

# Parent Handbook

## Introduction:

Today Care Children's Center is a child care center providing temporary care for the children of Regions Financial associates. Care may also be provided for employees who are grandparents or foster parents with legal custody of a child. Proof of custody is required. The Alabama Department of Human Resources licenses Today Care Children's Center. The types of care offered and descriptions are as follows:

- v **Back-up Care** – for days when your regular child care arrangements are not available. For example: school holidays, teacher in-service days, or your nanny is ill. Employees are allowed 50 days per year. Days may not be bought, sold, donated or shared between employees. Back-up care may only be scheduled for 3 weeks consecutively. After this, a break of no less than 5 business days must be observed.
- v **Infant Transition Care** – is for parents returning from maternity leave, or who have recently adopted a child. Infant Transition care is available for up to 24 weeks. When you call to make arrangements for transition care, you may choose to reserve a space for two to five days per week.

During transition care, your child is guaranteed a space for a maximum of 24 weeks. For this reason, you are financially responsible for all days you reserve for your child. There are no credits for days missed such as illness, vacation or other reasons.

50 back up care days are available when your transition care ends. A minimum of five business days must elapse between the end of transition care and the time when back up days are available for use. Transition babies receive priority for scheduling spaces.

## Operations:

Today Care Children's Center admits children without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin or ancestry. We do not discriminate on the basis of special needs, as long as we are able to provide a safe, supportive environment for your child.

Our hours of operation are 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The center is closed the following days:

New Year's Day	Memorial Day	Columbus Day	Christmas Day
MLK Day	Independence Day	Veteran's Day	
President's Day	Labor Day	Thanksgiving	

## Making and Cancelling Reservations:

Reservations must be made in advance. Reservations can be made the morning of (space permitting) or up to 90 days in advance. Please make a reservation as soon as you feel you will need care for your child.

Reservations can be made 24 hours a day by calling 988-4017. We will check our voicemail Monday through Friday at 6:30am.

If you make a reservation and do not show or cancel within 24 hours prior to your reservation, you will be charged.

School Age reservations for school holidays and summer require a cancellation notice of one week.

Parents are encouraged to bring their children to visit prior to admission to familiarize them with the center and meet our staff. A completed registration packet is needed before any back-up care reservations can be made.

## **Admission:**

Prior to admission, Today Care Children's Center must have:

- ✓ **A completed State of Alabama DHR-CDC-739 pre-admission form (2 pages)**
- ✓ **A Blue Card (Current Alabama immunization record that is on the state seal. Parents must provide updated immunization records as needed)**
- ✓ **A completed physician's form including the child's insurance information, in case of emergency**
- ✓ **Regions Financial department form: this includes employee contact information: email and mail codes**
- ✓ **Authorization to photograph**
- ✓ **Parent Handbook Signature page**
- ✓ **Developmental History Form**

Registration forms may be picked up at the center or obtained by **calling the center at 988-4017**. Forms may be returned by **fax to 988-5062**.

## **Drop off/Pick up procedures:**

Each parent or designee will be required to sign their child in and out of the center.

Once at the center, parents will be required to fill out a Daily Admission form and a Permission to Administer Medication form (if necessary). If your child has a special need or developmental delay you will be asked to fill out a Special Care Form so that our staff can fully meet your child's needs.

At discharge, the caregiver will go over the daily report with the parent, and the parent will receive a copy if they would like one. We appreciate timely pick-up of your child before the center closes. However, if a parent or other authorized person arrives after 6:30 p.m., there is a \$1.00 per minute late fee with a minimum of \$5.00 being paid.

When someone other than a parent arrives to pick up a child, the staff will:

- ✓ Confirm whether authorization to pick up your child was noted on the registration form
- ✓ Require the individual to provide photo identification

In the event of parents separating or divorcing, both parents will be entitled to pick up their child (or children) unless otherwise specified by a court order. A copy of the court order must be provided to the center.

Any person who appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol and attempts to pick up a child will be prohibited from taking the child from the center. The proper authorities will be contacted.

## **What to bring with you at drop off:**

*Please label each item that belongs to your child.*

- q Payment by cash, check, credit card or flexible spending deduction
- q Medications – in original containers with dosing for the appropriate age of the child
- q Disposable diapers and wipes
- q Baby food and formula or expressed breast milk prepared in an unbreakable bottle. **(no glass bottles)**
- q Change of clothes
- q Sack lunch or money to order a hot lunch from ROC

## **Fees:**

Back up care is \$15.00 per day per child. Transition care is \$25.00 a day/ \$125.00 per week. There are no credits for absences during transition care.

If you are late picking up your child, there is a charge of \$1.00 per minute, per child, with a \$5.00 minimum charge.

A hot lunch may be ordered from the Riverchase Cafeteria for a charge of \$5.00

Payment by check, cash, credit card, or flex-spending card is required at the time of service. Any usage of the center will count as a full day and will count toward your 50 day allowance. If a balance is not paid and/or payment arrangements are not made with the center director, your child will not be able to use the center or make reservations for your child until the account balance is paid or payment arrangements are made.

