan	12
Fees for Absences, Holidays, Winter Closing and Vacations	12
Sibling Discounts	13
Notice of Withdrawal	13

6. PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNICATION	13
Parent Visits and Communication	13
Parent Evaluation	14
Parent Concerns and Complaints	14
Progress Reports, Conferences and Referrals	15
Voluntary Participation in College Related Studies	15
7. HEALTH POLICIES	15
Medical Evaluations and Immunizations	16
When Your Child Becomes Sick	16
Mildly Ill Children in Care	17
Administration of Medicine and Topical Ointments	18
Allergies	18
Procedures for Emergencies and Transportation to the Hospital	18
Suspected Abuse and Neglect	19
Health Consultant	19
8. CHILDREN'S RECORDS	19
Records	19
Confidentiality	20
Amending the Child's Record	20
Transfer of Records	21
9. TERMINATION/SUSPENSION POLICY	21
10. SOCIAL SERVICES PLAN	22
Community Agencies	23-25
11. ABOUT CHILD CARE OF THE BERKSHIRES, INC.	25
12. PARENT'S RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES	25
Parent's Rights	25
Your Child's Records	26
Responsibilities of the Program	27
Providing Information to The Office of Child Care Services (OCCS)	27
Reporting Neglect and Abuse	27
Notification of Injury	27
Availability of Regulations	28
Parent Emergency Evacuation Information	28
13. MSQ STAFF	29



1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND ORGANIZATION

History

Monument Square Early Childhood Center was started in 1969 after a group of concerned citizens organized the non-profit agency, Northern Berkshire Child Care Committee, and advocated for a childcare center to be located in North Adams. The original site was in the basement of a church located on the Monument Square and hence the name; it originally served only preschoolers but later opened rooms for infants and toddlers.

We are licensed by the Department of Early Education and Care to care for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. The licensing process insures that we have met all of the requirements to operate these programs including health and safety issues, staff/child ratio, teacher and assistant teacher qualifications, appropriate equipment and materials, programming and policies. Much of the information in the Parent Handbook is required by DEEC; a copy of the entire regulations is available in the Director's office for parents to review.

Administration

The Executive Director of Child Care of the Berkshires hires the Program Director and Assistant Director of the Center and they are responsible for the overall management of the center. The Program Director is assisted by an Invoice Clerk located in the Main Office (located on the second floor of the Haskins Community Center) who handles all parent fees. There is a Lead Teacher who oversees the Infant and Toddler and Preschool Programs and is responsible for some supervision of the staff. During a temporary absence of the Program Director, the Assistant Director and the Lead Teacher assume the responsibilities and are freed up from their regular classroom duties when needed and appropriate. If the Program Director, the Assistant Director and the Lead Teacher are absent at the same time, another qualified person is designated and their name posted.

Staffing, Groupings and Ages of Children

There are five groupings of children in the center, each staffed with a Head Teacher and an Associate Teacher. There are extra staff persons who help in the middle of the day with lunches, assist in the morning or afternoons and with break coverage. College students and substitutes assist with opening and closing the classrooms and with occasional coverage. Some of our staff has been with the program for many years; others are new and bring new ideas and techniques but all enrich the program. Staff is hired based on their educational qualifications, their experience and their ability to nurture children. Each staff member, student and substitute has completed a CORI (Criminal Offender's Record Investigation) report. Each staff member completes a minimum of 20 hours of training per year. A list of staff members is included in the Parent Handbook; this list also identifies the Lead Teacher.

The groupings we have at the Center, with the approximate ages and the staff: child ratio are:

Infants:	Ages of Children - 6 weeks to 15 months Size of Group - 7 infants	Staff:Child Ratio 2:7
Toddlers: (Monkeys)	Ages of Children - 15 months to 2 yrs, 9 months Size of Group - 9 toddlers	Staff:Child Ratio 2:9
Transition: (Bumblebees)	Ages of Children - 2 to 3 years old Size of Group - 9 Toddlers/Preschoolers	Staff:Child Ratio 2:9
Preschool: (Ducklings)	Ages of Children - 2.9 to 6 years old Size of Group - 16 Preschoolers	Staff:Child Ratio 2:16
Preschool: (Dragon)	Age of Children - 3 to 6 years old Size of Group - 17 Preschoolers	Staff:Child Ratio 2:17

We assign children to the various groups by chronological ages, developmental stage, and the size of the group, with teachers and parents input. We move children into the next group using similar criteria; as we are most concerned about children developing trust with their teachers. We like to have children remain with one set of teachers for at least six months and preferably 9 to 12 months. Moving up into the next group can be an anxious time for many parents and children; the staff and parents have developed packets of information to make the transition to another group easier. Both the preschool and transition rooms are children of mixed ages. These mixed groupings offer many opportunities for the children to know children of different abilities and ages.

2. ENROLLMENT

Nondiscrimination Statement

Child Care of the Berkshires believes in the value and importance of having children cared for in heterogeneous groupings and therefore strives to place them in groups of mixed ages, from various socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds, as well as typical children mixed with children with disabilities. Research suggests that children learn much from mixed groupings and that it provides them with unique and valuable opportunities for enhanced learning and social interactions. Furthermore, the Monument Square Early Childhood Center and Child Care of the Berkshires, Inc. complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1965 (PL 88352) to the end that no person will, on the grounds of race, color, sex, religion, marital status, national origin, disability, political beliefs, sexual

preference, or cultural heritage be excluded or subjected to discrimination in the enrolling of children or as adults users of this service.

Enrollment Guidelines

In cases where the demand for care exceeds the number of children that may be served, the following priorities serve as enrollment guidelines:

1. Full time enrollments (5 days)
2. Full-time enrollments (2 or 3 day combinations)
3. Five day half-day enrollments

Part-time Enrollments

It is a goal of the Center to be fully enrolled whenever possible. In most situations, it is our policy that children must be enrolled for a minimum of 2 half-days per week. Concerning half-day enrollments, morning half-day enrollments end at 12:30 p.m. and afternoon half-day enrollments begin at 12:30 p.m. If possible, we will try to accommodate requests, which vary a half hour from the above. However, because of the DEEC regulations concerning licensed capacities and staff/child ratios, we may not be able to do so.

There will be no reduced rates for midday enrollments. If a parent needs care for a child from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., the full day rate will apply. Occasionally a child may be enrolled on an hourly basis for late afternoons based on enrollment and/or wait list status.

Enrollment of Children with Special Disabilities

In determining whether to admit or serve a child with a disability, the Monument Square Early Childhood Center will, with parental consent, request information related to the child's participation in the Center's program from the local public school, the Early Intervention Program or other health or service providers.

The Center will, with the parent's input, identify in writing the specific accommodations, if any, required to meet the needs of the child at the Center, including any change or modifications in the child's participation in regular Center activities, the size of the group to which the child may be assigned and the appropriate staff/child ratio and any special equipment, materials, ramps or aids. The toileting needs of a child with a disability will not be considered an undue burden.

