

THE FIRST STEP
NURSERY SCHOOL
AND
DAY CARE CENTER, INC.

PARENT HANDBOOK



1350 15th Street

Fort Lee, NJ 07024

201-944-9642

Website: www.firststep7.com

Est. 1983

-INDEX-

| | |
|---|--------------|
| Introduction Letter | |
| Purpose | page 1 |
| Credentials | page 1 |
| Staff | page 1 |
| Center Regulations | page 1 |
| | |
| Meals & Snacks | page 2 |
| Enrollment Procedures | page 2 |
| Release of Children Policy | page 2 |
| | |
| Trips | page 3 |
| Celebrations | page 3 |
| Birthdays | page 3 |
| | |
| Medical Policies | page 4 |
| | |
| Weather Information | page 5 |
| Programs | page 5 |
| Group Schedules | page 5 |
| | |
| Holiday Schedule | page 6 |
| Parent Involvement And Communication | page 6 |
| | |
| Discipline Policy | page 7 |
| Expulsion Policy | page 7 |
| | |
| Payment Schedule | page 8 |
| | |
| Sick Policy Letter | page 9 |
| | |
| Information to Parents | page 10 & 11 |
| | |
| Credit Card Contact | page 12 |
| | |
| Parent Contact | page 13 & 14 |
| | |
| Emergency Evacuation Plan | page 15 |



The First Step

Nursery School & Day Care Center Inc.

1350 15th Street
Fort Lee NJ, 07024
Phone: (201)944-9642
Fax: (201)944-1868

Dear Parents,

Welcome to The First Step Nursery School and Day Care Center, Inc. We hope this booklet will help you to understand how our center operates and how you can contribute to your child's growth and development.

Our center is a warm, supportive place where your child can grow and develop socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually. The programs our center provides are individualized and our staff set goals for the children based on each child's stage of development and concurrent needs. Careful structuring of our environment provides space and time for each child to explore and develop their interests.

The First Step was established in 1983. We are licensed by The New Jersey Division of Youth & Family Services. Our location is 1350 15th Street in Fort Lee, NJ. 201-944-9642.

We are glad that you came in to visit and we hope that you met with our staff. After reading this handbook feel free to call us anytime with questions or concerns that you may have. We look forward to starting your child in our tender, loving childcare program.

Sincerely,

Mary Jo Iorlano
Director

GENERAL INFORMATION

PURPOSE

Our purpose is to provide a top quality child care program for children. We encourage the development of self-esteem, discovery and problem solving skills in a warm, caring and nurturing environment. Our "home-like" atmosphere as well as our "open door policy" helps to provide comfort for both parents and the children.

CREDENTIALS

The First Step Nursery School and Day Care Center has been in existence since 1983. We are a non-sectarian program. We are licensed by New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Services.

STAFF

The most important key to our successful program is our staff. Our teachers and teachers' aids are very concerned about the development of each child. Planning stimulating activities which meet the different interests of the children and their groups as well as social interaction helps to motivate children's learning. Our teachers are always available to guide your child, to comfort or discipline them when necessary.

Our staff includes licensed Early Childhood education teachers as well as experienced teacher's aides that are also considered teachers in the way that they relate to the children.

CENTER REGULATIONS

Our center is open from 7:30 am to 6:00 pm Monday thru Friday, year round. Parents MUST pick their child up on or before 6:00pm. If an emergency does occur and you are unable to pick your child up, or you are going to be late please contact the center so arrangements can be made. If the center is not notified, a staff member will remain with your child while we are trying to contact you, but in the event that we cannot we are obligated to contact the State Division's 24 hour hotline to seek assistance in caring for your child. (1-800-792-8610). Our center will also charge you a Late Fee of \$3.00 per every minute after 6:00pm that your child is picked up from the center.

All children, AT ALL TIMES must have a COMPLETE change of clothing which will remain at the center until used. All clothing must be labeled with your child's name.

All Infants/Toddlers must have a supply of diapers, wipes, powder and/or ointment, formula and any other items that are required for the changing of and caring for an infant/toddler.

Any child who spends extra time at the center other than what they are registered for will be charge by the hour for that time.

MEALS AND SNACKS

Each parent on a daily basis must supply lunch. Food cannot be stored at the center for more than one day. All lunches MUST be ready to serve, with no cooking involved. The center provides a microwave oven on premise to heat lunches if necessary. All foods MUST be cut up and ready to serve (especially grapes). We are a "NUT FREE" center. No child is allowed to bring in any food items containing any type of nut products. Children are NOT PERMITTED to bring candy, gum or any foods containing an excessive amount of sugar to the center. Special arrangements can be made for birthday and holiday celebrations.

ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES

Parents interested in our program are required to visit us prior to enrollment and to acquire all of the necessary forms. Parents must fill out a Registration Form, Medical Release Form, Child Information Form, and Parent Handbook attached forms. The Medical Form must be filled out by your child's pediatrician and returned within the first two weeks of your child's enrollment. Failure to return the medical forms with this time frame will be grounds for immediate withdrawal of the child from the center.

Children are enrolled throughout the year. Parents on the waiting list will be contacted as space becomes available.

Children who are in the legal custody of one parent MUST also provide a copy of the court papers to the center. A Registration Fee, a Deposit and the First Months Tuition are due upon enrollment. Please read the parent contract agreement carefully! Once the initial visit has been made and forms and fees are in order, your child may begin.

POLICY ON THE RELEASE OF CHILDREN

Each child may be released only to the child's custodial parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the custodial parent(s) to take the child from the center and to assume responsibility for the child in an emergency if the custodial parent(s) cannot be reached. Written procedures to be followed by the staff member(s) if the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s), appear to be physically and/or emotionally impaired to the extent that, in the judgment of the staff member, the child would be placed at risk or harm if released to such an individual, the procedures shall require that:

1. The child may not be released to such an impaired individual;
2. Staff members attempt to contact the child's other parent or an alternative person(s) authorized by the parent(s) and;

3. If the center is unable to make alternative arrangements, a staff member is required to contact DYFS 24-hour child abuse hotline 1-800-792-8610 to seek assistance in care for the child.

The center must be notified of any changes in address, telephone numbers, or names of persons authorized to pick up your child. If at any one time or another, the person(s) authorized to pick your child up cannot, a telephone call is required by the parent(s) to let the center know who will then be picking up your child. The person who comes to pick up your child MUST have a valid picture ID in order for your child to be released. NO EXCEPTIONS!!! CHILDREN WILL NOT BE RELEASED UNLESS THE CENTER HEARS FROM THE PARENT(S) FIRST.

TRIPS

Part of our curriculum is for the children to go on class trips to places of interest including but not limited to: zoos, museums, shows, etc. A permission slip will be sent home either by e-mail or a hard copy prior to the upcoming trip and it must be signed by the parent or guardian allowing the child to attend. Parents have the option to request that your child not participate in that trip. Your child will then remain at the center for the day of the trip. All trips require an additional fee. Parent participation is always needed and welcome on all trips.

CELEBRATIONS

Holidays are special times at our center. We try to celebrate each and every holiday with the children using special art activities, stories, finger plays, and special snacks. We also post class "goody" snack lists in our reception area for parents to sign up to bring in special snacks for a holiday party. We welcome any contributions you, the parent, would like to make in order to help us make your child's holiday a memorable one.

BIRTHDAYS

The most important celebrations are the children's individual birthdays. We try to make each and every birthday a special one for your child. If you are interested in a special birthday celebration for your child, you can make arrangements with your child's teacher.

MEDICAL POLICIES

Requirements

All children are required to receive a physical exam. All children MUST have all the necessary immunizations and the medical form completed within two weeks of admission.

According to the New Jersey Department of Health requirements and in the best interests of your child's classmates, your child MUST be kept home if he/she shows any of the following symptoms:

- a. Rashes or inflamed skin
- b. Abdominal pain, nausea, or vomiting
- c. Diarrhea
- d. Earache
- e. Sore Throat
- f. Inflammation of the Eyes
- g. Enlarged Glands
- h. Persistent Coughing
- i. Fever

If a note from your child's physician is submitted to the center stating that any of these ailments are not transmittable to the other children or adults, then and only then, may your child attend the center. Your child CANNOT return to the center until he/she is symptom free for 24 hours.

If your child develops ANY of these symptoms while at the center, the parent or guardian will be notified to pick up their child IMMEDIATELY.

If your child is absent 3 or more days your child CANNOT return to the center without a doctor's note.

When a child needs to take a *prescribed* medication, a parent or guardian MUST fill out and sign a "Parent Consent Medication Form" located in your child's classroom, in order for a staff member to administer that medication. Each day that your child must receive this medication, the consent form must be filled out and signed.

