

Family/Parent Handbook for Little Sprouts University

History

Little Sprouts University an ever-growing learning center with one location and three (2) classrooms with students ranging in age from 30 months- 6 years of age. We strive to accommodate Oakland / Wayne County families with the quality care they deserve. Little Sprouts University begin as an In Home daycare, we successfully operated for 3 years before expanding to this current location.

Mission Statement

At Little Sprouts University, we believe in the value and uniqueness of each child and family we serve. Our center experience is designed to promote each child's own individual social, emotional, physical and cognitive development. As caregivers and educators, our mission is to provide a safe and developmentally appropriate learning environment, which fosters a child's natural instinct to explore, discover, create and become a lifelong learner.

Philosophy

We believe that in the right environment a child's natural curiosity and creativity leads to endless opportunities to grow in knowledge and develop a love of learning. We provide that environment at Little Sprouts University by making it a safe and nurturing place where your child will be encouraged to build, splash, dash, pretend and create their way to exciting discoveries about the world around them. Early childhood is a critical time for brain development, your child's mind is growing faster now than ever. That's why every learning moment matters. At LSU our classrooms are thoughtfully designed to meet the unique needs of each child. We allow children to join the Little Sprouts University Family at 18 months and to stay with us throughout their 5 years of age.

Each day with us will be a chance for your child to grow socially, cognitively, emotionally, and physically. As early as infancy, your child will be provided with learning opportunities adapted to fit his or her age, developmental stage, and learning style. Full-day, year-round care and all-day preschool in one location makes it possible for you to provide your child with the care and education that will help them become happy, healthy lifelong learners.

Hours of Operation

Little Sprouts University is open Monday- Friday from 7:00am-6:00pm
 Little Sprouts University is closed for the following holidays:

- New Years Eve
- New Years Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- July 4th
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Eve & Christmas Day

Plus Two (2) Professional Development Days per year

Programs

There are Two (2) programs offered at Little Sprouts University. They are:

Room	Age	Ratio	Schedule
Trail Blazing Toddlers	2.5-3.5 years of age	1-4 Max of 20 students	7:00am-6:00pm
Nature Navigators	3.5-5 years of age	1-10 Max of 30 Students	7:00am-6:00pm

Licensing Notebook

Little Sprouts University Childcare is a public program voluntarily licensed to serve up to 50 children by the Michigan Department of Human Services. A copy of the licensing rules is available for review in the office.

Weather Related Closings

Little Sprouts University will remain open during most severe weather. The Center Director will monitor the weather and local news stations to determine when it is appropriate to close the center early or cancel care for the following day. In the event that Little Sprouts University closes early or cancels care for the following day, parents will be contacted and informed of the situation via Telephone and ProCare.

Children should be picked up in a reasonable amount of time to ensure all parents, children, and staff can travel safely home.

Enrollment Records

Each fall, Little Sprouts University completes an audit of enrollment records. At the conclusion of this audit, families will be notified if anything needs to be updated. Some forms must be updated every year, including the Emergency Contact and Medical Consent form.

Other records must be updated throughout the year, such as physicals and immunization records. When visiting your child's physician for a yearly "well-child" appointment, please request a copy of your child's physical and most recent immunization record. You may bring these items in yourself.

In addition, any time a family's information changes such as address, place of employment or health insurance provider, a new Emergency Contact and Medical Consent form must be completed.

Enrollment Procedures:

Item Checklist Needed Before Care Begins
Signed contract
Signed Handbook Agreement
Child Information Card
Health Appraisal
Immunization Record

Food Policy Agreement (for children requiring formula, milk, or baby food)
Food Program Application
Copy of Drivers License
Registry Clearance (for participation in field trips)
Non-Refundable Deposit (one week of care)

Confidentiality

Confidentiality is a top priority for Little Sprouts University. Personal information of families and staff will not be shared for any reason without prior written consent of the individual. When discussing a child's activities and friends in the classroom, only first names will be used. In situations regarding behavior problems and/or Incident/Accident Reports, names of children involved will never be given to families. ProCare is an app used to communicate between parents and staff. Please know that staff can read messages sent via ProCare. Please keep ProCare communication information things that you do not mind staff reading.

Tuition

Financial Agreements

Upon enrollment and any changes to tuition, families are provided a Financial Contract. This contract should be carefully reviewed and checked for errors. The contract states the days and hours your child may be at Little Sprouts University as well as the amount due every Monday. This contract is binding and can only be changed with approval and signatures from parents and the Center Director.

Yearly Registration Fee: \$150 annual and a monthly Supply Fee of \$20 a month or \$240 annually

Payment Schedule

Tuition is paid using ProCare. Please contact Director to set up payments online via ProCare. Tuition is due every Monday. There is a \$ 30 late fee for the first day, and additional \$10 per day for payments not initiated on Monday.

An invoice will be sent via ProCare a day before tuition is due. If you do not receive an invoice you are responsible for contacting the office and requesting one.

Subsidized Care- DHS

Little Sprouts University accepts childcare assistance. Parents will be responsible for full payments until authorization has been received and then a weekly copay after a determination amount has been calculated. If at any time assistance is stopped, parents will be responsible for full tuition as of the date the assistance ended.

