

Welcome to All Stars Montessori, L.L.C.

This is your **All Stars Montessori Parent Handbook**. Please keep it handy to refer to if you have questions regarding our goals, policies or procedures. This handbook and other useful information can be found on our website at www.allstarsmontessori.com. If you have any further questions that you do not feel we have answered herein, please feel free to discuss it with one of our staff. Health and Safety policies listed in this handbook were taken from the *Health and Safety Policies* manual provided by Health Consultants for Child Care.

All Stars Montessori is a non-denominational for profit childcare center offering education to all children regardless of race, creed, color or sex. Children with special needs may be admitted to the program if their needs can be accommodated within the current program structure. In all cases, a child must be able to participate and substantially benefit from the program without risk to themselves and other children.

Each member of our staff has been carefully selected based on their specific qualifications, education and genuine love and concern for children. Each staff person's credentials meet or exceed Minnesota Department of Human Services licensing requirements. A background study is completed on all staff employed at All Stars Montessori. All teachers, assistant teachers and experienced aides complete and stay up-to-date on both CPR and First Aid training. All Stars Montessori also offers this training at no charge to all staff every three years. Anyone employed at All Stars Montessori completes training on Shaken Baby Syndrome, and any staff person that cares for infants in the center is trained on SIDS, as well. All Stars Montessori believes that education and training is very important. We provide a variety of training opportunities related to early childhood education and all staff is expected to complete these trainings. We also provide various tuition assistance options for staff interested in secondary education in Early Childhood or Montessori.

We are pleased that you have entrusted the care and nurturing of your child to us. We intend to take that responsibility very seriously. We hope to maintain an open and honest relationship with you and we ask that you do the same with us. Our goals can be summarized as follows:

1. To maintain a relaxed and home-like atmosphere that is loving and caring in which children feel safe and secure.
2. To meet each child's physical needs while encouraging independence and self-care.
3. To encourage curiosity within each child, serving as guides and helpers as each child discovers and explores, enabling them to gain independence.
4. To offer a wide variety of activities using the Montessori curriculum, including: practical life, sensorial, language, math, art, music and movement, science dramatic play and geography.
5. To provide ample opportunity for the use of large motor skills for indoor and outdoor activity.
6. To be supportive of parents, encourage parent involvement and foster open and honest communication while using tact and discretion.
7. To provide a nurturing environment in which children have respect for others and respect for themselves.

Montessori Philosophy

Dr. Maria Montessori believed that the goal of early childhood education should be to cultivate in each child the natural desire to learn. All Stars Montessori has adopted this goal and with its Montessori curriculum and teaching methods, offers an environment which stimulates and supports each child as an individual.

Dr. Montessori aimed to nurture all aspects of students – the intellectual, emotional and social. The content of the All Stars Montessori program therefore consists of diverse activities: drawing, reading, dancing, building, washing, counting, sorting, problem-solving, cooking, talking, sharing and listening. It is our belief that we can help children develop self-confidence and fundamental learning skills. Above all, we offer an enjoyable, safe and exciting place for children to spend their day.

All Stars Montessori – outline of policies and procedures:

- Hours –** All Stars Montessori is open Monday – Friday, from 7:00 am to 5:30 pm
- Please be respectful of these hours and be on time to pick up your child. Late pick-up fees will be assessed in the amount of \$1 per minute after 5:30 payable directly to the staff person who stayed late with your child. This policy will be strictly enforced for the benefit of your child as well as our staff and their families. All Stars Montessori staff has the right to call the police in any case where you have not come for your child or notified us of an unavoidable emergency by 6:15 pm.
- Child Supervision –** While children are in the care of All Stars Montessori, they will be under direct supervision at all times. The following ratios are maintained throughout the day:
- infant ratio of 1:4 (*ages 6 weeks to 15 months*)
 - toddler ratio of 1:7 (*ages 16 months to 36 months*)
 - preschool ratio of 1:10 (*ages 36 months to Kindergarten*)
 - school age ratio of 1:15 (*ages Kindergarten – 5th grade*)
- There will be up to 12 infants; up to 28 toddlers (up to 14 in each classroom); up to 60 preschoolers (up to 20 in each classroom) and up to 25 school agers.
- Registration Fee –** Upon registration, we require payment of a non-refundable registration fee as well as a non-refundable deposit in the amount of one week's tuition. The deposit of one week's tuition will be applied to your child's last week in attendance if two week's notice is given. The non-refundable registration fee is \$75 for toddlers, preschoolers and school agers, and \$90 for infants under 16 months old. All Stars Montessori will provide pre-printed labels with each infants full name to be used on bottles, etc.
- Tuition –** Tuition will be determined upon enrollment and will be based on the age of your child and whether they will be enrolled on a full time or part time basis. In most cases, tuition will go down when your child transitions into an older age group. All Stars Montessori reserves the right to make adjustments to tuition based on changes in the program and/or cost of living. We will provide you with at least 60 days notice prior to making any tuition changes. We appreciate your consistent and timely payments. If delinquent payments become a problem that cannot be corrected, All Stars Montessori reserves the right to terminate services. There will be a \$30 fee for checks returned as NSF.
- Families with more than one child in attendance will receive a 10% discount on the tuition for the second and subsequent children enrolled.
- Payment –** We are able to accommodate individual preferred payment schedules, including weekly, every other weekly and monthly. Your tuition and payment schedule will be outlined on your signed contract. Payment will be due prior to the time of service. (Fridays for weekly and bi-weekly payments and the 1st of the month for monthly payments.) Monthly tuition will be prorated for enrollments in the middle of the month. We will charge late fees for tuition that is not made in a timely manner as outlined in your contract. We take the following methods of payment: cash, check, money order and automatic deduction from your checking or savings account.
- Other fees –** From time to time, your child may be participating in a field trip, special project or other activity that requires additional expenses to be covered by you. You will receive written notification of these activities in advance. All Stars Montessori may also use various fund-raising projects from time to time.
- Enrollment Forms –** Medical information must be current and complete, and immunization records must be up to date upon the first day in attendance. All Stars Montessori requires that your child's physician, dentist and preferred hospital be listed on our records. You will be provided with the following forms to complete upon enrollment: registration form, contract for enrollment, immunization record, health care summary, health history, permission to administer, general travel authorization, photo/media release and

emergency authorization. For infants and toddlers there is also an Infant/Toddler individual profile form. We will update your file periodically. You are required to provide updated medical information or immunization records to the center as changes occur.

Termination –

We ask that you provide a two-week written notice prior to withdrawing your child from All Stars Montessori. Any tuition fees already paid will not be refunded. Behavior or health issues which may affect the safety, health and general well-being of other children at All Stars Montessori may result in termination of enrollment.

Holidays –

All Stars Montessori generally observes the following paid holidays each year: New Years Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the day after, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. If any of these holidays fall on a Saturday, the preceding Friday we will be closed. If any of these holidays fall on a Sunday, the following Monday we will be closed. We reserve the right to make slight changes to this schedule on an annual basis depending on the calendar. We will also be closed the Thursday and Friday before Labor Day for staff workshop and preparation for the upcoming school year. Tuition will still be due for holidays that fall within your child's regular schedule.

Vacation –

We ask that you provide as much notice as possible when your child will be taking a vacation from the center so that we can schedule staff accordingly. Each child, after 12 consecutive months of enrollment, will be allowed one-week vacation without payment of tuition. This is to be used at once as one full week, not individual days. Your child must be on vacation from the center to receive the vacation from tuition. If you do not use your vacation during the 12-month period, it will be lost. It cannot be carried over to the next year. Prior to 12 months of consecutive enrollment, any time that your child is absent from the center tuition will need to be paid in full.

In an effort to be as flexible as we can, All Stars Montessori will attempt to accommodate extended absences while holding a spot for your child upon your return. In order to do this, we ask you to provide as much notice as possible. We will also ask for a non-refundable "hold spot" payment, a portion of which will be applied to your first week back. Depending on the timing of your extended absence and expected return, All Stars Montessori may need to adjust the date of your return in order to appropriately meet enrollment and staffing needs. This information will be outlined in the *Contract for Holding a Spot* that will be provided to you.

