

FAMILY HANDBOOK



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Deale, MD 20751
www.tenderyearscenter.com
443-203-6325

Director / Operator:
Faith Wilkerson
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Hours of Operation

Mon-Fri 7:00am - 4:00pm (8 weeks - 23 months)
Mon-Fri 7:00am - 4:30pm (2 yrs - Preschool, extended to 5:30pm)
Mon-Fri 7:00am - 5:30pm (School age children arrive on bus at 2:30pm)

*“Let my teaching fall like rain and my words descend like dew,
like showers on new grass, like abundant rain on tender plants.”*

— Deuteronomy 32:2

Our Mission

At Tender Years of Deale, we recognize that from infancy to adolescence, children are in a tender season of growth. Our mission is to provide the a safe, nurturing Christian environment where “God’s word descends like dew” and teaching “falls like gentle rain” so that children grow healthy and strong.

Our Approach

We provide a nurturing, safe, child care environment that lays a strong foundation of the Christian faith for children during their "tender years" of childhood through literacy-rich, play-based learning opportunities. We believe that a literacy-rich, play-based, gospel-based, learning environment helps children of every age reach important developmental milestones, foster friendships and build Christian character.

Our Philosophy

As a gospel-based center, our staff seek to model Christian values for all children of all abilities and special health care needs. We seek to live in peace with God and one another (Romans 12:18) and glorify God through our words and actions (Colossians 3:17).

Through bible lessons, prayer and praise, we lay the foundation for a "biblical worldview" that encourages children to marvel at God's creation, recognize His hand in the complexities of nature, know ourselves as created in His image and celebrate God's love for us through Jesus Christ.

(Genesis 1:26, Ephesians 2:4-9)

Our Religious Affiliation

Tender Years of Deale, LLC is operated by Reverend Faith Wilkerson, an ordained elder in the Global Methodist Church and the Pastor of Family and Youth Ministries at Cedar Grove Methodist Church. Together, we partner with Cedar Grove in ministry events, camps, service projects and worship services.

Our Licensing

Lic #261623

Tender Years of Deale, LLC is a child care center regulated by the Maryland State Department of Education COMAR 13A.16 and licensed by the MSDE Office of Child Care Region 1.

Our Families

Families are the foundation of children's development. We view ourselves in partnership with our parents to ensure the health and safety of every child. We welcome parent participation and feedback is valued because family input contributes to the planning and implementation of our program and shaping of our policies.

Family Engagement - Special Events

Holidays

We learn about many holidays both religious and civic. We encourage children to attend evangelistic activities hosted by Cedar Grove Methodist Church such as Preschool Graduation, Vacation Bible School, Easter Egg Hunt, Family Christmas Services, Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, Ash Wednesday and Lenten Vespers. As a gospel-based center, we will not celebrate Halloween but we encourage attending the annual Trunk-or-Treat hayrides and games in Deale.

Biblical Themed Camps and Holiday Programs

Our center leads biblical themed summer camps such as and school-days-off camps for all ages.

Birthday Celebrations

For your child's birthday, each classroom teacher makes the day special. We can arrange for parents to bring a store bought food item, such as a cupcake or popsicle. If you wish to bring something for your child's class, we encourage families to consider a goodie bag for each classmate that can be given out and opened at home.

Operation Christmas Child (October/November)

We participate in a project for giving to kids around the world through Samaritan's Purse. Donations are requested. Volunteers are requested.

Trunk-R-Treat (October)

We invite families to celebrate by participation in the fall festival community event at Cedar Grove Methodist Church or at the Deale Fire Department with the Elks Lodge.

Easter Egg Hunt

We invite families to celebrate the meaning of Easter at our community event at Cedar Grove Methodist Church.

Special Guest and Volunteers

Children love to have special guests to the classroom to enhance an activity or subject area they are exploring. We regularly post sign up opportunities on the Bulletin Board, in the email newsletter and in Brightwheel for parents to volunteer or help with a project. Special guests such as fire fighters or police officers may be invited to the center during our unit on Community Helpers. All special guests and volunteers shall be under the close supervision of a staff member at all times.

