Montessori School of Oceanside 2

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Parent Handbook

"I have studied the child, I have taken what the child has given me and experienced it and this is what is called the Montessori Method."

Maria Montessori
(1870 – 1952)

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE ON MARIA MONTESSORI

Maria Montessori, the first woman M.D. in Italy, was one of the great pioneers in the study of the development of the very young. She has truly impressive credentials when, in 1908, she began her now famous method of educating young children.

A background in mathematics, engineering and biology preceded her study of medicine. Graduated from Rome University Medical School in 1896, she was appointed assistant doctor at the Rome University Psychiatric Clinic. Her work during the next three years with retarded children reflected not only deep compassion but also rigorous scientific quality.

The Ministry of Education invited her to give a series of lectures at Rome University on the education of exceptional children. In these lectures, she set down the foundations of scientific pedagogy in Italy and was subsequently asked by the state to found and head a school for exceptional children.

She designed the special materials and scientifically prepared an environment she deemed essential for the meaningful education of her pupils. Dr. Montessori succeeded brilliantly and received world acclaim. Montessori believed she could apply her revolutionary ideas to the education of the normal child, and to this end she embarked on a program of intensive studies at Rome University.

During the years from 1901 to 1908, Montessori studied philosophy and psychology. Made a Professor in 1904, she occupied the Chair of Anthropology at the University and occupied the Chair of Hygiene and the Magistero Femminile in Rome, one of the women's colleges in Italy. In 1908, Dr. Montessori began her innovative method with a group of normal children in the slum area of San Lorenzo, Rome. In a year, her success with these children was of world-wide interest. A major landmark in education of the young children was established.

Between 1912 and the end of her life, she put her ideas into twenty-five books and pamphlets on various aspects of her education theory and practice.

Dr. Montessori died in Holland in 1952 at the age of 82 and was buried in Holland, her adopted country, whose love for freedom and concern for education she particularly valued.

Since 1980, Montessori schools have been established worldwide. Montessori education was introduced to this country in 1912 with one of the early schools being established by Alexander Graham Bell in his own home. There are now over seven thousand established Montessori schools in this country.

SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

Montessori School of Oceanside 2 is dedicated to the philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori in the belief that her teachings provide a scientifically based system which not only aids the child during early development but throughout life. The Montessori philosophy is based on love for the child, respect for the child's dignity as a person, and a strong desire to help the child realize their fullest potential in society.

The school upholds the right of the child to progress at their own pace, in their own individual way and to be provided with the aids they need for physical, emotional, social and intellectual normal development.

The school offers an environment where in an atmosphere of serenity and respect, the child finds:

- A variety of equipment and material which motivates their spontaneous activity and desire to learn
- Inner order and inner discipline
- Confidence and sincerity in human interactions
- People who lovingly care for their total welfare and development

The Montessori classroom is a social community concerned with the total development of children in a relaxed atmosphere, free of criticism and competition. Our goal is to promote the child's growth toward autonomy, to give them a positive attitude toward school through an excellent foundation of creative learning. Attitudes and confidence developed while they are yet in formation will serve them throughout their lifetime.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

WHAT IS THE MONTESSORI METHOD?

Montessori is a philosophy and method of education which emphasizes the potential of the young child and develops this potential by utilizing specially trained teachers and special teaching materials. Montessori recognizes in the child a natural curiosity and desire to learn; the Montessori materials awaken the desire and channel their curiosity into a learning experience which the child enjoys. Montessori materials help the child to understand what they learn by associating an abstract concept with a concrete sensorial experience; in this manner, the

Montessori child is actually learning and not just memorizing. The Montessori Method stresses that children learn and progress at their own pace.

WHAT DOES MONTESSORI OFFER MY CHILD?

Montessori allows each child to experience the excitement of learning by their own choice rather than by being forced. Dr. Montessori observed that it was easier for a child to learn a particular skill during corresponding "sensitive periods" than at any other time in their life. These are periods of intense fascination for learning a particular skill. Montessori allows the child freedom to select individual activities which correspond to their own periods of interest and readiness and progress at their own pace. A child who acquires the basic skill of reading and arithmetic in this natural way has the advantage of beginning their education without drudgery, boredom or discouragement.

WHY ARE MONTESSORI CHILDREN GENERALLY SELF-CONFIDENT, OUTGOING AND SELF-RELIANT?

Montessori is based on a profound respect for the child's personality. The child works from their own free choice and is allowed a large measure of independence which forms the basis of real self-discipline.

As each child progresses at their own pace and successfully completes the self-correcting exercises, they develop confidence in their ability to understand their environment.

Montessori presents endless opportunities among the children for mutual help which is joyfully given and received. Cooperative social interaction among children of different ages engenders a feeling of friendship, respect for the rights of others, and self-confidence.

These aspects of the Montessori program help eliminate the necessity for coercion which often causes feelings of inferiority and stress.

WHAT IS THE MONTESSORI CONCEPT OF FREEDOM IN THE CLASSROOM?

The Montessori environment includes a fine balance between structure and freedom. The concept of freedom carrying responsibility is gradually introduced from the time they enter school. The Montessori child has a wide variety of constructive paths to choose; they gain the skills and tools to accomplish their choice and they are taught the social values that enable them to make an enlightened choice. An undisciplined and unskilled child is not free, but rather they are a slave to their immediate desires. Allowing this behavior to proliferate merely forms a habit that is hard to change. The child does not benefit from destructive behavior and they become an unhappy child. Freedom does not involve being able to do what you want to do. It does involve being able to distinguish what is constructive and beneficial and being able to carry that out.

WHY SHOULD I SEND MY CHILD TO MONTESSORI SCHOOL?

Montessori is education…not a preschool school. The best time to start your child's education is during the early years…2 ½ to 4 ½ when most of their intelligence and social characteristics are formed. Fifty percent of the child's mental development occurs before 4 years of age. In a Montessori school, your child will learn to think in logical patterns and to deal with reality. They will become better prepared to cope with the complex challenges of tomorrow's world.

WHAT IS MONTESSORI APPARATUS?

The Montessori classroom offers 500 unique educational didactic (self-teaching) materials which are used by the children in the classroom. They accommodate many levels of ability. They are not "teaching aids" in the traditional sense, because their goal is not the external one of teaching children skills or imparting knowledge through "correct usage". Rather the goal is an internal one of aiding the child's mental development and self-construction. They aid this growth by providing stimuli that captures the child's attention and initiates a process of concentration. The child, then, uses the apparatus to develop their coordination, attention to details and good work habits. When the child's environment offers materials that polarize their attention…the teacher is then able to give them the freedom they need for healthy development.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A MONTESSORI CHILD ENTERS THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM?

The habits and skills which a child develops in a Montessori class serve them for a lifetime. Since Montessori education is successful in developing concentration, self-discipline, a love of learning and social skills…the child is better equipped to enter new situations…they easily adjust to the traditional school environment. Good habits, that are acquired early in a child's life result in a lifelong pursuit of knowledge.

DOES THE MONTESSORI ENVIRONMENT FOSTER CREATIVITY?

Experience tells us that **"creating"** cannot be taught and that the child's environment tends to either foster or restrict their creative potential. To foster creativity Montessori realized that the environment must itself be **beautiful**, **harmonious**, and **based on reality** in order for the child to organize their perceptions of it. Then the child is capable of selecting and emphasizing those processes necessary for creative endeavors. The child needs freedom if they are to develop creativity which is involved with the intellectual as well as the aesthetic processes of the mind. The child in the Montessori classroom is free from judgment by an outside authority that so inhibits the creative impulse.

WHY MONTESSORI?

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE EARLY YEARS

Dr. Maria Montessori, one of the most important educators of our time, emphasized the need for early education. She wrote, "**The most important period of life is not the age of university studies, but the first one, the period from birth to the age of six. For that is the time when man's intelligence itself, his greatest implement, is being formed. But not only his intelligence; the full totality of his psychic powers…at no other age has the child a greater need of intelligent help, and any obstacle that impedes his creative work will lessen the chance he has of achieving perfection."**

THE REAL NEEDS OF THE CHILD

Montessori attitudes and philosophy are most consistent with the needs of a child in the process of developing and learning. Montessori's educational theories are based on the way a child develops naturally

and then correlated for use as an educational system consistent with these laws.

CHILD CENTERED

Dr. Montessori believed that no human being is educated by another person. They must do it themselves or it will never be done. A truly educated individual continues learning long after the hours and years they spend in a classroom because they are motivated from within by a natural curiosity and love for knowledge. She felt, therefore, that the goal of early education should not be to fill the child with facts from a pre-selected course of studies but rather to cultivate their own natural desire to learn. Her experiments made the child the center of education; her program is adapted to the interests and the needs of the children. As a result, children concentrate with enthusiasm and achieve a real and profound understanding of their work. This intellectual progress is accompanied by emotional growth. The children become harmonious in movement, independent of work, and honest and helpful with one another.

PHASES OF GROWTH

Dr. Montessori discovered, and recent educational research has verified, successive phases of growth in children each with characteristic sensitivities which guide physical and mental development. These phases of growth, she called **"sensitive periods"**. They are outwardly recognizable by an intense interest which the child shows for certain sensorial and abstract experiences. Dr. Montessori discovered that the guiding sensitivities constitute needs in the child which demand fulfillment and are universal to all children. Thus, the validity of Dr. Montessori's observation has remained constant since she began her task of the discovery of the child.

THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER

The function of the teacher in a Montessori classroom differs considerably from that of the traditional teacher; hence, Dr. Montessori used the term "director/directress". The directress brings the child into contact with the world in which he lives and the tools by which he learns to cope with his world. They are, first of all a very keen observer of the individual interests and needs of each child, the daily plan proceeds from the observation rather than from a prepared curriculum. The correct use of materials is demonstrated, as they are individually chosen by the

children. The directress carefully watches the progress of each child and keeps a record of their work. The individual child's total development as well as their progress toward self-discipline is carefully guided by the directress who prepares the environment, directs the activities, and offers the child enticement and stimulation. In a Montessori classroom, the child stays with the same directress for between 1-3 years, developing a continuity of care and providing ample opportunity to build upon relationships. The mutual respect of the student and the teacher-guide is the most important factor in this process.

THE UN-GRADED CLASSROOM

The greatest possibility for flexibility in permitting individual lessons and progress, while still retaining group sessions at no expense to the individual child, exists in the Montessori environment. The use of individual materials permits a varied pace that accommodates many levels of ability in the classroom. If the classroom equipment is to be challenging enough to provoke a learning response, it must be properly matched to the sensitivities and past experiences of the child. This experience is so varied that the most satisfying choice can usually be made only by the children themselves. The Montessori classroom offers them the opportunity to choose from a wide variety of graded materials. The child can grow as their interests lead them from one level of complexity to another. They work in a group composed of individuals of various ages, abilities, cultures and interests and are not required to follow anyone else's program…it permits the younger children a graded series of materials for imitation and the older ones an opportunity to reinforce their own knowledge by helping the younger ones. Hence, they add to the group as they receive from it what they need.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

By being an involved parent, your child's experience at Montessori School of Oceanside 2 will be enhanced for both of you. Our door is always open for you to visit for a few minutes or a few hours, and of course, you are welcome to join whatever activity is going on, whether it may be reading stories, arts and crafts or eating lunch.

If your daytime schedule does not permit active involvement at our school during class time, you can still share in your child's activities. Proudly display your child's art work and projects at home (children love to see their creations decorate the refrigerator), and in the evening and on the way to and from the center, encourage your child to share their

experiences. Talk about the fun things your child likes to do, the teachers, special friends, favorite lunches and whatever else interests your child.

