

**P & J TENDER CARE
PRESCHOOL & CHILD CARE CENTER
PARENT HANDBOOK**

**WHERE TENDER CARE AND LEARNING
GO HAND IN HAND!**



2201 – 11th Street
Rock Island, Illinois 61201
Telephone: 309.788.6908
Fax: 309.732.1137
Email:
pjtendercare@sbcglobal.net

Hours of Operation:
Monday – Friday
6:30 am – 5:30 pm

4544 – 3rd Street
Moline, Illinois 61265
Telephone: 309.764.6908
Fax: 309.764.7143
Email:
pjtendercaremoline@yahoo.com

Hours of Operation:
Monday – Friday
6:00 am – 5:30 pm

Ages Served: 6 weeks through 6 years

Illinois State Department of Children and Family Services License Numbers:

Rock Island Center #249943 (Licensing Capacity – 63)

Moline Center #460653 (Licensing Capacity – 69)

Executive Director: Paquita Richardson

Owners: James and Paquita Richardson

(Parent Handbook Effective Date: February 2014)

Please keep this parent handbook for future reference. P & J Tender Care reserves the right to amend, interpret, change, rescind, revise, or depart in regards to any fees and/or policies in this handbook after proper written notification to the parent or guardian. This handbook replaces any previous dated handbooks.

Visit our website at pjtendercare.net

P & J TENDER CARE

MISSION STATEMENT

"Our mission is to provide high quality child care and a safe learning environment for children and their families."

CORE VALUES

- ~We value parent's trust.*
- ~We value team work and cooperation with parents and staff.*
- ~We value a clean and safe learning environment.*

P & J TENDER CARE PHILOSOPHY *OUR VISION IS IN OUR NAME*

- P**ersonal* We take a **personal** interest in others and try to meet their individual needs.
- J**oyful* We believe joy is a condition of our hearts that keeps us grounded even when we don't always feel happy. We are **joyful** in what we do and what we accomplish at P & J Tender Care.
- T**ender* We feel it's important to be **tender** with people's feelings, so that no one is needlessly hurt.
- E**xperience* We believe **experience** builds on knowledge and education.
- N**urturing* We feel **nurturing** is part of caring as we soothe and comfort.
- D**evoted* We are **devoted** to making good decisions that benefit the children, their families, and the community in which we live.
- E**xpertise* We share our **expertise** in early childhood development education that is based on our continuing education and learned knowledge.
- R**espectful* We are **respectful** of people and accept them for who they are regardless of their race, religion, gender, culture, beliefs or values.
- C**ompassionate* We are **compassionate**; knowing how and when to show empathy to others.
- A**wesome* We are united and supported with an **awesome** team spirit that places value in one another.
- R**esponsible* We understand that being **responsible** means people can count on us to go beyond what is expected.
- E**nduring* We will **endure** any hardships, big or small, that come our way because we have a positive outlook for the future of P & J Tender Care and the families we serve.

Welcome to P & J Tender Care. Thank you for entrusting us with your child’s care and education. This handbook will provide valuable information as we begin our relationship with your child(ren). If updates are made to this handbook, a written notice will be placed in your child’s mailbox. If you have questions at any time, please don’t hesitate to ask an administrator for more information or clarification on the policies and procedures of P & J Tender Care. *For all documented purposes in this Parent Handbook, the use of the word, *parent*, is interchangeable with the word *legal guardian*.

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SECTION ONE – WELCOME TO P & J TENDER CARE

HISTORY OF P & J TENDER CARE

P & J Tender Care Preschool and Child Care centers, Rock Island and Moline, are privately owned and operated by Paquita and James Richardson who have always put the needs of children and their families first, since the opening of their first child care site in their home in 1976. In December of 1994, the business grew out of their home and was relocated at 1113 – 31st Avenue, Rock Island. They overcame the many hurdles of owning a business outside of their home establishment.

As time passed and their sense of commitment to serving families in the community grew, the two opened a second child care center at 4544 – 3rd Street, Moline in May of 2007. In the summer of 2009, the Rock Island center was relocated to 2201 – 11th Street so that even more families could find a safe and loving place for their children to grow, learn, and experience life in a safe and loving environment.

The Richardsons feel a sense of giving back to their community in providing not only care for the families and children they serve, but by also helping the community by providing employment and learning opportunities for the staff they employ. P & J Tender Care is a place for all to learn and grow.

P & J TENDER CARE'S PURPOSE

P & J Tender Care's purpose is to provide a warm and accepting environment for children in which each child's social, emotional, intellectual, and physical needs are met on an appropriate level.

DEDICATION TO QUALITY

The P & J Tender Care Staff each undergo a thorough staff orientation and a required 20 hours of training annually that requires them to become educated on the policies and procedures of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services Licensing Department, the Illinois Quality Rating System, and the National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs.

