



Tracey Lawyer Childcare

# Parent Handbook

## Philosophy

Welcome to TLC, where Thinking, Learning, and Creating come to life each and every day. Our goal is to provide a safe and secure environment for your child that fosters physical, social, emotional and cognitive development. We believe children learn by doing. Hands-on learning allows children to explore and to find meaning in the world around them. At TLC there is a shared construction between teacher and child. Encouraging children to generate their own questions promotes curiosity and creativity among our youngest learners.

## Goals

TLC's goals are to create a warm and loving environment, to encourage children to learn and explore independently, to foster children's natural curiosity, to develop a sense of community and to foster life long learners.

## About Tracey Lawyer Childcare

TLC is founded and operated by Tracey Lawyer, a former preschool and first grade teacher with 13 years experience. She has had the pleasure of teaching many children in Santa Barbara over the years. With a background in child development, Tracey continues to grow and learn by attending workshops and conferences. TLC is dedicated to developing a partnership between home and school, which benefits the development and growth of your child. We are a licensed Family Childcare in Santa Barbara. We are pediatric and adult CPR certified, and we are a Green Care provider. Our classroom is created with eco-friendly toys and products.

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**Enrollment Forms**

- Child Introduction Form
- Child Enrollment Record
- Field Trip Permission Form
- