

Cornerstone
CHILDREN'S
CENTER

Building lives on the foundation of Christ

**Family
Handbook**

WELCOME

Dear Family:

We are so excited that you and your child/children are a part of the Cornerstone Family. Your child/children will receive three things at Cornerstone every day.

- 1.) Care from warm, loving Christians.
- 2.) Christian education that is developmentally appropriate.
- 3.) Encouragement to grow spiritually, cognitively, socially, physically and emotionally.

The name Cornerstone Children's Center was chosen based on the verse in 1 Peter 2:6 because everything we do focuses on Jesus Christ, the Chief Cornerstone. A lot of prayer and thought has been and will continue to be put into everything we do. Rest assured that we will do our best to provide a safe environment for your child/children.

We welcome you, your ideas and your presence here. We see Cornerstone as a family ministry and will act accordingly by providing opportunities for families to grow stronger. You can help make that happen by praying for this ministry.

We thank you for trusting us with your child/children. We consider it a great honor to serve the Lord by caring for these little ones every day.

In Christ,

Cassie D. Neal
Executive Director
Cornerstone Children's Center

Diane Born
Associate Director
Cornerstone Children's Center

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STATEMENT OF FAITH

- 1) We believe there is only one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:19)
- 2) That the Bible is God's inspired and authoritative word, revealing that Jesus Christ is God's son; that people are created in God's image; (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
- 3) That He created us to have eternal life through Jesus Christ; (1 Timothy 2:4)
- 4) That although all people have sinned and come short of God's glory, God has made salvation possible through the death on the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ; (Romans 3:23)
- 5) That salvation is offered to every individual on conditions of repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ; that a man is justified by faith alone, but that good works follow and flow from a living faith. (Ephesians 2:8-9)
- 6) That the Holy Spirit's power is demonstrated in and through us for the accomplishment of Christ's last commandment: go, and make disciples of every nation. (Mark 16:15)
- 7) We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ. (Philippians 2:1-4)

I believe and affirm this Statement of Faith. I will carry out my daily responsibilities according to this Statement of Faith.

ABOUT CORNERSTONE CHILDREN'S CENTER

- **Our Purpose:** Daily, we will build families on the foundation of Jesus Christ, through early education, spiritual development and a loving environment. (Isaiah 28:16 & 1 Peter 2:6)
- **Key Verse:** “For it stands in scripture: “Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a CORNERSTONE chosen and precious, and he who believes in him will not be put to shame.” (1 Peter 2:6)

- **CORNERSTONE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

- Warren Sowell, Chairman
- Robert Greene, Pastor
- Archie Branch
- Tom Cato
- Joni Hamilton
- Chris Keene
- Marianne McMillan
- Cassie D. Neal, Executive Director
- Allison Osborne
- Tom Peterson, IV
- Julie Ramsey
- Doug Roper, Jr.
- Mary Kay Thompson
- Sarah Torrance
- Eddie Tyson

Certification

We are licensed by Bright from the Start.

We are currently active members of The Georgia Alliance for Quality Child Care.

Hours of Operation

Child care services are provided from 7 AM to 6 PM Monday through Friday. Administrative office hours are 8:00 AM to 5 PM. We are open January-December.

Holidays

The full day program will be closed for the following holidays:

- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day & the day after
- Christmas Eve, Christmas Day & the day after
- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day & the day before

The half day program follows the calendar of the Vidalia City School System. The half day program will be closed for the following holidays:

- | | |
|-------------|----------------------------|
| • September | Labor Day |
| • October | Fall Break |
| • November | Thanksgiving Holidays |
| • December | Christmas Holidays |
| • January | Christmas Holidays |
| • January | Martin Luther King, Jr. |
| • February | President's Day Holidays |
| • March | Holidays |
| • March | Spring Break |
| • April | Spring Break & Good Friday |

Admission & Enrollment

All admission and enrollment forms must be completed and enrollment fee paid prior to your child's first day of attendance.

A registration fee of \$100.00 is due at the time of enrollment. The After School Care registration fee is \$50.00. This fee is non-refundable.

Based on the availability and openings, our facility admits children from 6 weeks to 12 years of age (through 5th grade). For the 2, 3, 4 year class and After School Care, a child must meet the class age by September 1st. We structured those classes that way in order to align with the state kindergarten requirements.