The Center will, with parental permission, participate in the development and review of the child's individual program plan in cooperation with the local public school, Early Intervention Program and/or other health and service providers. We will, with parental permission, inform the appropriate administrator of special education, in writing, that the Center is serving a child with a disability.

The Program Director of the Center (or a designated teacher) will serve as the liaison for each child with a disability and will be responsible for coordinating care in the program and with service providers and communicating with the child's parents, service providers and the center staff.

The Initial Visit and Separation

During the intake process, the Director will schedule a visit to the Center in order to meet the teachers and familiarize you and your child with the surroundings. The first day away from home and parents can be very exciting, but is sometimes difficult for some children. We encourage parents to take time to explain to their children where they will be going and what they will be doing. If you feel that a second and possibly, a third visit necessary, please make arrangements to do so. There is no charge for these orientation visits. On your child's first day, plan to spend a little extra time in order to make the transition seem less frightening and to help your child feel more secure. Some children need reassurance that parents will return and some benefit from beginning with shorter days, which become progressively longer.

3. OPERATING SCHEDULE

Hours of Operation

We are open at 7:30 a.m. and close promptly at 5:30 p.m. in the afternoon. Children must be picked up **BEFORE** 5:30 p.m. so that there is enough time to gather their possessions and talk briefly with the closing staff members. There is a late fee of \$5.00 per 10 minutes or any portion thereof to be paid directly to the closing staff member, if a parent is late.

Calendar and Holidays

The Monument Square Early Childhood Center will be closed on the following days:



New Year's Day (Jan. 1)	Columbus Day (October)
Martin Luther King Day (Jan.)	Veteran's Day (November)
President's Day (Feb.)	Thanksgiving Day (November)
Memorial Day (May)	Day After Thanksgiving (November)
Independence Day (July)	Christmas Eve (December)
Labor Day (Sept.)	Christmas Day (December)
Staff Development (March)	

Snow Days and Other Emergency Closings

The Center will not be closed for snow days except under extreme circumstances. If the decision to close is made, it will be announced over radio stations WMNB 100.1 FM and WNAW 1230 AM. However, on days when the North Adams Public Schools close due to excessive snow, we may open an hour later, at 8:30 a.m. and this delay will be announced over the radio.

If there is an emergency situation, which necessitates closing the Center (bomb threat, chemical spill), everyone on site will be notified as quickly as possible. Staff will immediately lead the children from the building through the nearest and safest exit. A check will be made to be sure that everyone is present and accounted for, and will then proceed to the American Legion located on American Legion drive, Or we will be directed by The City of North Adams Emergency Personnel. Infants will be transported in the fire evacuation cribs if necessary. We will then proceed to contact parents to request that children be picked up immediately. Administrative and support staff will assist in the evacuation where needed and will insure that everyone has vacated the premises.

In the event of a tornado, etc. where there may be no advance warning, children and staff will proceed to the southern most room of the building, located in the basement.

Loss of Power, Heat or Water

In the event of a power outage, we will attempt to determine how long the disruption in service is anticipated. If it is determined that there will be a long-term disruption which would impact on loss of heat, refrigeration, ability to warm foods, or other conditions which would affect the healthy, safety, or comfort levels of children and staff, immediate steps will be taken to contact parents to pick up their children. If the length of disruption in services cannot be determined, the conditions will be carefully monitored and steps will be taken to contact parents to pick up the children when deemed appropriate. Emergency lighting and fire alarm systems in the building possess reserve battery power.

If the heating system fails and the temperatures fall below 65 degrees Fahrenheit and it does not appear that the problem will be corrected within two to three hours, parents or emergency contacts will be notified to pick up the children. We will make provisions for maintaining the comfort level of the children with extra clothing, blankets, etc until parents can be reached for pick up of the children.

In the event of an advance notice for a short-term loss of water, containers of water will be stored for diapering, the flushing of toilets, and for hand washing. In the event that there is a sudden, long term projected loss of water, and there is no other access to water that could be transported to the Center, we will contact parents to pick up their children immediately.

4. PROGRAM AND CURRICULUM

Philosophy

As an accredited program, we embrace the philosophy of the National Association for the Education of Young Children. It is our purpose to provide a caring, safe, secure and stimulating environment for your child that promotes his or her physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development, while responding to the various needs of the family. We strive to meet his or her individual needs with a children centered curriculum and promote his or her growth and development as an individual and as a member of the group. We believe

that children learn through hands on experiences and through play. We are committed to facilitating learning; we do not believe in forcing children into learning situations and meeting adult expectations for which they are not ready.

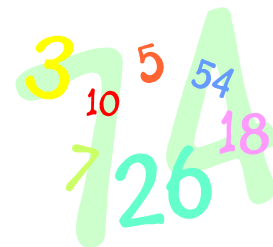
Program and Curriculum

The programming for each group is based on the developmental needs of the individual children enrolled in each of the three basic age groups: infants, toddlers, and transition/preschoolers. The teachers are responsible for developing lesson plans, which include activities in all developmental areas, (e.g., self-help skills, art, science, language development, music, large and small muscle coordination, self-esteem, thinking and problem solving). The teachers also plan for a balance between quiet and active time and between child-initiated and teacher-directed activities. They schedule plenty of free play in order to enhance independent investigation and experimentation as well as socialization. These plans are posted and copies are made available for parents to take home.

The curriculum is based on the interests of the children, individual and group needs, and the goals for the group developed by the teachers. For the infants, most of the day is spent eating, napping, diapering and exploring the environment; care giving times are considered "prime times" for one-on-one interactions and the core of the curriculum. The toddlers are provided with activities and care giving practices that promote sensory development, large and small muscle skills, positive self-esteem, development of trust with the caregiver, self-help skills (eating, dressing toileting), socialization and language skills. Some examples of themes and topics that may be covered in the toddler/transition/preschool groups are:



Animals: Farm, Zoo, Pets and Wild
Body Awareness
Colors
Community Helpers
Dinosaurs
Families: Brothers, Sisters, Grandparents, Moms, and Dads
Five Senses
Food: Fruits, Vegetables
Health
Holidays
How Things Work
Learning About Myself
Machines
Math Concepts and Counting
Musical Instruments
Nature



Seasons: Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer
Transportation: Cars, Trucks, Buses, and Boats
Weather: Rain, Snow, Wind
Letter recognition and sounds

Teachers structure the environment in order to maximize the learning of young children. In all the rooms, there are designated areas or learning centers. Most of the rooms will have a housekeeping area, a block area, a designated area for painting, water and sand play, a book or a reading nook, a movement area or a climber, and an eating area.

Should you have any ideas or suggestions for further topics, themes, or field trips, we welcome your input. In addition, should you have any special talents, interests or hobbies (or know someone who does) that might be of interest to the children, please tell us. We welcome volunteers and visitors to the classroom.