P & J Tender Care Child Care Center and Preschool, an Illinois Quality Rating System Star Level Two Child Care Center, has been working through the National Accreditation Commission for Early care and Education (NAC) Programs Self-Study since March of 2013. This process can take from one to two years. The staff are preparing for the validation visit in which the goal is to become accredited through NAC. This recognition will exemplify excellence in the care of young children above and beyond the Illinois Quality Rating System Star Level Two Child Care Center standards and expectations. If this accreditation is achieved, it will be a marker in the early childhood development field that P & J Tender Care has not only met, but also has exceeded state licensing requirements in an exemplifier way in an environment that is conducive to each child's individual growth.

The National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs is sponsored by the National Association of Child Care Professionals (NACCP). NACCP is the nation's leader among association serving child care owners, directors, and administrators. The organization's goal is to strengthen and enhance the credibility of leaders in the field of early child care and education by providing membership services and benefits. For more information, please visit www.naccp.org.

ABOUT THE P & J TENDER CARE PROGRAM

The P & J Tender Care Staff is dedicated each day:

1. To provide a program with a balance of quiet and active group and individual activities, with sufficient flexibility to respond to the needs of each child. The center is staffed with Child Development Associate teacher qualified personnel.
2. To provide for fine or gross motor development through both indoor and outdoor play.
3. To promote socialization skills through play with the child's peers as well as interaction with adults.
4. To encourage good health habits through hygiene techniques such as hand washing and personal care.
5. To encourage good nutritional habits by providing snacks and meals which are attractively served and designed to meet each child's dietary requirements.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

P & J Tender Care is committed to:

- Following the developmentally appropriate guidelines established by the National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs.
- Providing a safe, secure, and healthy environment for all children and families that meets or exceeds all mandated criteria for the State of Illinois Department of Children and Family Services along with all other state, county, and city requirements.
- Encouraging each child in his or her developmental growth within a creative environment that encourages learning through action, inquiry, and exploration.
- Assisting each child in gaining better control and understanding of his or her body and behavior through interaction with others, the environment, materials, and equipment that is age appropriate.
- Understanding that each child learns best through play and an environment that is set up with a hands-on approach, allows children to experience firsthand the world in which they live.
- Identifying expected learning outcomes for young children through assessment.

- Helping each child develop language skills which will enable expression of thoughts and feelings as well as an opportunity to increase knowledge.
- Promoting a good self image in each child by providing an environment that encourages independence, decision making, and problem solving.
- Fostering an appreciation for the ethnic and cultural diversity of its families and its community; discrimination in any form, will not be tolerated.
- Promoting a professional, cooperative, informative, and respectful relationship with families.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

P & J Tender Care is committed to:

- Providing an environment that is free from discrimination in employment and opportunity because of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, ancestry, marital status, disability, and veteran or military status.

Furthermore, it is the policy of P & J Tender Care to:

- Strictly follow personnel procedures that will ensure equal opportunity for all people without regard to race, color, religion, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, ancestry, marital status, disability, veteran or military status.
- Make reasonable accommodations wherever necessary for all employees or applicants with disabilities, provided that the individual is otherwise qualified to safely perform the duties and assignments connected with the job and provided that any accommodations made do not require significant difficulty or expense.
- Achieve understanding and acceptance of P & J Tender Care’s policy on Equal Employment Opportunity by all employees and by the communities in which the child care centers operate.
- Thoroughly investigate any instance of alleged discrimination and take corrective action if warranted.
- Document alleged or proven cases of discrimination with as many details as possible.
- Be continually alert to identify and correct any practices by individuals that are at variance with the intent of the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy.

P & J Tender Care affirms this policy and requires all staff to effectively pursue the policy as stated above.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

The ADA is a federal civil rights law that went into effect in 1992. The Act states that people with disabilities are entitled to equal rights in employment, state and local public services, and public accommodations such as preschools, child care centers, and family child care homes. ADA presents an exciting opportunity to plan for and include children with disabilities in early childhood settings. Children and families benefit from inclusion. Children with disabilities share learning opportunities with their peers. Inclusion also fosters caring attitudes and teaches children about interdependence and understanding for human differences. For early childhood professionals it is an extension of continuing efforts to meet the individual needs of each child and family.

SECTION TWO – GENERAL INFORMATION

PARENT VISITS AND OBSERVATION

You are always welcome to visit. This is your school, too! Please feel free to ask us anything; we need to know your concerns and interest. If something out of the ordinary is happening at home (separation, divorce, parent illness, moving, house guests, death, or anything unusual), we need to know. Children react to even minor changes. If we are aware of these changes, we can help your child with our understanding of the situation.

The door is always open, and we are always here to listen to any concerns or celebrations you would like to share that may help us provide the very best quality care for your child.

HOURS

The Moline Center operates Monday through Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The Rock Island Center operates Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Preschool hours are from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily.

HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

P & J Tender Care is closed on the following six holidays: New Years Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Memorial Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day. Holidays falling on Saturday or Sunday will be observed on the Friday before or the Monday after the holiday. **There is no reduction in tuition for holidays.**

FAMILY TRADITIONS & BELIEFS

Family traditions and beliefs are culturally diverse and meaningful to each individual family. It is important that family traditions and beliefs be respected, and for that reason, holidays are not celebrated at P & J Tender Care. This allows each family to teach their children the traditions and beliefs that are unique to their own family. As children learn and grow, it's important that these fundamental traditions and beliefs are established by a child's family rather than the child care center staff.