Illness –

We will take every precaution to safeguard your child against illness. Children should not be sent to school with any of the following symptoms:

- Chicken pox, until all of the lesions are crusted over
- elevated temperature (100 degrees or higher)
- vomiting or diarrhea
- undiagnosed rash or rash attributable to a contagious illness or condition
- sore throat
- severe cold or respiratory problems
- undiagnosed drainage from eyes
- any bacterial infection for which 24 hours of antibiotics have not been completed (Including, but not limited to: strep throat, impetigo, lice, ring worm, scabies and other contagious infections.)
- significant respiratory distress (fast, difficult or different breathing; uncontrolled coughing or wheezing)
- unexplained lethargy
- any situation in which your child requires more care than staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children in their care

Your child may return to school after 24 hours of being symptom and fever free without fever reducing medicine (i.e., Tylenol, Motrin, etc.). If your child has been taking over-the-counter medication for three consecutive days, you will need a doctor's note in order for them to return to school.

If your child should come down with any of these symptoms while at All Stars Montessori, you will be notified and expected to pick your child up within one hour or make arrangements with someone on the emergency form to pick up your child. In the meantime, your child will be isolated from the rest of the children and cared for by a designated staff person.

For infants with colds or respiratory viruses, our staff will use bulb syringes to clear the infant's nasal passages, especially prior to feedings.

Please notify All Stars Montessori of any communicable (contagious) disease that your child has contracted so that we can inform other parents. Each individual classroom will inform parents when a communicable disease has been identified in the child's class. If the illness occurs in more than one classroom, we will post information on the bulletin board in the front. Information regarding the incubation period, early signs to watch for and exclusion recommendations will be noted.

- Attendance –** Because staff assignments are based on daily enrollments, we are unable to extend any credit for absences. Please notify the school by 9:00 am if your child will not be in attendance. For this same reason, we ask that you adhere to your regular scheduled hours. If there is an instance where you will need extra hours for your child, please let us know in order that we can staff accordingly. For part-time schedules, extra hours will incur extra charges.
- Communication –** It is very important to keep open and clear lines of communication between parents and caregivers. Teachers, Assistants and Aides caring for your child will be available at the end of each day to touch base on how your child's day went and to notify you of any concerns. Lead Teachers will conduct parent-teacher conferences periodically throughout the year. Never hesitate to contact us to set up a time to meet.
- Parent Visits –** Parents of enrolled children are welcome to visit the center at any time during hours of operation. We also ask that you remain aware that drop-in visits by parents can often be disruptive for your child, your child's teacher and the other children. If you would like to visit, please let us know in advance so that we can assist you in ensuring that your visit will be the as non-disruptive as possible.
- Security –** A security key-fob is required to gain entrance into All Stars Montessori. Two of these key-fobs will be provided to each family upon enrollment. Extra key-fobs or replacement cards are \$6 each. We ask that you sign your child in and out when you drop them off and pick them up. We also ask that you ensure that a staff person acknowledges your child's arrival and departure. We will release a child only to the parents or authorized persons listed on their emergency form. If for any reason someone other than you or persons listed on the emergency form will need to pick up your child, we will require prior written notice. For safety reasons, we cannot accept a phone call as proper authorization. We will ask for identification from any person other than the parent who is picking up the child.
- Behavior Guidance –** The adults at All Stars Montessori respect each child's dignity in all of their dealings with them. Most children respond immediately and in a positive way to quiet, firm guidance and redirection from an adult. Physical contact in guiding a child is avoided unless it is necessary to restrain the child in order to prevent them from harming themselves or another child. We try to stress the positive side of the issue and keep the words "no" and "don't" to a minimum. Occasionally, some form of a "time out" is necessary. This is when a child is briefly separated from the rest of the group to help the child understand the consequences of their undesirable behavior. A record of separations will be kept at the school. No child may be separated from the group unless less intrusive methods of guiding the child's behavior have been proven ineffective.

These less intrusive methods must insure:

- that each child is provided with a positive model of acceptable behavior;
- be tailored to the developmental level of the child;

- redirect the child or group of children away from problems towards more constructive activities in order to reduce conflict;
- protect the safety of all children and staff persons;
- and, provide immediate and directly related consequences for a child's unacceptable behavior.

If a child displays persistent unacceptable behavior and has to be separated from the group five times or more in one week or eight times or more in two weeks, the following procedures will need to be followed:

- 1) A parent/teacher/director conference will be set up to discuss the specific problem, brainstorm for a solution, share ideas and set written behavior strategies and consequences agreed upon by all parties.
- 2) In the event that the behavior persists, a second conference will be arranged to appraise the situation, recommend professional guidance (psychological, physical, etc.), reset written behavior strategies and set up a follow up conference.
- 3) At the follow up conference, data will be obtained from any outside sources that were consulted and an evaluation will be made whether All Stars Montessori is capable of facilitating the recommended treatment. If so, the specific behavior strategies will be put into effect and behavior will continue to be monitored. If not, the child will be asked to leave the center.

Fire, Weather and other emergencies

All Stars Montessori is equipped with fire extinguishers, smoke alarms and well-defined plans for fire, severe weather and other emergencies. Fire drills will be held each month. All Stars Montessori will follow the decision of the superintendent of the Rosemount/Apple Valley/Eagan, District 196 in the event of inclement weather or other emergencies. In the event of a closure of district schools, All Stars Montessori will also be closed. In the event of a two hour delay, All Stars Montessori will open at 9:00 a.m. Please watch your local news or listen to the radio in the event of questionable weather for information on school closings. Closings and late starts will also be indicated on our website.

Child Abuse and neglect –

All Stars Montessori is legally required to report suspected abuse or neglect to the proper authorities.

Chemical Use –

All caregivers, including teachers, assistants, aides or substitutes are prohibited from abusing prescription medication or being under the influence of a chemical that impairs the individual's ability to provide care. Anyone who is giving care to your child will be made known of this policy and expected to fully comply.

Medication –

All Stars Montessori will administer only dated, labeled, prescribed medication or parent authorized over-the-counter medication. The medication must be in its original container and be immediately placed in the designated location for medicine in each classroom. Under no circumstances can a medicine be placed in a child's backpack, lunch box or diaper bag. We also require a medical authorization form to be completed each time your child is to receive any type of medication. All Stars Montessori will have these forms available for you to complete upon request. Over the counter medication will be administered according to the manufacturer's instructions unless written instructions are provided by the child's physician or dentist.

Allergies –

Allergies can be very common among young children. If your child has an allergy, please discuss this with All Stars Montessori staff so that we can make sure the necessary precautions are taken.

Medical emergency –

In the event that a medical emergency occurs, we will administer first aid, call 911 and then contact you. If the emergency involves a poisoning, the Poison Control Center will be contacted. We require written authorization for emergency treatment to be on file prior to attendance. Fairview Ridges Hospital in Burnsville is the closest hospital to All Stars Montessori. Staff will not transport children, but will remain with a child who is being transported to the hospital in the event that the parent or other authorized emergency contact is unavailable.

