

GUMP PARENT HANDBOOK



GERMANTOWN UNITED METHODIST PRESCHOOL *Preschool and Extended Care Policies and Procedures*

2331 South Germantown Road Germantown, TN 38138

Preschool Office: 901-753-3109

E-mail: preschool@germantownumc.org

Website: www.mygump.org

Office Hours: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Preschool Hours: 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Before Care: 7:30-9:30 a.m.

After Care: 2:30-5:30 p.m.

Contents

Welcome.....	3
Mission Statement.....	4
GUMP Goals.....	4
What to Look for in a Preschool.....	4
Our History.....	4
Licensing	5
School Funding Philosophy.....	5
Parental Involvement.....	5
Tuition and Fees	6
Withdrawal	6
Student Needs.....	7
Toilet Training.....	7
Teacher/Child Ratio.....	7
Guidance/Self-Regulation.....	8
Class Descriptions.....	8-11
School Hours	11
Extended Care.....	12
Emergency Closing	13
Extra Days	12
Sign-In/Sign-Out Policy.....	12
Authorized Release of a Child.....	13
Your Child’s Records.....	14
Illnesses.....	14
Medication Policy.....	14
Allergies	15
Food	15
Toys.....	15
Field Trips	15
Birthdays	16
Clothing.....	16
Parking Lot Safety	16
Parking.....	16
Parking Lot and Carpooling Map.....	17
Carpooling.....	17
Child Safety.....	17
Family Appeals Process.....	18
Weekday Preschool Council.....	18
Appendix A: <i>Food Facts for Young Children</i>	19-21
Appendix B: <i>The Flu: A Guide for Parents</i>	22-23
Appendix C: <i>Tennessee Department of Human Services Summary of Licensing Requirements for Child Care Centers</i>	24-27

Welcome to GUMP!

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Germantown United Methodist Preschool, affectionately known as GUMP. On behalf of all the staff here at GUMP, we thank you for allowing us to partner with you by choosing GUMP as an important piece in creating the best environment for your child to grow and learn in his/her own unique and special way. We believe that the first five years of a child's life are the most important ones in developing positive skills that will serve as your child's foundation for all future learning. We also know that if young children are awake, they are learning! Therefore, our goal is to provide a rich, nurturing, and stimulating environment in which your child can build relationships with both peers and teachers that will equip him/her with tools to use to enhance emotional, social, spiritual, physical and cognitive development throughout his/her entire life.

Please feel free to contact us if there are ways that we can better serve your child's needs throughout the school year. Thanks for sharing your child with us here at GUMP, as we are blessed by the special gifts that each child brings!

Here's to a wonderful school year together!

Preschool Administration
Germantown United Methodist Preschool
preschool@germantownumc.org
(901) 753-3109

Mission Statement

Germantown United Methodist Preschool is a ministry of Germantown United Methodist Church that provides a loving, nurturing and developmentally appropriate environment for children to grow to their fullest potential emotionally, socially, spiritually, physically, creatively and cognitively.

GUMP Goals

While educating CHILDREN we strive:

- to nurture children's emotional development so that they can identify their feelings and choose appropriate responses while maintaining a positive outlook
- to guide children to be respectful, independent, caring, accepting and honest in their relationships
- to bequeath to children assurance that they are unconditionally loved by God and that they have immeasurable worth
- to promote a healthy sense of self that motivates children to care for themselves and others
- to inspire children to be confident, independent thinkers who are inquisitive, creative, and problem solvers

In partnering with PARENTS we strive:

- to empower parents to be confident as their child(ren)'s first and most important teacher while building a trusting parent/teacher relationship focused on the best interests of their child(ren)
- to encourage parents to accept their child(ren) as individuals, understand their limitations, allow them to develop at their own pace, and love them unconditionally
- to support parents in being patient, united and consistent as they parent their child(ren), helping them to assume the roles of loving authority figures and positive role models
- to ensure that parents understand and honor school policies, as they are designed to benefit all children and families
- to support parents by providing a community of love, faith, acceptance, open-mindedness, and forgiveness

What to Look for in a Preschool Program

All parents want a nurturing and stimulating environment for their children. Parents can sometimes find it overwhelming to determine if their child will get this kind of care and direction in a given preschool.

In choosing a preschool, parents may find it helpful to examine three broad areas:

- What is the relationship between the children and the staff members?
- Do you agree with the values and goals of the program?
- Do the physical facilities and the health, nutrition and safety aspects of the program meet your standards?

We believe only informed parents can be happy leaving their children in our care. Therefore, this handbook is designed to address your concerns about our staff, our values and goals, as well as other important aspects of our preschool program.

Our History

In 1974, Germantown United Methodist Church members and their friends recognized a need for their children to have opportunities to play and learn together. As the community rapidly expanded and became more mobile, their vision grew.

Those founding mothers and fathers envisioned a nonprofit preschool program that viewed the developmental needs of a child as a continuous, interrelated process. They sought to design an educational experience that emphasized growth in a child's physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being. They envisioned a preschool program that was as well rounded in every way as the children who would graduate from it.

We believe our program today remains true to the vision of our founding mothers and fathers. The Germantown United Methodist Church Preschool reports to the GUMC Administrative Board, and the policies and procedures are determined by the Weekday Preschool Council.

Licensing

The GUMC Preschool is licensed by the State Department of Human Services and holds a Three-Star Quality Rating (the highest rating attainable) among State Licensed Child Care Facilities, reflecting our commitment to a quality preschool program.

School Funding Philosophy

The preschool program is nonprofit and supported entirely through student fees. Most of the budget – over 75% is allocated towards salaries and training.

Each year, the Weekday Preschool Council reviews financial policies and establishes its budget based on the number of students who will be enrolled. This budget is carefully considered and based on the needs of the students, the financial ability of parents to pay tuition, and the salary requirements of staff.

These budget obligations must be met whether all children attend school or not. The preschool must honor its financial obligations and depends on receipt of all fees. Student fees are nonrefundable. Parents wishing for a place to be held for them until their child is able to attend will need to pay full tuition for the time prior to the child's arrival. Should you choose to leave the school year early, a one month notice is required. If you wish to return to GUMP that same year, tuition must be paid consistently during your absence.

We believe a quality preschool program must rest on a firm financial foundation that is within the family's ability to pay, yet meets the budgetary requirements of a nonprofit school.

Parental Involvement

All parents are welcome to share in the learning experiences of the children in the preschool program through participation in special event days, programs, teacher conferences, home activities and school/classroom celebrations. During Parent and Child visit day, as well Curriculum Night, parents meet with their child(ren)'s teachers, who explain their class schedule and the curriculum for the school year.

Parents are encouraged to visit, ask questions and make suggestions. Parents know their children best, and sometimes a casual suggestion by a mother or a question from a concerned father will help a teacher address the particular student's needs more effectively. Questions, comments or concerns should be directed to each individual child's teacher. If more information is required, please see the director.

Teachers are happy to arrange a conference at any time and encourage parents to contact them to request a conference date and time. **However, parents are asked NOT to discuss their children during pick-up and drop-off times.** All children will be formally assessed twice each year. Parent/teacher conferences will occur twice during the year. Teachers will notify parents of conference times.

Parents will be sent the date and times for Curriculum Night (evening event-parents only) once it has been determined. During Curriculum Night, teachers will share more specific age level/developmental information

regarding the curriculum for the school year. Parents will have the opportunity to see their children's artwork as well as ask specific questions. The children especially enjoy having parents come to their school on this night, in fact, they expect a full report on what parents saw and heard in the preschool classroom!

In addition to Parent Conferences and Curriculum Night, the preschool teachers communicate with parents throughout the year in order to enhance their understanding of and ability to work with each preschool child (i.e. Monthly Calendars, Classroom Newsletters, Emails, etc.).

We believe effective parent involvement is essential to the well-being and success of the preschool student, and we aim to keep parents informed of their child's progress.

Often parents will find their child has brought home classroom work to display or has information about the day's activities in his/her backpack or tote bag. These take-home projects or notes keep parents abreast of their child's progress. Even though children will not bring something home in their hands every day, the preschool program makes sure they bring something home in their hearts.

Tuition and Fees

Tuition is based on a yearly cost of operating the program. The Weekday Preschool Council of Germantown United Methodist Church sets the tuition for each individual school year. Tuition fees may be paid by cash, check or credit card*. Payments can be made annually, by the semester, or in nine installments from August 1 to April 1. For example, in order to be enrolled for the fall session beginning in August, the first installment or the semester tuition must be received by August 1. These are set fees and no refunds are given for any school days missed. Families choosing to pay by the semester receive a 2% discount.