Multiple Child Discount

Families with two or more children enrolled full-time at Little Sprouts University are eligible for a 10% discount to be applied to the youngest child's weekly tuition fee.

Late Pick-Up Fee

Little Sprouts University closes at 6:00pm, Monday-Friday. Parents will be charged a late pick-up in the amount of \$15 at 6:05 and \$1 per minute for every minute a child is present after their contracted pick-up time (this will pay for the teachers' time when they have to stay past their scheduled out time). Teachers will record late fees for processing. If there is a late pick-up fee, parents will receive a written notice from the Center Director stating the amount of the late pick-up fee. The fee will be added to your payment the following week.

If parents do not arrive to pick up their child from the program by 6:15, staff members will first try to contact the parents using all phone numbers provided on the Emergency Contact and Medical Consent form. If parents are unable to be reached, staff members will try to contact all emergency contact persons. If staff members are unable to contact emergency contact persons, the Center Director will be notified and they will then notify the Department of Human Services and/or the local Police Department.

Insufficient Funds

All payments rejected due to insufficient funds will be charged a \$50 penalty. Missed payments and late fees must be paid within the following Monday. Repeated incidents could result in termination of child care services. A payment plan should be discussed with the office if a family is having trouble making tuition payments.

Delinquent Accounts

Families will be charged \$30 fee on the first day starting on the Monday after payment is due. Families that are behind in payments more than 7 days without contacting the Center Director and setting up a payment arrangement may have their child care services terminated. For information about assistance programs that will help cover the cost of child care tuition, please speak with the Center Director. A payment plan must be agreed upon between family and Center before an account will be considered "in good standing" and no longer eligible for termination. This requires a signed payment plan contract.

Holidays and Vacation

Paid Holidays (staff paid)

Little Sprouts University will be closed in observance of the following holidays:

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- And up to TWO (2) Professional Development days per year

If the holiday falls on a weekend day, Little Sprouts University will close during the week.

For example, if New Year's Day falls on a Saturday, Little Sprouts University may close on Friday or Monday. Families will be given Thirty (30) days notice in the event of additional closings.

Paid Holidays and Professional development days are essential to ensuring the highest quality care and education for your child.

Vacation Days

Each family who attends Little Sprouts University full-time for at least 1 Year and are current with payments will receive one week of vacation per calendar year. Please note: vacation days are per family, not per child. Any vacation days not used by December 31 of each year will expire. Vacation days may not be used on a paid holiday. Please provide the Little Sprouts University with a 30 days notice when you wish to use vacation days. Requests to use vacation days must be provided in writing.

Extended Absence

In the event that a child needs to take an extended absence, such as summer break, and wishes to return to the program after a period of time, a fee of 50% of the monthly tuition must be paid each month the child is absent. More than Two (2) consecutive weeks of non-payment and no contact with the Center Director could result in termination of enrollment. If possible, notify the Center Director at least 30 days before an extended absence.

Curriculum

Daily Schedule and Activities

Each program has a Daily Schedule tailored to each age group. Little Sprouts University uses The Sprout Smart Curriculum

A Daily Schedule will be provided of your child's program.

Free Choice

"Free-play" (also called child-initiated activities, free choice, self selection) activities are incorporated into the children's schedules. During free-play, teachers actively participate with the children by asking questions about what the children are doing, participating in their pretend play, reading books when prompted, encouraging children to try new activities or play with a new toy, etc. Free-play is another opportunity for a child to grow socially and cognitively through the development of relationships.

Outdoor Play

Outdoor play is incorporated into the daily schedule. Staff members actively engage in activities when prompted by the children. Outdoor play is an opportunity for children to run, jump, climb and use their bodies in ways that would otherwise be unsafe in an indoor classroom. In addition, a large amount of social interaction takes place when children play outdoors. Because they are engaged in fewer teacher-directed activities and more child-directed play, children are able to choose their friends and who to interact with.

Children will go outside year-round, including winter. Only during extreme weather conditions will the children remain indoors.

Our teachers refer to the Child Care Weather Watch poster from the MI Department of Public Health to determine if it is too hot or cold to play outdoors. It is important for parents to send their children in appropriate clothing and outerwear for the weather conditions (e.g., coat, snow pants, boots, gloves, etc.). Please clearly label all articles of clothing with your child's name. Little Sprouts University has a few extra hats and mittens, but not enough for every child. If a child is not dressed appropriately for the weather, we will contact parents to provide the appropriate attire. Please ask your child's teacher if you have any questions about weather-appropriate clothing.

Nap/Rest time

The MI Department of Human Services requires that all children must be provided a regularly scheduled nap or resting time. Children will not be forced to sleep but may be encouraged to lie quietly for a period of time. The length of time a child should have to remain resting varies by child. There is no hard and fast rule regarding the maximum amount of time a child should have to remain resting. Children should be provided alternative quiet activities if unable to rest.

Children are encouraged to bring a familiar item from home to use during nap/rest time, such as a small blanket or stuffed animal. These items will be stored in your child's backpack or mat bag; there is limited space for storage of such items. Please take this into consideration when deciding which items to bring. All items should be clearly labeled with your child's name, as all class laundry is sent home weekly to be washed.

