



Great Start Readiness Program

Parent Handbook

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Introductory Information

Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP). The Hamilton Great Start Readiness Program provides high quality preschool for four year old children (but not five by October 1) who meets qualifying factors that may put them at risk for low educational attainment in Kindergarten and beyond. The program is funded by the Michigan Department of Education and overseen by the Ottawa Area Intermediate School District.

Philosophy. The goal of the GSRP program is to provide every preschooler with the best educational opportunities through child-centered, hands-on curriculum set in a rich learning environment which is created through our families, community and professional staff.

We believe that young children learn to the best of their ability when given:

- A safe, healthy, nurturing environment
- Development of strong teacher-child relationships in combination with strong family-teacher relationships in which all are valued
- Many opportunities for play and learning through play experiences
- Families are involved and we work together to help your child
- The activities are geared toward your child's current skills and interests

Decisions are made from a child-centered focus which includes looking at the early childhood standards of quality preschool, the curriculum, assessment information, feedback from parents and the diverse social, economic, cultural and family needs that exist within the classroom.

Licensing Regulations. Lakeshore Little People's Place is licensed by the Michigan Department of Human Services: Office of Children and Adult Licensing. Each facility is assigned a Licensing Consultant who ensures the centers follow the "Licensing Rules for Childcare Centers" set forth by the Department of Consumer & Industry Services: Bureau of Regulatory Services. A copy of these rules is available on the parent table along with a licensing notebook where parents can review documentation of the renewal/interim inspection reports, as well as, any documentation on special investigations. A license is granted for a two year period and requires a full licensing inspection to renew. Every year the Licensing Consultant will also conduct an unannounced visit to further ensure all licensing rules are being followed by checking paperwork files and observing classrooms. In addition, the Licensing Consultant must approve any changes such as new classrooms or transportation and investigate any incidents reported by staff, parents, children or local authorities. LLPP is also inspected by and must meet regulations set in place by the Department of Environmental Health and Fire Safety.

Partnerships and Collaborations. LLPP partners with several organizations in our community to aid in providing appropriate comprehensive services and ensuring high quality care. LLPP has membership on the Great Start Collaborative, Great Start Collaborative Early Care and Education Committee, Great Start Readiness Collaborative and Administrative Committees, Ready for School, and the Lakeshore Association for the Education of Young Children. LLPP also works closely with the Ottawa Area Intermediate School District and local school districts. Participation in these organizations allows LLPP to work for the development of a common community philosophy for early childhood. The sharing of information on available community services allows a comprehensive, seamless system of services for all children and families.

Enrollment Information

Admission. Lakeshore Little People's Place admits children without regard to race, color, nationality, or religious background. Age requirements and qualifying factors must be met to be eligible for admittance to the GSRP program. Children must be four years old on or before October 1st of the school year and meet risk factors identified by the Michigan Department of Education. These risk factors include:

- Extremely low income (counts as two factors)
- Low income
- Diagnosed disability or identified developmental delay
- Severe or challenging behavior
- Primary home language other than English
- Parent/guardian with low educational attainment
- Abuse/neglect of child or parent
- Environmental risk such as: parental loss, sibling issues, teen parent, homeless or non-stable housing, high risk neighborhood or prenatal or postnatal exposure to toxic substances known to cause learning or developmental delays. All required forms must be completed and signed before a child may attend the program. Parents must agree to keep all information updated as necessary.

Recruitment. An open house takes place yearly in February to identify those students that meet Head Start, GSRP or tuition paid preschool requirements. This open house gives parents an opportunity to meet the teachers, visit the classroom, and ask questions regarding the program. Open enrollment will continue from the date of the open house through the summer. Applications that are received will be carefully reviewed and documentation supporting risk factors will be gathered. All information submitted is confidential. Children meeting Head Start requirements will be referred to the Allegan Head Start for services. In some cases, a waiver may be obtained allowing them to attend Hamilton GSRP. Parents will be notified by letter if their child has qualified for GSRP and referrals will be made to other programming if they do not qualify.

If more families apply for GSRP than slots are awarded, those children with the greatest need based on the qualifying risk factors will be admitted first.

Enrollment. Once a child has qualified, the parent/guardian will receive the GSRP Parent Handbook, Health Care Service Plan, and Crisis Intervention Plan. The following forms are required before the child begins the program:

- Health Form / Immunization Record signed by a physician
- Child Information Card – updated with any change
- Personal Information Form
- Parent/Agency Agreement
- Parent Providing Food Agreement
- Birth Certification
- Verification of Qualifying Factors

Schedule of Operations. GSRP operates October through May and has a morning and an afternoon half day program which operates Monday-Thursday.