Tuition is due the first day of the month, August through April. After the 5th day of the month, any unpaid fees will be considered delinquent and a \$30 late fee will be charged. A similar \$30 fee will be charged for checks returned for insufficient funds. If the 5th day of the month occurs on a day the preschool is closed (weather, holiday, Saturday, Sunday, etc.), tuition is still due no later the 5th of the month. Fees mailed to GUMP post marked by the 5th will not be charged a late fee. Fees not paid by the 10th of the month will result in dismissal. Should special circumstances arise regarding payment, please contact the Preschool Director so a plan can be put into place. It is the parent/families responsibility to ask for payment arrangement.

In addition to tuition, a one-time ANNUAL ACTIVITY/MAINTENANCE FEE of \$100 per student is charged. Fees may be paid by check (payable to GUMP), cash or credit card. *Credit card payments can be made using the www.mygump.org website-go to Current Students tab and click on the Pay by Credit Card button. The GUMP payment form will ask you to create an account. Follow the prompts once you are directed to the payment form. A 3% convenience fee will be added to all credit card payments.

Commitment Fees for the following school year are due on May 1. This payment will be applied towards April tuition during the upcoming school year - this ensures a year-long commitment to G.U.M.P. Commitment Fees are Non-Refundable.

If a child is picked up late, from preschool or extended day, a late pick up charge of \$10.00 for pick up within the first 10 minutes, and \$5.00 for each additional 10 minutes will be incurred and added to your account.

Withdrawal

Parents are asked to give one month notice prior to leaving the school year early or withdrawing their child(ren) from the preschool. We believe a one month notice allows for an orderly withdrawal process. This notice should be given in writing to the director. Refunds will only be given if written notice of withdrawal is submitted on time and will be in accordance with the following policies: payment for the full month in which the child attended any day(s), will be a family's obligation. This allows the preschool sufficient time to fill your

child's space. The school will not refund the activity/maintenance fee. A withdrawal resulting from a recommendation of the preschool faculty will not require a parent's written notice. If you withdrawal your child from GUMP you will forfeit the \$200.00 Commitment fee. The Commitment fee is a commitment to seeing the school year through and will only be applied to April's tuition.

If you wish to return to GUMP that same year, tuition must be paid consistently during your absence.

Student Needs

Barring special circumstances in which the GUMC Preschool is unable to safely and effectively address the needs of a student, students shall be admitted to the program to participate with all rights, privileges, and services accorded all other students. For those students with special needs, a case-by-case determination shall be made.

Special circumstances that would call for a team approach for a child's admission and instruction include developmental delays and health concerns, and significant behavioral challenges. A child with easily communicable conditions will be excluded from the general population, as well as a child whose significant health problems greatly restrict his/her ability to participate in the existing program.

Should it ever arise that a child needs are not being met by GUMP's teaching or administrative staff, the director has the responsibility to protect not only that child's best interest, but the interest of the entire classroom. After following appropriate procedures (teacher communication, assessments/screenings, parent conferences, classroom observations, classroom implementations, team meetings, etc.), the team may decide that GUMP is no longer the best place for the child, and the family may need to seek placement elsewhere.

Toilet Training

Parents of children younger than three need to inform the teachers when their child is being toilet trained so that teachers can reinforce the family's efforts during the school day.

Children enrolled in the preschool program for the three-year-old class and up must be potty trained BEFORE beginning the fall session. Realizing each child's development is unique, we will work with families of three-year-olds who indicate a readiness to be trained but have not quite mastered control. This window of opportunity for training will last until Fall Break of the current school year. Children who are still in diapers or pull ups when their classmates are in pants lose a lot of self-esteem, which is counterproductive to our program. Should a child continue to have toileting difficulties, a parent/teacher conference will be held to discuss options.

We believe children learn best when they are confident about mastering control of their bodies, and therefore this is a goal that we encourage and support.

Teacher/Child Ratio

As a part of the preschool's licensing requirements and in keeping with our belief in the value of a more personalized preschool experience, each classroom will maintain the following teacher-child ratio:

<u>Toddlers</u>	<u>One-year-olds</u>	<u>Two-year-olds</u>
1:4	1:4	1:5
Group Size Max: 8	Group Size Max: 12	Group Size Max: 10
<u>Three-year-olds</u>	<u>Four-year-olds</u>	<u>Five-year-olds</u>
1:8	1:13	1:15

Group Size Max: 16

Group Size Max: 20

Group Size Max: 20

***We believe low teacher/child ratios give children the individual attention they need.

Guidance/Self-Regulation

We believe all children are very eager to please and most misbehavior can be easily corrected through redirection or changing the environment (removing the stimulus for the unacceptable behavior). For children ages three and older whose unacceptable behavior continues after redirection, or change of environment has been tried, then a short period outside the group to think about unacceptable behavior is usually all that is required to correct misbehavior. Physical punishment is not allowed. Given the opportunity – and positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior – children respond to direction and correction and teachers have the opportunity to plan and respond to individual needs more effectively.

Should GUMP Administration, after meeting with teacher(s) and parents/family, not be able to alter misbehavior/disruptive behavior, GUMP will give the family two weeks to find alternative care for the child. All tuition and fees are non-refundable.

Biting occurs occasionally in the preschooler or toddler age. The close supervision of students by teachers is instrumental in preventing biting; however, the speed with which a child can bite limits the total control of such behavior. Incidences of repeated biting by a child will be addressed individually. Teachers will inform parents shortly after an incident.

Class Descriptions

The following descriptions provide insight into our expectations for each class.

TODDLERS

The toddler program is for our youngest children. In this class, children are given ample opportunities to move and explore. Toys are kept on low shelves so that even the children who are not yet walking can access items for themselves. There are books, cause and effect toys, a dramatic play center, blocks, balls, stacking toys, soft animals, and a quiet cozy area available to the children each day. Daily outside time is also provided, weather permitting. The two teachers provide loving support to each child. It is not uncommon to see one teacher reading to a couple of children while the other is supporting almost-walkers in their attempts to master this skill. Children are on individual schedules and are fed when they are hungry, and helped to sleep when they seem to be tired.

Toddlers can attend two, three or five days a week and must be at least nine months old to enroll in this class. At the beginning of the year, most of the children in this class are between 9 and 16 months of age. If space permits, children may join the class during the school year. This class has a maximum of eight children.

Your child will need the following items in his/her diaper bag each day: crib sheet (24" x 38" or larger) with their name written across the middle, blanket, 4 diapers, extra change of clothes (appropriate for weather and correct size), bottles and sippy cup (when child is ready), baby food, and healthy well-balanced lunch when developmentally appropriate. Write child's name on lid and bottom of baby food jars, spoon, bib, and lunch containers. Place all food, drinks, spoon, and bib in a large gallon zip lock bag. Pacifier may be brought if needed. Label everything with PERMANENT MARKER. *Please notify our personnel if your toddler is being breast-fed.*

ONE-YEAR-OLDS

Our one-year-old class is for children who are walking independently and between the ages of about 16 and 23 months when the school year begins. Most children will turn two during the school year, but will do so after September 30. One-year-olds can attend school either two, three or five days a week. The class welcomes new

members during the school year until it reaches its maximum of eight students. There are always two teachers in the room.

While supporting each child's individual development is paramount, the teachers provide a few opportunities each day for the children to do things as a group. There is a short story and song time each day, and the children all eat lunch together at a table with the two or three teachers. Naps are taken on mats, or cots, and teachers help children get to sleep as needed. There are ample opportunities for the children to play each day, both inside and outside. Inside, there are duplicates of many toys so that children can play near one another with the same toy without the expectation of having to share at this stage of development. The classroom is equipped with dramatic play materials, books, toys, blocks, stuffed animals, and developmentally appropriate objects to climb on and through. Outside, there are riding toys, toys that can be pushed, balls, a kitchen and tool bench, and slides to climb and descend. When the outside temperature is warm, a water table is available. Teachers are constantly using language to describe the children's surroundings and to help talk them through encounters with other children so that they begin to hear words such as cooperation, share, and take turns.

Each one-year-olds need the following in his/her diaper bag each day: a fitted crib sheet, 3 diapers, and a change of clothes. Each child needs a healthy well-balanced lunch box complete with foods that can be eaten independently, a filled sippy cup, and a bib. Everything will need to be labeled with a PERMANENT MARKER.

TWO-YEAR-OLDS

Our two-year-old classrooms are for children who will have turned two on or before August 15 of the current school year. Two-year-olds can attend school either two, three or five days a week. It is a happy and busy place. Each classroom follows a developmentally appropriate curriculum that supports the Tennessee Early Learning Standards for Preschool Children. Teachers write lesson plans that take into consideration the development of the children in the room in the areas of cognitive (thinking, knowledge, language, early math concepts), motor (using both large and small muscles), personal (doing things for themselves and regulating own behavior), social (getting along with others), and creative (moving and singing to music, enjoying art experiences, and learning to pretend). Monthly themes that have a religious component are used as the vehicle for introducing various skills, topics, and learning experiences. Children have daily opportunities to play both inside and outside. Inside, the rooms are organized into centers. There are places to play with small table toys and puzzles that develop problems solving, fine motor, and math skills. A floor area provides space to build with blocks and play with vehicles and other larger toys. There are music instruments and art supplies available for the children's use. Children can look at book or hug a stuffed animal in the cozy corner. The dramatic play area is always a favorite place to play. A science and exploration center and a water/sand table are also available. A large fenced-in playground is equipped with slides, balls, a water table, riding toys, and dramatic play items.

