

Roudenbush Community Center

Established 1975

65 Main Street - Westford, MA 01886

www.roudenbush.org

CHILD CARE

Full Day Programs

William E. Frost School
73 Main Street
978-692-5533

Co-Director: Karen Lessard
Co-Director: Jane Garrahan

PRESCHOOL

Part Day Programs

Old Nabhasset School
170 Plain Road
978-692-5544

Roudenbush Community Center
65 Main Street
978-692-5511 Ext. 225

Interim Director: Juanita Antunes

SCHOOL AGE

Before/After & No School Days

Abbot School
25 Depot Street
(Cell) 1-978-846-2168

Roudenbush Community Center
65 Main Street
978-692-5511 Ext. 226

Director: Erin Shepherd

PARENT HANDBOOK

Revised March 2011

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~WELCOME~

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to the Roudenbush Children's Center. Our goal is to provide a warm, nurturing environment where children feel safe, secure and comfortable. We offer a developmentally appropriate curriculum where children are given the opportunity to participate in small and large group activities, safely explore the world around them, and, most importantly, to have fun. All of the Roudenbush Children's Centers are licensed through the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care. You may contact EEC for our compliance history.

Department of Early Education and Care
10 Austin Street
Worcester, MA 01609
508-798-5180

The purpose of this handbook is to outline the centers' policies and programs. We make every effort to work closely with parents in a partnership that will facilitate a child's growth and development. Communication between parents, teachers, site director and the Roudenbush Executive Director is a vital part of our program.

THE HISTORY AND THE FACILITY

The Roudenbush Community Center (RCC) began in the fall of 1975. The 65 Main Street building was the second Westford Academy, then middle and elementary school, and finally the local branch of the YWCA. It became the Roudenbush Community Center at a vote of the town meeting in 1975. Our programs have expanded to the Nab building, the Frost building and now the Abbot School. Roudenbush Community Center is a self-supporting organization serving the Westford community. The revenue earned from our programs supports our classes, programs, staff and maintenance. The Roudenbush Community Center, Inc. (TRCCI) was officially incorporated in 1995 as a non-profit fiscal agent for the RCC. We are also committed to preserving and protecting the three buildings under its care and custody.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The goal of the Roudenbush Children's Centers is to provide a model program that is responsive to the changing needs of children, parents, staff, and the community. The children's centers shall not discriminate in providing services to children and their parents on the basis of race, disability, religion, cultural heritage, political beliefs, national origin, sexual orientation, or marital status. Toilet training status is not an eligibility requirement for enrollment. We endeavor to provide a safe, healthy, and nurturing environment where the developmental needs of children are addressed. We provide experiences that stimulate growth, supplement and enrich family life. We try to be a support and resource for families, the community and the schools. For staff, we strive to provide an atmosphere that will attract and retain well-trained personnel by encouraging professional development and a sense of teamwork. We encourage cooperation and open communication among staff as well as with other members of the child care community.

PHILOSOPHY OF CHILD CARE, PRESCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS

Learning Through Play

Our centers strive to provide an environment where children have the opportunity to learn. Your child was born with a natural curiosity, which makes him/her want to touch, taste, see, smell and hear everything. Since play is the natural way that every child learns, it is one of the most effective methods of teaching...our method of teaching. Through play, your child's curiosity is stimulated. He/she is encouraged to explore, imitate, manipulate and master the surrounding environment. The center prides itself on providing your child with a safe and caring environment. Our programs give your child the opportunity to participate in a variety of age- and developmentally-appropriate activities. Included in our programs is the opportunity for children to learn about different cultures by participating in a variety of traditional cultural events and holiday celebrations. Through these experiences, a positive self-image is reinforced and a foundation for strong cognitive and social skills is formed. In our early childhood programs, our curriculum is based on themes, such as autumn, animals, holidays, dinosaurs, earth week, spring, all about me, families, etc., which incorporate language, math, science, small/large motor skills, art, music, and cooking activities. The daily schedule consists of alternating periods of individual, small group, large group, structured and non-structured time, both indoors and out of doors. It is always a pleasure to see children learning while forming new friendships. When appropriate, we will take field trips or bring in special entertainment (i.e. storytellers, magicians or pets, etc.), to fit with our programming. Curriculum focus may vary as needed with the needs of the children in a given room or that week's specific theme.

PHILOSOPHY OF SCHOOL AGE PROGRAM

Our center strives to provide an environment where children have the opportunity to learn. Teachers plan and implement activities, which will enable each child to develop accordingly to their ability and motivational level. Children's positive feelings of self-worth are the foundation of curriculum development for our extended day and school age programming. In our school age programming, our curriculum is flexibly structured to meet the needs of the children who have spent the majority of their day in a structured school setting. We will be focusing our curriculum around clubs (choice of various activities), outside activities (sports), homework, arts and crafts, free play, quiet time, and music. The teachers in each classroom supervise the clubs. There may be a theme attached to the clubs for any given week. For example, clubs may focus around science or the environment. Each child is given the opportunity to choose the specific club of interest to him/her. The intent of the clubs is to encourage decision making, allow children to learn to take responsibility, and to foster independence. Children will participate in the planning and development of the clubs when and where appropriate.

ENROLLMENT POLICY

Enrollment for fall and summer programming is done every spring. Notification of dates for registration are posted in the centers. We accept registration year round, but acceptance is based upon availability of space. We require children to attend a minimum of 2 days a week for those in full day child care, kindergarten, and school age. Days and hours are flexible within certain arrival and departure times. The part day programs run according to the school year, therefore all children attending those programs must register for the full school year.

