



*"Giving Parents a Choice and Children a Chance."*

**FORZA Child Development Center  
(FCDC)  
Preschool**

***4-Year-Old: VPK Program***

***3-Year-Old: PreK Program***

***4-Year-Old "Wrap-Around" Program:***

***With a Focus on Mastery of the ELLM/Plus  
Curriculum and Supported with STEM Activities***

# Parent Handbook

**Welcome to the FORZA Child Development  
Center!**

**Parrish locations: 8605 Erie Road, Parrish, FL 34219  
12214 US Hwy 301 N., Parrish, FL 34219**

**Naples location: 215 Airport Pulling Rd N, Naples, FL 34104**

**Bonita location: 28011 Performance Lane, Bonita Springs, FL 34135**

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## **THE FORZA CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER (FCDC) MISSION STATEMENT**

The Mission of the FORZA Child Development Center is to foster pride in reaching age appropriate milestones for all preschool students in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. Moreover, FCDC will make a concerted effort to provide learning opportunities and meaningful learning experiences that will result in every child entering Kindergarten ready to learn, ready to read, and ready to succeed! Keeping in mind that about 85 percent of a person's brain develops by age 5, it is so very evident that early learning is one of the most important keys to your child's long-term success. FCDC strives to provide your child with an environment that promotes significant learning gains and enhances their educational readiness for Kindergarten within a safe and orderly school atmosphere.

## **THE FORZA EDUCATION MANAGEMENT TEAM WELCOMES YOU!**

On behalf of the FORZA Education Management Team, we want to extend a very warm welcome to you and your child as members of our FORZA/GCCAS family. We are anticipating an incredible and exciting year at the FCDC. We know your child will have a unique and holistic learning experience here -- full of discovery, excitement, wonder, and attainment of significant learning gains, at an optimum level, in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains.

FORZA Education Management was founded on the principle of, giving parents a choice regarding their child's education and the children of today a chance to be successful. We believe that all children can and will learn, if given a chance. FORZA provides quality educational choices for parents and students based on individual student needs.

The FORZA team encourages you to become involved in your child's experiences at the FCDC and enjoy the many exciting milestones that your child will reach throughout the school year. Our Preschool Director, Misty Doyle, and Preschool Staff have developed unique and meaningful learning experiences, based on a sound and researched based curriculum entitled, "Early Literacy and Learning Model/Plus (ELLM/Plus)."

This Parent Handbook also offers information that should answer most of your questions. However, do not hesitate to contact our Director and/or Preschool Staff if you need further clarification. ***Your child will experience a learning environment that will produce memories that will last a lifetime!***

Sincerely,

**The FORZA Education Management Team**

## **A NOTE FROM: THE FORZA CHILD DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR**

I am looking forward to the partnership between FCDC and your family. As parents, you are the first and foremost important teachers in your child's life. Thank you for trusting us to disseminate meaningful learning experiences via the Developmental Domain Paradigm which in turn will enhance your child's ability to master the standards of the ELLM/Plus curriculum and subsequently the Florida Standards for Kindergarten.

This is an exciting time for your child and family as well. We are delighted and invigorated to be a part of this excitement! Thank you again for allowing us to be a significant part of your child's most formative years. Please see the important notification below re: Peanut/Peanut Oil Allergies.

With Great Expectations!

Misty Doyle

**IMPORTANT NOTIFICATION TO PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S) Re:  
Peanut/Peanut Oil Allergies**

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

FCDC maintains a “peanut sensitive environment.” This *Parent Handbook* presents and acknowledges the fact that most schools have at least one or more students that have been diagnosed as having a peanut/peanut oil allergy. If a child were to enroll into a FCDC School with a peanut/peanut oil allergy, FCDC would immediately enact its peanut allergy “Avoidance Strategies” which are already included in this Handbook. The purpose of said strategies are an effort to manage specific allergens to prevent anaphylaxis. In addition, coupled with the "Avoidance Strategies," are procedures and rules which will immediately go into effect petitioning all faculty, staff, parents, and students to abide by all pertinent and prudent safety regulations and safeguards pertaining to this allergy.

To provide the minimized allergen environment, it is critical to receive the full support and cooperation of the entire school community. Students are asked to bring lunches and snacks, moreover, any items sent to school for special occasions must be free of peanuts, tree nuts and products that may contain peanuts/tree nuts such as donuts, granola bars, etc. **This allergy can be so very devastating that the law requires that any food item with any ingredients from peanuts/nuts be designated on the label of that food product. Therefore, please check ALL food item labels for peanut/nut ingredients prior to sending them to school.**

**Truly, this is a life saving measure!**

It is understood that this request may require added planning and effort on your part when packaging your child’s lunch, snacks, and food items sent to school for special celebrations and we sincerely appreciate your support and cooperation.

Sincerely,

FORZA and FORZA CDC

**RATIONALE FOR PRE-K/VPK PROGRAMS**

For too long, Pre-K/VPK were considered simply as arbitrary preparations for kindergarten. However, the information/data collected from children who attended pre-kindergarten versus children who did not tells a different and much more compelling story. Pre-K/VPK impacts a child throughout their entire school experience, resulting in everything from heightened vocabulary scores to improved attendance and high school graduation rates. Other factors, such as stronger family relationships, increased number of job hours worked, avoidance of criminal behavior and reduced reliance on social support, even proof of increased earnings and better health, all stem from enrollment in Pre-K/VPK Programs.

Moreover, aside from the compelling, individual benefits of Pre-K/VPK Programs, the community is impacted on a very real level as well. Research supports the ideology that communities who invest in Pre-K/VPK

Programs experience considerable returns on their investment through hardworking private citizens, as well as those employed in the local, state, and federal governments. The Urban Child Institute acknowledges that big things start when children are small; and the Pre-K/VPK Programs are no exception. For every child in a community, regardless of social status, financial standing, or even family dynamics, overwhelming research supports the importance of building certain, critical skills before entering kindergarten; skills influence a child's in-school development and performance as well as their future adult lives as does the community in which the child resides. (Bibliography for the above research available upon request).

## **FCDC PHILOSOPHY**

FCDC's primary goal is to assist parents with the development of their child via a Holistic Approach to the Total Child in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. FCDC's process of promoting development in the domains is disseminated in FCDC's safe, secure and stimulating environment where nurturing, learning, exploring, and enrichment are integral components of your child's learning.

The FCDC's developmental process includes but is not limited to the following:

- Promotes differentiated instruction.
- Provides cognitive, recreational, creative cultural activities, which are varied - both planned and spontaneous.
- Encourages creativity and exploration.
- Perpetuates a progressive self-concept, heightened self-esteem, self-expression, self-direction and self-reliance.
- The Faculty and Staff affords meaningful learning experiences for students that enhances age-appropriate development of gross and fine motor skills, language and communications skills concurrently reinforcing effective listening skills.
- Adds Enrichment from resources, staff and experiences including the STEM Model/ Framework which fosters higher order thinking skills.

## **FCDC CURRICULUM**

The Early Literacy and Learning Model/Plus (ELLM/Plus) is a research-based, comprehensive curriculum for 3 and 4-year-old preschool children that has been proven to be effective improving children's early reading achievement via the Florida Institute of Education research studies. The literacy-focused curriculum builds children's cognitive development through literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, the arts, coupled with motor experiences, and physical health awareness. The students at FCDC acquire important cognitive and social/emotional development, facilitated by interacting with supportive teachers who encourage the student's curiosity, tenacity, and creativity by planning and implementing engaging activities coupled with providing support during meaningful learning experiences. ELLM/Plus is designed to expand your child's vocabulary and refine their understanding and comprehension of words they know and use. Moreover, the STEM curriculum coupled with age appropriate activities will be introduced to the child fostering an appreciation for an interdisciplinary approach of mastering the Science, Technology, Engineering,

and Math standards. The goal of this curriculum is that every child enters school ready to learn, ready to read, and ready to succeed. The overall curriculum reflects a developmental approach to teaching which supports FORZA's philosophy that children learn best when they are actively involved in the learning process.

The VPK Program is presented during the FCDC's wrap-around schedule. The State of Florida-funded Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) Program prepares Florida's children for a successful Elementary School experience, focusing on early language and literacy. This program prepares four-year-old children (child must be 4 on or before September 1 for VPK) and 5 on or before September 1 for Kindergarten, building a strong foundation for lifelong educational success. Classrooms are arranged into defined learning areas and structured settings with learning domains taught by highly trained and educated teachers. The curriculum matches the FORZA CDC's philosophy, wherein the development of the "Total Child," is the focus. Children in VPK not only develop skills in language, literacy, mathematics, science and social studies, but also creativity, listening, self-esteem, self-control, responsibility, and cognitive, social, emotional, physical development.

**The Developmental Domains of Learning used in VPK are:**

- Mastery Approaches to Learning
- Language and Communication
- Emergent Literacy
- Mathematical and Scientific Thinking
- Social Studies coupled with the Arts
- Social/Emotional Development along with internalizing appropriate values
- Motor Development and Physical Health.

**FORZA's Rationale for disseminating effective Preschool/VPK programs are based on Educational Studies that validated the following facts:**

- The most important growth and development in the brain happens by age five.
- The early years are the learning years.
- A child's ability to be attentive and to follow directions emerges in the early years.
- Structured early learning fosters abilities for later success in school and in life.
- Pre-K/VPK programs prepare children to be ready for school. Children who participate in high-quality Early Childhood Educational Programs develop in the child; better language skills, higher scores in school-readiness tests and students develop acceptable social skills coupled with fewer behavioral problems once they enter school.
- Children are proficiently prepared for Kindergarten, especially in the areas of pre-reading, pre-math and social skills.
- Pre-K/VPK instills a love of learning in children and instills a strong desire for life-long learning.
- Pre-K/VPK enhances what a child learns at home.

## **FORZA Child Development Center's Character Training Values**

Each month, the FCDC will focus on the following character training values. In the classroom, this can be achieved through discussions at circle time, role-play, music, stories along with spontaneous situations that arise each day. At home and while traveling in the car, parents can discuss these character traits as they discuss the day's events, situations that arise with siblings, etc., which will act as a reinforcer for learning and a more thorough understanding of the value under study.

- August:** Cooperation – Teamwork; Sportsmanship - Initiative, Creativity and Motivation  
**September:** Respect - Courtesy and Awareness; Attentiveness - Listening and Thoughtfulness  
**October:** Sharing - Generosity and Charity; Self-control - Moderation and Wisdom  
**November:** Thankfulness - Appreciation and Gratitude; Responsibility - Trustworthiness and Dependability  
**December:** Joyfulness - Cheer and Optimism; Wisdom and being able to employ Good Judgment which culminates the child's ability to realize reasonable forecast.  
**January:** Caring - Sympathy and Compassion; Patience - Persistence and Diligence  
**February:** Love - Gentleness and Empathy; Honesty and developing a true sense of Integrity.  
**March:** Kindness - Tenderheartedness and Consideration; Forgiveness – Understanding the rationale for Pardoning.  
**April:** Courage - Bravery and Determination; Tolerance - Fairness and Justice  
**May:** Helpfulness - Support and Understanding; Perseverance - Endurance and Prioritizing  
**June:** Politeness - Manners and Courtesy; Neatness - Organization and Cleanliness  
**July:** Citizenship - Patriotism and Honor; Loyalty - Faithfulness and Dedication

## **FORZA CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER LICENSURE INFORMATION**

**Advisor - Early Learning Coalitions (ELC) of SW Florida and Manatee County**

**Florida Department of Children and Families (FDCF) Licensing Numbers:**

**Naples:C20CO0103 Bonita:C20LE0163 Parrish:C12MA0342**

**Parrish Schoolhouse:C12MA0360**

**Three and Four-Year-Old Programs including the VPK Program**

**Hours of Operation: Monday – Friday, 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.**

## **ENROLLMENT**

Enrollment at FCDC is open to 3 and 4-year-old children year-round. Enrollment shall be granted without regard to a child's race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, or disability; and without regard to a parent or guardian's race, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, gender, pregnancy, disability or sexual orientation, socio-economic level, or marital status.

Parents can apply for enrollment of their child in FCDC by completing the Enrollment Application. Upon acceptance, enrollment is secured by paying the **NON-Refundable** Registration Fee.

Initial enrollment into the FCDC is contingent upon receipt of the completed enrollment package, signed fee agreement, registration fee, immunization records and signed Parent Handbook receipt.

When enrolling, the parent(s)/guardian(s) must provide a current immunization record. The State of Florida requires every child to be up-to-date on annual physicals. Updated shot records and physical forms are required to enroll along with maintaining continued enrollment status. Records are checked monthly and a reminder will be forwarded to any parents requiring new documentation. All agreement papers that are in the enrollment package must be signed and are due at the time of enrollment. If applicable, FCDC will need a copy of any court orders dealing with child custody. The above must be submitted before your child is permitted to attend classes.

In addition, the parent(s)/guardian(s) who are interested in enrolling their children in the VPK Program are currently required to log on to <https://www.elcofswfl.org> (for Lee and Collier County) or <https://www.elc-manatee.org> (for Manatee County) and complete the online application *in addition*, to the FCDC online application. With the online process, parents will open a parent portal using their email address and a password. A proof of residency and the child's birth certificate must be uploaded to complete the application. Upon approval of an application, an email of, "Congratulations" will be sent to the parents. At that time, the parent can go back online via the portal and print "The Certificate of Eligibility." Assistance is offered at the office of the Early Learning Coalition.

The office locations are cited below:

VPK Child Enrollment Advisor, Area 2, Naples-Collier  
Early Learning Coalition of Southwest Florida  
3050 North Horseshoe Drive, Unit 231 Bldg. B  
Naples, Florida 34104  
Phone: 239-213-1137 Ext: 6312  
Fax: 239-213-3356  
[www.elcofswfl.org](http://www.elcofswfl.org)

Early Learning Coalition of Manatee County  
600 8<sup>th</sup> Ave West, Suite 100  
Palmetto, Florida 34221  
Phone: 941-757-2900 Ext. 2200

The Enrollment Application and Fee Agreements are not meant to serve as contracts guaranteeing service for any duration, as FCDC reserves the right to dismiss any parent or child at any time with or without cause. Moreover, continued enrollment at FCDC is contingent upon the parent's emergency contact list being current along with the child and parent(s)/guardian(s) adhering to the policies and procedures of FCDC as outlined in this Handbook including, but not limited to, timely payment of all fees and tuition.

Parents are required to notify FCDC immediately, should any of the information collected at the time of enrollment or any time thereafter change. Failure to do so may result in the child(ren) being dis-enrolled from the program.

The FCDC is a year-round, privately owned preschool education center for 3 and 4-year-old children. We are open Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. We request that all children arrive at the school no later than 8:30 a.m. FCDC promotes a developmentally appropriate program, which follows a sequence of specific daily activities that are scheduled to start at 8:00

a.m. The faculty, plan both structured and informational activities daily; therefore, when there are late arrivals, this disrupts the educational process.

## **TUITION**

### **3 and 4-Year Old children:**

- Varies depending on center location. Please see director for current rates.
- Please note that weekly rates INCLUDE Afternoon Snack each day.
- 6% Rate Reduction for each additional sibling
- VPK Wrap-Around Rate is located on the following page.

### **VPK Wrap-Around Rate:**

- Varies depending on center location with VPK Voucher. Please see director for current rates.
- Please note that weekly rates INCLUDE Afternoon Snack each day.
- 6% Rate Reduction for each additional sibling

## **TUITION PAYMENTS**

Tuition payments are due in advance by the Monday of each week. If the tuition payment is not made within five days of the payment date, a late fee of \$30.00 may be assessed for each week the payment is tardy. Tuition can be made via automatic withdrawal, via debit card, or check. **Checks are made out to FORZA.** There will be a \$30.00 fee charged for tuition checks returned by the bank. Returned Tuition checks will not be re-deposited. Parents will be responsible for re-issuing a second check. If at any future time the bank returns a parent's check, all future tuition payments must be made by certified check, money order, credit card, or cash if an emergency exists.

Tuition **DOES NOT** include fees for field trips and extra-curricular activities unless the field trip or activity is funded via a Grant.

There is no credit given for vacations, scheduled school holidays, child illness, or for closings due to emergency situations, inclement weather, or acts of God.