Teachers assist in potty-training that has been started at home. Each child needs to bring a fitted crib sheet (or a rest mat purchased at the school), a soft sleep friend (if needed), diapers, a complete change of clothes including socks – all labeled with a PERMANENT MARKER – in a backpack or diaper type bag that will accommodate all of the above items.

We furnish a mid-morning snack and you furnish a healthy well-balanced lunch, including a drink in a sippy cup. Please do NOT send juice box drinks or Capri-type drinks, as they are usually squeezed too hard and most of the juice is wasted. The lunch should be brought in a labeled lunch box or bag. Simple, manageable play clothes and velcro or slip-on shoes are mandatory to help foster the growing independence of all children. (See clothing on page 13).

THREE-YEAR-OLDS

Children who turn 3 on or before August 15 of the current school year are eligible to begin in our three-year-old program. Three-year-olds can attend school either two, three or five days a week. The three-year-olds follow the school faith-based curriculum and delve deeper into the subject matter in group discussions, in learning centers and by incorporating special visitors. The Tennessee Early Learning Standards are incorporated in the curriculum. Children are encouraged as they continue to develop their personal, social, cognitive, language, creative, and motor skills. The ability to grow in self-control is an important personal and social skill that is supported in many ways by the curriculum. Children are encouraged to be independent, to follow through on tasks, and to take some responsibility for themselves. Accordingly, our three-year-olds must be completely day-time potty trained, but we extend this deadline to fall break of the current school year for those families who need a little additional time (See toilet training on page 8). Playing with, and not just alongside, others grows increasingly important this year. To support this stage of growth, teachers guide the development of social skills such as how to take turns, how to work out disagreements, how to use language to express wants and feelings, and how to listen to others. These are taught through games, stories, and through many opportunities to play and socialize with the children and teachers in the classroom. Opportunities to develop fine motor skills are given through the availability of a variety art supplies and small toys. As fine motor control strengthens, children learn to draw pictures with recognizable objects and learn to write their names. Pre-reading skills are addressed daily through stories song, rhymes, and finger-plays. Likewise, children have daily experience with math skills such as counting, comparing, classifying, and ordering. In addition to the two regular classroom teachers, the children see a separate chapel and music teacher once a week, beginning in September. A G.Y.M. teacher begins weekly lessons following Fall Break.

The children will need a rest mat every day (that may be purchased at the school), a healthy well-balanced lunch with a drink (juice box, sippy cup, or a 'sip-top' thermos), and a change of clothes. Simple, manageable play clothes and velcro or slip-on shoes are mandatory to help foster the growing independence of all children. Everything will need to be labeled with a PERMANENT MARKER. The school provides a healthy snack each morning. (See clothing on page 13.)

FOUR-YEAR-OLDS

Our four-year-old classrooms are for children who will have turned four on or before August 15 of the current school year. Four-year-olds can attend school either three, four or five days a week. The Tennessee Early Learning Standards focus on kindergarten readiness in ALL areas of development so our curriculum not only supports cognitive knowledge (information, identifying letters and numbers) and fine motor development (writing and cutting), but continues to aid children in the acquisition of independence, social, emotional, creative, problem-solving proficiencies as well. The day is divided into large group times, small group times, center time, and outside play. During large group time, teachers talk about the events of the day, lead the children in music and movement activities and then discuss the monthly theme. Practice with phonics and math concepts takes place during small group time. During center times, children get to pick from a variety of different activities that develop social skills, enhance creativity, reinforce letters and numbers, and develop language skills. Each afternoon, the children spend time outside on our playground. Beginning in September, children have Chapel, a music class, and G.Y.M. class once a week.

The children bring a rest mat every day (that may be purchased at the school), and a healthy well-balanced lunch with a drink ("straw-top" thermos or juice box) in a school bag of their choice. Because 4's focus on Kindergarten Readiness and Independence, the child's bag must be one that the child can manage his/her bag

and their belongings independently. The school provides a healthy snack each morning. Simple, manageable play clothes and velcro or slip-on shoes are mandatory to help foster the growing independence of all children. Please label your child's items with a PERMANENT MARKER. (See clothing on page 13).

FIVE-YEAR-OLDS

Children who have reached the age of 5 by August 15 of the current school year are welcome to enroll in our five-year-old transition program. The transition class is for those children who would benefit from an additional year of preschool before going on to kindergarten. The children in our 5T class attend school Monday through Thursday. Children who will attend kindergarten in a private school and whose summer birthday doesn't make the earlier cutoff date also enroll in our 5T class. The intent is to teach the child how to learn through experiences and to make learning fun and meaningful. The class offers an environment which is rich in opportunities to mature and strengthen his/her emotional, social, cognitive and/or motor competencies. We focus on the success of the whole child. We set the stage for future learning by instilling the joy of learning. Beginning in September, children have chapel, a music class, and a G.Y.M. class once a week. Your child will need to bring the following each day: (1) healthy well-balanced lunch and drink in a lunch box, (2) rest mat with loop available from the preschool. No school bags are needed. Please label your child's items with a PERMANENT MARKER. Extra-curricular activities include: Chapel, music, and G.Y.M. once each week.

G.R.A.C.E. - "GUMP Recognizes All Can Excel"

G.R.A.C.E. ranges in ages from 2-5 years, and will serve children identified as having a disability, including developmental delay. This specialty classroom allows for the individualized teaching and care necessary to help enhance the child's developmental growth, while adjusting to a preschool environment. G.U.M.P. works in partnership with Le Bonheur's L.E.A.D. program to promote an environment that will encourage independence for the child while providing additional support to the classroom teacher. The lead teacher for G.U.M.P.'s G.R.A.C.E. Class is Special Education Certified.

G.U.M.P. believes that the parents are their child's first teachers, therefore G.U.M.P. teachers/staff will work closely with parents through daily collaboration and communication to ensure the most success for their child. Therapist that are arranged and paid for through the family are welcome to serve the child during the preschool day. This collaborative approach will allow for sharing of therapeutic ideas/suggestions, so that teachers can carryover these ideas into the classroom setting. Children enrolled in G.R.A.C.E. will have inclusive opportunities to participate in activities such as outdoor play, music, gym, and chapel.

The G.R.A.C.E. class will offer a 2, 3 and 5 day options for families. It is important to understand this classroom option is being offered as a commitment from August through May. Parents are encouraged to call GUMP to set up a tour and parent interview.

School Hours

The preschool hours are 9:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. Office hours are from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Parents with children three years of age and under must bring their child(ren) to the classroom inside the building at the beginning of each school day and pick them up at the classroom door at the end of the day.

Carpool: Our four- and five-year-olds will participate in our convenient carpool system to keep our parking lot from being overcrowded. A carpooling form must be completed during the phase-in week. Carpooling information must be on file in order to carpool.

Arrival to school: For children who are not carpooling, please arrive promptly, but not before 9:20 a.m. because teachers are preparing the classrooms for the day up until that time. Carpool time is 9:20-9:35 a.m. Parents are asked to contact the office by 9:15 a.m. when their children will be unexpectedly absent for any reason. A family may send a note to school in advance of any planned absences (vacations, out-of-town). Parents of children three, four and five-year-olds are encouraged to make every effort to arrive by 9:30 a.m. Most children have a very stressful day when they arrive late and find others already engaged in daily activities. Our children achieve at their best potential when they arrive on time and have the “map” for the day.

Departure from school: Parents who will be parking and coming inside to pick up their children should be waiting at 2:30 p.m. Carpool time is 2:20-2:35p.m. If it is necessary for a child to be taken home early, please knock on the door and the teacher will bring the child to his/her parent in the hall. This causes less disruption for the other children. Should a parent arrive after 2:35 p.m. in picking up their child from his/her school day, GUMP staff will take the child to After Care, or the GUMP office, and late charges will occur. GUMP admin will then contact a parent by phone.

Late Arrivals and Early Departures: For children who arrive after 9:35 a.m. or depart before 2:20 p.m., parents or guardians must use the sign-in/out sheet located in the child’s classroom. A phone call would be appreciated.

Security - Electronic Door Locks - Security measures are in place insuring that all entrances remain locked at all times. To enter the building, adults must use the door off the West Street parking lot. A doorbell with a camera and intercom system is available for your convenience.