INSURANCE

P & J Tender Care carries the proper amount of liability insurance as is recommended and required by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.

SMOKE-FREE, DRUG-FREE, FIREARM-FREE ENVIRONMENT

P & J Tender Care is a smoke-free and drug-free facility. Neither smoking nor the use of drugs will be tolerated or allowed in the building, on the playground, in the parking lot, or any other areas of P & J Tender Care property. This policy applies to all staff and other individuals visiting P & J Tender Care.

P & J Tender Care is a firearm-free facility. No firearms are stored at P & J Tender Care Preschool and Child Care Center properties. Under **no** circumstances will the handling, storing, displaying, and/or usage of firearms will be tolerated.

If a staff person is caught smoking, using drugs, or possessing a firearm in any way at work, termination of their employment will be at the sole discretion of the P & J Tender Care Administrative Staff.

Other individuals, other than staff, not adhering to this policy will be asked by staff to leave the property of P & J Tender Care.

SECTION THREE – DAILY SCHEDULE INFORMATION AND NEEDS

CURRICULUM

Creative Curriculum is used in the classroom to help children learn and grow through play. Each room has specific learning centers that help children learn through discovery, imagination, exploration, and curiosity. The Creative Curriculum website shares that its curriculum "is widely regarded as forward thinking,

comprehensive, rigorously researched that honors creativity and respects the role that teachers play in making learning exciting and relevant for every child.”

Materials purchased for the classroom are carefully chosen to enhance the curriculum and spark the children’s interest and desire to learn. Many leading psychologists agree that children learn best through free play when they have access to manipulatives and materials that inspire children to learn and grow.

CLOTHING

Parents, you are urged to dress your child in PLAY clothes to ensure that they feel free to participate in all activities. This will allow a child the necessary freedom to participate. Paint shirts are provided for painting, water, and mud play. Sandals, clogs, cowboy boots, jelly shoes, or other slick soled shoes are not allowed for safety purposes. We also ask that proper outerwear be worn for health and safety purposes. Please avoid jackets and coats with drawstrings, and also provide your child with gloves, mittens, and hats that fit snug as not to obstruct vision and movement. It is recommended that an extra hat and pair of mittens or gloves be left at the center for daily use.

TWO changes of clothing need to be kept at school, in the event of an accident. Marking of all clothing is recommended. Clearly mark your child’s first and last name. It is extremely helpful to the staff when outer garments, socks, shoes, underwear, jackets, sweaters, coats, hats, mittens, and boots are clearly marked. We will not be responsible for lost or misplaced items. Please check the lost and found for items missing. All lost items are disposed of after 30 days. Any personal items left over 30 days after a child’s withdrawal from the center will be donated to charity or disposed of.

OUTSIDE PLAY

DCFS requires “Children shall be taken outdoors for a portion of every day unless the weather conditions pose a danger such as lightening or extremely high or low temperatures.” We will be going outside for a short period daily, weather permitting. If there is medical reason for your child not going outside, we require a note from your physician stating this fact.

The Illinois Quality Rating System requires outdoor area should be used daily for one hour for gross motor play, weather permitting. In Illinois the term “weather permitting” means temperatures between 25 and 90 degrees, taking into consideration the wind chill. For example, if the temperature is 30 degrees, but 18 degrees with the wind chill factored in, it is not expected that children have outdoor play time.

NAP

In keeping with the standards established by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, a daily nap or quiet time will be provided for all children under 6 years of age who are at the center for 4 or more hours. To protect your child’s health, a freshly sanitized individualized cot and sheet are provided each week. Parents are required to take blankets home at the end of each week and returned washed blankets on Monday mornings.

TRANSPORTATION/FIELD TRIPS

We do not provide transportation to and from school. For special field trips, transportation may be arranged. Parents will be notified prior to any field trips. Parental permission is required before children may be transported on a field trip. Parents may request to join a field trip event. Please watch for special event information. Children will be expected to follow general safety guidelines while being transported. Teachers will assist children in maintaining an acceptable noise level. Children will remain seated on the bus at all times. Children will keep all body parts and objects inside the bus at all times.

TOYS FROM HOME

Parents are asked to keep toys at home. We are not responsible for lost, stolen, or misplaced toys. They may bring a video or a book for the teacher to share with the class. Please clearly mark all items brought to the center.

SECTION FOUR – ENROLLMENT & BILLING

ENROLLMENT ADMISSION CRITERIA

To enroll a child, the following criteria must be met:

1. The child must have a physical examination, TB skin test and a lead test or screening no more than six months prior to enrollment. A physical form will be provided upon enrollment for your child's physician to fill out. An Official Birth Certificate, from the county office in which the child was born, will be needed within 2 weeks of enrollment.
2. An Enrollment Form Packet must be completed by the parent/guardian, including the following sections completed and/or signed: Child Authorization for Pickup and Contract for Services sheet, Medical Information and Names of Any Persons Not Allowed to Pick Up Your Child sheet, Field Trips and Excursions, Picture Taking and Use sections, About Your Child sheet, Emergency Medical Consent, and Verification of Parent Handbook Receipt sheet.
3. A Verification of Receipt form (DCFS form CFS581) must be signed by the parent or guardian upon receipt of the Summary of Licensing Standards for Day Care Centers provided by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.
4. Enrollment fees are due and must be paid in full before the child begins child care. **Enrollment fees are nonrefundable.** A Payment Contract must be completed and signed.