Children are admitted without regard to race, culture, gender, religion, national origin, or disability. We do not discriminate on the basis of special needs as long as a safe, supportive environment can be provided.

If your child has an identified special need, please complete the form included in the enrollment packet.

Inclusion

Cornerstone Children's Center believes that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging in child care. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program based on his/her individual capabilities and needs.

Non-Discrimination

At **Cornerstone Children's Center** equal educational opportunities are available for all children, without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, or parent/provider political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation or special needs, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state or local laws. Educational programs are designed to meet the varying needs of all students.

Family Activities

Each family is a child's first teacher. We value families as partners in the growth and development of children in our program. We encourage parents and other family members to be involved in the program, visit children's classrooms, participate in events, and provide feedback on the program. We offer a variety of ways in which families can participate in helping us establish and reach our program goals.

Confidentiality

Unless we receive your written consent, information regarding your child will not be released with the exception of that required by our regulatory and partnering agencies. All records concerning children at our program are confidential.

Staff Qualifications

Caregivers participate in an orientation class and ongoing training in the areas of child growth and development, healthy and safe environments, developmentally appropriate practices, guidance, family relationships, and professionalism.

All lead teachers and assistant teachers must possess the following:

- A clear fingerprint criminal background check
- CPR/First Aid certification
- Training in Fire Safety
- Basic Core Training: Recognizing Child Abuse, Infectious Disease, and Positive Discipline.

We strongly discourage families from entering into employment arrangements with staff (i.e. babysitting). Any arrangement between families and our caregivers outside the programs and services we offer is a private matter, not connected or sanctioned by **Cornerstone Children's Center**.

Communication & Family Partnership

To build a solid foundation, it is imperative to establish ongoing communication between our parents and the staff. We welcome your comments, concerns and suggestions. Throughout the year, we will hold a number of formal and informal opportunities for communication.

Open House – We will hold Open House at the beginning of each year so that you can meet your child's teachers.

Conferences – Family & teacher conferences will occur twice a year. During these conferences, we will discuss your child's strengths, likes and dislikes and styles of learning. We will work together to set goals for your child's growth and development. You may request additional conferences regarding your child's progress at any time. We encourage you to communicate any concerns.

Newsletters - The monthly newsletter provides center news, events, announcements, etc. The newsletter will be sent home in your child's backpack or diaper bag.

Email - We encourage you to provide an email address that you use regularly so that we may send you announcements, event invitations, newsletters and general updates.

- **Cassie D. Neal, Executive Director:** cornerstonedirector@vidaliafumc.org
- **Diane Born, Associate Director:** cornerstonead@vidaliafumc.org

Website – We also have a website that has valuable information including lunch menus, special events, field trips, staff information, etc. Go to www.vidaliafumc.org and click on the Cornerstone tab for more information.

We ask that your child's information is kept current at all times. State law requires that we keep a file on each child with current phone numbers, address, emergency contacts, custody paperwork, etc.

Open Door Policy

We are delighted to have family members participate in our program. Please come for lunch, to read a story or do a special craft. We ask that you let us know in advance if you are planning to come visit.

The infant room welcomes parents/guardians to nurse or feed their infants.

Open Door Policy does not mean the doors will be unlocked. For the safety and protection of the children, external doors will be kept locked at all times.

Our team will always do their best to speak with parents/guardians. Since staff days are devoted to caring for children, it is usually not feasible to have a long discussion during regular program hours. If a situation requires a longer discussion, kindly arrange for an appointment.

CURRICULA & LEARNING

Learning Environment

We provide a rich learning environment with curricula that are developmentally appropriate to the specific ages in each classroom. We strongly believe that learning happens through play. Learning and exploring are hands-on and are facilitated through interest areas. Our program is designed to enhance children's development in the following areas: spirituality, creativity, self-expression, decision-making, problem-solving, responsibility, independence, and reasoning. We encourage openness to that which is different from us, and the ability to work and play with others.

Copies of daily schedules are posted in each classroom.