- Minor Accidents –** You will be notified either by phone and/or written explanation in the event that your child experiences a minor accident. Accident/injury reports will be kept on file at All Stars Montessori.
- Meals/Snacks –** Breakfast and two nutritious snacks will be provided by All Stars Montessori each day. Cold cereal with milk will be offered for children arriving prior to 8:00 am.
- For your convenience, hot lunches that meet dietary guidelines will be delivered by a USDA certified company each day for a small fee. These lunches will be kept warm in steam tables and served within one hour of arrival. Each month you will be provided with a menu from which to make your selections for that month. Payment can be made separately or along with your tuition.
- If you prefer, please feel free to send a packaged lunch for your child. Please be sure that your child's lunch meets dietary guidelines. We ask that you cut up the food at home in order that it is ready to be served to the child allowing for minimal direct contact with the food by our staff. If you are sending food that needs to be reheated, we ask that it is already pre-cooked and only requires a brief period of reheating.
- All Stars Montessori will provide milk with lunch.
- Field Trips –** All Stars Montessori will be going on field trips, walks around the neighborhood and other outings throughout the year to enhance the children's learning experience. We will provide you with a general travel authorization form to sign that will permit your child to go on unannounced walks to parks or other areas near the school. This form will be kept in your child's file and updated annually. In the event of a field trip, you will be notified in advance and asked to sign a specific field trip permission slip. Information on field trips will be provided to you in advance.
- Birthdays –** A birthday is a special event in a child's life. We acknowledge this at our group time and will have a special day designated for each child's birthday celebration. If you choose to bring a birthday snack to share, only packaged treats purchased from a store are allowed. Because bakery items typically do not list ingredients, these are not allowed. Also, be sure to check with the Director or with your child's teacher(s) to be sure there are not food allergies in the classroom. Many children also enjoy bringing small treasures to share in lieu of food such as stickers, pencils, etc.
- Clothing/Personal Belongings –** Your child will participate in many activities, both indoors and out. It is important that they be dressed in comfortable, durable, weather appropriate play clothes that will handle food spills, paint, sand and water play. We will be taking children outside daily if the temperature is not extremely hot or extremely cold. Please make sure that your child has weather appropriate clothing (dressing cool in the summer and warm and dry in the winter). Also, please send a labeled bottle of sunblock during the summer. Shoes must be worn at all times. Please keep in mind that tennis shoes are recommended as sandals, flip flops or other open toed shoes may lead to injury. Also, per licensing guidelines, drawstrings on children's outerwear must be removed to prevent strangulation.
- We ask that each child keep at least one extra set of clothing at school, stored in a bag and clearly marked. This will enable your child to finish the day comfortably if they happen to have a spill or an accident. Please label your child's clothing, especially their winter outerwear. All Stars Montessori cannot be responsible for lost items such as hats, mittens, etc. For children that are still in diapers, please ensure that your child always has a sufficient supply of diapers and wipes. Due to licensing restrictions, we will use only disposable diapers, not cloth. For infants, bottles must be pre-made and brought in individual bottles labeled with your child's first and last name. We are not able to prepare bottles at the center.
- Please discourage your child from bringing toys or personal belongings to school. These items tend to be distracting, can create sharing issues with their playmates or get

lost. All Stars Montessori is always happy to encourage a child to bring their favorite book to be shared with the class during story times.

Pets – In order to protect all children at the center from various allergic reactions, fears and other safety issues that may arise, we ask that your child does not bring a pet to school.

In the event that the Teacher of the classroom would like to provide an opportunity for the children in that class to learn to raise and care for a domesticated animal, a permission slip will be provided to each parent before hand.

**Research, etc. –
Public relations** As part of your child's enrollment, you will be asked to complete a Photo/Media Release form that will indicate what, if any, permission we have to use your child's image in advertising, informational or other community publications. In the event that All Stars Montessori, its staff or other licensed or authorized agency requests permission to research, obtain data, or publish information on any child in the center, parents will be notified in advance and asked to sign a separate release.

Health Consultant – All Stars Montessori has contracted the services of Health Consultants for Child Care. The nurses from HCCC will assist the center in forming and maintaining Health and Safety Policies that ensure the highest level of safety is maintained at the center. They will also be making monthly visits to our infant room as a service to our teachers as well as the parents and babies.

Privacy Rights – The data requested on the Registration and Emergency Authorization form as well as other information kept in your child's file at All Stars Montessori will be kept confidential. Access to this information is provided only to the Directors and the Office Manager, DHS Licensing, and your child's teacher(s).

**Grievance –
Procedure** If you are dissatisfied with any aspect of services being provided in our program, please bring it to our attention in a timely manner so that we can deal with it immediately. We ask that you speak first to your child's assistant teacher or Lead Teacher. If you are uncomfortable discussing the issue with them, or if no suitable resolution is reached, please bring the issue to the attention of the Director or Tracy Magnuson and/or Denise Muir. You are always free to contact the Licensing Division at anytime throughout this process.