Non-payment of tuition is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program. Timely payments are essential for continued enrollment at FCDC, however, if you anticipate difficulty with paying on time, please discuss the matter with the FCDC Director immediately. If alternative arrangements for payment are approved, you will be notified by the FCDC Director.

## **FCDC Accepts Child Care Subsidies**

Parents of a subsidized child must complete all required paperwork in a timely manner to continue enrollment at FCDC. If a family becomes ineligible to receive child-care subsidies, the parents are personally responsible for the payment of tuition and must sign a fee agreement stipulating the same.

FCDC offers a multiple child discount for one or more siblings enrolled during the same school year. The youngest sibling pays the full tuition rate and each additional child's tuition is discounted 6% (six-percent) per

child. Discounts are only applicable when tuition payments are made on time. The full tuition rate, plus any additional late fees will be charged when tuition payments are late as presented in the late tuition policy.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Within FCDC, confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with employees of FCDC who have a “need to know,” to appropriately and safely, care for a child. Confidential and sensitive information about faculty members, will not be shared with other parents and/or children as FCDC strives to protect everyone’s right to privacy. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to: names, addresses, phone numbers, disability information, HIV/AIDS status, or, other health related information of anyone associated with FCDC.

Outside of FCDC, confidential and sensitive information about a child will only be shared when the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the child has given express written consent, except where otherwise provided for by law. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will be provided with a document detailing the information that is to be shared outside of FCDC, persons with whom the information will be shared, and the reason(s) for sharing the information.

Any Parent(s)/Guardian(s) who violate the Confidentiality policy will not be permitted on school property thereafter. For additional information regarding dis-enrollment of a child when parent(s)/guardian(s) re prohibited from accessing school property, please refer to the policy regarding Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Right to Immediate Access.

Parents(s)/Guardian(s) may observe children at FCDC, accompanied by an employee, who may exhibit behavior that might appear inappropriate (i.e. biting, hitting, and spitting) as it is understandable that a parent/guardian may be concerned about the safety of other children. The FCDC Confidentiality Policy protects every child’s privacy, moreover, FCDC personnel are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you.

FCDC takes very seriously the responsibility of maintaining the confidentiality of all persons associated with FCDC. Parents must understand the implications of this responsibility. Parents need to recognize that the Confidentiality Policy not only applies to their child or family, but to all children, families and employees associated with FCDC. Any parent who shares any information considered to be confidential, pressures employees or other parents for information which they have no need to know, will be in violation of the Confidentiality Policy.

## **MANDATED REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT**

Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any **suspicion** of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. The employees of FCDC are considered mandated reporters, under this law. The employees of FCDC are not required to discuss their suspicions with parent(s)/guardian(s) prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior or condition prior to making a report. Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. FCDC employees take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the proper authorities. The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children.

As mandated reporters, the staff of FCDC cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in “good faith.”

Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the child’s body
- ◆ Severe verbal reprimands
- ◆ Improper clothing relating to size or cleanliness
- ◆ Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (e.g. car seats, seat belts, etc.)
- ◆ Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol
- ◆ Not providing appropriate meals including a drink for their child
- ◆ Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time
- ◆ Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child
- ◆ Sending a sick child to school that has been over medicated to hide symptoms, which would typically require the child to be kept at home until symptoms subside.
- ◆ Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation

### **PARENT/GUARDIAN CODE OF CONDUCT**

FCDC requires the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of an enrolled child to always behave in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy, and respect. One of the goals of FCDC is to provide the most appropriate environment in which a child can grow, learn and develop to an optimum level. Achieving this ideal environment is the responsibility of both, the employees and parent(s)/guardian(s) of FCDC. Parents are required to behave in a manner that contributes to this ideal environment. **Parents who violate the Parent Code of Conduct will not be permitted on school property thereafter.** Please refer to the Policy on Parent’s Right to Immediate Access for additional information regarding dis-enrollment of the child when a parent is prohibited from accessing school property.

### **SWEARING/CURSING**

No parent or adult is permitted to curse or use other inappropriate language on school property at any time, whether in the presence of a child or not. Such language is offensive and will not be tolerated. If a parent or adult feels frustrated or angry, it is more appropriate to verbally express their frustration or anger using non-offensive language. At NO time shall inappropriate language be directed toward members of the staff.

### **THREATENING OF EMPLOYEES, CHILDREN, OTHER PARENTS, OR ADULTS ASSOCIATED WITH FCDC IS NOT ACCEPTABLE**

Threats of any kind will not be tolerated. In today’s society, FCDC cannot afford to idly sit by while threats are being made. In addition, all threats will be reported to the appropriate authorities and will be prosecuted fully. While an apology for such behavior is appreciated, FCDC will not assume the risk of a, “second chance.” It is understood that parents will not always agree with the employees of FCDC or, the parents of the other children, it is, however, expected that all disagreements be handled in a calm and respectful manner. Confrontational interactions are not an appropriate means by which to communicate a point and are strictly prohibited.

## **PHYSICAL/VERBAL PUNISHMENT OF YOUR CHILD OR OTHER CHILDREN AT FCDC**

FCDC does not support or condone corporal punishment of children, ergo, such acts are not permitted on school property.

While verbal reprimands may be appropriate, it is not appropriate for parents/guardians to verbally abuse their child. Doing so may cause undue embarrassment or emotional distress. Parents/Guardians are always welcome to discuss a behavior issue with the teacher and seek advice and guidance regarding appropriate and effective disciplinary procedures.

Parents are prohibited from addressing, correcting, or disciplining a child that is not their own. Moreover, no parent/guardian or other adult may physically punish another parent's child. If a parent/guardian should witness another parent's child behaving in an inappropriate manner or is concerned about behavior reported to them by their own child, it is most appropriate for the parent to direct their concern to the classroom teacher and/or FCDC Director.

Furthermore, it is wholly inappropriate for one parent to seek out another parent to discuss their child's inappropriate behavior. All behavior concerns should be brought to the classroom teacher or the Director's attention. At that point, the teacher and/or Director will address the issue with the other parent. Although that parent may be curious as to the outcome of such a discussion, teachers and/or the FCDC Director are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you. All children enrolled at FCDC have privacy rights and are further protected by our Confidentiality Policy. You may be assured that we will not discuss anything about your child with another parent/guardian or adult visiting the center.

## **SMOKING**

For the health of all FCDC employees, children and associates, smoking is prohibited anywhere on school property. Parents are prohibited from smoking in the building, on the grounds, or, in the FCDC parking lot. Parents who are smoking in their cars must dispose of the cigarette, cigar, pipe, vapor cigarette, etc., prior to entering the parking lot.

## **VIOLATIONS OF THE SAFETY POLICY**

Parents are required to follow all safety procedures at all times. These procedures and best practices in school safety are designed not as inconveniences, but to protect and for the overall welfare of the children, employees, and associates of FCDC. Please be particularly mindful of FCDC entrance procedures. The parents and staff at FCDC are very polite, however, everyone needs to be vigilant not to allow unauthorized individuals into FCDC. Holding the door open for the person following you may, in fact be polite, however that person may not be authorized to enter the premises. Security procedures are only strong if all stakeholders of FCDC are alert and self-disciplined in following them. Be alert and immediately report breaches of our Safety Best Practices to the FCDC Director.

***PARENTS MUST BE RESPONSIBLE FOR AND IN CONTROL OF THEIR BEHAVIOR AT ALL TIMES.***

## **PARENTS' RIGHT TO IMMEDIATE ACCESS**

As provided by law, parent(s)/guardian(s) of children enrolled at FCDC are entitled to immediate access, without prior notice, to their child(ren) when they arrive to FCDC.

## **COURT ORDERS EFFECTING ENROLLED CHILDREN**

In cases where the child is the subject of a court order (i.e., a Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order) FCDC must be provided with a **Certified Copy** of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed unless the custodial parent(s)/guardian(s) request a more liberal variation of the order in writing. In the case where both parents are afforded shared/joint custody by order of the court, both parents must sign the request for a more liberal interpretation of the order.

**In the absence of a court order** on file with FCDC, **both** parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. FCDC cannot, without a court order, limit the access of a one parent/guardian by request of the other parent/guardian, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself where one parent/guardian does not want the other parent/guardian to have access to their child, FCDC suggests that the parent/guardian keep the child with them until a court order is issued, since our rights to retain your child are secondary to the other parents'/guardians' right to immediate access. If conflicting court orders are presented, the most recently dated court order will be followed. FCDC staff will contact the local police should a conflict arise.