Our Curriculum - Experience Early Learning

We offer literacy-rich, play-based learning experiences to assist infants, toddlers and preschoolers reach developmental milestones. Beginning in Fall 2025, we use the nationally recognized "Experience Curriculum" which is founded on a cross-disciplinary model that supports a child's on-going social-emotional, physical, language and cognitive development. There are three levels: Experience Baby, Experience Toddler and Experience Preschool. Lessons are aligned with Maryland and national standards for education. Lesson plans and activities are integrated into the Brightwheel app so that parents can see lessons and activities planned for each day. In addition, we utilize the Experience God curriculum that offers a biblical lesson and theme for each month.

Equipment and Materials to Support Learning

The materials in our classrooms and outdoor play areas support learning, discovery, and exploration for children of all abilities and backgrounds. All child-accessible materials are age appropriate, clean, and in good repair. Materials such as manipulatives, books, games, dramatic play items, and sensory materials are selected to support classroom learning themes and are rotated when possible.

Materials are stored on low, open shelves and in accessible bins to encourage children's independence, choice-making, and responsibility for cleanup. Our classrooms include materials that support children of varying abilities and developmental levels, including chunky crayons, knobbed puzzles, sensory items, textured materials, and hands-on manipulatives.

Teachers guide children in returning materials to their proper places. Each preschool and two-year-old classroom includes areas for blocks, dramatic play, science, art, and reading, along with age-appropriate books that reflect children's interests, cultures, languages, and experiences.

Total Inclusion Approach

We welcome children of all abilities and special health care needs. Tender Years of Deale admits children of any religion, race, color, disability, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the child care center.

We believe that each child is a gift from God, and we value the uniqueness of every child. Our center embraces the Christian faith but does not discriminate based on religion, creed or denomination.

We believe that an inclusive classroom celebrates the diversity of learning styles and communication which benefits children to understand both the content of their learning and how to show empathy and care of peers. Our staff anticipate that changes or adaptations may need to be made to a lesson, the classroom space and the schedule when working with children of varied physical and cognitive abilities. We are prepared to partner as needed with a child's therapist and allow inclusion of professionals into our classroom setting as needed.

We request that if your child has a special health care need that you allow us to partner with you to meet your child's needs and help them thrive in our program. Please provide any documents for your child's IEP/IFSP to the director.

Tuition Rates By Age Groups



The Acorns 6 weeks - 17 months (approximate)

Teacher/Child Ratio 1:3

Hours of care: 7:00am - 4:00pm

Rate: \$475/week



The Pine Cones 18 - 24 months (approximate)

Teacher/Child Ratio 1:3

Hours of care: 7:00am - 4:00pm

Rate: \$425/week



The Sprouts 24 - 36 months (approximate)

Teacher/Child Ratio 1:6

Hours: 7:00am - 4:30pm with option to extend

Extended care until 5:30pm: additional \$40/week

Rate: \$310/week or \$350/week with extended day



Mighty Oaks Ages 3 - 5 years old

Teacher/Child Ratio 1:10

Hours: 7:00am - 4:30pm with option to extend

Extended care until 5:30pm: additional \$40/week

Rate: \$300/week or \$340/week with extended day



Mighty Cedars Kindergarten - 5th Grade

Teacher/Child Ratio 1:15

\$175/week during the school year or \$50/day

Summer programs are priced differently.

Deposit

At the time of enrollment, each child's placement requires a deposit of \$175. This is non-refundable and non-transferable. The \$15 activity fee is also due upon enrollment.

Activity Fees

At the time of enrollment, the first month Activity Fee is paid. The monthly activity fee of \$15 per month covers the cost of enrichment materials and activities that occur throughout the year for your child. These will include special programs brought to the center, planned enrichment materials for additional STEAM activities and field trips.

Weekly Tuition

At the time of enrollment, the first week of care (tuition) is due in advance of starting. Invoices are sent weekly through Brightwheel. All parents must enroll and download the Brightwheel app. All weekly tuition must be paid the week before the care is provided. In other words, please remit payment on Friday before the upcoming week of care. Failure to pay can result in unenrollment.

Extended Care / Late Pick Ups

Each age grouping has a standard pick up time. Pre-arranged extended care is available upon request. Please see the enrollment agreement for the cost and times. When you have a delay in picking up, please contact the center promptly. If you pick up after your child's classroom closes, there will be a charge of \$30 for every 5 minutes overtime.

