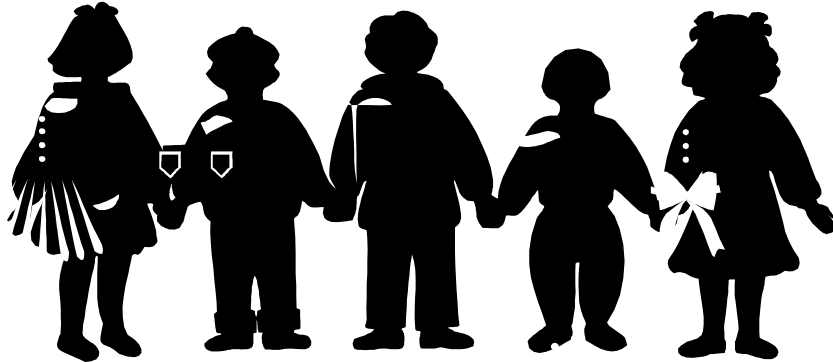


Little Blessings



Parent's Day Out

Where Learning is Fun!

2010-2011 Parent Handbook

Location:

First United Methodist Church of Castle Rock
1200 South Street
Castle Rock, Colorado 80104

303-660-2170

www.littleblessingspdo.com

Fax: 303-663-9763

Director:

Susan Wartchow

All parents or guardians will be asked to sign a form stating they have read and understand the policies, parental responsibilities, and procedures of the Little Blessings PDO program as outlined in this handbook.

Welcome!

The Little Blessings PDO program is excited to serve you and provide your child with a wonderful experience. We will work with you in whatever way we can. Understand that communication is very important between us. If there are any issues going on in the life of your child – please let us know! Always know that our office has an open door policy and you can discuss anything that may be a concern for you. We're glad you've entrusted us with your precious children. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Susan Wartchow
Director, Little Blessings PDO

Little Blessings Parent's Day Out Program

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Our Mission

The Little Blessings Parent's Day Out program is designed to provide toddlers and preschoolers with the necessary motor, educational and social skills for a smooth transition into the elementary school system. Each day is structured with new and repetitive activities in a Christian environment.

Our Philosophy

The philosophy of Little Blessings is to recognize each child as an individual and teach to each individual's needs in all areas of development. The environment is one that fosters the excitement, joy and challenge of learning. The program also strives to create a partnership with parents maintaining open communication. The school community fosters respect, thoughtfulness and empathy for others.

Schedule

The Little Blessings PDO school year runs from August to May following most of the Douglas County High School schedule for holidays and snow days. Classes are from 9:00 am to 2:30 pm, Monday through Friday. Two, three and five-day programs are available for your child as listed below.

- Monday – Wednesday – Friday
- Tuesday and Thursday
- Monday through Friday

Registration

Registration in the Little Blessings PDO program is held in March for the following school year and is open to everyone with consideration given in the following order:

- Returning families from the previous school year.
- Members of the First United Methodist Church of Castle Rock.
- Waitlisted children.
- Children of the community.

All areas are on a “first come, first serve” basis. Applications are accepted for the waitlist throughout the school year in the event of any classroom or student changes.

A non-refundable registration fee is due at the time of registration as listed below:

- First year families \$50.00
- Returning families \$25.00

Eligibility

Children between the ages of 18 months and seven years old are eligible for the Little Blessings PDO program. Children 18 months of age must be walking on their own before they can begin the program. Children 3 ½ and above must be potty trained.

Tuition

Tuition for the Little Blessings PDO program is based on an annual fee broken down into 10 monthly payments for your convenience. For current year tuition rates, please visit our web site.

- Reimbursement is not given for snow days or student absences due to illness, vacations, etc...
- Tuition for the last month of the school year (May) is due at the time of enrollment. This payment is **not** reimbursed and is non-transferable in the event the child leaves the program before the end of the school year.
- If your child increases the number of days they attend during the year, the increased May tuition is due at that time.