Attendance, Arrival, and Separation

Consistent attendance is necessary for your child to benefit fully from the program; however, we recognize and appreciate the need for parents and children to spend quality time when possible. If your child is going to be absent from the Center, please call and inform the Director or teacher. It is helpful for us to know how many children to expect on any given day.

When bringing children to the Center, we ask that parents make sure that the teacher is aware of the child's arrival. All children should be brought directly to the teacher in charge. Teachers want to say hello in the morning and briefly exchange valuable information. We also suggest that you tell your child when you are leaving, when you will return, that you say goodbye, and then leave quickly. The teachers are very experienced in dealing with separation problems and have found that honesty is the best approach. In most instances, a child will stop crying by the time the parent reaches the front steps or shortly thereafter. Please feel free to call and see how your child is doing if you have concerns.

Late Pick-up and Fees

When picking children up, we ask that the child does not leave without the teacher's knowledge. This applies both in the classroom and when on the playground. If you are unable to pick up your child at the prearranged time, please call the Center staff as soon as possible. If no one comes to pick up your child and we have not received a phone call, we will call the person listed on your enrollment sheet as your authorized emergency number and ask that they pick up your child immediately. There will be a late fee for children picked up after 12:30 unless other arrangements are made in advance (for morning enrollments) and after 5:30 p.m. (for full day and afternoon enrollments) of \$5.00 per each 10 minutes or any portion thereof. If none of the emergency people are available, and after an extended waiting period (5:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.), we may call the Department of

Children and Families. Hotline and file a report or contact the North Adams Police Department for assistance.

Release of Child

If there is a change in the regular pick up plans, the staff must be notified on or before that day. **We will not release a child to anyone who is not listed as an authorized person in the child's file.** There are authorizations forms in each classroom so that if your plans change, it is convenient to complete the forms. We may ask that people who are unknown to us show picture identification. Please do not ask other people to pick up your child without first informing the staff.

Outdoors Play

Outdoor play is also scheduled daily, weather permitting, for all groups of children. We use the adjacent play yards as well as the grounds surrounding the Haskins Center, which allow for supervised exploration by the children of open fields. We often take the infants on walks in strollers.



Naptimes

Children who attend childcare for a full day are required by The Department of Early Education and Care to have a 45-minute quiet time. It is important that parents communicate their nap and rest expectations to the teachers. The teacher will establish expectations concerning a child's quiet time, based on the individual needs of the child and the wishes of the parents. Infants will be assigned to their own crib and will nap throughout the day. The older children generally rest after lunch, on mats. Staff play soft music, dim the lights and provide back rubs. It may be that some of the older children will not be expected to lie down on mats, close their eyes or sleep. Quiet activities including off-mat activities (coloring, table games, reading) will be planned for children who do not sleep. Parents may bring in pillows, sheets, blankets, pacifiers and stuffed animals to make naptime more comfortable. No punishment will be associated with naps or rest time.

Communicating Pertinent Information and Telephone Contact

Please inform the teacher each morning of events which have happened that may excite or worry your child during the day, such as a bad morning, difficulty in sleeping, an absent parent, a new pet, loss of a loved one, etc. By communicating pertinent information, the teacher will have a better understanding of your child's behavior and will be better equipped, if necessary, to help him or her cope with the problem.

If you expect to be away from your regular phone number on specific days, please let the staff know where you will be or give a back up number. **It is imperative that the Center staff knows the whereabouts of parents at all times in case of emergencies.** If your schedule or need for care changes, please notify the Director at once. **If your home**

number, place of employment or address changes, or the emergency numbers change, please update this information immediately for your child's file.

What to Wear and What to Bring Every Day

Please keep in mind the comfort of clothing and shoes as you send your child to participate fully in the program. We plan for children to paint, glue, and work with many messy materials so clothing should be washable. We also try to go out every day unless prohibited by the weather, so please plan accordingly for appropriate clothing. We ask that parents do not send their children to school in jackets with drawstrings as they are dangerous. We also ask that every child have a complete change of clothes in his/her cubby. Accidents and spills happen easily and it is important that a change of clothes be on hand. Each item must be labeled. We cannot assume responsibility for unlabeled items. Extra slippers are helpful especially in winter weather when feet get wet.

For all children who are not toilet trained, we require that you provide diapers, wipes, powders and creams.

Toys From Home

Each room has similar "toys from home" guidelines; we allow them in most rooms but please check with your child's teacher to familiarize yourself with their specific policy. Teachers cannot be responsible for the safety of items brought from home so we discourage parents from sending in very special items that may get lost or broken. We also ask that items from home are labeled.

Guidance and Discipline

It is our belief that guidance and good discipline involve compassion, caring, and sensitivity while helping the child understand that mistakes are a natural part of growing up. A child builds trust through consistency, a calm and reassuring manner and voice, close body and eye contact, respect, and realistic expectations. Staff create nurturing and caring environments in which children are emotionally comfortable and are encouraged to develop at their own pace.

The teaching staff has established developmentally appropriate classroom routines and classroom rules. We communicate rules as positive behavior whenever possible:

"Chairs are for sitting." and "We walk down the steps."

It is understood that at various times children may not follow the established rules and may, in fact, choose not to conform to acceptable patterns of behavior. In such cases, the teaching staff will handle discipline problems in a consistent manner and with an approach, which is cognizant of the individual child's needs, and with sensitivity to the child's age and development. We recognize that toddlers do not share well and we do not require it.

The teaching staff will help children learn positive social behavior. Staff is patient, understanding and speaks in kind, firm voices when disciplining children. Good behavior is encouraged and praised. Appropriate behavior is modeled for the children, especially the infants and toddlers; i.e., "Pat her head." as an alternative to pulling hair. A teacher will try to distract a child and redirect a child's behavior before using the method of separation and/or a "cool down time."

A cool down time is defined as a time for the child to come under self-control, not a time of humiliation and punishment. When this method is used, the length of the time will depend on the child's ability to sit and will be used only after some discussion between the teacher and the child has taken place concerning the problem. Nevertheless, the maximum time permitted is equal to one minute for each year of the child's age.

Physical punishment is not used, including spanking. No child will be subject to cruel or severe punishment, humiliation or verbal abuse. The teaching staff will consult with the Program Director if a child's behavior is sexually explicit, inappropriate, problematic, disruptive, or harmful to other children in order to affect an individualized discipline plan. Teachers document all such incidents and the Program Director will intervene.

Biting

We understand that biting is a developmentally normal behavior for infants and toddlers (and for some preschoolers), but we will work very hard to prevent and discourage it. When a child bites, we try to avoid any type of response that will serve to reinforce the behavior. We respond to and comfort the child who has been bitten and remove the biter from the situation. The biter is not allowed to play for a brief time and is spoken to at his/her comprehension level regarding the inappropriateness of the action. We also attempt to determine the context of each biting situation to determine if there are any patterns; i.e. over stimulation, too few toys, too much waiting, hunger, crowding, etc. We monitor the biter closely and offer alternatives to biting to resolve conflict and/or to deal with frustrations. We also assess the environment itself to see if any modifications can be made to alleviate the problem and we make special efforts to protect potential victims. The name of a biting child is not released to other parents as it serves no useful purpose.

Toilet Training



When the parent decides that the child is ready to begin toilet training, the staff will work with the parent to implement a method, which is in the best interests of the child. A child who is not ready should not be pushed as problems may result then or in the future.

To help your child accomplish toilet training, it is important that there are consistency and communication between the home and the Center. Parents and staff must be doing the same thing. We suggest that parents be positive and give lots of reinforcement and praise. We again ask that your child have extra clothes at the Center (including training pants with labels). Pants should be easily slipped on and off; belts and suspenders make

the process more difficult. Finally, we all know that accidents are bound to happen and you should expect them without any undue concern; no child will be punished for wetting or soiling his/herself, or for not using the toilet.

Special Events and Celebrations

We are a diverse, multi-cultural center and do not practice customs of any specific group or religion. We do try to expose children to different celebrations, especially associated with their families currently enrolled. For example, teachers may plan activities around Hanukkah, Thanksgiving, and Ground Hog Day. We opt for simplicity and ask parents to check with teachers before they send in costumes or valentines.

We welcome parent participation to celebrate a child's birthday. If you would like to send in cupcakes, cake, cookies or whole fruits for the celebration, we ask that they are store prepared and not homemade. This is a recommendation by the Center for Disease Control because of the risk in maintaining food safety especially during transportation and potential allergic reactions to ingredients that may not be identified. We do ask that you consider the nutritional needs of the children and try to make the treat as nutritious and healthy as possible. You are also welcome to join the celebration. Please discuss such plans with your child's teacher so that they can be incorporated into the daily schedule for that day. We also ask that you please don't send in gifts for teacher or other staff members for birthdays, holidays, ect. A suggestion is to bring in an age appropriate toy or book for the classroom that all children can benefit from.

Field Trips

The preschool children are often taken to special events away from the center. We often walk to the library or downtown. You will be notified in advance and asked to sign a permission slip for field trips on which your child will be transported; you will need to bring in your child's car seat. Staff will take a first aid kit on all field trips. There may be a nominal charge for a field trip (i.e., the cost of renting the pool or admission to a movie matinee). No child will be denied the privilege of a field trip unless the safety of the child or the group may be jeopardized. The Program Director will talk the situation over with the parents if this were the case.

In general, the infants and toddlers do not attend these events as it is difficult to transport the very young children and they become easily frightened and insecure in a new environment. However, both infants and toddlers are often taken on walks around the center.



Snacks and Lunches

Your child will be provided with breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack while at the Center. Breakfast is served from 8:30 to 9:45 a.m. and lunch is served between 11:30 and 12:00 p.m. We ask parents to adhere to the schedule. A weekly menu is posted in each

classroom, and is made as healthy as possible. These menus conform to the established guidelines of the Bureau of Nutrition Child Care Food Program. Our nutrition staff spends a lot of time planning a variety of meals that appeal to young children and expose them to diverse nutritional experiences. You are welcome occasionally to bring in a special nutritional snack for your child to share with the other children. Please remember we are a peanut free environment.

Food may not be used as a punishment or a reward and therefore, we will not give dessert as a reward for eating lunch or force a child to eat one specific food item before eating others. Staff likewise, will not force a child to eat or drink. We ask that parents not send in substitute food.

For infants, the Center supplies formulas, milk, cereal, juice and baby food. We encourage mothers of infants to come to the Center and nurse their children or to send in breast milk. Mothers may nurse in the classroom or in the staff lounge. Please let us know when you want to start introducing table food.

For young toddlers, we avoid serving popcorn, chunky peanut butter, olives, nuts, fruits with the peels on, seeds, raw celery and carrots.

We do not serve honey to infants and toddlers. We do not serve unpasteurized cider. We do not allow children to bring in soda, candy, gum, lollipops or cough drops.

5. FINANCIAL MATTERS

Fees are established based on a parent's requests for childcare and according to our published scale that is updated annually. Copies are available in the office and are discussed and distributed to parents at the time of enrollment in that program. Each family must sign a fee agreement, which details the payment schedule and the fee. Fees must be paid one week in advance or if parents prefer, they may pay one month in advance. Fees are charged to each account on a monthly basis at the beginning of the month. A statement is then sent out by the Main Office. If parents have questions on their fees, they should call the Main Office at 663-6593 and ask for the billing clerk for clarification. Failure to adhere to the payment schedule may result in termination. Accounts, which are in arrears more than one month, will be subject to a \$10.00 late penalty. Problems with adhering to the weekly payment schedule should be discussed with the Program Director.

Subsidies and Dependent Care Assistance Plan

We recognize that childcare is expensive and have some monies to subsidize childcare fees for income eligible families. We are members of the Northern Berkshire Community Partnership, which has monies available to subsidize the fees of working families with

middle incomes for three and four year olds. If you feel that you might be eligible for any of these subsidies, please talk with the Program Director concerning your financial situation and possible reduction of childcare fees.

Fees for Absences, Holidays, Winter Closings and Vacations

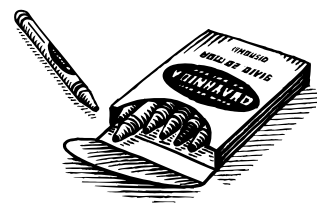
Fees will be charged for absences, holidays, snow or other weather-related emergencies.

For private consumers, two weeks of half-fee vacations will be allowed during each year. Six months of continuous enrollment must be completed before the half-fee for vacation time is credited to the account.

Sibling Discounts

There are several reductions for families with two children in care, dependent on the source of the subsidy. Families with two or more children enrolled in the program on a full time basis may receive a reduction of up to one third of the fee for the second child. The reduction is based on the following schedule:

<u>Family Income</u>	<u>Reduction</u>
\$ 0 - 15,000	33%
15,000 - 19,999	25%
20,000 - 29,999	15%
30,000 - 39,999	10%
40,000 +	



Withdrawal and Notice

We ask that parents give the Program Director two weeks advance notification of withdrawal of a child from the Center; otherwise, fees will be charged for two weeks after termination.

6. PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

Parents Visits and Communication

We provide a wide range of support services and means of communication to parents. First, we are sensitive to the issues of parent and child separation. Our open door policy for the Center encourages parents to visit the classroom and spend as much time with their child as needed to reduce anxiety and foster positive parent/teacher relations. Parents are encouraged to phone the teacher or Director with questions or concerns regarding their children.