Curriculum

Our program supports and encourages each child's individual development in the following areas: social, emotional, cognitive, language, physical and spiritual. Play is a key part of our curriculum because research supports play as a powerful means of learning for young children. Planned within the framework of our philosophy and goals, our curriculum also includes: Bible stories, music, language development, creative art activities, character traits, large and fine motor skill activities, science, math, shapes, colors, and letters. We also offer a group chapel time. The curriculum provides a framework on which teachers can build an early childhood program that will allow children to grow and develop as Christ Jesus did – in wisdom and stature and in "favor with God and men" (Luke 2:52). The curriculum is developed around themes which provide opportunities for the children to learn about God, Jesus, the Bible, the church, self, family, others, and the world around them. We take a team approach to planning the lessons and will use the Bible, the Georgia Early Learning Standards and years of experience as our guides.

We believe that effective teaching occurs when learning experiences are presented to a child at an appropriate age and on the child's developmental level. Our lessons and activities will reflect this approach and philosophy.

Outings & Field Trips

Weather permitting, we will conduct supervised walking trips around the neighborhood. Children are accounted for at all times. A permission statement for participation in walking trips is included in the enrollment package.

From time to time, there will be supervised field trips, and we encourage you to join your child on the trip. We will use the church buses and/or parent vehicles for field trips. Permission slips for each trip must be signed by the child's family.

For field trips, please dress your child appropriately for the season. Walking shoes are a must. Sandals and flip-flops are not appropriate for walking and make it difficult for your child.

The safety of children and staff will be guarded in all activities of child care programs. Proper restraint systems (seat belts) and the correct use of them are critically important during travel to/from the child care program as well as during field trips.

Transition

Your child's transition in child care should be a positive and exciting learning adventure. We will work with you and your child to ensure the smoothest possible transition occurs as new routines and new people are introduced.

Transition from home to center. Prior to your child's first day, you will have an opportunity to tour the center, meet with your child's peers and teachers, and communicate any anticipated concerns. At this time please share the best communication methods that the teacher may use to reach you.

Transition between learning programs. Children are transitioned to the next program based on age, developmental readiness, state licensing requirements, and space availability for the infant and 1 year old programs. During the transition, current and future teachers will meet with you to propose a plan to introduce your child into the new program. Children transition into the 2, 3 and 4 year old program based on their age on or before September 1st.

Transition to Kindergarten. Transition activities such as field trips to local Kindergarten programs and creating a mural of special friends and special times at our center will be part of your child's education at our center. We will provide you with information on local schools, what to expect, and ideas on how to talk to your child about transitioning to the next school.

Rest Time

Infants sleep according to their own schedule and are put to sleep on their backs.

After lunch, all children less than 5 years of age participate in a quiet rest time. Children are not required to sleep and may be given quiet activities.

Cots are provided for each child. If your child would like to bring his/her own pillow or blanket for rest time, we will store it in his/her cubby.

Diapering

Please note that staff members that are assigned diaper changing responsibilities shall not be simultaneously assigned kitchen food preparation duties.

Step 1: Diapering area will be prepped with table paper that covers the surface of the changing area.

Step 2: Gather a clean diaper and enough wipes to clean the child's bottom, child's hands and teacher's hands. Gather non-porous gloves if they are being used. Gather other necessary supplies such as plastic bag for soiled clothes and diapering cream. The diapering cream should be on a paper towel so that it can be disposed of with soiled diaper. Supplies should be placed within reach of changing area, but not on the changing area.

Step 3: Teacher will wash hands with liquid soap and warm running water.

Step 4: Teacher will remove soiled clothes and put them in plastic bag, if needed.

Step 5: Remove soiled diaper and place in diaper pail.

Step 6: Wipe child's bottom (front to back) with wipe.

Step 7: Use clean wipe to clean teacher's hands.

Step 8: Use clean wipe to clean child's hands.

Step 9: Throw soiled wipes into diaper pail.

Step 10: Put a clean diaper on and redress child.

Step 11: Place child at sink and wash hands, following proper procedure.

Step 12: Use clean wipe to clean visible soil. Spray diapering surface with bleach-water solution. Wait at least 10 seconds before wiping with disposable towel or allow the surface to air dry. The diapering surface should be disinfected after each child is changed.

Step 13: Teacher should wash hands, using proper procedure.

Step 14: Log diapering information on child's log.

Step 15: Log diapering information on Cornerstone's log.