REGISTRATION PACKETS

Each year, parents must complete a registration packet and pay a nonrefundable registration fee and one month's tuition to apply for admission. Acceptance is on a first-come first-serve basis, based upon the availability of space. Summer programming follows the Westford school year calendar. The children's centers keep an ongoing waiting list and use this waiting list to fill vacant slots within the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) guidelines and also reflect the programs philosophy of planning for the needs of each child.

After a child's acceptance into the program, parents and children may visit the children's center before the first day of attendance. After the child is enrolled and begins his/her program, parents may visit the center at any time to observe. However, teacher conferences require an appointment.

As per the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) regulations, the following forms are required and must be completed and submitted to the center absolutely no later than your child's start date. In-house families are required to update all forms annually. Your child will not be allowed to attend the center without appropriate forms in his/her file.

REGISTRATION PACKET - Please be sure all sections are completed and all forms are signed and dated. All forms must be updated annually and maintained in the child's record.

- Summer Registration Form
- Fall Registration Tuition Contract
- Emergency Release / First Aid and Emergency Medical Care Consent / Transportation Plan and Child Release Consent Form
- Child's Information Form (In-house families who are re-registering their child/ren may omit the Developmental History section of the Child's Information Form.)
- Field Trip / Photo Permission Form / Parent Handbook Acknowledgement Form
- Automatic Direct Payment Form (Optional)

MEDICAL DOCUMENTATION - Please be sure all required information is present and all forms are signed by physician/authorized person and dated.

- Record of a **physical examination** within 1 year (*Must be updated annually*)
- Up-to-date **immunization record**
- **Age appropriate proof of lead (Pb) screening** - 1st record of lead **MUST** be between the ages of 9-12 months and then every birthday after through age 3 (unless you live in a high risk community).

SERVICES AVAILABLE

Parents and children of our center can utilize any of the programs offered at the Roudenbush Community Center. A list of community resources is available to parents through our community center.

HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION - HOLIDAYS / SHUTDOWN DAYS

The full day child care center at Frost operates 52 weeks a year from 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM, Monday through Friday. The school age program operates 52 weeks per year with before school care and after school care, full day care on vacation weeks, snow days, and during the summer.

**The Frost program allows for 2 shutdown days for center maintenance at the end of the summer program.*

**The school age program allows for 1 shutdown day at the end of the school year and at the end of the summer program.*

The centers are closed and regular tuition is charged for the following holidays:

TRCCI may choose to close the day before or after a major holiday. Advance notice will be given.

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Presidents Day
- Patriots Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Columbus Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Friday after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Day

NOTE: Preschool programs follow the Westford public school year calendar and therefore may be closed on days which are not listed above. You will receive a school calendar before the start of the school year.

TUITION AND REFUND POLICY

Full day child care, kindergarten, school age and part day preschool tuition is based on a yearly fee which is divided into 10 equal monthly payments from the last week of August until the end of June. Summer is billed separately. Tuition for all programs is billed one (1) month in advance. Invoices are issued on the 1st of every month and payment is due by the 15th of the month for the following month's tuition. Please write your account number on checks, money orders, or bank checks made payable to TRCCI.

CANCELLATION / CHANGES / WITHDRAWAL / TUITION REFUNDS

Cancellation fee prior to start of program: Fifty percent (50%) of your monthly budgeted amount will be assessed as a cancellation fee if you cancel prior to the start of a program.

Changes to program: All changes to a program require a 30-day advance written notice and must be submitted to the director of your child's program no later than the 15th of the month in order to be reflected on the next invoice. At that time, all recurring invoices will be adjusted to the new monthly rate for the remaining payments. Additional days added to the child's schedule after the cutoff will be treated as "extra days" and billed accordingly. Once invoices are sent out, we can not make revisions for that month. Payment must be made in full for the amount invoiced, and future invoices will be adjusted to the corrected amounts.

- **Kindergarten and school age children:** If you sign up to attend during school vacation weeks, ½ days, etc...and do not attend, you will still be billed and required to pay.
- **Adding additional days:** If you sign up for additional days during your child's week, we are saving that spot for you and you will be required to pay whether or not your child attends.

Withdrawal from program: Withdrawal from a program requires a 30-day advance written notice. Accounts must be paid in full by the last day of withdrawal from any program. Once the written notice of withdrawal has been received, payments for any additional charges incurred during that time period must be paid for at the time of service.

Tuition refunds: There will be NO tuition refunds based on illness, holidays, inclement weather closings, vacations or other legitimate conditions beyond the control of the children's centers or The Roudenbush Community Center, Inc. (TRCCI). Variations in attendance from the regular schedule will be billed accordingly.

RETURNED PAYMENTS

Any form of payment (check or auto withdrawal) returned by the bank three (3) times within a 12 month period will require payment by cash or certified check for all future payments. Service charge of \$25.00 for any and all returned transactions will be applied to your account. A finance charge of 1.5% per month will be applied to the account until paid in full.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

At the centers we have some basic rules for the health and safety of children. The children's centers practice consistency in discipline based on an understanding of the child's individual needs and development level. Discipline is directed toward maximizing social growth as well as protecting others in the group.

Group discussions are used to introduce behavioral standards. Children learn what is expected of them by talking about which behaviors are appropriate and which are inappropriate. Rules are often established jointly by the teacher and the group with the objective of creating a safe and happy environment.

Discipline practices include praise and positive reinforcement as well as reminders about the rules. In the classroom setting, a short separation from the group or sitting with the teacher talking is the center's method of discipline.

No child shall be subjected to abuse or neglect, cruel, unusual, severe, or corporal punishment including any type of physical hitting inflicted on the body, punishments which subject the child to verbal abuse, ridicule or humiliation, denial of food, rest or bathroom facilities, punishment for soiling, wetting or not using the toilet, or punishment related to eating or not eating food.