A.M. Session	8:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.
P.M. Session	12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

GSRP will follow the Hamilton Community Schools (HCS) calendar and will **not** operate on any days HCS are closed due to Holidays, scheduled days off, or snow days. In the event of a fog delay, only the p.m. session will meet.

Arrival and Pick Up. Each child must be signed in upon arrival. Sign-in sheets are located by the door of the classroom. Parents should walk a child into the classroom and alert the teacher to an arrival or departure. This is also a good time to talk to the staff about how your child is feeling.

All children must be signed out when they are picked up. Children will be released only to parents or persons authorized by parents and listed on the Child Information Card. If you intend for someone not listed on the information card to pick up your child, notify the staff in writing. In emergencies, you may call the site. ID will be required at pick up.

If a parent, by court order, is not allowed to pick up his or her child, a copy of the Court Order must be provided to LLPP and the child may be released only according to the court order on file. If the court order is not on file, either parent may pick up the child regardless of what the other parent has communicated.

Late Pick-up Policy. Parents are expected to promptly pick-up their child after the GSRP preschool session.

Withdrawal. Two weeks written notice to the Site Director is required if a parent withdraws a child from the program. The Site Director or Executive Director of Lakeshore Little People's Place may request withdrawal of a child from the program for the following reasons:

- Failure to provide documentation on qualifying factors
- For excessive late pick-ups (more than two in a three month period)
- If a child endangers the health or safety of staff or other children
- If the director, in consultation with the staff, determines Lakeshore Little People's Place is unable to meet the needs of a child and/or a parent
- If conferences between the director and parents do not satisfactorily resolve inappropriate behavior
- If a parent does not provide the center with required paperwork concerning their child or refuses to abide by other licensing requirements
- If a parent behaves inappropriately in front of other parents, staff, or children

Confidentiality Guidelines. To be confidential is to be entrusted with someone's personal information and not share it with others. GSRP staff must respect families', children's and colleague's privacy. All information and documentation necessary for GSRP enrollment will be only shared with the lead teacher and GSRP administrator for verification of eligibility only. Documentation will then be stored outside the classroom in a locked location. Confidentiality also includes sharing any other information regarding a GSRP child including but not limited to, all child/family information and records, private conversations with a parent, or developmental information. The GSRP lead teacher should discuss confidential information with other GSRP teachers only if they need to know the information to complete their job responsibilities. Employees should never discuss confidential information with anyone other than employees of LLPP. Confidential information should not be removed by any employee unless approved by the Site or Executive Director.

Curriculum, Screening and Assessments

Curriculum. The High Scope approach uses ACTIVE LEARNING where children are involved in direct, hands-on experiences with people, objects, ideas and events. ADULT CHILD INTERACTION involves adults observing and interacting with children at their level to discover how each child thinks and reasons. The LEARNING ENVIRONMENT is arranged in several clearly defined interest areas that enable children to find, use, and return the materials they need in order to explore, invent, and learn about their world. Finally, the DAILY ROUTINE includes a plan-do-review process which gives children the opportunity to pursue their own interests, make plans, follow through on them and reflect on their experiences with peers and adults.

Zoo-phonics. Zoo-phonics is a curriculum that helps children learn their letters and sounds. Each letter is assigned an animal and body movement. The Zoo-phonics program fully involves the child's eyes, ears, mouth, and body as they learn phonemic awareness and the alphabet.

Lesson Plans. Lead teachers, with the help of the assistants, will develop a written lesson plan developed around High Scope Key Developmental Indicators. Teachers will familiarize themselves with High Scope Preschool Curriculum Content including the following 8 areas: Approaches to Learning, Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development and Health, Language Literacy and Communication, Mathematics, Creative Arts, Science and Technology, and Social Studies.

Screening Tool. LLPP uses Ages Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3) for its developmental and social-emotional screening tool for children from one month until they enter Kindergarten. Highly reliable and valid, ASQ-3 indicates differing levels of development, educates parents about developmental milestones and incorporates parents' expert knowledge about their child. Parents will complete the Ages and Stages and teachers will evaluate results and use the information to guide lesson plans. If a delay is indicated by the assessment, teachers will notify the Site Director who will work with the teachers and parents to develop a plan to address the delay including referrals for available resources. If the parent has already completed this with a health care provider or other professional, a copy of the form can be submitted to their child's teacher. Parents can also complete their own assessment of their child by logging onto greatstartshere.org and selecting the Ages and Stages box on the left. If the child meets criteria for a delay, the parent will be contacted with available services.

Observation Records. Teaching teams will use note-taking and checklists to accurately record behaviors and developmental milestones reached by each child as they occur within the classroom setting. These records will be used to guide behavior plans and recall skills when completing an individual child's progress report. Teachers will also use these observations to guide curriculum and lesson planning to increase skill levels in the classroom as a whole.