We also believe in the importance of on-going communication between staff and parents. Staff is always willing to meet and talk with parents and we value your input regarding any suggestions or ideas that you might have. In order to allow staff to give you their undivided attention, however, we ask that you set up a specific time away from the

classroom. Since the children's safety is one of our primary concerns, it is often difficult and distracting to discuss issues in the classroom or on the playground while teachers are supervising the children. Any important information that would help us to better serve your child's needs should be put into writing in order for appropriate staff to be aware of it. Also, please check the parent mess board and your child's cubby for information about your child's day or for important messages or paperwork.

Parents are encouraged and afforded opportunities to participate in the classroom and assist on field trips and with special events whenever possible. To promote further communication and allow input, other opportunities for involvement are offered such as parent meetings, social events, fundraising activities, representation on the Parents Advisory Committee or on various ad hoc subcommittees to work on specific tasks or issues. Please let the Program Director know if you have any interest in serving on the Parents Advisory Committee or assisting in other ways.

Parent Evaluation

As part of the NAEYC accreditation process, we ask parents to complete a program evaluation on an annual basis to assist us in assessing and revising the program and in setting goals. We appreciate compliments as well as constructive feedback.

Parent Concerns and Complaints

If a parent has a concern or a complaint, we encourage him/her to speak directly to a member of the staff, depending on the nature of the complaint. If the concern is something that happened in the classroom (i.e.; a child hit another child, missing or dirty clothes, minor complaints of the child), it is advised to talk with the head teacher in the classroom. If the concern is of a more serious nature or the parent feels uncomfortable talking it over with the teacher or feels that it is inappropriate to speak with the teacher, the parent should voice his/her concern to the Program Director.

We take parents' concerns seriously and want to be responsive. The Program Director will listen to the concern, may schedule a time to talk over the situation, gather information and if necessary, will implement corrective action as appropriate. The Program Director will take follow-up action and meet again with the parent to discuss the resolution of the complaint. The Program Director may also document the resolution of the complaint in writing to the parent, dependent on the seriousness of the situation.

All complaints will be recorded and a copy will be sent to the Executive Director for review. If the complaint is not resolved to the parent's satisfaction, the parent may contact the Executive Director for further resolution.

Parents should make complaints of a most serious nature (physical or verbal abuse of a child, over-enrollment, and serious safety issues) directly to the Executive Director. The Executive Director will follow the above process (i.e. listen, gather information, meet with the teachers, the parent(s) and Program Director) and will try to resolve the situation. If

indicated, a report will be made to the Department of Social Services and/or the Department of Early Education and Care. The Executive Director will communicate concerning complaints of the most serious nature with the Board of Directors.

Department of Early Education and Care

51 Sleeper Street, 4th Floor
Boston, MA 02210
Main Line: (617)988-6600
Fax: (617)988-2451

Executive Office of Education

One Ashburton Place, Room 1403
Boston, MA 02108
Main Line: (617)979-8340
Fax: (617)727-0049



Progress Reports, Conferences, and Referrals

Parents are notified of their child's progress and developmental issues through daily contact with staff, posted daily notices, progress reports, and parent/teacher conferences. Teachers complete progress reports every three months for infants and every six months for toddlers and preschoolers. Teachers will schedule parent conferences at mutually convenient times when requested by parents or when staff feels it necessary to meet to discuss a child's development.

In an attempt to better serve children and families, staff may identify a child or parent in need of additional services, be it social, mental health, education or medical. A list of local referral resources and telephone numbers are provided during the intake and enrollment process. Referrals are based on the observations of the child's behavior by the classroom staff and may include observations by the Program Director. Other CCB staff may also be consulted when appropriate, to help formulate written service plans and assist parents and staff with their implementation. Staff will meet with the parents and discuss the observations and the referral; no referral will be made without written parental consent. If it is determined that the child is not in need of services, staff will review the child's progress every three months thereafter. A written record of referrals for the child is maintained in the child's folder. We are familiar with the people to contact at the local schools and we will assist with the referrals.

Voluntary Participation in College Related Studies

Occasionally, the Center is asked to serve as a site for general observations and the collection of data by local college and high school students. While we support providing opportunities to others which enhance education and a more comprehensive understanding

of child development we, as child advocates, are also committed to safeguarding children's health, safety and welfare relative to physical, cognitive, psychosocial growth and parent and child's right to privacy. Any such observations and/or collection of data are, therefore, carefully monitored for their appropriateness. Requests for such observations/data collection must be made in writing clearly outlining the goals/objectives and procedure(s) to be used and are subject to the approval of the Program Director and Executive Director. In connection with the collection of data for research purposes, written, informed parental consent will also be requested before a child is allowed to participate in any study and for each occurrence. The parent has the option of seeking additional information concerning the study and/or may not give his/her consent. Under no circumstances will students or observers be left alone and unsupervised with the children. The students will be informed of the requirements of confidentiality based on their observations and their collection of data.

7. HEALTH POLICIES

It is one of our goals to provide a healthy and safe environment for your child. The following policies attempt to ensure procedures to obtain that goal.

Medical Evaluations and Immunizations

Upon acceptance for enrollment and prior to the start of child care, all children are to have had a State mandated medical evaluation form completed and must be in compliance with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health requirements for immunization against polio, tetanus, diphtheria, whooping cough, measles, mumps, HIB and German measles. In addition, effective August 1, 1998, one dose of varicella vaccine, or a note signed by a physician stating that the child has already had chicken pox, will be required for all children who are 19 months of age or older, and who were born on or after January 1, 1997. Children older than nine months and under the age of four years old must be screened for lead poisoning unless the examination is objected to on religious grounds. Parents are responsible for updating their child's files for immunizations annually.

When Your Child Becomes Sick

Staff will take extra special precautions when children who are ill are diagnosed at the Center and when children who are mildly ill remain at the Center.

Children who exhibit symptoms of the following types of infectious diseases, such as gastrointestinal, respiratory and skin or direct contact infections may be excluded from attending the Center if it is determined that any of the following exist:

- The illness prevents the child from participating in the program activities or from resting comfortably;



- The illness results in greater care need than the child care staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children;
- The child has any of the following conditions: fever, unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficult breathing and other signs of serious illness;
- Diarrhea;
- Vomiting two or more times in the previous 24 hours at home or once at the Center;
- Mouth sores, unless the physician states that the child is noninfectious;
- Rash with a fever or behavior change until the physician has determined that the illness is not a communicable disease;
- Purulent conjunctivitis (defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow discharge, often with matted eyelids) until examined by a physician and approved for readmission, with or without treatment;
- Tuberculosis, until the child is noninfectious
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has started or all the sores are covered;
- Head lice and free of all nits or scabies and free of all mites;
- Strep infection until 24 hours after treatment and the child has been without fever for 24 hours;
- Hepatitis A unless treated by a physician;
- Chicken pox until the last blister has healed over.