When conflicts develop over rights and property of others, our goal is to work with the individual children and resolve the conflict through effective communication. If conflicts continue, parents may be asked for ideas or solutions.

BITING

Biting is an unfortunate but natural stage in the development of most young children. Although parents may not observe this behavior at home, most children who participate in a social environment with other children may, on some occasions, bite another child or are bitten by another child. While this is unpleasant for everyone involved, biting does not, under normal circumstances, represent a health threat.

The center's policy on biting is to help children outgrow this undesirable behavior by learning more acceptable forms of social interaction. Our approach to managing biting is consistent with our policy for managing behavior problems in general. We examine the environment and the activity schedule to see how they may be contributing to the behavior and we make any adjustments that we feel may help the child to modify the behavior. We also help parents to understand the behavior so they can be prepared to respond in a constructive way.

Unless biting by a child is unusually chronic and acute, it does not constitute cause for the center to suggest that a child should receive additional intervention outside the center or alternative child care services. We may, on rare occasions, decide to assign children to different groups as a remedial strategy.

INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE / CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

As required by EEC, no form of corporal punishment or restraint will be permitted at Roudenbush Children's Centers. Substantiated instances by a staff member of slapping, spanking, shaking, pinching or other physical modes of punishment will be cause for dismissal of such a staff member. The use of sarcasm, mocking, embarrassment, scapegoat or other forms of verbal abuse, if substantiated, will be cause for dismissal of such a staff member.

When a staff member is suspected of abuse, the children's center director will follow the following procedures. Immediately upon the director's notification of the alleged incident of abuse, the director will remove the staff member from direct contact with the children at Roudenbush Children's Centers until a full investigation has been completed. The director will then proceed to file a 51A to the Department of Children and Families and then notify EEC. During this time, the staff member will be presumed innocent and will continue to receive full salary and benefits.

If institutional abuse by a staff member results in abuse of a child, RCC will follow the procedures set forth above with respect to reporting to the Department of Children and Families.

If a staff member at Roudenbush is suspected of a criminal action, the director will follow the following procedures. The director will meet with the staff member to discuss the situation. If parents are involved, then the director, staff member and parents will meet. The staff member will be presumed innocent during this time. Pay will continue but direct contact with the children may be limited.

PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

As a child care worker, we are mandated to report and required by law to report instances of know or suspected child abuse - the law does not give us the choice. Child abuse must be reported to the Department of Social Services, Lowell, MA @ 978-452-8970.

SNOW DAY POLICY

Full Day Child Care, Kindergarten, and School Age: If Westford public schools are closed the Roudenbush Children's Center will open at 8:30 AM. If Westford public schools have a delayed opening we will open at our regularly scheduled time (7:00 AM). If there are hazardous weather conditions Roudenbush Children's Centers may close or have a delayed opening. Please visit our website at www.roudenbush.org to see closing or delay announcements posted or call the Roudenbush Community Center at (978) 692-5511 to listen to a recording stating whether we are closed or have a delayed opening.

Part Day Preschool: If Westford public schools are canceled all AM & PM preschool classes will be canceled. If there is a one-hour delay we will open at our regular time, but if there is a two-hour delay we will cancel AM classes. If Westford public schools cancel afternoon kindergarten, Roudenbush will cancel all PM classes.

HOW TO HANDLE COMPLAINTS OR PROBLEMS

If a parent has a complaint or problem, it is the policy of the center that it be directed to the teachers involved. If the response is unsatisfactory, the parents, the teachers and the children's center director will meet in an effort to find a resolution. Parents are always encouraged to make suggestions regarding the center's policies and programming.

TERMINATION POLICY

1. **Non Payment** - Billing is on the 1st of each month and tuition payments are due by the 15th. If your family is experiencing financial difficulties, please contact the Finance Office to work out an affordable payment plan. In the event that no contact has been made and payment has not been received within 30 days your child will be withdrawn from the program per tuition contract.

2. **Aggressive Behavior** - See below.

3. **Failure to provide health forms or other paperwork required to maintain enrollment.**

4. **If it has been determined that the center does not meet the needs of the child, the following steps will be taken:**

- The staff will document the circumstances
- Meet with the parents
- Provide information for referrals
- The staff shall prepare the child for withdrawal from the center in a manner consistent with the child's ability to understand.

BEHAVIORAL TERMINATION

Teachers will inform the director and/or assistant director of behavioral concerns regarding children at the centers. If a child is biting, hitting, pushing and/or acting aggressively toward other children/teachers the teachers will review the child's record and document the child's behavior. They will then inform the parents of their concerns, and will arrange a meeting with the parents. The staff and parents will together come to an agreement on a plan, which will be consistent between home and school on controlling the behavior. (If a referral is recommended please read below). If, however, parents are unable to meet with staff within a requested time period, we may ask that your child be temporarily suspended from attending class until a meeting has taken place and a plan of action established.

The plan will be given a three-week trial period, after which the staff and parents will again meet to determine if there has been any improvement. In the event that there has been no improvement the child will be withdrawn from the program. The director will write a formal report of why your child is being terminated from the program. The teachers/directors will work closely and consult with the Westford Public Schools or Early Intervention programs regarding behavioral issues. Training will be posted through out the year on behavioral issues, and if funding permits specific training will be offered to staff for free or at a minimal cost.

REFERRAL SERVICES

Teachers will inform the director and/or assistant director of any concerns behavioral or developmental regarding children in their care. The teachers will review the child's record and document their concerns. They will then notify the parents of their concerns and will arrange a meeting with the parents. After the meeting or series of meetings, if a referral is recommended, the teachers (with help from the director and/or assistant director) will supply the parents with a list of community resources for children in need of social, mental health, educational or medical services including dental and vision. If needed, parents will also be provided with a contact person for Chapter 766 or Early Intervention Programming. Teachers will also provide a written report to the parents including the reason for recommending a referral. There will be documentation of the observations made and interventions attempted. Staff at the center will work with parents to try to accommodate the child's needs.