Extended Care

Extended Care is available for currently enrolled GUMP families. Children enrolled in Extended Care must be two years of age or older. Families may choose Extended Care options based on their needs – Before Care, After Care, and/or days of the week needed. Families must commit to enrolling in Extended Care by the semester. Drops -Ins for Extended Care are available, if there is an open space, and a daily rate charge will be applied. Once families have dropped in a maximum of three times, families will be required to pay the Extended Care registration fee. Once families have utilized Extended Care a maximum of 10 times, families will be required to enroll in Extended Care, or they will no longer be able to use this service until the following school year.

Extended Care rates can be found on our website at the “Tuition and Fees” link. Drop-In rates can be found at the Preschool Office.

Before Care hours are 7:30-9:30 a.m. Children may not be dropped off before 7:30 a.m. Children attending Before Care will have a time of free play, a small snack or breakfast (provided by family), and an outdoor play time. GUMP staff will ensure that all children arrive safely to their school day classroom and will sign-in each child.

After Care hours are 2:30-5:30 p.m. Children attending After Care will have two times of free play, a circle time of learning, a small snack (provided by GUMP), and an outdoor playtime. GUMP staff will ensure that all children arrive safely to their After Care classroom and will sign-in each child. Children must be picked up from After Care no later than 5:30 p.m. to retain their placement.

Children enrolling in Extended Care must be Ambulatory – able to communicate, follow verbal directions, meet behavior expectations, eat independently, and be able to physically navigate the classroom.

All GUMP Policies and Procedures apply for Extended Care.

Emergency Closing

We believe an orderly school day which begins and ends in a quiet, unhurried way contributes to a child's sense of security.

On the days the Germantown Municipal School District is closed, or closes earlier than regular dismissal time for snow, other inclement weather or other imminent possibilities of an emergency condition, the preschool will also be closed. These days will not be made up at the end of the year. Germantown Municipal School District school closings are announced on local TV and radio stations as well as on their websites. We believe conforming to Germantown Municipal School District closing policies prevents confusion.

In the event that Germantown Municipal School District (GMSD) announces that schools will close during the school day once it has begun, we will follow the same schedule for early closings as GMSD. This means, for example, if schools close two hours earlier than usual, so will GUMP. GUMP will use the same time increment for early closing as GMSD. For early closings, in addition to announcements made via local TV stations and websites, we will notify families by email, text, or social media post as soon as possible.

Extra Days

In accordance with the preschool funding philosophy, the monthly payment schedule is NOT affected by school cancellations.

From time to time parents of a toddler, one-year-old, or two-year-old need to place the child in the preschool for an extra day. When this occasion arises, the parents may call the preschool after 9:30 a.m. to see if a space is available on that day. Teacher/child ratios will be maintained at all times and availability is determined based on ratios.

The additional cost of this occasional extra day will be \$35 for a toddler, one-, or two-year-old and must be paid the same day the program is used.

Sign-In/Out Policy

In order to comply with the safety/security procedure required by our state licensing agency, children attending the Preschool must be signed in and out by a custodial parent or another adult authorized by the parent. For parents of Toddlers, One-, Two-, and Three-year-olds, your child's teachers will have specific instructions as to where the form is located in their classroom for you to **sign your full name** upon your child's arrival and departure each day. If your child arrives later or departs earlier than our hours of operation, 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., you must sign your child in or out in your child's classroom regardless of arrival or departure time. For parents of Four and Five-year-olds, using the carpool line, the Preschool Director or other designated staff person will document your child's arrival and departure.

Authorized Release of a Child

We believe parents should have a happy, comfortable place for their young children when unexpected circumstances require the parents' attention. Unless parents give written permission, the school will not allow the children to leave the premises with someone other than those named on the pick-up authorization forms available in the preschool office. Valid identification may be requested from the individual coming to get the child. In an emergency, parents may telephone permission for the child to go home with someone other than the parent. Verification of the caller's identity will be made.

If there is a person or persons to whom the child SHOULD NOT be released, please notify the office and the child's teacher. The state laws will be our guidelines for such a release.

Your Child's Records

Because the health and safety of every child is of utmost importance, parents are required to keep several forms on file in the preschool office and update them as needed (i.e., recent inoculations and immunizations).

The following forms must be in the school office before a child may begin the first day of preschool:

1. An enrollment form with the telephone numbers of friends/family to call in an emergency, as well as the child's doctor's name and phone number must be on file.
2. The school must also have signed permission that gives school officials permission to authorize emergency medical treatment for a child.
3. State health laws require a health form, called the "Tennessee Department of Health Certificate of Immunization," from the doctor of all newly enrolled children that includes up-to-date immunization records and notice of any allergies. Also, any time immunizations are received, a new certificate must be provided. Up-to-date immunizations are required for attendance at GUMP.

Parents are asked to keep all records updated. In addition, be sure those persons listed as emergency numbers are aware their name and number are on file and updated.

We believe accurate record-keeping is essential to an orderly environment and quick, appropriate action in an emergency.

Illness

We believe sick children need extra love and attention during their illness. We ask parents to keep sick children at home for their own good and for the health of other children and their teachers in the class.

A child who has a fever, vomiting, diarrhea, or has a colored nasal discharge should NOT be at school. Any child exhibiting these symptoms will be dismissed ASAP. The child should be free of any symptom for 24 hours before returning to class. Please provide a note from your child's doctor stating it is safe for all children if your child returns in less than 24 hours. In addition, the school should be notified if a child has a communicable disease such as chicken pox, strep throat, 5ths disease, Hand-Foot-Mouth or head lice.

Medication Policy

Non-emergency Oral Medication

Because we consider the administration of medicine critical, we do not wish to place that dosage on the agenda of a faculty member who has the responsibility of many children and many tasks, both spontaneous and planned. Therefore, we welcome parents to return to campus at the given hour and administer any required dosage to their child.

Non-emergency Topical Medication

If you would like a topical medication applied to your child:

- 1.) Request a GUMP medication form from the Preschool Office or your child's teacher. Complete the form as indicated, sign it and return it to the teacher.
- 2.) If it is a prescribed medicine, the container must clearly carry the prescription label with the child's name, physician's name, and dosage information. If it is an over-the-counter product, the container must be labeled with the child's name. We are not able to apply medicine that requires refrigeration.

Required Maintenance Medication

In rare instances, there are certain medications taken on a regular basis to assist a child. If your child has such a need, please check with the Preschool Office for the procedures that may need to be put in place.

Allergies

If your child has any type of severe allergic reaction to foods, insects, or other factors, which requires immediate administration of prescription medication (Epi-pen, etc.) please notify your child's teacher and provide both labeled Rx medication and a detailed set of physician's instructions regarding the procedure if symptoms should occur during school hours. This information will be posted in the classroom along with the location of the emergency medication.

If your child has severe food allergies, parents must provide food for snack each day and/or any special celebration where snacks or treats are needed (birthdays, Christmas., etc.), in order to insure the allergic child's safety, as many of our snack foods are processed in plants where certain allergens are present and may pose a potential threat.

If food allergies are life-threatening, the classmates of the child with the allergy class will be told to refrain from bringing foods for lunch that may cause an allergic reaction, for example, a peanut-free classroom if there is a child with a life-threatening allergy to peanuts. Your child's teacher will notify you if this situation becomes necessary.

Food

Because we believe children are healthier and happier when they are not hungry, we ask parents to provide a healthy well-balanced lunch along with a drink. Drinks do not have to be provided if your child participates in the milk program. Please do not pack sweets (candy), soft drinks, Lunchables, food that needs to be heated, and food from fast food restaurants in your child's lunch. The preschool will provide a healthy snack during the day to children in the one-year-old through five-year-old classrooms.

Parents of toddlers or one-year-olds may bring only unopened jars of baby food. For health reasons, the school can only accept unopened jars.

All parents are asked to put their child's name on everything a child brings to school – especially lunch boxes, baby food jars, sippy cups, food containers, and bottles. Parents of babies who are to be fed breast milk must inform the teachers and be certain those bottles are CLEARLY labeled with the child's name and "Breast Milk."

Parents of children in our two- five-year-old classes are offered the opportunity for their child to participate in our milk program. There is a choice of 2% white milk or 1% chocolate milk on an annual payment basis. The milk cost is non-refundable on days which the child is absent. Paperwork to sign up for the milk program is available before school starts. You may switch flavors, add or drop the milk program at any time by telling the preschool office.

Toys

The preschool is well-equipped with a variety of toys chosen for fun and skill development. Do not send toys to school, with the exception of these two occasions: 1. If a child needs something special for sleep, a soft quiet toy is welcomed (toddlers-3 year olds only). 2. If it is "show and tell" day. These events are marked on the classroom calendars which children bring home each month. Toys promoting aggressive behavior are not welcome. We believe a preschool experience includes playing with toys that are used in conjunction with our lesson plans and have been purchased for specific developmental skills.

Field Trips

During the year, 4 and 5 year olds may take field trips. Parents receive notification of the trips on the monthly class calendar and posted outside the classroom. Any special needs such as sack lunches, specified clothing, etc. will be indicated on the form.

