

Parent Information Book

**Touch By An Angel ®**

 **Learning Institutions**

**6222- 6224 W. North Ave.**

**Chicago, Illinois 60639**

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Dear Parents,

Welcome to Touch By An Angel®

This parent handbook has been written with two purposes: to share basic information about how Touch By An Angel® Centers operate, and to explain the strong leadership role that parents play at the centers.

Touch By An Angel® programs exist as a place where children learn, and enjoy themselves in the process, because of the care and energy that parents and staff put forth. Without this kind of energy, the Centers could not exist.

We hope that you will take some time to sit down, relax, and read this handbook carefully. You are expected to be familiar with its contents. If you have any questions or if anything is unclear to you, please share this with us. In addition, your comments are always welcome. We are always open to better ways of doing things.

Thank you for giving your attention to this handbook. It was designed to ensure that we can work together to provide the best program and service possible for your children and your family. We look forward to your participation here at Touch By An Angel ® Centers and to our involvement with you and your family.

Your Partners in education,

*Angel Humphrey, CEO, EMBA*

*Robert Humphrey, CFO, BS Business Management*

**Touch By An Angel® Learning Institutions**

*“Preparing Tomorrow’s Future, Today…”*

**MISSION**

Our mission is to educate every child to be an academically successful student, a socially responsible citizen, and a life-long learner.

Vision

Touch By An Angel ® will be a leader in early childhood education as well as Pre-primary education to enlighten and empower the urban community.

*The aim of pre-primary education is to promote children’s preparedness to learn and level off the differences before basic education.*

**Core Values**

**Accountability-** We emphasize diligence and innovation in order to promote efficient and effective learning.

**Communication-** In order to promote understanding and accessibility we encourage sharing ideas and information.

**Community-** We support our community by promoting collaboration and cooperation in activities that enhance the quality of life.

**Diversity-** We value differences among individuals and prepare ourselves to live successfully in a global society.

**Integrity-** Our policies and practices center around honesty, professional ethics, responsibility, and fairness.

**Learning-** We promote student-centered learning and Life Long Learning among staff, families and students.

**Quality-** We emphasize continuous improvement in the quality of student learning experiences.

**Respect-** We appreciate and consider the choices, endeavors and relationships of others.

**Service-** We are committed to providing supportive services that meet the needs of our students, staff and families.

**Goals**

* Provide learning opportunities of different levels and types to promote learning, personal growth, skill improvement, and academic development.
* Sustain and enlarge partnerships with community organizations, businesses, and industries to support community growth and enhancement.
* Institute an assessment process to evaluate student growth and improve instruction.
* Sponsor events and develop curricula to promote cultural and global awareness.

**T.B.A.A SPIRIT**

Touch By An Angel ® Learning Institutions are neighborhood childcare centers that are committed to providing a cooperative, welcoming, and respectful environment for all children, families, and staff. This work is not due to the nature of family and community life, a mere job. Rather, it is a commitment to the continued growth and development of children, parents, staff, and volunteers. It is in this spirit that our Parent Handbook was developed.

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**Touch By An Angel ® Learning Institutions**

**Parent Hand-Booklet**

 The following documents outline the program and the responsibilities of the provider(s) and the parent(s). Here at TBAA, we have a well-qualified staff that provides excellent care services for your child/children’s needs. Please review this booklet completely.

**Program**

 It is the philosophy of Touch By An Angel ® Learning Institutions that early childhood should be a time of fun, warmth, security, exploring, and discovery. Children are creative and receptive; the staff strives to nurture and encourage these qualities in the children who attend.

**Standards**

 The City of Chicago Department of Business & the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services license Touch By An Angel ® Learning Institutions. We undergo regular, outside monitoring including health, sanitation, and safety inspections. Its operation is governed by a Board of Directors and paid Directors.

**Admission**

 Children who are 6 weeks to 12 years of age are eligible to enroll in the program

Admission requirements and enrollment procedures are as follows:

1. Classes are filled on a first-come/first-served basis according to the date of enrollment with the director.
2. If the classes are filled when a parent calls, the child’s name will be put on a waiting list to fill vacancies as they occur.
3. As vacancies occur during the year, they are filled from a waiting list, or new registrations, according to the above procedures.

**Location(s)**

 Our program is located at 6222-6224 W. North Avenue in Chicago, Illinois. Please use the 6224 entrance.

**Days and Hours of Operation**

 We are open Sunday through Saturday from 6 am until 8:00 pm.