Child Observation Record (COR). COR Advantage is a birth-to-kindergarten assessment that assists in supporting children at every developmental level. Its purpose is to document and assess children's skills, knowledge, behavior and accomplishments across a wide variety of content areas. Each of the eight content areas are comprised of items that address key concepts in early learning. Multiple objective anecdotal notes about each child are recorded over time by an observer and used to enhance teaching and learning.

Progress Reports. LLPP specifically designs its assessments to document a child's progress towards Kindergarten readiness skills. Teachers will document a child's competency in several core areas. Progress reports are completed twice per year for preschool children and are used to individualize each child's specific needs, monitor a child's progress, and evaluate teaching effectiveness. Teachers will share results with parents during parent/teacher conferences.

Program Evaluation

Program Quality Assessment. The preschool Program Quality Assessment (PQA) is a rating instrument designed to evaluate the quality of early childhood programs. It evaluates program quality in areas of: learning environment, daily routine, adult-child interaction, curriculum planning and assessment, parent involvement and family services, staff qualifications and development, and program management. An Early Childhood Specialist (ECS) works with the program on a monthly basis and completes the full assessment three times a year. Results from this assessment are then used by the teaching teams to complete classroom Quality Improvement Plans.

Parent Notice of Program Measurement. Lakeshore Little People's Place/Hamilton GSRP is required to work with the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) to measure the effect of the state-wide Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP). MDE sometimes collects information about GSRP staff, children and families. They do this in different ways which may include: Ask parents questions about their child and family, observe children in the classroom, measure what children know about letters, words, and numbers, ask teachers how children are learning and growing and track children's educational progress through second grade. Any information shared about your child is intended for the further growth and development of the Great Start Readiness Program. All information from you and about your child will not be shared with others in any way that you or your child could be identified. It is protected by law. Questions? Contact: mde-gsrp@michigan.gov or (517) 373-8483 or MDE, Office of Early Childhood Education and Family Services, 608 W. Allegan, P.O. Box 30008, Lansing, MI 48909.

Parent Evaluations. Parents are given the opportunity to evaluate the program in the fall and spring. The Site Director and teachers will use these evaluations to set improvement goals for the classrooms in conjunction with PQA.

Early Childhood Follow-up Form. GSRP programs are required to record children attending GSRP programming into the Michigan Student Data System (MSDS). In addition to this, a GSRP K-2 Follow-up form is sent to children's teachers in Kindergarten, First, and Second grade in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the GSRP program based on their performance in early elementary grade levels.

Inclusion Policies

Cultural Competence. Great Start Readiness Preschool (GSRP) programs within Ottawa County have culturally diverse classrooms. Cultural competency is a broad concept that impacts student self-worth and acceptance in the classroom environment. GSRP programs strive to provide culturally sensitive environments in which all families and children feel welcomed and accepted. GSRP, in accordance with the Michigan Department of Education Early Childhood Standards of Quality, will show respect for the cultural, home language, and family composition for all children.

Encompassed within the GSRP program and Program Quality Assessment are specific measures to ensure cultural awareness within the GSRP classrooms. This includes but is not limited to: materials reflecting the cultures within the classroom and supporting children who speak multiple languages. Every measure will be made to understand and reflectively respond to families and children from all cultures.

Special Needs. GSRP programs within Ottawa County promote inclusion. GSRP strives to provide appropriate developmental learning opportunities for all children in accordance with the Michigan Department of Education Early Childhood Standards of Quality. Encompassed within the GSRP program are developmental assessments through Ages and Stages Questionnaire, which is completed in partnership with parents to ensure all children are achieving appropriate developmental milestones. However, if the child presents with a development delay, the staff will contact the local education agency (i.e. local school district) to initiate protocol for suspecting a developmental delay. All efforts will be made to continue the student in the least restrictive environment.

Classroom Information

Classroom Ratios. LLPP maintains lower teacher to child ratios than state guidelines whenever possible. The GSRP classroom will maintain a teacher to child ratio of 1:8 and the classroom size shall not exceed 18 children.

Daily Schedule. A typical half day may be as follows:

- **Arrival/Greeting Time (8:35 - 8:45 a.m. or 12:20 - 12:30 p.m.)** Children enter the classroom at their own pace. Parents/guardians are encouraged to stay until children are ready for them to leave. Children have choices about whether to spend time with books or interact with adults and one another. Once all children have arrived, adults share the daily announcements.
- **Large-Group Time/Music and Movement (8:45 - 9:00 a.m. or 12:30 - 12:45 p.m.)** All adults and children participate in activities planned around children's interests, developmental levels, music and movement, cooperative play and projects, and events meaningful to children.
- **Small Group Time (9:00 - 9:15 a.m. or 12:45 - 1:00 p.m.)** An adult-initiated learning experience based on children's interests and development where children explore, play, work with materials, and talk about what they are doing. Individual children explore and use the same set of materials in their own way.
- **Planning Time (9:15 - 9:25 a.m. or 1:00 - 1:10 p.m.)** Through small group experiences, children indicate their plans to adults in a place where intimate conversations can occur and where people and materials are visible. Adults use a range of strategies to support children's planning (e.g., props, area signs, tape recorders, song) planning individually, in pairs, and in small groups.
- **Work Time (9:25 - 10:25 a.m. or 1:10 - 2:10 p.m.)** Children always initiate activities and carry out their intentions. Children make many choices about where and how to use materials. During Work Time, adults participate as partners in child-initiated play and encourage children's problem solving both with materials and during times of social conflict.
- **Cleanup Time (10:25 - 10:35 a.m. or 2:10 - 2:20 p.m.)** Children and adults clean up together, keeping the spirit of play and problem solving alive. Children make many choices during clean up time. Adults accept children's level of involvement and skill while supporting their learning.
- **Recall Time (10:35 - 10:45 a.m. or 2:20 - 2:30 p.m.)** Gathered in small group settings, children choose Work Time experiences to reflect on, talk about, and exhibit. Adults provide a variety of materials and strategies to maintain interest as they follow the children's lead and encourage children to share (e.g., individual props such as puppets, telephones, group games using a hula hoop, ball or spinner, re-enacting, drawing, showing and describing a structure or painting, etc.). Adults are unhurried in their approach and may complete Recall Time with four or five children each day.
- **Snack (10:45 - 11:05 a.m. or 2:30 - 2:50 p.m.)** Family-Style meals support children doing things for themselves (e.g., serve themselves, pour beverages, distribute napkins, and wipe up spills). Children choose whether to eat, what to eat, and how much to eat. Adults eat and have meaningful conversations with the children. Children are encouraged to clean their own snack space including disposal of leftovers, wiping of tables, and pushing in their own chairs.
- **Outside Time/Dismissal (11:05 - 11:45 a.m. or 2:50 - 3:30 p.m.)** Children have many choices about how they play in the outdoor learning environment much as they do during Work Time indoors. Adults supervise children for safety and also join in their outdoor play, supporting children's initiatives and problem solving.

(Taken from Michigan.gov/documents/mde/Sample_Routine_Part-Day_Sample_Routine_353318_7.pdf)

Toys from Home. If a toy is brought from home for use in the classroom, it may be shared with other children. LLPP cannot be responsible for lost or broken items. Guns, war toys, and other toy weapons are prohibited. Be sure your child's name is on any toys from home. We encourage you to leave toys at home.

Clothing. Children should wear clothes which are comfortable and easy to fasten. Rubber-soled shoes are recommended. An extra set of clothing may be placed in the child's cubby for spills or accidents which may occur. Please label all clothing, including coats, with your child's name. Warm outerwear including boots, caps, snow pants, and mittens are needed on cold days. All belongings should be kept in a labeled bag.

Food. LLPP provides a snack for children in GSRP according to the USDA guidelines. LLPP is a peanut and tree nut free environment. Make sure food allergies are communicated clearly on enrollment forms and to classroom teachers so that special accommodations can be made. LLPP is a peanut and tree nut free environment. Meal-time can be a social learning time where children are encouraged to try new foods. Good table manners and eating habits are encouraged. All parents must complete the Parent Providing Food Agreement included in the enrollment pack.

Special Occasions and Food Service. As a licensed childcare facility, we are required to follow strict guidelines for food service. In the instance of special occasion days, such as birthdays and holidays, we ask that “treats” are limited to non-food items. If a classroom wishes to incorporate special snacks into the celebrations, a parent sign-up for food items, approved by the director, will be provided. If a food item is brought as a treat, it should be individually wrapped and it will be sent home with the children so that the parent can choose whether to give it to the child and determine any potential allergic reactions.

Use of Photos. LLPP uses photos of children for many purposes. They may be used for a special project/craft, identification of personal belongings, classroom/hallway decorations or LLPP publicity. Parents may request in writing to their Site Director that their child not be photographed for one or all of the mentioned purposes.

Use of Media in the Classroom. Teachers are asked to use movies and media to support academic instruction and should not use media for entertainment purposes, unless used as a focused reward for the students with the approval of the director. Movies, books and computer games need to be age appropriate with a “G” rating. A maximum of two hours of media per week is acceptable but must be part of a written lesson plan. The classroom lights must remain on and an alternative activity must be provided for children who do not wish to participate in watching the video or DVD. Media means the use of electronic devices with a screen, including but not limited to, televisions, computers, tablets, cameras and electric game consoles.

