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Welcome Note

Welcome to Kelly's Kids Learning and Development Center! We would like to thank you for your interest in our center. This parent handbook was designed by the director, Kelly Morris. We hope this parent handbook can be used as a guide when you have questions. This handbook is intended to give parents and prospective parents an idea of how our center will run, and what to expect from staff. It is not all-inclusive, and may change at any time without any prior notice.

If you have a question that is not answered here, please refer to our website at <http://www.kellyskidsldc.com> and click on the Frequently Asked Questions link. You can also ask Kelly questions by emailing her at kellyskidsldc@gmail.com or by calling the center.

Our Mission

The mission of Kelly's Kids Learning and Development Center is to provide an enriching environment for children to learn through real-life, hands-on experiences in a safe and loving atmosphere. At Kelly's Kids, we recognize that each child is an individual, and learns at his/her level and in many ways.

Our Philosophy

Children benefit most from being in an environment that promotes learning. All children have certain needs that must be met if they are to grow and learn at their best. At Kelly's Kids, our teachers see your child as an individual, and strive to provide hands on learning and quality care, regardless of their individual needs. We will accommodate children of all races, genders, cultures, religions, and abilities in an effort to serve children best, without discrimination or prejudice.

Licensing

Kelly's Kids Learning and Development Center is licensed by the State of Nebraska to provide care in our facility for up to 76 children, ages 6 weeks to 5 years.

The license is posted in the center for the public to see. All child care centers must have approval from both the fire and sanitation inspector and be in compliance with all regulations before a license can be issued.

We hope to not only adhere to, but also to surpass the requirements set forth by the State of Nebraska, as these are the minimal standards our center must follow. Please feel free to make suggestions to staff, or director. We are always looking for ways to make our center better, and the best place for your child to be during the workday.

Enrollment

At Kelly's Kids Learning and Development Center, we understand the importance of parents and guardians wanting to explore the care possibilities for your child or children. Please call for a tour of our center, and ask to talk to the Director, Kelly Morris, to set up an appointment. On your tour, the director can give you important information, and can be there to readily answer your questions.

In order to get started, there is an enrollment fee and an enrollment packet must be completed for each child prior to their first day at the center. These forms include important information, such as how to contact you, the parents, information about who can pick up your child, and their contact information. Other permission forms may need to be completed as well.

Other forms that must be completed are a photography permission form, emergency card, and permission to leave the premises form (typically for walks around the neighborhood). A copy of your child's immunization records is required by the state to be in your child's file. **Each time your child gets new vaccinations, we will need the updated immunization record for that child.**

Your child will have a file both in our physical file cabinet as well as our Childcare Manager software. The software allows us quick access to information, and allows us to do our billing for tuition and fees. We keep paper versions of all file records as required by the state of Nebraska in an individual family file.

We understand that there is a lot of personal information we require families to provide us with when they enroll their child or children with us. This is for the safety of your child or children and family. We assure you that all information about your child and family will be kept confidential and only used for our businesses purposes. Should you have questions about your child's file, or the contents therein, please contact the director or assistant director. All files containing information about your family are kept in the director's office, which remains locked when she is not there.

The only staff who requires access to your family's file is the director and assistant director. There will be an emergency card which will contain names and phone numbers of contacts if an emergency should arrive that are laminated and kept in your child's classroom. We use these emergency cards when going on walks, during fire and tornado drills, or other situations where we feel that "just to be safe" the teachers have the information with them so that they can act accordingly.

We are a HIPPA compliant center, which means that we follow the guidelines set forth by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act for medical records pertaining to your child and family. This will protect our staff, the children, and their families. This assures that medical records of children, such as immunizations records and injury reports, are kept confidential and secure as well.

Tuition & Payment

Tuition is calculated on a weekly basis and is billed bi-weekly, every other Monday. Balances and when tuition is due will show up in your child's sign in and out page. Tuition can be paid by check or cash. If paying by cash, please put it in a sealed envelope with the child or children's name for whom the tuition is for. A check does not require an envelope.