Payment Policies

- A one-time, non-refundable deposit is made to hold placement for initial enrollment
- The first week's tuition must be paid prior to the child's start date
- Tuition must remain current to maintain enrollment
- Care may be suspended or terminated if payment becomes more than 14 days overdue
- If care ends midweek, families are responsible for payment for the full week (no prorating)
- Payment can be made by check, cash, Venmo, Zelle or set up on auto-billing through Brightwheel.

Automatic un-enrollment can occur if the center does not receive payment by 7am Wednesday of the billing week. A written notice will be sent on the morning of the third day to state the un-enrollment of the child(ren).

Late Fees

Payments not received by due date (the Friday before care starts, see invoice from Brightwheel) will be considered late and will be charged an additional \$50 per child overdue.

Admission and Enrollment

Admission to Tender Years of Deale is ongoing and non-discriminatory. No child will be excluded from admission based on religion, race, color, disability, sex, or national origin. Preference may be given to siblings of currently enrolled children.

Enrollment Process:

Step 1 - Submit an Inquiry / Learn About the Program

Complete the online [Inquiry Request Form](#). The Director will follow up to schedule a tour or conversation. Families review program information, including mission, philosophy, and approach.

Step 2 - Receive Enrollment Packet

If space is available, families will receive an Enrollment Packet, which includes: Enrollment Agreement, [Health Inventory Forms \(Parts 1 & 2\)](#), [Emergency Contact Form](#), Annual Acknowledgment, Family Handbook, and Sleep Sack, Crib Permission and Field Trip Permission Forms (as applicable).

Step 3 - Submit Documentation and Payment

Enrollment is finalized only after all required documentation and payments are received and approved, including: first week's tuition, first month's activity fee, and required deposit.

Enrollment Requirements

A child may not begin care until a parent or guardian has:

- Received the full Enrollment Packet, Signed the Enrollment Agreement
- Submitted all required forms, completed in full and signed
- Submitted all required payments

Withdrawal and Un-enrollment

Families may withdraw a child from the program at any time by providing written notice (email faith@tenderyearscenter.com). Payment for the final week of care is required.

The center reserves the right to unenroll a child at anytime due to:

- Non-payment of tuition or fees
- Failure to maintain required enrollment or health documentation
- Violation of program policies
- Inability to safely meet the needs of the child within the group care setting
- Staffing, licensing, or classroom capacity limitations (see below)

Placement and Availability in Preschool Class Each Fall

The preschool program begins after Labor Day. Enrollment in the preschool program Septemeber - May is not automatically guaranteed and children may be placed on a waiting list.

Enrollment Agreement

Enrollment in the program is confirmed through a signed Enrollment Agreement, which serves as the family's Contract for Care. This agreement outlines the child's program selection, schedule, tuition, fees, and other enrollment provisions. Updated agreements are completed whenever a child transitions to a new age group or classroom placement.

Annual Re-Enrollment

Each June, all currently enrolled families will complete re-enrollment for the upcoming school year which begins the Monday after Labor Day. Families will be required to review and sign updated enrollment documents and submit all required forms, including current Health Inventory Forms completed and signed by the child's pediatrician.

Moving Up to New Age Grouping

When a child transitions to a new age grouping, families will receive updated enrollment materials, including a revised Enrollment Agreement that reflects new tuition and fees.

Your child's enrollment, classroom placement, and continuation of services are dependent upon available space, licensed capacity, staffing ratios, developmental readiness, and the program's ability to safely meet the needs of all enrolled children. Advancement to the next classroom is not automatically guaranteed upon reaching a certain age and may be delayed until space and staffing become available.

Planned or Emergency Closings

While every effort is made to maintain regular operations, there may be occasions when staff illness, emergency circumstances, severe weather, public health concerns, or other unforeseen events affect classroom staffing or center operations. In order to remain in compliance with Maryland licensing regulations and maintain safe supervision ratios, Tender Years reserves the right to adjust classroom schedules, combine groups as permitted, shorten operating hours, or temporarily close classrooms or the center when necessary. Families will be notified as soon as possible in these situations.

Because tuition supports ongoing staffing and operational expenses, payments remain due during temporary emergency closures or interruptions in service.

