

Wellspring Early Learning Center Parent Handbook

Vision: Every childhood overflowing with fun, discovery, and love.

Mission: We recognize the family as the best environment to cultivate the life of a child. Therefore, it is the mission of Wellspring to replicate a nurturing home setting that supports the wholistic development of every child. We invite you to come grow with us!

Wellspring Early Learning Center 531 Vanosdale Rd Knoxville, TN 37909

Classes, Schedule & Attendance

Wellspring is a full-time, DHS-Licensed Child Care Center. Our operating hours are Monday-Friday 6:45 am- 6:00 pm. We offer care for children ages 6 weeks-12 years old during the school year. We also offer a Summer School Age Program for K-5 grade.

Regular attendance is important for children to receive the most benefit from our program. It is also our goal to provide stability and consistency as much as possible for each individual child. We aim to always maintain positive relationships with the children and families of our center. Children are expected to attend regularly.

Arriving at approximately the same time every day helps your child know what to expect and makes drop offs much easier. We strongly recommend and encourage parents to have all preschool children at our center by 9:00 am each day they are scheduled to attend. This ensures your child receives the full range of activities we have planned and helps keep all children on a consistent schedule. Bringing your child in too close to lunch time or nap time can be disruptive and difficult for the child, teacher, and the rest of the class. Children need to be fed lunch if they arrive after our scheduled lunch time, due to a late morning appointment, family event, etc.

*If your child will be arriving later than 9:00 am, please inform the Director or Teacher in advance. Children may not be checked in during rest time, as this is disruptive to the rest of the class.

It is at the Director's discretion to arrange a meeting with the parents/guardians and discuss alternate options if a child is consistently brought in late to our program or at times when it is disruptive to the child or rest of the class.

As much as possible, please be sure that your child is well rested and ready for a busy day at school. If your child "sleeps in" at home, and arrives later, it is often difficult for him/her to nap when the rest of the class is napping. This disturbs the children in the nap room. Keeping your child on as consistent a schedule as possible – even on the weekends – makes it easier for your child to participate fully in the activities at Wellspring.

Arrival, Departure & Security

- Our center is open from 6:45 am- 6:00 pm Monday through Friday. Please do not bring your child into the school prior to 6:45 am. Teachers arrive a few minutes early to prepare the school for the children. They are unable to supervise any children until 6:45 am.
- Wellspring does not assume responsibility or liability for any activities of the children while they are with parents/guardians on the premises.
- Children will only be released to persons who are authorized to pick up the child. The list of authorized individuals is found on the ProCare parent portal and can be updated there. We encourage you to add photos of anyone authorized to pick up your child so that our staff can easily identify them. Please instruct anyone who is permitted to pick up your child to always have their ID on them, as staff will verify until familiar.
- The safety of the children is always our primary concern. We will not release a child to someone who appears incapable of safely caring for the child (intoxicated, under influence, erratic behavior etc.) at any time. In the instance that this occurs, we will call someone else from the pickup list to come pick up the child.
- Proper transportation is expected, based on compliance with car seat laws in the state of TN.
- Children must be signed in and out by an authorized pick up contact.
- Children may not enter the school unaccompanied. All guardians must sign their child in/out upon arrival and pick-up. A parent/guardian/adult over the age of 18 must sign the child in or out; younger siblings, cousins, friends, etc., are not permitted to enter the building and facilities unaccompanied.

Late Pick Up Fees

• Children should be picked up no later than 6:00 pm or a late pickup charge of \$5.00 plus \$2.00 per minute per child will be charged. (Example: Pickup at 6:02 pm results in a charge of \$9.00; \$5 late pickup charge plus \$2.00 for each minute.) Consistent late pickup may result in services being terminated, at the discretion of the Director.

Registration, Tuition and Fees

- To register your child as a new student, an application and other appropriate forms must be completed.
- A non-refundable registration fee is due upon submitting of application. This fee will be reassessed annually as follows:
 - \$80 per preschool child, \$50 per school age child. Annual re-registration occurs each year in August. This fee goes towards class supplies, facilities upkeep, and re-enrollment.
- A preliminary visit to Wellspring is required by at least one parent/guardian. **Due to COVID and health/safety protocol, a virtual tour and session with the Director may be considered the necessary preliminary visit for registration requirements. **
- All forms must be completed and turned in and the registration fee paid before your child can attend.

