

Welcome to Impressionable Years and thanks for choosing us as your childcare provider. We are a privately owned and operated center. The owner is on site to ensure high quality. We strive to ensure the staff and families are communicating and ensure the highest level of education and care for your child.

We hope you and your child(ren)'s years at Impressionable Years will be memorable, exciting, satisfying, fulfilling and enjoyable. We are here to make sure your children are growing and flourishing at each stage of their lives.

The following pages are our guidelines for care. We hope they are clear, easy to understand and follow. These guidelines were put in place to ensure safety, security and structure. Please ensure you are completely familiar with the rules and regulations.

Thanks again for choosing Impressionable Years and we look forward to building a lasting relationship with you and your child(ren).

OUR MISSION

Provide Child Care that fosters qualified employees, safe and clean surroundings, organized learning and a nurturing environment during the most impressionable years of a child's developmental stages. To prepare your children socially, physically, and cognitively so they will excel in their grade school years.

We are committed to a child-centered program which focuses on the whole child. We strive to develop a child's positive self-esteem through respect and authentication of each one's unique personality.

STAFF

Impressionable Years will try to employ highly qualified and experienced teachers. We will provide development opportunities for all staff to ensure they know the latest techniques so the child receives the best care and education.

Children change every day. Teachers and staff will provide daily updates on the child's development. Each afternoon, we will let the parent know about the fun learning experiences their child is enjoying. This includes their child's activities, developmental changes, and of course, milestones, big and small.

We will meet with the parents to discuss the child's progress. We have developed methods to ensure we communicate thoroughly with the parents about their child's discoveries. Our teachers will be eager to understand the parent's needs and actively listen to their suggestions. We honor their role as a parent and as the first and most important teacher in their child's life. We work together with them to support their child's healthy growth and development by sharing the learning and excitement their child experiences every day. These are some of the way our staff will keep the parents informed:

- Ongoing dialogue with teachers and staff at drop-off and pickup time
- Regular parent and teacher conferences
- Center-specific newsletters that highlight upcoming activities and events
- Parent communication boards
- Written communication specific to your needs, including regular assessments in many centers

- Comprehensive curriculum plans so you know what your child is learning

CURRICULUM

Infant Program

The infant care curriculum is based on respect and authenticity, following the principles of such leading child development experts and Magda Gerber and Karen Miller. Using our emphasis on observation as a starting point, we strive to become “in tune” with your child so that the dance that occurs between a caregiver and a infant during feeding, diapering and activity times becomes completely enriching and specific to your child. Primary caregivers will strive to provide a totally safe environment that is free from overstimulation but designed so that mobile babies are free to explore the classroom, while non-mobile babies are safe in a smaller area. By being close, on the floor, and observing, caregivers can interact with your child at times when the child has indicated a desire to do so. Other time can be spent observing your child’s growth into those all important milestones. Our careful records help us to ensure that your child reaches milestones when he/she is ready; creating a child that is independent, confident and ready to learn about the world around them.

Todfant and Toddler Program

The curriculum for todfants and toddlers is based on expanding knowledge of the world around them through observation of their particular interests and play patterns. By watching the areas of interest and focusing on their strengths instead of their weaknesses, we begin to plan activities that are based in these areas. This approach to “positive learning” enhances the learning process, and provides ample opportunities to explore the questions and concerns of the class without using themes in which children cannot actually experience the ideas teachers are trying to impart. Caregiving times such as mealtimes and potty times are used as opportunities for socialization, and are also important parts of the curriculum.

Preschool and Pre-K Program

Our Preschool and Pre-K curriculum is for 3 and 4 year olds and introduces language, math, science and social skills, in a logical, natural sequence to encourage learning one step at a time. Our teachers also provide plenty of individual attention to support your child’s unique needs.

Our program provides a rich classroom environment where children are encouraged to explore and is challenged to learn, while making friends and developing self-confidence. Our lesson plan shows them that the activities labeled as “play” really are valuable teaching tools to increase skills in all areas of development. By using longer-term areas of interest as a springboard for activities, we are helping to encourage children’s confidence by understanding topics

completely. They strengthen their cognitive skills with fun memory games in which they match objects that share similar characteristics and because children learn best by doing, we provide opportunities for hands-on experiences, such as creating collages, which combines creative expression with a tactile experience. Projects will include field trips to encourage complete learning.

