



The Tree House Children's Center

Parent Handbook

Revised 6-19-17

Mission Statement: The Tree House Children's Center provides child centered programs to meet the individual needs of its children and support the needs of our community. We believe that human growth is a developmental process which has physical, cognitive, social and emotional components and that there is a method in which all of these could and should be met.

Philosophy: Our school philosophy is based on the research that young children learn and develop best through play in a hands-on environment. The environment at The Tree House is structured with hands-on learning centers that facilitate small, informal group learning as well as children working individually. In addition, group time activities are offered several times a day to help foster large group skills and a sense of community. In conjunction with the inside learning centers we offer an outdoor classroom as part of the learning environment. The outside area is loosely structured to provide areas for hands-on exploration and discovery, physical activity, dramatic play and gardening. The teacher's role at The Tree House is to set up the classroom with a variety of activities and help the children explore, discover and learn.

Specific curriculum areas including but not limited to:

Social/Personal Development: Throughout the year, children will learn more about themselves and what it means to be respectful and kind to themselves and others. We often work both individually and in small groups teaching the Boost social skills curriculum. Cooperation and sharing are expected along with an overall community of caring. Our classroom also includes a dramatic play area where children can role play and experiment using their imaginations. Developmentally appropriate creative problem solving is encouraged through many activities at all age levels. We encourage appropriate choice making, and children acting inappropriately will be redirected from their negative behavior to a positive one. Overall, we strive to build an inner confidence and motivation to learn!

Language Arts: We work to develop important pre-reading skills, such as: phonics, sequencing, visual discrimination, storytelling, listening, letter recognition, writing and conversation skills.

Science: Students are encouraged to explore firsthand the world around them. This includes experiments, cooking, learning about animals, plants, time and weather. Science also occurs naturally and spontaneously as children discover and share their interests in bugs, leaves, birds, etc. We support and extend these discoveries with them.

Fine Motor Skills: This includes coloring, pre-writing, cutting, pasting, stringing beads, sorting, building, and picking up and manipulating small objects.

Gross Motor Skills: We develop this through activities that involve hand-eye coordination, kicking, running, jumping, throwing, catching, obstacle courses and playing outside.

Sensory Integration: We know that children learn best when their sensory needs are being met. We offer many different sensory experiences for children of all ages to explore and assist in behavior regulation. The changing sensory table, sensory tubs, different types of dough, transition

tools, obstacle courses, and movement games are a small sampling of activities we offer to meet these needs.

Art & Creative Expression: Children create through many different mediums and learn about color, shape, texture and number concepts as well as develop social skills while creating art. We value process art where the process is the goal, not the end product. Children are encouraged to be unique and creative with their art. Children develop fine motor skills, self-expression and creativity through art. Comments like, "tell me about your art" or "wow it looks like you worked hard on this art piece" support the creative process we are trying to encourage.

Mathematical/Logical Reasoning: We play many math games and use different math activities that involve one to one correspondence, counting, number recognition, graphing, sorting and exploration of shapes.

Programs and Schedule:

All Programs at the Tree House have a low average maximum ratio of eight students to one staff.

Preschool Programs:

2 Day Program

This program is designed as a first school experience for the unique needs of 2 and 3 year olds. This program emphasizes social and emotional development through music, process art, stories and more. Parents are welcome to leave their child when they feel they are ready to separate. Toilet training is not required. This program runs Tuesday and Thursday from 9:30 to 11:30 AM. One snack is served. There is a maximum of 12-15 students with two teachers and one aide.

3 Day Program

This program is designed with active 3 and 4 year olds in mind. Our balanced curriculum engages young minds with hands on activities in language arts, art, music, movement and science. For example, during our bear theme children enjoy making cinnamon bears for art, learning bear facts and sharing their favorite stuffed bear at circle time. Our program fosters confidence and helps children become problem solvers and lifelong learners. This program runs Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9:00 – 11:30 AM. One snack is served. There is a maximum of 18 students with two teachers and one aide.

PreK Program

This program is designed to help prepare your growing 4 or 5 year old for kindergarten. The PreK curriculum is a planned program of weekly books which are integrated into the day. While reading the *Very Hungry Caterpillar*, by Eric Carle, the kids enjoyed making a caterpillar puppet to help retell the story, they sampled different fruits in the story and made a graph to see what the favorite fruit was and on the science table they watched a set of caterpillars transform into butterflies. All activities help set the groundwork for a successful kindergarten experience. This program runs Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 8:30 to 11:30 AM. One snack is served. There will be a maximum of 21 students in this class with three teachers.