TUITION

The director or office manager will indicate the tuition fee for your child's program according to the schedule provided for him/her. **Tuition is payable in advance on a weekly, biweekly, or monthly basis.** Parents paying full tuition are required to pay in advance on Monday of the week the child care will be provided. Parents paying co-payments through DHS Resource & Referral are expected to have the current monthly tuition co-payment paid in full no later than the first full week of the month unless a payment plan has been agreed upon. If for any reason the full monthly co-payment or weekly tuition payment has not been paid in full by the last business day of the month in which the payment is due, a \$10 late fee will be assessed to your account on the first business day of the following month. There will be no exceptions to this late fee.

An annual fee will be due September 1st of each calendar year. The amount charged will be the current enrollment fee rate based on the number of children in the family that are enrolled. If initial enrollment occurred on or after June 1st of the current calendar year, the family will not be charged a fee until the following calendar year on September 1st. If the payment is more than 30 days late, a \$10 fee will be added to the annual fee.

If a child is withdrawn from the child care program with an outstanding balance, the balance is expected to be paid in full at the time of withdrawal. If the balance is not paid in full or payment arrangements are agreed

upon with a written contract at the time the child is withdrawn. P & J Tender Care reserves the right to turn the balance over to a collection agency thirty days after the final withdrawal date.

FEE STRUCTURE

The current tuition fees may be obtained at the front desk. The fees are based on the age of the child. The fees are directly influenced by the number of staff in each classroom. The tuition costs go down as the need for staff decreases by the age of the child. Below is a breakdown of the staffing requirements by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services:

Age of Child	Number of Staff in Classroom
6 Weeks through 14 Months	1 Staff for Every 4 Children
15 Months through 23 Months	1 Staff for Every 5 Children
24 Months through 35 Months	1 Staff for Every 8 Children
36 Months through 6 Years	1 Staff for Every 10 Children

If tuition rates increase, parents or guardians will be notified through written correspondence that will be found in the oldest child's mailbox.

LATE PICK UP FEES

P & J Tender Care closes at 5:30 p.m. daily. If your child is not picked up by 5:30 p.m., **you will be charged a late pick up fee of \$1.00 per child/ per minute after 5:30 p.m. until you arrive** at the center. This fee is payable to the closing teacher, and **must be paid within THREE days or your child will not be able to return to the center** on the fourth day.

RETURNED CHECKS

Any checks returned to us for non-sufficient funds will be subject to a \$25.00 service charge.

WITHDRAWAL FROM CHILD CARE PROGRAM FEE

If a two week's notice is not given for withdrawal from the child care program, the parent will be responsible for two weeks of tuition. If state funding is not received for days billed for DHS Resource and Referral tuition, the rest will be added to the final bill.

REFUND POLICY

In the event, a parent or guardian feels that they have overpaid tuition, P & J Tender Care offers a refund policy. The parent must submit a written request with the following information: parent's name, child's name, date(s) in question that may be due a refund, amount of requested refund, and an address and phone number where person making request may be reached. If assistance is received from the Illinois Department of Human Services and a refund of partial co-payment is being requested, no refunds will be issued until final payment has been received from the State of Illinois.

After receiving the request, the bookkeeper will do an audit of the account in question and issue a refund if one is due to the parent or guardian.

VACATION TUITION REDUCTION

For families paying full weekly tuition, each child may take one full week of vacation per calendar year without a tuition charge. There is a ½ week fee for the second week of vacation, and full tuition for any additional weeks. For families receiving funding through DHS Resource and Referral monthly co-payments will not be reduced for vacations.

SEVERE WEATHER TUITION POLICY

Payment of tuition is not exempt due to weather closure.

SECTION FIVE – ATTENDANCE POLICIES

DAILY ATTENDANCE: ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

Arrival

Parents and children must enter and leave the building through the main entrance (front door). For your children's safety, parents are asked to bring their children into the center, hang up their coats, take the children to the sink to wash their hands, and then personally take them to a staff member. This enables us to greet each child and parent and exchange any needed information. You are then asked to record check-in time using the sign-in machine on the counter that records your child's attendance. Each individual dropping off or picking up your child must have their own ID Code.

All children must arrive at the center no later than 10:00 a.m.; no children will be admitted after 10:00 a.m., unless prior arrangements have been made with center staff because of appointments, etc. Parents are asked to never drop a child off and allow him/her to come into the center unattended.

Departure

Likewise, at the end of the day, parents are asked to personally inform a member of the center staff before taking a child home. Make sure you sign your child out using the sign-out machine on the counter. This attendance recorder documents the children present in case of an emergency evacuation. Parents are asked to make sure an adult accompanies the child to the car upon leaving.