Emergencies & Inclement Weather

Tender Years of Deale follows the Federal Government guidelines for emergency and inclement weather. If local weather presents an emergency issue, a community-wide text will be sent out promptly. It is our goal to remain open and provide care as long as it does not jeopardize the health or safety of our staff or families. **We encourage families to have a back up plan for care in the case of emergency closures.**

Schedule and Calendar

Daily Schedule

Children ages 18 months and older must arrive to the center by 8:45am to begin their day. See the Daily Schedule located at the back of this handbook and is posted in each classroom. Each playgroup has a daily schedule that includes time for rest. Infant schedules up to 12 months of age are individualized.

Nap Policy

It is required by law that children are given a minimum of two hours opportunity for rest. Nap time is part of this daily routine. Each child is provided with a crib (up until 12 months) or a cot with a fitted sheet. If child is under age 2, they will be provided with a sleep sack. After age 2, they are provided with a blanket. No blankets, sleep sacks or sheets are needed from home. We launder these items weekly at Tender Years. Children under age two will eat, sleep, and play on demand. We will not wake a sleeping child under age 2. Preschool children who are growing out of a daily nap may read books on their cot.

Weekly Schedule

Tender Years of Deale is open Monday - Friday from 7:00am - 5:30pm.

Monthly Schedule

A calendar of monthly events is available on the website and is posted in the reception area.

Check-In & Check Out

All families will check students in and out using the Brightwheel app. The kiosk at the front door will accept your unique code or you may scan the QR code and use your phone.

Drop-off

Children must arrive by 8:45am to begin the day. All families will walk children into the center through the appropriate classroom. Children in Room F (ages 0-12 months approximately) enter through F Room Door only between 7am-9am or 3pm-4pm. Persons entering Room F must remove shoes or wear shoe covers.

Pick-up

Children must be picked up on time and can be released only to those listed on the Emergency Form. If an adult other than those on the pick-up list needs to pick up a child, please provide written permission from the parent/guardian by email or on paper to faith@tenderyearscenter.com

Parking Lot Safety

Please supervise your child as you accompany them in and out of the center. Do not leave children in vehicles unattended. Vehicles should not be allowed to idle in the facility's designated parking areas at any time, including during drop-off and pick-up.

Communications

Upon enrollment, we seek to establish communication preferences for families and introduce our patterns for keeping lines of communication clear and predictable. Please familiarize yourself with daily, weekly, monthly and emergency communication protocols.

Upon enrollment, please complete the following:

- Emergency Contact Form (completed annually)
- Center-Wide Communication through the Brightwheel App
- About My Child Worksheet for classroom teacher
- Photo Consent (opt-in or out of photos for marketing and publication)

Phone

Our phone number is (443) 203-6325 and we welcome parents to call at anytime. Please inform us via Brightwheel messaging (or you may call the center) when your child is ill or absent. Teachers may be reached through this phone. We ask that parents do not text or call teachers during their class time, as they are not able to take calls while teaching or supervising children.

Email

Center-wide messages, such as weekly reminders or newsletters will be sent out via email. It will be the responsibility of each family to provide us with the most up-to-date email address that you would like to have us use. We ask that you check your email for updates. Emails can be updated through the front desk anytime. We keep our internal communications private through our email service, Constant Contact, which does not sell personal information.

Community Bulletin Board

Our community bulletin board also has information posted as it become available. Our receptionist is responsible for keeping this board up to date each month. Please contact the director for any confidential referrals. We also have partnered with a non-profit called My Wonder Play Learning that offers events and classes to help parents and any adult caregivers to nurture curiosity, spark creativity, & inspire a desire to learn for a lifetime.

Text Messaging

Text messaging directly from the director's cell phone will be used to distribute timely information, such as an alert that may point you to an important email or update on a change of operation (such as inclement weather). Please remember that cellphone carrier rates may apply.

Website and Social Media

Our website www.tenderyearscenter.com and Facebook page will not post photos of children without the signed the permission form. Upon enrollment, families elect to opt-in or opt-out of photos used for external communication by signing the Annual Acknowledgment form.

Family Conferences

Families will be informed in May to sign up for the end of year family conferences. Sign up opportunities are announced by email and in the electronic newsletter (available in BrightWheel App) and in print format on the bulletin board at front desk. The Brightwheel Messaging App allows you to sign up for your time slot directly with your child's teacher.