MN Dept of Human Services, Division of Licensing: 651-296-3971

This handbook is not intended to be all-inclusive. All Stars Montessori reserves the right to make changes, additions or subtractions to this handbook without prior notice except where otherwise specified.

INFANT PROGRAM (6 weeks to 15 months)

Our infant teachers' goal is to encourage your baby to explore their environment safely as they grow by providing a variety of safe and sanitized infant toys, large muscle activities, etc.. Using the Montessori philosophy, they will interact with your baby through word and touch to encourage them to become more and more involved in their surroundings. They realize that infants follow very individual schedules and therefore do not establish a general schedule for all infants to follow. The following summarizes a normal day's routine that each infant will be involved in as their parents and teachers feel are appropriate for them:

Upon arrival, the teacher will greet the parent and the infant and exchange written and verbal information about the baby's morning so far and the night before. As part of All Stars Montessori's desire to keep communication open between staff and parents, details about your infant's day will be written on a white board for your review when you pick your child up. The teacher that greets you each morning will ask you for information about your child such as: how your baby slept the night before, when the last time they ate was, what their overall mood is for the day, etc.

Infants stages of development move quickly, and infant teachers will ensure that your baby has ample opportunity to reach various developmental milestones by ensuring: tummy time to foster neck and arm strength; opportunities for assisted seating to build core strength; a variety of safe and sanitized manipulative activities to encourage development of raking grasp, transferring, and eventually the pincer grasp; ample space

on comfortable ground to encourage rolling, rocking and eventually crawling; various large muscle activities to build strength in the legs and encourage babies to pull themselves up and eventually walk. Through regular interaction involving holding, rocking, talking, singing, etc. – infant teachers will encourage infants to recognize faces, respond to their name, and find and develop their own voice. We will be diligent about washing all toys, teethingers and other infant equipment to limit the spread of germs.

Each infant will nap as needed throughout the day. There is one crib for each infant. Tight fitting, cotton sheets are provided for each crib and are washed at least weekly or when soiled. We do have a supply of blankets for comforting and cuddling. If your baby has a special blanket, a pacifier or other special toy that you feel will make them more secure, please feel free to bring it in clearly labeled with your child's first and last name. Due to licensing regulations, blankets that are two sided as well as blankets that are knitted or crocheted are not allowed. Babies will be put to sleep on their back as a preventative measure for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. We will be sensitive to your baby's natural pattern of sleep. It is difficult if a baby is used to being rocked to sleep. We attempt, instead, to put them in their cribs while they are sleepy, but still awake. This will allow them to learn to settle themselves to sleep

Each infant will be fed formula, breast milk or whole milk, solids and snacks as indicated by the parent. As parents, you will determine your baby's diet and eating schedule. Please send your baby's prepared formula/breast milk in bottles labeled with your baby's first and last name. All formula/breast milk will be refrigerated immediately. We ask that bottles be transported in insulated carriers to ensure that there is no spoilage. Our infant staff uses feeding time as a relaxed time for your baby and we do not prop baby's bottles. As you determine your baby is ready, we will provide rice cereal and baby food. As your baby grows, we will also provide table food that is appropriate for babies. This is an important time for babies as they begin to develop the skills needed for self feeding and independence in this area can be a big milestone for them. Our infant teachers will aide infants in this process while encouraging developmentally appropriate independence.

Generally speaking, our infant room schedule involves the following:

Morning: arrival and exchange of information, play and interaction/diaper changing, morning nap, snacks/feedings; play and interaction/diaper changing.

Afternoon: lunch, afternoon nap, snack, play and interaction/diaper changing, departure and exchange of information.

Please make sure your baby has an adequate supply of diapers, wipes and changes of clothes that are clearly labeled. Per licensing guidelines, drawstrings on children's outwear must be removed to prevent strangulation. At this time, All Stars Montessori is not able to use cloth diapers. Fresh air and the opportunity to explore the outdoor environment is important for babies, and we will get them outside whenever the weather allows. When the infants do go outdoors, teachers will ensure that they remain shaded from the sun. It can be helpful to send a cap for your infant to offer further protection from the sun. If your baby is over six months old and you would like us to apply sunblock in the afternoon, please send a bottle clearly labeled with their first and last name.