A child who has been excluded from child care may return after being evaluated by a physician, physician's assistant or nurse practitioner, and it has been determined that he/she is considered to pose no serious health risk to him/her or to the other children. **Nevertheless, the Center may make the final decision concerning the inclusion or exclusion of the child.**

If a child has already been admitted to the Center and shows signs of illness (i.e.; a fever equal to or greater than 100.5 degrees by the oral or auxiliary route, a rash, reduced activity level, diarrhea, etc.), he or she will be offered their mat, cot or other comfortable spot in which to lie down. If the child manifests any of the symptoms requiring exclusion (as listed above) or it is determined that it is in the best interests of the child that he or she be taken home, his/her parents will be contacted immediately and asked to pick up the child as soon as possible.

The Program Director will notify parents immediately in writing when a communicable disease has been introduced into the Center using information from the Day Care Health Manual.

Mildly Ill Children in Care

Mildly ill children (children with colds, low fevers (under 100.5 degrees, headaches, Fifth's Disease, etc.) will be allowed to rest quietly on their mats, with books or games if they desire, and remain somewhat separated from the other children. The daily schedule of meals will be adhered to once it has been determined that the child's system will be able to tolerate it. Fluids will be offered throughout the day.

Administering Prescription and Non-Prescription Medication

We can only administer medication, prescription or non-prescription, to a child with written parental permission and written order of a physician. For prescription medication, the written order of the physician may be the label on the medication that includes the child's name, the dosage, and the name of the physician. Parents may ask the pharmacy to have the medicine in two bottles, so that they may leave one at the Center. Staff will not administer any such medication contrary to the directions on the original container unless so authorized by a written order of the child's physician. Staff will keep a written record of when the medication was given and place it in the child's file. Prescription medication must be kept in its original container with the child's name, name of drug, directions for administering, proper storage procedure, and expiration date recorded on it. We will store all medications in a safe and secure location, and return the unused portion to the parent.

For non-prescription medications (such as Tylenol, aspirin), we can accept as the written order of the physician a signed statement listing the medication(s), dosage, and criteria for its administration. This statement is valid for one year from the date that it was signed. The staff can accept as written parental authorization the signed statement authorizing the Center to administer non-prescription medication in accordance with the written order of the physician. This statement will be valid for one year from the date on which it was signed. Parents will be notified each time a non-prescription medication is administered to a child.

Topical non-prescription medications such as sunscreen, petroleum jelly or other ointments can be administered to a child with written parental authorization. A signed statement listing the specific topical non-prescription medication(s) and the criteria for administration is valid for one year from the date of signature.

Allergies

If your child has an allergy, please let us know. Also, please inform us should there be a history of allergies in the family (i.e. parent allergic to insect stings). To safeguard the health of all children, notices concerning children's allergies are posted for staff and substitutes.

Procedures for Emergencies and Illness and Transportation to the Hospital

In the case of an emergency or illness (such as a seizure, a serious fall or serious cut), the teacher in charge will begin administration of emergency first aid while another staff member takes other children to another area or room. It is expected that all staff members will respond in a calm and reasonable manner. Other staff will be alerted to send for assistance, be it the Program Director or another person in the Center.

One of the supervisory staff will contact the parent to come and pick up the child or, if response time is a factor, to have the parent meet the child and accompanying staff at the emergency room of the North Adams Regional Hospital.

If the child is transported to the hospital by the Center, one of the staff shall drive and another staff member will accompany the child for comfort. The child will be properly restrained in a care seat and in a seat belt and not carried on the staff member's lap.

In the event a situation arises that is life threatening or the child cannot be comfortably restrained in a car, an ambulance will be called immediately and the parent will be called to meet the child and staff at the hospital. The teacher or other designated staff will go with the child in the ambulance.

If the parent comes to pick up the child and needs assistance, the teacher or Program Director may offer to drive to the hospital or to accompany the child.

When parents cannot be reached, we will call the persons listed as emergency contacts. The child's whole file will be taken, including permission forms.

In case of an accident on field trips, the parents will be contacted as soon as possible and informed of the nature and extent of the injury and the proposed plan of action. If necessary, an ambulance will be called to transport the child to the hospital.

Suspected Abuse and Neglect

All staff at the Monument Square Early Childhood Center are mandated reporters; that means that if they suspect a person of abuse or neglect of a child as defined by the Massachusetts General Laws, they are mandated to report it to the Department of Social Services. A complete copy of our Child Abuse and Neglect Policy is available to parents in the office upon request.

Health Consultant

Dr. Michael Gerrity is the Health Consultant for the Monument Square Early Childhood Center. He has reviewed our health policies and is available for consultation. Please note that our Health Policies reflect certain state-mandated standards.

8. CHILDREN'S RECORDS

Records

The Center maintains a written record for each child that includes:

- an application form
- copies of periodic medical records
- immunization record/updated physicals
- prescribed medications administered to child
- all necessary authorizations and consent forms
- all pertinent correspondence
- referrals for social services
- progress reports



The Department of Early Education and Care requires that these records be legible, dated, and signed by the individual making the entry. Records are maintained for at least five years, unless it is transferred to the parent(s). Periodically, you will be asked to update various forms as required by The DEEC. It is imperative that all forms be filled out completely and that the information is accurate. Please do not merely refer us back to the old forms indicating that nothing has changed since you last filled them out. In addition, please note that on some forms there may be more than one location for your signature.

Confidentiality

Information in the child's record is privileged and confidential. We will not distribute or release information in a child's record to anyone not directly related to implementing the program plans for a child without written consent of the child's parent(s). We will notify the parent(s) if a child's record is subpoenaed.

Upon request, Parents may have access to their child's records at reasonable times. In no event will access be delayed more than two business days after which the initial request for access was made; the child's entire record, regardless of the physical location of its

parts, will be made available. The Center will have these records duplicated and will maintain in each child's record a written log indicating any persons to whom information contained in a child's record has been released. Each person (s) releasing information contained in a child's record, in whole or in part, upon each instance of release would enter into the log the following: his/her name, signature, position, the date, the portions of the record which were released, the purpose of such dissemination or release, and the signature of the person to whom the information is released. Such a log will be available only to the child's parent(s) and the Monument Square Early Childhood Center personnel responsible for record maintenance. There is no charge for copies of information in the child's records.

Amending the Child's Records

A child's parent(s) shall have the right to add information, comments, data, or any other relevant material to the child's record. The child's parent(s) may also request deletion or amendment of any information contained in the child's record. Such request shall be made in accordance with the procedures described below:

- a. If such parent(s) is of the opinion that adding information is not sufficient to explain, clarify, or correct objectionable material in the child's record, he shall have the right to have a conference with the Center staff to make his objection known.
- b. The Center will, within one week after the conference, render to such parent(s) a decision in writing stating the reason or reasons for the decision. If the decision is in favor of the parent(s), steps will be taken immediately, as may be necessary, to put the decision into effect.