Visitors must schedule appointments with the FCDC Director and are **ONLY** permitted to enter the facility at the discretion of the FCDC Director. An employee of FCDC will always accompany visitors throughout the school facility and property.

FCDC will dismiss any child whose parent is prohibited from entering school property. Due to the parents'/guardians' right to the immediate access policy, as well as state and federal regulations, FCDC cannot have a child at the center when the child's parent/guardian access to the school is prohibited. FCDC will not agree to any request to maintain a child's enrollment, even if the parent agrees to remain off the school's property. Such an agreement is a violation of Statute and will **NOT** be entertained.

Once presented with a Protection from Abuse Order or a Restraining Order, FCDC is obligated to follow the order for the entire period that said Order is in effect. Employees of FCDC cannot, at the request of anyone, except the issuing Judge, allow a Protection from Abuse Order and/or a Restraining Order to be compromised. FCDC will **IMMEDIATELY** report any violations of these orders to the court.

## **DISMISSAL/ EXPLUSION POLICY**

FCDC reserves the right to discontinue the care of any child with or without cause. The decision will be well thought out and based on the best interest of the child, staff members, and/or other students. Before termination occurs, a parent consultation will be held, and/or "Behavior Reports," will be provided to the parent/guardian enabling all parties to work together as a team to discuss and ameliorate any problems/issues that would, "stop" the Expulsion Policy from being enacted. However, if solutions are ineffective, the school will have no other alternative but to terminate the child's enrollment. Termination may result from: disruptive behavior, violation of policies, abuse of staff, children or property; non-payment of tuition; or the school's inability to provide the care required for the child. If such a termination arises and money is still owed, the parent/guardian is still responsible for said tuition or fees. Any past due balances must be paid within 30 days of the dismissal. An invoice detailing the past due balance will be forwarded to the parents'/guardians' address indicated in the child's file within one week of the dismissal. Any balances remaining after the 30-day period will be referred to FCDC's legal counsel for collection.

Parents will be refunded any unused tuition within two weeks of the dismissal. An FCDC or FORZA check will be mailed to the address indicated in the child's file. The FCDC's Director or designee will assist the parent/guardian in gathering their child's belongings at the time of dismissal and parents are required to leave FCDC's property immediately and in a calm and respectful manner. FCDC will request assistance from local police should any parent/guardian become disruptive and/or uncooperative while gathering their child's belongings upon dismissal.

A dismissed child and his/her parents are required to call and request an appointment with the FCDC Director if they wish to return to the school's property following a dismissal. Appointments are made at the discretion of the FCDC Director and are not a right of the dismissed child or parent.

Following a dismissal, any parent or child who harasses, threatens, or, in any manner causes harm to anyone affiliated with FCDC by calling, writing, or any other means, will be fully prosecuted.

### **WITHDRAWAL**

**Two weeks written notice is required when withdrawing a child for any reason. If the proper notice is given, any unused tuition will be refunded within thirty days of the withdrawal. If the required notice is not given, parents/guardians will be charged tuition for two additional weeks.**

The parents/guardians and child, following their last day of enrollment, are not permitted to re-enter the school property without prior permission from the FCDC Director. A withdrawn child and his/her parents are required to call and request an appointment with the FCDC Director if they wish to return to the school following the last day of enrollment. Appointments are made at the convenience and discretion of the FCDC Director and are not a right of the withdrawn child or parent.

Parents who wish to change their child's days or times of enrollment at FCDC, must submit a request to do so two weeks in advance of the proposed change.

The FCDC Director will notify the parents in writing if the new schedule is available and has been approved. A schedule change will not be finalized until a new fee agreement is signed. If the schedule change requires an additional deposit and/or registration fee, the change approval will also be contingent upon these payments being paid as well. If the requested schedule is not available, parents/guardians may choose to continue with the current schedule until the requested schedule becomes available, or, may choose to withdraw their child from the program. The date that the FCDC Director receives the request for a schedule change will be used as the "date-certain" for the two weeks-notice required for withdrawal.

### **ARRIVAL PROCEDURES**

Upon arriving at FCDC, the parents/guardians, or, the adult responsible for dropping off the child must "sign-in" via the fingerprint system on the designated computer in the hallway just outside of the FCDC Director's office. Once check-in of the child is complete, the child is required to be escorted, by their parent/guardian or the adult responsible for dropping off the child, to their designated classroom. Children are required by law to always be supervised while in the FCDC facility. Parents/guardians are required to assist their child in putting their belongings away and getting them settled and ready for the school day.

FCDC discourages parents from sneaking out of the classroom due to some student's attachment issues. Some children exhibit separation anxiety when it is time for their parent to leave. FCDC believes it is best for parents to establish a routine with their child as soon as possible of assisting the child in putting their belongings away and getting them ready for the school day. After this routine, the parent will kiss and hug their child, say goodbye to the child, and depart the classroom immediately. The longer the parent of an anxious child drags out the departure, the more anxiety the child is going to feel. The employee present in the classroom will comfort and assist the child if any anxiety lingers. The professional employees of FCDC are available to discuss other options if the child does not settle into the arrival routine after a reasonable period.

At arrival, if a child must receive medication during the day, parents are required to follow the FCDC Medication Policy. Moreover, parents/guardians are required to notify the child's teacher or FCDC Director of any special instructions or needs for the child's day. The parent/guardian must present any special instructions in the form of a letter and verbally discuss them with either the classroom teacher or FCDC Director. These special instructions include, but are not limited to: Early Pick-Up, Alternative Pick-Up Person, health issues during the previous night, what may need to be observed and/or any other general issues or concerns which the child care providers should be aware of to best meet the needs of the child throughout the school day. Moreover, any specific and succinct instructions regarding the dissemination of any medication prescribed by the Medical Doctor that is to be given during the school day.

## **PICK-UP PROCEDURES**

Parents, or, another authorized adult are required to sign in and out through a fingerprint system on the designated computer in the hallway just outside of the FCDC Director's office. The official time is on the designated computer. A binder is also maintained, with a paper sign in/out for anyone not in the system, or, if they cannot get the system working for any reason.

Once a parent signs their child out, the parent is then solely responsible for supervising their child while on agency premises. The parent may not allow a child to wander through the hallways, bathrooms, other classrooms and/or playground. Parents are required to handle all business issues prior to signing out their child and are required to directly exit the building once they have signed their child out of care.

Parents must take home all papers in the child's cubby or school bag each day.

Parents or persons designated to act "in loco parentis" are required to sign any incident/accident reports from the day at pick-up. The classroom teacher will be able to briefly discuss the matter with you or another authorized adult at pick-up. However, should you feel it necessary to have an in-depth discussion or meeting, it is most appropriate to schedule the meeting for a later date because the teacher is responsible for supervising the remaining children in the classroom. A telephone conference may be scheduled for later in the day or for the next day at nap/rest time if the parent(s) is unable to meet at the FCDC during the day.

## **LATE PICK-UP**

FCDC remains open until 6:00 p.m. After this time late charges apply i.e., a late charge of \$1.00 per minute, due at pick-up, will be assessed for anyone arriving late with the minimum charge being \$5.00. If you are going to be late please notify the Main Office.

If the parent of a ½ Day student requests that their child stay late, the fee assessed is \$10 for 3:00 P.M. dismissal and \$20.00 for a 6:00 dismissal.

After the third occurrence of late pick-up, a written letter will be sent to the parents. If the lateness continues after letter has been sent to parents and the behavior continues a child's services may be terminated regardless of the reasons for the late pick-up. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that someone (either a parent or Emergency/Alternate pick-up person) is available to pick up the child on time.

### **PERSONS APPEARING TO BE IMPAIRED BY DRUGS/ALCOHOL AT PICK-UP**

The staff of FCDC will contact local police and/or the other custodial parent should a parent appear to the staff of FCDC to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. The parent's right to immediate access does not permit the agency from denying a custodial parent access to their child even if the parent is or appears to be impaired. However, FCDC staff will delay the impaired parent if possible, while contacting the other parent, the local police and Child Protective Services.

Any other authorized person who attempts to pick-up a child and appears to the staff of FCDC to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol will be denied access to the child. The staff of FCDC will contact the child's parents, local police and Child Protective Services to notify them of the situation.