As part of engaging your baby in all of their surroundings, All Stars Montessori will be going on walks around the neighborhood when weather permits. We will provide you with a general travel authorization form to sign that will permit your baby to join us on these outings. This form will be kept in your baby's file.

TODDLER PROGRAM (16 months – 3 years)

As the child reaches the age of 16 months and shows signs of readiness, they will begin the transition into the toddler room. All transitions are set by the child and age guidelines are general. Our toddler teachers understand the big changes that begin to occur for your child as they become toddlers. More self-help skills are being learned, they are being potty trained and their social interaction with their peers is reaching new levels as they move from "parallel play" to actually playing together. The teachers will be sensitive to these changes, keeping in mind that it was not so long ago that they were still a baby. Montessori education, specifically Practical Life materials that build concentration and coordination will be part of your toddler's learning experience. As your toddler nears the age of three, they will be mastering skills that will help them be successful as they transition into preschool. Communication is very important and your child's teachers will do their best to make themselves available to discuss your child. Please feel free to call if you have any specific questions. A schedule of planned activities will be posted for your information.

The following outlines a general schedule followed by the toddler room:

As children arrive in the morning they and their parents will be greeted by the teachers who will inquire about how their night was and how they are doing today. The children will engage in various free play activities. Breakfast will be provided before 8:15 a.m.

The mornings in the toddler classroom will involve: AM snack, circle time, music and movement activities, fine motor activities, puzzles, manipulatives, art activities, blocks, small group work, sand and water play, indoor/outdoor large muscle play, and other activities. Diapers will be changed in the morning, before and after nap as well as when needed.

The afternoons will involve: lunch, nap, PM snack, music and movement activities, free play and indoor/outdoor large muscle play. Diapers will be changed again after nap.

You will be provided with a communication sheet at the end of each day sharing information about what activities your child participated in during the day, when they were changed, how they ate, how they slept and what items they may need. This form serves as part of the daily communication, but face to face communication is preferred whenever it is possible.

When your child has transitioned into the toddler room, you will have the option to order a hot lunch for them or to bring a lunch from home. All Stars Montessori will supply a morning and an afternoon snack as well as milk with lunch. Teachers will be using meal time to help the toddlers master important skills that come along with meal time including self help skills, social skills and manners.

Potty training is huge at this age – and our toddler teachers will work closely with parents to ensure that the process is a successful one. As your child begins to show signs of readiness at school, their teacher will discuss the process with you. It is helpful if parents can share what techniques are successful for their child, and teachers will also be able to share methods that have worked for them in other cases. Teachers will encourage independence in this area. Going to the bathroom by themselves and being able to wash their hands by themselves, as well, does a lot for a child's confidence in this area.

Please make sure your toddler has an adequate supply of diapers, wipes and changes of clothes labeled clearly. Per licensing guidelines, drawstrings on children's outwear must be removed to prevent strangulation. Due to licensing restrictions, we will use only disposable diapers, not cloth. Please be sure to send a blanket and other comfort items clearly labeled for your child to use at nap. Your child will have their own cot, labeled with their name and washed and sanitized weekly. During the summer, we ask parents to apply sunblock to their child in the morning prior to bringing them to school. We also ask that you send a bottle of sunblock clearly labeled with your child's first and last name for teachers to re-apply in the afternoon. We will be diligent about washing all toys, cots and other toddler equipment to limit the spread of germs.

PRESCHOOL PROGRAM (3 years – Pre K)

On or around the time your child turns 3 years old, they will begin the transition into the preschool program. The timing of transitions can be different in each circumstance and age guidelines are general. Children must be mostly potty trained prior to beginning our preschool program.

As children arrive each day, they and their parents will be greeted by the teachers who will inquire about how their night was and how they are doing today. The children will engage in various free play activities. Breakfast will be provided before 8:15 am.