Extended Day

This program is designed to help complement our preschool schedule and to accommodate your childcare needs. In this small group setting, the structure is loose and the fun and socialization from the earlier day continues. A lunch snack is provided. There will be a maximum of 16 children with two teachers. Refer to pricing information below for schedule information.

Morning Care

Bring your child in their pajamas with their clothes and a hairbrush and we will get them ready for school. We will help them get dressed, feed them a breakfast snack and get them ready for their

day. And then we get to play. Morning care starts at 7:00 and ends at 8:15, 8:30, 9:00 or 9:30 AM depending on your child's school program.

School Age Programs:

Refer to above for School Age Morning Care information

TK/Kinder Gap

The TK/kinder program includes school pick up. This program is designed to support families by providing a low key transition time for kinder children after an intense day of learning at school. Legos, dramatic play, and free art are favorites of this group. This program runs Monday – Friday from 12:30(TK)/1:45 - 2:35 (12:16 – 1:06 on Wednesday). There will be a maximum of 24 children with two teachers and one aide. After this program the kids can join the enrichment program.

Enrichment

The enrichment children arrive hungry and excited to play. After a hearty snack, these children choose from an array of activities including science, art, building, music, sports, sewing, dramatic play, cooking, and more. This program includes school pick up and a hearty snack. It runs Monday – Friday from 2:35 – 4:30 PM (1:06 – 4:30 on Wednesday). There will be a maximum of 45 children with three teachers and two aides.

Enrichment Extension

After the excitement of enrichment, these children will listen to a story, have tea time (a small snack) and work on homework for 10 – 20 minutes (with assistance as needed). Then these children choose from an assortment of self-directed art, puzzles, or board games. This program runs Monday – Friday from 4:30 - 5:30 PM. There will be a maximum of 45 children with three teachers and two aides.

Enrollment Information

Refer to the calendar for the specific dates for starting, ending, holidays and the camp day offerings.

We will be closed on the following days:

WJUSD Non-Instructional Days

Labor Day

Veteran's Day

Thanksgiving Break

Winter Break

MLK Day

Lincoln's Holiday

President's Day Holiday

Spring Break

Memorial Day

Admission to the Tree House Children's Center requires parents to meet with Janet or Cheryl and tour our school. In order to meet state licensing regulations, we require that all forms be completed and returned to us before the first day of attendance. Enrollment into the program is not complete until all of the following items have been received by Janet or Cheryl:

- 1 Enrollment Application
- 2 General Permission Slip
- 3 Signed Admission and Financial Agreement
- 4 Identification and Emergency Information*
- 5 Health History – Parent's Report* (Preschool only)
- 6 Physician's Report (Preschool only)*
- 7 Immunization form and record (Preschool only)

- 8 Consent for Emergency Treatment*
 - 9 Parent's Rights Form*
 - 10 Personal Rights Form*
- * Required by the State of California Licensing Division

Registration & Tuition Information

Registration for preschool programs will begin on March 1st, and school age programs on May 1st for the following fall. Priority is given on a first-come, first-served basis. For preschool classes, the Tree House reserves the right to adjust the wait list to balance classes and accommodate families with multiple children. If the Enrichment program fills, priority will be given to full time families.

To enroll your child, the enrollment application along with a nonrefundable \$50 registration fee (\$25 for siblings) is required.

Monthly tuition is billed based on the rates below:

Preschool Tuition:

Refer to the Preschool Application for the current rate schedule

School Age Tuition:

Refer to the School Age Application for the current rate schedule

Extra Days: Once your child is registered for a regular schedule, you may add additional days when space is available at a rate of \$6/day for AM care, \$5/day for kinder gap, \$12/day for enrichment (\$20 on Wed) and \$6/day for extension. This program is available on a space available and first-come first-served basis. For any extra days, once you have requested the add, you will be billed whether you use it or not.

Summer program begins June 5 and ends August 4. Registration for summer program begins February 1st. Priority is given on a first-come, first-served basis. AM session runs from 8:30 –12:30 with a hearty snack served about 10:30. PM session runs 12:30-4:30 with a hearty snack served about 3:00. All day is 8:30 – 4:30. Both AM and PM snack is served as well as lunch about 12:30. Refer to the summer application for the summer tuition. Summer session is split in half with the first half due June 10th and the second half due July 10th.

Discounts: There is a 10% discount (on the lesser amount) for families after enrolling the first of multiple children.