Toilet Training

The most important factor in making the toilet learning experience successful and as low-stress as possible is a family/teacher partnership that supports the child. Research indicates that children cannot successfully learn how to use the toilet until they are physically, psychologically, and emotionally ready. Many pediatricians say that most children under 24 months of age are not physically capable of regulating bladder and bowel muscles. Most positive toilet training occurs only after children show signs of physical control or awareness of their bodily functions and when they demonstrate an interest or curiosity in the process. We are committed to working with you to make sure that toilet learning is carried out in a manner that is consistent with your child's physical and emotional abilities and your family's concerns.

Parties

We will celebrate holidays such as Christmas and Easter with special events. Individual birthdays will be celebrated in class. The teacher will work with the parent to determine the best day and time to do so. Cake/cupcakes are appropriate and are the parents' responsibility.

Balloons and treat bags are not allowed in the center due to choking hazards. (Invitations to outside parties can be given out at school, provided that each child in that particular class is included.)

Please be mindful of any food allergies before bringing any special snacks.

GUIDANCE

General Procedure

Thoughtful direction and planning ahead are used to prevent problems and encourage appropriate behavior. Communicating consistent, clear rules and involving children in problem solving help children develop their ability to become self-disciplined. We encourage children to be fair, to be respectful of other people and of property, and to learn to understand the results of their actions.

Challenging Behavior

Children are guided to treat each other and adults with self-control and kindness. When a child becomes physically aggressive, we intervene immediately to protect all of the children.

Our usual approach to helping children with challenging behaviors is to show them how to solve problems using appropriate interactions. When discipline is necessary, it is clear, consistent and understandable to the child.

Guidelines for Guiding Behavior

Discipline at Cornerstone Children's Center will always be directed from a loving, Christian atmosphere in a positive manner. By teaching right from wrong, establishing routines, setting limits and stating the rules, our staff will help your child develop self-discipline and self-control over their own actions.

AT NO TIME will physical or verbal abuse be used. No child will be denied food, bathroom privileges or rest periods as a means of discipline.

Our staff is instructed that all recurring discipline problems must be brought to the attention of the director, at which time the director will discuss the problem with you.

Notification of Behavioral Issues to Families

If a child's behavior/circumstance is of concern, communication will begin with the parents as the first step to understanding the child's individual needs and challenges. We will work together to evaluate these needs in the context of our program.

On rare occasions, a child's behavior may warrant the need to find a more suitable setting for care. Examples of such instances include:

- A child appears to be a danger to others.
- Continued care could be harmful to, or is not in the best interest of the child as determined by a medical, psychological, or social service personnel.
- Undue burden on our resources and finances for the child's accommodations for success and participation.

TUITION AND FEES

Payment

All weekly tuition payments are due on Monday of each week. All monthly tuition payments are due on the 10th of each month. Any payments submitted after Wednesday or the 12th must be accompanied by a \$25.00 late fee. Any accounts that remain unpaid as of Friday or the 15th of the month will be subjected to dismissal of the child.

Late Pick-up Fees

Late pick-up is not a normal program option and will only be considered an exceptional occurrence. Please contact the school if you know you will be arriving late. Late fees of \$2 per minute for the first 5 minutes will be assessed beginning at 6 PM. At 6:05 PM the rate is \$5 per minute. **The late fee is due immediately, in cash, to the teacher in charge of your child.**

Returned Checks/Rejected Transaction Charges

All returned checks or rejected ACH (automatic debits) or credit card transactions will be charged a fee up to the maximum amount allowed by law. This charge may be collected electronically. Two or more returned checks or rejected transactions will result in your account being placed on "cash only" status.

ATTENDANCE & WITHDRAWAL

Absence

If your child is going to be absent or arrive after 9:00 AM, please call us at (912) 535-7521. We will be concerned about your child if we do not hear from you.

Withdrawals

A written notice, 2 weeks in advance, is required by the center when a child is being withdrawn. Failure to notify will result in additional fees.

Transfer of Records

Whether transitioning to the next program setting or to a new classroom, your child's records will be transferred internally.

If your child is transitioning to a new school, a written request from you with instructions directing where the records should be sent is required.

Closing Due to Extreme Weather

Should severe weather or other conditions (i.e., snow, storms, floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, blizzards, loss of power, loss of water) prevent us from opening on time or at all, notification to the families will be announced on WTCQ.

If it becomes necessary to close early, we will contact you or your emergency contacts as soon as possible. Your child's early pick-up is your responsibility to arrange.