Transfer of Records

Upon written request of the parent(s), the Center will transfer the child's records to the parent(s) or any other person the parent(s) identifies, when the child is no longer in care.

9. TERMINATION/SUSPENSION POLICY

On occasion we may find it necessary to terminate or temporarily suspend childcare services if such situations were to arise that were not in the best interests of the child, family and/or program. As these situations occur, we will attempt to work together with parents and supportive agencies, as appropriate, toward a resolution whenever possible. Examples of possible situations (inclusive of but not limited to) are as follows:

- a. Failure to adhere to the payment schedule.
- b. Behavior that jeopardizes or threatens the health, safety and/or welfare of staff, the individual child or other children.

- c. Noncompliance with CCB/Monument Square Early Childhood Center's policies or procedures.
- d. Noncompliance with DEEC policies or procedures, including a lack of service need.
- e. Consistent under utilization of a slot; we reserve the right to give that slot to a family with a greater service need.
- f. Inability of a child to adjust to the program after a reasonable amount of time.

When a Program Director determines that a problematic situation exists which might warrant termination/suspension or childcare services, the program Director will notify the Executive Director who will then notify her/him of the situation. The Program Director will notify the parent/guardian of the problem as soon as possible and will schedule a meeting to determine what options exist, if any, which might rectify the problem. Supportive agencies/persons may be involved, as appropriate, to assist in the process of developing a corrective plan of action.

Prior to termination, families who are enrolled on a State subsidized slot will be apprised of their right to a review process. A record of this meeting and the resolution of the meeting, including reasons for termination, will be made and placed in the child's file. Child Care of the Berkshires is a large agency that offers a number of childcare options; if appropriate, the family may be referred to another day care program or to the Resources for Child Care Program for information and referral.

When a child is leaving the Center, the classroom teacher will make an attempt to prepare the child and the other children for the departure of the child. It is suggested that there be a farewell snack or a group art project for the child.

10. SOCIAL SERVICES PLAN

In a situation where Child Care of the Berkshires' teaching staff have a concern for a child's social, emotional, cognitive or physical well being, they are to discuss the concern with the Program Director of the respective child care center. All concerns will be documented in writing, whether or not a referral is made, and placed in the child's file, by the Program Director or his/her designee. If it is determined by the Program Director (possibly in consultation with other available resource people, i.e. - the local early childhood specialist, the resource teacher, etc.) that a child or a family is in need of additional educational, medical or other family support services, the Director (or his/her designee) will contact the parent and discuss the situation. In addition, and when appropriate, with the parent's permission, the Direction (or his/her designee) will make a referral to an appropriate agency.

When appropriate, parents of children under three years old will be referred to the local agency, which is responsible for special education services:

North Berkshire County	The Early Intervention Program/Mental Health And Substance Abuse Services of the Berkshires
Central Berkshire County	The Pediatric Development Center
South County	The Children's Health Program

Parents of children three years old and over will be informed of their rights under Chapter 766 and the name of the appropriate special education administrator will be given to them. All concerns and follow-up action will be documented in the child's file, including referrals to other agencies.



Community Agencies

The following is a listing of agencies in the community to which a family might be referred but the referrals will not be limited to the agencies in the following listing.

Child Abuse and Neglect

Department of Children and Families

236-1800
1-800-792-5022

Alcoholism and Addiction

Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services of the Berkshires

BRIEN Center

North Adams
24 Hr. Crisis Services

664-4541
800-252-0227

NARH Behavioral Health Services

664-5368
800-327-5050

AIDS

AIDS Action Center
American Red Cross

1-800-235-2331
1-800-332-2030

Domestic Violence

Elizabeth Freeman Center

499-2425

Counseling

Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services of the Berkshires

North Adams 664-4541
Pittsfield 499-0412
800-252-0227

Employment/Training

Mass. Division of Employment Security

North Adams 663-1111
Pittsfield 499-1797

Berkshire Works 663-1114
499-2220

Financial Assistance

Department of Transitional Assistance

North Adams 663-3012
Pittsfield 499-3250

Vermont Social Welfare 1-800-442-8541

Food

Women and Infants Feeding Program

North Adams 663-3012
Pittsfield 445-9429
Great Barrington 528-2037

Northern Berkshire Community Action 663-3014

Department of Transitional Assistance

Food Stamps
Pittsfield 236-2000
North Adams 663-1100

Salvation Army

North Adams 663-7987
Pittsfield 422-0624

Berkshire Food Project

North Adams 664-7378
Healthy Families- No. Adams 664-6104
Healthy Families- Pittsfield 445-4324

Health Services

Visiting Nurses Association

North Adams 664-4536
Pittsfield 447-2862

Parent Skill Building

Parent Partnership Program 664-4725
McInerney Parent Center 499-3556
Family Center/Children's Health Program 528-0721

Child Care Information and Referral Services

Resources for Child Care 887-443-7830

Special Education Services

Adams/Cheshire Schools/Special Education 743-5202
Berkshire Hills Regional Schools 298-3711
North Adams Public Schools 662-3232
Pittsfield Public Schools/Special Education 499-9515
Williamstown Public Schools 458-5707

The Department of Early Education and Care

1-413-788-8401

Western Mass. Legal Services

Pittsfield 499-1950
North Adams 664-4531

Youth Services

Adams Youth Center 743-3550
Williamstown Youth Center 458-5925
Northern Berkshire YMCA 663-6529
COTY Center 663-3133

Housing Support

Family Life Support Center
North Adams 664-8279
Adams 743-7957
Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority 443-9128

Education

Berkshire Works 663-1114, 663-1111
Life Long Learning 662-5314
Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts (MCLA) 662-5543

Berkshire Community College

Pittsfield Campus 499-4660
Great Barrington Center 528-4521



11. CHILD CARE OF THE BERKSHIRES, INC.

Child Care of the Berkshires, Inc. is a non-profit organization that was established in 1969 and which operates a number of childcare and family support services programs throughout Berkshire County. The Main Office is located in the Sarah Haskins Community Center at 210 State Street, North Adams. Inquiries may be made by calling (413) 663-6593 or (413) 447-7554. A Board of Directors made up of parent representatives and members from the community at large, oversees the operation of the agency, reviews policies and procedures, monitors the finances of the agency and supervises the Executive Director. Please check with your child's teacher or stop by the office at the Center for an updated list of additional programs that are offered.

12. PARENT INFORMATION, RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Chapter 28, Section 10 of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts mandates the Department of Early Education and Care the legal responsibility of promulgating rules and regulations governing the operation of day care centers (including nursery schools).

Child Care of the Berkshires, Inc. is required to inform all parents of specific information about their rights and responsibilities at the time of admission of their child to the center. Section 7.04 of 102 CMR 7.00, the regulations that govern day care centers, contains more information.

Parent's Rights

Visits: You have a right to make unannounced visits to your child's room while your child is present.