Field Trips. Occasionally classroom teachers plan class trips. Field trips are meant to be fun, learning experiences. When taking children off-site on field trips or even stroller rides, the book containing classroom Child Information Record (emergency cards), cell phones, and First Aid kit are taken. All field trips must be pre-approved by the Site Director. Parents will receive written notice of all field trips and written permission must be given before a child is allowed to attend a field trip. All vehicles must meet state licensing transportation standards, and drivers must hold a chauffeur’s license and meet state licensing standards.

Child Health and Safety

Outdoor Play. Cold weather does not make children ill. Studies have indicated that children who are taken outdoors, even during cold weather for short periods of time, have fewer incidences of respiratory illnesses. Infectious disease organisms are less concentrated in outdoor air than indoor air. Exposing the skin to sunlight promotes the production of the vitamin D that growing children require. Being outdoors in the fresh air helps children to stay healthy. When outdoors, children breathe fresh air, develop their muscles, learn and practice increasingly difficult skills, share and cooperate with other children, and get hands-on experiences with some basic scientific principles. Outdoor play affords an opportunity for learning in a different environment and also provides many health benefits. Open spaces in outdoor areas encourage children to develop gross motor skills and fine motor play in ways that may be difficult to duplicate indoors.

It is also recommended:

- That children wear child-safe sunscreen all year round, even in winter
- That children are dressed appropriately for activities: long-sleeved and long-legged items protect from sunburn; full jacket, snowsuit, mittens, scarf, hat, boots for snow play; etc...
- That children are adequately hydrated during both hot and cold weather

(Taken from the Michigan Department of Human Services - Technical Assistance Manual)

Children will not be permitted to go outside when the “Feels Like” temperature is under 10 °F or above 100 °F. The “Feels Like” temperature takes into consideration the wind chill or heat index and is a better measure of the weather conditions for outdoor play.

Child Health Policy. A green Health Appraisal form containing an immunization record and documentation of a physical exam signed by a physician must be on file with LLPP. The green Health Appraisal form must be on file at the time of enrollment and then updated annually for children under 2 ½ and every two years for children over 2 ½. Parents of school-age children can sign a Physical Exam Waiver form stating that their child is in good health and that their immunizations are up to date.

It is the policy of LLPP to notify the parents as soon as possible when changes in the child's health are observed. This will allow parents to give additional input on a child's condition and be involved in decision making regarding the child's care. Indicators of changes in a child's health are:

- Fever of or over 100 degrees
- Diarrhea - two or more loose/watery stool without known cause (by teachers or staff).
Exception: Medication or new food reaction (call parents to confirm)
- Vomiting - any vomiting
Exception: Babies that "burp up" following a feeding (consult parents for history)
- Unknown skin rash as these are often symptoms of communicable disease
Exception: Parent does not need to be notified of mild diaper rash that is already known to the parent. Rashes due to allergies or known medical conditions should be treated as instructed by parent and a notification call must be made with each episode.
- Irritability, lethargy, persistent crying that is not typical for the child
- Difficulty breathing

If a child becomes too ill to participate comfortably in activities or they need more care than the staff can provide, the child will be temporarily separated from other children and sent home as soon as possible. Parents are expected to pick up ill children within an hour of notification. Parents should notify the Site Director if a child in care has been diagnosed with a communicable and infectious disease. The Site Director will then post a Health Alert visible to all parents and report to the County Health Department if necessary. See the Health Care Service Plan for a list of communicable and infectious diseases.

Return of Children to Childcare after Illness. If a child is too ill to participate in the regular activities of the classroom they should not return to care. Antibiotics must be administered for a 24-hour period and the child must be fever free for 24 hours prior to the child returning to the center. An exception to this is if a doctor's note is provided stating they can return to care. If a child has a communicable illness, the guidelines set in place by the Ottawa or Allegan County Health Department will be followed regarding how long a child should be excluded from care. LLPP reserves the right to request a doctor's note before allowing a child to return.

Child Incident/Accident. In case of injuries, the incident is logged and Child Incident/Accident Report is completed. In case of serious injuries, Staff will follow the guidelines for Accident or Injury (emergent) as listed in the Health Care Service Plan. All staff is trained in CPR and First Aid and AED. Until the arrival of the parent, a physician, an ambulance or paramedics, the child's teacher or Site Director will make decisions regarding care of the child. LLPP is not responsible for medical bills incurred because of accident or injury while a child is in attendance. All serious injuries requiring medical attention are required to be reported to the Office of Children and Adult Licensing. **Please report any phone number changes on your Child Information Card** so that you can be reached in an emergency.

Emergency Procedures. LLPP has written procedures for emergency situations including fire, tornado, serious accident/injury and man-made disasters, as well as a crisis management plan. Emergency procedures and evacuation plans are posted in each classroom. For detailed instructions on specific emergency procedures, please see the Crisis Intervention Plan.

Non-Smoking Policy. According to law, smoking is prohibited in the building or on the adjoining grounds at LLPP.