Multimedia

The use of multimedia in our program is an extension of the teaching and learning that takes place in our classrooms. Teachers may select movie, television, and computer game titles based upon weekly themes. Children are not required to view part or all of a video or television show, or to play computer games. Instead, the activity is offered as one of several centers. All multimedia must have a rating of "PG" or "E" and must possess an educational theme. Children are limited to a specified amount of time per week they may use or view multimedia.

Weapons/Violent Play

There is a strict policy of allowing no weapon play at Little Sprouts University. Children are not permitted to play with weapons of any type or size or to pretend that other items are weapons, including their fingers, hands, or blocks. Redirection should be used when a child is engaging in

weapon or violent play. If a child brings a weapon to Little Sprouts University, the weapon should be placed out of sight and sent home the same day with a note explaining the policy about weapons.

Competitive behavior is minimized in our programs. In young children, competition often increases negative behavior and decreases acceptance of others. Bullying is not considered acceptable behavior; all efforts will be made to guide children in finding appropriate ways to interact with others.

Pets & Visiting Animals

Staff may introduce a class pet to the classroom. Please make sure you share any pet allergies with your student's teachers. Pets and visiting animals that are brought into the classroom must be carefully considered for their temperament, health risks, and appropriateness for young children. No animal may be brought into Little Sprouts University without first notifying and receiving permission from the Center Director. Once approved by the Center Director, pets and visiting animals must have documentation from a licensed veterinarian or animal shelter to show that the animal(s) is fully immunized and that the animal is suitable for contact with children.

Assessments

Little Sprouts University uses ASQ to assess students' levels when entering the program and then every six (6) months. Parents are encouraged to work with their child's teacher to assess and meet their child's needs.

Parent-Teacher Conferences/ Assessment Portfolios

Parent-teacher conferences will typically be held two times per year, as well as each time your child transitions classrooms. The goal of the parent-teacher conference is to gain insight into your child's development both in the center setting as well as the home setting. During conferences, your child's development and any goals you may have for your child will be discussed. Little Sprouts University uses ASQ to help assess children's development. Parents are encouraged to request conferences whenever they feel it necessary.

Field Trips

Little Sprouts University offers a variety of experiences both at and away from the center. Field trips where students will be transported will require a "Field Trip Permission Form." Parents will be notified at least 20 days in advance of all field trips requiring a "Field Trip Permission Form." If you do not wish for your child to attend a particular field trip, please find alternative childcare arrangements for that day, as we will not have staff available to stay behind with children not participating in the field trip.

As a participant in our child care program, your child may participate in short, unannounced field trips including but not limited to: walks as a class around the perimeter of the building and/or nearby neighborhoods; trips to local playgrounds; trips to local businesses. Teacher-child ratios are maintained at all times.

A "Parent/Guardian Permissions" form must be completed at the time of enrollment for this type of field trip.

Rules Related to Transportation

Little Sprouts University uses a private bus company for away field trips. Head counts shall be taken before leaving the center, after entering the vehicle, during a field trip, after taking children to the restroom, after returning to the vehicle, and upon returning to the center. When children leave the vehicle, the vehicle shall be inspected to ensure no children are left in the vehicle.

Meals and Snacks

	AM Snack	Lunch	PM Snack
Trail Blazing Toddlers	9:15	12:15	3:15
Nature Navigators	9:15	12:15	3:15

Food Service Policy

At Little Sprouts University, children are provided a nutritious meals and snacks. Little Sprouts University follows the nutritional guidelines established by the child and adult Food Program. Menus will be posted in classrooms, You may request a copy to take home if you would like. Children will be encouraged to sample all foods that are offered, but will never be forced to eat. Please inform your child's teacher if your child cannot eat a certain food or has different dietary needs (e.g. vegetarian, vegan, lactose intolerant) so a substitution can be made. For certain dietary restrictions, you may be asked to provide food from home for your child.

Food From Home

Children are welcome to bring in treats to celebrate a birthday or holiday. Due to various food allergies and dietary restrictions in our classrooms, we recommend supplying store-bought snacks still in the original packaging. Please check with your child's teacher before bringing any

homemade snacks. A list of healthy snack options approved by the USDA and MI Department of Education is available from the Center Director. (No Nuts or nut butters allowed)

Food Allergies/ Action Plans

If your child has a food allergy, please complete a Food Allergy Action Plan form. This form will be posted in your child's room, as well as in food preparation areas. If medication for an allergic reaction is provided, please have your physician sign the Food Allergy Action Plan as well.

Two-Year-Old Programs

The following information is specific to the toddler, and two/three-year-old program rooms: Parents must supply diapers, wipes, diaper cream, extra clothing, blankets, and stuffed toys for rest time. Please label all items with the child's name. Children may use pacifiers during rest time. To reduce the likelihood of spreading illness, pacifiers must be kept in a child's cubby or diaper bag during all other times of the day. If you are breastfeeding, please discuss with your child's teacher when your child should be fed breast milk, and when you would like to come in and feed your child.

Breast milk must be brought in ready-to-use containers. For health reasons, we are not able to store bags of frozen milk for extended periods of time.