**Records**

When you enroll your child/children at Touch By An Angel ®®, you are asked to supply personal information, including your address, home, cell and work numbers, place of employment, and names and phone numbers of at least 3 people to be contacted in case of an emergency. **If any information changes, please let us know Immediately! It is very important that we have current emergency contact information** **for your child(ren)**. If you do not have a home phone or cellular number, you will be required to give us a 4th emergency contact person and phone number. It puts all of us in a difficult situation when a child is ill or you are delayed in picking up your child(ren), and we cannot reach you because we do not have your current information.

**Arrival/Departure of Children & Handwashing Policy**

 Upon arrival, students, staff, and parent volunteers are required to properly wash their hands to alleviate any outside germs. Students and staff are required to properly wash their hands after recess, bathroom breaks, meal service times, coughing/sneezing, and any activity that may involve communication with germs.

 Additionally, parents are required to sign in/out on their child/children’s attendance sheet(s) & electronically sign (E-sign) their child/children in/out with their ID code on the sign-in Kiosk. Here at TBAA we understand and value precious time. To expedite arrival & departure times, parents/guardians that have 2 or more enrolled children have the option of having their children listed & combined on 1 attendance sheet per month. Reducing sheets also assists in creating a greener environment within our program. If this is the perfect option for your family, we certainly need to know this important information before or upon enrollment of your children. Of course, this may be changed at any time upon request.

Lastly, it is important that you escort your child/children inside the daycare facility to ensure that they arrive safely. This also provides a smoother, calmer beginning of the day for you, your child, and your child’s teacher. It provides an opportunity for your child’s teacher to share important information with you and for you to share any new information about your child. We encourage parents to drop off their children on time for school and to keep in mind that classes start at 9:30 am. Any parent who brings a student after 9:30 am will be charged an inconvenience fee of $1.00 p/minute NO EXCEPTIONS!

**Discharge procedures**

 All children shall be discharged from the facility only to the parent(s) or guardian(s) or to a person 13 years and older designated in writing by the parent(s) or guardian(s) to receive the child. TBAA staff shall refuse to release any child to a person, whether related or unrelated to the child, who has been or appears to be intoxicated.

 Persons not known to the provider and/or staff shall be required to provide a driver’s license or photo identification card issued by the Illinois Secretary of State or their state’s Secretary of State office prior to a child’s release to them. The time of each child's departure from the center shall be noted on the daily attendance sheets and initialed, or signed by the person to whom the child is released.

**Late Pick-up**

 When a child is still in attendance after business hours, TBAA will make 3 attempts to contact the parents and/or legal guardians, we will also make 3 attempts to contact all emergency contacts on file. The center will keep the child a ½ hour after making such attempts. After all attempts have been made TBAA will request for police assistance in finding parents & emergency contacts.

**Fines**

 Unless an emergency occurs, any parent who arrives any time after 9:30 am will be charged an inconvenience fee of $1.00 per minute. Also, any parent who arrives after 6:00 pm or after their written agreed scheduled pickup time will be charged a late fee of $1.00 per minute.

 Procedures for being late

 \*Call a half-hour before drop-off/pick-up time

 \*Call before naptime (please do not call between 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm)

 \*Inform the staff in advance

Though these procedures do not excuse the inconvenience/late fee, it does give the staff time to know when the child/children shall arrive or shall be ready. \*\*All fines are due every Friday by 8:00 pm

**Attendance**

 In order for your child to benefit and learn from the activities at Touch By An Angel ® Centers, maximum attendance is necessary. Therefore, All Children Are Expected To Attend Daily. Exceptions are certainly made for vacations and illnesses, but we need to know about this. If you know that your child will be absent please notify us. The Daycare is Not a “Drop-In & Out” Program! If your child is absent for two consecutive days without any explanation, we will make every effort to contact you to find out why. If your child is absent for three or more days due to illness, you will need to bring in a note from your child’s healthcare provider before he/she can return to the program.

**Transportation Rates**

 1-5 Blocks radius =$7.00, additional sibling $2, 6-10 Blocks radius =$8.00, additional sibling $2

 10-15 Blocks radius =$9.00, additional sibling $2, 15 Blocks or more =$10.00, additional sibling $2

\*\*All rates are per child; please add an additional $2 per additional child from the same school.

Transportation services areas are as follows:

* Up to Roosevelt going South
* Up to Fullerton going North
* Up to Harlem going West
* Up to Damen going East

If you require services outside of these areas please send your request to TouchByAnAngelCenters@gmail.com

**TRANSPORTATION POLICY**

The safety of children and staff must be provided in all activities of childcare programs. Proper restraint systems and the correct use of them are critically important during travel to/from the child care program as well as a part of the activities of the setting.