### **EMERGENCY/ALTERNATE PICK-UP FORMS**

On the FCDC application parents are strongly encouraged to include any, and all persons who, during events, may at one time be asked to pick-up their child from FCDC. In an emergency the child's parents will be called first. If they cannot be reached staff will call the persons listed on this form until someone can be reached.

Should the staff contact a parent, and the parent is unable to pick up the child, it is then the responsibility of the parent to arrange for their child to be picked up by someone on the emergency list. Failure of the parent to make such arrangements will result in dismissal from the program.

Parents do not need to be listed on the Emergency Contact Form. The nature of the parental relationship affords the parents (in the absence of a court order indicating otherwise) the right to pick-up their child.

Parents will be asked to determine which persons (if any) on the Emergency/Alternate Pick-up form have the right to act "In Loco Parentis." In Loco Parentis status affords the pick-up person the right to discuss confidential information about the child's day including but not limited to, incident/accident reports, and behavior issues. In the absence of this designation, the people on the Emergency/Alternate Pick-Up Form are only afforded the right to pick up the child. Staff is not permitted to discuss the child's day with them.

The persons on the Emergency/Alternate pick-up form will be required to provide a Government issued photo ID prior to FCDC releasing the child. **There will be no exceptions to this rule.**

All changes and/or additions to the Emergency/Alternate Pick-up form must be made in writing and be dated and signed. Only custodial parents have the right to make changes or additions to this form.

FCDC reserves the right to refuse/ban any person listed on the Emergency/Alternate Contact Form for any reason, including but not limited to violations of the policies/procedures contained herein. It is the responsibility of the enrolling parent(s) to inform each person on the Emergency/Alternate Form of the policies/procedures contained herein.

### **NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE**

Parents/Guardians are required to inform FCDC by 9:00 a.m. and if possible, the day before, if a child will not be at FCDC on a scheduled day. This will enable the FCDC to more effectively maintain appropriate ratios and help the classroom teacher effectively plan for the day.

If a child is ill, please notify the FCDC Director, not only of the absence, but also of the nature of the illness. The FCDC can be notified via phone, communication application, or by email. Teachers will begin to contact parents after 9:00 a.m. for students that are absent with no notification. Since it is imperative for the teachers to focus on students in attendance, parents will be reminded to contact the FCDC in case their child will be absent. After the third occurrence of no notification, a written letter will be sent to the parents/guardians.

Effective communication enables the faculty to keep track of any illnesses, which may occur at FCDC. This information will only be shared with staff on a “need to know” basis. If your child has a communicable disease, we ask that you share the diagnosis with the FCDC Director, enabling the Director to send out a notice to all families that a communicable disease is present. Once again, only the communicable disease information will be shared. FCDC will take all measures necessary to protect your child’s confidentiality. Parents/Guardians are not required to disclose this information by law, moreover, it will not affect the enrollment status of the child. However, parents/guardians who know in advance that a child will be late, are required to notify the center at least 24 hours prior to the tardy arrival, which assists in maintaining the appropriate number of employees to ensure ratios are met when the child arrives to school.

### **FCDC’s RIGHT TO REFUSE ADMISSION**

FCDC reserves the right to refuse admission to any child at any time with or without cause.

Possible reasons for the refusal of admission include but are not limited to:

1. Staff deems the child is too ill to attend.
2. Domestic Situations that present a safety risk to the child, staff or other children enrolled at FCDC if the child were to be present at the center.
3. Parents’/Guardians’ failure to maintain accurate, up to date records.
4. Parents’/Guardians failure to complete and return required documentation in a timely fashion.

Based on the circumstances, parents/guardians may or may not be reimbursed the tuition for days when their child was refused admission to the program.

### **Illnesses**

For the protection of all children and staff, children should not be brought to the FCDC when they are ill. Please do not send your child to school if your child is displaying one or more of the

following symptoms:

**Fever:** A child with a temperature of 100 degrees or more needs to be picked up within an hour and kept at home until he or she is fever-free for 24 hours.

**Diarrhea/Vomiting:** A child with diarrhea or one who has vomited, needs to be picked up within an hour and should remain at home for 24 hours after symptoms clear.

**Colds/Ear, Eye or Nasal Discharge:** A child with eye discharge should be checked for conjunctivitis. Runny noses are a common occurrence among children; however, if a cold is severe -- the mucus from the child's nose is thick and/or greenish, if the child has a bad cough, or if your child is lethargic or not feeling well, please keep the child at home until symptoms subside.

### **Highly Contagious Diseases**

If a child has contracted or has been exposed to a highly contagious illness, please inform the office immediately of the condition. The checkout book in the front office posts a class exposure notice. This will alert parents/guardians of symptoms to watch for in their child. Highly contagious illnesses or highly contagious conditions include but are not limited to: strep throat, pinworms, measles, mumps, chicken pox, conjunctivitis, lice, scabies, whooping cough, impetigo, meningitis, hepatitis A, salmonellas, shigellosis, and scarlet fever. FCDC requires a physician's note before returning to school after a bout with any contagious illness or other highly contagious conditions.

### **Antibiotics**

A child on antibiotics should be kept at home at least 24 hours after the first dose to allow the medication to work on the condition. When a child becomes ill during the school day, he/she will be separated from the other children and contact the parent/guardian with the request that the child be taken home immediately. A child who has become ill at school must be picked up by the parents/guardians within an hour of being notified. If the child is not picked up within this timeframe, or, the parents/guardians cannot be reached, the next emergency contact on the registration form will be contacted.

### **Health and Allergies**

It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to inform the FCDC Director, in writing, if their child has any food allergies, asthmatic conditions, insect allergies or any other physical or health conditions that has been diagnosed by a physician that could become critical or life-threatening, necessitating specific care of a medical professional, or, a certain type of medication that needs to be maintained on campus. If there are special circumstances regarding a child's care (i.e., special food and/or lunch required at a certain time), the parents/guardians must verbally share this information with the FCDC Director, or, if scheduling factors prohibit such a meeting, then the parents/guardians must ensure that a written document has been received by the FCDC Director explaining the special circumstance.

FORZA Child Development Center maintains a ***peanut sensitive environment***. Parents should be cognizant of the fact that most schools have at least one or more of their students that suffer from a severe allergy, with a percentage of those students that have been diagnosed as having a peanut/peanut oil allergy. In an ideal world, the easiest way to maintain control of exposure to peanuts, food items with peanut ingredients, peanut oil, etc., would be to have a completely peanut-free

environment. However, this is unrealistic as attaining this goal all but impossible. Therefore, FCDC employs and practices, “Avoidance Strategies” of specific allergens which is the cornerstone of management in preventing anaphylaxis.

### **Medication**

Although parents are encouraged to seek medication for their child from their physician that can be administered before and after school. If that is not possible, medication will be maintained in the Director’s office. If a child needs to have medication administered, please notify the FCDC Director and your child’s teacher. You must sign a medication form authorizing FCDC personnel to administer the medication. If the form is not signed, the FCDC will not be able to administer any medication. The medication must also be in its original bottle and/or box with the child’s name, current date, doctor’s name and dosage amount printed on the label. Medications shown to cause excessive drowsiness will not be given at school. Medicine must be taken by mouth only. FCDC does not administer vitamins or diet supplements, as these are not considered medicine. At the end of the day, you may check back with the office to see the medication verification log, where the time, dosage amount given, and the staff’s initials will be kept. Every FCDC student with life-threatening allergies needs to have an epinephrine autoinjector in the school which will be kept in a secure but unlocked location near the student for quick access within several minutes of a reaction. Backup epinephrine auto-injectors will be available in other school areas such as gyms, assembly rooms, cafeterias, school yards, etc. coupled with those able to administer the epinephrine. Emergency communications between all the student's locations (classroom, cafeteria, gym, playground, etc.) and the FCDC Director’s office should be available.

### **Sick/Vacation Time:**

Each family is entitled to 2 weeks of vacation within a year beginning with the start of the school year in August. A reservation fee of 50% of the normal tuition rate plus a written intent to make use of the vacation week/s is required to hold your child’s place in the Child Development Center. If your child is home sick or there is a school holiday, you are responsible for a full week of tuition as our staff is here and being paid and we are holding a place for your child. Communication with the center director is imperative when your child is sick or absent. Please provide the center with a doctor’s note or note explaining absences when out more than one day.