We will offer assistance to parents in making a referral. If assistance is requested, a consent form will need to be signed by the parents. We will also inform parents of the availability of services and the right to appeal under Chapter 766. We will follow up with referral agencies with parental permission and ask for the service provider to consult with our staff and assist in meeting the needs of the child at the center. If it is determined that the child is no longer in need of services from this agency or is ineligible to receive services, the center will review the child's progress at the center every 3 months to determine if another referral is necessary. We will maintain a written record of all referrals as well as parent conferences.

If after following the above steps or a portion thereof or being confronted with a behavioral problem which threatens the safety of staff or other children at our center, or we feel we cannot meet the needs of the child, the child will be removed from the program. We will document these circumstances, meet with parents, and provide referral sources. Staff will prepare the child for removal from the center in a manner consistent with the child's ability to understand.

MORNING AND AFTERNOON ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES

Part Day Preschool - It is necessary that you escort your child to and from his/her classroom. Please be on time when picking up your child, occasionally small children become very anxious when Mom/Dad is late. If you arrive early please wait outside of the classroom. You are welcome to use the outside playground while waiting for a session to begin or end.

Full Day Child Care, Kindergarten, and School Age - The center opens at 7:00 AM. Please do not enter the building prior to that time because teachers are preparing their classrooms. When you bring your child, please be sure to walk him/her into their classroom. You must sign in upon entering the classroom. Make sure the teachers know that your child has arrived. Arrival time provides a good opportunity to share important information concerning your child with the teachers. The children's centers close at 6:00 PM. All parents and children are expected to have exited the building by that time. Therefore, parents are expected to arrive prior to 6:00 PM to pick up their children.

PICK-UP TIME

We welcome daily conversations, however, please keep in mind that your child's teacher must continue to monitor the rest of the class while talking with you. If you feel that you have something important to discuss, please let us know so that we can arrange an appointment with your child's teacher. If you are going to be late and cannot make proper arrangements with the center for a late pick-up, it is your responsibility to contact your emergency pick-up person to make arrangements for timely pick-up of your child.

Other than parents, only persons with prior written authorization will be allowed to pick up a child from the center. Anyone who is unfamiliar to staff, including authorized individuals, will be asked to present identification before a child is released to them. Children are allowed to leave the facility only when accompanied by an authorized adult.

Our procedures to ensure the security of the children are as follows:

1. Check pick-up authorization form in child's file. A child may be released to a person who is not on the authorized list only if the parent has provided a verifiably dated and signed note authorizing a specific person to pick up the child at a specified time.
2. Before releasing a child to someone other than a parent, staff will check the driver's license or other identification to make sure it matches the authorization form or special authorizing note.
3. Under no circumstances will a child be released to a person who is not on the list or for whom the parent has not written an authorization note even if the child and staff member are familiar with the person.

4. No employee will force a child to leave the center with someone unfamiliar to the child.

5. Occasionally, child care centers are put into a difficult position by parents who are involved in a custody dispute. In the absence of a court order, the center cannot deny a parent access to his or her child. Even with a court order, our ability to deny access is limited to notifying promptly the custodial parent and the proper police authority, should unsanctioned contact be attempted or occurs at the center. Difficulties of this type must be discussed with the director so that we can clarify our procedures and limitations. Staff members will be instructed not to place themselves in jeopardy to mediate a family dispute or to attempt to enforce a court order. If a parent chooses to leave a child in the center's care, with a court order in force, the custodial parent will be required to sign a waiver acknowledging the center's inability to physically obstruct a hostile effort to take the child from the center.

COURT ORDERS / CUSTODY AGREEMENTS / RESTRAINING ORDERS

In the event that there is any of the above, it is the parent's responsibility to notify the center. The parent MUST bring a legible photo copy of the court order in its entirety. Legally without said documentation we MUST release the child to any parent that is picking up. We can not take word of mouth or written notes from parents stating any of the above.

LATE FEE POLICY

Although the centers close at 6:00 PM (time based on our clock in the foyer) we do realize that on rare occasions due to emergency situations pick-up may not be possible before 6:00 PM. If you pick your child up after our closing time of 6:00 PM, you will need to sign a form that will be filled in by the staff working that evening. This form will be sent to the Roudenbush finance office and the fee charged to your account to be paid with your monthly statement. For every minute you are late to pick up your child after 6 PM, you will be charged \$1.00 per child. After 3 warnings (occurrences) this late fee increases to \$5.00 per minute per child. This policy also applies to the part day preschool programs. For every five minutes that you are late after the close of your child's program you will be charged \$5.00 per child.

THE FIRST WEEK / SEPARATION

Children who are new to the program may require a period of adjustment to help them feel comfortable in their new surroundings. We suggest you discuss with the teachers in your room how best to help your child. Please feel free to discuss your child's adjustment each day when you arrive, take the time to see that your child gets settled in comfortably as well as start to establish some arrival and departure routines. For example, sign in together, put belongings away, and be sure to say good-bye before you leave. It is very helpful to your child if you maintain a predictable pick-up schedule. The teachers will assist parents with separation concerns. We know that each child and parent is unique and will adjust differently to new situations.

PROGRESS REPORTS

Progress reports are completed in the fall and spring of each year.

MOVING-ON-UP / LEAVING

When your child is ready to move-on-up to the next classroom, we will begin transitioning into their new room approximately 2 weeks before they are scheduled to go. A normal transition would start with a couple of hours per day and then the hours would get extended as the days go on and the time gets closer to the actual move. Transition times will depend on the child and how they are adjusting to the new room.