Payments

Full monthly payment is due on the first day of the month that your child is scheduled to attend by cash or check. Checks should be made out to “Little Blessings Parents Day Out”. Payments are accepted in the office in person or by mail. You may place your tuition in the tuition box located outside the Director’s office. A \$10.00 late fee will be added if the payment is not received within 7 days. *If payment is not received after 10 days, the student will not be allowed to attend the Little Blessings PDO program until payment is received. **If payment is not received within 14 days, your child will be expelled from the program however, the payment for that month will still be due.***

Cancellation

In the event your child withdraws from the program, written notice to the Director is required. Please ask an office staff member for a withdrawal form. (Reimbursement is not given for the pre-paid May tuition) Funds are also non-transferable. There are cancellation forms available in the office for your convenience.

Enrollment

When the child is entered into the Little Blessings PDO program, the parent or guardian will receive an enrollment folder and medical forms. The folder and health / immunization forms need to be completed, signed by their physician and returned by the date indicated in order for your child to attend the program.

Parent / Guardian Responsibilities

To ensure a successful day for you, your child and our staff - the parents or guardians are responsible for the following:

- Our doors will open for drop-off at 8:57 am. The Security System will automatically open the back door at that time. The Little Blessing staff is not responsible for your child before 9:00 am. They use this time to prepare for class.
- It's important to be on time. It makes an easier transition for your child to get into the morning's activities and routine.
- Pick up your child at 2:30 pm. The parent or guardian will be charged \$1 per child per minute starting at 2:35 pm. If your child is not picked up by 2:35 pm, the following actions will be taken:
 - The parents or guardians will be called and/or the number listed on the sign in sheet.
 - The emergency contact will be called at 2:45 pm if unable to contact the parents or guardians.
 - If no response from the above, Social Services will be contacted at 3:00 pm.
 - Late pick-up payment is due the following school day.
 - When you pick your child up on time – you are teaching them a healthy respect for another person's time.
- Sign your child in and out upon dropping off your child and picking them up. The sign in/out sheet will be located in the classroom and will require your name, time in and daytime phone number where you can be reached.
- If someone other than the parent, guardian or authorized person will be picking up a child, please give both verbal and written notification. The teacher will not release the student unless the person is on the car pool list and they have identification. **This individual must be at least 18 years old.**
- If visiting your child's classroom during the day, please sign-in at the Director's office before entering the classroom. (This is not required for early pickup).
- Keep all enrollment forms current and up to date. Any changes to address, medical information, marital status, car pool, etc... need to be reported immediately to the Director in writing.
- Medical information must be updated on an annual basis per the Department of Human Services.
- Before your child can begin the program, we must have on file:
 - A general health appraisal
 - Current immunizations. After each well visit, (18 months, 2 years, 3 years, 5 years and 6 years) we require updated immunization records. These records must be received within 30 days of your child's birthday.

- Please put sunscreen on your child before bringing them to school. Little Blessings does not automatically apply sunscreen.
- Label all items that belong to your child and are brought to school so that it is visible.
- Bring all items listed under “Items needed by children” each day your child attends.
- On occasion, we ask for parent volunteers for Special Events. Sign-up sheets will be available at orientation. We may also send emails for certain needs.
- When dropping off and picking up your children, please park in the parking lot. Do not park by the side door as it is an emergency exit.
- Do not leave any child (younger or older sibling for example) unattended in a vehicle.
- Check our website on a daily basis for news and updates.

Items Needed By Children

The following items are required each day your child attends. **Please label these items with their name:**

All Ages:

- A **healthy** snack for mid-morning snack time. The snack should consist of finger food that the child can eat by themselves.
- A **healthy** lunch box and drink. The lunch should consist of finger food that the child can eat by themselves. See our website for a list of “Do’s & Don’ts”. The teacher / aide will assist in opening any items. Please refrain from packing any candy, messy items or food that will stain clothing or carpet.
- We also have “peanut-free” snack and lunch ideas. Check the website for that list as well
- Non slick, closed-toe shoes. **No sandals, crocs or smooth-bottom cowboy boots.** (no need to label)
- Age appropriate water bottle, which they can drink from without assistance.
- Change of clothes to include shirt, pants, underwear and socks.
- Weather appropriate outerwear. (Most classes will go outside even if it is just for a few minutes – see Playground information). Include jackets, winter coats, snow boots, snow pants, gloves and hats.