We recommend that all new foods be tried at home first since a child could have an allergic reaction to foods they have not had before. Please inform your child's teachers on the daily charts of any new foods your child has tried.

What to Provide

Clothing and Items from Home

Extra clothes, water bottle, sunscreen, crib fitted sheet and small blanket for rest, travel size pillow, weather appropriate extra set of clothes.

Play Clothes

Please send your child to Little Sprouts University in Uniform shirts with the school logo, black or khaki pants/ skirts and play shoes Monday-Thursday. Friday is free dress day. Play is usually active and often messy; comfortable, washable clothes are important if your child is to participate fully in the program. Outdoor play is scheduled every day as an essential part of our planned curriculum.

Children should be dressed appropriately for both indoor and outdoor activities. All children occasionally get their clothes wet and have toileting accidents. Whenever this occurs, it is best to change the child into an extra set of clothing provided by the family. Your child's teacher will request that you bring a complete change of clothing, including underwear, to be kept at school and replenished as needed. Please be sure to clearly label all items of clothing. Let the teacher know whenever your child's clothing or other items cannot be located.

Items from Home

Little Sprouts University allows one stuffed animal or comfort item to be brought to school for nap/rest time. We ask that all items brought to Little Sprouts University from home be placed in your child's cubby shortly after arrival by parent. Please clearly label all belongings brought from home. It is recommended that items of value, such as iPods or handheld gaming systems be left at home, due to the risk of damage or theft. Little Sprouts University is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items.

Arrival and Departure

Arrival

Little Sprouts opens at 7:00 am 5 days of the week. Parents are required to accompany their child into the center and into their child's classroom. Parents should also speak with the teacher in the classroom, if only briefly. We encourage parents to communicate with their child's teacher about their child's temperament that particular day, how he/she slept the night before, whether he/she has eaten that morning, etc. Most children go through periods of difficulty with separating from their parent(s). This is common and developmentally appropriate.

Try these tips for a successful drop-off:

- Establish a regular, predictable routine. Whether you have a kiss and a hug and go, or help your child put his things in his cubby first, do it the same way every day. What often makes separating stressful for children is the uncertainty. If your child can predict what will happen, the separation won't be as difficult.
- Separate once. If you come back into the classroom again and again, it will increase your child's stress. Remember the moment of separation is the worst part for your child, so doing it more than once makes it more stressful for your child.
- Be reliable. Return when promised. Children who are picked up later than expected may have more difficulties separating. Phrase time in terms your child will understand. For example, you will be back after snack time or before nap time.

Departure

Little Sprouts University closes at 6:00 pm 5 days of the week. If you will be late picking up your child, please provide us with as much notice as possible. Please note that there is a late fee for arriving after 6:05pm. If someone we are not familiar with is to pick up your child, it is essential that you inform your child's teacher in advance of the pick-up. This person must be listed as an authorized person on the Emergency Contact and Parent Consent form. Remind the authorized person that they may be asked for identification such as a driver's license to ensure your child's safety. Even if the individual has picked up before, he or she may still need identification if the teacher in charge has never met him or her.

Be sure to say goodbye to your child's teachers so they know you are leaving. Once you have reunited with your child and are departing, Little Sprouts University is no longer responsible for your child. For safety reasons, please do not let your child run ahead of you inside or outside of the building.

If parents do not arrive to pick up their child from the program, staff members will first try to contact the parents using all phone numbers provided on the Emergency Contact. If parents are

unable to be reached, staff members will try to contact all emergency contact persons. If staff members are unable to contact emergency contact persons, the Center Director will be notified and she will then notify the Department of Human Services and/or the Southfield Police Department.

Attendance

Regular attendance is strongly encouraged for the benefit of the child as well as the classroom as a whole. Our learning begins at 9:30 am each day, there will be no admittance after 9:30 am. If your child has a doctors appointment and will arrive after 9:30 please let the office know ahead of time, a doctors note but be presented at time of drop off. If your child will be absent, please call the center by 9:00 am so your child's teacher may make accommodations to the lesson plan.

If your child will be absent for an extended period of time (more than 2 days), the center should be notified in writing of the date the absence begins and the expected date your child will return. Enrollment will be terminated if a child is absent for a period of two weeks or more, and no notice has been received or contact made by the family.

Health and Safety Policies

Illness

Our first priority at Little Sprouts University is providing a healthy, safe learning environment for all children. A child will be sent home as soon as possible if any of the following is experienced: an illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities (as determined by the staff); an illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can reasonably provide without compromising the health or safety of other children in the classroom; or a child is experiencing any of the following conditions:

- Fever of 101 (under the arm) or greater, until 24 hours symptom-free without fever-reducing medication
- Signs/symptoms of severe illness, including: lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, inexplicable irritability or persistent crying, difficulty breathing, and/or wheezing
- Diarrhea (not associated with diet changes or medications) (Two instances) until diarrhea stops for 24 hours or the continued diarrhea is deemed not be infectious by a licensed health care professional.
- Blood in stools not explainable by dietary change, medication, or hard stools
- Vomiting (One instance) the child can return after vomiting has been resolved for 12 hours or until a health care provider determines the cause for vomiting is not contagious and the child is not in danger of dehydration.
- Persistent abdominal pain (continues more than 2 hours) or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs/symptoms of illness
- Mouth sores with drooling, unless a health care provider determines the sores are not contagious
- Rash until a physician determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease

- Pink eye (conjunctivitis) until after treatment has been initiated for 24 hours
- Scabies, until after treatment has been completed
- Tuberculosis, until a health care provider states that the child is on appropriate therapy and can attend child care
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever
- Chickenpox, until all sores have dried and crusted (usually 6 days)
- Hand Foot and Mouth sores have dried and crusted and no fever
- Pertussis, until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment has been completed
- Mumps, until 9 days after onset of symptoms
- Hepatitis A virus, until 1 week after onset of illness
- Measles, until 4 days after onset of rash
- Rubella, until 6 days after onset of rash
- Unspecified respiratory tract illness accompanied by another illness which requires exclusion
- Herpes simplex, with uncontrollable drooling

A child who becomes ill while at Little Sprouts University will be isolated in their classroom in order to limit exposure of other children to communicable disease. An ill child will be isolated to wait for his/her parent to arrive. For this reason, we ask families to make every effort to pick up a sick child as soon as possible.

Little Sprouts University reserves the right to make the final determination of exclusion due to illness. Any exceptions to our illness policy will require a written note from a licensed health care professional stating that the child is not contagious.

*Parents will be notified by telephone and ProCare. Please contact Little Sprouts University via phone by 9:00 am whenever your child is ill.

Notice of Exposure & Reporting Disease

If your child is exposed to a communicable disease, a notice will be shared by phone. Additionally, families will receive email notification of the illness. If your child or anyone in your household becomes ill with a communicable disease, please notify the Center Director immediately.

In the event a child is reported to have a communicable disease, the Center director will notify the health department.

Hand Washing

Frequent hand washing with soap and warm, running water is the most effective way to reduce and prevent the spread of illnesses commonly found in childcares such as the flu, diarrhea, and pink eye. Parents are encouraged to assist their child in the hand washing process upon arrival.

Other times your child (and staff members) will be expected to wash their hands:

- Upon arriving at the center or when changing classrooms
- After each diaper change or using the toilet
- Before and after meal times

- Before and after administering medication
- After handling bodily fluids (mucus, blood vomit)
- Before and after using the sensory table
- After coming indoors from the playground
- After handling pets and other animals
- After cleaning or handling garbage

Warm, running water (no colder than 60 degrees F) and soap must be used. Hands must be rubbed vigorously for at least 20 seconds, including the backs of hands, between fingers, under nails, and under any jewelry. A disposable paper towel should be used to dry hands and turn off the faucet. Help reinforce the importance of hand washing by encouraging frequent hand washing at home as well.

Medications

Prescription and over-the-counter medications must be given to a staff member in the original container, clearly labeled with the child's full name and birth date. Little Sprouts University staff will not administer any medication without a signed Medication Authorization Form. Forms can be obtained from your child's teacher or from the Director.

Little Sprouts University will not administer Tylenol for Fever. To administer Tylenol to a child under 2 years old Little Sprouts University will need a doctor's note with dosage and times.

Medications are stored in a locked box (refrigerated medications) or in a high cabinet (non-refrigerated medications) while in use at Little Sprouts University. The Medication Authorization Form must remain with the medication at all times. Unused medications must be immediately returned to the family and will not be stored at Little Sprouts University.

Medications are administered only by Approved Teachers. When a medication is given, the teacher will document the type of medication administered, the dosage, and the time it was given.

Physicals and Immunizations

Every child must have a current physical and immunization record on file at Little Sprouts University to attend. The physical on file must be updated at least annually; immunization records must be updated whenever a new immunization is received.

Documentation of Accidents/Incidents

Staff members shall document accidents and incidents that occur at Little Sprouts University using an Accident/ Incident Report and Incident report on ProCare. The parent shall sign the report the same day as the incident. A copy may be given to the parent. All Accident/Incident Reports must be given to the Center Director to be placed in the child's permanent file.

Documents of Health Incidents

All parents will be notified of any communicable illnesses present in the center via a sign posted on the main entrance to the center explaining the illness. In addition, parents with children in the classroom of the infected child will receive an email regarding the illness.

Documents of Allergies

A child with allergies must have an Allergy Action Plan posted in a visible location in the classroom. If the allergy is food-related, an Allergy Action Plan must also be posted in the kitchen area. All staff working in the classroom of a child with allergies must review the Allergy Action Plan to ensure understanding of emergency procedures should the child have an allergic reaction. All allergic reactions must be documented with a Health Incident Form.

Documents of Special Health Care Needs

An Emergency Care Plan will be on file for any child with special health care needs (seizures, etc). A copy of the Emergency Care Plan must be kept in the classroom emergency binder. All staff working in the classroom must familiarize themselves with this plan, should an emergency arise. If necessary, staff will receive training regarding a child's specific health care needs.

Emergency Medical/Dental Procedure

It is important that parents complete and update, as needed, an Emergency Contact and Parental Consent Form. This form contains contact information for both the parents as well as the individuals authorized to pick up the child in the event of illness or emergency. In addition, the form allows Little Sprouts University staff members to seek emergency medical or dental care from authorized care providers in the event of serious injury. It is the responsibility of the parent to complete this form and to make corrections to this information when necessary.