The teacher keeps a portfolio collection of your child's artwork, lessons, and achievements in the classroom. Each May, teachers prepare for June Confencs. We will invite you to sign up through the front desk sign up sheet to meet with the teacher and discuss your child's achievements.

We welcome you to request a formal conference at any time of year. You may calling the center or email the director to schedule a time with your teacher to discuss your child's growth, milestones, engagement with peers or any concerns you may have.

Resources for Community Support

Lending Library

Children are welcome to borrow books from either of our lending libraries. One is located in the main reception area featuring books on parenting as well as books for children under 5. An older lending library is located in the School Age Care room. You may borrow at any time. Have books to share? Bring donations to the director for review.

Resources for Support

Sometimes, families, children and parents need extra support. Our center can provide you with information to access local agencies that offer helpful services. Child Find, The Resource Center, South County Assistance Network and Anne Arundel County Systems of Care all provide services at little to no cost for Anne Arundel County residents. See our bulletin board in the reception area for information and updates.

Referral Services

Have a child with a learning difference or special health care need? We offer referral resources for children with disabilities and children with special health care needs. Inquire from a teacher or director if you would like help connecting with local resources for mental health services, food assistance, housing, utilities, crisis or emergency services, mentoring, parent training and education.

Community Partners

We also have partnered with the Elks Lodge, the Deale Fire Department and area businesses in order to supplement lessons on Community Helpers. We have supported a non-profit called My Wonder Play Learning that offers events and classes to help parents and any adult caregivers nurture curiosity, spark creativity, and inspire a desire to learn for a lifetime.

What to Bring

Clothing and Outdoor Gear

Each child should come to school dressed appropriately for the weather and ready to play. Children over 18 months should arrive in shoes. Comfortable, durable play clothes are suggested, and sturdy sneakers are recommended. Sandals, crocs and flip-flops are NOT PERMITTED. The following clothing items should be clearly labeled with the child's first and last name and always at the center:

- Change of clothes (appropriate to the season) kept in ziplock bag
- Rain boots (fall, spring, summer) kept in cubby area
- Rain coat (we value outdoor time rain or shine)
- Snow boots (winter) kept in cubby area
- Winter coat (winter) kept in cubby area
- Mittens / Gloves (winter)

A change of seasonal clothing (including underwear, socks, & shoes) is important so that your child can be changed as needed during the day.

Infant and Toddler Clothing

Please refer to the single page sheet of instructions provided by the teacher for ages 0-2.

Tender Years Closet

We keep a selection of clothing on hand for those occasions when a child needs a change of clothes. These are labeled TYD. We welcome donations of clothing from families.

Toys and Items from Home

Please limit the personal items that your child brings from home to lunch box, water bottle, clothing, or requested materials for sharing during circle time or for projects. Label everything with your child's name.

Water Bottle or Sippy Cup

Please see sheet on the recommended sippy cup and water bottle for each age level. Families must provide a labeled water bottle or sippy cup that is taken home daily.

Cell Phones, Tablets or Electronic Devices

Children are not to bring cell phones, tablets, iPods or any electronic devices to the center.

Walking and Strolling Field Trips

A walking field trip may be arranged for a visit to the fire house, library, Cedar Grove church or park. Infants and toddlers may take a stroller ride to the park when weather is permitting. We ask that parents sign an annual permission slip for children to participate in any off-site programs. Staff to child ratios are maintained during all off-site programs.

Reinforcing Positive Behavior

Disciplinary Policy (COMAR 13A.17.07.03c Child Discipline)

Tender Years of Deale will abide by the above COMAR regulation. There will never be physical punishment of any kind.

Behavior Management

Behavior is a form of communication. Children must learn the social and soft skills related to appropriate behaviors needed to be successful in life. At Tender Years of Deale, we use both proactive and reactive approaches to behavior management.

Appropriate behavior at Tender Years of Deale is defined by three basic expectations:

- We respect self and others.
- We respect and care for our school and personal property.
- We observe personal and school boundaries.

Proactive Behavior Support Strategies

By providing choices and redirecting children toward more positive behaviors, our staff help children gain a sense of empowerment and control in their environment. Throughout the day, children are offered choices to make decisions for themselves and to develop independence. Redirecting a child's focus away from a negative behavior and toward a positive one is another technique used by our staff.