### **FCDC SCHOOL CALENDAR**

**The FCDC is open year-round except for the following days/situations which are known as School Closings.**

#### **SCHOOL CLOSINGS**

Labor Day  
Thanksgiving Day  
Day after Thanksgiving  
Christmas Eve  
Christmas Day  
New Year’s Eve  
New Year’s Day  
Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Presidents' Day  
"Good" Friday  
Memorial Day  
Independence Day (4th of July)

**In addition to the above School Closings, if any Holiday falls on a Sunday, then FCDC is closed that following Monday, moreover, if any Holiday falls on a Saturday, then FCDC is closed on that prior Friday. Finally, if the district public schools are closed due to impending or inclement weather/hurricanes, etc., FCDC will also be closed.**

### **EMERGENCY CLOSING AND INCLEMENT WEATHER INFORMATION**

**As stated above, if district public schools are closed due to impending bad weather/hurricanes, etc., FORZA Child Development Center will also be closed.**

**The most up-to-date and accurate information regarding school closings will be listed on local media sites, please rely on the school district's emergency information sources to secure the correct information. FCDC staff will also contact parents via email and established communication apps.**

Should the school need to close in the middle of the day, the school staff will attempt to reach the child's parents first to arrange for pick up. If the staff be unable to reach the parents, the persons listed on the emergency contact form will be called until pick up arrangements can be made. Staff will notify the parents or emergency contact person at the time of the call, of the pick-up location should the children need to be evacuated from the FCDC. Parents or emergency contact persons should report directly to the alternate location if one is indicated. Should the FCDC need to close for any reason, tuition will not be refunded or reduced for closures of less than 10 school days. If the closure extends beyond said 10 school days, parents will have their tuition adjusted based on a daily rate.

### **DAILY SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES/CLASS ASSIGNMENTS BASED ON THE FLORIDA EARLY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENTAL STANDARDS**

The Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards were adopted in the Fall 2017. The standards and benchmarks reflect the knowledge and skills that a child on a developmental progression should know and be able to do at the end of an age-related timeframe. FCDC meets these Standards and Benchmarks as adopted by the State of Florida. Moreover, the FCDC program embraces the individuality of each child by promoting a unique learning experience; each child is encouraged to develop at their own pace and the progress of each child is gauged on a periodic basis. Currently, FCDC uses the national developmental screening tool, "Ages & Stages Questionnaire," which is recommended by the State of Florida. Through the "Ages & Stages Questionnaire" ("ASQ,") assessment each child's daily activities can be adjusted in these developmental domains by enhancing or reinforcing a solid foundation in their curriculum of activities. If there is a concern regarding any child's development, the "ASQ" will be administered with the results presented to the parents/guardians coupled with adjustments made in the child's curriculum coupled with the learning activities that will be utilized. FCDC fosters open communication with the children as well as the parents. This approach enhances significant learning gains and achievement to the appropriate academic and developmental levels of each child.

## **STAFF TO CHILD RATIOS:**

Department of Children and Family Ratios for teachers to students is: 20 to 1 for four-year-olds, 15 to 1 for three-year-olds and VPK is 12 to 1 following The Early Coalition. **However, FCDC has even smaller ratios i.e., 11 to 1 for 4s and 8 to 1 for 3s.**

## **NAP/REST TIME**

### **Rest Periods**

The FCDC students will enjoy a nap/rest period each day. A small blanket (no larger than 40" by 60") should be kept at the school Monday through Friday. Said blanket, must be taken home and laundered on Friday.

## **BIRTHDAY/HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS**

We welcome the celebration of your child's birthday at school. Parents are welcome to send in or bring special food for their child's birthday, moreover, are permitted to organize special brief activity (cupcakes are preferred over sheet cakes). For an activity, please check with the Director at least one week in advance to discuss and schedule an appropriate time to present the event/activity during the day. Please note that home (off-premises) birthday party invitations may be handed out at school if the ENTIRE class is invited, otherwise we ask that you mail your invitations.

**Dietary note: If FCDC has enacted the "Avoidance Strategies," bringing peanuts and/or foods containing peanut products will be prohibited as being a part of the Birthday/Holiday Celebrations.**

**FOOD POLICY INCLUDES: All age groups, Three-year and older classrooms, and finally, the Peanut Policy.**

### **All age groups:**

All food items must be labeled with your child's name. FCDC does not permit children to share or exchange food items.

For the safety of your child, parents are required to provide notification, in the form of a doctor's note, of any allergies to food or otherwise, coupled with instructions for treatment should a child have an allergic reaction. Please refer to the Health, Safety and Peanut Policies contained herein for further information.

Parents are required to provide written notification of any food/dietary restrictions. (i.e. lactose intolerance, vegetarian diets, wheat free/gluten free diets)

FCDC does not endorse using food as a punishment. Children will never be denied participation in lunch or snack time due to behavior issues.

Food can be used by teachers as a reward for good behavior and/or for classroom lessons. Any food given as a reward (i.e. lollipops, candy) will be placed in the child's cubby/school bag to be enjoyed at home.

### **Three-year and older classrooms:**

FCDC does not serve or provide breakfast in the morning. Parents are required to feed their child a nutritious and filling breakfast prior to arriving at FCDC. Parents who send their child to school without having been fed breakfast will be neglectful of their children's nutritional needs and will be reported to the appropriate authorities as provided for in the Child Protective Services Act.

All meals are family style, with the children sitting at tables, to promote good manners, eating habits and socialization skills. Staff will encourage children to eat their main entrée first, followed by healthy snacks. Candy and junk food will be reserved for a "dessert" when an adequate amount of their lunch has been eaten.

A portion of FCDC's curriculum focuses on developing healthy, well-balanced eating habits. Therefore, parents are required to provide a full, healthy lunch for their children each day they are in attendance. Lunches should include a sandwich (or main entrée item), snack(s) and a drink. FCDC will provide water for children who wish to have it with lunch. Snack food items should be healthy, such as fruit, vegetables and the like. Parents should limit junk foods to a minimum in their child's lunch. When preparing your child's lunch please refer to the Peanut Policy that follows. All uneaten food will be placed back in the child's lunch container allowing parents to monitor what items and how much their child consumed during the day. Parents should limit the number of choices offered in their child's lunch, as children often become distracted by the choices. Parents should provide enough food so that their child is satiated, but not so much that food is wasted.

FCDC does not allow full size candy bars, sodas, or full-size candy treats such as Skittles, Starbursts or gum, in a child's lunch. If you wish for these foods to be a part of your child's diet, please give them to your child at home. One or two miniature sized candies are permitted in a child's lunch as a treat. However, FCDC staff will prohibit a child from consuming these treats if the child is having a particularly over active, excitable day.

FCDC prohibits any food item in glass containers as well as aluminum cans. These can be safety hazards for the children and staff.

If your child's lunch requires refrigeration, please include a "cold pack" in the lunch bag to preserve freshness.

FCDC will provide a healthy afternoon snack for all children in 3 years of age and older age groups, including water, fruit juice and/or milk. A list of the daily snacks available to the children will be posted in the classroom on a monthly-basis.

## **PEANUT POLICY**

### ***Attention Parents/Guardians:***

***If your child has a peanut/peanut oil allergy, please notify the FCDC Director before enrollment.***

FORZA Child Development Center maintains a "**peanut sensitive environment**". Parents should be cognizant of the fact that most schools have at least one or more of their students that suffer from a severe allergy, with a percentage of those students that have been diagnosed as having a peanut/peanut oil allergy. In an ideal world, the easiest way to maintain control of exposure to peanuts, food items with peanut ingredients, peanut oil, etc., would be to have a completely peanut-free environment. However, this is unrealistic as attaining this goal all but impossible. Therefore, FCDC employs and practices, "Avoidance Strategies" of specific allergens which is the cornerstone of management in preventing anaphylaxis. It is problematic to achieve complete avoidance of all allergenic foods because there can be hidden or accidentally introduced sources. However, via this approach, it is possible to reduce a child's exposure to allergenic foods within the school setting via said Avoidance

Strategies, moreover, all teachers and staff members receive professional development in these strategies coupled with administering epinephrine. The Professional Development presented will be based on the Resource: ***Preschool Food Allergy Handbook*** by Lee and Francoeur. Said resource can be shared by the teacher with Parent(s)/Guardian(s).