Tuition

Tuition for the program will be setup as an automatic ACH withdrawal on the 1st and the 15th of each month via ProCare. Rates are reflected on a weekly basis and are subject to change. Please see the website for the most current prices.

- ➤ Infant Care \$275/wk.
- ➤ Toddlers \$245/wk.
- ➤ Preschool \$205/wk.
- ➤ After School \$80/wk.
- ➤ K-5th Grade (rising 1st-6th) Summer Care \$125/wk.

- Billing statements are accessible via the ProCare parent portal. (Parent Portal Directions: Go to WellspringKids.com and click *Login* on the site menu. This will direct you to enter your credentials. After logging on, you'll be able to run statement reports by clicking the 'Report' Tab).
- Procare Parent Portal statements will summarize monthly charges and adjustments that will be automatically charged on the 1st and 15th using an ACH withdrawal or credit card. Each bimonthly withdrawal is calculated by taking the weekly tuition rate, multiplying it by 52 (weeks) and then dividing by 24 (withdrawal periods). For example, the ACH withdrawal for a preschooler is \$205 x 52, divided by 24, which equals \$444.17 (plus any other fees or charges). If using a credit card, a 3% fee will be assessed.
- A \$25 fee will be added if an ACH tuition payment is rejected by the parent's/guardian's bank. If this occurs a second time, the fee will be increased to \$50. Chronically overdue payments can result in a child being dismissed from the center's care.
- In the event that an ACH is rejected by the parent's/guardian's bank, the credit card on file will be charged.
- Credit is not given for days missed due to illness, vacation, or for days that Wellspring is closed due to holidays or inclement weather.
- Please do not bring your child to school if you have not paid his/her tuition. If a balance is overdue by more than two weeks, services will be discontinued. Switching or makeup days are prohibited. Refunds are not given for tuition or registration fees once paid.
- A 10% discount is given on tuition for second and additional children of the same family. Discount is taken from lower tuition rate(s).

Fees

• Summer school age (for rising 1st-6th grade children) field trip fees will be determined each spring by the Director and due before summer session begins.

Holiday and Closing Schedule

Wellspring will be closed on the following days each calendar year: Labor Day, Thanksgiving and the following Friday, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Memorial Day, and Independence Day. If a holiday falls on a weekend, a weekday will be chosen for observance of the holiday by the Director. No reduction in tuition fees is given for days Wellspring is closed.

Wellspring will follow Knox County Schools in decisions for closing, early or delayed opening and dismissal for bad weather, bad driving, or other emergency/safety conditions. Our priority is always the safety of our families and staff. There will be no reimbursements or reduction in fees given for inclement weather closings or delays. Any time an early dismissal is necessary, parents will be notified and expected to pick up their child(ren) in a timely manner.

Curriculum & Classroom Management

We believe in a hands-on, experiential method of learning for preschool children. We follow *The Creative Curriculum*, which is research based and supports the development of the whole child.

Our teachers will utilize this curriculum to present lessons and activities that allow your children to learn using his/her senses and participation. Calendars listing daily activities may be sent home via the newsletter or app at the beginning of each month.

Wellspring offers enrichment activities for each student. Examples may include: Math Enrichment, Reading Enrichment, Science Enrichment, Art, Spanish Enrichment, Music and Movement, Story Time, Personal Safety, and Exercise Class! These classes give students some additional reinforcement of information being taught in the classroom, as well as opportunities to receive some "special attention" as they work in small groups with a teacher learning important skills.

Discipline

Our goal is to model and teach children to evaluate situations, understand and be able to express their emotions, and make good choices. We recognize our role in this by offering a supportive and positive environment, where we cultivate mutual respect and care, establish strong relationships with all children, and exhibit positive attitudes and proactive, problem-solving responses. We believe this approach helps children learn coping methods and how to express themselves faster and prevents many behavior problems.

Techniques we use for behavior guidance and management are: setting clear and age-appropriate expectations, positive reinforcement, redirection, fair and realistic consequences, conflict resolution, time away/time out to cool down and give time to process and determine what they are feeling.

Shaming, yelling, negative reinforcement, or physical discipline of any kind is prohibited at our center.