Intolerable Behaviors

Aggressive, reckless, harassing or bullying behavior which jeopardizes the health, safety, or welfare of the child, other children, the greater community, or staff members is immediately recorded in Brightwheel. A conference with the parents may be requested, and a student may be suspended, expelled, or the parents may be asked to withdraw their child from the center. When a child has been significantly injured, the parent is also notified by phone promptly and the incident is documented on the Incident Report Form. Incidents of harm resulting from intolerable behavior towards another child can result in immediate suspension or expulsion from the center.

Biting and Pushing Policy

Biting and pushing is unfortunately not unexpected behavior for infants/toddlers. Some children communicate through this behavior. However, biting/pushing can be harmful to other children and to staff. Our goal is to help identify what is causing the biting/pushing and resolve these issues.

When Biting/Pushing Does Occur:

For the child that was bitten/pushed:

1. First aid is given. It is cleaned with soap and water. If the skin is broken, it is covered with a bandage.
2. Parents are notified.
3. The incident is documented on Brightwheel.

For the child that bit/pushed:

1. The teacher will firmly tell the child, "We do not bite/push."
2. The child will discuss with a teacher how the other child may feel.
3. The parents are notified and an Incident Report is filled out. The child will be shadowed to help prevent further incidents and observed to determine the cause (teething, communication, frustration, etc.).

When Biting or Pushing Continues

If a child inflicts 2 bites/pushes in a one week period (5 days of school attendance) in which the skin of another child or staff member is broken or bruised or the bite leaves a significant mark, a conference will be held with the parents to discuss the child's behavior and how the behavior may be modified.

If the child again inflicts 2 bites/pushes in a one week period in which the skin is broken or bruised or leaves a significant mark, the child will be asked to take a one week break from the school.

If the child again inflicts 2 bites/pushes in a one week period in which the skin is broken or bruised or leaves a significant mark, the parents may be asked to make other day care arrangements.

If a child who has been through steps 1 and 2 then goes 3 weeks (15 days of school attendance) without biting/pushing, we will go back to step one if the child bites/pushes again.

If a child bites/pushes twice in a 1 hour period, the child will be required to be picked up for the remainder of the day.

Referring to Outside Services

We may recommend outside evaluation or support services through appropriate early childhood specialists, pediatricians, behavioral consultants, or early intervention programs. The purpose of a referral is to better understand the child's needs and identify supportive strategies that promote success in the classroom and at home. If, despite interventions and collaborative efforts, the program is unable to safely meet the needs of the child or maintain a safe environment for others, we reserves the right to determine whether continued enrollment is an appropriate fit.

Developmental Screenings & Observation Practices

Milestones matter for children from birth to age five. At Tender Years of Deale, we are committed to supporting each child's growth through ongoing observation and developmental awareness. Our program utilizes regular observation practices to better understand each child's development. Lead teachers and/or the Center Director conduct weekly observations during free play and instructional time, documenting children's skills and behaviors through anecdotal notes.

We encourage families to use the Milestone Tracker through the Centers of Disease Control to is not meeting one or more developmental milestones, has lost previously acquired skills, or if there are any concerns, we encourage families to act early. This may include speaking with the child's pediatrician or requesting a formal developmental screening.

Our center is committed to partnering with families by sharing observations, making referrals to outside professionals when needed, and offering opportunities for teachers and families to meet and discuss a child's development.

Healthy Center Standards

Infants and young children who attend early care and education programs are at a high risk for catching and spreading infections. **We encourage families to have a backup plan for child care** when their child cannot attend the program due to illness.

Three main reasons to keep children at home:

1. The child does not feel well enough to comfortably take part in usual activities.
2. A child needs more care than teachers and staff can give while still caring for other children.
3. The illness has a risk of spreading to others.

Sick Child Policy for Acute Illnesses

We cannot admit a child to care or allow a child to remain in care when the child is exhibiting symptoms of acute illness.

Please keep your child home if they:

- Have received a vaccine (keep home after appointment)
- Have a fever of 100 degrees or higher
- Have a cold for more than 4 days
- Have nasal discharge
- Are diagnosed with an illness
- Are within first 24 hours of antibiotic or other medication use
- Have a constant cough

If Your Child Becomes Sick at the Center

All child care staff monitor a child for signs and symptoms of acute illness. The center director will notify a child's parent upon observing a sign or symptom of acute illness. Until parent or authorized person picks up your child, we will provide temporary isolation for the affected child in a separate area within sight and hearing of an adult.