Child Abuse/Neglect. We are required by law to report suspected incidents of child abuse/ neglect. Detailed information regarding this is available in the Crisis Intervention Plan. Community services are available to families seeking help or intervention; please see the Site Director or consult the Health Care Service Plan for a list of resources.

Child Discipline Policy. Staff will use positive methods of discipline that encourage self-control, self-direction, self-esteem and cooperation. Discipline is most effective when it is consistent, reinforces desired behavior and offers natural and logical consequences. Discipline helps children gain control over their behavior. Children act best when they know the rules and know they are expected to follow them. Positive methods of discipline create a constructive and supportive social group and reduce incidents of aggression. Positive discipline methods will help guide a child toward self-discipline and independence.

This is encouraged by the following methods:

- Planning ahead to prevent problems
- Setting consistent/clear rules
- Encouraging appropriate behavior
- Relating the discipline method to the behavior
- Talking to the child about the feelings he/she is having
- Redirection or distracting a child
- Removing the child from the source of conflict
- Tailoring the method of discipline to the individual child
- Suggesting appropriate solutions
- Involving the child in problem solving

All of the following means of punishment shall be prohibited:

- Hitting, spanking, shaking, biting, pinching, or inflicting other forms of corporal punishment.
- Restricting a child's movement by binding or tying him or her including harness, leash or other restraint device. Strapping devices on confining equipment, such as high chairs used to stabilize the child in that type of chair, cannot be used for punishment or discipline.
[Note: If a child needs to be restrained in an extreme situation to prevent harm to themselves or others, place the child's arms across their chest in a criss-cross position, position yourself behind the child with your arms on top of theirs until they are calm and the situation is safe.]
- Inflicting mental or emotional punishment, such as humiliating, shaming, or threatening a child.
- Depriving a child of meals, snacks, rest, or necessary toilet use.
- Confining a child in an enclosed area, such as a closet, locked room, box, or similar cubicle.
- Excluding a child from outdoor play or other gross motor activities. Examples of this include:
 - Not allowing a child to go outside because of misbehavior during small group time
 - Excluding the child from the entire outdoor period for throwing sand
 - Excluding the child from gym activities for not eating their lunch
- Excluding a child from daily learning experiences. This does **not** include age appropriate discipline techniques, such as:
 - Redirecting a child from the block area after throwing blocks
 - Having a child participate in small group time in a way that benefits the child and doesn't disrupt the group, such as having the child sit a few feet away
 - Using Time-out when appropriate

Use of Time-out. Removing a child from classroom activities is used as a last resort technique for children who are harming themselves or in danger of harming others. It is an opportunity for children to clear their minds and rejoin the group or activity in a more productive state. Time-outs are used only as a last resort to help the child gain a better sense of self-control. When using Time-out, care giving staff must assure:

- Their expectations of the child's behavior are realistic
- Consequences immediately follow the child's behavior
- Children are not humiliated or made to feel threatened or afraid
- The Time-out does not last longer than it takes for the child to calm down
- Children remain supervised at all times

Behavior Concern Management. If a child has a reoccurring behavior issue that continues after teachers have implemented the positive discipline guidelines above, the following steps will be taken:

- The child's teacher will fill out a Behavior Concern Report and give it to the Site Director.
- The Site Director will evaluate the steps taken by staff to correct the behavior and review all incident reports involving the child to look for patterns or other information that might be useful.
- The Site Director may aid the staff with intervention techniques and will set up a meeting with the child's parent ensuring that they are aware of the problem.
- At the parent conference an intervention plan will be developed. The age of the child, the child's background, the classroom setting, and other extenuating circumstances will be considered.
- In some cases, consultation with health care professionals and/or family services may be required.
- If the above intervention is not successful and the behavior does not improve, the director may remove the child from the program for a period of time, or permanently depending on the circumstance.
- The Site Director may, at any time during this process, decide not to continue care for the child if the safety of the child or other children is compromised or if behavior severely disrupts the daily classroom routine.

Child Biting Intervention. Biting another child should never occur but sometimes children get frustrated and bite other children. We want to be supportive of parents as they teach their children not to bite but at the same time we need to protect other children in our care. A bite that leaves red marks, bruising or broken skin must be reported to both children's parents and an Incident Report must be written. LLPP suggests that a parent seek medical attention for a child if the bite they receive breaks the skin.

If a child bites twice in 2 weeks (14 calendar days), staff members will follow the steps for Behavior Concern Management. Staff also will attempt to identify the reason for biting and apply the following preventions for biting:

- If it is being used for means of communication: help the child find a simple word or hand gesture to substitute for biting.
- If it is being used for attention: spend more one-on-one time with the child to alleviate their need for additional attention-seeking behavior.
- If it is being used for an oral fixation: provide a teething ring loosely attached to their wrist.