Tuition will be billed by the 5th of each month and is due the 10th of each month. The first tuition will be billed on Aug 5th and due on Aug 10th. You will receive an email with your invoice and can pay: through the link in that email with a debit to your checking account, pay by check in the box on the sign in table or pay with cash delivered directly to Janet or Cheryl. The invoice you will receive will be new charges to your account and therefore may not reflect your current balance if your balance was not zero from the previous month. Tuition is based on a 180 school days per year calendar. Tuition is broken down into ten monthly payments, August through May.

After the 10th, a \$25 **late fee** will be assessed to your account. Accounts delinquent more than 30 days will, at the discretion of the Director, be forwarded to a collection agency or turned over to the school attorney for legal action and services will be discontinued.

There is a \$35 fee for all checks returned for **insufficient funds** or Intuit payment network charges denied.

Changes in rates are made by March 1st before the following school year for preschool and May 1st for school age. Enrollment for the following year will be automatic on March 1st and once you receive the registration invoice you can let us know if you wish to discontinue for the following year.

A late pickup fee (equivalent to the extra day rate for the next program session) will be assessed to your account if you are more than 5 minutes late to pick up your child. For preschool programs, after 2:30 (1:00 on Wednesdays) after a five minute grace period, a late pick up fee of \$1 for every min will be assessed to your account. For school age programs, after 5:30pm, after a five minute grace period, a late pick up fee of \$1 for every minute will be assessed to your account.

No tuition credits are given for any days a child is absent including illness or vacations.

We do not allow **trades**. However, you may add extra days as described above.

Each child is accepted into the program on a 2 week **trial basis**. During this time, the parent or the Tree House may decide withdrawal is necessary and all unused portions of fees will be refunded within 48 hours.

All other **withdrawals and schedule changes** need to be in writing at least two weeks prior to that schedule change.

Any child enrolled in the Tree House as of May 1st will be charged through the close of our program on June 1.

The Tree House reserves the right to terminate child care services if, in the judgment of the Director:

- 1 A child is aggressive toward other children and causes harm to others or self.
- 2 An inordinate amount of the teacher's time is needed to attend to a particular child's special situation, to the extent that it is depriving the other children in the classroom the level of care and concern to which they are entitled.
- 3 The tuition account becomes 30 days delinquent.
- 4 Failure of parents/guardians to honor the rules, regulations or manuals provided by the Tree House.
- 5 The child's special needs are beyond the school's scope of care.

Parents will be called to pick up their child for the day if their child is overly aggressive or destructive to the Tree House supplies or property.

General Information

Parents have the right and are encouraged to visit the Tree House at any time to observe all activities of our program any time they deem appropriate.

The State Licensing Agency, Police Officers and Child Protective Services have the right to interview a child and the school staff, and to inspect and audit all records maintained by the school without securing prior consent of anyone. Licensing also has the right to observe the physical condition of a child including conditions indicating abuse and neglect, and to have a licensed medical professional examine a child if deemed necessary.

Who to go to with concerns

We encourage open communication between the staff and parents and we want to hear any concerns you may have. You may talk to the teacher of your child's program or Cheryl or Janet with any concern. If your concern is still not taken care of please arrange a formal meeting with Janet and Cheryl.

Discipline Philosophy

It is the school's ambition to promote positive personal growth in all children. Using positive redirection, the staff teaches students to respect other students, their belongings and the school. The staff avoids comparison and competition among children. Rather, positive redirection is employed, allowing the children to discover what they can do instead of what they can't do. No corporal punishment or other violation of a child's personal rights will ever occur at The Tree House. Instead, we work with each individual child to develop the social skills that they are lacking to help prevent future behavior mistakes.

Conflict Resolution

When conflict arises between children, the staff will work with them using and teaching basic conflict resolution techniques.

- 1 Approach calmly, stopping any hurtful actions
- 2 Acknowledge children's feelings
- 3 Gather information
- 4 Restate the problem
- 5 Ask for ideas for solutions and choose one together
- 6 Give follow-up support as needed

This process of resolving disputes helps children build problem-solving and social skills that children can rely on throughout their lives. Studies show that teaching children conflict resolution skills encourages the development of essential social abilities that allows children to grow as productive, independent members of society.

If there is an ongoing discipline problem, the director of the program will talk with the parent to create a plan to help the child be successful in our program. Once the plan is in place there will be an individualized communication plan between the staff and parent. The director will meet with the parents if the discipline problem continues to discuss if this program is right for their child. The Tree House has the right to terminate child care as mentioned above.

Child Abuse Policy

All staff of The Tree House are mandated reporters and are required to report any suspected abuse, neglect, or maltreatment of the child. Any abuse or maltreatment of a child, either as an incident of discipline or otherwise is prohibited. Any means of corporal punishment will not be tolerated. Additionally, withholding or using food, rest or sleep as a punishment is prohibited.