It's important to check the child's mailbox each day for important information.

ABSENTEEISM

When children scheduled to attend the center will be absent for any reason (illness, vacation, etc.) their parents are asked to notify the center at your earliest convenience. Please contact the center at least 1 hour before normal arrival time or by 6:00 a.m. (Moline) or 6:30 a.m. (Rock Island) when P & J Tender Care opens. If a child is absent for five or more days per month without prior notice to center staff, the center reserves the right to drop children from our program.

AUTHORIZATION FOR PICKUP

Children will be released only to parents, legal guardians, or to persons designated by parents on the Authorization for Pickup form filled out upon enrollment. Each individual authorized to drop off or pick up your child, must have their own ID Code. Parents are asked to check this form periodically and update the list as necessary. Persons not recognized by center staff will be asked to show identification.

If a staff member suspects that the person picking up the child is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, the child will not be released. Another person authorized to pick up the child will be called. The safety and well being of the children in our care is of primary importance. If that person does not have an ID Code in the system, the parent will be called for confirmation of identity of person picking up child.

WITHDRAWAL

Parents are to notify the center director at least **two weeks in advance** when their child will no longer be attending the center. This allows the staff to prepare the child for the change gradually and us to fill any vacancies. If the parent/guardian removes the child from the center without two week's notice, he/she is subject to be billed by the center for two week's tuition. Payment will be expected upon withdrawal date. If it is not received within 30 days, P & J Tender Care reserves the right to turn the full balance owed over to a local collection agency.

*****DISMISSAL**

If any child misses more than **5 consecutive** days with prior notice to the daycare center or without being notified during the week due to illness or vacation, your child will be un-enrolled from P & J Tender Care. You may re-enroll your child, but a new enrollment fee will apply. If there is a waiting list for your child's class, you will be placed on the list in order of the date requested by parents or guardians.

SECTION SIX – BEHAVIOR & DCFS REPORTING SUSPICION OF CHILD ABUSE

DISCIPLINE POLICY FOR CHILDREN

At P & J Tender Care, we do not use corporal punishment. Our first goal is to teach staff how to identify behavior issues as they arise. Positive behavior is rewarded with praise. Inappropriate behavior is dealt with in a positive manner that helps the child understand the behavior and how to improve the behavior. The staff learns to use redirection, apply logical consequence, and teach problem solving to a child as disciplinary action for inappropriate behavior. The staff is directed to follow these steps in handling behavior issues:

- When a child shows signs of inappropriate behavior, the first step is to **redirect** the child to another activity. Redirecting a child helps a child stay on task and reinforces that when inappropriate behavior is exhibited better choices should be made.
- Using an application of **logical consequence** that is related to the behavior is the next step. For example, if a child knocks over another child's block structure, the direct logical consequence would be for the child to help rebuild the block structure. If a direct logical consequence isn't evident to the teacher or assistant, a privilege may be taken away. An example would be the child is waving their scissors in the air during a cutting project. The indirect logical consequence would entail the child having their scissors privilege taken away. If the child continues to be disruptive and difficult, a redirected logical consequence would be directing the child to the quieter designated Safe Place area of the room where the child can rest, relax, and refocus before rejoining a group.
- **Problem solving** is also used. The child may sit with the teacher and revisit the behavior that was exhibited and use problem solving as to what could have been differently and how the child might make better choices in the future.

BEHAVIOR DISCHARGE POLICY

If your child is not ready for the group experiences, if he/she has needs which are not best met in our group setting, or if his/her behavior is detrimental to the other children in our care, we may request a confidential conference with the parent and discuss alternative options to better meet the child's individual needs. We do not believe the child should remain in the center if he/she does not derive some benefit from the program or experience. If we decide it is in the child's best interest to discharge him/her from the center, we will plan with the parents to meet the child's needs, including referrals to other agencies.

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

REPORTING SUSPICION OF CHILD ABUSE

P & J Tender Care complies with the Illinois Manual for Mandated Reporters. All child care center staff holds the responsibility to take action as Illinois Mandatory Reporters. The State of Illinois defines the role of a Mandatory Reporter as follows:

The Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act places several requirements on you as a mandated reporter.

- *You are required to "immediately report or cause a report to be made to the Department" of suspected child abuse or neglect.*

- *Privileged communication between professional and client is not grounds for failure to report. Willful failure to report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect is a misdemeanor (first violation) or class 4 felony (second or subsequent violation). Further, professionals may be subject to penalties by their regulatory boards. A member of the clergy may claim the privilege under Section 8-803 of the Code of Civil Procedure.*

- *You may have to testify regarding any incident you report if the case becomes the subject of legal or judicial action.*

- *State law protects the identity of all mandated reporters, and you are given immunity from legal liability as a result of reports you make in good faith.*

- *Reports must be confirmed in writing to the local investigation unit within 48 hours of the Hotline call. Forms may be obtained from the local DCFS office or you may duplicate and use the forms in Appendix D of the Manual for Mandated Reporters.*

P& J Tender Care encourages staff to discuss suspicion of abuse with the center director whenever possible so that all possible details may be considered before a report is filed.