Parents that have more than one child enrolled will receive a 10% discount off the weekly tuition rate of the oldest child enrolled. This will begin when the second child is enrolled in our program (normally the younger child). If you have two or more children enrolled that are the same age, the 10% discount will apply to one child's weekly tuition total.

It is important that you pay your tuition on time. Accounts that are overdue will be charged a late fee of \$25.00 in addition to the tuition amount already owed. This will show up in your child's sign in and out page under the balances. Failure to pay by the tenth business day after the late fee is assessed will result in termination from our program, and we will send it to a collection agency.

Two week's written notice is required when leaving our program. Please state the reason your child(ren) is leaving our center, as we always desire to make improvements on our center. If notice is not received, two weeks of tuition will be added to your account. Failure to pay this amount will result in the director sending it to a collection agency. In rare circumstances, this two-week notice policy may be waived, at the director's discretion.

If you know there will be a change in your payments due to certain life situations and you may be unable to pay tuition on time, please talk with the director in advance of the next billing cycle. We understand that emergencies come up and you may need to pay late once. However, if you do not inform us of your situation, your account will be charged for the tuition owed, and if necessary late fees will be assessed.

Parents who pick up their children after our center is closed will be assessed a late fee. For each child picked up late, the fee is \$15 for the first 1-15 minutes, and \$1 a minute thereafter. Late fees will show up in your child's account, and billing for these fees is automatic with the tuition payment schedule. You will receive a notification in your child's cubby of the late fee and balance of your account. Repeated late pickups (3 or more) may result in termination from our program. This policy exists for the safety of your children, and for respect of the staff. Please call the center, as a courtesy, if you are running late to let staff know. This will not waive your late fee, but it is courteous to let staff know as they will be concerned.

Kelly's Kids reserves the right to raise or lower the fees and tuition of their program accordingly. This will likely take place at the beginning of the year effective in January, however if we feel we must make changes at other times of the year we reserve the right to do so. Parents will be given the changes in writing with reasons explaining the increase(s) no less than 30 days prior to when the changes will go into effect, regardless of when the changes will be made.

Arrival and Departure

In order to maintain a safe and secure environment, each family will receive an individual assigned door code. This main entry security code provides access to the center from an exterior keypad mounted by the front door. This ensures that people cannot walk into the center on a whim, and that all staff and children are safe.

Once inside, your child or children must be signed in and out each day by an authorized adult that is on their contacts list. Each family will have a sign in and out code specific to them, and when checking in or out, parents can look at account balances, and verify that the information on their child's account is correct.

While the center is open from 7am-6pm, your child must be dropped off in their classroom by 10:00am unless they have a pre-approved reason for a later drop-off. Parents are required to call the center by 10:00am if their child(ren) will not be in attendance. This is for scheduling staff, and for the cook to prepare the correct amount of food for that day. This requirement is for both children in both full and part-time care. Should you attempt to drop off your child **after** 10:00am, we may not be able to accommodate your child due to staffing changes that we make accordingly. We cannot have teachers on the clock working above their ratio to children. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Your child will not be released to an adult that is not on your child's contacts list, unless a phone call is made to the center or an email sent to the director by the parent and it is OK'd with the child's teacher, assistant director, or director. If you know when dropping off your child or children that someone is picking up your child(ren) that is not on your child's contacts list, please notify the child's teacher, assistant director or director at this time.

This helps us to maintain a safe environment for both children and staff, and allows the staff to be prepared. Please make sure the person picking up your child has identification, because for the child or children's safety, the teacher will check the identification of the person picking up the child before releasing them to their care.

When dropping off and picking up your child or children, make sure the teacher is aware of when you are arriving and departing. This is not just a request, it is a requirement. Imagine turning around to find a child is missing, or that a child is there that was not, and you never saw the parent(s)! If a teacher does not see a child arrive or leave, he/she may think a child is missing or not know how a child arrived. Children must be accounted for at all times in order to maintain a safe and welcoming environment.

Children must be picked up by no later than 6:00pm. If you will be late, make sure to call the center to let us know. If a child remains on the premises for more than 30 minutes past closing and staff are unable to contact the child's parents and/or emergency contacts, then the center has no choice but to contact Child Protective Services and the Lincoln Police Department. We understand that emergencies happen, and we want to take the best action to keep children safe and comfortable.