If you are moving from one Roudenbush program to another, we will prepare your child in a way that he/she can understand. All records will be forwarded to the new Roudenbush program.

If you are leaving the center, we will prepare your child in a way that he/she can understand. We are willing to share any information pertaining to your child with another program with written consent from the parent/guardian.

DAILY CLASS ROUTINES

The daily schedule consists of alternating periods of individual, small and large group activities, both indoor and outdoor structured and non-structured activities, daily activities such as calendar, weather and helper charts, and introduction of the day's activities.

Free Play & Craft Activity - Free choice of independent or small group play in special learning centers. Indoor climber, sand and water tables, and construction materials are usually available. Fine motor activities utilizing puzzles, games, art materials, and manipulatives are encouraged. The craft activity generally relates to the theme for that time period.

Circle Time - Songs, singing games, records, finger plays, dramatic and imaginative activities as well as teacher-directed discussions, games or activity relating to the theme being studied.

Snack Time -The center provides a morning and an afternoon snack. Nutrition is always our first priority; therefore we strive to provide quality snacks. Please notify the teachers if your child has special dietary requirements or ALLERGIES.

Large Motor Activities - Outdoor playground play or indoor gym/room activities, group games, and agility exercises.

Story Time - Story related to season or unit

Lunch Time (Full Day Programs) - Children bring their lunches from home. We recommend a variety of sandwiches, cut up vegetables, fruits and/or yogurt. See nutrition and lunch ideas at the back of this handbook.

Rest Time (Required by EEC Regulations) - Mats are provided and children bring in a crib-size sheet, small pillow, blanket, and a "soft", quiet rest time toy from home. Kindergarten children may bring in a "quiet" box to use on their mats during rest time. Parents are expected to wash their child's bedding each week.

Arts & Crafts or Group Game Time - Teacher-planned activities.

Outside Time - We try to go outside every day as long as weather permits.

DAILY SCHEDULES

Dramatic Play - Children learn the roles of others, see events from another perspective, and work out conflicts using dress-up clothes, toy furniture, typewriter, and other props.

Reading - Children develop a positive feeling toward books, gain understanding of the world of information by reading, listening, and using books, filmstrips, tapes, records and movies.

Quiet Area - Children often need a quiet space to be alone or play a quiet game with a friend, read a book or just relax.

Exercise & Creative Movement - Children of all ages develop a positive feeling about themselves through a variety of physical activities including aerobics.

Arts & Crafts - Materials are always available for individual art activities including painting at easels, clay modeling, drawing, coloring etc. In addition, specific arts and crafts are integrated into the curriculum.

Outdoor Activities - A fenced in play area is available for younger children. This includes a play structure with slides, a clubhouse and sandbox. The older children have the use of the fields for playing organized games.

Cooking - Children of all ages learn a variety of skills through the hands-on experience of cooking, not to mention the sheer enjoyment of having something special to eat at snack time.

Woodworking - For younger children, hammering with nails is always fun and enhances eye-hand coordination. The after-school program children can use more advanced skills, tools, and materials to make woodcrafts.

Music - Children of all ages develop a positive feeling through music. They learn to express themselves, use their imagination, and explore their hidden talents.

Homework Time - Children in grades 1-7 have 30 to 45 minutes each day for homework or quiet reading time.

Hobbies & Clubs - Older children especially enjoy sharing favorite activities and skills together.

ROUDENBUSH COMMUNITY CENTER PROGRAMS - CHILD TRANSFERS

Two (2) or more children must be enrolled in order for us to transfer. Children at Frost Children's Center may utilize any of the programs offered at the Roudenbush Community Center between the hours of 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM, and 2:00 PM to 4:30 PM. The Frost Children's Center will drop off and pick up children attending activities at the Roudenbush Community Center if it is during the hours and days of the child's regular attendance. A Child Transfer Form must be signed by child's parent/guardian and classroom teacher in order for the child to be escorted over to the Roudenbush Community Center.

DIAPERS

Parents are responsible for providing diapers, diaper wipes, and bibs for their children. Please check with the infant/toddler staff regularly about your child's supply. Parents who supply cloth diapers are responsible for cloth diaper clean up and laundering at home. The center will double-bag soiled diapers for daily removal.

TOILETING

All children will be supervised when going to the bathroom. If your child should have an accident, he/she will be changed into clean clothing per EEC regulations.

TOOTH BRUSHING

The EEC regulations state that whenever a child is in care more than 4 hours OR whenever they consume a meal in care, the children are required to brush their teeth. We will be brushing teeth daily after lunch. Parents MUST provide an appropriate size toothbrush and we will provide the toothpaste. The toothbrushes will be discarded every 3 months and you will be asked to provide a new one.

NAP / REST TIME

Infants - To reduce the risk of SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome), we have a safe sleep policy at Roudenbush. All infants will be placed on their back to sleep in their cribs. We require a physician's note for non-back sleepers that explain the medical reason why the infant should not use the back sleeping position, how the child should be placed to sleep, and a time frame that the instructions are to be followed. If an infant falls asleep in a swing, bouncy chair, etc., the infant will be transferred into their crib by a teacher.

Toddlers and preschoolers - All children will be provided a mat to rest on. Parents must provide a crib-size sheet, small travel-size pillow and blanket. EEC requires a minimum of a 45 minute rest period for children who are in care longer than 4 hours. If a child is not asleep after 30 minutes, a quiet activity or toy will be given to them to do for the remainder of rest.