SECTION SEVEN – HEALTH, SAFETY, & NUTRITION

HEALTH AND CONTAGIOUS ILLNESS POLICY

Illness

It is difficult to list strict criteria governing when a child is too ill to come to the center. In general, if your child is running a fever, has a contagious disease, and/or is exhibiting diarrhea and/or vomiting, he or she is too ill to be at the center. These are sufficient reasons to keep a child at home. Some guidelines are as follows:

- ❖ Fever over 100 degrees
- ❖ Skin eruptions or rash
- ❖ Constant hacking cough
- ❖ Redness of throat or eyes
- ❖ Vomiting

❖ Diarrhea (2 or more loose, watery stools)

Likewise, should a child become ill or have any of these symptoms while at the center, the parent will be notified and the child will be isolated from the group. The parent is then expected to remove the child from the center immediately.

The center may request and require a doctor's note to return to the center for the health safety of all the children. The child must remain free of any of the above symptoms for 24 hours before returning to the center.

Parent Notification of Child's Illness

In the event a child exhibits any of symptoms listed in the guidelines of the Illness section, the parent will be notified immediately. If the parent cannot be reached with all contact information that has been provided by the parent, P & J Tender Care will begin to call other contacts that the parent has provided on the pickup list. If no one can be contacted and the illness becomes serious and is considered a medical emergency, P & J Tender Care reserves the right to call 911 for medical assistance.

Communicable Diseases

When children first enroll in a child care setting, they sometimes have a higher rate of illness, but this has proven to strengthen the immune systems of children as they grow older and enter elementary school. P & J Tender Care works to eliminate the spread of communicable diseases whenever possible by following these important procedures:

- Hand-washing is the most important skill that can be taught to help prevent the spread of communicable diseases. Staff and children are to wash their hands when entering the classroom at the beginning of the day and throughout the day, and especially before handling food, eating, and after using the bathroom.
- Staff is trained in Universal Health Precautions, first aid, and preventative health procedures.
- Staff is responsible to make sure toys, equipment, furniture, and the structural walls and floors of the classroom are sanitized on a regular basis. In the event a child is sent home with a communicable disease, the staff will be asked to begin the sanitizing process in their classroom.
- Children experiencing symptoms or a diagnosis of a communicable disease will be cared for and taken by the director to an area away from other children until the parent arrives to pick up the child.
- Parents are asked to report to the center staff whenever their children may be exposed to a communicable disease; and the day on which they were exposed.
- Parents will be notified when their children have been exposed to a communicable disease at the center, and what symptoms to watch for in their child. These notices will be sent home and/or posted by the attendance clock on the front counter.
- Parents may be asked to keep their child at home during the time he/she is most likely to develop the disease depending on the seriousness of the disease.

MEDICATION & ALLERGY

Parents are asked to report when a child is taking any medications at home. This helps the center staff understand any changes in eating habits, bowel movements, behavior, etc.

P & J may distribute medication prescribed by a doctor if it is in the original container stating the child's name, amount of dosage, and the date prescribed. Any child on an antibiotic must remain outside of the center for at least 24 hours after the first dosage. The program does not administer the initial dosage of a medication, except with physician's written permission for life-threatening situations. Medication is given only by designated staff trained in administration of medication. Medication is given only by staff trained on use of the device.

We may also give over-the-counter medication. **Any over-the-counter medication must be in its original container and have your child's name clearly labeled on the container.** Medication must also have an expiration date

on it. No medication can be administered if the expiration date has passed. The *medication must be age appropriate to be administered*. All medicines are stored in a locked refrigerator, cabinet, or container and are inaccessible to children.

Children with physical activity limitations due to allergies must have written documentation from their doctor with clear written needs or restrictions. Allergy medications must meet the same written documentation as all other prescription or over the counter medications. Parents or a health care professional demonstrate use of the device and any special care after use to all staff who will be administering the medication.

Sunscreen requires a medical form be filled out by the parent. The sunscreen lotion must be brought from home and be clearly marked with the child's name. Teachers will apply the sunscreen as requested by the parent when playing outdoors during the spring, summer, and fall seasons.

Please ask a staff member for a medication release form if you choose to have any type of medication to be administered at the child care center. This form must be completely filled out and signed by you in order that we may give your child his/her medication.

ACCIDENT REPORTS

P & J Tender Care Staff is trained to always be focused on caring for and being engaged in learning with the children at all times. Children learning to climb, crawl, grab, run, and socialize can sometimes have little bumps and bruises along the way. In the event an accident occurs, the staff will present the parent with an Accident Form that will provide as many details as possible in regards to how the accident happened, how medical and tender loving care was administered, and a signature from an administrator to let the parent know the accident was reported outside the classroom. The parent is asked to read the report and then sign it to acknowledge the staff presented the report to them.

If an accident occurs that is more than a slight bump or bruise, the parent will be called to let them know the details so they may make the decision if they would like to come to the center and observe their child or seek other medical attention.

Parents having any concerns with accident reports should speak with an office administrator as soon as possible so as many accurate details of the accident possible may be gathered for a conference discussion.