**Procedure and Practices, including responsible person(s):**

* Consent for Child Care Program Activities form will be filled out for each child being transported.
* Smoking is prohibited in vehicles used to transport children.
* Children will be transported properly in a seat belt, car seat, or booster seat according to current Illinois regulations. Parents may be required to supply a booster or car seat as needed for their child if field trips involving use of transportation are a part of the program. Staff will be sure that car seats, booster seats and seat belts are used properly and each child is properly secured before setting the vehicle in motion. Staff will assist with releasing children from their transportation safety restraints, when needed. All adults in the vehicle will use proper restraining devices according to the vehicle manufacturer’s recommendations.
* The number of passengers in the vehicle will not exceed the manufacturer’s stated capacity for the vehicle.
* Children will be prohibited from eating, drinking, standing, or other dangerous or distractive activities during transportation.
* Children will never be left unattended in a vehicle, even for brief periods. All children will be accompanied by an adult to/from the vehicle to insure safety.
* All children will be accounted for before leaving the facility and again before returning.
* All travel routes will be planned in advance.

**Vehicle Requirements**

* Only insured, licensed, well-maintained vehicles will be used to transport children.
	+ A back up vehicle will be available if needed and can be dispatched immediately in case of an emergency.
	+ A first aid kit and list of emergency contacts for all children and adults will be in the vehicle during transportation of children.
	+ A cell phone will be available in case of emergency.

**Driver Qualifications**

* + Drivers will be legally-licensed and shall not be under the influence of any chemical substance that may alter their ability to drive safely.
	+ Drivers will meet staff qualifications including a criminal history check.
	+ Drivers will be first aid and CPR certified if another staff member present is not.
	+ Drivers will obey all traffic regulations.
	+ The driver shall not be included in the child: staff ratio. Drivers must not be distracted from safe driving practices by being simultaneously responsible for the supervision of children.
	+ The driver will be familiar with the planned route ahead of time.
	+ Drivers will have evidence of a safe driving record for the previous 5 years.
	+ To prevent distractions the driver is not permitted to talk on a cell phone or play loud music.

**When the policy applies:**  This policy is in force anytime the childcare program transports children. Staff will adhere to the policy guidelines even if no children are present when using a vehicle owned by the childcare facility.

**Communication plan for staff and parents:**

* Policies, plans, and procedures with all new staff (paid and volunteer) will be covered during orientation training. They will sign that they have read, understand, and agree to abide by the content of the policies.
* During enrollment, this policy will be reviewed by a director with the parents. Parents will sign that they have read, understand, and agree to abide by the content of the policies.
* A copy of all policies will be available during all hours of operation to staff and parents in the policy handbook.
* Parents may receive a copy of the policy at any time upon request. A summary of this policy will be included in the parent handbook.
* Parents and staff will receive written notification of any updates.
* Parents will sign a consent for Childcare Program Activities form for all outings where transportation is required.

**Tuition**

Rates are as follows: \*Half days equal 4 hours or less.

Infants: 6 weeks - 19 months $335 p/week, $67.00 p/full day or $35.00p/half day

 Toddlers: 20 months – 35 months $270.00 p/week, $54.00 p/full day or $28.00 p/half day

 Preschool: 3 years – 5 years $230 p/week, $46 p/full day or $23 p/half day

 School-age: 5 ½ years – 12 years $230.00 p/week, $46.00 p/full-day or $23 p/part-day afternoon

TBAA Kidz Kamp: June-August 31st -$175.00 p/week (excluding field trip fees & lunch for field trips)

**Private Payment Policies**

 Private tuition is due every Friday before the beginning of a new week or every month on the 1st or the first Monday of the new month, and tuition must be paid whether or not the child/children attend. If a parent pays weekly, and tuition is not received by 6:00pm Friday evening there will be a $5.00 late fee each day starting the same day. If a parent pays monthly and tuition is not received by the 1sth of the current month there will be a $5.00 late fee each day starting the same day.

**Subsidy Payments**

 If parents are assessed a tuition co-payment fee, payments are due every month on the 1st. If tuition copayment is not received by the 5th there will be a $**5.00 late fee per day**, starting the same day.