If you plan to drive on a field trip, please return necessary forms given to you during phase-in week as soon as possible. Remember, you must complete forms certifying your knowledge of driver expectations and providing pertinent insurance coverage information and driver license status in order to drive for a field trip.

We believe our community has beneficial experiences for a young child which enhance a child's sense of wonder, growth, and enjoyment.

Birthdays

Hooray! A child's birthday should be celebrated everywhere – and especially at school.

Parents may bring or send a special snack for the child's class to share. The best ideas are cookies, donut holes, miniature muffins, and fruit. Please refrain from sending cupcakes, cakes and juice boxes. A small child's serving size is appreciate to maintain low sugar intake.

"Pretend" birthdays for children whose real birthday falls during the summer or school holiday can be arranged. Please check with the child's teacher before making any birthday plans.

One word of caution and consideration: if the birthday child is having a party outside the classroom, parents may pass out invitations during preschool hours only if ALL members of the class are invited. If the party is not a class party then parents are responsible for getting invitations to the select children who have been invited and may not distribute them during the school day. We believe birthday celebrations affirm the parents' joy in their children and can help promote self-esteem.

Clothing

Please send a complete change of clothes – including socks. Accidents do happen. Children will go outside every day the weather permits, so please dress children accordingly. Because independence is one goal of preschool, children need to dress in clothes they can manage alone. Be certain clothes are comfortable and washable. Children come to preschool to learn and have fun – that can sometimes be messy work. Please save clothes that are "special" for special occasions.

For safety reasons, children old enough to wear shoes are required to wear tennis shoes with velcro closures as they are the best choice and allow your child to participate safely & fully in all activities. Socks must be worn every day for hygiene reasons. Please do not allow your child(ren) to wear boots (including cowboy style), sandals, flip flops, crocs, thongs (open toed shoes) or clogs.

If a child is still in diapers, send the minimum the classroom teacher designates. Be certain to label everything for every child from socks to diaper bags and pants to jackets with a PERMANENT marker. We believe children are happier when they do not have to think about the comfort or control of their clothes.

Parking Lot Safety

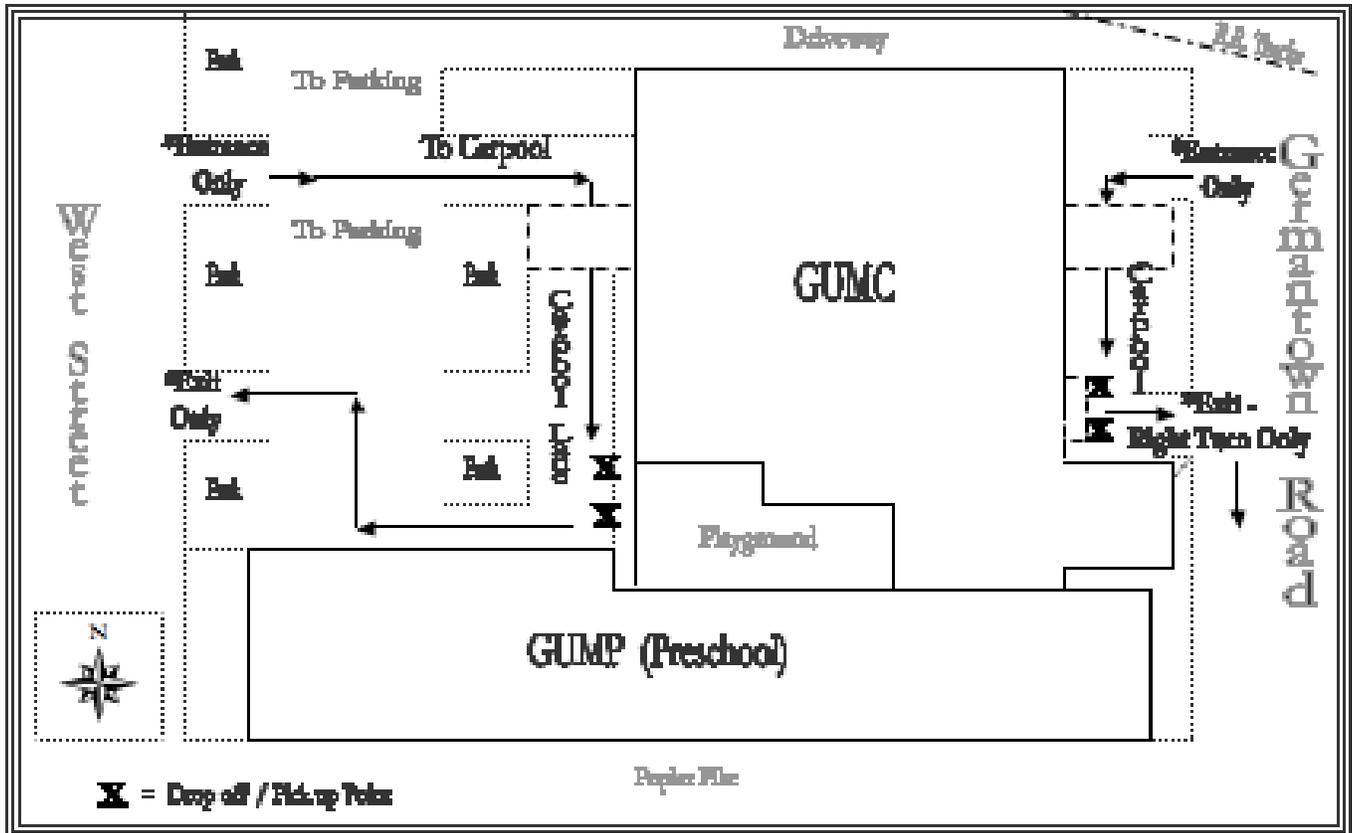
As required by law, child(ren) may not be left unattended in a vehicle at any time (this includes siblings of children enrolled in the preschool). Remember to hold your child's hand while in the parking lot. Please make use of the covered walkway as much as possible.

Parking

Familiarize yourself with entrance and exit driveways. (See map) These apply for parking and carpooling. Please park in lined spaces only. Double parking and parking in the drive-through lanes is prohibited as this creates hazardous situations, especially in the event of a fire or medical emergency. Please allow parents of toddlers, one-, two-, and three-year-olds to use the parking spaces closest to the main doors to the preschool as they will be carrying children, diaper bags, etc. Please remember it is against the policies of this preschool for a parent to leave a child in a vehicle parked on church grounds while entering the building to drop off or pick up an- other child.

For those families with children four and five years old, please use our carpool system so that all children can arrive and depart in a timely manner. (For specific carpool instructions and map, see the carpooling section below). Parents are reminded that Tennessee state law requires child-restraint seats and seat belts be used at all times in all vehicles.

PARKING LOT & CARPOOLING MAP



* **ENTRANCE & EXIT POINTS APPLY FOR PARKING AS WELL AS CARPOOLING** *

Please Note: Entrance drives are those closest to the railroad tracks & exit drives are those closest to the preschool.

Carpooling

Familiarize yourself with entrance and exit driveways. (See map on page 18.) These apply for parking and carpooling. Our families with four-and five-year-olds will participate in our convenient carpool system in order to keep our parking lots from being overcrowded. All carpooling families must display assigned carpool card provided by GUMP and sign the permission form.

Our carpool lanes will operate from 9:20 a.m. to 9:35 a.m. for morning drop off and from 2:20 p.m. to 2:35 p.m. for afternoon pickup. Parents arriving after morning carpool will have to park and bring their child(ren) into the Preschool using the West St. parking lot entrance, escort them to the appropriate classroom and sign their child in for the day using the sign in sheet posted outside the classroom door. Children are not allowed to go to the classroom alone. Parents who are late for afternoon pick up must park and come in to pick up their child(ren) in the Preschool Office.

Please follow the directions on the map below when carpooling so that we can keep our parking lot safe and the line moving in an efficient manner. All 4 and 5 year old classes will use the carpool lane off of Germantown

Rd. All drivers must turn RIGHT when exiting the carpool line in order to keep the carpool line moving efficiently, as well as to keep traffic flowing on Germantown Road and vehicles off the railroad track.

The carpool line is not available for children enrolled in Before and/or After Care.

Child Safety

Required Child Abuse/Neglect Reporting

In accordance with the laws of Tennessee, our faculty and administrative staff will report any cases of suspected child abuse to the Department of Human Services.

Child Car Seat Safety

Tennessee's child safety-seat law requires booster seats for children up to age 9. Safety restraint seats will still be required for younger children. Violations could result in a \$50 fine. Here's a look at the types of seats and restraints required under the law:

Child's age/weight/height	Type of seat	Location of seat
Age 0-1, 20 lbs. or less	Rear-facing	Rear seat if available
Age 1-3, greater than 20 lbs.	Forward-facing	Rear seat if available
Age 4-8, less than 5' tall	Belt positioning booster seat	Rear seat if available

***Please note that GUMP's faculty and staff are unable to fasten seat belts or car seat restraints. This is the responsibility of the child's parent/guardian, or those entrusted to pick up the child.