P & J TENDER INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT PLAN (IPM) **IPM POLICY STATEMENT**

P & J Tender Care desires to prevent unnecessary exposure to children and employees to pesticides and reduce the need to rely on pesticides when managing pests. It is the policy of P & J Tender Care to only use pesticides when pests have been identified and their presence verified. Additionally, a sign will be posted 72 hours in advance and following the application that provides notice of the application of the pesticide in or adjacent to the location to be treated and at each entrance to the buildings.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

The P & J Tender Care staff has been trained for emergencies. The following procedures and precautions are in place to protect the children in the event of an emergency.

Fire Emergency

- Emergency phone numbers are posted by each phone.

- Both child care centers are equipped with a professional fire alarm system.
- Three fire extinguishers are strategically located throughout the building. Staff is to follow the steps taught in fire extinguisher training when using the fire extinguishers.
- The Moline Center is equipped with a ceiling roof sprinkler that goes off in an actual fire.
- Fire drills are held each month to prepare the staff and children in case of fire.
 - The Center Director pulls the fire alarm.
 - Staff remains calm and quickly moves the children to safety using the evacuation map that is clearly posted in each classroom.
 - The last staff person exiting the classroom is to turn off the lights to indicate everyone has exited.
 - Classroom teachers are to take attendance book with them when exiting the building.
 - All staff has been instructed what door to exit and where to stand outside the building in case of fire.
 - When safely in designated area away from the building, roll call is taken using the attendance books.
 - The Center Director carries a folder with emergency emails and phone numbers that would be used in case of an actual fire.
 - After the fire alarm is turned off, the staff and children may go back to their classrooms.
 - The Center Director then completes the Fire Drill report that is filed in the front office.
- In the event of an actual fire, the first and most important step is to move all children to safety following the procedures that have been repeatedly practiced in fire drills. The professional fire alarm system will automatically call 911 and report a fire. The second step is to dial 911 and confirm that a fire call has been received for the building address. The center director will then use the emergency emails and phone numbers to call parents to inform them of the fire.

Tornado and Thunderstorm Emergency

Tornado drills will be held twice a year during the spring and summer months. The teachers will move the children to the inner most rooms of the building as directed on their classroom evacuation map posted in each classroom. Whenever possible, children should be sitting under tables or chairs to prevent them from being hurt from flying or dropping debris.

The Center Director will watch for weather advisories for tornadoes and thunderstorms on the main center computer. She will instruct teachers to quickly move their students from classrooms to safer places in the building in the event of a severe thunderstorm warning or tornado warning.

Winter Weather Advisory

In the event of inclement weather that may cause a threat to safe travel, parents may be called and asked to pick their children up early. Local television stations will also be notified of an early closing in the event there is a winter weather emergency. Staff will be allowed to leave as the number of children decreases. Staffing will need to remain at ratio at all times to ensure the safety of the children.

Potentially Violent Situations

If a potentially violent individual enters the center, it's important first and foremost to remain calm and do everything possible to keep the situation under control. Once danger is sensed, the following steps should be taken:

- Immediately call 911 and let them know a potential violent individual has entered the building.
- Try to keep the individual in one area of the building if at all possible to ensure the safety of the children.
- Remain calm and polite showing empathy for the person's circumstances.
- Do not try to physically restrain or block the individual from their movement.
- If possible make it known to other staff that there is a possible dangerous situation in the building, and they should begin evacuating children out of the building in an orderly and quiet manner. The children should not walk in front of the building if the intruder is able to see them from the front office. Other staff and children should not

enter the area where the intruder is located. The staff should take the children to the nearest business and explain the need for emergency evacuation and shelter.

- Staff should be trained to dial 911 as a backup if the front office administrators are not able to due to the intruder's demeanor. Staff may use their cell phones to call for help.

FOOD PROGRAM

P & J Tender Care participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The menus are created to provide nutritious meals and snacks for children while in child care.

Daily meals are served as follows: breakfast 8 a.m. to 9 a.m., lunch 11:15 to 11:45, and an afternoon snack around 2:30 p.m.

Upon enrollment, and annually thereafter all parents will be required to fill out an eligibility application (regardless of income) to see if their child will qualify for free or reduced meals. Children are given two meals and one snack throughout the day. Children are encouraged to try new foods, but never forced. The Department of Children and Family Services states "Food shall be cooked or prepared at the day care center in a kitchen which has been inspected and approved in accordance with the Illinois Department of Public Health's Food Service Sanitation Code." All food is prepared meeting this requirement.

A weekly menu will be available for view each week. All children will be served the foods on the menu unless the proper documentation for a food substitution has been received by the center.

Food substitutions will only be allowed for medical and religious reasons. If your child has a medical condition with diet restrictions, a medical form with a doctor's signature must be signed stating with clarity the foods that must be avoided. If the substitution is required due to religious reasons, it must be submitted in writing to the center administrator so that proper substitutions may be made. Food allergies with the child's picture are posted in each classroom. The cook along with the entire staff is alerted to all children in the center having food allergies.