You are encouraged to speak with your child's teacher on a frequent basis. If there are any questions, problems or situations that need to be addressed, do not hesitate to contact the center owner operator.

OUR POLICY FOR NON-DISCRIMINATION

Our program is designed for children from six weeks to six years of age. Montessori School of Oceanside 2 accepts applicants on a first-come, first- served basis and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, marital or veteran status, national origin, handicaps or political beliefs.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

To enroll your child at Montessori School of Oceanside 2, we encourage both parents and children to visit the center and meet with the Administrator and teachers. During this time, you will have the opportunity to tour the facility and have your questions answered.

When you have made the decision, please follow these steps:

1. Complete all necessary forms in the packet which include the enrollment form and emergency contact numbers.
2. Submit a current physical examination report and immunization record completed by a physician.
3. Pay the required non-refundable registration fee.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION

All information pertaining to a child and their family is at all times kept confidential. At times a staff member, along with the Director of the center, may review the child's file for information which may be pertinent to the child's needs.

By no means may the child's family information or the child's information be released to any outside influences, except for the licensing agents and departmental authorities. Other than this, parental approval must be given.

WAITING LISTS

Due to high demand for quality child care, there may not be a place immediately available for you child at our school. We do maintain a waiting list based on the date of the application and the child's age. As openings occur in the center, parents are called in the order of their position on the waiting list.

Priority will be given, however to children currently enrolled in our school who are waiting to advance to the next age group and their siblings who have not yet enrolled, before new families are accepted.

We are not able to reserve a place for your child should you decline the opportunity to register when offered.

ADMISSION POLICY

1. Children must be at least six weeks of age.
2. Children must have on file, prior to their first day of enrollment, a record of complete physical, an updated immunization record, evidence of freedom from tuberculosis and any other state requirements that apply.
3. All registration materials must be completed prior to enrollment. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to update the personal information in their child's file. This information includes but is not limited to the home address, home phone number and schedule of attendance.

TUITION POLICY

Tuition must be paid monthly or weekly. Tuition is due the first business day of each month or Monday of each week. Late fees will be assessed on late payments. For returned checks a fee is also assessed, and you may be required to make future payments in cash.

Tuition is still due in full according to your child's fee schedule, even though your child may not attend. Should your child permanently withdraw from the school, no credit or refund of tuition will be given. Return to school would require payment of a re-registration fee.

For each additional child enrolled in your immediate family, you will be entitled to a 10% discount on tuition of the older child.

Should there be any extenuating circumstances that would prevent you from paying on a timely basis, please discuss this confidentially with the Director prior to it becoming a problem. Continued failure to pay tuition on a timely basis may result in terminating your child's enrollment.

WHAT SCHEDULES ARE AVAILABLE

Montessori School of Oceanside 2 is generally open from 7:00 am to 5:30 pm Monday through Friday, twelve months a year.

We offer full-time and part-time care and flexible scheduling on a space available basis. The center Administrator can provide you with specific information on what openings are available.

VACATIONS AND HOLIDAYS OBSERVED

We are closed on these national holidays: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas week and some state holidays. There is no tuition credit allowed for these days.

We may choose to close on the day before or after the actual holiday if that day falls on a weekend.

ATTENTION TO SAFETY

From the moment your child arrives until they are picked up at the end of the day, your child's safety is our foremost concern. No child shall ever be left unsupervised. Our center is equipped with an intercom/telephone in each classroom to allow for emergency use.

Procedures for arrivals and departures have been developed to assure the safety and well-being of everyone at the center. Your cooperation in complying with them is appreciated.

- Parents are to use only the front door for entering and exiting.
- Children shall always be walked into the building and be placed with a staff member before the parent leaves. Never leave a child outside the building for them to walk in alone or accompanied by another child.

