

First United Methodist



Child Development Center Day Care and Parents Day Out

Parent Handbook

Revised July 2026

3425 N Ocoee Street
Cleveland, TN 37312
Phone: 423.478.1426

Dear Parents,

We welcome you and your family to First United Methodist Child Development Center and Parents Day Out! It is a privilege to work with your child and to get to know your family. Our prayer is that this CDC/PDO year will be a special one in the growth and development of your child. We are excited about the programs the CDC/PDO staff has planned for you.

As the Director of CDC/PDO, my office is always open for any concerns or praises you may have.

If you do not have a church home, we invite you to visit First United Methodist Church. We offer a 10:30 JAM (Jesus and ME) children's program on the 2nd – 5th Sunday of each month. On the 1st Sunday, we have a family Sunday with children invited to the Sanctuary. There is a nursery and a class for younger children every Sunday. We are a welcoming, friendly church and would love for you to visit. Our Ministerial staff is always available for your needs.

Welcome to the Child Development Center, Parents Day Out, and First United Methodist Church!

Love in Christ,

Amanda Ratcliff, Director

Ashley Dixon, Assistant Director

Train children in the way they should go; when they grow old, they won't depart from it.

Proverbs 22:6

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1. Purpose and Goals

PURPOSE OF OUR PROGRAM

At First United Methodist Child Development Center and Parents' Day Out, we strive to provide a balanced program that will further the emotional, social, mental, spiritual, and physical development of each child.

Our Program is a church-related program ministry. We strive through actions and teaching to give our children basic Christian concepts. We want the children to feel and experience God's love.

Our staff have concern and love for the children. Our staff is trained in CPR and First Aid and continues to grow professionally through training and workshops in child development.

PURPOSE OF LICENSING

Rules of Tennessee Department of Human Services
Chapter 1240-04-01

Licensure Rules for Child Care Agencies

<https://publications.tnsosfiles.com/rules/1240/1240-04/1240-0401.20220629.pdf>

The purpose of licensing is the protection of children while under the care of childcare agencies licensed by the Department of Human Services and to promote developmentally appropriate practices that enhance early learning and foster parental engagement.

The basic requirements in these rules seek to maintain adequate health, safety, and supervision of children while in a licensed care setting.

GOALS FOR CHILDREN ATTENDING

1. Develop an awareness that every person was created by GOD, in his image, and is worthy of love.
 2. Acquire knowledge from the Bible so the child will grow in faith and have a clearer understanding of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.
 3. Experience loving care from adults whose lives exemplify commitment to the principles and truths contained in God's Holy Word.
 4. Learn more about self and others through play and instructions.
 5. Obtain personal and spiritual growth in their lives.
 6. Be encouraged to develop skills and abilities to communicate effectively with their teachers and other children at an appropriate age level.
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2. General Policies

Criteria for Enrollment

CDC	PDO
Ages 6 weeks to 5+ years; Full-time	Ages 2, 3, 4, and 5; Must be 2 by August 15; part-time programs available; 3s and above must be fully potty trained
All forms must be completed before your child's enrollment. Updated Immunization records on a Tennessee Department of Health Certificate of Immunization form, as required by the state, must be signed or stamped by a physician or the Health Department and updated regularly. The Board reserves the right to disenroll any child whose records are not kept up to date. The Center does not take children that are not Immunized.	All forms must be completed before your child's enrollment. Updated Immunization records on a Tennessee Department of Health Certificate of Immunization form, as required by the state, must be signed or stamped by a physician or the Health Department and updated regularly. The Board reserves the right to disenroll any child whose records are not kept up to date. The Center does not take children that are not Immunized.
Children grouped by age (school cohort) and will transition each August. Any deviation will be communicated to parent.	Classes arranged by age (2s, 3s, 4s) based on age on August 15 th .

Hours of Operation

CDC	PDO
Monday–Friday, 7:30am–5:30pm	9:00am–2:00pm; Several program options: • 2-day (T/Th) • 3-day (M/W/F) • 5-day (M–F)

CDC	PDO
Observes the following holidays: New Years Day Good Friday Memorial Day Independence Day Labor Day Thanksgiving and following day Week of Christmas Late pick-up after 5:30pm incurs \$1/min fee	In addition to the holidays listed for CDC, the PDO program follows the Bradley County School calendar for Fall Break, Christmas Holiday and Spring Break. Late pick-up after 2:00pm incurs \$1/min fee

Tuition & Payment Policies

CDC	PDO
Full month due at enrollment; tuition due 1st day of the month. Family could be dismissed upon failure to pay timely.	Tuition due 1st day of the month; assessed monthly regardless of attendance. Family could be dismissed upon failure to pay timely.
Rates: Crib/Pre-Toddler \$975, Toddler \$850, 2–5 years \$750/month	2-days: \$210/mo; 3-days: \$315/mo; 5-days: \$525/mo
\$50 annual activity fee; \$25 returned check fee	\$50 Registration Fee; \$25 returned check fee
ProCare ACH required (additional \$25 if not utilized)	Same as CDC
No tuition reduction for absences, illness, or up to 5 emergency/snow days	Same as CDC
Two weeks' notice required for withdrawal or two weeks' tuition charged.	Same as CDC

CDC/PDO Tax ID for childcare expenses: 620550563

Absence, Arrival & Departure

- Notify the center director before arrival time if your child will be absent.
 - **Arrival:**
 - CDC: Arrive by 9:00 am to minimize disruptions.
 - PDO: Do not arrive before 9:00 am (teachers set up beforehand).
 - Please notify your child's teacher in advance of any anticipated absences or delays for appointments, etc.
 - **Departure:**
 - CDC: Pick-up by 5:30 pm
 - PDO: Pick-up by 2:00 pm
 - Use the south side entrance under the covered walkway for both.
 - Only authorized adults may pick up children (ID required if unknown to staff).
 - South side entrance is a **NO PARKING ZONE**.
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Curriculum

- We focus on a Christian, developmentally appropriate curriculum with stories, games, crafts, music, and group activities.
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Rest Periods

CDC	PDO
Per state licensing requirements, children will have a two our rest period after lunch.	Children under three will have a rest period (nap) after lunch.

Clothing & Possessions

- All removable clothing/items must be labeled with the child's first & last name.
- Provide weather-appropriate clothing and shoes.
- Extra clothes are required for all children (especially non/toilet trained).
- For those children who are not potty trained, send enough disposable diapers, along with wipes and cream, for the day. Send a minimum of six diapers.
- Comfort toys for nap time are allowed (labeled).
- Toys from home only for dedicated events/show and tell.

Meal Service

- Parents provide lunch which will be refrigerated as needed.
- For infants in the CDC, parents must provide unopened jars of baby food, as regulated by the state of TN. Please bring bottles already prepared. Due to the extreme risk of choking, solid foods (including cereal) shall not be given in bottles or with infant feeders to children with normal eating abilities unless authorized by a physician and a written prescription. **NO EXCEPTION.**
- Lunches must be nutritious and should include protein, fruit, vegetable, and bread.
- Food should be pre-cut into bite-sized pieces for all children.
- Teachers are not permitted to use a microwave to warm food due to the dangers of 'hot spots'. Utilize a thermos if warm food is desired.
- The center provides milk for lunch, and water for snack. Juice is only provided at classroom parties.
- All food, cups, and containers must be labeled and sent home daily for washing.
- The center provides a mid-morning snack.
- Severe food allergies: Parent must provide all food if medication on site is required.
- All items must be labeled with the child's first and last name.
- Birthday celebrations are welcome (healthy treats preferred, ingredient list must be included if food is provided). Additional options include stickers or appropriate favors.

Health, Medical & Medication Policies

- **Stay Home Requirements:**

- Fever $\geq 100.7^{\circ}$, vomiting, diarrhea, unexplained rash, or draining eye: must be symptom-free for 24 hours before returning.
- If a child becomes ill while in day care (fever, vomiting, diarrhea, rash of unknown nature, draining from the eye or any other signs of illness) the parents will be contacted and expected to pick up the child within one hour. The child may not return until they have been symptom free for 24 hours. A doctor's slip may be required by the director if there is a question about the child's illness.
- If COVID-19 positive: fever & symptom free for 24 hours before return.
- Lice/scabies: Must show proof of treatment and be nit-free.