CLOTHING

Activities can be messy! Please dress your child in clothing that he/she will not have to worry about keeping clean. Remember to label everything (boots, jackets, hats, mittens, raingear, etc). At least one change of clothes, including underwear and socks, should be kept at the center at all times.

(Infants and toddlers should have two complete sets.) All clothes sent or worn to the center must be labeled with the child's full name. Each child will have a specially designated space to hold personal belongings. The children are expected to wear shoes at all times (excluding infants). When a child wears heavy foul-weather boots to school in place of shoes, other shoes or hard-soled slippers must be sent for use indoors. Please no flip-flops or open-backed shoes.

COLD WEATHER

Children will be brought outside to the playground (at the discretion of the teachers) on a daily basis. Dresses and tights are inappropriate for outside play during the winter months. Please routinely send snow pants, boots, hats and mittens in a bag so that your child will always be prepared.

TOYS FROM HOME

With the exception of a "soft", quiet rest time toy, children are discouraged from bringing personal toys from home. The centers are not responsible for the loss or damage of personal items.

PERSONAL PHONE CALLS

If you need to call any of the centers to check on your child or tell them something we will gladly take a message and make sure your child gets it. We will not get your child out of their room so that you may talk directly to them. When this occurs other children expect their parents to call them at school as well. This is much too disruptive to the class/group.

NUTRITION POLICY

We try to promote a healthy attitude toward food. We take care in our selection, preparation, and presentation of food. We balance the snack menu from the various food groups and try to serve foods low in fat, sugar and preservatives. We often involve children in snack preparation.

LUNCH / SNACKS

We provide morning and afternoon snack with 2 % milk (*whole milk is provided for young toddlers*) and 100% apple juice. Our monthly snack plan is posted in your child's classroom. You must provide a lunchbox lunch with a drink (see Appendix D for suggestions). Due to the lack of refrigerator space, you must supply cold packs inside of your child's lunchbox to keep it cold until lunchtime. Each classroom has a microwave oven for lunch items that require heating up.

CELEBRATING BIRTHDAYS AT OUR CENTER

Children enjoy sharing their birthday celebrations with their friends. Parents are welcome to send in a special treat. Please make arrangements with the teachers in your child's room.

TRANSPORTATION

We provide bus transportation for kindergarten and school age to and from our centers to the Westford Public Schools. We do not provide transportation in any form, i.e., car, van, bus, taxi, to or from a child's home. Parents are responsible for their children prior to their arrival. We are responsible for children from the time parents leave them with our teachers until they arrive at their school and once again when they return from school. The bus does not return to school when a child misses the bus. Please impress upon your child and the Westford school system staff the importance of catching the children's center bus. Both the school and the parents will be contacted if a child does not arrive on the bus as scheduled. Please remember to call our center and let us know if you picked your child up from school or if you dropped your child off at school if they usually take the bus. Only a parent or a person designated by the parent on the child's enrollment forms may take a child from the center. No child is released to another person without written or verbal consent by the parent or legal guardian.

BUS POLICY

The buses that transport the children from the centers to/from the Westford public schools are financed by the Roudenbush Children's Center, independent of the Town of Westford and the Westford public school system. It is our responsibility to convey the children safely to and from the schools. Children are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner at all times. For the safety of all, inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated. We have instituted a "3 strikes-you're-out" policy as stated below.

- The first bus incident, parents will receive notification verbally and in writing.
- The second incident, parents will be notified and asked to meet with the site director and/or director of the Roudenbush Community Center.
- The third infraction, the child will not be permitted to ride the center's bus and transport to/from public school will be the responsibility of the parent.

FINDERS FEE- KINDERGARTEN AND SCHOOL AGE

School age and kindergarten parents will be charged a fee for failure to notify the appropriate center of their child's absence.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are an important part of our program. It is our belief that excursions into the community provide a child with a variety of experiences. Parents are required to sign (in their enrollment forms) permission for their child to take walking trips throughout the neighborhood. We also offer a number of field trips by bus transportation. We will request a fee for these trips, which includes bus transportation and entrance into the activity. These trips require a separate signed permission slip for your child to attend. Make sure to completely fill in the field trip permission form. The permission slip will be distributed to you by the teachers in your child's room. We require that all children participate in these field trips, unless there are more than 15 children who do not want to attend. If your child does not participate in a scheduled field

trip on a day that he/she normally attends, your child must wait until their classroom returns from the field trip before they can attend regular classroom activities for the remainder of the day. Parents please be aware that we will not be refunding money for field trips. If your child is scheduled for a trip, they have been reserved a spot. If he/she is unable to attend, reservation costs and bus fees must still be met. This also applies to special events held at the center. The children's centers have a contract with the Dee Bus Company of Westford. School buses equipped with seat belts are used for all field trips. The bus is insured and has a two-way radio with the bus company. The book of emergency numbers, first aid kit and our cell phone are always taken when children are off site.

Field Trip First Aid - All staff is certified in first aid procedures and will take care of minor accidents. Parents will be notified on the return from the trip of any injury. In the event of serious injury, the parents will be called immediately and emergency procedures of ambulance, parent called, hospital and doctor will go into effect.

USE OF OFF SITE FACILITY

We have a written plan, which explains our procedures whenever visiting a beach or water park. Staff is trained about water safety at the beginning of each summer. First aid kit and cell phones are brought to the beach / water park.

If the bus breaks down while coming or going from a field trip, a call will be made by the bus driver to Dee Bus Company to send another bus. The administration will also be notified. In case of an injury or illness requiring emergency transportation, a staff member will administer first aid and a second staff member will call 911 from the cell phone and alert the administration to travel to the hospital and wait for the parents.