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

General Procedure

We open at 7 AM. Please do not drop-off your child prior to the opening. When you arrive at Cornerstone each day, you must accompany your child to the classroom or to the activity room if you are not using the carpool lines (8:00-8:30 AM). It is important for you to wait for an acknowledgement from the teacher before leaving the center.

The half-day program dismisses at 11:30 for 2 year olds, 11:45 for 3 year olds and at 12:00 for 4 year olds. Please use the carpool lines for dismissal of these programs.

Older siblings in the program will not be allowed to check a child out of his/her classroom.

In addition, we ask that children not be permitted to enter, open the doors, or depart from the building without being accompanied by an adult.

We close at 6 PM. Please allow enough time to arrive, sign your child out, and leave by closing time.

STATE LAW REQUIRES CHILDREN'S ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES TO BE RECORDED.

Cell Phone Usage

The times you spend in the center dropping off and picking up your child are the primary windows of time we have to communicate with you about your child. In order to make the best use of these opportunities, as well as to be attentive to your child and other children, we ask that you **NOT** use your cell phone at anytime while visiting the center.

Authorized & Unauthorized Pick-up

Your child will only be released to you or those persons you have listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. If you want a person who is not identified as an Emergency and Release Contact to pick-up your child, you must notify us in advance, in writing. Your child will not be released without prior written authorization. The person picking up your child will be required to show a picture ID as verification. Please notify your pick-up person of our policy.

If a child has not been picked up after closing and we have not heard from you, attempts will be made to contact you, and the contacts listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. Provisions will be made for someone to stay with your child as long as possible, but if your child has not been picked up by 7:00 PM, the law requires us to call the Department of Family and Children's Services to arrange care for the child. Any escort must present picture identification when picking up the child. Faculty will not release a child to an escort without proper identification and authorization.

Right to Refuse Child Release

We may refuse to release children if we have reasonable cause to suspect that any person picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way that may endanger the child. To protect your child, we may request that another adult listed as an Emergency and Release Contact pick-up the child or we may call the police to prevent potential harm to your child. Reoccurring situations may result in the release of your child from the program.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

What to Bring

INFANT/TODDLER INFORMATION

- Parents of infants need to supply all formula and bottles. All bottles and tops should be marked with your child's name and the date. It is also recommended that you leave an "emergency" can of formula with us at all times.
- Parents can either bring diapers on a daily or weekly basis. Either way, please be sure that you supply enough to meet your child's needs.
- Please make sure to fill out the Feeding Plan and make changes as your child grows. Additional forms are available from the teachers.
- When your child begins eating table food, please check the menu to see if your child will eat what is being served.
- Please leave a change of clothes for cold weather and a change of clothes for warm weather for your child. Place items in a Ziploc bag and label the bag and clothing with your child's name.
- Notes are sent home daily that list diapering and feeding schedules and to make you aware of items needed.

Please label all items brought from home with your child's name (i.e., clothes, bottles, diapers, pacifiers, blanket, etc.) to prevent items from becoming misplaced or lost. We are not responsible for lost or damaged items.

PRE-SCHOOL INFORMATION (Two Year Olds through Four Year Olds)

- Please leave a change of clothes for cold weather and a change of clothes for warm weather for your child. Place items in a Ziploc bag and label the bag and clothing with your child's name. These items will be stored in your child's cubby.
- Please label all items brought from home with your child's name (i.e., backpack, clothes, blanket, pillow, etc.) to prevent items from becoming misplaced or lost. We are not responsible for lost or damaged items.
- If your child is here for the full day program, you will need to provide a blanket for nap time. We will provide the cot. The blankets will be sent home on Fridays to be laundered and returned on Mondays.

Cubbies

Upon enrollment each child will be assigned a "cubby." Cubbies are labeled with your child's name and photo.

Toys from Home

We request that you do not allow your child to bring toys from home into the center unless they are part of a show-and-tell activity.

NUTRITION

Food Prepared for or at the Center

Food prepared for or at the center will be properly planned, prepared and portioned according to the Child and Adult Care Food Program (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/care/>) and the state requirements for food service. Menus will be posted and sent home monthly. Parents may provide alternate provisions for children with allergies, special needs or food aversions.