The safety and best interest of the children and class is always a priority. Wellspring may discontinue services at any time due to unresolved behavioral issues and patterns that cause damage or destruction of property, puts any other child or staff at risk, causes excessive disruption to the day, or makes someone feel unsafe in any way.

Rest Time

The State of Tennessee Department of Education regulations are that a child must have an opportunity to nap in any program open more than 5 hours. Quality rest and sleep are crucial to the healthy development of all children. All preschool children will have the opportunity to nap at least 1-2 hours each day. Infants sleep more often, as necessary due to their individual needs. Each child is encouraged to sleep during this time. Children who do not nap or take shorter naps may do quiet activities, such as books, puzzles, or quiet table work, after a state-required period of at least 30 minutes of reclining rest time.

It is important that your child not be continually disruptive during rest time. We encourage parents to have a similar schedule when the child is at home, to allow for more consistency for rest/nap time.

Diapers/Toilet Training

- All diapering, potty training, or toileting times are managed in a clean, safe, and appropriate way.
- Parents will discuss diapering or potty training their child with the child's teachers.
- Parents will supply diapers and wipes for all children until they are potty trained and no longer need those
 items. Teachers will communicate when diapers or wipe supplies for the child are low and need to be
 replenished.
- A positive, relaxed environment and approach will be used by all staff at Wellspring for diapering and potty training. Punishments, shame, or any other negative treatment are not part of our care.

Mealtimes

If your child has any food allergies, please make sure that the Director and staff are aware of them.

- Our goal at Wellspring is to provide a healthy and balanced offering of foods daily. Breakfast, a morning snack, lunch, and an afternoon snack will be provided for all preschool children. An afternoon snack will be provided for afterschool children.
- A weekly or monthly meal and snack calendar will be posted and accessible to all parents.
- Parents may opt to send in a packed lunch for their child due to allergy or health needs. Please notify the Director and Teacher if your child will not be participating in our served meals.
- All eating opportunities at Wellspring should encourage and promote a positive attitude towards food and nourishment.
- Milk is offered at each meal as per our food program guidelines. If your child is allergic to milk or will not drink dairy milk, please send in a daily milk substitute of your choice.

Items from Home

- We provide nap blankets for all children, but some are more comfortable and feel at ease with a blanket from home. Your child may bring a small stuffed animal and blanket to sleep with while at Wellspring.
- Toys may be brought to Wellspring only on scheduled Show and Tell or other special event days, as communicated by the Teachers or Director.
- Please do not send anything of value to Wellspring. We do not assume responsibility for items sent in or lost while at our facility or in our care.

Outdoor Play and Dress Attire

- Outside exploration, play and nature time are crucial elements to our program. Children will experience multiple outdoor play opportunities daily if the temperature is above 32 and below 95 degrees with wind chill and heat index factored in.
- You may provide sunscreen and/or bug repellant for your child if needed. Please ensure bottles are clearly
 labeled with your child's name and that you have signed a permission slip allowing our staff to apply these
 items to your child as needed. These items are considered toxic and must be kept locked up and inaccessible
 to children in our classrooms.
- Please make sure your child is prepared to play outside in the appropriate weather conditions. Gloves, hats, and a coat are necessary during colder weather. If a child is dropped off without adequate or appropriate clothing, a parent or guardian will be called and expected to bring clothing by in a timely manner.
- Your child should be dressed in clothing that is comfortable each day. Keep in mind that we are very handson, and children may often come home with remnants of play and activities on their clothing. Tennis shoes are recommended for daily wear.
- Please bring a complete change of clothing (including socks) to be left at school for your child in a bag labeled with his/her name. During toilet training for younger children, a second extra outfit may be needed. If a soiled clothing item is sent home with your child, please send a replacement outfit the following day. If your child needs extra clothing and we do not have it on hand at Wellspring, a parent/guardian will be called and asked to bring it or to pick up the child.

Disenrollment & Withdrawal Policies

We provide care designed to support children's growth and to challenge them to learn, as individuals with unique personalities and learning styles, and collectively to be able to succeed in a diverse and ever-changing world. We serve a diverse community and recognize that each family is different and holds their own standards and expectations for what a program should look like. Most families will view their child's enrollment at our facility as a privilege, adhere to and uphold our policies, and contribute in the partnership to support a positive experience for all. The majority of children will adjust to the new environment and begin to feel "at home" over time.