**Enrollment documents**

 Any child to be enrolled for the first time is required to have within 30 days of enrollment a certified copy of the child's birth certificate or other reliable proof of identity and age of the child.  The center shall make a duplicate and return the original certified copy to the parent or guardian no later than the end of the next business day after receipt. If a certified copy of the birth certificate is not available, the parent or guardian must submit a passport, visa or other governmental documentation as proof of the child's identity and age and an affidavit or notarized letter explaining the inability to produce a certified copy of the birth certificate. The center's notice to parent or guardian shall also indicate that the center is required by law to notify the Illinois State Police or local law enforcement agency if the parent or guardian fails to submit proof of the child's identity within the 30 day time frame.

**Enrollment fee**

 There is a $100.00 enrollment fee per child and the fee is non-refundable. The enrollment fee covers a child’s registration, school uniform shirt for field trips and outings, locker for student & paperwork processing. Enrollment fees are due prior to a student’s start date.

**Enrollment Deposit**

 If a parent and/or guardian wishes to have their child/children start prior to approval of the subsidy program a $250.00 deposit fee is required, and will be credited to their account (minus the approved copayment) once approval has been determined by Illinois Action for Children.

**New & Redetermination Applications**

 Any parent who has a child approved under the subsidy program is required to bring in their application to Touch By An Angel ® child care facility along with two (2) current consecutive checks and/or current school schedule, and submit all information to a Director of TBAA’s program.

**Calendar Year/Outstanding Balances**

Touch By An Angel ® calendar year ends on December 31st of the current year; in order to zero out all accounts for the new calendar year any & all outstanding balances prior to this date (12/31) must be paid in full on or before December 31st of the current calendar year.

**Health Information & Medication Policy**

 Touch By An Angel ® does not administer any medication. Parents are advised to administer any and all medication prior to arrival of childcare program, and/or upon departure of program.

 Each child is required by state regulations to have on file a health statement, which includes a record of up to date immunizations and the signature of the child’s source of medical care. Each child who has not had a physical examination within the last year must have one before entrance into the childcare and preschool program. This physical may be done by a physician or public health nurse. The daycare must have on file for each child a signed Permission for Health Care authorizing emergency care and transfer of medical records to the local hospital. Emergency numbers for reaching the parent or guardian and another authorized person must also be on file. A child who arrives at the daycare facility noticeably ill, with a rash, or with a fever higher than 101 degrees will not be admitted for that day.

**Health check**

 Upon arrival, provider(s) and/or staff are to inspect each and every child for any minor/major cuts or bruises in the parent’s presence. If minor cuts and/or bruises are present, parents are to make a note of it on their child’s description sheet; if major cuts and/or bruises are present parents shall have to fill out an incident report detailing what occurred. Though every attempt will be made, Touch By An Angel ® Daycare and its staff shall not be held liable for any accidents or injuries that may occur while in care, this includes but not limited too transportation to and from field trips/public facilities.

**Illness/exclusion policy**

 PLEASE DO NOT SEND YOUR CHILD TO THE CENTER WHEN HE/SHE IS SICK! Sick children need their rest, which they cannot get in a room full of energetic, busy children. Also, a sick child can cause illness in other children, and for this reason TBAA staff shall conduct a daily, pre-admissions screening to determine if the child has obvious symptoms of illness. If symptoms of illness are present, the provider shall determine whether to provide care for the child, depending upon the apparent degree of illness. The parent will be consulted and possibly asked to pick up the child. Some forms of illness include, vomiting, wing worm, pink-eye, ear infections, rashes with/without diarrhea etc. In the case that your child becomes ill while at the Center, we will remove him/her from the classroom, place him/her in the designated isolation area, and a parent or guardian will be called and asked to pick-up the child. If a child has been under a doctor’s care for greater than 4 days, a doctors release form will be required upon readmission to the daycare.

NOTE: Children with diarrhea and those with a rash combined with fever (oral temp of 101 degrees or higher or under the arm temp of 100 degrees or higher) shall not be admitted to the day care while these symptoms persist, and shall be removed as soon as possible should these symptoms develop while the child is in care. Before your child returns to the Center after an illness, your child must be symptom free and meet all other requirements listed above.

**Diapering Policy**

Reason this policy is important:Children’s diapers, staff involved in changing diapers and the diaper changing area/supplies have the potential to spread germs and disease. Following proper procedures and room set up will reduce the contamination of the setting (hands, furnishings and floors) and decrease the risk of the spread of illness. Any infant/toddler program Teacher or Teacher’s Assistant should check children every ½ hour for soiled diapers, and immediately change the child diapers and/or clothes.