Food Allergies

If your child has a food allergy, you must notify us in writing so that we can make appropriate substitutions. The written notification should list appropriate food substitutions and must be updated at least annually.

Food allergies can be life threatening and each child with a food allergy should have an action plan for emergency care completed by the family physician.

Infant Feedings

Infant feedings follow these procedures:

- Bottle-fed infants are fed while being held or sitting up.
- Infants are fed "on demand" to the extent possible (at least every 4 hours and usually not more than hourly).
- Breastfeeding is supported by providing a place for nursing mothers to feed their babies. Expressed breast milk may be brought from home if frozen or kept cold during transit.

Fresh breast milk must be used within 48 hours. Previously frozen, thawed breast milk must be used within 24 hours. Bottles must be clearly labeled with the child's name and the date the milk was expressed. Frozen breast milk must be dated and may be kept in the freezer for up to 3 months. Refrigerated or frozen breast milk shall only be heated or thawed under warm running water or in a container of warm water.

- Baby Bottles and Formula - All baby bottles shall be clearly labeled with the individual child's name. Formula shall be supplied by the parent daily in bottles. Only the current day's formula or breast milk shall be served. Bottles shall be refrigerated at a temperature of forty (40) degrees Fahrenheit or less. Refrigerated or frozen breast milk shall only be heated or thawed under warm running water or in a container of warm water.. Formula will be diluted at the child care site according to the instructions provided by the manufacturer or from the child's health provider, using water from a source approved by the local health department. Formula brought from home must be labeled with the child's name.
- Solid foods will only be introduced after a consultation with the child's family.

Toddler Feedings

- Children are encouraged to self-feed to the extent that they have the skills. Children are encouraged, but not forced to eat a variety of foods.
- Round, firm foods that pose a choking hazard for children less than 3 years of age are not permitted. These foods include: hot dogs, whole grapes, peanuts, popcorn, thickly spread peanut butter, fish with bones and hard candy.

HEALTH

Immunizations

All children are required to have an up-to-date immunization record prior to acceptance to the center. The State of Georgia requires all shot records be furnished on Form 3231. No exceptions will be made to this policy.

Illness

We understand that it is difficult for a family member to leave or miss work, but to protect other children, you may not bring a sick child to the center. The center has the right to refuse a child who appears ill. You will be called and asked to retrieve your child if your child exhibits any of the following symptoms. This is not an all-inclusive list. We will try to keep your child comfortable but he/she will be excluded from all activities until you arrive.

- Illness that prevents your child from participating in activities.
- Illness that results in greater need for care than we can provide.
- Fever (above 100°F under the arm, above 101°F in the mouth, above 102°F in the ear) accompanied by other symptoms.
- Diarrhea – stools with blood or mucus, and/or uncontrolled, unformed stools that cannot be contained in a diaper/underwear or toilet.
- Vomiting – green or bloody, and/or 2 or more times during the previous 24 hours.
- Mouth sores caused by drooling.
- Rash with fever, unless a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease.
- Pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge, until on antibiotics for 24 hours.

- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Head lice, until treatment and all nits are removed.
- Scabies, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Chickenpox, until all lesions have dried and crusted.
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough), until 5 days of antibiotics.
- Hepatitis A virus, until one week after immune globulin has been administered.

Children who have been ill may return when:

- They are free of fever, vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours.
- They have been treated with an antibiotic for 24 hours.
- They are able to participate comfortably in all usual activities.
- They are free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling (not related to teething) unless:
 - The child's physician signs a note stating that the child's condition is not contagious, and;
 - The involved areas can be covered by a bandage without seepage or drainage through the bandage.
- If a child had a reportable communicable disease, a physician's note stating that the child is no longer contagious and may return to our care is required.
- HEAD LICE - Children with head lice will not be allowed to return to the center until they have been treated and no further head lice or nits are detected during a health check.

Allergy Prevention

Families are expected to notify us regarding children's food and environmental allergies. Families of children with diagnosed allergies are required to provide us a letter detailing the child's symptoms, reactions, treatments and care. A list of the children's allergies will be posted in the main area, kitchen and in classrooms. We are trained to familiarize ourselves and consult the list to avoid the potential of exposing children to substances to which they have known allergies.