With that understood, keep in mind, it is not only the responsibility of FCDC, but also of the parents/guardians to maintain a safe environment for all students. With very young active children who are playing with and touching each other, it is quite difficult to monitor every child in terms of exposure concurrently throughout every second of the day.

Due to the extreme nature of allergic reactions in some children to peanuts and products containing ingredients that come from peanuts, FCDC prohibits anyone from sending or bringing peanuts and/or foods containing peanut products to be sent to school. Peanut allergies can be so severe that exposure to peanuts can result in an anaphylactic reaction which in many cases is terminal unless treated immediately. An allergic child can have a reaction from simply smelling peanuts on someone's breath or by touching peanut oil residue left on a counter top, not just from consuming peanuts or peanut products. FCDC will disseminate to all parents/guardians a ***Peanut Allergy Avoidance List***, that presents the "hidden" names of peanuts as well to assist the parents/guardians in preparing their children's lunch or sending in treats for a special event.

Although skin contact typically results in minor skin reactions and not anaphylaxis, the potential of young children putting their fingers in their mouths will increase the chance for accidental contact and exposure which can result in potentially more severe reaction. Moreover, FCDC stresses with its faculty, staff, and parents/guardians that minute amounts of certain foods, such as peanuts, can be life-threatening when ingested. Several children have had skin rashes and stomach upsets from simply coming into contact, with residual peanut butter and other peanut ingredients although tables have been wiped clean of visible material. Foods brought in for special events should be purchased in stores and contain complete ingredient declarations.

When preparing your child's lunch and/or sending in treats for birthday celebrations, please be sensitive to the needs of certain children and review carefully the ingredients of your child's lunch or treats for special events for evidence of peanuts or peanut oils as ingredients.

FCDC is a peanut sensitive environment, parents/are responsible for providing foods that are peanut and peanut product free for their child's lunch and/or snack. We have included for your reference a list of acceptable food items that are peanut, and peanut product free. However, this is only a partial listing of foods. There are many acceptable food items that are peanut, and peanut product free in stores. The important thing to remember is to read the label of every food item you send to school with your child. Many foods which we do not think of as containing peanuts, or peanut products have in fact been made in the same factories as peanut containing foods and are therefore considered to be contaminated. When reading the label look at not only the ingredients listed, but for statements such as, "may contain traces of peanuts." For example, Plain Chocolate M & M's have this statement on the label.

Due to the possibility of cross-contamination, (this occurs when one food is prepared with items previously used to prepare foods with peanuts, or peanut products), FCDC does not allow homemade snacks at the center. While FCDC understands that parents enjoy providing homemade snacks for birthdays and holidays, we must be mindful of the safety of all children enrolled at FCDC.

Since FCDC is a peanut sensitive environment, parents can purchase the items to make homemade snacks and plan with the classroom teacher to make the snacks as part of a classroom lesson. Only FCDC utensils, bowls, and bakeware may be used to prepare these foods.

### **FOOD IDEAS**

Carrot Sticks	Oreos
Celery	Chips Ahoy (Large Cookies)
Peppers	Teddy Grahams
Broccoli	Shortbread
Applesauce	Rice Krispy Treats (Original Flavor)
Grapes	Fruit
Oranges	Fruit Gushers
Apples	Nutri Grain Fruit Bars
Bananas	Full Size Ritz Crackers (Not Ritz Bits)
Melon	Chicken Salad
Raisins	Dried Fruit
Plain Cheerios	Cashews
Pistachios	Yogurt
Cheese	Lunch Meat
Cream Cheese	Jelly (Not contaminated by peanut butter)
Tuna Fish	Egg Salad
Pretzels	Potato Chips (Not Fried in Peanut Oil)
Goldfish Crackers	Graham Crackers
Popcorn	Jell-O
Pizza	Popsicles

This list is not inclusive and is only meant as a guide. Please read the labels of all food brought to the center to be sure that it does not contain peanuts and/or peanut products.

### **TOYS FROM HOME**

Personal toys from home, are not allowed at FCDC. The school has a variety of toys, blocks, and manipulatives that are educationally designed to challenge, instruct and provide opportunities for social interaction. Moreover, due to the risk of damage, loss, sharing issues, etc., children are not permitted to bring in toys from home, unless specifically requested by the classroom teacher to be used as a part of a designated segment of the curriculum.

Parents are responsible for enforcing the, “no personal toys at school” policy. Parents are encouraged to consult the classroom teacher should they find their child is having difficulty with

this policy. If the parents repeatedly disregard said enforcement of this policy with their children, the staff will call the parents and require that they come to the school and remove the toy.

The only latitude in this policy is that children, in classrooms with a nap/rest period, are permitted to include one plush/non-musical toy with their bedding supplies with which to nap/rest. This toy is to be placed with the bedding supplies and use of said toy will only be allowed at nap/rest time.

All toys brought in for use as part of the curriculum, and/or for nap/rest time will be inspected by FCDC staff for safety and appropriateness and may be prohibited at the sole discretion of FCDC.

## **DRESS CODE: CHILDREN**

**Uniform Shirts** are required.

**All FCDC students are to wear their uniform shirts with khaki, navy blue or black bottoms, coupled with rubber-soled shoes such as sneakers or tennis shoes.** Children's bottoms do not include overalls, or clothing with difficult closures. These types of clothing present challenges for children in relation to toileting. Moreover, keep in mind that we have daily art projects and outdoor-play, and this means that life can get a little messy, although, the paint we use is washable. All students are required to have two size appropriate complete change of clothing at FCDC at all times. A complete change of clothing includes, shirt, pants, underwear, socks, and shoes.

### **Footwear**

FCDC attire guidelines are in place to protect your child. Please do not dress your child in open-toe sandals since mulch can get stuck in sandals and cause splinters. Footwear such as flip-flops, "jelly" shoes, or shoes with more than a half inch heel are unsafe and inappropriate for school, moreover, are not covered by the school's insurance. Children will be running, jumping and climbing while at school. A child wearing flimsy or ill-fitting shoes runs the risk of a sprain or fracture while engaging in normal physical activities. Proper footwear supports the feet and ankles of a small child to develop properly if consistently worn.

### **Jewelry/Accessories**

FCDC does not permit students to school wear any type of jewelry, as the school cannot be responsible for loss or damage. Earrings and necklaces present a potential danger of being caught on something or accidentally pulled on by another child. In addition, please do not put small barrettes, bobby pins, etc., into your child's hair. These accessories are safety and choking hazards to all children. When choosing accessories for your child, be mindful of the potential safety issues they present, not only for your child, but also for the older and younger children attending FCDC.

### **Labeling**

Please remember that your child needs at least two FCDC approved outfits at school and that they are stored in a clear, zip-lock bag with your child's name clearly indicated on the zip-lock bag. Make sure you label everything with your child's name that you want returned. Labels should be

the first name and last name's initial. Please label all clothing and bedding with a permanent marker, laundry pen, adhesive or sewn-in label to identify your child's belongings.

**FCDC is not responsible for damage to, or, loss of clothing or other items brought to school.**

## **DRESS CODE: PARENTS**

### **Clothing**

Parents are required to be dressed in appropriate clothing while at FCDC, or, involved in or at any FCDC sponsored events or activities. Inappropriate clothing would include, revealing, extremely short, ripped/torn (in inappropriate places), and/or see through articles of clothing. Anything with suggestive or vulgar language is prohibited.

### **Jewelry**

While volunteering in the classroom or at any FCDC sponsored events or activities, parents should wear very limited jewelry and/or accessories as per the children's/staff's dress code policy.

## **FIELD-TRIPS**

FCDC endeavors to supplement the in-class curricula with off-campus field-trips. Parents are required to give written permission for their child to attend each field-trip. Notification of a field-trip will be sent home in advance of the trip, with all pertinent trip information including: destination, date, time, trip rationale, cost, and mode of transportation. Accompanying the notification paper, teachers will include a permission slip to be filled out, signed by the Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and returned to the teacher prior to the date of the trip. The field-trip permission slip must be filled out completely and accurately, and all trip costs must be paid in advance.

If parents wish to attend the trip with their child, they should present their request to the classroom teacher in advance of the field-trip.