- Parents must complete the sign-in/sign-out process on a daily basis and any applicable permission slips (medications, field trips)
- When picking up your child, be certain that a staff member acknowledges that your child is leaving the building.

A child will not be permitted to leave with any person other than those designated in writing by the parent. Photo identification will be checked for any designated person picking up a child. There will be no exceptions to this policy.

If there are any changes to those authorized to pick up your child, or if you will be car-pooling with other parents, please advise us. Remember to use a child safety seat and buckle up when transporting your children at all times.

HEALTH PRECAUTIONS

In addition to the physician's examination and immunization records for enrollment, we also have a daily screening to observe each child's health. If your child develops symptoms of illness during the day we will immediately isolate them from the other children and call you pick up your child. For the health and well-being of your child and others, please do not bring your child to school if they:

1. Have a fever or have had one during the previous 24 hours.
2. Are in the first 24 hours of antibiotic treatment.
3. Have a heavy nasal discharge that is not clear. (Nasal discharge that is clear may be caused by an allergy)
4. Have a constant cough.
5. Have symptoms of possible communicable diseases such as sniffles, reddened eyes, sore throat, painful ears, rash, headache, abdominal pain and/or fever.

If your child has a communicable disease, such as chickenpox, please inform the school so we can take the necessary precautions.

For more detailed health care information refer to our Illness Policy.

In the case of accident or injury we will make an attempt to reach you. If you are not reachable, the child's pediatrician and emergency contact persons listed will be called.

IF YOUR CHILD NEEDS MEDICATION

Our staff will dispense prescription medications during the day only with parental written authorization. The form must be completed in full with the name of the medication and the prescribed dosage and times to be given. The medication is to be in the original container with the child's name and dosage instructions on the pharmacy label and must not be expired. Please alert us to any possible side effects of the medication and when it is to be discontinued. When medication is administered, the time, date, amount, and responsible party will be recorded.

MEALS

Good eating habits and positive attitudes towards food should be established at an early age. For young children it is essential to have a nutritionally balanced diet for healthy growth and development. Our menus have been designed to include items from each of the four basic food groups with an emphasis on fruits and vegetables. Milk is provided with lunch. A variety of mid-day snacks and drinks are also given. Those arriving early may be given breakfast.

Please advise your child's teacher in writing of any food allergies or intolerance. A substitute item may be able to be offered to your child in place of that item.

NAP TIME

There is a rest period during the day for all children. Each child is assigned their own mat or cot to sleep on and is welcome to bring in a favorite blanket or "cuddly".

TOILET TRAINING

We accept children that are not yet toilet trained. When you, the parent, have determined that your child is ready to begin using the toilet, our staff will assist your child so as to maintain consistency between home and school behavior. The following guidelines are useful in determining if your child is toilet trained:

- The child can wait 30 minutes between toilet times (our staff accompanies the children to the toilet approximately every 30 minutes).
- The child can express the need to go to the bathroom to a parent and teacher.

- The child does not need to wear diapers, even at nap time.

CLOTHING YOUR CHILD WILL NEED

Children are to be fully dressed when they arrive to our center. Because play and activity are such an important part of the curriculum, clothing should be comfortable and practical. Children will feel much more at ease participating in activities if they are not concerned about ruining their "good" clothing.

Children who walk must wear closed shoes at all times, preferably sneakers. Footwear such as sandals, flip-flops and boots do not offer the necessary safety and protection and therefore, are not permitted.

Every child needs to always have a complete change of clothing, including socks and underwear (if applicable), kept at school in case of soiling. If your child has changed clothing during the day, please take home the soiled items and replace them the next day.

All clothing items are to be labeled with either a commercial label (available in fabric and notion stores) or permanent markers with the child's full name. A lost and found box is kept at the center, so please check it if you are missing anything. If your child comes home with an article of clothing that is not his or hers, please return it.