Attendance

Your child(ren)'s good attendance at the center is very important for their continued success in the program, and their sense of security at the center. Care is mostly on a full-time basis, but there will be a few spaces for part-time care to accommodate some families that will only need part-time care for their child or children due to their work schedules. Please talk to the director prior to enrollment to discuss the attendance of your child or children, to discover if there is a space available to meet your needs. Part-time care will be on a mostly consistent schedule basis, so that we can schedule staff accordingly.

It is important to communicate when your child will be absent to the center staff or director, so that they can plan accordingly. Please call the center by 10:00am if your child is ill and will not be in attendance. Absences for an illness or vacation must not exceed two consecutive weeks, unless a doctor's note is given to the center explaining the length of time the child must stay away from the center. Otherwise, we will fill the space with another child, as care is in great need in this area and it would not be fair to a family in need of care.

Absences due to illness or vacations will not affect the cost of care. Your payment secures a space for your child, and there will be no discount or prorated payment amount for illness or vacation days. When your child is gone, the center is still here and running, and your child's tuition ensures that the center can run with or without them there.

Our Closing Policy

In the event of inclement weather, if LPS closes, Kelly's Kids Learning and Development Center will be closed as well. Notification of LPS closing can be seen on 10/11 News on KOLN/KGIN Channel 10 or on their website at <http://www.1011now.com/>, on the Kelly's Kids Facebook Page and on the center's answering machine.

Notification that we will be closed will be posted on the business closings page on 10/11 News website, our Facebook page, and an email will be sent out to parents. If you are in doubt or wanting to know if we are closed, please check one of the methods listed above. We do not plan to close during extreme cold temperatures, rather for snow/icy conditions, as we do not have concerns such as children walking to school as LPS does.

If there is an emergency and Kelly's Kids needs to close, parents will be notified with signage on the front door and a message on the phone's answering machine. If our center should need to close due to an emergency or inclement weather after opening, parents and children's contacts will be called to pick up your child (ren). We will make every effort to remain open, and a member of our staff will remain on the premises until all children have been picked up. Parents will have one hour to pick up their child from the time the phone call is made.

Holidays Our Center Will Be Closed

At Kelly's Kids Learning and Development Center, we believe that holidays are an important part of our culture and our family life. If your child(ren) will be gone during a holiday where our center is open, whether it is for cultural, religious, or family celebrations, please notify our staff in advance that your child(ren) will be absent. We encourage families to take time to celebrate!

At the beginning of each year, we will hand out a list of the holidays we will be closed so that you can plan accordingly. We will close for the same holidays each year, however this list will include specific dates for that calendar year that we will be closed. If a holiday falls on a Saturday, then the holiday will be observed the Friday before. If a holiday falls on a Sunday, then the holiday will be observed the Monday after.

We will be closed on the following holidays:

New Years Day

Good Friday

Memorial Day

Independence Day

Labor Day

Thanksgiving Day and the following Friday

Christmas Eve(if on a weekday) and Christmas Day, December 24th and 25th

2 days per year, one in October and one in March/April, for In-Service Training/Staff Development

Reminders of the holidays our center will be closed will be posted on the parent bulletin board and at the front welcoming area by the touch screen clock in/clock out station. If Kelly's Kids decides to close additional days or at an earlier time on a certain day, parents will be notified no less than 30 days in advance with a message posted on the parent bulletin board and note sent home. Please ask the director if you have any questions regarding holidays our center is closed.

Illness Policy

The following policy is recommended by the Lancaster County Health Department and is also followed by the Lincoln Public Schools system. It is extremely important for your child to come to our

center in good health, well-rested and ready to learn and interact with other children. This will help to prevent the spread of illness, and create the healthiest environment for your child.