ALL MEDICATION MUST COME IN its ORIGINAL PRESCRIBED BOTTLE OR CONTAINER WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME ON IT ALONG WITH THE DOSAGE. NO CHILD WILL RECEIVE ANY MEDICATION AT ANY TIME FROM ANY STAFF MEMBER UNLESS THE PARENT HAS COMPLETED AND SIGNED THE MEDICAL CONSENT FORM AND THE MEDICATION IS IN ITS ORIGINAL/PRESCRIBED CONTAINER.

Upon admission, a "Medical Release Form" must be completed and signed by a parent or guardian allowing Englewood Hospital to provide emergency treatment to your child in case of an accident or injury.

The First Step uses *Pedimedica* at 810 Abbott Blvd. in Fort Lee as the centers doctors on call.

The center WILL CLOSE in cases of head lice, chicken pox or any other ailment that can spread throughout the center. Parents and/or guardians will be notified prior to the center closing in this case.

WEATHER INFORMATION

The First Step follows the Fort Lee Public School System's decision to close on bad weather and/or snow days. To know if the center will be closed parents need to call The First Step at 201-944-9642 and listen to the pre-recorded message. It will tell you if the center is closed or having a delayed opening. The message is usually left by 6:30am. Parent *will not* receive a telephone call from the center.

If during school hours the weather gets bad or looks as though it will become hazardous, The First Step will call parents to pick up their child from the center. The centers' director also has the right to close the center even if Fort Lee Schools are not closed. We know that this is an inconvenience for many parents but the safety of our children and staff is our main concern.

PROGRAMS

The center's sessions consist of both half and full days. Half days consist 4 hours or less per day. Full days consist of any hours over hours per day. Parents can choose 3, 4, or 5 day programs either full or half days. All hours are flexible. At The First Step, we understand that flexibility is an important part of good childcare. That is why we work with you to vary hours according to your convenience.

GROUP SCHEDULES

7:30 - 8:30 Arrival/Breakfast
8:30-9:00 TV Time/Toilet
9:00-9:30 Work Time Selected Areas*
9:30-10:00 Physically Education**
10:00-10:30 Circle Time
10:30-11:15 Lesson of the Day***
11:15-11:30 Toilet
11:30-12:00 Lunch
12:00-2:00 Nap Time
2:00-2:30 Snack/Toilet
2:30-3:00 Work Time Selected Areas*
3:00-3:30 Physical Education**
3:30-4:00 Lesson of the Day***
4:00-4:30 Snack/Toilet
4:30-5:00 Story Time/Music & Movement
5:00-6:00 TV Time/Departure

*Work Time Areas: Dress Up, Blocks, Manipulatives, Puzzles, Lego's, Games, etc.

**Physical Education: Parachute Play, Dancing, Yoga, Scooters, Potato Sac Races, etc.

***Lesson of the Day: Science, Art, Letters, Holiday Themes, Drama, Socialization, Finger Plays, etc.

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

The center is open Monday through Friday from 7:30 am to 6:00 pm, except for the following holidays:

Labor Day
Thanksgiving Day & the Friday after Thanksgiving
Christmas Eve Day - Open till 2:00pm (May close due to low enrollment)
Christmas Day
New Years Eve Day - Open till 2:00 pm (may close due to low enrollment)
New Years Day
Good Friday
Memorial Day
Independence Day & the day before or after depending what day it falls on
Friday of Labor Day Weekend - this is the centers' clean up day

***It is also the Director's discretion to close the center on a day before or after a holiday if the enrollment will be low or if the holiday falls on a weekend. Parents will be notified in advance.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT & COMMUNICATION

Parents are always welcome to visit the center anytime; no prior permission from the director or staff members is needed before visiting. We recognize the fact that HOME and the CENTER must cooperate with one another in order to achieve our goals.

Parents can contribute by volunteering time in our classrooms, going on class trips, working our book fair or just by collecting items needed for school projects.

Parents are urged to bring all classroom questions and concerns directly to their child's teacher. The director is available for follow-up discussions and for all concerns regarding school policy.

Parents can call teachers or leave a message anytime during the school day. The teachers schedule regular conferences during the school year and will make themselves available to you as needed.

Notes and newsletters from the director and teachers are sent home by e-mail and/or individual lunch boxes. They contain pertinent information that should be given your attention. Often copies of these communications are posted in our reception area. Please be sure to read all correspondents on a regular basis to know what is happening in the center.

