

2026 Center Newsletter

*Please read in its entirety. Effective immediately.
If you have any question about the following message, please contact Ms. Kia via ProCare app (office messaging).
Thank you in advance for your complete cooperation and support.*

Attention

As we step into the new year, we'd like to share a few reminders about Center policies and procedures to help us kick off 2026 on the right foot. First, Happy New Year and a warm welcome back to all students and families.

Scheduling

Mornings?

The Children's Center has a **9:30 Am cutoff policy**. While we understand that morning issues may come up, this cutoff helps maintain a structured schedule in our classrooms. At 9:30 Am, we take morning attendance, set the staff-to-child ratio for the day, and serve snacks. This is also when each classroom begins its morning learning activities, and late arrivals can cause distractions.

Children won't be accepted into the Center after 9:30 Am to minimize distractions, unless they have a doctor's appointment that the teacher was informed in advance and they arrive with a doctor's note.

Thank you for your understanding as we work toward creating a more structured approach to our students' daily learning and schedules.

Meal time

The Center offers a morning snack at 10 AM and an afternoon snack at 3 PM. If your child is a picky eater, you're welcome to pack an extra snack in their lunchbox for those times. Please also send a refillable water bottle for daily use.

Evenings?

The Children's Center **closes at 5:30 Pm** sharp, so be sure to plan your evening to arrive no later than that time for pickup.

If you're going to arrive after the evening cutoff, let the Center know your estimated arrival time. A late fee applies: \$25 after the first 5 minutes, plus \$1 for every additional minute. This fee is paid in cash, is not part of your tuition, and should be settled at pickup or before your child returns the next day. It goes to the staff member who stayed with your child past regular work hours.

Breakfast?

If you are providing your child with breakfast and would like us to serve it, please note that breakfast ends at 9 a.m. To give your child enough time to eat, arrive before this time. The cut-off is in place because we don't want to rush children during meals, and our day starts at 9:30 a.m. with circle time, followed by a 10 a.m. snack. Children who arrive after the breakfast cut-off can enjoy their breakfast during the 10 a.m. snack period.

Lunch?

The Center has a no-heating policy, so if you need your lunch to stay warm, please use a thermos to keep it at a safe temperature. We won't be reheating food anymore. For items that need to stay cold, be sure to include an ice pack in your lunch box.

Weekly Bins

Please ensure your child comes to school ready for the week ahead. In case of an emergency, the classroom may contact you if your child needs anything extra, but buckets should be fully stocked on Monday mornings with a week's worth of supplies in every room. If your child is not potty-trained or in the potty-training stages, make sure they have enough diapers or pull-ups, along with wipes or flushable wipes, for the entire week. Each child's bin should include a fitted crib sheet, blanket, optional pillow, and plenty of clothing. At the end of each week, remember to clean out the bin and restock it with items for the following week.

No Outside Toys

We are not responsible for any broken or lost toys brought into the Center. Please keep all outside toys in the car or at home to prevent classroom disruptions. Any visible toys will be taken and put away until departure. This rule helps avoid conflicts that can arise and disturb the classroom environment.

Note: Outside toys are only allowed during show-and-share days, as scheduled by the teacher.

Preventing the Spread of Illness

How is your child feeling?

Children should stay home from school if they're sick. At the Children's Center, we work hard to create a safe and healthy environment for everyone, but we need your support. If your child isn't feeling well or is showing symptoms of illness, including but not limited to:

Fever

Severe Pains including Headache, Body aches including ear, throat or teeth, and Stomachache

Vomiting

Diarrhea

Persistent cough

Constant sneeze

Runny unclear nose

Lethargy

Rash

or any contagious disease or infections, they should be kept home. When in doubt, reach out to your child's doctor and keep us informed about their progress. Children can return once they have a doctor's note.

What happens when your child is sick at school?

You'll be contacted through the ProCare emergency text message system. If there's no response within 5 minutes, you'll get a follow-up phone call for immediate pickup. Children should be picked up within an hour of being called. If a child isn't feeling their best and a parent can't be reached, the Center will contact an emergency contact to arrange pickup.

Please ensure your contact information is up to date and your emergency contacts are current and available for pickups if necessary.

2026/27 Calendar

This is the school year's working calendar. Dates may change if necessary, with advance notice. Snow days will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Dates of Closure (2026/27)	Reason
Thursday, January 1	New Year's Day
Monday, January 19	MLK Day
Monday, February 16	President's Day
Friday, April 3	Teacher's Development Day
Friday, May 8	National Provider's Day
Monday, May 25	Memorial Day
Friday, June 19	Juneteenth
Friday, July 3	Fourth of July
Monday, September 7	Labor Day
Monday, October 12	Columbus/Indigenous People Day
Wednesday, November 11	Veteran's Day
Wednesday, November 25	Thanksgiving Break (Close @12)
Thursday, November 26	Thanksgiving Break
Friday, November 27	Thanksgiving Break
Wednesday, December 23	Christmas Break (Close @ 12)
Thursday, December 24	Christmas Break
Friday, December 25	Christmas Break
Thursday, December 31	New Year's Day Eve (Close @ 12)
Friday, January 1	New Year's Day

Communication?

We communicate through ProCare, so be sure to have the app downloaded and updated on your devices and add your cellphone number to ensure we can connect with families effectively. We can't be responsible for any messages you miss due to not using ProCare.

For any questions or concerns, contact your child's teacher during working hours through Procure or by calling 301-856-1680. Please avoid calling between 1:00 pm and 3:00 pm, as this is nap time and when staff are on their lunch breaks.

Infant/ Toddler Room - Ms. Amanda (7:00 Am - 4:00 Pm)

2-year-old Room - Ms. Kia (7:00 Am - 5:30 Pm)

3-year-old Room - Ms. Crystal (9:00 Am - 5:00 Pm)

4-year-old Room - Ms. Tonya (8:30 Am - 5:30 Pm)

In case of an emergency or if you cannot reach your child's teacher, feel free to contact Ms. Kia, director, via ProCare, phone call, or email at thechildrensctr@yahoo.com.

The Children's Center may soon announce a switch from ProCare to Brightwheel to help avoid payment portal issues.