Arrival and Pickup

Children must be signed in and out by an adult or authorized sibling each day. The sign-in sheet for each program is located inside the front entrance on the sign in table. If we are picking your child up from Waggoner we will walk them over to The Tree House and sign them into our program. If your child is coming by bike, we will sign them in when they arrive. If they are arriving by car, it is the responsibility of the adult who transports them to sign them in. Licensing requires parents to sign their children in and out with a full signature and the time, daily. If you accidentally forget, we

will call you to come back and sign your child in or out. Children worry when they are not picked-up on time. If you find you will be late, please notify us, so we can reassure your child. A child will only be released to persons authorized by a parent. Staff will check ID for all unfamiliar people picking up your child. We must have written authorization (texts work well) for changes in pick-up arrangements. Refer to the section on page 5 regarding the late pick-up fee.

School Access and Parking

There is a lot of traffic and parking congestion on Edwards Street during drop off and pick up at Waggoner Elementary. Due to this congestion we ask parents to access the Tree House by traveling on Abbey St. It can also be difficult to find a parking spot during certain times of the day. We are asking that parents look for spots near the Little League Park. In consideration of our neighbors please be aware of where you are parking to make sure you are not blocking the alley or someone's driveway.

Field Trips

The Tree House will do walking field trips throughout the year. We will be walking to the City Park and little league field on a regular basis and occasionally downtown. The Tree House will not transport your child in any way other than walking.

Scholarships, Tuition Trades and Payment Plans

The Tree House has a few scholarships available for each program. If you know of a family who could benefit from our program but can't afford it, please let us know. We also have a few chores we need done each month that we are willing to offer a tuition trade. Ask Cheryl or Janet if you are interested in more information. If you need additional time paying your tuition we are happy to work with you. Talk with Cheryl or Janet to make arrangements before your tuition becomes late.

Health and Safety Policies

Your child's health is a matter of major importance to us. If your child develops signs of illness during the day, you or your emergency numbers will be called. If he appears to be contagious, we will separate him from the other children. For the comfort of your child, and for the safety of the other children, please be sure the three numbers listed on your emergency card are people readily available. Please call The Tree House if your child will be staying home from school. Knowing they are absent helps us so we don't have to worry when they don't arrive for pick up after school.

General Health Guidelines

Keep your child home for 24 hours if:

- 1 He has a fever, vomiting, diarrhea or has had any of these during the previous 24 hours.
- 2 He is fussy, cranky or not himself. Even if he is just tired, a rest may prevent illness.
- 3 He has any other symptoms of a new communicable disease (sore throat, nausea, pink eye).

Your child may come to school if:

- 1 The cold is over, but there is nasal discharge or cough.
- 2 He has been exposed to a communicable disease, e.g. chicken pox, and you are carefully checking him for symptoms before school.
- 3 He has been taking an antibiotic for at least 24 hours. Please notify us if he is on medication. Sometimes, it changes behavior.
- 4 He has allergies. Please inform us of what your child is allergic to and any medication he is taking.

Medication

We can give your child medication under these conditions. The medication must be brought in the original container with the child's name printed on it. An adult must bring the medication and hand it to the director. The adult will be asked to sign the medication book giving instructions as to the name of the medicine, dosage, and time to be given. For the safety of all children, medication or vitamins may never be brought by a child or kept in a backpack. If your child will need the use of an EpiPen or EpiPen Jr or administering of an inhaled medication, we have additional paperwork that will need to be filled out. Before medication can be administered we need parents to review the plan of operation for incidental medical services (Appendix A). Please come and talk to the director if your child will need one of these medications while at The Tree House.

Accidents

In case of medical or dental emergency, we will make an immediate attempt to contact a parent. If we cannot reach you, we will call your designated emergency persons. If necessary, we will call 911. The signed consent allows the staff to make all emergency decisions in the parent's absence. It is your responsibility to keep the Tree House updated on emergency numbers and other pertinent information.

Disaster Plan

If there is a facility disaster we will evacuate the children to the little league field located on the corner of Abbey and Haven Streets. We will wait there until the building is safe to re-enter. If we cannot re-enter the building we will call parents to come pick up their children. If more shelter is needed we will transport the children and staff to The Club House Preschool (417 Haven St) or Cheryl Moore's House (438 Edwards Street). Please keep your emergency contact information current as we will use that information to make contact with you.