A child may not be readmitted to care after an absence of 3 days or more due to illness without a written statement from the parent or physician that the child may return to a regular schedule.

We will call you if your child shows signs of:

- A fever of 100 degrees or higher
- Two episodes of diarrhea within 2 hours or diarrhea that soils clothing beyond the diaper
- Vomiting
- Ongoing signs or symptoms of illness that prohibit the child from participating in activities

Preventing the Spread of Disease

Hand washing is the single most important line of defense in preventing the transmission of disease-causing organisms. Children and staff shall wash hands upon arrival at the child care center.

Hand washing procedures are posted at each sink.

Children will wash hands:

- Upon arrival at Tender Years of Deale
- After each diaper change or visit to the toilet
- Immediately before eating meals or snacks
- Before and after water activity
- After playing on the playground
- Whenever hands are visibly soiled

Staff will wash hands:

- Upon arrival at the child care center
- Immediately before and after handling food, preparing bottles, or feeding children
- Before handling clean utensils or equipment
- After using the toilet, assisting a child, or changing diapers
- After handling body fluids
- After handling soiled items such as garbage, mops, cloths, and clothing
- Whenever hands are visibly soiled
- After removing disposable gloves

Doctor's Visits

We ask that parents plan annual check-ups at the end of the day, keeping in mind that children cannot return to the center following an appointment.

If a child goes to the doctor for an illness, please provide a note from the doctor stating permission to return to care. If your child is prescribed antibiotics, they will need to be on the antibiotics for 24 hours before returning to the center.

Anytime a child receives vaccinations, they will need to remain home following the appointment for observation.

When your child is absent for three days or longer, written permission from a parent or health practitioner is required for a child to return to a program, stating that the child is well enough to return to a regular schedule.

Medical Administration Policies

General medication, whether prescription or nonprescription, may only be administered by the Director or those staff members who have completed their Medical Administration certification. A medication authorization form should accompany any medication that is to be administered during time of care.

Please complete the following form that includes:

- Parental permission documented on a medication authorization form
- A licensed health practitioner has approved the administration and dosage
- Prescription medication may not be administered unless at least one dose has been given at home

Prescription medication must be labeled by the pharmacy or physician with: the child's name, date of prescription, name of medication, dosage, administration schedule, administration route, duration, and expiration date.

Supporting Healthy Child Development

At Tender Years of Deale, we seek to lay a strong foundation for your child to reach developmental milestones and support healthy brain development. We understand that while your child is in our care, we become one of your child's earliest teachers. With that great responsibility, we strive to do all that we can to support and encourage children along the continuum of learning.

Holding, cuddling and talking to your infant are also important for her brain! Our teachers' physical and emotional contact with your baby is essential. For example, eye contact, warm and soothing voices as well as responding to your baby's vocalizations will foster social connection and promote language development.

The development of strong attachment relationships lays a foundation for children's sense of personal identity and self-esteem, as proposed by researcher J. Ronald Lally who called for a focus of identity development in the context of infancy. (Lally 1995, 58-59; Zero to Three 2009).

Community Resources for Reaching Developmental Milestones

Helping babies, toddlers and young children develop to their maximum potential is a team effort. As we engage in activities to help promote skill development, there may be times we may recommend a free assessment by the Maryland Infants & Toddlers Program. By initializing on the Acknowledgment Form, you acknowledge that free, family-centered support is available to any child under age three who lives in Maryland. Printed information is also available at the front desk.

Photography & Video Permission

Tender Years of Deale uses photography and video to document children's learning process and experiences as well as highlight our programs in marketing materials, the website or other media outlets. Upon enrollment, families elect to opt-in or opt-out of photos used for external communication by signing the Annual Acknowledgment form. There is no opting out of internal use of photography and video documentation that is shared within our community to reflect the learning process and experiences.