## **Meals and Snacks**

The Center will provide a nutritious morning and afternoon snack for your child.

Parents must provide a lunch, or you may choose to order your child a hot lunch through the ROC. Menus will be posted at the center. Lunch will consist of a meat, 2 veggies, a starch and milk. The fee for lunch is \$5 per child and is due at the time of drop off, NO EXCEPTIONS! If you choose not to order lunch through TodayCare for your child, you must send a sack lunch from home. Lunch orders have to be made by 8:30 a.m. All foods must meet DHR guidelines for child care centers.

**Because classrooms do not have microwaves, children must bring lunches which do not require heating.** Leftover food, which has been opened, will be discarded. Non open cans or jars may be sent with your child to the center.

Please label all bottles. Formula must be provided by parents, and bottles must be made up prior to your arrival at the center. Center staff cannot prepare formula.

Expressed breast milk may be brought from home if frozen or kept cold during transit. We will not microwave breast milk. It will be heated using the crock pot and it will not be re-heated.

## **Supervision**

No child will be left unsupervised while at the center. The ratio of caregivers to children is as follows:

<b>Ages of Children</b>	<b>Staff/Child Ratio</b>
6 weeks – 12 months	1:4
12 months – 30 months	1:5
30 months - 5 years	1:8
5 years – 12 years	1:12

The caregiver will update you as needed about your child's well being. Parents are welcome to call at any time to check on their child. Parents may also drop by to see how their child is doing, or have lunch with him or her if desired.

## **Discipline/Positive Guidance**

Caregivers at Today Care Children's Center are trained in child development and in positive methods of discipline. They use appropriate guidance, redirection, and set clear-cut limits appropriate to the child's age and developmental level.

Aggressive physical behavior toward staff or other children is unacceptable. To protect all of the children and encourage more acceptable behavior, caregivers will intervene immediately when a child becomes aggressive. For acts of aggression such as hitting or biting, the children involved will be separated. Care and comfort will be given to the injured child. If a child is bitten or injured the parent will be notified.

Because early childhood facilities are included in the definition of public accommodations under Title III of the ADA, we will follow all parts of the ADA law. However, children who pose a direct threat or significant risk to the health or safety of others will be excluded from care.

We will document how often any unusual behavior occurs and any steps taken by the staff to deal with the behavior. Behaviors which are developmentally appropriate for the age and stage of development are not considered a "direct threat." Example: A 2-year old who has bitten another child several times does not qualify as a direct threat, because biting is not developmentally unusual for a 2 year old child. However, an older child with a disability who bites, hits, or is otherwise aggressive to staff and children might be covered under this provision.

When needed, staff will use a variety of methods to teach children self-control and how to express their feelings in acceptable ways. These include redirecting children to acceptable activities, using logical consequences to help children be responsible for their actions, using firm words and tones to help children understand how someone feels, and modeling acceptable ways to express negative feelings.

Each child in the center is special, with individual needs that require careful attention. Today Care Children's Center will make reasonable accommodations for children with special needs. We suggest enrolling your child on a trial basis to determine if care at Today Care Children's Center is the best environment for your child. While our goal is to reasonably accommodate all children into the program, any child who poses a "direct threat" or is likely to cause or continue to cause significant harm to them, other children and/or staff, will be asked to not return to the program.

### **Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect**

Children need a safe, nurturing environment to grow and learn, and they need to feel loved by their caregivers. Today Care Children's Centers has a commitment to provide an environment that encourages your child's growth and learning. Should you have difficulty providing for your child's emotional or physical needs, you are encouraged to ask for help. Our staff can help you find a community resource which can offer assistance.

In the rare instance that we feel that your child's needs are consistently not being met, our staff will work with you to identify your child's needs and assist you in meeting those needs. If you are temporarily unable or unwilling to meet your child's minimal needs, our staff is mandated by Alabama law to file a report with the Alabama Department of Human Resources, Child Abuse and Neglect Unit. It then becomes the role of the State of Alabama to work with your family to insure that your child's needs are being met.

### **Confidentiality:**

Children's Files are kept confidential and are only accessible to program management and your child's Teacher. Files are maintained in a locked cabinet and are inaccessible to the general public

### **Resolving Parent Concerns:**

Just as teachers are encouraged to discuss concerns with parents, parents are encouraged to ask their child's teachers any questions they may have about their child's care at the Center. It is important for parents to clear up any questions or misunderstandings quickly. Open communication between staff and parents is vital to the smooth operation of the Center.

Ongoing communication between staff and parents is vital to the smooth running of the center. Our staff is committed to resolving your concerns.