Sign In/Sign Out Book is an essential tool. It transfers your child to and from our custody. Because of this it is of the utmost importance that you sign your child in and out of our center on a daily basis. This book is located in the reception area.

Parents are responsible for calling the center when their child will be late or absent.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Discipline is an integral part of the whole classroom environment. Many things can affect the way children behave. Children need to know what the behavior is that teachers expect from them and consistency plays a major role in this.

Here at The First Step we *never* use physical violence in disciplining a child instead we re-direct the activity by removing the child from the problem situation and re-direct his/her attention onto something else. If that is unsuccessful, we then place the child in a "Time Out" chair. This designated chair is not one that is in a corner nor in a different room, just in a place that separates the child from the problem situation and/or the group. After a few minutes, the teacher will explain to the child why he/she was asked to sit down; offer some words of encouragement, and then the child is allowed off the chair and may re-join the group.

EXPULSION POLICY

Any child at anytime may be expelled from the program for the following reasons: continued problems with behavior, biting, hitting, hurting others, etc. Also for continued sicknesses, outstanding tuition, not treating staff with respect and professionalism, not following the centers rules and regulations, parents mistreating other parents or children, etc. Expulsion is not limited to the above provisions. If expulsion was to occur the parent would be notified either in writing or by telephone. Depending on the act in which the child is being expelled, this would determine the time frame in which the child must leave. For example: if it is based on potentially dangerous behavior by either the child or parent, the child would be asked to leave immediately.

Each parent **MUST** sign below and return this part of this page showing that you have read the expulsion policy and except its terms.

I, _____ parent of _____ have read and
(Parent's name) (Child's Name)

understand the Expulsion Policy and except the terms of its agreement.

Parent Signature

Date

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

TUITION & REFUNDS:

A NON-REFUNDABLE YEARLY registration fee of \$100.00 MUST BE PAID prior to children admission. This registration fee will be charged to you yearly on your child's anniversary date of registration.

A TUITION DEPOSIT must be paid prior to child's admission. This deposit is ONE MONTHS TUITION, which will be credited toward the LAST MONTH that your child is in attendance. This deposit can ONLY be used as credit when ONE MONTH'S WRITTEN NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL IS GIVEN. NO EXCEPTIONS.

ALL TUITION PAYMENTS ARE DUE ON OR BEFORE THE FIRST OF EVERY MONTH. There will be a late fee of \$35.00 rendered when tuition is not paid on time. This late fee will be added weekly until tuition amount is paid. Arrangements can be made with the director for bi-weekly payments if parent request it.

TUITION MUST BE PAID USING "RAPID TUITION"- electronic payment by either charging your credit card or withdrawing funds from your bank account.

A LATE FEE is charged to parents whose child remains at the center past 6:00pm. The late fee is \$3.00 for every minute past 6:00pm, and it MUST BE PAID THAT DAY DIRECTLY TO THE STAFF MEMBER when you pick up your child.

Drop Off payments are due AT THE END OF EACH DAY the child attends.

There is a fee for bounced checks in the amount of \$35.00.

Since you child's place is guaranteed in our program, ALL HOLIDAYS, VACATIONS, AND ILLNESSES WILL NOT BE CREDITED. THERE WILL ALSO BE NO CREDIT FOR SNOW DAYS AND NO MAKE UP DAYS FOR ILLNESS.

SINCE ALL CENTER'S EXPENSES CONTINUE AND SPACE IS RESERVED WHETHER OR NOT YOUR CHILD IS IN ATTENDENCE, NO REFUNDS WILL BE MADE FOR ABSENSES, HOLIDAYS, VACATION, SNOW DAYS OR ANY OTHER INSTANCES.

MULTIPLE CHILD DISCOUNT:

There is a 10% tuition discount for more than one child in a family attending the center at the same time. The discount is 10% off the total of the children's combined tuition for each month. There are no discounts on Registration Fees and Deposits.

I, _____ parent of _____, have read the entire content of THE FIRST STEP HANDBOOK and understand and will abide by all of the rules and regulations. In keeping with New Jersey's child care licensing requirements, we are obligated to provide you, as a parent of the child enrolled at our center, with this informational statement. The statement highlights, among other things, your right to visit and observe the center at any time without secure prior permission; the center's obligation to be licensed and to comply with licensing standards; and the obligation of all citizens to report suspected child abuse/neglect/exploitation to The State's Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS). This information is included within this handbook.