- If a child becomes ill or injured after arriving at the center, the Center Director will attempt to contact the parent(s) at all available telephone numbers. If a parent cannot be reached, the individuals listed as emergency contacts/authorized pick up persons on the Emergency Contact & Parental Consent form will be called.
- Children who are ill or seriously injured will be sent to the office and remain under the supervision of the Center Director until a parent arrives.
- If the child requires immediate medical attention: The staff member who witnessed the emergency situation will remain with the injured child and instruct someone else to call 911. If no one is available, first ensure the child is stable and if possible, bring the child with you to call 911.
- A staff member who witnessed the emergency situation will accompany the child to the hospital, bringing the child's physical exam, immunization records, and Emergency Contact & Parental Consent Form.
- The Center Director will contact the parent(s).

Sunscreen & Insect Repellent

All families will be required to supply sunscreen for their child/ren for outdoor activities. A permission slip must be on file before sunscreen will be applied to a child. Sunscreen will be applied by classroom teachers regularly throughout the day. Parents are encouraged to apply insect repellent to their child before arriving at Little Sprouts University for the day, as Little Sprouts University staff are not permitted to apply insect repellent.

Mandatory Child Abuse Reporters

As childcare professionals who interact with children on a daily basis, each staff member of Little Sprouts University is a mandatory child abuse and neglect reporter and must contact the MI Department of Human Services whenever abuse or neglect is suspected.

Tobacco Use

Cigarettes/ Vapes and smokeless tobacco products are prohibited on premises, including parking lots and outdoor play areas.

Access Policy

Any person in the center who is not an owner, staff member, substitute, or subcontracted staff or volunteer who has had a record check and approval to be involved with child care shall not have unrestricted access to children for whom that person is not the parent, guardian or custodian, nor be counted in the staff to child ratio. Unrestricted access means that a person has contact with a child alone or is directly responsible for child care.

Persons who do not have unrestricted access will be under the direct supervision and monitoring of a paid staff member at all times and will not be allowed to assume any child care responsibilities. The primary responsibility of the supervision and monitoring will be assumed by the Center Director/Lead Teacher unless he/she delegates it to the Center Director/Lead Teacher due to a conflict of interest with the person. Little Sprouts University Buildings are locked at all times and only staff may open doors for visitors. If staff doesn't know the visitor they shall ask for ID or get the Center Director, Center staff will approach anyone who is on the property of the center without their knowledge to ask what their purpose is.

If a staff member is unsure about the reason, the Center Director is to get approval for the person to be on site. If it becomes a dangerous situation, staff will follow the "Dangerous Adult" procedure. Non-agency persons who are on the property for other reasons such as maintenance, repairs, etc., will be monitored by a paid staff member and will not be allowed to interact with children on the premises.

A sex offender who has been convicted of a sex offense against a minor (even if the sex offender is the parent, guardian, or custodian) who is required to register with the MI sex offender registry:

- Shall not operate, manage, be employed by, or act as a contractor or volunteer at the child care center.
- Shall not be on the property of the child care center without written permission from the Center Director except for the time reasonably necessary to transport the offender's own minor child to and from the center. The Center Director is not obligated to provide permission and must consult with their licensing agent first.

Affidavit Policy

At times families may be dealing with difficult situations at home. When legal matters are present in the home, families may need to collect affidavits for their legal team. Due to the nature of the relationship between caregiver and child, families may choose to ask a Little Sprouts University staff member to provide such a statement. Our program's priority is providing the best possible care when children are away from home and our focus will remain on the child, making sure all their needs are met during what could be a difficult time at home. Little Sprouts University staff members will not provide written statements or affidavits of a professional nature to families.

Guidance Strategies

Reasons for Misbehavior

Every adult who cares for children has a responsibility to guide, correct, and socialize children toward appropriate behaviors. These adult actions often are called child guidance and discipline. Positive guidance and discipline are crucial because they promote children's self-control, teach children responsibility and help children make thoughtful choices. The more effective caregivers are at encouraging appropriate child behavior, the less time and effort adults will spend correcting children's misbehavior.

Effective guidance and discipline focus on the development of the child. They also preserve the child's self-esteem and dignity. Actions that insult or belittle are likely to cause children to view their caregivers negatively, which can inhibit learning and can teach the child to be unkind to others. However, actions that acknowledge the child's efforts and progress, no matter how slow or small, are likely to encourage healthy development. Teaching children self-discipline is a demanding task. It requires patience, thoughtful attention, cooperation, and a good understanding of the child. Little Sprouts University staff will use only positive guidance techniques.

When interacting with young children, staff should ask themselves the following questions: "Am I..."

- Validating feelings?
- Asking open-ended questions?
- Encouraging problem solving?
- Respecting children's choices?
- Using praise and positive reinforcement?
- Talking with children – not at them?
- Circulating throughout the classroom?
- At the child's eye level?

Understanding Misbehavior

If caregivers understand why children misbehave, they can be more successful at reducing behavior problems.