We currently have three preschool classrooms that operate together as one cohesive group for themes of study, field trips, etc., but are then separated in to smaller classes for their educational time to aide in more individualized relationships and opportunities. Each of our classrooms has their own personality and is carefully prepared by the teachers of that room. In each room will be various Montessori materials in areas of study such as: sensorial, mathematics, language arts, practical life, science and geography. There will also be ample opportunities for children to engage in the experiences of writing, reading, arts and crafts, music and movement and dramatic play. The individualized and child-centered approach of Montessori gives each child, no matter where they may be at developmentally, an opportunity to seek out learning experiences and this process gives them skills that will be useful for the rest of their life. Our preschool teachers carefully observe each child individually as they are engaged in their learning environment. It is through this observation that teachers are able to ensure that children are given the opportunity to gain confidence in all areas, as well as being

appropriately challenged to advance to new skills when they're ready. Our preschool teachers also understand the importance of preparing your child for Kindergarten. Kindergarten teachers have shared with us that even more important than academics is social skills such as the ability to share, respect for their environment, ability to sit in a group and stand in a line. All of these skills are practiced each day to help each child to be ready for the eventual transition to Kindergarten.

Each of the preschool classrooms will emphasize the *Letter of the Week* as well as various themes of study. Added to our regular classroom schedules are various on-site visits from firefighters, dental workers, etc. and several off-site field trips throughout the year.

Children will also have outdoor play time at least once a day throughout the year. All children will be provided with a morning and afternoon snack, ample time for lunch and a quiet time. Some children will sleep during this quiet time and others will be allowed to participate in supervised quiet activities after a short period of rest.

A monthly calendar will be provided that will outline what the children are working on during the month. Information specific to that day's activities will also be available on a bulletin board outside of your child's classroom. Communication very important and your child's teachers will do their best to make themselves available to discuss your child. Please feel free to call if you have any specific questions. Progress reports and/or conferences will be offered periodically throughout the school year.

Please make sure your child has at least one change of clothes labeled clearly. Per licensing guidelines, drawstrings on children's outwear must be removed to prevent strangulation. Please be sure to send a blanket and other comfort items clearly labeled for you child to use at nap. During the summer, we ask parents to apply sunblock to their child in the morning prior to bringing them to school. We also ask that you send a bottle of sunblock clearly labeled with your child's first and last name for teachers to re-apply in the afternoon. We will be diligent about washing all toys, cots and other equipment to limit the spread of germs.

All Stars Montessori's comprehensive Montessori preschool program is integrated into the full-time child care day for all children in this age group. Also available are morning and extended morning preschool options for families that are seeking the benefits of a Montessori preschool program and Kindergarten preparedness opportunities, but are not in need of full-time child care. The morning and extended morning preschool program runs on the same calendar as the District 196 elementary schools, and is not in operation on days when children in those schools are off. This option is available for three or five days per week, depending on enrollment availability.

SCHOOL-AGED PROGRAM (Kindergarten – 10 years)

Children that have entered elementary school will be a part of our school aged/latch key program. Our program does not provide transportation to and from school, but children that attend Highland Elementary School in District 196 or that have been accepted to a District 196 Magnet School (outside of their home attendance area) will be bussed to and from our school by the district.

Our School Aged program exists to provide a safe and fun environment where children can foster relationships with one another, continue their learning and grow while they explore their world. We maintain at least a one to fifteen teacher-to-child ratio. Our School Age teachers prepare an environment that offers various educational materials along with a variety of hands-on materials that engage the children's senses and keep them engaged. Their imagination is encouraged through ample dramatic play opportunities as well as through an eclectic supply of arts and crafts supplies, math and science materials, board games, books, blocks and more.

During school breaks, we provide fun and educational field trip opportunities that enable the children to explore the world around them while remaining safely supervised by well-trained and licensed teachers.

Please make sure your child has at least one change of clothes labeled clearly. Per licensing guidelines, drawstrings on children's outwear must be removed to prevent strangulation. During the summer, we ask parents to apply sunblock to their child in the morning prior to bringing them to school. We also ask that you send a bottle of sunblock clearly labeled with your child's first and last name for teachers to re-apply in the afternoon. We will be diligent about washing all toys, materials and other equipment to limit the spread of germs.