Please keep your child home if they show any of these symptoms. In order to further prevent the spread of illness, your child must be picked up if they are experiencing **any** of the following symptoms:

- Vomiting (maximum of 2 times)
- Diarrhea
 - Diapered children whose stool is not contained in the diaper and toilet-trained children with diarrhea causing “accidents” require exclusion from care. In addition, children with diarrhea should be excluded if the stool frequency exceeds 2 or more stools above normal in a day for that child.
- Runny nose with yellowish-greenish discharge with a fever or constant coughing
- Fever of 101° (ear thermometer) AND another symptom or behavior change (lethargic)
 - Children may return to the center **after being fever free without the use of fever reducing medication for 24 hours**
- Conjunctivitis or pinkeye
 - Eyes that are red, crusty, or draining
 - Children with these symptoms **must have a doctor’s note stating it is not communicable to return to our center**
 - Children diagnosed with conjunctivitis or pinkeye may return after antibiotics have been administered for a period of no less than 24 hours
- Chicken pox
 - All sores must be scabbed over and the child must be **fever free without the use of fever reducing medication for 24 hours**
- Head/Body Lice
 - Once there are no live lice present, the child may return to care. They will be checked with a lice comb upon arrival. If nits are present, children are still allowed to come, as they are very unlikely to be transmitted from one child to another.
- Rashes/Skin Conditions
 - Any skin rashes, boils, or other conditions whose cause is not known (may be on skin or inside the mouth) AND a fever or behavior change, until a physician has determined the illness is not contagious.
 - Children may return to our center **with a doctor’s note stating it is not communicable** or once the rash or skin condition has disappeared

To ensure that your child will receive optimal care while at our center, all staff is trained in CPR, first aid, and correct techniques for taking care of body fluids as well as good hygiene practices. Should your child acquire any of these symptoms while at the center, parents will be notified and asked to pick up their child as soon as possible. Upon notification, parents must pick their child up within 1 hour (a slightly extended time is allowable if a parent works out of town).

Medications and Illnesses

Medications will be administered, when necessary, by trained staff. Medication may only be administered in the **dose appropriate for your child's age which must be printed on the original medication container or package**, unless otherwise noted by a doctor. If there is no dosage for your child's age, we cannot give the medication to your child. All medications must be in their original container or box, and have your child's name printed on it.

For sanitary and safety reasons, each child must have their own medication in a separate container, even if they are members of the same family. This will avoid any confusion, and each room will have a locked box where the medicine is kept. Should your child's medication need to be refrigerated, it will be locked in the kitchen refrigerator.

At times, a child is uncomfortable and may be able to better focus or feel better with the help of a medication. During such an instance, if you wish your child to be given medication, whether it is an over-the-counter or prescription medication, the child's parent is required to sign the medication log in the child's classroom. Please include the date, child's name, type of medication, the dose amount, and the time to administer the medication along with your signature. The dose amount must also be printed on the package for the child's age. This is for our record keeping, and to ensure the correct dose is given to your child at the time that they need it. A staff member will also complete part of the medication log form, initialing that they administered the medication and at what time it was administered. This record is for safety purposes, and to prevent mistakes in medication administration.

Any medication that states it should be given only **once a day** should be given by the parent, not by the center staff, therefore this type of medication will not be administered. If this is the first time your child is taking a medication, their first dose must be taken at home to ensure no allergic reactions occur. Should your child experience an allergic reaction to a medicine at the center, the parents will be called, and a member of our center staff will call 911 if necessary.

Children with a serious illness will need to stay home. Please see the Illness Policy on page 8 of this handbook for more information. Medications administered at the center are to keep the children healthy and aid in their recovery from an illness, and will not be used to reduce fevers or prevent an illness from occurring.

Personal Belongings

In each classroom, there are a set of cubbies, and each child will be assigned one cubby to keep their personal belongings. Please make sure to **write your child's name on their belongings** with a permanent marker, so that teachers can keep the room organized. This could include on diaper

packages, wipes containers, sunscreen bottles, and on the tags of their extra clothing and blankets. Sunscreen will be required in the warmer months to be worn on children during outside times.

Your child is to bring a blanket for nap time with their name on it somewhere, and may bring a comfort item to sleep with as well, such as a doll, teddy bear, or stuffed toy. All other toys must be left at home. Due to the wide variety of toys, many of which are not appropriate for our child care center, we ask you to please keep them out of the center. We also don't want to risk your child's toys being broken, lost, or taken by other children or parents accidentally.