Features:

- Math and science skills developed with hand-on experiences
- Thematic units that encourage curiosity, self-direction and confidence
- Daily language experiences that support literacy and language development
- Observation-based assessments that demonstrate your child's progress
- Portfolios that collect your child's work and capture learning
- Regular communication with teachers so that you are informed

Before and After Care Program

The before and after care curriculum is also a developmental approach in which we endeavor to provide a relaxing atmosphere for the full-day student. Opportunities are afforded for the older child to choose to work and play alone or in small or larger groups. Soft, comfortable, quiet areas in the classroom will be available for reading, talking to one's friends and general unwinding from a busy school day. Choices may be made from planned activities in science, hobbies, arts and crafts, dramatic play and many other areas. Children will start homework after 4:30 pm.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Hours are between 6:30 am – 6:30 pm. All children must arrive at the center before 10:00 am or they may be denied care. If you will be late, please contact the center in advance of 10:00.

TUITION AND EXPENSES

Tuition – Rate sheets are included in your parent brochure. Please refer to it for specific rates. Fees are due by close of business on the Friday in advance of services for the coming month. Impressionable Years uses Tuition Express to except MasterCard, Visa and Electronic Check Transfer. Care will be denied on the second of the month if your account is not current and will

be accessed a \$25.00 late fee. If the account is not brought current by the fifth of the month, the space will be withdrawn and any deposit forfeited. In order to return to care, you may be required to re-register your child, in which case all fees pertinent to registration, including the deposit will apply. No records will be provided while any account balance is outstanding.

Registration Fee – There is a one-time non-refundable registration fee of \$75.00 for one child and \$100.00 for the second or more children in the family.

Deposit – A deposit of ½ months tuition is required if you need to hold a space more than 2 weeks. **ALL DEPOSITS ARE NON-REFUNDABLE.** Deposits will be forfeited if you fail to utilize a space once a child has been registered.

Late Pick-up Fee – Our center closes promptly at 6:30 pm. If you are late, you will be charged \$2.00 a minute beginning at 6:31 PM and for each additional minute thereafter. Please call the school to inform us anytime you will be late. Calling does not eliminate the late fee.

If we have not heard from you by 6:45, we will begin to call your emergency contacts. It is important to understand that the staff of Impressionable Years is not required to stay past 6:30. Late pick-up fees in the form of **CASH** should be paid directly to the waiting staff member. Continued abuse of the center closing times may result in termination of care.

Withdrawal – You may withdraw from the center at any time of the year. If there are any other children in the same family still enrolled, no deposits will be refunded or applied to your tuition unless two weeks written notice is presented to the Front Office.

Impressionable Years reserves the right to refuse care under certain conditions. The following are only examples and are not intended to limit our rights:

- Non-payment of tuition; or
- Consistent communications difficulties between parent and Impressionable Years;
- Repeated failure to abide by the regulations set forth in this handbook;
- Exhaustion of all reasonable efforts regarding child or adult behavior concerns'
- For any other reason which in the opinion of management is in the best interest of the center
- Inappropriate Behavior (biting, hitting, kicking, cursing, etc).

Returned Checks – A fee of \$30.00 will apply for any check returned for insufficient funds (NSF). Payment in the form of cash, certified check or money order must be provided within 24 hours of notification of the returned check in order to bring your account current. If payment is

not received, service to your family will be discontinued. If your account incurs two NSF charges within any 12-month period, all future payments will be due in cash, certified check or money order until management approves the resumption of payment by check.

Activity Fee – There is a non-refundable activity fee for children in the Preschool and Pre-K programs. This fee pays for in-house performances and out-of-the center special events and field trips. Part of the money may also be used for special art or curriculum projects. The activity fee applies during the school year (September-May). It does not carry over to any other programs. A separate activity fee will apply to the summer program which will run from June through August.

Leave of Absence – We make every effort to stay open for your convenience. On holidays, snow days and sick days, tuition will not be reduced. Should you require an extended leave of absence for six weeks or more you can request a leave of absence in the form of a letter. You will be charged a non-refundable fee of \$250.00 per child to hold their space in the center. Leave is only available to children two years or older.

Extra Day Charges – There is an addition \$15.00 fee for school age children for late openings, early closings, or full day closings at the elementary schools. School age children are required to bring a lunch when they are at the center all day.

MEALS

Lunch, Morning and Evening Snacks are provided by the center to children who are 18 months and above. A menu will be distributed each month. If you find that your child does not like what is provided by the center on any of the days, please send your child in a bag lunch. Children under two is required to bring backup snacks/lunch to remain at the center. Milk and juice is only provided at Lunch and Snack times in a 4 oz cup (2^{nds} available if asked). No milk from the center will be served outside of Snack/Lunch time and will not be used for sippy cups or bottles. If you would like your child to have milk/juice outside of those times you are required to provide it.

TRANSPORTATION

Impressionable Years provide van runs to many local schools to include: Four Seasons, Waugh Chapel, Crofton Meadows, Crofton Woods, Piney Orchard and Crofton Elementary.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Impressionable Years will require all parents to be involved in at least 1 activity with the center per year. This involvement could include newsletters, field trips, conferences, classroom volunteer, workshops and story time.