Safety Procedures

To protect your child in the event of an emergency, fire, "stranger danger", or natural disaster, the Preschool practices monthly safety drills to practice "proper procedures" with the children. To protect the children in the event of a fire, the state of TN now requires that only 20% of wall space may be used for display of paper art work or bulletin board displays. Nothing may be hung from the ceilings.

Family Appeals Process

On occasion a family may have specific concerns that must be addressed for their child. Those concerns need to be brought first to the classroom teacher. If the concern continues to exist, the family may then share it with the Preschool Director. Should the concern persist, the family is encouraged to speak to the Chair of the Weekday Preschool Council.

Weekday Preschool Council

The Weekday Preschool Council, which oversees the preschool ministry, is composed of Germantown UMC members. The council members are nominated by the church nominating committee and elected by the Administrative Board at the Annual Charge Conference. Please check with GIMP preschool administration for current Preschool Council members.

Appendices A, B, C

Food Facts for Young Children

Food hazards

Although it may be tempting to give toddlers and young preschool children certain foods that are fun to eat and staples in the diets of older children, make sure the foods are appropriate for the age group you are serving.

Here is a list of some of the most common food choking hazards. These foods should not be given to young children under age four.

- Hot dogs (whole or cut crosswise into chunks)
- Whole grapes
- Raw carrots
- Popcorn
- Hard candy
- Large chunks of meat or other food
- Marshmallows (even miniature)
- Spoonful of peanut butter
- Ice cubes
- Nuts, peanuts, or seeds

Toddlers 1 to 2 years old

Your toddler is getting more adventurous and curious about trying new foods. Allergy producing foods are a concern, and so are foods that can be a choking hazard. The following list is only a guideline. If your child has trouble with the foods prepared as listed, then wait until he/she is able to safely eat foods before feeding them to your child.

The following foods are inappropriate for toddlers who are 1 to 2 years old unless prepared accordingly:

- Carrots --Because they can easily choke a toddler, carrots should never be eaten raw. They must be shredded and then well-cooked until they are very soft.
- Grapes - Whole grapes are a choking hazard for small children and should always be cut into small pieces before you offer them.
- Hot dogs - Slicing hot dog lengthwise and then cutting it into pieces that are no more than a quarter-inch wide greatly reduces the risk of choking.
- String cheese - For your toddler to safely eat string cheese, serve it shredded and never sliced or cut into chunks.

The following foods are always inappropriate for toddlers who are 1 to 2 years old

- Low-fat milk - The fat in whole milk is nutritionally important for young children up to 2 years of age, so low-fat milk should not be used for children in this age range.
- Peanuts and peanut butter - In addition to being highly allergenic, peanuts also present a choking risk for toddlers. Don't feed young children peanuts or peanut butter until the child is 3 years old.

- Certain Snacks - Hard candy, lollipops, nuts, popcorn or other snacks are just the right size to become lodged in a small child's throat. These snack foods are a choking risk.

Children 2 to 3 years old (Children who have not reached their 4th birthday)

Foods that are choking hazards are still a concern

The following foods are inappropriate for children who are 2 and 3 years old unless prepared accordingly:

- Whole grapes - Whole grapes are a choking hazard for small children and should always be cut into small pieces before you offer them.
- Whole hot dogs or hot dogs sliced in circles - Slicing hot dog lengthwise and then cutting it into pieces that are about a quarter-inch wide greatly reduces the risk of choking.
- Peanuts and peanut butter – Please check with your child’s pediatrician in regards to the latest research regarding all nut allergies.
- Hard snacks - Hard candy, lollipops, nuts, popcorn or other snacks are just the right size to become lodged in a small child's throat. These snack foods are a choking risk.
- Whole sticks or chunks of string Cheese - For your child to safely eat string cheese, serve it shredded and never sliced or cut into chunks.

Eating Environment

Provide a calm and relaxing atmosphere. Eating with the children can model good eating practices. Mealtime can be a valuable learning experience. When you sit and eat with children, pleasant conversations can take place. Discussions about the colors, textures, and tastes of the food also can encourage language and cognitive development. Let the toddlers feed themselves using child-sized utensils. Eating with toddlers can become very messy, but all messes can be cleaned up. If toddlers are using smaller sized utensils and are given small servings of food, the mess they make can be reduced. Be encouraging and supportive during this learning process. Be aware of your verbal and non-verbal cues and reactions. For example, do not frown or sigh loudly when a child makes a mess. Young children are learning and need encouragement. Help children learn skills, including how to help clean up a mess!

Since young children are becoming more independent, they should also be allowed (as much as possible) to serve themselves. If children are allowed to make their own choices, chances are they will eat more than if they have no choice in the matter. Likewise, toddlers can start to make the choice to stop eating when full. Encourage children to take small servings and allow second helpings if the child is still hungry. Teach children to recognize body cues such as hunger and fullness. Forcing children to “clean their plate” may encourage over eating. Families and caregivers have a major responsibility to make sure young children are healthy and safe. Understanding proper nutrition practices and the abilities of young children, adults are able to establish healthy eating habits for life.

Snack or Lunch Suggestions

- Fresh fruit - oranges, kiwi, bananas, fruit salad, etc.
- Breads - zucchini, banana, date, cranberry, corn, whole grain etc.
- Mini bagels and cream cheese
- Rice cakes
- Trail mix - made with cereal (Kix or Cheerios)
- Yogurt - large containers are more economical - just serve in bowls or Tupperware
- Natural applesauce - large containers are again more economical
- Soup (Soup should not be brought to school unless your child can skillfully handle a spoon.)
- Nutri-Grain bars
- Crackers and cheese (shredded or sliced)

the flu



A Guide for Parents

What is the flu?

The flu (influenza) is an infection of the nose, throat, and lungs that is caused by influenza virus. The flu can spread from person to person. Most people with flu are sick for about a week, but then feel better. However, some people (especially young children, pregnant women, older people, and people with chronic health problems) can get very sick and some can die.

What are the symptoms of the flu?

Most people with the flu feel tired and have fever (usually high), headache, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, and sore muscles. Some people, especially children, may also have stomach problems and diarrhea. Cough can last two or more weeks.

How does the flu spread?

People that have the flu usually cough, sneeze, and have a runny nose. This makes droplets with virus in them. Other people can get the flu by breathing in these droplets or getting them in their nose or mouth.

How long can a sick person spread the flu to others?

Most healthy adults may be able to spread the flu from 1 day **before** getting sick to up to 5 days **after** getting sick. This can be longer in children and in people who don't fight disease as well (people with weakened immune systems).

How can I protect my child from the flu?

A flu vaccine is the best way to protect against the flu. CDC recommends that all children from the ages of 6 months up to their 19th birthday get a flu vaccine every fall or winter (children getting a vaccine for the first time need two doses).

- Flu shots can be given to children 6 months and older.
- A nasal-spray vaccine can be given to healthy children 2 years and older (children under 5 years old who have had wheezing in the past year or any child with chronic health problems should get the flu shot).

You can protect your child by getting a flu vaccine for yourself too. Also encourage your child's close contacts to get a flu vaccine. This is very important if your child is younger than 5 or has a chronic health problem like asthma (breathing disease) or diabetes (high blood sugar levels).

Is there medicine to treat the flu?

There are antiviral drugs for children 1 year and older that can make your child feel better, be less contagious, and get better sooner. But these drugs need to be approved by a doctor. They should be started during the first 2 days that your child is sick for them to work. Your doctor can discuss with you if these drugs are right for your child.

What Can YOU Do?

How else can I protect my child against flu?

1. Take time to get a flu vaccine and get your child vaccinated too.
2. Take everyday steps to prevent the spread of germs. This includes:
 - Clean *your* hands often and cover your coughs and sneezes
 - Tell your child to:
 - Stay away from people who are sick
 - Clean hands often
 - Keep hands away from face
 - Cover coughs and sneezes to protect others (it's best to use a tissue. Then, throw it away).

What should I use for hand cleaning?

Washing hands with soap and water (for as long as it takes to sing the *Happy Birthday* song twice) will help protect your child from germs. When soap and water are not available, wipes or gels with alcohol in them can be used (the gels should be rubbed into your hands until they are dry).

What can I do if my child gets sick?

Consult your doctor and make sure your child gets plenty of rest and drinks a lot of fluids. If your child is older than 2 years, you can buy medicine (over-the-counter) without a prescription that might make your child feel better. Be careful with these medicines and follow the instructions on the package. **But never give aspirin or medicine that has aspirin in it** to children or teenagers who may have the flu.

What if my child seems very sick?