Listed here are some of the possible reasons why children misbehave:

- Test whether caregivers will enforce rules.
- They experience different sets of expectations between school and home.
- A child does not understand the rules, or are held to expectations that are beyond their developmental levels.
- They want to assert themselves and their independence.
- They feel ill, bored, hungry or sleepy.
- They lack accurate information and prior experience.
- They have been previously "rewarded" for their misbehavior with adult attention.

Preventing Misbehavior

Intervention strategies include but are not limited to the following:

1. One-on-one relationships building activities such as the I Love You Rituals

2. Utilize mental health, social workers, and psychologists in service of the child and family. Refer to special needs programs if available.
3. Class-made books individualized for the student. Individual picture cards to support behavioral expectations.
4. Ways for the student to be of service to the school, others or his or her community.
5. Noticing and describing the child's body, face and actions, labeling of feelings, and acknowledging or true intent.
6. I Am: Feeling Chart, I Choose: Self-Control Board, and intense work with the Feeling Buddies.
7. Assessing, teaching, or scaffolding missing executive skills.

Biting Program

Before age three, biting is somewhat common. When a child repeatedly bites:

1. Identify stressors—not enough structure, too much structure, not enough rest, eating, bowel habits, connection, attunement, etc.
2. Start a stress reduction program at home and school.
 - More touching (skin to skin), massage games (I'm saying goodnight to your legs, arms, hands, fingers, head, etc.)
 - I Love You Rituals with attuned interactions
 - Chest and lap time
 - More schedules and routines
3. Shadow the child and use a teething necklace. There is nothing you can do to help a child learn other ways of getting needs met after the bite has occurred. You must catch the child before the bite. Most bites occur during transitions and unstructured time. Have a person shadow the child who is biting. When the child begins to bite:
 - Toss the teething cloth into the child's open mouth. The mouth will close.
 - Firmly say, "STOP. No bite! Ouch! (make pained face) Biting hurts."
 - Say, "You wanted _____(take an educated guess as to what the child wanted). Say _____ (acceptable words) or do _____(acceptable action)!"
 - Make visuals of alternatives to biting: Say, "My turn," put up a STOP hand, play with a different toy, move away, etc.

While biting is an age-appropriate behavior, it is important to remember it is also an unacceptable behavior in a childcare environment.

Severe Biting Policy

The following process will be followed if a child's behavior continuously takes away from the care or safety of others.

- Meeting with parent, teacher, administration to discuss a plan of action to increase positive behavior at school and home. If necessary, an evaluation will be recommended for the child and the parent will be supplied contact information for the evaluation. If an evaluation is recommended, the parent will have five (5) days to make the appropriate connection and Thirty (30) days for the evaluation to take place/be scheduled. All documentation must be provided to the office. Failure to respond in a timely manner may result in the child's expulsion from the program.

- Logs must be kept to seek out triggers and patterns for repeated undesired behavior. Upon written request, these logs will be made available to the parents and/or evaluator.
- If aggressive behavior/ biting occurs two times in the same day the child must be picked up from the center immediately. The child will be removed from the classroom while waiting to be picked up. If the behavior occurs a third time in the same week, the child must be picked up immediately and take the following day off.

Home and School Partnership

ProCare is an app to help parents stay connected with their child and teacher during school hours. This is where you can communicate directly with your child's teachers throughout the day. It can also be used to pay your bill with Little Sprouts University. Talk to Center Director to get set up.

New Family Orientation

Each family is strongly encouraged to schedule a time with the Center Director to complete a "New Family Orientation." This orientation is a great time for parents to drop off routine care items (diapers, nap time bedding, etc.) as well as an opportunity to participate in a portion of classroom activities with their child, familiarizing themselves with their child's routines at Little Sprouts University. Important policies and procedures are also reviewed with the Center Director at this time, as well as the paperwork required for enrollment completed. Typically, "New Family Orientation" is scheduled 1-2 days prior to the start date.

Daily Communication

Little Sprouts University uses ProCare to communicate, share photos, notes and incidents.

Newsletters

A monthly newsletter will be posted on the bulletin board in your child's class. This newsletter provides you with general information and announcements about the center and the detailed weekly themes and announcements.

Cultural Competence

Little Sprouts University is committed to respecting each child's and family's culture and diverse needs. We recognize that culture influences every aspect of a child's development and is reflected in childrearing beliefs and practices. We believe it is important to support and preserve the child's home language usage, faith and beliefs, and cultural traditions. We recognize that children can and will acquire the use of English even when their home language is used and respected.

Little Sprouts University carries out this philosophy of cultural competence in the following ways:

- Families are treated with respect and sensitivity from our first meeting.
- Families' financial limitations are respected when planning for activities that could potentially result in additional costs, through the acceptance of DHS payments, and clear understanding of payment expectations from the time of enrollment.
- We attempt to learn accurate information about each family, their culture, faith and beliefs, and cultural traditions (we encourage each family, if they feel comfortable, to

share this information with us at the time of enrollment). This information is part of the child's daily plan as it relates to meals and snacks, holiday recognition, etc.