USE OF VOLUNTEERS

Prior to volunteering, a background check will be done on all volunteers. All volunteers will undergo an orientation of the center with a director and/or teacher. The dates, hours of volunteering and responsibilities will be noted in their file. They will be under the direct visual supervision of a qualified teacher at all times and will never be left alone with a child or group of children or allowed to change a child's diaper or soiled clothing. Volunteers will not be counted in the teacher to child ratio.

ROUDENBUSH COMMUNITY CENTER BOARD MEETINGS

The Roudenbush Committee meets on a monthly basis. The Committee welcomes parents to attend these meetings.

HEALTH CARE POLICY

The children's centers health care policy is in compliance with the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC). Each child is required to have a recent health record on file at our center for day care children, and for the school age children a health record needs to be on file at their school. If a child has any sign of illness, parents are strongly urged to keep the child home. The children's center reserves the right to send a sick child home. The director, site director, and/or lead teacher will make a decision. If children become ill during the day, they will be isolated from other children and encouraged to rest quietly. Parents will be asked to make arrangements to pick up their child as soon as possible.

Children in all programs will play outdoors daily, weather permitting. Parents are responsible for sending children in adequate clothing and footwear to maintain good health during outdoor play in all suitable weather conditions, including normal winter temperatures. Please do not ask us to keep a child inside because of a cold or other illness. A child who is too sick to go outside is usually too sick to be in a social situation with other children.

If a child has been sent home with head lice, parents are required to have their child's head checked by a school nurse or other health care professional before re-entry into the program.

Parents are asked to notify the center if their child contacts a contagious disease such as strep, impetigo, viral infections, lice, etc., so that staff and other parents can be alerted. If your child has been absent with a fever, the child must remain home for 24 hours after the fever ends, without the use of fever-reducing medicine.

CHILDREN CANNOT ATTEND THE CENTER WHILE AWAITING THE RESULTS OF A THROAT CULTURE. IF THEY DO THE RAPID TEST AND IT COMES OUT NEGATIVE, YOU STILL MUST KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME AND WAIT FOR THE RESULTS OF THE 24-48 HOUR TEST TO COME BACK. IF THE TEST INDICATES STREP, THE CHILD MUST REMAIN AT HOME FOR AT LEAST 24 HOURS AFTER THE BEGINNING OF ANTIBIOTICS.

Any ALLERGIES or special health conditions should be brought to the teacher's attention as soon as possible.

Please use the following guidelines in making a decision to keep your child at home when they are ill:

- Severe cold with sneezing and nose drainage
- Pronounced or persistent coughing
- If the child seems sick without obvious symptoms

Your child MUST be kept home if they have any of the following:

- Temperature of 100 degrees or higher in the morning
- Children sent home with a fever in the middle of the day cannot return to school until they have been fever-free for a full 24-hour period without the use of fever-reducing medicine.
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Rashes must be diagnosed by a physician and we require a note from the physician stating rash is not contagious
- Bronchitis
- Impetigo of the skin
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Diarrhea of two or more instances close together may be assumed to be contagious unless determined by a doctor not to be so.
- Head lice

PLAN FOR ADMINISTERING MEDICATION

If a child is no longer ill but requires prescription medication to complete a prescribed dosage, the head teacher, teacher, assistant director or director will administer it. The Department of Early Education and Care directives is as follows:

1. No prescription or non-prescription medication shall be administered to a child without written parental authorization that indicates the medication is for their child.
2. All prescription and non-prescription medication shall be administered only with a written order from a physician, which may include the label on the medication. Over-the-counter medications (e.g., Tylenol, Dimetapp, etc.) will only be administered or stored by the center with a written physician's order. If an over-the-counter medication is ordered, we require specific instructions as to dosage, schedule and term.
3. For topical non-prescriptions, written parental authorization is required.
4. Medication is hand-delivered by the parent in its original prescription bottle. Medication is stored in the staff refrigerator or administrative medical cabinet. All unused medication including those medications which have been finished will be returned to the parent.
5. All medication times are documented in the EEC MEDICAL PERMISSION FORM. This form becomes part of the permanent file when completed.

CPR / FIRST AID

All staff members are certified in CPR and emergency first aid procedures.

If a child requires first aid, a teacher will administer first aid. Parents are given a written injury report form informing them of the injury. The form is logged into an injury report log and then filed in the child's folder. If a child requires further medical attention, 911 will be called. We will notify parent/guardian immediately. If they cannot be reached, the emergency contact person will be notified. If the child needs to be taken to the hospital by ambulance, one qualified staff person will accompany the child to the hospital. The qualified staff person will also take the child's folder with them to the hospital.

SCREENINGS

If you or your child's teacher feels there are any concerns regarding your child's development in the areas of speech, language, muscle coordination or vision, your child may receive free screenings (must be a Westford resident) through the Westford public school system, or for children under 3, early intervention.

FIRE DRILLS AND EVACUATION PLANS

Fire drills are an important exercise that is performed every month. An evacuation plan is posted in each classroom. These plans were formed in conjunction with the fire department and the building inspector. If you are in the building at the time of a fire drill you must follow the proper procedures. Proceed to the nearest exit and walk quickly out of and away from the building. Do not re-enter the building until you have been authorized to do so.

- The teachers will lead the children out of the building
- Attendance will be taken by the teacher and given to the site director
- The site director will coordinate fire drills for the center every month

CONTINGENCY PLANS FOR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

I. Major Widespread Emergencies: Emergency situations are often not conducive to calm and composed thinking. Drafting contingency plans provides the opportunity to discuss and make preparations and to prevent unwise judgments that may occur under the stress of an emergency. Good planning contributes to an organized, comprehensive approach designed to keep children safe. Major emergencies that could be widespread would be handled by busing children to Westford Academy or Blanchard School that have emergency generators, etc, and are the emergency shelters for the Town of Westford. The children would be transported by the bus company with whom we have a contract for daily transportation of the students to the Westford elementary schools. Parents would be notified by cell phone of the emergency, the need to pick up their children, and at which site to pick them up. Staff would remain with the children until all the parents came for pick-up. Messages would be left on the Roudenbush Community Center's answering machine at (978) 692-5511 (if working) and announcements would be on radio and TV stations.