What to Wear to School

We like to have fun at The Tree House and sometimes having fun means we get messy. Please send your child to school in clothes they can play and have fun in and won't worry about getting dirty. **All children must have a change of clothes** that should be kept in their cubbies (preschoolers) or in their backpacks (school age children) for use after spills, sand, water play, etc. Please label all jackets and sweatshirts. We work to help the children take care of their personal belongings at school, but we are not responsible for lost items.

Toys from Home

Please leave all toys at home; they often cause sadness when lost or broken. Children may bring books to share or science and nature items to add to our science area. We are not responsible for lost items from home at Tree House.

Birthday Celebrations

A child's birthday is an important day and we want to help them celebrate. The Tree House will help your child to feel special with a banner and the special birthday chair for the day. We prefer to avoid special snacks. We are working to teach children that we can celebrate a special occasion without food.

Parent Education

At The Tree House we strive to have an open line of communication between the staff and families. We want to hear your concerns, help you answer parenthood dilemmas and share in your child's delights. Parent education meetings will be offered several times a year to provide information about parenting and to give parents a chance to get to know each other better. If you have a

suggested topic, pass it on to the teachers. Also, we have a parent lending library in the office. Feel free to borrow any books you feel would be helpful.

We are looking forward to a great year. Please let us know if you have any suggestions on how to improve our program. We are open to all suggestions.

Appendix A

Administration of Incidental Medical Services

The Tree House will enroll children that need services of administering inhaled medications Epipen Jr. and Epipen. Other incidental medical services can be discussed with the Director of the program and a plan will be put into place.

Incidental Medical Services Policy

The following requirements must be met before enrolling a student who requires administration of Incidental Medical Services:

- Written Authorization from the child's physician and a valid prescription .
- Parent must complete the Parent Consent for Administration of Medications form
- Medications, supplies and equipment must be in the original labeled container with the child's name on it and must not be expired.
- Tree House will maintain documentation of Incidental Medical Services on a log after every medication or service is administered.
- Proper safety precautions will be in place.
- Staff must wear gloves when dealing with blood or bodily fluids, properly wash their hands and properly dispose of instruments in an approved container.
- Tree House will have designated trained staff for each individual child in care receiving Incidental Medical Services.
- The appointed staff member will be trained by the child's parent; the parent will be trained by the child's physician.

Incidental Medical Services Staff Policy

- Employees may not deviate from written authorization from the child's physician.
- Facility must have a designated trained staff that will be trained by the child's parent
- Medications that have expired or are no longer being used at the facility should be returned to the child's parents. If the medicine has not been picked up within one week of the request, then medication must be disposed of by trained staff.

Care and Storage;

- Incidental Medical Services and medications in the facility should be stored in a secure, inaccessible, clean location and under conditions as directed by the physician or pharmacist.
- Medications that require refrigeration should be stored in a designated area of the refrigerator separate from food and will be inaccessible to children.

Administration of routine for Incidental Medical Services

- Once all requirements are met, the designated trained staff will administer Incidental Medical Services by utilizing the following requirements.
 - Right Child
 - Right Medication
 - Right Dose
 - Right Time
 - Right Route Documentation
- Any Incidental Medical Services routinely administered must be documented in a log by the staff member who administered medication or service
- Parent must be informed when their child received Incidental Medical Services via a medication log
- If a child is administered any Emergency Supplemental Therapy the child's authorized representative will be called immediately

Specific Medication Protocol

Inhaled Medication

- The Tree House has been provided with written authorization from parent to administer inhaled medication and authorization to contact the child's health care provider.
- The Tree House complies with specific written instructions from the child's physician to which all of the following shall apply
 - Specific indications for administering the medication pursuant to the physician's prescription
 - Potential side effects and expected response
 - Dose-form and amount to be administered pursuant to the physician's prescription
 - Actions to be taken in the event of side effects or incomplete treatment response
 - Instructions for proper storage of the medication
 - The telephone number and address of the child's physician
- The instructions shall be updated annually
- The Tree House staff that administers the inhaled medication to the child shall record each instance and provide a record to the parent on a daily basis

EpiPen Jr. and EpiPen

- Use in accordance with the direction and as prescribed by a physician
- Keep ready for use at all times
 - EpiPens are kept in the classroom first aid kit that is out of reach of children, but accessible to adult staff
 - Teachers take first aid kits with them to any event, outside activity, or field trip and keep them under their immediate supervision and availability
- Protect from exposure to light and extreme heat
- Note the expiration date on the unit and replace the unit prior to that date
- Replace any auto-injector if the solution is discolored
- Call 911 and the child's parents immediately after administering the EpiPen or EpiPen Jr.