Employee and Volunteer Requirements

Employee Screening Policy. The following steps will be taken by the Site Director to ensure that all staff members are of responsible character and suitable to meet the needs of children as stated in R4000.5104 of the Licensing Rules for Childcare Centers:

- Site Directors will have written record of three or more references.
- Staff must sign a written acknowledgment of the following:
 - That they are of responsible character, have not been convicted of a crime, and will report upon being investigated or convicted of a crime
 - That they have received a copy of the Michigan Child Protection laws excerpted by the Department of Human Services and understand its contents including mandating requirements, definitions and indicators of abuse/neglect
 - That they will report any suspected abuse or neglect of a child by parent, staff, or other to the proper authorities
 - Sign a statement that they have never been named in a central registry case, are the perpetrator of a child abuse or child neglect, nor have been investigated for abuse or neglect
- A State Police Clearance Form must be completed by applicants, and checked through the state website. All directors will be required to complete fingerprint registry. This clearance will be repeated for each employee on a yearly basis.
- Children's Protective Service Clearance Form will be completed and kept on file. This clearance will be repeated for each employee every two years.
- LLPP reserves the right to require drug/alcohol screening of any employee at any time during employment.

Employee Training Policy. All employees must comply with training requirements mandated by state, federal or local agencies. All employees will complete an orientation process before unsupervised contact with children. All employees must read and sign the Employee Acknowledgement stating that they have read and understood all the policies of the center as stated in the Employee and Parent Handbooks, Classroom Handbook, Crisis Intervention Plan and Health Care Service Plan. All employees must familiarize themselves with the State Licensing Rules for Childcare Centers.

All Lead and Assistant Teachers must complete 24 hours of annual training in child development, curriculum, child discipline, health/safety, nutrition, working with parents and licensing rules for childcare centers. All staff must also complete training on child abuse/neglect and cultural competency/inclusions. All employees are required to have current First Aid, CPR and Blood Borne Pathogen training.

Teacher Requirements. GSRP Lead Teachers are required to have a valid Michigan teaching certificate and an early childhood specialist (ZA or ZS) endorsement, or a valid Michigan teaching certificate with a valid child development associate (CDA) credential, or a bachelor's degree in a child development or early childhood education with specialization in preschool teaching. Associate Teachers must have an associate's degree in early childhood education or child development (or the equivalent), or a valid classroom CDA credential. Teacher Aides must meet the Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing, Department of Human Services, licensing requirements as a caregiver.

Teacher Performance and Evaluations. Parents are given the opportunity to evaluate classroom functioning and teacher performance in the Fall and Spring. The Site Director will use these evaluations to set improvement goals for the classrooms and provide feedback to individual teachers on their performance. The Site Director will also see written feedback from co-workers regarding an employee's performance. These feedback forms are designed for the use of the Site Director only and are destroyed after the information is used to assist in the Site Director's written evaluation of the employee. The Site Director will meet with the employee annually to give feedback and assist employees in creating goals for the upcoming year.

Outside Employment. LLPP is not liable for any employee aside from the time in which they are actually working for LLPP. An employee who is hired for private duty by a parent of a child enrolled in the program is not a representative of LLPP during that time. This includes but is not limited to: babysitting, serving as a nanny, house sitting/cleaning, transporting children, or any other services for which they are paid by any source other than LLPP.

Volunteer Policy. Volunteers provide a wonderful service in the classroom as they lend their time, energy and compassion toward the children. It is important to keep in mind that ultimately the children are the responsibility of the employees. Staff members will ALWAYS have a “line-of-sight” observation of the volunteer.

All volunteers must be approved by the Site Director. If the volunteer will be in contact with the children at least 4 hours per week for more than 2 consecutive weeks, they must provide documentation confirming a negative TB test. All volunteers must complete a State Police Clearance Form and a Children’s Protective Service Clearance Form. Volunteers under eighteen years of age must provide references from an educator or other unrelated adult qualified to give a reference. All volunteers will complete a Volunteer Agreement and agree to:

- Sign a statement that they are of responsible character, have not been convicted of a crime and will report upon being investigated or convicted of a crime
- Sign a statement that they have received a copy of the Michigan Child Protection laws excerpted by the Department of Human Services and understand its contents including mandating requirements, definitions and indicators of abuse/neglect
- Sign a statement that they will report any suspected abuse or neglect of a child by parent, staff, or other to the proper authorities
- Sign a statement that they have never been named in a central registry case, are the perpetrator of a child abuse or child neglect, nor have been investigated for abuse or neglect
- Review Policies and Procedures of LLPP
- Maintain parent/worker confidentiality, including not disclosing full names of any children in reports or other class work
- Follow direction given by the classroom teacher and Site Director

Furthermore, it is agreed that a volunteer at Lakeshore Little People’s Place **WILL NOT:**

- Be left alone in a classroom with children or accompany children to the bathroom
- Have access to receipt books or payment boxes
- Have access to staff personnel or child records
- Be counted in determining staffing to child ratios

Classroom Visitors. Any classroom visitor, volunteer, or guest speaker must be pre-approved by the Site Director and check in with the office when they arrive.