Violent toys such as weapons, guns, and aggressive figures are not allowed at the center. Items brought from home must remain in the cubbies until nap time, and must be put away when the mats are put away, in order to keep them from becoming damaged and minimize losses. For rooms that do a Show and Tell, the toys must fit this requirement and will be kept in the Show and Tell box until group time.

Infants are required to bring a set of bottles (no less than three) with their child's name written in permanent marker on both the bottle and the nipple cap. Formula in a factory sealed can or container, breast milk (fresh or frozen), dried cereals in original package and baby food (commercial or homemade) must be provided by parents as well, and labeled with the child's name. Please communicate with your child's teacher about amounts of food to be fed to your infant, and changes as they occur with growth. Bottles of milk or formula will always be heated in a warm crockpot of water, and never in the microwave or stovetop to prevent burns.

The center will provide baby-sized spoons, bowls, etc. for feeding as well as chairs and tables/trays. Infants will be held when bottle feeding until they reach 6 months of age and can hold a bottle and bottles will not be "propped up" or allowed in cribs while sleeping, to prevent choking. Breast milk and formula will be fed to infants until they reach 1 year of age, and then they are required to switch to whole milk. Bottles will be phased out gradually and replaced by a sippy cup when the child starts on table foods.

Both infants and toddlers are required to have a box of wipes with their name on it that can be replenished with wipes refills and diapers or pull-ups that must be replenished when necessary. Teachers will let parents know when children are running low on supplies, so that they can be replenished when necessary. Parents must also provide diaper cream or ointment when necessary, but the center will provide Vaseline and Aquaphor in the case that a child obtains a rash while at the center and has no cream or ointment.

In the case that a child runs out of diapers or wipes, the center will provide extras for the child to borrow until they are replenished, as well as extra clothing in the event that your child soils their clothing a second time during the day. Please remember, parents are responsible for providing diapers for their child. Notice will be given to parents on their child's daily sheets when they are running low, to give adequate time for parents to bring more diapers. Center diapers will be provided to borrow in the event that your child's diaper supply has not been replenished, at a cost of .50 per diaper. Your child's teacher will keep track of how many center diapers that were necessary to use for your child, and the charges will be due with the following tuition cycle payment. A statement will be provided to parents with the diaper charges. Please note, that according to state child care licensing guidelines, diapers must be changed every two hours (if a child is dry at the time, the teacher will check the child's diaper again within an hour).

If parents donate any unused diapers for the center to use as extras, they will receive a \$5 credit on their account! **Parents are responsible for providing a new extra change of clothes the following day. Please clean and return center clothing, which will have Kelly's Kids written on them, as soon as possible.**

Potty Training

At Kelly's Kids Learning and Development Center, we are more than happy to support you in potty training your children, with the understanding that in order for it to be successful, we need to work together. Consistency is the key. During the potty training process, clothing children wear should be easy for them to take off and put back on. Each child is required to bring their own pull-ups. Children will be allowed to come to daycare in underwear **only after they have been accident free for at least two weeks**. When the child has made the transition from pull-ups to underwear, extra clothes should be brought daily and placed in their cubbies, in case of accidents. Soiled clothing will be sent home in a plastic bag.

Our Staff

At Kelly's Kids Learning and Development Center, all staff are experienced educators in early childhood education. Some staff members have an associates, bachelors, or diploma in early childhood care and education. Other staff is in the process of obtaining their degrees, and is currently taking classes. Some staff have many years of experience working in the child care field. All staff maintains current licensing requirements for training in this field.

Each member of our staff is certified in First Aid and CPR, and will maintain current certification during their employment at Kelly's Kids. Our cooks maintain current Class III Food Handler's Permits and are knowledgeable and experienced in the art of preparing food for large groups, and have a deep passion for working with children. They will help to ensure that each meal is prepared safely, and meets or exceeds the adult and child food care guidelines.

All staff is trained in the procedures and practices of our center. Staff do not only have education and experience, they also love being with children and working together in cooperation with teachers and families. The goal of all staff is to provide a loving, safe, comfortable, nurturing, clean, and caring environment where your children can learn and grow.