Please read this statement carefully, and if you have any questions feel free to contact me at 201-944-9642.

Thank You,
Mary Jo Iorlano/Director

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Dear Parents:

When the seasons change and winter is upon us, the children here at the center are more prone to getting sick. Please be aware that you are obligated to follow the center's "Health Regulations" listed in our Parent Handbook. It is very important that all parents understand that we are NOT licensed to care for sick children. Keeping this in mind, it is very important that you keep your child home when they are sick and/or pick them up from the center immediately. Please be considerate of the other children in your child's classroom and the other parents who stay at home with their sick children to make them well again.

Here at the center a temperature of 101 degrees is considered and fever and the child MUST be sent home and cannot return to the center until they are FEVER FREE for 24 hours.

A staff member MUST be told in the morning, upon your arrival, if your child is a little under the weather. Any child, who has been sick especially with a fever, MUST see the Director or Co-Director upon their morning arrival to be sure that the child is fever free. If the child has a fever the parent MUST remove the child from the center until he/she is fever free for at least 24 hours. If a child is absent for more than 3 days or upon the request of the Director or Co-Director, a doctor's note MUST accompany the child back to the center or the child WILL NOT be allowed to return until the doctor's note is given. The doctor's note MUST state what the illness was what the medication (if any) is needed, and of the child is contagious or can he/she return to school.

If the above rules and regulations are not followed, each parent will receive ONE WARNING ONLY, then after another occurrence, your child will be asked to leave the center. This is a very big concern for all of us, so we appreciate your greatest cooperation on this matter.

Please sign and return the bottom portion of this letter with your registration forms.

Thank You,
Mary Jo Iorlano/Director

I, _____, parent of, _____
(Parent name) (Child's name)

have read the above information and agree to follow all the rules and regulations of The First Step's Health Policies. I understand that if I do not follow them, I will receive ONE WARNING before I am asked to remove my child from the center, without any TUITION CREDITS OR REFUNDS OF ANY KIND.

(Parent Signature)

(Date)

Department of Children and Families
Office of Licensing
INFORMATION TO PARENTS

Under provisions of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers (N.J.A.C. 10:122), every licensed child care center in New Jersey must provide to parents of enrolled children written information on parent visitation rights, State licensing requirements, child abuse/neglect reporting requirements and other child care matters. The center must comply with this requirement by reproducing and distributing to parents this written statement, prepared by the Office of Licensing, Child Care & Youth Residential Licensing, in the Department of Children and Families. In keeping with this requirement, the center must secure every parent's signature attesting to his/her receipt of the information.

* * * * *

Our center is required by the State Child Care Center Licensing law to be licensed by the Office of Licensing (OOL), Child Care & Youth Residential Licensing, in the Department of Children and Families (DCF). A copy of our current license must be posted in a prominent location at our center. Look for it when you're in the center.

To be licensed, our center must comply with the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers (the official licensing regulations). The regulations cover such areas as: physical environment/life-safety; staff qualifications, supervision, and staff/child ratios; program activities and equipment; health, food and nutrition; rest and sleep requirements; parent/community participation; administrative and record keeping requirements; and others.

Our center must have on the premises a copy of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers and make it available to interested parents for review. If you would like to review our copy, just ask any staff member. Parents may view a copy of the Manual of Requirements on the DCF website at www.state.nj.us/dcf/providers/licensing/laws/index.html or obtain a copy by sending a check or money order for \$5 made payable to the "Treasurer, State of New Jersey", and mailing it to: NJDCF, Office of Licensing, Publication Fees, PO Box 657, Trenton, NJ 08646-0657.

We encourage parents to discuss with us any questions or concerns about the policies and program of the center or the meaning, application or alleged violations of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers. We will be happy to arrange a convenient opportunity for you to review and discuss these matters with us. If you suspect our center may be in violation of licensing requirements, you are entitled to report them to the Office of Licensing toll free at 1 (877) 667-9845. Of course, we would appreciate your bringing these concerns to our attention too.

Our center must have a policy concerning the release of children to parents or people authorized by parents to be responsible for the child. Please discuss with us your plans for your child's departure from the center.

Our center must have a policy about administering medicine and health care procedures and the management of communicable diseases. Please talk to us about these policies so we can work together to keep our children healthy.

Our center must have a policy concerning the expulsion of children from enrollment at the center. Please review this policy so we can work together to keep your child in our center.