WHAT YOUR CHILD CAN BRING FROM HOME

When it is your child's snack day, they have a specific "Show and Tell" time in class. They are encouraged to share items of interest, such as toys, games, or books. Items of dangerous or violent nature, such as toy guns or sharp objects, or anything deemed to be unsafe by our staff will not be permitted.

In other instances, it is in the best interest of all children to not bring in personal items, as they may be lost or broken or create problems in an otherwise shared environment. A good alternative is to have a favorite toy waiting in the car when your child is picked up.

Under no circumstances should money, jewelry or valuables be brought in by your child.

HOW BIRTHDAYS ARE CELEBRATED

Birthdays are special and important occasions. At our center we want to make your child's birthday fun and exciting. You are welcome to bring in a treat for everyone in your child's class, preferably something nutritious. Please make arrangements with your child's teacher for any special plans, which can include songs, stories, or something to make your child's birthday unique.

SPECIAL INFORMATION FOR PARENTS OF INFANTS AND TODDLERS

At Montessori School of Oceanside 2 we know that very young children need extra special care and attention. Our loving staff provides a nurturing, soothing, stimulating environment for precious little ones. Plenty of hugs, cuddles, talking and listening, with close attention to your child's needs, create feelings of warmth and security.

Children involved with activities to promote sensory development and awareness, physical development and cognitive skills on a daily basis. Details about your child's behavior during the day are provided to you in our daily notice.

Please be sure that your child has the following items in the center on a daily basis, replacing and laundering them when needed:

1. Diapers - for a full-time infant, 5-8 disposable diapers will be needed daily.
2. Baby wipes – labeled
3. 2-3 tight fitting crib sheets – labeled.
4. Three changes of clothing (including socks or booties) labeled.
5. Sweaters and/or jackets suitable for indoor and outdoor changes in temperature.
6. Receiving blanket – labeled
7. Ointments – labeled (no powder or sprays please)
8. Any foods, whether formula or solids, must be supplied by the parent and must be labeled.
9. Medication in most areas must be prescription only. Medication forms must be filled out before any medication can be administered to an infant. If the administration of non-prescription medication is permitted by regulations, a doctor's note may be required.
10. All belongings must be brought to school in a tote bag. All items must be labeled, especially baby bottles and caps. **All bottles must be accompanied with a cap. This is a government requirement.** We are sorry but we cannot be responsible for any unlabeled item.

11. Any items that are not listed above which you care to bring should be labeled. The center cannot be responsible for disappearing items. With your cooperation we can keep disappearing items to a minimum.
12. Please do not use your infant's bin for storage. This only creates a cluttered atmosphere and a home for germs. Infant's belongings must be taken home nightly and laundered (if needed).

Eating times for this age group are special times, and individual preferences will be recognized. Bottles are never propped and food is portioned and made to appropriate consistency. If you are able to visit the center at this time, you are always welcome to join your child for meals, including breast feeding.

TIPS FOR THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

The first day of school can be both exciting and unsettling. There are several ways you can assist your child with what might be their first experience away from you and the security of your home.

- Determine whether past experiences indicate that your child might have a problem leaving you.
- Determine whether you might have a problem leaving your child.
- Take your child to the center to visit prior to the first day. Have your child meet their teacher; walk around the building; peek in through the windows; look at the playground equipment, the parking lot, side lawns, trees and other surroundings.
- The more familiar your child is with our center and the consistency of your daily routine in arriving, the more comfortable they will be.
- With some parents and children, a transition period into the new experience of child care may ease the separation. Perhaps the first day or few days that your child attends could be less than the full schedule to allow time for the adjustment. Soon your child will look forward to coming to us with assurance that Mommy or Daddy will return.

For some children, going to school is a happy uneventful break from family or caregivers. For other children the experience is both difficult and frightening. Until that first morning (or the first few days) there is no way to be absolutely sure of how a child will react. Sometimes, days later, there is a delayed reaction accompanied by tears and non-verbalized fears. The way parents react can play an important role in a child's enthusiasm and

acceptance. The language of support, before the event, can help dispel some of these fears.