Younger students (3 ½ and younger)

- A crib size sheet and blanket or a junior size sleeping bag for rest time.
- Toilet training children should bring 2 -3 changes of clothing. Please dress your child in elastic waist pants. Please inform your child’s teacher if your child is toilet training and any special procedures you may have.
- Five (5) disposable diapers and a container of wipes are needed for children in diapers. Please label each diaper with the child’s name.

Please do not bring any toys from home unless it is for a special occasion like ‘show and share’. We cannot be responsible for lost items. The only exception would be “snuggly” for naptime. Also, DO NOT send money with your child. It’s against Colorado state regulations to have money in a child care facility.

No diaper ointments or medications allowed in child's backpack. If such ointments or medications are needed, please refer to 'Medications' section.

Drop-In

Children are eligible to 'drop-in' in their classroom on days that they do not normally attend, depending on availability. The cost is \$30.00. Please fill out the 'Drop-In' form located in the office or on the website if you are interested.

Staff Expectations

The staff of the Little Blessings Parent's Day Out program is here to assist you and develop your child in a positive atmosphere. The following can be expected from the staff of teachers, teacher aides and office personnel:

- All teachers are qualified to teach preschoolers as defined by state licensing procedures from Department of Human Services and are required to attend continuing education classes throughout the year.
- Organized daily lesson plans and activities.
- A daily schedule posted so that in the event you arrive late or early, you know where to drop off or pick up your child.
- All staff members carry a communication device (such as a two way radio).
- A continuous class count.
- An information sheet of your child's activities to be distributed at the end of the day. Any concerns your teacher may have will be documented on this form.
- Posted upcoming events that affect the school and your child.
- A place where you can place your child's personal belongings.
- Parent / Teacher conferences upon request.
- Information posted on our website indicating upcoming events, daily school notes, parent information and contagious disease information.
- A newsletter or calendar provided by teacher or available on website.
- A positive atmosphere.
- Discipline of your child, following our Conscious Discipline Program (parent seminars provided throughout the school year).
- The staff is required by law to report any suspected child abuse to the Douglas County Human Services Department.

Illness, Injury, Medications and Special Needs

Illness

Children should not be brought to the Little Blessings PDO program if they are showing any signs of a contagious illness such as, but not limited to, pink eye, the common cold or influenza. Some symptoms may include fever, vomiting, diarrhea, complaint of stomach pain, earache, red eye(s) or complaint of the 'yucky' feeling. **Children must be free from fever, diarrhea and/or**

vomit for 24 hours before returning to school. Please refer to the “Medical Info” page on our website for more detailed information.

If your child becomes ill while at Little Blessings PDO, the parents or guardians will be notified to pick up the child within 1 hour of notification.

If your child contracts any communicable diseases, please notify the Director immediately. As a courtesy, a notice of exposure will be posted on our website. Click on “News You Can Use”. The family information will remain confidential.

Injury

Notify the Director of Little Blessings PDO and the child’s teacher if an injury has occurred that will prohibit the child from involvement in any daily activities.

Any visible markings on a child at drop off such as, but not limited to, scratches, bruises, cuts, will be noted by the teacher.

If an injury should occur while at Little Blessings PDO and is not life threatening, the injury will be treated and an ‘injury form’ will be completed with a description of the incident and treatment. Parents or guardians will be asked to review the form and sign it. If the injury is life threatening, 911 will be called immediately before the parents or guardians.