Parents are entitled to review the center's copy of the OOL's Inspection/Violation Reports on the center, which are issued after every State licensing inspection of our center. If there is a licensing complaint investigation, you are also entitled to review the OOL's Complaint Investigation Summary Report, as well as any letters of enforcement or other actions taken against the center during the current licensing period. Let us know if you wish to review them and we will make them available for your review.

Our center must cooperate with all DCF inspections/investigations. DCF staff may interview both staff members and children.

Our center must post its written statement of philosophy on child discipline in a prominent location and make a copy of it available to parents upon request. We encourage you to review it and to discuss with us any questions you may have about it.

Our center must post a listing or diagram of those rooms and areas approved by the OOL for the children's use. Please talk to us if you have any questions about the center's space.

Our center must offer parents of enrolled children ample opportunity to assist the center in complying with licensing requirements; and to participate in and observe the activities of the center. Parents wishing to participate in the activities or operations of the center should discuss their interest with the center director, who can advise them of what opportunities are available.

Parents of enrolled children may visit our center at any time without having to secure prior approval from the director or any staff member. Please feel free to do so when you can. We welcome visits from our parents.

Our center must inform parents in advance of every field trip, outing, or special event away from the center, and must obtain prior written consent from parents before taking a child on each such trip.

Our center is required to provide reasonable accommodations for children and/or parents with disabilities and to comply with the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (LAD), P.L. 1945, c. 169 (N.J.S.A. 10:5-1 et seq.), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), P.L. 101-336 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.). Anyone who believes the center is not in compliance with these laws may contact the Division on Civil Rights in the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety for information about filing an LAD claim at (609) 292-4605 (TTY users may dial 711 to reach the New Jersey Relay Operator and ask for (609) 292-7701), or may contact the United States Department of Justice for information about filing an ADA claim at (800) 514-0301 (voice) or (800) 514-0383 (TTY).

Our center is required, at least annually, to review the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), unsafe children's products list, ensure that items on the list are not at the center, and make the list accessible to staff and parents and/or provide parents with the CPSC website at www.cpsc.gov/cpsc.gov/cpscpub/prerel/prerel.html. Internet access may be available at your local library. For more information call the CPSC at (800) 638-2772.

Anyone who has reasonable cause to believe that an enrolled child has been or is being subjected to any form of hitting, corporal punishment, abusive language, ridicule, harsh, humiliating or frightening treatment, or any other kind of child abuse, neglect, or exploitation by any adult, whether working at the center or not, is required by State law to report the concern immediately to the State Central Registry Hotline, toll free at (877) NJ ABUSE/ (877) 652-2873. Such reports may be made anonymously. Parents may secure information about child abuse and neglect by contacting: DCF, Office of Communications and Legislation at (609) 292-0422 or go to www.state.nj.us/dcf/ and select Publications.

OOL8/22/14

CREDIT CARD CONTRACT

The First Steps NEW Payment Policy.

Our policy is implemented for the parent's convenience as well as for the Centers.

THE POLICY IS AS FOLLOWS:

***Each parent MUST provide The First Step with a major credit/debt card; credit card number and a signature. This information will remain on file at the center in strict confidence.

***Each Parents monthly tuition payment to be automatically charged to their credit/debt card account.

***All parents who pay weekly or bi-weekly will be charged according to their regular payment schedule.

THERE IS A 3.5% SERVICE CHARGE ON ALL CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS.

*****All parents MUST sign and return this form upon child's admission.**

If you have any questions about this policy please contact the Director.

TODAY'S DATE

PARENT'S NAME

CHILD'S NAME

TYPE OF CREDIT CARD

CREDIT CARD NUMBER

EXPIRATION DATE

PARENT'S SIGNATURE

**PARENTS CONTRACT AGREEMENT WITH THE FIRST STEP
NURSERY SCHOOL AND DAY CARE CENTER, INC**

**AS A PARENT ENROLLING MY CHILD IN THE FIRST STEP I
UNDERSTAND AND AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING:**