**Procedure and Practices, including responsible person(s):**

* Diaper changing table is sturdy, a convenient height (28”-32”) with a water proof pad in good repair (no cracks, ) and placed on a floor surface that can be cleaned and sanitized. (Tile, linoleum). (Carpet should not be used)
* Diaper changing is only done in designated area, positioned to allow for supervision of all children and not located in food preparation areas.
* Diaper changing supplies that may present a hazard shall be stored in an area inaccessible to children except during diaper changing.
* Diaper changing tables will not be used to store items other than diaper changing items (toys, papers, etc.., will not be placed on surface).
* A sink is within reach of diaper changing table to allow for proper hand washing immediately and a tightly covered, plastic lined, hands-free diaper pale is available next to diaper area.
* The child will not be left alone on changing table.

**Clothing/Personal Items**

Parents are responsible for supplying pampers, pull-ups, wipes, powder, lotion, ointment and specific formula (TBAA Centers provides Goodstart infant formula). These items are to remain stocked up at all times. If a child goes under his/her required supplies that child will not be permitted until needed items are re-stocked. Parents are also required to provide 2 pair of clothing and replace as the weather changes or as needed. Please be understanding if your child is not neatly “tucked in” after a day at the center. We do a lot of jumping, climbing, running, and other play. These activities do not lend themselves to preserving one’s appearance. If your school age child wears a uniform that you want protected, please feel free to leave a labeled set of clothes at the facility.

**Minor Accident/Illness**

1. First Aid will be administered at the Centers or on a field trip;
2. You will be contacted by phone or when you come to pick up your child (depending on the seriousness of the accident); and
3. An Accident/Incident Report will be completed.

**Major Accident/Illness**

1. If necessary, staff will call 911. Your child will be taken by ambulance to a medical facility;
2. You will be contacted immediately and asked to proceed to the medical facility that your child has been taken to;
3. Your child’s Emergency Authorization Form will be obtained from his/her file; and
4. An Accident/Incident Report will be completed.

\*All children need to have on file medical insurance documents in case a child needs to be taken to a medical facility, this includes a medical card if applicable.

**Universal Precaution Procedures (UPP)**

 Touch By An Angel ® makes every effort to control the spread of communicable illness and diseases. Staff, volunteers, children, and anyone else in direct contact with clients will practice universal precautions. Every staff member and volunteer will be trained on proper universal precaution procedures. Direct service staff will teach children routine and standard hygienic procedures and model these behaviors.

**First Aid/CPR**

 Staff at Touch By An Angel ® Centers are trained annually in First Aid, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), and Universal Precaution Procedures, and we are committed to preventing accidents by providing a well-supervised program. Annual training is held during May as a refresher and in October for renewal.

**Safety Precautions And Emergency Evacuations**

 The safety and well-being of the children in our care is our first priority, and precautions are taken to ensure that the center is a safe environment for children. For example, no child is ever left alone. Each child will be within the sight of an adult at all times. Staff follow a Site Safety Policy at all times to protect the health and safety of children.

**Fire And Tornado Drills**

 To ensure that children and staff will be quickly and safely evacuated from the buildings in the event of a fire or other emergency, emergency evacuation procedures and diagrams are posted in each classroom, and fire drills are practiced monthly. These procedures ensure that all children will be evacuated and that the fire department will be informed in case of emergency.

**Emergency Closing/Snow Day Policy**

 If public schools are closed because of the weather, the Centers will also be closed to our children. In case of any other emergency that forces us to close, you will hear from your child’s teacher or another staff member.

 **Field Trips**

 An important part of our curriculum is exposing the children to many and varied experiences within the community; therefore, several field trips are built into the year.

**Rules for field trips**

 All parents are welcome to volunteer on field trips with the children. The following rules must be adhered to at all times:

1. All children must be treated the same while on field trips-this means that parents cannot provide special treatment to their children during trips.
2. The group must stay together at all times;
3. Before the bus leaves the Centers, volunteers will be assigned two to three children to supervise to assist the teachers;
4. Siblings who are not enrolled in the program **CANNOT** attend field trips – **NO EXCEPTIONS!**
5. Souvenirs or treats must not be purchased on field trips unless they are purchased for **ALL** children;
6. Drugs or alcohol are **STRICTLY PROHIBITED!**
7. Smoking is not permitted around the children and throughout the duration of field trips. **Secondhand smoke has been proven to be hazardous to good health.**

\*\*Parents may be asked to accompany their child on all field trips if their child has documented behavioral concerns.

**Gym/Spanish Classes**

 Physical education and learning a different language is such an important part of our curriculum that’s why we’ve built in 4 days of P.E. as well as 2 days of Spanish.