Call or take your child to a doctor right away if your child:

- has a high fever or fever that lasts a long time
- has trouble breathing or breathes fast
- has skin that looks blue
- is not drinking enough
- seems confused, will not wake up, does not want to be held, or has seizures (uncontrolled shaking)
- gets better but then worse again
- has other conditions (like heart or lung disease, diabetes) that get worse

Can my child go to school if he or she is sick?

No. Your child should stay home to rest and to avoid giving the flu to other children.

Should my child go to school if other children are sick?

It is not unusual for some children in school to get sick during the winter months. If many children get sick, it is up to you to decide whether to send your child to school. You might want to check with your doctor, especially if your child has other health problems.

When can my child go back to school after having the flu?

Keep your child home from school until his or her temperature has been normal for 24 hours. Remind your child to cover their mouth when coughing or sneezing, to protect others (you may want to send some tissue and wipes or gels with alcohol in them to school with your child).

..... For more information about flu, visit www.cdc.gov/flu

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION • SAFER HEALTHIER PEOPLE

TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

SUMMARY OF LICENSING REQUIREMENTS FOR CHILD CARE CENTERS

This summary is a guide for parents of children in child care centers. It outlines some of the requirements child care providers must meet in order to be licensed. The Department of Human Services is legally responsible for licensing child care centers with 13 or more children. **The purpose of licensing is to protect your child.** Questions about these requirements or concerns about an agency's compliance should be referred to the local DHS office. You may ask your provider to see the complete set of center rules or you can access the rules through the Department's website at: <http://state.tn.us/humanserv>

Ownership, Organization, and Administration

- Every child care center shall have an on-site director.
- General liability, automobile liability and medical payment insurance coverage shall be maintained on the operations of the child care agency's facilities and vehicles.
- Enrollment of children under six (6) weeks of age is prohibited.
- Children shall not be in care for more than twelve (12) hours in a twenty-four (24) hour period except in special circumstances.
- Written documentation that the parent performed an on-site visit to the agency to review the agency's facility and child care policies & practices prior to enrolling the child.
- A copy of the agency's policies, procedures, and the Department's Summary of Licensing Requirements shall be supplied to the parent upon admission of the child.
- Parents shall be permitted to see the professional credential(s) of staff upon request.
- During operating hours, parents shall be permitted immediate access to their children.
- Children shall be signed in and out of the center by the parent or other person specifically authorized by the parent or the appropriate staff person.
- Children's Records
 - Written consent for emergency medical care.
 - Written plan stating to whom the child shall be released.
 - Written transportation agreement between parent and the center regarding daily transportation.
 - Daily attendance that includes time in and time out for each child.
 - Prior written permission of parent for each off-site activity.
 - The records of any child who is five (5) years old in an agency which lacks approved kindergarten status shall include a signed acknowledgment by the child's parents that recognizes that the child's attendance does not satisfy the mandatory kindergarten prerequisite for the child's enrollment in first grade.
- Incidents, accidents and injuries shall be reported to the parent as soon as possible, but no later than the child's release to the parent or authorized representative.
- Incidents, accidents and injuries to children shall be documented immediately and must include: date & time of occurrence, description of circumstances, and actions taken by agency.
- The agency or agency staff shall not disclose or knowingly permit the use by other persons of any information concerning a child or family except as required by law.

- During hours of operation the current license and agency report card shall be posted near the main entrance in a conspicuous location.

Supervision

- All areas of the building and grounds shall be visually inspected for children prior to closing the agency for the day.
- Children six (6) weeks through nine (9) years of age:
 - Adult must be able to hear the child at all times, be able to see the child with a quick glance, and be able to physically respond immediately.
 - Exception: during mealtime an adult must be in the direct sight and sound of children ages six (6) weeks through five (5) years of age, not in kindergarten, while the child is eating.
- Children ten (10) years of age and older:
 - Adult must know the whereabouts and activities of the children at all times.
 - Each child shall be greeted and received by a specific caregiver who will have ultimate responsibility for their supervision and care.
 - When children leave a caregiver's assigned area and go to another, the center shall implement a system to track the whereabouts of each child and recognize the transfer of responsibility from one caregiver to another.
- When children ages ten (10) and above are grouped with children under ten (10) the minimum supervision requirements for children six (6) weeks through nine (9) years shall apply.
- When more than twelve (12) children are present on the premises a second adult must be physically available on the premises.
- When more than twelve (12) children in first grade and above are present, a separate group, space and program shall be provided for them.
- Each child must be on roll in a defined group and assigned to that group with a specific caregiver(s).
- Infants shall not be grouped with children older than thirty (30) months, and a separate area shall be provided for them.
- Children shall be kept with the same group throughout the day and shall not be moved, shuffled, or promoted to a new group until required based upon the developmental needs of the child, however
 - Groups, excluding infants & toddlers may be combined for short periods for special activities of no more than thirty (30) minutes per day
 - Groups, excluding infants & toddlers may be combined for up to one (1) hour at the beginning & end of the day as outlined in the A:C ratios:

- Children shall be provided an opportunity for outdoor play when the temperature range, after adjustment for wind chill and heat index, is between thirty-two (32) degrees and ninety-five (95) degrees Fahrenheit and not raining; children shall be properly dressed and the length of time outside adjusted according to the conditions and the age of the child.
- During outdoor play caregivers shall be alert for signs of dehydration, heat stroke, frostbite, etc., dependent upon the season.
- Spanking or any other type of corporal punishment is prohibited.
- Discipline that is potentially shaming, humiliating, frightening, verbally abusive, or injurious to children shall not be used.
- Discipline shall not be related to food, rest, or toileting.
- Staff shall plan ahead for developmentally appropriate activities; written lesson plans shall be provided for children of each age group.
- For ages three (3) through school-age, a curriculum shall be offered that shall include instruction, at least once a year, in personal safety – parents notified of and given an opportunity to review the curriculum.
- For school-age children the curriculum shall include instruction on reporting physical, verbal or sexual abuse.

Health & Safety

- Children shall be checked upon arrival and observed for signs of communicable disease during the day.
- Symptomatic children shall be removed from the group until parents are contacted and health issues are resolved.
- At least one staff with certification in first aid and one certified in CPR on duty at all times.
- The agency, in consultation with appropriate local authorities, shall develop a written plan to protect children in the event of disaster.
- All home/work contact numbers for parents shall be readily available to all staff.
- Impetigo and diagnosed strep shall be treated appropriately for 24 hours prior to readmission to the center.
- Children diagnosed with scabies or lice shall have proof of treatment and be free of nits prior to readmission.
- Serious injuries or signs of serious illness shall be reported to the parent immediately to arrange for emergency treatment.
- Accidents, injuries, and every sign of illness shall be reported, or a reasonable attempt made to report, to the parent as soon as possible, but no later than the child's release to the parent or authorized representative.
- All medications, prescribed and non-prescribed, shall be received from the parent by a designated staff person or management level staff person.
- Medication shall never be handled by children or administered in bottles or infant feeders unless authorized by a physician.
- All medications shall be inaccessible to children.
- Unused medication shall be returned to the parent.
- Smoking is not permitted in the presence of children.
- The use of alcoholic beverages is not permitted in child care centers during the hours of operation of the center.
- Firearms shall not be on the premises of a child care agency, in any vehicle used to transport children or in the presence of a child.
- Staff's personal belongings (purses, backpacks, coats, etc.) shall be inaccessible to children at all times.

- For the protection of children and adults, the Centers for Disease Control guidelines for handwashing and diapering procedures shall be followed.
- If older children are enrolled who lack independent toileting abilities, rules regarding diapering of preschool children shall apply; they shall be changed in a location designated for that purpose and which provides privacy from other children and adults.
- In order to avoid the spread of airborne diseases children shall be positioned on mats in a face to feet alternating pattern during naptime.
- All staff, substitute staff, volunteers are required to immediately report any reasonable suspicion of child abuse or neglect.

Food

- If any agency provides meals, the agency shall provide developmentally appropriate meals, snacks, and drinks for each child that are of sufficient proportions and nutritional value to meet each child's health needs.
- A meal shall be offered to children who arrive before 7:00 a.m. and have not had breakfast at home.
- All special needs diets shall be prepared as prescribed by a physician or by the written instructions of the parent.
- Staff shall support and facilitate a parent's decision to continue breast feeding.
- Children shall not be permitted to carry a bottle with them throughout the day.
- Caregivers and children shall wash their hands with soap and water.
- At mealtime, children shall be seated at tables and chairs of appropriate size, and adults shall sit with them.
- Frozen breast milk shall be dated when expressed.
- All formulas remaining in bottles after feeding shall be discarded.
- Microwave ovens, bottle warming devices, and crock pots, including cords, shall not be accessible to preschool children.
- School-age children shall use microwaves only under direct supervision.
- Previously opened baby food jars shall not be accepted in the center. If food is fed directly from the jar by the caregiver, the jar shall be used for only one feeding.
- Children shall never be left without adult supervision while eating.
- Home canned food and raw milk are prohibited.