Parent Involvement and Partnership

Procedures Related to Concerns. Lakeshore Little People's Place strives to provide a positive environment for all, however at times concerns may arise. If you have any concerns, please bring them to the attention of the Site Director who will complete a concern resolution and follow-up form. If you are unable to resolve your concerns through the Site Director, the Executive Director may be contacted. If you have concerns regarding a policy or procedure you can contact the Executive Director who will bring your concern to the board of directors. If you feel that LLPP is in violation of a licensing regulation, reports may be made to the Department of Human Services: Office of Children and Adult Licensing. A copy of the regulations is available on the parent table.

Parent Involvement. Lakeshore Little People's Place welcomes your family into our community and invites you to become active partners with us as we teach and care for your child. When parents and teachers join in partnership an optimum learning environment can be created. LLPP has an open door policy with all parents and we invite you to drop in anytime. We seek to encourage parents to participate in the education of their child inside and outside the classroom. Here are some ways you can get involved:

- Having informal day-to-day conversations with teachers
- Communicating with your child's teacher through email, phone and notes
- Attending formal parent teacher conferences
- Participating in developmental discussions regarding your child by request or invitation
- Volunteering within the classroom
- Reading your child's lesson plans, monthly newsletters and Parent Board information
- Participating in special events for parents and families
- Reinforcing lesson plan activities at home
- Participating in advisory committee meetings
- Participating in program evaluations and giving input on policy and procedure
- Sharing ideas or items related to your culture that can be shared in the classroom

Family Contacts. This program requires a minimum of four family contacts per year: two home visits and two parent/teacher conferences. The purpose of home visits and parent/teacher conferences are to engage families in the child's education and to help them provide educational experiences for the children. This process requires staff and parents to interact frequently to update each other about a child's experiences at home and at school.

- **Home visits.** The main purpose of the initial visit is to create a foundation for the beginning of a positive partnership between home and school. It is designed to ease the transition into GSRP for the child and family. The lead teacher will discuss any required enrollment paperwork, implementing the ASQ with parents and family, sharing curriculum and program information, and discussing the goals parents have for their child. The second visit is designed around the individual child and parent needs. The child's assessment will be reviewed highlighting areas of achievement and areas that need improvement. Teachers and parents will discuss the process of transitioning into Kindergarten and summer activity packs will be given to the students.
- **Conferences.** Parent/teacher conferences are held in the fall and spring. Conferences are designed to provide information concerning the progress of the child, goals for continuous progress and any additional support that may be necessary. Samples of the child's work may be given and teachers will give ideas on how parents can support learning at home.

Advisory Committee. Each Semester, parents will be asked to participate in an advisory committee meeting. This meeting is held with GSRP teachers and administrative staff and designed to get valuable information from parents on program function. Topics of discussion may include: Curriculum, nutrition and other health related topics, program outcomes and goals, Kindergarten transitioning and program evaluation. Parents are also invited to serve on the area wide GSRP Advisory Committee that meets at the OAISD twice a year. This committee is made up of representation from parents, GSRP teaching Staff, GSRP administrators, the Early Childhood Specialist, Head Start teachers, Title 1 Preschool teachers, kindergarten teachers, school specialists, Department of Human Services, Community Health Services, Head Start, and local early childhood programs.

Parent Resources. A list of family health related resources is available in the Health Care Services Plan. A book of more detailed and widespread resources is also available on the parent table. Health related information regarding specific communicable illnesses/diseases is also available in the Site Director's office.

Whole Family Connection. Whole Family Connection is a web-based initiative designed to give families throughout the United States free, anonymous and better access to community services for children and families to help them live healthier and more fulfilling lives. Using online profiles, Whole Family Connection identifies and matches families' needs with service providers in Ottawa County who can help them in areas such as education, health, social well-being, spiritual well-being, environment safety and economics. To access this site and set up your profile visit: www.wholefamilyconnectionottawa.com.

2-1-1. If you need immediate assistance or wish to speak with someone about your needs, dial 2-1-1 which is an access point for persons needing health and human service programs. Please also feel free to ask your site director for assistance in finding available services for your family.

Parenting Education Opportunities. Opportunities for parenting education will be highlighted in the Director's monthly newsletters, displayed on the parent boards or distributed through your child's mailbox. Education opportunities may include: speakers, playgroups, parenting articles, seminars and special community events.