Parent Input: The program must have a procedure for allowing your input in the development of center policy and procedure. The program must allow you to make suggestions, but it is up to the program to decide whether or not they will be implemented.

Conferences: You have a right to request an individual conference with the program's staff and Monument Square Early Childhood Center has the responsibility to make the staff available.

Meeting Prior to Admittance: The Program Director of Monument Square Early Childhood Center (or designee) will meet with you prior to admitting your child to the center.

At the meeting, the program Director in addition to the information contained in this fact sheet, must provide you with: the center's written statements of purpose; types of service provided; referral policy; behavior management policy; termination and suspension

policy; a list of suggested nutritious foods you could send for snacks and meals; the policy for identifying and reporting child abuse and neglect; the transportation plan; a copy of the health care policy (if you request it); procedure for administration of medication; procedures for providing emergency health care and the illness exclusion policy; and a copy of the fee schedule. All of this information is contained in the Parent Handbook.

You should also be given the opportunity to visit the center's classrooms either at the time of the meeting or prior to the enrollment of your child.

Progress Reports: At least every six (6) months, you should either meet with the center's staff to discuss your child's progress, or receive a written progress report of your child's activities and participation in the center. This report must become part of your child's center record. If your child is an infant or a child with disabilities, you should receive a written progress report every three (3) months. Center staff must bring any special problems or significant developments to your attention as soon as they arise.

Your Child's Records

Information contained in your child's record is privileged and confidential. The center's staff may not distribute or release information in your child's record to anyone not directly related to implementing the program plan for your child without your written consent. You must be notified if your child's record is subpoenaed.

You should be able to have access to your child's records. The Center must provide access within two business days, unless they have your permission to take longer. You must be allowed to view your child's entire record even if it is located in more than one location. The center must have procedures regarding access, duplication, dissemination of children's records. They must maintain a written log, which identifies anyone who has had access or has received any information out of the record. This log is available only to you and the people responsible for maintaining the center's records.

You have the right to add information, comments, on data, or any other relevant materials to your child's record and you also have the right to request deletion or amendments of any information contained in your child's record, but request shall be made in accordance with the procedures described below:

1. If you are of the opinion that adding information is not sufficient to explain, clarify or correct objectionable material in your child's record, you have the right to have a conference with the licensee to make your objections known;
2. Monument Square Early Childhood Center will, within one (1) week after the conference, give you a decision in writing stating the reason or reasons for the decision. If his decision is in your favor, he shall immediately take steps as might be necessary to put the decision into effect.

The licensee shall not charge an unreasonable fee for copies of any information contained in your child's record.

Upon your written request, when your child is no longer in care, the licensee can give you your child's record to transfer them to any other person that you identify. The center should ask you to sign a form verifying that you have received the record.

Responsibilities of the Program

Providing Information to the Department of Early Education and Care

Monument Square Early Childhood Center must make available to the Department of Early Education and Care any information required to be kept and maintained under these regulations and any other information reasonably related to the requirements of these regulations. This includes any information in your child's records. Authorized employees of the Office are not to remove identifying materials from the center premises and are required to maintain the confidentiality of individual records.

Reporting Abuse or Neglect

All center staff are mandated reporters. They are required by law to report suspected abuse and neglect to either Department of Social Services or to the licensee's program administrator. Monument Square Early Childhood Center must have written policies and procedures for reporting and must provide the written policy to you upon enrollment.

Notification of Injury

Monument Square Early Childhood Center must notify you immediately of any injury that requires emergency care. They must also notify you in writing, within 24 hours, if any first aid is administered to your child.

Availability of Regulations

Monument Square Early Childhood Center must have a copy of CMR 102 7.00, Standards for the Licensure or Approval of Group Day Care and School Age Child Care Programs, on the premises, available to any person upon request. If you have questions about any of the regulations, ask your center to show them to you.

PARENT EMERGENCY EVUCATION INFORMATION

Monument Square Early childhood center, 210 State Street, North Adams, MA 01247

Emergency Contact Person: Linda Cellana, Program Director
Kelly Phillips, Assistant Program Director
Telephone: (413) 664-4657

Cellular Phones:

Please do not call cell phone during non-emergencies as it is not turned on, will not be answered, and messages cannot be left.

The Massachusetts Office of Child Services requires that we provide this emergency evacuation information to parents of all enrolled students. Please save this form in a safe place for reference. We suggest you store it with your Parent Handbook.

In the event of a Confined Environmental Emergency, (e.g. fire, toxic fumes, chemical spill, ect.), during which this facility must be evacuated, in accordance with Public Safety officials, staff and children will leave the building and gather in the IMMEDIANT AREA at Joe Wolfe Baseball Field located behind the Haskins Community Center.

In the event staff and children are required to leave the immediate area due to a non-confined Environmental Emergency, (e.g. chemical spill, flood waters, ect.) all children and staff will be transported by walking in an orderly fashion to the following NON-IMMEDIATE AREA:

- American Legion, American Legion Drive, North Adams, MA 01247
Telephone: (413) 664-9004

If necessary, children will be transported to the following Health Care Facility:

- North Adams Regional Hospital, 71 Hospital Avenue, North Adams 01247
Telephone: (413) 663-3701

In the event of a Major Environmental Non-Confined Emergency that necessitates the evacuation of a large area, children will be transported by school bus to one of the following Red Cross designated mass shelters (as advised by Public Safety officials):

- A: Drury High School, South Church St, North Adams, MA 01247
Telephone: (413) 662-3240

There, they will be cared for while parents/emergency contacts are notified and arrangements are made for their pick up. At all times during the crisis, staff will remain with and care for all children in care. Staff will check attendance whenever children are moved. Staff will maintain accurate attendance lists, and bring any necessary medications/supplies and emergency records. All parents will be notified of the situation and where to pick up children as soon as possible.

MONUMENT SQUARE EARLY CHILDHOOD STAFF

(413) 664-4657

Program Director
Assistant Program Director
Administrative Assistant

Linda Cellana
Kelly Phillips
Megan Therrien

Resource Teacher

Tammy Hoag

The Infant Room

Teacher
Assistant Teacher
Closer

Avis Merrill
Sandy Robinson
Megan Therrien



The Toddler Room

Associate Teacher
Associate Teacher

Dolores Dennett
Sandy Horsfall

The Bumblebees

Associate Teacher
Associate Teacher
Opener

Katie Hayes
Stephanie Trzcinski
Ginny O'Neil

The Ducklings

Associate Teacher
Associate Teacher

Jessica Martel
Kristy Sampson

The Dragons

Associate Teacher
Associate Teacher
Planning Time & Breaks

Kelly O'Brien
Freda Nielsen, Tiffany Hartlage, & Ginny O'Neil

Support Staff

Bus Driver
Transportation Aide
Billing Clerk

Millie Kisielewski
Lisa Robinson
Lory Atwell

Kitchen

Debra DiLorenzo