### **Care of Children:**

#### **Exclusion Criteria:**

Exclusion of children will occur if a child becomes ill while at the center. **Your child may be sent home for any of the following reasons:**

- q Fever above 101 degrees
- q Diarrhea (2 or more)
- q Vomiting
- q Undiagnosed or contagious rash
- q Severe wheezing
- q Difficulty breathing
- q Requires inhaler or nebulizer treatment for more than every four hours
- q Uncontrolled coughing
- q Persistent or excessive crying
- q Unusual drowsiness
- q Complaining of severe pain
- q Contagious stages of pertussis, measles, mumps, chicken pox, rubella or diphtheria
- q Unable to play
- q Other conditions as identified by the center director

If your child becomes ill while at the center, you will be called and asked to pick up your child. If the parent or legal guardian cannot be reached, an emergency contact person, designated by you, will be called and your child's pediatrician may be notified. Your child will be transported to the hospital, if required, due to severe illness or injury.

**Once your child has been sent home with an illness, they will not be allowed to return until they are symptom free for at least 24 hours without medication. A child sent home may not return before the 24 hour mark without a doctor's note.**

Parents are required to inform TodayCare of reportable communicable diseases. TodayCare will notify public health authorities as well as the parents of other children who may have been exposed to your child. Your family's identity will be kept confidential.

### **Health Consultation**

TodayCare works in tandem with pediatricians, pediatric sub-specialists, the Department of Human Resources and the Jefferson County Health Department.

### **Medications**

Parents will indicate any medications to be given on the Authorization to Administer Medication form. An Authorization to Administer Medication form must be filled out and signed each day that medication is needed. The Center Director or Assistant Director will document time and dosage given on the form.

TodayCare staff will administer medications as directed by parents or legal guardians. Directions must meet normal guidelines for the medication. Prescription medications must be provided in the original prescription container and include the child's name, date of prescription, dose, frequency, route of administration and expiration date. Non-prescription medications must be provided in the original container and may not be expired. Dosing will be as prescribed by the physician or as listed on the manufacturers label for over the counter medication, regardless of parental instructions or permission. If your over the counter medicine states "under 2 consult a physician", we would need proper dosing from the doctor on a script pad. It can be faxed directly to us at 988-5062.

### **Sanitation and Hygiene**

We will follow "standard precautions" as recommended by the Center for Disease Control. All center caregivers will follow strict procedures for hand washing, diapering, and cleaning up spills of any type of body fluids

Care rooms will be cleaned and disinfected daily. All toys handled by children will be sanitized after use or, if unable to be sanitized, removed from use for at least 48 hours. Cloth toys and other toys used by children who are still mouthing them will be limited to use by only one child and cleaned and disinfected after each use.

Smocks will be worn by caregivers. Smocks that become soiled with potentially contaminated fluids will be changed. Smocks will be washed daily.

Our staff receive annual training in CPR and pediatric first aide.

### **Evacuation Plan**

A detailed evacuation plan is posted at each exit door. Evacuation drills are performed monthly. For any emergency, such as a fire, that would prevent us from remaining in the center, the staff and children will be evacuated to the far corner of the front parking lot, and if needed transported to the Riverchase South Building cafeteria on the second floor.

In the event of a tornado or an emergency that would prevent us from leaving the building, the children and staff will move to the main hallway of the building. Should emergency conditions prevent a parent from retrieving their child, the child will be cared for as long as necessary by staff members using emergency provisions located in the center.

Decisions regarding delayed openings or closures due to inclement weather will be made in conjunction with Regions Human Resources and TodayCare Management. Any changes to the center's hours of operation will be posted on the voice mail system and the local news.

### **Mother's Room**

Breast feeding mothers are welcome and encouraged to come into the center to nurse. A quiet, private area is provided.

## **Emergency Plan**

Today Care Children's Center is prepared to care for children in the event of an emergency. The center director has emergency phone numbers by all phones. First Aid supplies are in each room and the center is stocked with a comprehensive first aid kit. The staff is Red Cross certified in CPR as well as First Aid.

In the event of a life threatening illness or injury, "911" will be called to alert Emergency Medical Transport Services. The center director will phone the parent. The emergency facility designated by our center is The Children's Hospital. A staff member will accompany and remain with the child until the parent or legal guardian can assume responsibility.

## **Naps**

Cribs for babies and cots for older children are provided by the center. . There will be a designated rest time after lunch for children through preschool age. Sheets, blankets and pillows are provided by the center. Your child may bring security items from home if needed. Please label these items.

## **Smoking, Prohibited Substances and Guns**

The use of tobacco in any form, alcohol, or illegal drugs is prohibited on the facility premises at all times. No guns or other lethal weapons will be in the center at any time.

## **Toys and Games**

Children will not be able to bring any cellular phones, ipods, toys, videos, hand-held game boys, or other items from home that can be lost or misplaced. **If valuable items are brought to the center, Today Care will not accept responsibility if they are lost, misplaced or taken home by someone else.**

**Thank you in advance for your cooperation, and we look forward to seeing and caring for your child.**

**Thank you for choosing TodayCare Children's Center  
If you have any further questions please contact:**

**Phone  
(205) 988-4017  
Fax  
(205) 988-5062**

**We are located at:  
2191 Parkway Lake Drive  
Hoover, AL 35244**