**Nap time**

 An afternoon quiet time will be observed each day from 1:00 pm until 3:30 pm, unless your child/children are being picked up, or an emergency occurs, we do ask that all telephone calls and visits be restricted during this time.

**Meals & Snacks**

 Children will be served nutritious meals and snacks throughout the day according to their scheduled time in childcare, which will be as follows:

* Breakfast @ 7:00-7:15am
* Am snack @ 8:30am-9:00am
* Lunch @12:00pm-12:30pm
* Pm snack @ 3:10pm-3:30pm
* Dinner 4:00-4:30pm
* Evening snack 6:00pm-6:15pm

\*\* Information about any food allergies should be in writing and discussed prior to enrollment.

**~~Fundraising~~**

 ~~Our annual outdoor carnival is held every year in the month of September, and it is required that each enrolled family is to sell 10 tickets @ $10 p/ticket. All carnival money is due by the end of July of every year.~~

**Child Abuse & Neglect**

All staff of Touch By An Angel ® are mandated reporters of suspected child abuse and neglect in accordance with the State of Illinois Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act. This means that we are required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. As mandated reporters, staff has a responsibility to the safety of enrolled children in our program.

**Discipline**

 See Attached (Guidance & Discipline Policies)

**Touch By An Angel ® Learning Institutions**

Childcare professionals are in business to protect and care for children, not hurt them. Besides, such abusive conduct is against the law. For that matter, we do not ”punish" children. Instead, we provide guidance and discipline based on a clear set of simple, consistent, and easy-to-understand rules.

**We have 3 Rules —**

* **You can't hurt yourself.**
* **You can't hurt others.**
* **You can't hurt things.**

**Ages and Stages**

Touch By An Angel ® provides child care for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. While a new body of thought is emerging that considers all young children "infants" till they reach 3 years old, we use these categories to differentiate between obvious sub-groups:

* **Infants** — They are a challenge because they are so dependent on adults for their basic needs. They pose no discipline problem, but the most troublesome behavior tends to be crying. Infants cry because they are wet, hungry, cold, or lonely. Studies show that infants who have their needs met quickly, and who are held and comforted when they cry, develop a strong sense of security and well-being. At Touch By An Angel ® no child is allowed to cry unattended and infants receive special care and attention to their needs.
* **Toddlers** — Toddlers can be very challenging. Like babies, toddlers like to be held, talked to, and comforted. They may speak only a few words and this limited communication makes it hard to understand a toddler's needs. Still uncoordinated, they need constant supervision to ensure they do not hurt themselves. Plus, toddler behavior can be frustrating for slightly older children because, if allowed to roam, they can disrupt play by grabbing toys or stumbling into an ongoing activity.
* **Preschoolers** — Preschoolers are learning about the world around them. They ask lots of questions, and they love to imitate adults. They are learning to share and take turns (but don't always want to). Preschoolers are also quite independent. They like to try new things and often take risks. Getting attention is fun; being ignored is not. Preschoolers like to make decisions for themselves. Sometimes they can get carried away and break simple rules by exhibiting behavior that may tend to hurt themselves or others.

**Guidance and Discipline Techniques**

Here are the basic methods used by Touch By An Angel ® that form our approach to dealing with behavioral problems:

* **A Safe Environment** — One of the most important things a caregiver can do is set up a safe environment. Our entire facility is completely childproofed. For our main floor, that means that almost every single piece of adult furniture has been removed. (Why not? There's more room to play.) The only reachable shelves contain open-top toy bins. Of course, our electrical outlets and cabinetry have been child-proofed. Our yard is roomy and completely fenced in. Our outdoor equipment is manufactured especially for very few people to help prevent injury. Our inside toys are, in the main, incapable of inflicting injury and too large to swallow. Maintaining a safe environment avoids many, many problems.
* **Establish a Predictable Routine** — Touch By An Angel ® has established a daily routine that allows children to follow a consistent routine and schedule. Starting with morning arrival right through to afternoon departure, our children learn to expect a fun and balanced day. They are fed a nutritious breakfast, morning snack, full lunch, and afternoon snacks. See our Menus posted in the facility. They are presented with opportunities for group and individual play and activities. There are also appropriate "quiet" times and afternoon naps.
* **Set a Good Example** — Young children love to imitate adults as well as older children. Touch By An Angel ® is a team. We care for each other and demonstrate a warm and caring relationship throughout our day. We laugh, sing, and dance with our children. We cooperate as a team, share responsibilities and each willingly performs all necessary tasks. We encourage sharing and hugging. We discourage the use of rough language and do not permit imitations of violent and culturally insensitive play scenarios (e.g. "war" or "cowboys and Indians").
* **Praise** — Effective praising encourages learning, independence, and strong self-esteem in children. The key to effective praise is to be a coach more than a cheerleader. We explain to a child *how* they did something worthy of praise rather than merely saying, "good job." Praise, whenever merited, is truly wonderful to behold. One of the great blessings of this profession is the opportunity to watch a young child's eyes light up and the aura of self-awareness and pride emanates from the knowledge they have achieved something good, new or just plain nice. Effective praise engenders positive thinking.
* **Time Out** — Whoops! For the normal young child, sometimes learning happens when inappropriate conduct needs correction. Timeouts are imposed when both two criteria have occurred. First, one of the three rules (above) has been violated. Second, the child fails to take advantage of positive corrective alternatives presented at the first occurrence. In other words, the misbehavior continues despite good coaching. In this regard, typical behaviors may be pushing, biting, or grabbing away a toy being used by another child. At Touch By An Angel ® we care for very young children. Therefore, time-outs don't last long and consist of isolation while sitting in a chair or standing in the corner for a few minutes. Time outs give the child an opportunity to calm down and think about what has happened. Then the child is coached again and provided a positive alternative. Prudent timeouts do work well when they are required.
* **Natural and Logical Consequences** — Natural and logical consequences are effective in helping children see the connection between their actions and the results of their behavior. For example, the natural consequence of knocking the basketball hoop over is that the game comes to a halt, and the fun stops. On the other hand, logical consequences require adult intervention. For instance, a child may insist on removing a crayon or marker from the activity table for use on a wall or floor, or, intentionally collapsing the "ball pit" tent by jumping *on* it, instead of *in* it. In these cases, crayons and ball pit tents may have to "take a vacation" until the child settles down.
* **Distract, Redirect** — Distraction usually works well with very young children. Providing an alternative toy or activity may be the solution when natural curiosity interferes with the play activities of other children or important tasks being performed by staff. Redirection occurs when a child is engaged in unacceptable behavior that merely needs simple correction. A child throwing a plastic Legos® block for instance will be handed a soft, squeezable ball to throw instead.
* **Reward** — It’s more effective to reward good behavior than to punish bad behavior. Praise, of course, is an important way to foster appropriate conduct and self-control. At Touch By An Angel ® however, we do not employ material "reward" in exchange for desired behavior. For instance, we will not withhold a fruit item as an incentive to finish a vegetable item at meal times. Instead, we use subtle praise, hugs, and smiles to show that appropriate behaviors are valued and appreciated.
* **Temper Tantrums** — Again, at Touch By An Angel ® we care for young children 6 years old or younger. We experience few "temper tantrums" here, not because tantrums don't occur in our age groups, but perhaps because our consistent routines tend to prevent situations where tantrums are likely. Our children are not hungry, for instance. A toddler may begin crying in frustration because they cannot have a particular toy already in use. They are comforted and presented with a positive alternative or redirected to another activity. We believe that consistency of routine and a caring, attentive environment are most responsible for our "good fortune" in these cases.
* **Biting, Pushing, and Hitting** — Unlike temper tantrums, pushing and biting (or the attempt to bite) do occur on occasion. Thankfully, instances of hitting are almost non-existent here. Nevertheless, in our age categories, children are most likely to engage in this kind of unacceptable behavior. Infants learn by touching and feeling often using their mouth to taste an object. This isn't an unacceptable behavior. However, with older toddlers and preschoolers, we find two main instances where pushing or biting may occur. These are instances of frustration or overexcitement. Therefore, at Touch By An Angel ® we are to provide constant supervision over group play activities and are particularly watchful of youngsters who may use biting to express their feelings.
* **Cultural, racial, ethnic, or physical insensitivity** — Again, we are truly fortunate here at Touch By An Angel ®. We have yet to experience a child expressing comments or behaviors that indicate an intolerance or insensitivity to ethnic, racial, or cultural differences. We feel most of all that's because the parents of our children are well educated in these issues and are determined that their children be free of prejudice and intolerance. Moreover, the absence of these indicators is proof (to us, at least) that our children do not see, hear, or experience insensitivity in their homes. However, it is still our duty here at Touch By An Angel ® to foster knowledge and understanding of the world, including people of different races, religions, and incapacities. So we do. Our reading material is not only multicultural but provides a knowledge of the planet and our environment. We do not believe in television viewing, but we do use 30 minutes a day (immediately following lunch and prior to naptime) to watch Elmo® and/or Sesame Street® learning videos which are designed to include excellent cues to multicultural diversity learning and awareness.