- **Communicable Disease:**

- The center will use the Reference Guide for Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and the website of the American Academy of Pediatrics to decide when a child may re-enter care following specific contagious diseases. The website is located at www.aap.org.
- A child diagnosed with a communicable disease shall have proof of treatment before readmission.
- All communicable illnesses will be posted to notify parents of potential exposure. Confidentiality will always be maintained.
- The occurrence of any communicable disease will be disclosed to the local health department no later than the end of the day on which it is discovered.

- **Medication:**

- Only prescription meds needed more than twice a day, with proper form and labeling, will be administered.
- The medicine must be received by the director, assistant director or staff in charge. Parents must complete a medication form in its entirety and take medication home each day at pickup. Medication must be labeled with the child's name.

- No OTC meds in diaper bags.
- No over-the-counter drugs, such as Tylenol or gas drops, can be kept in diaper bags that are left at school.
- Allergy-related medications for emergency rescue to allergic reactions will be kept in the classrooms for immediate access with the proper administering information complete on a medicine form. All staff will be trained on the use of this medication.
- Please notify the office whether your child has or develops any medical conditions that they may need care for, or the staff would need to be aware of during their time at the center. (Examples: allergies to food, bee stings, asthma, hives, diabetes, etc.)

Inclement Weather

CDC	PDO
Does NOT follow city/county schools; notifications via ClassDojo	Follows Bradley County School weather closings; check local news

Behavior Management, Biting & Expulsion

- **Behavior Management**
 - We focus on rewarding positive behavior and if needed, we use redirection.
 - Staff will reassess the classroom environment, appropriate activities, and supervision. Staff will always use positive methods and language while managing classroom behaviors.
 - Staff will try to redirect children from negative behavior and praise appropriate behaviors
 - Child will be given verbal warnings, clear rules, and time to regain control.

- Staff will consistently apply consequences for rules.
- Disruptive behavior will be documented and maintained in confidentiality with verbal notification to the parent. Written documentation will be provided if the behavior might lead to expulsion. Parent/Guardian will be notified verbally.
- The Director or parent is involved only if the behavior threatens safety to the child or others, if it becomes significantly worse, or if it becomes increasingly frequent.
- **Extreme Behavior**
 - A severe bite or physical attack would be defined as one that would cause a deep bruise or break in the skin.
 - Continued classroom disturbances would be defined as any behavior that causes the teacher to lose control of the classroom, to focus on the child, and ask for assistance from the director regularly.
 - As a rule, we will use the following steps for extreme cases of inappropriate behavior, such as *severe biting, *severe physical attack, or continued classroom disturbances.
 - First incident of extreme behavior will result in a strong warning to the child, and the parent may be called and required to pick up the child. The child may return the following day.
 - Second incident will require parents to be called to pick up the child. The child will be suspended for a period of three to five days, during which tuition will still be charged.
 - Third or subsequent incident will result in the Director recommending to the Board a specific course of action, which may include requiring attendance to the Regional Intervention Program, removal of the child from the program for a specific time or dismissal from the program if deemed appropriate.
 - If a child is expelled from the CDC or PDO Program, parents will be referred to tn.gov to help locate childcare. (Expulsion Policy is attached)

- The CDC/ PDO Board reserves the right to remove a child from the program without following these steps if, in the opinion of the Board, failure to remove the child poses a serious threat to the health or safety of other children/staff. The Board's decision on these matters is final.

- **Biting:**

- Biting is not unexpected when toddlers are in group care.
- Biting happens for a variety of reasons and most of these are not related to behavior problems. Therefore, we do not focus on punishment for biting but on effective techniques that address the reason.
- Approach to biting instances:
 - Care for and help the child at was bitten.
 - Help the child who bit learn more appropriate behaviors.
 - Removing attention from the child that bites and placing attention on the child bitten.
 - Express strong disapproval of biting.
- Incident report completed and signed by a parent.
- In the event of episodes of ongoing biting, we will develop a plan of specific strategic techniques and communicate those to the parent. See extreme behavior below.