Our goal is to always work toward a positive solution when possible. Acting in a timely, thoughtful, and well-communicated manner is especially important to us. Open and honest discussion between the parents, teachers, Director, and child are necessary to frankly discuss the issue, come up with a positive and proactive plan, adjust expectations if needed, and move forward. Continued communication and progress check-ins will be a priority. Wellspring may recommend professional guidance and help if needed or provide professional literature for assistance.

We recognize that in some cases, continued enrollment is not in the best interest of the child, family, or Wellspring program. Wellspring Early Learning Center reserves the right to discontinue services without reason at any time. Wellspring will try to give plenty of notice and time for the family to make other childcare arrangements. The following situations may justify a child and the family's dismissal from our center:

- Child is unable to adjust or thrive in the program after a reasonable amount of time and effort by parents and staff
- A debilitating condition which interferes with normal participation in daily activities or requires an excessive amount of individualized care
- Exhibiting threatening or humiliating treatment of -- or abuse of any kind -- staff, children, or others in the center setting
- Continuous disruptive behavior that is not modified by attempts made to help the child adjust and respond in an appropriate manner
- A parent/guardian fails to abide by licensing or center policies or requirements
- Non-payment of tuition or overdue balance
- Consistent late pick-ups or too early drop offs
- Failure to complete required forms in allotted amount of time
- Loss of trust, communication or disintegrated relationship between family and the school

Please understand that threatening, abusive, intimidating, dangerous, or humiliating behavior by a child or parent/guardian may necessitate immediate dismissal and termination of services.

Teamwork for Change and a Positive Solution

Our goal is to work as a team with families to address any issues that may occur. If concern arises about a child's behavior or other circumstances, our staff or Director will work to discretely inform the parent/guardian immediately. A conference time may be set to discuss an action plan together and establish clear communication and rapport. The staff will problem solve in a proactive way and utilize a variety of options to help the child. Some potential avenues are as follows:

- Ideas for environment, daily structure, or transition and routine changes that may be needed
- Behavioral redirection
- Input from Child Care Resource & Referral personnel or DHS licensing agents
- Literature or other support resources for the teacher and family to discuss together
- Professional consultant or assessment

Withdrawal Procedure

When you are planning on withdrawing your child from our center, please complete a "Notice of Withdrawal" form and return to the Director. We require a **30-day written notice** to complete the withdrawal process, which allows us time to find another student. By enrolling your child and signing required documents, you have agreed to our payment and withdrawal policies.

• Parents are responsible for paying the full month of tuition (even if child is not attending) if a 30-day notice is not given.

Illness Policy

A clean, healthy environment is extremely important to us. Please be considerate of the health of the staff and other children in the program and do not send your child to our center while ill. No reduction in fees will be given for sick days. It is important to have back up care on hand for days when your child is sick and cannot attend Wellspring.

Covid-19

*If your child has been in contact with someone or may have possibly been exposed to Covid-19 or a similar illness, we ask that the most current health and safety guidelines be followed. This may include a period of time in quarantine or staying home from attending Wellspring. Please consult with the Director if such an occasion arises. It is up to the discretion of the Director and the health guidelines to determine how attendance, in the case of covid-19 exposure, is to be handled.

Please keep your child at home if they are experiencing any of the following:

Any Covid-19 symptoms; or possible exposure to Covid-19

- A fever of 100 degrees or higher
- Excessive nasal or sinus drainage
- Respiratory distress
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Unable to participate in normal daily activities due to not feeling well (unusually tired, pale, lacking appetite, disoriented, etc.)
- Face or body rash
- Lice and/or nits
- Eye drainage
- Sore throat, swollen glands

Please keep your child home until they have been free of symptoms for 24 hours without any sort of fever or symptom management medication.

A doctor's note will always be required before returning to Wellspring for lice, internal or external parasites, contagious rashes, or other chronic or extremely contagious symptoms or illnesses. A doctor's note may be required for other illnesses or symptoms besides the above listed before allowing your child to come back to Wellspring at the Director, or Assistant Director's, discretion.