If food is brought into the center for any purpose, it must be commercially prepared or cooked in a kitchen that is inspected by health officials.

SNACK OR TREATS

The Illinois Department of Children and family Services requires that any treats or snacks brought in by parents must arrive in unopened packages that were packaged by a bakery or manufacturer, or it shall not be accepted. *No home backed goods* will be accepted. Healthy and nutritious treats are recommended.

SECTION EIGHT - COMMUNICATION

CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

All employees of P & J Tender Care are required to respect the confidentiality rights of every child who attends either of the two child care centers. It is understood that confidentiality must be strictly kept to protect the privacy rights of the parents and children. Confidentiality may be defined as:

- Any information about the child.
- Any information about the parents, family, or friends of the child.
- Any documentation in which the child, family, or friends names are used or are inferred.

Any employee discussing or otherwise found communicating any form of information concerning the care, behavior, written documentation, or condition of any child with any unauthorized individual may result in immediate termination of employment.

PARENT STAFF RELATIONSHIPS

Parents and staff are asked to keep their relationship within the center and focused on the children. Therefore, parents are asked to keep their relationship with staff members strictly professional, and not ask staff members to babysit, attend parties, or anything that would take place outside of the center

CHILD ASSESSMENTS & CONFERENCES

Each child will have an assessment completed bi-annually to track their developmental progression. Assessments will be conducted by the classroom teachers during the months of May and November. A conference time will then be set up to discuss the assessments with the parents, teachers and director.

Parent-Teacher conferences are conducted twice a year, during the months of May and November. The purpose of the conferences is to discuss your child's development and to together decide upon developmental goals and priorities.

A teacher or parent may request a conference at any time during the year if they feel such a conference might be helpful to the child or provide more insight and information to the teaching staff in regards to specific needs of the child. Please feel free to call the center director at any time that a problem arises.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE POLICY

Grievances may be defined as problems and complaints in which either a staff or parent feels he/she or his/her child has not been treated fairly in regards to employment or care received. P & J Tender Care values the staff and parents they employ and serve. It's important to respect and value their thoughts, feedback, and opinions. In the event a grievance surfaces between staff and a parent, or between staff and other staff or the administrative staff, the following steps are to be taken by the parent or employee holding the grievance and the administrative staff assigned to handling the grievance.

1. If possible, it is best for the two parties involved to first discuss the grievance clarifying what the problem was or is, and then to move into discussion of how to solve the problem. It is encouraged that the discussion be in a timely manner so that the details can remain fresh in the minds of those involved. This is the first step to voice a concern or complaint.
2. If the parent or staff does not feel the first step resolved the problem, the second step is to go directly to the center director expressing the need for more investigating of the grievance. The center director will work with the parents and/or staff to work through the problem.
3. After meeting with the teacher and director, if the grievance has not been resolved, the parent or staff should then make an appointment with the Executive Director or Administrative Director to discuss a plan of action to solve the problem. The plan of action will be in writing so both parties may sign with the understanding of how the problem will be handled or solved and the responsibilities each has going forward.
4. Following the meeting with the Executive Director or Administrative Director, if the person filing the grievance feels the plan of action was not carried out appropriately, they may make their final appeal to the entire P & J Tender Care Administrative Team who will meet with the person filing the grievance to work together to find a resolution to the problem. In the event, a resolution cannot be established, the parties should decide at the meeting if the relationship between parent or staff and P & J Tender Care should continue or if it would be advantageous for both parties to end the relationship in a way that is professional and caring.

In the event, a conflict arises between two staff members; the P & J Tender Care Staff Conflict Resolution Policy will be followed to solve the conflict.

ROLE AND INFLUENCE OF THE PARENT OR GUARDIAN

A child's number one advocate and influence in their life is their parent or guardian. Child care providers work together with the parent to build a foundation for the child to learn to build relationships, skills, and knowledge as they grow. The ability to help children learn to transition from one community to another begins very early in life. A child starting child care need reassurance from their parent/guardian that P & J Tender Care is a safe, fun, and healthy learning environment that reflects what the child feels when at home. Please remember it may take days or even weeks for your child to adjust to their new environment and community of friends. This is a normal adjustment process for the child. A parent's positive attitude about their child coming to the center will help your child made the adjustment. If parents/guardians reflect trust in those caring for their child, the child will sense that security.

As parents, guardians, and child care providers come together for the benefit of the child the goal is to help each individual child develop their social, emotional, physical, and cognitive skills. Good communication between parents/guardians and the staff provide insight to each child's needs to obtain these skills.

The parent/guardian's thoughts and opinions are always respected and every effort is made to accommodate the needs of every child that is provided care and education at P & J Tender Care.

FAMILY PARTICIPATION

Families that participate in activities together help build healthy and loving relationships. P & J Tender Care offers different opportunities for families to participate which include, but are not limited to:

- Family Fun Nights
- Family Education Nights
- Family Breakfasts
- Chaperones for Field Trips
- Fundraisers

Parents are encouraged to participate whenever possible. If you have ideas to share of ways you would like to get involved at P & J Tender Care, please share your ideas with your child's teachers or the administrative staff.