Physical Facilities

- All facilities shall annually pass an inspection verifying compliance with all applicable state and local fire and environmental requirements.
- At least one (1) working, land-line telephone shall be present in the agency.
- If used, answering machines/voice mail shall be monitored at thirty (30) minute intervals except when staff and children are off premises.
- Parents informed that answering machines/voice mail are used.
- A minimum of thirty (30) square feet of usable indoor play space must be provided for each child.
- Outdoor play areas shall contain a minimum of fifty (50) square feet of usable play space for each child using the area at one time.
- Window blind cords and electrical cords on equipment shall be inaccessible to children.

Ratio Chart - First/Last Hour of Each Day Only

Group Size ▶	10	15	20
2.5 – 12 Years	1:10		
3 – 12 Years		1:15	
4 – 12 Years			1:20

- A:C ratios must be maintained while children are indoors and on the playground.
- A:C ratios and group sizes may exceed the required limit by up to ten percent (10%) no more than three (3) days per week, provided however:
 - Infant & toddler groups may never exceed the required ratios & group sizes.
 - The licensed capacity of the classroom may not be exceeded.
- **Adult:Child ratio and grouping chart:**

Age of children at beginning of school year	Minimum Adult:Child Ratio	Maximum Group Size
Infants (6wks. - 15 mos.)	1:4	8
Infants/Toddlers (6wks. - 30 mos.)	1:5	10
Toddlers (12 mos. - 30 mos.)	1:6	12
2 years (24-35 mos.)	1:7	14
2 - 4 years	1:8	16
2 ½ - 3 yrs. (30 - 47 mos.)	1:9	18
2 ½ - 5 yrs.	1:11	20
2 ½ - 12 yrs.	1:10	10
3 years	1:9	18
4 years	1:13	20
3 - 5 yrs.	1:13	22
4 - 5 yrs.	1:16	24
5 years	1:16	20
5 - 12 yrs.	1:20	No Max
School-Age (K & above)	1:20	No Max

- Ratios can be relaxed during naptime and nighttime care but one (1) adult must be awake and supervising the children in each nap/sleeping area (infant/toddler ratios must be maintained).
- **Supervision During Off-Site Activities**
 - A:C ratios for preschool children doubled during off-site activities.
 - A:C ratios for school-age children during off-site activities must equal the number of trained caregivers required in the classroom plus additional adults:

Number of Children	Trained Caregivers	Additional Adults	Total Adults Required
1 - 20	1	1	2
21 – 30	2	1	3
31 – 40	2	2	4
41 - 50	3	2	5

- A minimum of two (2) adults is required for any off-site activity.
- **Supervision During Swimming:**

Age Group	Ratio
Infants (6wks – 12 mos.)	1:1
Toddlers/Twos (13 – 35 mos.)	1:2
Three Year Olds	1:4
Four Year Olds	1:6
Five Year Olds	1:8
School-age & Above	1:10

- Group swimming is not prohibited but it is also not recommended due to the high risk.
- **Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Precautions:**
 - Infants positioned on backs when placed in crib for sleeping.

- Soft bedding is prohibited for infants to avoid risk of smothering.
- Infants touched by caregiver every fifteen (15) minutes in order to check for breathing and body temperature.

Staff

- At least one adult available on the premises at all times during child care hours must be able to read & write English.
- Caregivers must be at least 18 years of age.
- Staff under 18 years must be supervised by an adult while in the presence of children.
- Each group of children must have at least one caregiver present who has a high school diploma or equivalent.
- Substitutes providing services for 36 or more hours in a calendar year must have a physical and a criminal background check.
- Volunteers can not be used to meet the adult:child ratios unless they meet the qualifications for substitutes.
- Criminal background checks are required for employees who have contact with children.

Equipment for Children

- Individual lockers or cubbies, separate hooks and shelves or other containers, placed at children's reaching level, shall be provided for each child's belongings.
- In infant/toddler rooms, equipment and space shall be provided for climbing, crawling, and pulling without the restraint of playpens or cribs.
- Indoor equipment, materials, and toys shall be available to provide a variety of developmentally appropriate activities during play time.
- Climbers, swings and other heavy equipment must be anchored even if they are designed to be portable.
- Resilient surfacing is required in fall zones around playground equipment.
- A quiet rest area and cots or mats shall be available for all children who want to rest but no child shall be forced to nap.
- For health & safety reasons each crib, cot, bed or mat shall be labeled to assure that each child naps on his own bedding.

Program

- Each caregiver shall be responsible for providing consistent care for a specific infant(s)/toddler(s) which includes but is not limited to: planning, and record-keeping for the child, communication, general interaction with and routine care of the child.
- Children shall not be left in restraining devices such as swings, car seats, or high chairs (in excess of thirty (30) minutes). Stimulation shall be provided to children in those settings.
- Programs, movies, computer games, and music with violent or adult content (including "soap operas") shall not be permitted in children's presence.
- If television, video tapes/DVDs, video/computer games, and/or movies are used, they shall be limited to two (2) hours per day, or the length of a movie if more than two (2) hours in the case of school-agers.
- Other activity choices shall be available to children during television/movie viewing or computer use.
- An opportunity for outdoor play shall be extended to children of all ages who are in care for more than three (3) daylight hours unless outdoor play is prohibitive.

- All rooms used by children shall be maintained at a temperature of between 68 to 78 degrees by means of heating, cooling or ventilation sources approved for use.
- Swimming pools and/or wading pools shall not be used without prior approval by the Health Department.
- If animals or birds are kept in classrooms as pets, they shall be caged away from the food storage and preparation area, and cages kept clean.

Transportation

- An adult must be in the vehicle whenever a child is in the vehicle.
- A passenger log with the first and last name of each child shall be used to track the loading and unloading of children during transport.
- If the child was loaded from home, the parent or other authorized person will additionally sign the log indicating that the child was placed on the vehicle.
- The log shall be updated as children are released from the vehicle.
- When the child is released to a parent or other authorized person, that person must sign the log indicating the release of that child to them.
- Immediately upon unloading the last child the driver must walk through the vehicle to confirm that all the children are off the vehicle.
- If a monitor was on the vehicle they shall walk through the vehicle as well.
- A designated agency person who did not ride on the vehicle shall also conduct a walk through of the vehicle.
- Drivers must obtain certification from Department of Safety.
- Drivers must submit to an annual health examination and pass a drug screening test.
- Drivers and monitors have certification in CPR and First Aid.
- All child care vehicles designed by the manufacturer to carry ten (10) or more passengers must be inspected by the Department of Safety.
- Effective January 1, 2007 all child care vehicles designed to carry ten (10) or more passengers must conform to the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards for school buses.
- Child passenger restraints must be used in accordance with state law.
- Signage that includes the agency name and phone number and the Department's toll-free Child Care Complaint phone number must be on child care vehicles.
- Children shall not spend more than forty-five (45) minutes traveling one way to or from the agency's facility or to and from school (this provision does not apply to field trips).

Care of Children with Special Needs

- When children with disabilities are enrolled, all reasonable and appropriate efforts shall be made to provide each child an equal opportunity to participate in the same program activities as their peers.
- The agency shall have written individualized emergency plans for each disabled child who requires more assistance in emergencies.

Sick Child Care

- This type of care includes the supervision, protection, and meeting the basic needs of children who have short term illness, symptoms of illness, or who have a medical or technological dependency that requires continuous nursing intervention.

- Agencies that provide sick child care either as an exclusive service or as a component of an existing child care service must comply with additional rules specific to this type of care.

You can access the Department's website at:

<http://state.tn.us/humanserv>

A wealth of child care information can be found on the Department's website.

You can:

- **Learn more about the rules**
- **Learn more about the types of regulated care**
- **Locate a child care provider**
- **Learn more about the Report Card and Star Quality Program**
- **Locate the local child care licensing office**
- **Review the current personal safety curriculum**
- **View recent correspondence to providers**
- **Read about new initiatives**
- **Locate the nearest child care certificate office**
- **Find info on choosing child care**
- **Locate a resource and referral center**

And much more!

Child Care Center Rules

The full set of the official child care center rules can be found on the Secretary of State's Web Site:

<http://state.tn.us/sos/rules/1240/1240-04/1240-04.htm>

Report Card & Star Quality Program

<http://tnstarquality.org>

Child Care Resource & Referral Centers

Currently, there are eleven CCR&R centers located throughout the state. The centers help parents find the type of care that is best for their child or children. These community resources also give providers technical assistance to better serve the children in their care. Contact information for the CCR&R centers can be found on the Child Care Services web page.

Child Care Resource & Referral – Complaint Hotline

**NASHVILLE AREA: 615-313-4820
LONG DISTANCE: 1-800-462-8261**

If you have a concern about an existing child care agency or wish to report an illegal operation you can call the Department's complaint hotline.

**Department of Children's Services
Report Child Abuse or Neglect Hotline
1-877-237-0004**