Screen Time / Electronic Media Policy

Program Requirements

Tender Years of Deale adheres to all applicable COMAR13A.17.09.01.E6 regulations regarding the use of technology in early childhood settings. We are committed to ensuring that technology use supports, rather than replaces, active learning, creative play, and meaningful social interaction. For children under the age of two, passive technology, including videos and screen media, will not be used during program hours. For children ages two and older, the use of technology is limited, intentional, and developmentally appropriate. Passive viewing (such as short video clips) may be incorporated only by the lead teacher and solely for the purpose of enhancing or extending a specific lesson or project topic. For instance, a lesson on animals from Australia could include asking how does a kangaroo jump, then watching a kangaroo jump in a brief clip and then having the children imitate the action.

When technology is used:

- It will be teacher-directed and interactive, not used for entertainment or convenience.
- Staff will actively engage with children by:
 - Introducing the purpose of the clip and connecting it to the current lesson
 - Asking questions before, during, and after viewing to promote thinking and comprehension
 - Encouraging discussion, reflection, and follow-up activities related to the content

Technology will not replace hands-on learning, play-based experiences, or peer interaction.

All video content must be:

- Pre-approved by the Center Director
- Age-appropriate and aligned with the objectives in our curriculum
- Limited to a maximum of 30 minutes per week, except for occasional special events or activities, for which families will receive advance notice.

Interactive Technology Use

In addition to limited passive viewing, Tender Years of Deale may incorporate interactive video and technology as a teaching tool for children ages two and older. Interactive technology is defined as staff-guided media that requires active participation, engagement, and response from children.

Interactive video will be used to:

Reinforce concepts introduced through hands-on learning and play

Encourage movement, participation, and verbal responses (e.g., singing, repeating, answering questions)

Support different learning styles through visual and auditory engagement

When using interactive video, staff will:

- Remain actively involved throughout the experience, guiding children's participation
- Pause or stop content to ask questions, clarify ideas, and extend learning
- Encourage children to respond physically (movement, gestures) and verbally
- Connect the content directly to classroom activities before and after viewing

Interactive technology will:

- Be brief, purposeful, and developmentally appropriate
- Not replace creative play, exploration, or social interaction
- Be used as a supplement to instruction, not as a primary method of teaching

Child Abuse & Sexual Molestation Prevention Policy

The purpose of this policy is to protect children, staff, and volunteers from abuse and sexual molestation, to establish clear reporting procedures, and to ensure compliance with all applicable state and federal laws bekidsafe.org.

Zero Tolerance Statement

TYD prohibits and has ZERO TOLERANCE for any form of child sexual abuse, molestation, or sexual misconduct. This includes acts committed by staff, volunteers, contractors, or third parties during work hours, activities, or at any time when they have access to children bekidsafe.org.

Definitions:

Child Sexual Abuse: Any sexual act involving a child, including touching of the breast, genitals, or buttocks, penetration, exploitation, or coercion.

Sexual Misconduct: Any inappropriate sexual behavior or advances toward a child, regardless of the relationship or setting bekidsafe.org.

Prevention Measures

- All staff and volunteers must complete Basic Health and Safety or an equivalent sexual abuse prevention training.
- Mandatory background checks (including fingerprinting) is required for all employees and volunteers.
- Screening of applicants for criminal history through FBI and State of Maryland.
- All staff understand clear boundaries and supervision protocols for all children.

Reporting Procedures

Who must report: All staff, volunteers, board members, and anyone with knowledge of suspected abuse must report immediately. All of our staff are mandated reporters and will report EVERY suspected instance of child abuse or neglect directly to the protective services unit of Anne Arundel County.

Where to report:

To Child Protective Service: In emergencies or if a child is in immediate danger, call 911 and child protective services 410-974-8700. Reports can also be made to local law enforcement or the county child protective services 410-974-8700.

How to report:

Oral report to the Director. If the Director is unavailable, report to the next available supervisor. If no supervisor is available, contact Child Protective Services 410-974-8700 or law enforcement immediately.

Confidentiality:

Reports will be handled confidentially in accordance with state law.

Investigation and Action:

Any person found to have violated this policy will be immediately terminated, reported to authorities, and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. Tender Years of Deale will cooperate fully with investigations and provide necessary information to law enforcement or child protective services.

Training and Review:

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as needed. All staff and volunteers will be trained on this policy and procedures at hire and annually

Acknowledgement

All staff and volunteers must acknowledge receipt and understanding of this policy by signing the staff handbook or a separate acknowledgment form.