**Confidentiality**

 All information regarding any child and his/her family will be kept strictly confidential. Staff members have the right to discuss children enrolled in the program with the Director(s) or owners. However, staff will not discuss confidential matters with staff members outside of this group, with other parents, or with acquaintances. Any breach of confidentiality will be disciplined. All confidential material is kept in a locked file. It cannot be disclosed without the parent’s and/or guardian’s permission.

Note: In accordance with the State of Illinois Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act, reporting suspected child abuse supersedes all confidentiality disclosure rules. TBAA, however, will maintain confidentiality to the highest degree possible in these instances.

**Withdrawal Notification**

 If a child needs to be withdrawn from the program, a 2 weeks written notice is required so that the vacancy can be filled by another child. The notice will clearly state when the last day of care is to be provided by the provider to the child/children. The parent(s) will owe the payment of care through the last day of care stated within the notice. If notification is not received within two weeks, parents are still responsible for tuition, and tuition will accumulate at the current daily rate agreed upon until notification is received.

**Communication with Parents**

 This booklet has been supplied in an effort to answer many of your questions. Please contact anyone on the staff if you have more questions. Parents are informed of the activities of the program through email, Remind® calendars or memos; information includes weekly topics, class activities, field trips, and suggestions for parents. Two parent conferences are offered during the year, one in the fall and one in the spring. Either the parent or the teacher may request an additional conference any time there is a special concern. Because of state regulations concerning class size and teacher ratio, it is not possible for children to bring friends to visit. Parents are encouraged to visit the program at any time. Because of occasional field trips and special activities, advance notice is suggested. If the teachers are not free to talk with you, please understand that the children come first during class time; the teachers will be happy to talk with you during nap time or after the children are dismissed. Please remember that this is your preschool and your child’s education, so come and find out what is happening!

**Parent Meetings**

TBAA has 2 seasonal quarterly meetings a year during the months of April (spring), & October (fall). Though these meetings are not mandatory we do ask that parents attend to know what’s going on throughout the program year.

**Training days**

 The center shall have a total of up to 5 institute days per calendar year. These days will be utilized for service training hours as well as emergencies. A 1-week notice will be given before any scheduled training days, and notice will be given ASAP for emergencies.

**Holidays**

 On the following State holidays, the childcare facilities are closed:

 (New Year’s Day & Day after)

 (Martin Luther King B-day)

 (Presidents Day)

 (Good Friday)

 (Memorial Day)

 (JuneTeenth)

 (Independence Day)

 (Labor Day)

 (Indigenous Peoples’ Day)

 \*(Halloween Day) Early dismissal

 (Thanksgiving Day & Friday)

 (Christmas Eve, Christmas Day & Day after)

 (New Year’s Eve)

**Diversity & Celebrations**

Celebrations are an integral part of our curriculum. We celebrate the diversity and uniqueness of each family. Personal and religious preferences are respected. We would like to share in your family traditions, celebrations, and holidays. Please share the celebrations that are important in your family and culture. Young children enjoy celebrating simple things. We celebrate a new class pet, a new book, and the repair of a broken toy, a loose tooth, a newly acquired skill, or the shining sun! Birthday celebrations are welcome. If you choose to celebrate your child’s birthday we encourage you to donate a birthday book to the classroom in honor of your child’s special day, or fun stickers, colored pencils & coloring pages/books are always welcome as well ☺. We ask that you NOT bring a snack for the birthday celebrations.

**Toys & personal items**

There are a wealth of toys, games, and manipulatives in our programs. These materials have been selected with specific developmental stages in mind. We ask that your child NOT bring toys to school unless the teacher has communicated this desire to you. Young children have a difficult time sharing, especially special toys from home. Touch By An Angel ® has a zero-tolerance policy for weapons (real or toys) on our school’s premises. This policy is strictly enforced. We do not encourage or allow rough-and-tumble play or pretend play that supports fighting.

**Conclusion**

Thank you for reading this entire Booklet! We hope it has helped you to understand what we are all about, what we expect of you, and what you can expect from us! The Centers are very dynamic places. Children make it that way, as do the parents and staff. We look forward to your support, friendship, and involvement here at Touch By An Angel ® Centers.

**I have read and received the following handbook of Touch By An Angel ® which includes the following topics:**

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1st Parent/Guardian signature SS# Date

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Parent/Guardian signature SS# Date