FCDC provides all required supervision for all field-trips, however, parent(s)/guardian(s) are always welcomed to attend and assist in supervising the children.

Parents will not be permitted to transport any child, other than their own, on a FCDC sponsored trip.

## **CELL PHONES/SAFEGUARDS**

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) must turn off their cell phone as soon as they enter the FCDC parking lot. Please be aware that the FCDC parking lot can be a busy place; please watch closely for children and parents as you enter and exit the property. Please do not leave other children in the car as you pick up your FCDC student. Remember that cars need to be turned off, never left running without a driver, in the parking lot! The children, staff and other families need your complete attention when on school premises.

## **SAFETY**

The safety of your child is of the utmost importance. FCDC takes every precaution to make sure that your child's safety and security needs are met. The only way anyone may enter the building is through the front entryway, which is an automatic locked door. Each family will be issued a door code for entry. It is imperative for the children's safety, that you do not share your door code with anyone. Guests that enter, will be required to show a photo ID if the staff does not immediately recognize them. In the event of an evacuation emergency, there are pre-planned exits posted from each classroom. To maintain an even safer and more orderly school environment, GCCAS/FCDC collectively participated in the State Department of Education's, "**Florida Safe Schools Assessment Tool.**" The results of this assessment will act as a guide in creating additional ways to provide an even safer and more orderly school environment for the new school year 2018-2019.

### **FIREARMS AND WEAPONS**

At no time is any person permitted to carry any type of Firearm, Ammunition and/or Weapon on school property for any reason. Violation of this policy will result in immediate dismissal from the program.

### **FORZA CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER STAFF**

FCDC is committed to providing your child with the best possible qualified teachers. All staff members are carefully screened (criminal and background checks, fingerprints, reference checks, etc.), moreover, are required to meet all state and local regulations to work with preschool children. Teachers are selected based on their educational background, experience and training in working with children, in addition in their ability to show genuine care and affection in helping children to develop into confident, happy, and well-adjusted individuals. All teachers are trained in identifying child abuse and have taken (or are in the process of taking) a 45 - hour Childcare Certification class that incorporates this critical focus. The FCDC staff is encouraged to further their education and achieve 600 hours of childcare training by earning a CDA (Child Development Associate certificate)/Staff Credential. FCDC provides an enriching and positive environment for both teachers and children enabling and enhancing a harmonious balance of safety and fun within an atmosphere conducive to significant learning.

### **DISCIPLINE POLICY: BASED ON REDIRECTION**

The purpose of redirection is to assist a child in realizing those behaviors that are acceptable and appropriate in any given situation. Teachers set boundaries and guide children into making correct decisions. Children need to know and feel that they are loved, moreover, feel secure in their surroundings. The FCDC staff model self-control in promoting the child's learning of appropriate ways in which they can express themselves clearly and effectively. This is an ongoing process of active and participatory learning. FCDC is dedicated in teaching ways for the children to best communicate of and enhance their desire to get along with their peers coupled with inhibiting and discouraging any forms of bullying behavior. FCDC uses positive reinforcement to encourage appropriate behavior. The teacher will provide redirection in choices made regarding all situations. Positive reinforcement and redirection consists of encouraging self-control, self-direction, self-

esteem, and cooperation. With the mastery of self-discipline comes enhanced learning. No form of punishment is used at FCDC. In a situation where the child's behavior is out of control, the teacher will separate the child to a quiet area of the classroom or sometimes outside of the classroom, however, still under constant supervision. This allows the child to self-soothe and calm down allowing them to once again gain self-control. The teachers will explain to a child why their behavior was unacceptable and what the child must do, to be welcomed back to the class or specific group. Finally, a hug coupled with encouraging words will reassure the child that he/she can try again and be successful.

Preschool children are in their formative years of development. An important part of any child's education includes training in getting along with others, respect for authority and encouraging the child to willingly participate and follow reasonable rules designed for their safety. The faculty will create a positive learning environment by establishing simple and reasonable rules. Moreover, they will be consistent in enforcing rules and will redirect inappropriate behavior. All faculty and staff will maintain a calm, positive demeanor towards all children, using "quiet time," as a calming technique as opposed to a punitive measure.

## **PARENT VOLUNTEERS**

At FCDC, we delight in getting to know each individual family. Moreover, parents are invited and encouraged to be involved in their child's school activities. There is a plethora of ways in which parents can participate and volunteer at the FCDC.

Throughout the year, your child's teacher will present opportunities for you to become actively involved. Parents may volunteer to attend field-trips, read in the classroom, assist teachers, and/or coordinate special events. Parents not interested in volunteering directly in the classroom may donate items, do maintenance work, or assist in the front office.

Do you have a special talent or job that would be of interest to the children? Would you like to be a "Mystery Reader" in your child's class? Please be sure to consult with your child's teacher enabling us to arrange your active involvement. The children love to witness their parents helping at school!

At FCDC, the safety of the children is paramount. Therefore, any parent wishing to volunteer in the classroom on a regular basis will be required to secure and pay for all criminal background checks as required by our licensing regulations. Any person, including parents, with felony convictions, sex offender convictions and/or open investigations into any criminal activities will not be permitted to volunteer in the classroom, or on field-trips.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) with court orders detailing custodial arrangements will only be permitted to volunteer on the days in which they are afforded custody (joint/shared custody arrangement) as per the court order. For example, if a parent is afforded custody on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, that parent will only be able to volunteer on those days. Parents with visitation only right i.e., sole/exclusive custody arrangements, will only be permitted to volunteer with the express written permission of the custodial parent.

FCDC reserves the right to make or alter volunteer assignments. FCDC does not guarantee that the volunteering parent/guardian will be assigned to the location where their child(ren) is/are present.

### **Open Door Policy**

Parents are welcome to visit the school at any time -- announced or unannounced! If you have free-time to spare, please drop by as a FCDC working assignment may be awaiting you!

### **PARENT COMMUNICATION AND PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES**

At FCDC, we recognize the importance of parent involvement in their child's growth and development. FCDC has an "open-door" policy allowing Parent(s)/Guardian(s) to chat briefly and spontaneously with the Director or Office Manager about any concerns about your child at school. It is desired that Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will communicate with the Director and/or staff members about any topic regarding your child and/or their educational experience at FCDC. To secure a parent/teacher or parent/director conference, please schedule an appointment to ensure that the staff member is free from classroom responsibilities when you arrive. Periodic conferences to discuss your child's progress are recommended. Please know that every member of the staff is here to serve you. Most perceived issues can be ameliorated with a discussion or a note to the teacher; however, if an issue requires further attention, the Director, via a scheduled appointment, will be available to listen to your concerns. If an issue is important to you, it is important to us. Do not forget to check

the bulletin boards at the entrance of the school for other important reminders and/or pertinent information (i.e., school events, product recalls, helpful hints, fun websites and/or information web links, etc.).

### **Accident Reports**

Unfortunately, occasional accidents do happen. If an accident does occur, action will be taken immediately. Moreover, an accident form will be thoroughly completed to notify you of what occurred and what action was taken. The Director will sign the form and review the accident with the parent, child and staff member. The parent/guardian will be asked to sign the form and return it to indicate you have read the full declaration of what occurred along with the action to address the situation.

### **Monthly Newsletter**

FCDC will send home a Monthly Newsletter to inform you of what is transpiring at FCDC coupled with what is being learned in the three developmental domains i.e., cognitive, affective, and psychomotor at FCDC. Moreover, all parent(s)/guardian(s) will be apprised of all upcoming events, of the concepts your child will be learning, mastering etc. It is expected that all parent(s)/guardian(s) will carefully read the monthly newsletter that is sent home. The Monthly Newsletter is only one of the ways in which FCDC will communicate with all parent(s)/guardians(s). Said Newsletter will be placed in your child's communication folder, however, if your Newsletter is misplaced, there will be additional copies maintained in the Director's office, the parent information board and on the FCDC website ([www.forzavpk.org](http://www.forzavpk.org)).

### **FCDC SUGGESTIONS**

FCDC is excited and welcomes parent/guardian suggestions! If an idea would benefit FCDC, including its overall culture and learning environment, please do not hesitate to contact the Regional Director, Misty Doyle or feel free to send an email to **FORZA Education Management at: [www.forzaedu.com](http://www.forzaedu.com)**