<u>Injuries</u>

Even in a safe environment, children will at times sustain injuries during play and normal daily activities. An incident report will be filled out by the child's teacher, signed by a parent/guardian, and kept in the child's file for all accidents and injuries discovered by the staff while in our care.

If your child is injured and requires more care than we can administer with minor first aid, a parent/guardian will be called.

Medication

Although sick children are not allowed in care, we understand that administrating a medication may be required for other reasons. If your child is under a doctor's care and requires daily prescribed medication during school hours, please speak with the Director to work out a safe, well-communicated, and written doctor-approved plan to administer medication. A signed liability release waiver will also be required.

*Staff will ensure that medication administered is not accessible to other children.

Staff

Wellspring places high priority on employing quality teachers and staff who go above and beyond. We believe a quality center starts with exemplary staff! Rest assured that we will have high expectations and support our staff to success.

All of our staff and teachers will:

- Pass a criminal background check
- Be certified in First Aid and CPR
- Be trained on DHS and center policies and regulations
- Receive all state-required training courses for individual age groups, safety, health, curriculum development, communication and more.

We expect and encourage our staff to obtain additional trainings beyond what is required to help support their growth and ensure they are superbly equipped.

Parent Involvement and Communication

We believe that parent involvement and contribution is incredibly important! We strive for and value a healthy, open, and professional relationship with each family through respectful, two-way communication.

We offer many avenues and resources for staying up to date and involved, including daily conversations, notes sent home, conferences, newsletters, Procare reminders, classroom postings, calendars and more.

Parent participation is encouraged! Opportunities for involvement include field trips, assisting in the classroom, teacher appreciation events, holidays, traditions, parties and celebrations, parent meetings, planning or organizing special projects and events, and more. Please let the Director or your child's teacher know if you would like to utilize or share your professional expertise, hobbies, or talents in any way!

If you need uninterrupted time with your child's teacher or the Director, please schedule a short conference or meeting time. Staff must always have their attention on the children and activities in the class and cannot divert attention for an in-depth discussion during this time. Your ideas, feedback, and concerns matter to us, and we do want to speak with you on these things.

Due to confidentiality laws, we cannot discuss any situation involving a child with anyone other than their parents/guardians.

Technology and Social Media

Your child's privacy is important to us. We will never use images or media of any kind for public usage unless you have given us permission.

Part of our efforts to communicate with parents will include pictures from time to time via the Procare App. This is a great way for you to see things your child and their classmates are doing during the day and feel more connected.

Privacy Regarding Photographs, Video & Audio Tapes

- In consideration for being allowed to photograph, videotape or audio record your child on company property, you shall only use such recording for lawful and private home use, and will not publish, publicly display, or sell such recordings. Written permission must be obtained before capturing any image of the other children in the school or staff.
- Wellspring staff will not publish, publicly display, sell, or distribute any photos, videos, audio tapes, of children taken while on our premises during our operating hours to any person, media, group, or outlet.

Television and Media

All media used at Wellspring will be age appropriate. If movies are shown for holidays or special celebrations, they will be rated "G". We believe in hands-on instruction and play, and media will not be overused while at our facility.

Stay Connected

- Follow our Facebook page "Wellspring Early Learning Center" (https://www.facebook.com/WellspringEarlyLearningCenter)
- Email is: sheena@wellspringkids.com
- Primary communication through the Procare app

Wellspring Baby-sitting Policy

To maintain the professional status of Wellspring staff and prevent any potential conflict of interest, it is strongly recommended that parents not request the staff to babysit for current Wellspring children or their siblings. Our staff immensely enjoys spending time with your children, but it is difficult for staff to accommodate all families who

ask of their babysitting services as well as maintain a teacher-child relationship in the classroom. Wellspring ELC cannot be held responsible for the working arrangements of either party when entering an agreement to provide care or services independently. If a parent chooses to employ a staff member, a "Hold Harmless" baby-sitting/employment form must be signed and turned in to the Director beforehand. This arrangement must not interfere with the staff member's professionalism and position at our center.

Birthdays at Wellspring

Wellspring looks forward to celebrating and acknowledging holidays and your child's special day! Please remember that we only allow parents to distribute birthday or other party invitations at Wellspring if **ALL** children in the class receive one.