- Families are encouraged to be actively involved in what their child is doing in our program through family "homework", dress up days, holiday parties, and volunteer opportunities such as chaperoning field trips.
- Families are asked to inform us of the best way for them to receive communication (i.e. verbal, written, text, email, etc.)
- Families where English is their second language are encouraged and assisted in becoming knowledgeable about the cognitive value for children of knowing more than one language and providing them with strategies to support, maintain, and preserve their home language. Little Sprouts University will continue to acquire training annually to further our knowledge of culture, language, and diversity.

Room Transitions

Your child will transition to a new classroom when he/she has reached the developmental milestones for a particular classroom. As the time for a transition to a new room approaches, you will receive a letter containing information about your child's transition into his/her new classroom. Both your child's current and future teacher is available to address any questions or concerns you have during the transition process. Before the transition into a new classroom has been completed, parents are encouraged to schedule a meeting with the new teacher in order to familiarize themselves with the new classroom, children, and curriculum.

Parent Participation

Parent participation is strongly encouraged in our program. Some possible opportunities to participate and contribute to your child's Little Sprouts University experience:

- Field trip transportation and supervision
- Leading or assisting special projects (sewing, carpentry, cooking, etc.)
- Construction or collection of raw materials for art projects, dramatic play props, etc.
- Eating lunch or snack with your child – please inform the teachers one day in advance
- Volunteering in your child's classroom

Program Evaluations

Little Sprouts University asks parents to complete a program evaluation annually. The information gathered from these anonymous surveys is used by the staff to develop goals for our center and to improve the overall quality of care at our center. A parent's point of view is different from a teacher's point of view. Therefore, parent feedback on the program evaluations is very important to the success of our program and satisfaction of our families.

Questions/Concerns

If you have a question or concern, do not hesitate to bring it to the attention of the teacher most directly involved.

If the concern is not resolved, the Center Director can be reached at 248-232-0200 or littlestroutsuniversitymi@gmail.com

The Center Director is available to assist parents and staff in resolving concerns.

Emergency Procedures

Fire, Tornado, Bomb, or other Emergency Situations

Fire regulations and tornado warning procedures are posted near the exits in each classroom. Fire and tornado drills are conducted every three months; all classrooms are required to participate. In the event of a fire, bomb threat, or other evacuation emergencies, the children and teachers will immediately leave the building and go to each class' designated spot. Once all children are accounted for all classes will meet at Greenfield Presbyterian Church 2312 Greenfield Rd Berkley MI.

In case of a tornado, each classroom has a designated area to seek shelter until the emergency is over. Parents will be called as soon as safely possible following an emergency situation. For the safety of children, parents, and staff, we ask that parents do not attempt to pick up their child during an emergency situation.

Blizzard/ Severe Winter Weather

The Center Director will monitor the weather and local news stations throughout the day to determine when it is appropriate to close the center early or cancel care for the following day. The Center Director will post on ProCare to inform parents of the situation. Routine classroom activities will continue until parents arrive.

Missing or Abducted Child

In the event of a missing child, the Center Director will search for the child in the immediate area, while another staff member calls other staff to help with the search.

- If the child cannot be located in a reasonable amount of time, the Director will notify the Southfield Police Department and the child's parents.
- In the event of an abducted child, the Center Director must immediately contact the Center Director and the Southfield Police Department, and the child's parents.

Power Failure

Staff members and children should remain in the classroom and if possible, proceed with activities as usual, or may go to the outdoor playground until power resumes.

- If power cannot be restored within a reasonable amount of time, the center will close and parents contacted.
- Center Directors are responsible for contacting parents to inform them of the closing and of the need to immediately pick up their child.
- Activities will resume as possible until parents arrive.

Special Needs Care Policy

Little Sprouts University is committed to the principle of inclusion and complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. We are committed to every child equally, regardless of their special needs, and will commit to learning more about each child's specific needs and finding the best resources necessary to accomplish our common goal of finding the best care for each child. We believe that including children with special needs can enrich the experience of learning for all children and Little Sprouts University will make accommodations for children with special needs within the guidelines of ADA.

To assure that we are meeting the individual needs of each child enrolled with an identified special need, the following procedures and programs are followed:

- Staff receive ongoing training on inclusion and special needs as related to the specific needs of enrolled children.
- Confidentiality of children and families is respected and maintained at all times.
- Children with special needs will be included and encouraged to participate to the fullest extent of their abilities.
- Staff and families collaborate to meet the individual needs of the child.
- Communication with families is ongoing and is responsive to the needs of families.
- Physical environment is free of barriers.
- A variety of teaching strategies are used to meet the individual needs of each child.
- An individualized special needs care plan will be created with help of the parent/guardian, doctor, and Little Sprouts University to ensure that all parties are aware of the care practices which need to be in place.
- The special needs care plan will be completed annually or more frequently at the request of the parent/guardian or child's doctor.

Covid-19 Closing Billing Protocol

If your child's building closes due to a Covid case or state-mandated government shutdown tuition will be reduced to 50% of the cost during the shutdown unless state grants are in place to cover the loss.

Little Sprouts University Handbook Agreement

You can find the Little Sprouts University Handbook agreement Located in the main Office, Online and A QR code in the main office. A handbook agreement must be signed and initialed before your child starts their first day.