II. In the case of fire, natural disasters or situations (e.g., chemical spills, bomb threats) necessitating evacuation of the buildings, evacuation plans are as follows:

Frost Plan - The children would evacuate the buildings and follow the procedure for fire drills. The staff would take a head count outside of the building from their attendance list. The children and staff would walk across the sidewalk to the Roudenbush Community Center. The staff would take their emergency bag with cell phones and their emergency cards. Teachers would then call all the parents in their class and notify them of the emergency and the need to pick their child up at the Roudenbush Community Center building. The director or assistant director will notify the appropriate authorities (police, fire, poison center, etc.) from the cell phone in the emergency pack. The regular radio and TV stations would carry our messages (as in snow closings). Staff and children would not return to the building until clearance was given by appropriate authorities.

Nab Plan - The plan is the same as stated above but children will walk to the Nabnasset sub-fire station located on Oak Hill Road.

65 Main Street Plan (Including School Age and Preschool) - The plan is the same as stated above with the exception that the children will walk to the Frost center.

Abbot Plan - The plan is the same as stated above with the exception that the children will walk to the Frost center or 65 Main Street.

III. In the Case of Power Outage: The director of Roudenbush and the director and/or assistant director will formulate a decision to close the center on the estimated time for the power to be repaired.

Plan A - When the power outage occurs before the center opens for the day, the decision may be made to close for the day if the electricity is estimated to be off until noon or later. Parents would be notified by their child's teacher of the emergency and instructed to listen to their center's answering machine as well as the TV and radio for the reopening when the power has resumed. All staff has a class list at home and will be instructed by the director of the emergency and the plan via a (telephone) snow tree.

Plan B - When the power outage occurs during our normal operating hours, the decision to close the centers will be based on the number of hours left in the day, season of year, etc. If the power outage will cause a lack of heat in the winter and the building temperature would drop below 65 within 2-3 hours, the basic plan would be to call the parents to return for their child should the center be without power. Children can walk to other Roudenbush sites (as in fire and natural disasters) if the power outage is only in one building. Emergency lighting along with cell phones would give us several hours before we needed to leave the building.

IV. In the Case of Loss of Heat: When the loss of heat is not connected to a power outage, the site director would check in with the director of Roudenbush to see if a repair person was to be called to the site. The director would then decide if the building was warm enough or the children should be sent home. If the heat could not be fixed in a timely fashion, the plan for parent pick-up in number II would be followed.

V. In the Case of Loss of Water: The center could use bottled water in the lack of clean drinking water, but would have to close if the town water was interrupted at that site.

VI. In the Case of a Tornado or High Winds: The children and staff would go downstairs to the basement, crouch down on the floor and cover the back of their heads and necks with their hands. If there were no suitable structure nearby, they would lie flat in the nearest ditch or depression and use their hands to cover their head and neck.

VII. In the Case of a Flash Flood: The children and staff would go upstairs to the highest floor to avoid the water. Staff is instructed to avoid all small rivers and streams, low spots, canyons, dry riverbeds, etc., with the children. Staff is instructed not to walk through flowing water more than ankle deep with the children. Follow plans as outlined in number II.

VIII. In Case of Lightning: When inside, the children and staff would avoid using the telephone (except for emergencies) or any other electrical appliances. When outside, the children and staff would go to a safe shelter immediately. If swimming, they would get out of the water immediately and move to a safe shelter away from water. If in a wooded area, they would seek shelter under a thick growth of relatively small trees. If you feel your hair standing on end, squat down with your head between your knees, DO NOT LIE FLAT! Avoid all isolated trees or other tall objects, bodies of water, sheds or fences.

IX. In Case of Wildfire: Director and staff would listen to local radio and television stations for updated emergency information and follow the instructions of local officials. Follow plans as outlined in number II.

X. In Case of a Major Snow/Ice Storm: If Westford schools are closed and there are hazardous weather conditions, please call the center at (978) 692-5511 and there will be a recording stating whether we are closed, have a delayed opening or are opening at our regular time. Please check our website at www.roudenbush.org for snow changes.

APPENDIX D

LUNCHBOX SUGGESTIONS

BECAUSE OF THE SERIOUSNESS OF NUT ALLERGIES DO NOT SEND IN FOODS CONTAINING NUTS

You **MUST** supply a cold pack for your child's lunchbox as we do not have refrigerator space for childrens' lunches. However, all classrooms are equipped with microwave ovens to heat up lunches when needed.

Be aware of foods that may be a choking hazard (e.g., rounded, small slippery foods; firm, pliable foods; light, dry foods; chewy, sticky foods; stringy or tough foods, etc.). To avoid any instance of choking, we encourage you to cut your child's lunch items into small pieces when appropriate!

For the greatest nutritional benefits, build your child's lunch around the four basic food groups. Some good examples are as follows:

DAIRY MEAT AND FISH

Milk, Cheese, Cottage Cheese, Yogurt, Pudding, Custard, Poultry, Hard-Boiled Eggs, Lean Meats, Tuna

VEGETABLES, FRUIT, BREAD AND CEREAL

Apples, Bananas, Oranges, Dried Fruit, Fruit Juice, Tomatoes, Broccoli Florets, Carrots, Celery Sticks, Crackers, Enriched or Whole Grain Bread, Unsweetened Cereal