- 1. My child must have ALL of the immunizations required for his/her age upon enrollment along with a physical exam.**
- 2. My child MUST be kept at home if he/she shows any of the medical symptoms listed in the Parent Handbook. Your child MUST be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to the center. If my child is absent from the center for more than three days, a doctor's note MUST accompany his/her return.**
- 3. I agree to pay a Late Fee of \$3.00 per every minute after 6:00pm pickup of my child.**
- 4. I am required to pay tuition on or before the 1st of every month for that month unless other arrangements have been made with the Director. I agree to pay a Late Fee of \$35.00 for *every* week that tuition is late.**
- 5. I understand that there is NO CREDIT given for Holidays, Vacations, Snow Days, Sick Days or Expulsion.**
- 6. I agree to read and sign the "Expulsion Policy" and all other items listed in this parent handbook and return it with all of the proper registration forms.**
- 7. I understand that there is a SERVICE CHARGE of \$35.00 for a bounced check and if TWO checks bounce, I will only be allowed to pay tuition in cash or by certified check or money order or by credit card.**
- 8. I agree to pay a DEPOSIT to the center for ONE MONTH'S TUITION which will be credited to the last month of my child's attendance at the center. This credit WILL ONLY BE GIVEN WITH ONE MONTH'S WRITTEN NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL.**
- 9. I agree to supply diapers, wipes, lunch, one snack, formula, bottles, sleeping bag and/or blanket, pack n play (for infants only) and a complete change of clothes for my child.**
- 10. I agree NOT to send candy, gum or any other food containing an excessive amount of sugar to the center for my child. Birthday celebrations can be arranged.**
- 11. I agree NOT to send my child to school with toys unless discussed with the Director or teacher or on designated toy day or Show-n-Tell days.**
- 12. I understand that the center is allowed to administer medication to my child ONLY IF a permission slip is signed and dated in advance and the medication is sent to the center in the ORIGINAL prescribed bottle or container and has my child's name on it. Non-prescription**

medication will only be administered if accompanied by a doctor's note.

13. I understand that I will be notified in advance of any school trips and that a permission slip must be signed and returned with payment prior to the trip.

14. I agree to pay a YEARLY NON-REFUNDABLE REGISTRATION FEE of \$100.00 on our anniversary date, to cover some of my child's insurance expenses for that school year.

15. I agree to sign my child IN and OUT of the center on a daily basis, and to CALL the center when my child will not be attending school for an illness or for any other reason.

16. I agree to notify the center both verbally and in writing of any persons other than we the parents who can pick up our child from the center.

17. I agree to IMMEDIATELY NOTIFY the center of any changes in our home or work address and telephone numbers or any other important information regarding my child.

18. I agree (if divorced or separated) to supply the center with a COURT ORDER restraining the other party from picking up or visiting my child at the center.

19. I understand that the center is closed on the following dates: New Years Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after, Christmas Day and the Friday before Labor Day (the centers clean up day). Any holidays that falls on a weekend, if enrollment is low on the following Monday, we may also close. Also, any holiday that falls on a Tuesday or Thursday, we may close that Monday before or that Friday after. The center will open until 2:00 pm on both Christmas Eve and New Years Eve. (depending on the day it falls)

******I HAVE READ, UNDERSTAND AND AGREE TO ALL OF THE ABOVE RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE FIRST STEP NURSERY SCHOOL AND DAY CARE CENTER, INC. I WILL SIGN THE BOTTOM PORTION OF THIS CONTRACT AND RETURN IT TO THE CENTER WITH ALL OF THE REGISTRATION FORMS. A COPY OF THIS AGREEMENT WILL BE MADE FOR ME UPON REQUEST ONLY.***

Parent Name: _____

Parent Signature:

Date: _____

THE FIRST STEP EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN

This plan is designed to help all children and staff members safely evacuate the building during an emergency, specifically during a fire. Our building is equipped with an automatic fire alarm system to warn us of fire. Our building is also equipped with an automatic suppression system (sprinklers) to help put the fire out.

WHAT TO DO IF THE FIRE ALARM SOUNDS

If the fire alarm goes off staff members are to get the children in their classroom, along with their emergency cards and attendance sheets and go to the designated exit and leave building, by walking to the nearest exit and then to the designated evacuation location, Fort Lee Community Center. Staff will count and roll call the children before leaving the center, while walking and when they arrive at designated evacuation location, Fort Lee Community Center. Staff and children shall stay there and wait for the fire department to arrive.

In case of any other kind of disaster (natural or civil), staff members are to again, stop what they are doing and get the children and their emergency cards and attendance sheets to the designated exit and walk to the Fort Lee Community Center. Staff and children stay there until parents are notified by telephone so they can pick their child up. If cell service is out and we are unable to reach you please pick your child up at The Fort Lee Community Center located at 1355 Inwood Terrace Fort Lee, NJ.