If you want to send in something special for the teacher to distribute to the class to celebrate your child, please check with the Director first.

Record Changes/Immunization Records

Please put any changes to your child's records in writing and submit it to the Director. Be sure that phone numbers and emergency contacts are correct and updated as needed.

A current and updated official copy of Immunization Records must always be on file.

Parents are responsible for giving the Director the updated copies every time the child has any shots. When immunization records are not up-to-date, parents will be given 2 weeks to provide the updated form. Discontinuation of care will occur if this form is not on file within that time period.

Emergency Guidelines

As a childcare provider, we are required by the Department of Human Services to prepare a written Disaster Preparedness Plan. In the event of a disaster such as fire, flood, earthquake, severe storm, tornado, utility failure, nuclear accident or war, this plan would help to minimize injury or loss of life to staff and children.

*If at any time we need to evacuate our building for safety, we will go to a neighboring facility. (To be determined...)

A copy of our Emergency Plan will be provided to you upon request. If you would like to look at the Emergency Plan at any time, it is available in the office. Each classroom will have a posted emergency exit plan and route.

The Tennessee Emergency Management Agency suggests having supplies on hand to provide care for at least 24 hours following a disaster. We have an Emergency Supply Box which contains the following items:

Bottled water/First Aid Kit Non-perishable food/Diapers

Plastic bags for disposal Paper supplies/Gloves

Flashlight/batteries Blankets

Child Abuse/Personal Safety Curriculum

Tennessee Law (TCA 37-1-603) mandates that every licensed or approved childcare facility in Tennessee provide annually a Personal Safety Curriculum for enrolled children. This program must be presented to 3, 4 & 5 year old children. The curriculum that we use is <u>Keeping Kids Safe</u>. The purpose of this program is to assist young children in developing the following competencies:

- *self-awareness, self-esteem, and self-assertiveness
- *communication skills

- *problem-solving and conflict-resolution skills
- *knowledge of safety rules
- *knowledge of adult friends who can assist them in dealing with feelings, problems, and situations which may be dangerous to them

This curriculum is <u>not</u> sex education. It is a curriculum designed to give your child information and skills to prevent or handle a potentially dangerous or abusive situation. The <u>Growing Up Safe and Strong</u> manual (used in Keeping Kids Safe Program) is available at Wellspring for review at any time.

Security System and Cameras

Our facility uses a security system to monitor the premise through several means such as motion detection and cameras to record audio/visual in various locations. This is for the safety of your child and our teachers.

Please initial each line below:		
I have completed a pre-enrollment tour. Date of	tour:	(May be virtual due to Covid)
I have read the Tennessee <u>DHS Summary of L</u> link to the downloadable version.) I understand this is a L Licensing requirements.		
I have received a copy of the Wellspring ELC H abide by them. I understand if any changes or updates oc		
I agree to Wellspring ELC's tuition and payment discontinuation of services.	plan. I understand failure	to pay on time may result in
I understand that a 30-day written notice is requi 30 days even if my child does not attend during that time		at I will be responsible for payment of the
I understand that my child will not be released to emergency contacts as listed digitally on my ProCare pare necessary, to prevent transportation of my child with any or otherwise deemed unable to safely transport child.	ent portal, and/or 911 (in	extreme situations), will be called if
I hereby authorize the transfer of my child's heal	th record to the hospital li	sted above in the event of an emergency.
I authorize the emergency contacts, physician an Wellspring ELC staff to provide any emergency care necessity.		my ProCare parent portal, and/or
I respect and support the illness policy at Wellsp symptom-free for 24 hours prior to returning.	ring ELC and will not brin	g my child to school until they have been
I authorize and understand that while at Wellspr classmates will be taken. I understand that my child may maintains a security system onsite and additionally shares App. This is a way for parents to stay informed and feel a	appear in photos sent to t s regular communications	heir classmate's parents. Wellspring
I understand the Wellspring ELC privacy policy regard to my child and other children at the center. 'In co record your child on company property, you shall only us publish, publicly display or sell such recordings.'	nsideration for being allow	ved to photograph, videotape or audio
Signature of Mother/Legal Guardian	Signature of Father/L	egal Guardian
Print name of Mother/Legal Guardian	Print name of Father/	Legal Guardian

Date

Date