COMMUNICATION

Activities and care-giving needs will be documented daily with a copy sent home daily. Center information will be posted on the bulletin board for the parent to review. Teachers will provide parents with important information about changes, updates or activities in the child take home box. Teachers and daily sign-in and sign-out sheets will also inform parents of what is needed for their child.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Should your child take ill while at the center you will be notified and asked to remove the child within an hour of notification. If every attempt has been made to notify you unsuccessfully, we reserve the right to notify people listed as emergency contacts on your Emergency Card. If the child is sent home, the child may not return to the center that day, or on the following day, unless specifically approved by management, even with a doctor's note. If your child has been absent for three or more days, written notice from the physician or the parent stating the child's ability to return to all normal activities is required.

Here are some of the definitions and guidelines that will be used to determine if a child must go home and when he/she can return to care:

- Temperature of 100 taken by an under-the-arm thermometer.
- Rash – Child may return the next day if the doctor's note clearly states that the rash is of a non-contagious nature.
- Vomiting – child may not return the next day and not until the child is symptom-free and has resumed eating normally.
- Chills.

- Diarrhea – child may not return the next day and may not return until the child is symptom-free and is eating normally.
- Red and runny eyes – Child may not return the next day and may not return until they have been on medication for at least 24 hours and there is no goop or drainage in or around the eye(s). If the child is documented to have a medical reason for such drainage (clogged tear duct or allergies) the child may return the next day if “pink eye” is not present in the center.
- Runny Nose – Green or yellow discharge. May return with a doctors note.
- Noticeable change in behavior.
- Virus – child may not return to the center the following day and not until all symptoms have disappeared, and the child is medication-free for at least 24 hours.
- Coxsackie’s – Child may not return to the center until all blisters have disappeared and the child is eating normally.
- Strep Throat – Child may not return to the center the following day and not until he/she has been on medication for at least 24 hours and have been fever-free and Tylenol-free for at least 24 hours.
- Chicken Pox – Child may not return until all blisters have had the scabs fall off.
- Pneumonia – Child may not return to the center until the child has normal breathing, has no discomfort and is Tylenol-free.
- Thrush – Child may not return to the center the next day and not until the child has been on medication for at least 24 hours and has resumed normal eating patterns.

For all other illnesses, we will have to use our best judgment utilizing this as a guide.

Allergies that require maintenance medication must be diagnosed as such with a medication plan. Symptoms and known allergies must be specifically explained by the doctor along with what should happen when symptoms occur. These plans should be reviewed in a meeting with the child’s caregiver/teacher along with medication instructions. A fever is not generally a symptom of allergies. If a fever should occur, you will be asked to pick up your child from the center.

Medication – our medication policy is as follows: we will dispense any medication as specifically prescribed with a medication form, filled out completely and signed by both parent and physician, accompanying the medication. The parent must administer at least

one dose of any over-the-counter topical ointments or lotions, such as diaper rash ointment or sunscreen, which will be applied per the parent's instruction with a parent's signed medication form. The other exception is acetaminophen, which may be given in the event of an unexpected fever, when we have a parent-signed medication form. Medication forms are located in the front office. Medication should arrive in its original container. Medication brought in secondary containers will be promptly returned. For safety reasons, please deliver all medications to the front office and do not allow any medications to stay in the child's bag or lunchbox. Medications may be picked up at the end of the day from the front office. For regulatory reasons we cannot accept a faxed medication form from the doctor's office without also having your signature and date completed on the form.

Administration of over the counter medication to children under 24 months:

1. Over-the-counter medication will only be given to children under 24 months with a medication form signed by the physician and the parent.
2. Acetaminophen may be given if a medication form signed by a parent is on file stating "as needed". It may never be administered to keep a sick child in the center.
3. Topical products such as diaper ointment, sunscreen and lotion may be used with a parent-signed medication form.

Administration of over-the-counter medication to children over 24 months:

1. Over-the-counter medication will be given ONCE per illness. After that it will require a physician's signature on a medication form.
2. Acetaminophen may be given if a medication form signed by a parent is on file stating "as needed". It may never be administered to keep a sick child in the center.
3. Topical products such as those listed previously may be administered with a parent-signed medication form.

Accidents – while all efforts are made to protect your child from injury, occasionally accidents do occur. If a minor accident such as a scrape, bump or small cut should happen, the area will be thoroughly cleaned with soap and water. A proper bandage will then be applied and an accident report will be completed for you to sign upon picking your child up at the end of the day. If a more serious injury such as a wound to the head, sprain, or allergic reaction should occur, you will be notified immediately and the proper medical attention will be sought. Again, an accident form will be completed for your signature. Accident reports are our way of monitoring all injuries. At your request, a copy of the report will be made available for your personal records.