Medications

All medications should be handed to a staff member with specific instructions for administration. Medications should never be left in the child's cubby or with the child to administer on their own. Our staff will ensure that the medication is recorded along with the directions and will dispense the medication as directed. If your child experiences a noticeable adverse reaction we will notify you immediately with a phone call.

- **Prescription medications** require a note signed by the family and a written order from the child's physician. The label on the medication meets this requirement. The medication must include your child's name, dosage, current date, frequency, and the name and phone number of the physician. All medications must be in the original container (you may request pharmacies to fill your prescription in two labeled bottles). Please specify the dosage and time(s) to be administered for each medication. **Medication will not be given on an 'as needed' basis.**
- **Non-prescription medications** require a note signed by the parent or guardian. Non-prescription medication should not be administered for more than a 3-day period unless a written order by the physician is received.

If you would like your child to wear either sunscreen or insect repellent, you must provide it. The center is not responsible for supplying them. Please make sure to label them with your child's name.

Communicable Diseases

When an enrolled child or an employee of the center has a (suspected) reportable disease, it is our legal responsibility to notify the local Board of Health or Department of Public Health. We will take care to notify families with a letter, notifying them about exposure so children can receive preventive treatments. Included among the reportable illnesses are the following:

- Bacterial Meningitis
- Botulism
- Chicken Pox
- Diphtheria
- Hemophilus Influenza (invasive)
- Measles (including suspect)
- Meningococcal Infection (invasive)
- Poliomyelitis (including suspect)
- Rabies (human only)
- Rubella Congenital and Non-congenital (including suspect)
- Tetanus (including suspect)
- H1N1 Virus
- Any cluster/outbreak of illness

SAFETY

Fire

In the event of a fire, the emergency plan for evacuation will be followed.

Clothing

Please dress your child in practical clothing that allows for freedom of movement and is appropriate for the weather. Your child will be involved in a variety of activities including: painting, outdoor play, sand, water, and other sensory activities. Our playground is used as an extension of the center, and daily programs are conducted outside whenever weather permits.

Backless shoes and flip-flops are not appropriate for center play and make it difficult for your child to participate in some activities.

Extreme Weather and Outdoor Play

Outdoor play will not occur if the outside temperature is greater than 99°F or less than 37°F degrees.

Severe Weather, Thunder and Lightning, Wind

Immediately upon the threat of severe weather all children will be taken inside. If there are severe winds, children will be taken to Activity Center away from windows. Staff will be required to take roll and make sure children are accounted for.

Tornado Watch/Warning

Children outside will be instructed to return to their rooms immediately upon the threat of severe weather, children will be taken to an interior hallway or room away from windows. We will stay informed by the local media outlets for all weather updates.

Loss of Power, Structural Damage

Emergency lighting will be used for short term power loss. Please keep in mind that the center's phones DO NOT work if we lose power to our building. If the local power company determines the power loss will be for an extended amount of time, parents will be called from our cell phones and asked to pick up their child/children.

If there is a fire or suspected fire, smell of smoke or acrid odor of electrical wire, our fire drill evacuation plan will be executed immediately and the fire department called. When all children are in a safe area, roll will be taken to make sure all children are accounted for.

Injuries

Safety is a major concern in child care and therefore daily safety inspections are completed inside and outside the center area in order to prevent injuries. First aid will be administered by a trained caregiver in the event that your child sustains a minor injury (e.g., scraped knee). You will receive an incident report outlining the incident and course of action taken. If the injury produces any type of swelling or needs medical attention, you will be contacted immediately.

In the event of a serious medical emergency, the child will be taken to the hospital immediately by ambulance, while we try to contact the parent or an emergency contact.

Biting

Contact will be made to the family of the child who was bitten and the biter's family. We will work together with the families of each to keep them informed and to develop strategies for change. If biting becomes a repeated behavior for a child, parents will be called to pick the child up.

Respectful Behavior

All children and families will be treated with respect and dignity. In return, we expect the same from all of our families. We will not tolerate hostile or aggressive behavior. If this occurs, we reserve the right to ask you to control your behavior or to remove your children from our care.

BE ADVISED: Notwithstanding anything herein to the contrary and notwithstanding any other term or provision in this Handbook to the contrary, the Executive Director maintains the authority to permanently dismiss any child from attending Cornerstone Children's Center, if, in her sole discretion, she determines that: a) any child poses a danger or threat of danger to his or her own safety or to the safety of anyone else, or b) any child is obstructing the teaching, learning or care-giving process or requirements of Center.