- "I will go to work, and then I will pick you up."
- "You will have so much fun."
- "There will be toys and games to play with."
- "Your teacher will help you in the bathroom."
- "You can play with trucks."
- "You can paint and color."
- "Your teacher will be my friend too."

On the first morning or afternoon it is wise to arrive a little earlier so that you are not in a rush. Walk or carry your child into the center and take your child to their teacher. Introduce your child if your child is old enough to understand. If your child is too young to understand introductions, simply introduce your child to the caregiver and the staff will take over with the welcome. Since every child will have a cubby with their name it would be a good idea to help your child locate the cubby and place the things you have brought from home in the cubby. Then it is time to think about leaving.

- Be honest with your child. "I'm leaving for work now. I will be back at 4:00." "Give me a big hug and a kiss."
- It is not wise to say, especially if your youngster begins to cry or tantrum, "I'll be back in just a minute" or "I'm just going to the movies." Honesty and reality are always best.
- At this time the staff will go to work to interest your child in something around the center. Should your youngster continue to be upset, then we would contact you. This generally doesn't happen. Tears may flow for just a few minutes.

At the end of the day, park your car and come into the center. Your child will probably be looking for you, and the staff will have them ready to go. If for some reason you will be delayed, please call the center. Make sure the staff sees you take your child, and remember to sign out from the center.

Repeat this procedure on the days following the first day. If you have any concerns do not hesitate to call the center. Together we will plan how to overcome problems should they arise. On the first day of school, please understand that it is perfectly natural for you to walk out of the center and feel sad and/or apprehensive. A good cry has helped many a parent between the center and the work place. Rest assured your child is in safe, caring hands.

During the week prior to your child's enrollment in the center the staff will be glad to receive items that will be necessary in caring for your child. Otherwise, you can bring them with you on the first morning.

TERMINATION OF ENROLLMENT

In certain circumstances, it may be necessary for the Director to decide to discontinue a child's attendance. Such a decision would be based on whether it is in the best interest of that child, the other children in the class and the overall operation of the center to terminate enrollment. Every effort will be made to correct a problematic situation (i.e. moving the child to another class) before a final decision is made. Termination of enrollment may be the result of the following:

- Non-payment of tuition (immediate termination)
- Abuse of children, staff or property
- Continued violation of our policies
- Disruptive or dangerous behavior
- The center's inability to meet the child's needs.

Whenever possible, in the event of termination of enrollment, written notification of one week will be provided to the parent.

OUR RESPONSIBILITY FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Child abuse and neglect is a terrible crisis. As caring concerned parents and child care providers we take very seriously our responsibility, as required by law, to report suspected cases.

Our staff has been trained to recognize the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect.

Abuse and neglect, whether it may be physical or emotional, can happen in all types of families, from all walks of life and in varying degrees. In all instances the damage to children can last a lifetime and certainly affect their self-esteem and developmental process.

When abuse occurs, both children and parents are the victims and need support, understanding and help. Parents may ask the center Administrator for a confidential referral for outside intervention and suggested resources for prevention and assistance in dealing with this problem.

Should a parent or staff member suspect abuse or neglect, these steps are usual course of action:

1. Staff member will discuss the suspected case with the center Director.
2. The Director will observe the child, talk with the child and further seek to determine if abuse or neglect may have occurred. These findings will be documented in the child's file.
3. The Director will talk with the child's parents about the concerns.
4. The staff and Administrator will make a determination of the need to call the appropriate child abuse agency.
5. A social worker or representative of the agency may visit the child at our center or the child's home.

In a situation deemed to require immediate attention, a staff member may call the abuse hotline directly.

We are also very concerned about preventing abuse in the child care center. To protect the children in our care, the following measures are taken:

- Extensive screening of all staff members, including criminal background checks.
- Close observations and performance evaluations of staff.
- Involved, capable supervision constantly monitoring the classrooms, activities and staff members through closed circuit television and observation windows.