Medications

Medications, including oral and topical, will not be given to children with the exception of life threatening conditions such as a need for EpiPen. A written consent and explicit directions from both a doctor and the parent or guardian is needed for these medications to be distributed. The medication must be in the original container and accompanied by an Administration of Medication form. These medications will be administered by a member of the Little Blessings staff that has been delegated by the nurse consultant and trained in compliance with Section 12-38-132 C.R.S. of the “Nurse Practice Act” as stated in the Rules Regulating Child Care Centers 7.702.41. An additional fee will be charged for frequent medication administration and medication storage.

There is a \$25.00 annual charge to store medications for your child. This fee covers the storage and training cost to administer the medication.

Nurse Consultant

The Little Blessings PDO program does not have a nurse on staff. Our nurse consultant is Paula Dearborn – license #114781 who will visit our facility once a month and on an as needed basis. If you have any special needs or concerns that you would like to discuss with the nurse, please contact the director to set an appointment.

Special Needs

Please inform Little Blessings PDO of any special needs your child may have so that we can determine if and how we can help in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The facility is wheelchair accessible.

Discipline and Guidance

Our goal is to provide children with a safe and enjoyable environment. “It’s our job to keep your child safe and it’s their job to help keep it that way.” This comes from the new discipline policy that we have embraced called “Conscious Discipline”. The main focus is on the social/emotional aspect of the children. This program uses daily conflicts to teach conflict resolution, social skills, character development and self control. There are 7 powers of self -control: perception, attention, intervention, unity, acceptance, love and free will. From that emerges the 7 Life Skills: composure, encouragement, assertiveness, choices, positive intent, empathy and consequences. Using the latest research on brain development, teachers implement life skills to help guide children through situations which develop the whole child and help them to become successful.

If a child is injuring other children they will be taken out of the situation. The parent or guardian will be notified. If the child continues to injure other children, we may ask the parent or guardian to withdraw their child.

We reserve the right to release your child from the program if their behavior is not acceptable.

Curriculum

Whole Language (Thematic): The teachers are allowed the freedom to create their own curriculum, using a thematic approach. A topic is integrated into the curriculum using age and developmentally appropriate activities that teach to the 5 selves: social/emotional, creative, cognitive, language and physical. There is a separate PE teacher that focuses on age appropriate activities to develop gross motor skills. A Healthy Habits teacher teaches the children not only about ‘who’ foods and ‘go’ foods, but how to wash hands properly and other activities. The children are also exposed to Spanish, music and Bible lessons.

Handwriting Without Tears: This curriculum teaches all the precursor skills to handwriting so when the children enter kindergarten and elementary schools, the stress associated with writing will be lessened. The curriculum can be used for all ages. Such activities like playing with play dough is emphasized as that is an excellent hand strengthening exercise for fine motor development. The curriculum uses many fun props and incorporates music to help guide the children through the process of recognizing letters and how to write letters. This program is also utilized with the Douglas County School system.

Brain Gym: Simple exercises are incorporated in the classroom to help promote brain integration which in turn helps in the brain development of the young child. These simple exercises can help children focus, deal with stressful situations and help in coordination of the body as well as hand-eye coordination.

The rooms are arranged using centers such as: science, art, dramatic play, blocks, manipulative, literacy/books and music. The children follow the daily schedule and plenty of time is allotted for free play or choice play. The teacher is always available to aid in any conflict management or resolutions. During play, children develop many social skills that will stay with them the rest of their lives.

Field Trips, Playground and Television Viewing

Field Trips

The Little Blessings PDO program does not take field trips (we bring the field trips to school). Occasionally, your child's class may take a nature walk around the facility. In the event a special arrangement is made where the children will leave the facility, the parent or guardian will be notified in advance and the file will be checked for the "Release from Liability Form". Parent volunteers may be asked to accompany the class on these trips. All children will participate in Special Events and activities unless written notification is given to the office. Activities are posted on the website as well as on our school calendar.

If a special activity or "Field Trip" occurs on a day that your child does not attend, you are always welcome to bring your child and stay with them during the event.

Playground

Each class has a designated time to be on the playground for 30 minutes. Please put sunscreen on your child everyday before you bring them to school.