Poisons – All poisonous material will be kept out of reach. However, should your child ingest a poisonous substance, we will follow the instructions of the Poison Control Center.

Impressionable Years requires its staff to be qualified and current in Infant and Child CPR and First Aid at all times. We ask you to remember that we are not physicians but will attempt to help sick and injured children to the best of our ability.

YOUR FIRST DAY

We have prepared a checklist to help during those crazy last minute preparations.

What to bring:

1. **Backpack**

2. **Rest Time Needs**

Preschooler's - Please send a blanket and sheet for the child's cot. If the child has a special blanket, pillow or stuffed animal that will help make him/her more comfortable during rest time, please pack it. Just inform the teacher if it is something that should go home daily.

Infants – Please provide crib sheets (24x38 Fitted Sheet). Only thin blankets are allowed in the crib with the babies. No pillows, thick blankets or stuffed animals are allowed in the cribs.

3. **Extra Clothes** – It is very important that you pack at least two extra seasonal complete set of clothing (including socks). Accidents do happen and out of respect to the child we need to make sure that we respond to them quickly and with familiar clothing. If your child does not have extra clothes and an accident should occur, you will be called to bring an extra set of clothes. **PLEASE LABEL ALL BELONGINGS!!!**

4. **Infant Essentials** – Diapers, wipes, formula, breast milk, bowls, bottles, spoons, snacks, food, binkies, etc. Please provide anything you feel will help the teacher care for your child's needs. **PLEASE LABEL ALL BELONGINGS!!**

5. **Microwaves** – No microwave ovens are allowed for use with the children at Impressionable Years. Crock pots are used for warming bottles in the infant rooms.

6. **Paperwork** – Please understand that this is the most important part of your start to childcare. **WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ADMIT YOUR CHILD TO CARE UNLESS THE FOLLOWING FORMS ARE COMPLETED AND RETURNED!!**

- Health Inventory (both parent and physician area must be complete)

- Immunization form (must be completed by the physician)
- Emergency Care (every line must be completed)
- A signed contract and acknowledgement that you have received a Parent Handbook
- The form titled “All About Me”
- The back flap from the “Choosing Quality Childcare” pamphlet filled out and signed
- The initial infant plan (Children under 2)
- Homework Contract (school age only)
- Transportation contract (school age only)
- Picture/Web approval form

Some of these forms will need to be updated annually.

Plan to spend about 30 minutes on your first day helping to acclimate your child (and yourself) to the center and to make sure the paperwork is in order. Your last stop before leaving should be the Front Office to ensure all needed monies and paperwork are completed.

Remember, we are here to serve your childcare needs. Please feel free to call at any time or drop in for a visit at your convenience.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Inclement Weather – We will make every effort to be open in the event of inclement weather. Please contact the centers phone number to listen to the recorded message as to whether the center will be open, opening late or closing early. The recorded message will be available no later than 5:45 a.m. On days where the weather is unpredictable and there’s a possibility operation could shut down early, please keep in close contact with the center to find out about our decision to close or remain open. It is the family’s responsibility to call in and find out the centers decisions on inclement weather.

VACATION POLICY

Vacation – The center will allow one tuition credit (equal to 1 week of your monthly tuition cost) per year for vacation of full time families. You must provide the center written notice two weeks prior to the vacation date. Vacation credit may only be used for a full week. No partial credit will be granted. Unused vacation credit is not carried over from year to year. No vacation credit will be granted if your account is not current.

Unforeseen Closure – If for some reason the center is closed for unforeseen reasons, no discount in tuition will be available. Some examples of this might be:

Water Main Break

Governmental Request

Hurricane or Tornado Damage

Flood

Electrical Outage

WEB PAGE

www.impressionableyears.com

OTHER IMPORTANT POLICIES

Drop Off and Pick Up – All children should be dropped off and picked up from their classroom. Dropping off a child at the front door or waiting in the car for your child is prohibited. If another person is scheduled to pick up your child, a note must be given to the office in advance. The child will be released to either parent listed on the emergency card unless a copy of a custody agreement or court order is in your child's file. If we are not familiar with your face, expect to provide a photo ID before we release your child. No one under 18 is allowed to retrieve your child.

Clothing – Always dress your child in comfortable clothing. Please dress them appropriate for each season as if they will be outside daily. No sandals, flip flops, clogs, dress shoes, water shoes, or combat boots should be worn.

Toys – Please leave toys at home because Impressionable Years will not take responsibility for any lost or damaged items.

A Parent's Guide to Regulated Child Care – To get more information about Important Information for Parents of Children in Child Care Facilities, please visit MSDE's website at http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/child_care/child_care.htm