- **Expulsion:**

- Unfortunately, there are sometimes reasons we must ask that a child be removed from our program either on a short term or permanent basis. We want you to know we will do everything possible to work with the family of the child to prevent this policy from being enforced.
- An expulsion action is meant to be a period so that the parent/guardian may work on the child's behavior or come to an agreement with the childcare agency.
- The parent/guardian will be informed regarding the length of the expulsion policy.
- The parent/guardian will be informed about the expected behavioral changes required for the child or parent to return to daycare.

- Additionally, a child can be expelled for parental actions such as, but not limited to:
 - Failure to pay timely
 - Failure to complete required forms including immunization records
 - Habitual tardiness at drop off or pickup
 - Verbal abuse to staff
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- The CDC/PDO Board reserves the right to remove a child from the program without following these steps if, in the opinion of the Board, failure to remove the child will pose a serious threat to the health or safety of other children/staff. The Board's decisions on these matters are final.

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- **All incidents are documented by the program administration and the teacher.**
 - Parents must sign an accident report for any injury that leaves a mark/bruise.
 - Serious injury: immediate parental notification, possible ER visit at director's discretion. Transportation may be by director or ambulance.
 - Names of children who inflict injury are confidential.
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Outdoor Play

- State law requires daily outdoor play for all children, weather permitting.
- Severe weather is defined as rain, storm watches or warnings, and a temperature below 32 degrees or above 98 degrees.
- Any child who is unable to go outside for regular play should not be brought to the center.
- Make sure your child has a hat, sweater, coat, sunscreen or anything else they may need. Not having proper attire will not exclude outdoor time.
- Remember to label all items with their first and last name

Conferences & Observations

- Parent-teacher conferences are offered each spring/fall; additional conferences may be held as needed by request.
 - Observations by non-staff require parental permission.
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Toys

- Toys from home only for show and tell or naptime comfort items; must be labeled.
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Firearms, Smoke-Free

- Firearms are prohibited on campus (exception: law enforcement).
 - Smoke-free campus/policy includes e-cigarettes.
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Emergency Procedures

- In the case of extreme emergency, First United Methodist would respond in correlation with the Emergency Management Agency and would follow the steps outlined by the agency according to the circumstances of the emergency.
 - In the event of an evacuation, two church vans and staff cars would be utilized to transport our children to Wesley Memorial Church, Ocoee Middle School or Food City, the location deemed the safest place for our children.
 - Each teacher has an emergency kit prepared that contains supplies and contact numbers.
 - By signing the permission form for emergency evacuation, you are releasing the center from any liability during an emergency evacuation procedure.
 - **Parents will be notified of an evacuation and pick-up location on the ClassDojo. Please be advised that you must notify the office if your home, work or cell numbers change. It is imperative that we are always able to contact you or a designated emergency contact.**
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Staff Credentials

- Parents may review staff credentials by request (schedule with the director).
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Parent Communication, Open Door, Concerns

- Communication via ClassDojo. Register utilizing the QR code that is provided in the welcome packet. Please can to join for class notifications.
 - Newsletters are posted:
 - CDC: Parent board outside crib room.
 - PDO: Parent board at hall's end.
 - Quick updates at pickup as available.
 - Parents are welcome to visit classrooms/volunteer; visits may be limited at the director's discretion. Conferences must be scheduled outside of class time as the teacher's first responsibility is the children.
 - All concerns should be addressed to the director.
 - Parents must notify the director of any change in your address, phone number, parental rights, or information concerning your child's health.
 - Enrollment forms should be reviewed and updated annually in August.
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3. Additional Information

- **Contact:** 3425 N Ocoee Street, Cleveland, TN 37312. Phone: 423.478.1426.
- **Ratios & Class Placement:** In accordance with TN DHS standards; details in office/by request.
- You may contact the chair of the board (contact information in the office) if questions or concerns are not addressed satisfactorily.