Our staff is eager to work in a partnership with parents and families, and build a good working relationship together. When parents and staff are "on the same page" then the child's care is more consistent and better achieves the needs and goals of the child. Parents should feel free to discuss with staff anything that concerns them about their child's care, the classroom, the curriculum, or the way the center is run. Staff will be knowledgeable and should be able to answer your questions, or guide you to the appropriate person who can answer them.

Kelly's Kids Curriculum

The toddler curriculum is a theme-based curriculum that incorporates learning shapes, colors, animals, and other basic concepts through activities and group times. As teachers are planning for the week, they use this curriculum as a basis for what they are teaching. It is by no means all-inclusive, and is intended to be used as a tool to aid in planning, and to bring interesting things to children in a manner in which they understand and can learn from at their unique pace.

Toddler rooms have daily sheets that will highlight what the children are working on curriculum-wise, as well as activities they have enjoyed. The daily sheets are also a way to communicate with parents about potty training and if the child needs any items such as diapers, wipes, diaper cream, extra clothing, etc.

The preschool & prekindergarten curriculum incorporates learning in all areas through a weekly theme. Children experience large and small group times along with individual assistance while exploring the areas of Language, Math, Science, Culture, Music and Art. On a daily basis, children can participate in the focus areas and circle time activities, and explore designated locations in the classroom known as "centers". Socialization is encouraged throughout the daily activities as an integral part of the classroom experience. Play is their work!

Each group of children is different, and finding what works well for that group is also a part of curriculum planning. During planning times, teachers are asked to use this curriculum as a basis for what they will be teaching children, and will create activities, and plans from this curriculum. Teachers are encouraged to create different art projects, choose a variety of books related to the theme, be creative in choosing props for dramatic play, rotating out toys and replacing them with different ones when the teacher feels the children might want a change, and creating a variety of activities and projects that the teacher believes the children will be interested in and enjoy.

A teacher brings a lot of ideas, experience, and creativity to the classroom, and at Kelly's Kids we want to encourage teachers to use those qualities that they possess to enrich the environment and provide our children with the best learning environment possible. Every classroom will be different, and therefore the curriculum must be molded to fit that group of children. This is a guide; a starting point for teachers when they plan each week's lessons, activities, and changes to the environment of the classroom.

Teachers will post their lesson plans to a bulletin board or white board in the classroom so parents have an idea of what their children will be learning that week. Children in the preschool room have communication notebooks that are completed daily. The prekindergarten room sends home a monthly calendar of themes and any special activities going on during the month so that parents can plan accordingly.

Our Center Rules:

Rules in our center are kept to a minimum, so that the children can easily understand, remember, and follow them. The rules exist in order to ensure the safety and respect of all children and staff at Kelly's Kids. They are also there to maintain a sense of order, kindness, and responsibility. Children are expected to follow the rules in the center as well as outdoors on the playground, and also during field trips. Our rules are:

- 1) Be respectful to friends and teachers.
- 2) Be safe both inside and outside.
- 3) Be kind to everyone.
- 4) Be truthful to everyone.

Rules are posted in all classrooms, including the cafeteria, as a reminder to children and so that parents, staff, and other adults know what our rules are. This helps everyone to reinforce the rules, and to provide a safe, respectful, kind environment. We encourage parents to discuss the rules with their children, and join us in reinforcing these rules at our center.

Facility Information & Safety Features

Kelly's Kids Learning and Development Center building designed specifically for the purpose of caring for children in northwest Lincoln. The hallways, classrooms, bathrooms and cafeteria are all designed to fit the unique needs of children. Each classroom has tile and carpeted areas, and child-size sinks. The center meets all of the latest ADA and safety requirements as of 2008 building codes.

Our center features a fenced 3000 square foot outdoor play area, three times the minimum licensing requirement for our facility. This area has recycled tire mulch and grass, and provides plenty of room to run and a variety of play structure activities. Our play structure is made by Backyard Adventures, a leader in safe outdoor play equipment. We believe that kids thrive on fresh air and exercise.