During excessive hot weather (above 95 degrees) or cold weather (below 35 degrees), the playground time will be shortened to 15 minutes or less.

Please dress your child appropriately for the weather conditions. Each class will almost always go outdoors for at least a few minutes regardless of weather (snow, wind, heat, etc...).

Television Viewing

On occasion, a class may use a video to complement the theme of the day. The videos used will be age appropriate and rated 'G' for general audiences. A staff member will accompany all video and television viewing. If you **do not** want your child to see videos, please state so on the appropriate box of your child's folder and also verbally notify the teacher.

Emergency Procedures and Snow Days

Snow Days

- The Little Blessings PDO program follows the Douglas County High School snow day schedule. If the High School is closed, then Little Blessings PDO will also be closed.
- When the High School has a late start, Little Blessings PDO will begin at 10:00 am. When the High School has an early release, parents or guardians are expected to pick up their children immediately after the closure has been announced. Parents or guardians will be called if they do not arrive promptly.

- Little Blessings reserves the right to close early due to inclement weather. Parents will be notified via email and phone.

- To determine if school is closed, you may:
 - call the Douglas County School weather hotline number at 303-387-7669
 - log on to www.dcsdK12.org
 - log on to our preschool website at www.littleblessingspdo.com - Click on News You Can Use
 - check scrolling on local news channels – look for Douglas County High School

Emergency Procedures

In the event we send children home early, the parent or guardian will be contacted using the phone number listed on the daily sign in/out sheet. Specific information on each emergency situation can be obtained from the Director's office.

- Fire drills are conducted every other month
- Tornado drills are conducted biannually
- We reserve the right to close school for epidemics, facility problems, or the majority of staff absenteeism.

Security System

There are security cameras around the perimeter of the building and at main entrances. Doors remain locked during school hours, except during a short period of time to allow for drop off and pick up. Staff members may enter the building using access keys. The security system has a 24 hour recording device.

Lost Children

A count of children is periodically taken throughout the day to ensure that we do not lose a child. If a child should become lost while at the program, the following procedures are implemented:

- A count of the children in the classroom will be conducted to determine who is missing.
- The staff member in charge (teacher or aide) will contact the Director and any available staff personnel via radio to inform them of a potential situation.
- A thorough search will be conducted of the facility including all classrooms, the building, the playground and the parking lot.
- If the child is not found, the police will be called.
- The parents or guardian will then be called.
- If the parents or guardian cannot be reached, the emergency contact will be called.
- The security system recording device will be reviewed.

Classrooms, Licensing and Ratios

Licensing

The Little Blessings PDO program is a licensed facility by the Department of Human Services. All of our inspections and licenses are available for review in the Director's office. Records are maintained for a three-year period. The Department of Human Services mandates that we adhere to the ratios as listed below.

Classrooms and Ratios

Classroom	Child to teacher ratio	Capacity
God's Garden Shop and Nursery	5 to 1	5
S.A.M's Firehouse	7 to 1	7
Noah's Pet Shop	10 to 1	10
Creation Park	10 to 1	11
Starlight Theatre	10 to 1	8
Tent Makers	10 to 1	8
Do Good Disciples	10 to 1	10
Jericho's Gym	10 to 1	10
Heavenly Delights Ice Cream Shop	12 to 1	12
Promise Land Toys	12 to 1	15
Jeremiah's Jamboree	12 to 1	9

Students of the same age will be placed together as space is available – we try to have no more than 6 months of age difference

Reports and Complaints

Please report any concerns or questions you have to the Director of Little Blessings PDO. To file an official complaint about the facility, contact:

The Colorado Department of Human Services
 Division of Child Care
 1575 Sherman Street
 Denver, Colorado 80203-1714
 303-866-5958 or 1-800-799-5876

To report any suspected child abuse, contact:

Douglas County Health and Human Services
 101 Third Street
 Castle Rock, Colorado 80104
 303-688-4825