Smoking

The poisons in secondhand smoke are especially harmful to infants and young children's developing bodies, therefore the indoor and outdoor center environment and vehicles used by the center are non-smoking areas at all times. The use of tobacco in any form is prohibited on the center's premises, the church grounds and the parking lot. Tobacco use is also prohibited in any vehicle being used to transport children during the hours that the center is in operation.

Prohibited Substances

The use of alcohol or illegal drugs is prohibited on the center's premises. Possession of illegal substances or unauthorized potentially toxic substances is prohibited.

Any adult who appears to be inebriated, intoxicated, or otherwise under the influence of mind-altering or polluting substances is required to leave the premises immediately.

Child Custody

Without a court document, both parents/guardians have equal rights to custody. We are legally bound to respect the wishes of the parent/guardian with legal custody based on a certified copy of the most recent court order, active restraining order, or court-ordered visitation schedule. We will not accept the responsibility of deciding which parent/guardian has legal custody where there is no court documentation.

Suspected Child Abuse

We are required by law to report all observations of child abuse or neglect cases to the appropriate state authorities if we have reasonable cause to believe or suspect a child is suffering from abuse or neglect or is in danger of abuse or neglect, no matter where the abuse might have occurred. The child protective service agency will determine appropriate action and may conduct an investigation. It then becomes the role of the agency to determine if the report is substantiated and to work with the family to ensure the child's needs are met. Our center will cooperate fully with any investigation and will maintain confidentiality concerning any report of child abuse or neglect.

EMERGENCIES

Lost or Missing Child

In the unlikely event that a child becomes lost or separated from a group, all available staff will search for the child. If the child is not located within 10 minutes, the family and the police will be notified.

Fire Safety

Our center is fully equipped with emergency lighting, evacuation cribs, fire exits, sprinklers, and fire extinguishers. Our fire evacuation plan is reviewed with the children and staff on a monthly basis.

Emergency Transportation

In the event your child needs to be transported due to a medical emergency, if no authorized person can be contacted and the need for transportation is essential, an ambulance will be called for transportation or a personal vehicle will be used. A proper escort will accompany and remain with the child until a family member or emergency contact arrives. We use Vidalia Children's Center for necessary medical care.

Media Relations

In any emergency the Director will be the designated spokesperson communicating to any media outlets. Staff will direct all questions and information to the Director. No child information will be shared without prior consent of the parents.

TRANSPORTATION

Cornerstone Children's Center will use the Vidalia First United Methodist Church buses to pick up children in Pre-K -5th from the following schools: J.D. Dickerson Primary School, Sally D. Meadows and Vidalia Heritage Academy. After School Care students will be dropped off at Cornerstone Children's Center.

Each child must have the following on file: a written transportation agreement with the parent and an emergency medical information form.

All students under the age of 8 will ride in a booster seat.

We do not provide transportation to schools or to/from home.

If your child rides the church bus to Cornerstone, please let us know if he or she is going to be absent.

A licensed driver who is certified in CPR and First Aid will drive the bus.

CENTER POLICIES

Our center policies not included in this handbook are reviewed quarterly and updated annually or more frequently and are available for review upon request. To view the center policies, please contact the center director.

Family Handbook Acknowledgement

Please sign this Acknowledgement, detach it from your copy of the Cornerstone Children’s Center Family Handbook (“Handbook”), and return it to Cornerstone Children’s Center (“Center”) prior to enrolling your child or children.

Please be advised that, in the future, changes, additions or deletions may be made to the terms and provisions of this Handbook. If such changes, additions or deletions are made, reasonable notice of the same will be given to you.

Thank you for acknowledging the policies and procedures established by the Center for the safety and welfare of all children in our care. We look forward to getting to know you and your family.

The undersigned has received a true and correct copy of the Handbook. Further, the undersigned has reviewed the Handbook, understands all of its terms and provisions, and agrees to follow and be bound by all of its terms and provisions. Further, by executing this Acknowledgement, the undersigned verifies that he/she is the legal parent or guardian of

_____,
with full power according to the laws of the State of Georgia, or another State within the United States of America, to make all decisions on behalf of the above-named child or children.

Undersigned

Date

Undersigned

Date

Center Staff Signature

Date