All toys and materials are age-appropriate, and certified lead-free. Safety is a number one priority at Kelly's Kids. Each classroom features observation windows in interior walls. Kelly's Kids is a secure facility with a magnetic locked front door with keypad access, and a computer monitored touch-screen check-in and check-out station. All employees and children must check in and out each day through this computer.

The center includes a cafeteria and a kitchen where healthy meals and snacks are prepared and served daily for children and staff. This large cafeteria room with its reinforced construction and safety glass interior windows also serves as our severe weather shelter. It is large enough to accommodate everyone in the building. It also features projection Audio Visual equipment for special use as a multipurpose room. Children are never allowed in the kitchen for safety reasons, and any food-related activities will be carried out in the cafeteria or the child's classroom.

Safety Precautions and Procedures

Your child's safety is extremely important to all of us at Kelly's Kids. In order to help teach your child about safety and make sure children know what to do in an emergency, we will hold fire drills and tornado drills on a regular basis. A fire escape plan is posted in each room, including bathrooms, and is approved by the Nebraska State Fire Marshall. Practicing fire and tornado drills also helps to ease the children's fears, and educates the children on what they are expected to do if there is a fire or tornado.

The environment of our center, whether it is the hallways, classrooms, cafeteria, or outside areas, are all places where safety will be practiced and demonstrated by staff. Rules are in place, and apply everywhere in the center, to help maintain a sense of order and safety. Children are encouraged to walk in hallways and classrooms, and to be careful to watch where they are going when running outside in the play area.

To maintain child safety, children are not allowed to come in flip-flops or crocs, as they have a hard time keeping them on their feet and could become injured, especially when playing outdoors. Any shoes with laces, Velcro straps, sandals with straps, or other shoes that are appropriate for the season are preferable. Children coming in snow boots in the winter months will need to bring another set of shoes to be worn inside, such as tennis shoes, slip-ons, or indoor every day wear boots. All shoes must fit well and be sturdy enough for outdoor play.

All teachers, the cooks, and supportive staff are trained in CPR and First Aid. In the case that your child has a minor injury, the teacher or other staff member will practice proper First Aid to treat your child, and inform the child's parent in writing upon pickup. For more severe injuries, the teacher or director will inform the parents with a phone call and in writing and appropriately treat the child. If the injury is too severe, but not life-threatening, a parent will be contacted to pick up their child to treat them or seek medical attention. In the case of a very severe or life-threatening injury, staff will call 911 and then immediately contact the child's parent.

All teachers and staff are required by law to report suspected abuse to Child Protective Services or the Lincoln Police Enforcement. They are trained to watch for and document abuse and neglect in children. Should you as a parent suspect abuse and do not know your child's abuser, please contact the director privately in order for the center to work with you in documenting evidence. All reports that are made regarding child abuse and neglect will be discussed privately with the child's parent, and if necessary, parents will also take part in the report. This is not only the law, but also the policy of our center, because we believe children come first.

Praise and Discipline Policy

Praise is a wonderful way to encourage children, as well as let them know the kind of behavior they are engaging in is good and that it is recognized. By “catching children being good,” we can give children self-confidence and self-esteem. This is vital to their development at any age, and promotes a positive environment for both children and staff.

Praise can be very simple. A hug, high-five, a sticker, or a treat are some of the ways children are rewarded for good behavior. This will not only reinforce the child’s behavior, but it makes children feel good about themselves. By giving praise, we are reinforcing our expectations of children, and promoting a positive environment.

At Kelly’s Kids, our goal is to guide children through this time in their life in a positive manner. On the journey, sometimes children need a reminder of what is expected of them.

Discipline is a way to remind children, in a respectful way, what is expected of them. At times, to redirect a child to another area of the room or another activity can resolve the issue. A verbal or nonverbal reminder of the rules and expectations of children can also be a helpful way to guide them.

Other times, redirection is not appropriate, especially when redirection has been tried and the behavior still continues. Sometimes a child needs to take a break, a “time-out” away from the group and the activity the child was engaged in, to stop and think. It can be a cooling off period for a child who is angry or upset, or just a time for thinking about what to do next time the situation occurs. The length of time that time out is carried out is calculated by one minute per year of age of the child, so it is a short period of time.

Time out is carried out in a positive way, because it is a time for one-on-one teacher-child interaction to talk about the choices the child has made, and ways to handle the situation better next time. Working through the situation, the child learns how to make decisions, and gains an understanding of the process of working through a situation.

Discipline is always carried out in a non-demeaning, positive way, with the intent of guiding the child in the right direction. The staff at Kelly’s Kids respects the differences in parenting styles, and will do our best to accommodate reasonable wishes of parents. However, it is our personal philosophy that these methods of discipline work, and that they allow children to be respected by their peers and the staff. Any concerns that parents have about discipline and their child should be directed to the teacher, away from the group of other parents and children, or discussed privately with the center director or assistant director.

Birthdays and Family Celebrations

We know that birthdays and family celebrations are special to children and their families. If you would like to celebrate at the center, please plan ahead with your child's teacher. They will be more than happy to help you make the celebration special for your child and their peers.

Families are encouraged to bring treats to share with the other children in the class, and are encouraged to bring enough so that all children can share. Please check with your child's teacher to determine how many children and/or teachers to plan for. Food to be served must meet healthy nutrition guidelines, and not pose a choking hazard.

Treats may be either prepackaged, store-bought treats or may be homemade. Consider different options other than cupcakes or cake, such as fruit snacks, cookies, or granola bars.

Please keep in mind our center is nut-free, so the treats you bring must also be nut-free, as many children have developed a serious allergy to nuts. Popcorn will only be allowed in preschool and pre-kindergarten classrooms, and sticky candies such as lollipops, hard candies, taffy, and caramels are not allowed at the center due to the choking hazard they pose. If you are in question about whether or not the food you plan to bring could pose a choking or allergy hazard, please check with your child's teacher prior to bringing the food to the center.

Decorations are welcome, as well as sharing traditions with the class that accompany a birthday or other celebration. Age appropriate crafts, books, stories, or other mementos that relate to your celebration are welcome and encouraged at our center. Talk with your child's teacher to help plan it with he/she, and the event could become a fun learning experience for all! Creativity and new experiences are always welcome and encouraged!

Parent Involvement

There are many ways parents can be involved in their child's experiences at Kelly's Kids. Parents are encouraged to visit the center at any time of day to observe, sit down and read a book with their child, or visit with their child's teacher or the director.

Other ways parents can be involved include assisting in field trips, coming to the center to celebrate the child's birthday, volunteering in the classroom, or sharing their talents and culture with the classroom.

It is very important to keep consistent communications with your child's teacher, so that we can provide the best care possible for your child. Communication will include directly speaking with the teacher, notes home, phone calls, posted information on the parent bulletin board, and parents are strongly encouraged to meet with their child's teacher for two (2) conferences each year. If you would like to meet with your child's teacher outside of those two conferences, please feel free to discuss your wishes with your child's teacher.

If there are other ways you would like to become involved in your child's education that are not listed here, please talk with your child's teacher or the center director. Often, teachers will have a need for items that may be donated from parents, to help enrich our program. A list of items may be posted periodically on the parent bulletin board, or parents can simply ask the teacher what needs they may have for their classroom.

If you as a parent have an idea, please do not hesitate to share it with your child's teacher or the center director. Parents are welcome in our center anytime during the day, and are encouraged to stay as long as they wish, or help out to the extent they feel comfortable.

Parent Concerns, Grievances & Feedback

Many concerns or grievances can be brought to a child's teacher. However, other concerns or grievances parents have can be brought to management, either the director or assistant director. We have an open-door policy, and want to hear when you have concerns or questions. If an answer cannot be given at the time the concern or question is brought up, then the assistant director or director will address the concern or question with the parent when they are able to have an answer or more information.

Parents are welcome to email the center email at kellyskidslc@gmail.com with any concerns or questions, however we are also open to conversations in person during our office hours. A schedule of when the director and assistant director will be in the office is posted by the month on the office door.

We also welcome positive feedback! We encourage families who enjoy their child's experience to let us know. You can rate us on our center's Facebook page, drop a note to a teacher, or an email. We love to hear how teachers and staff have impacted your child's life in a positive way.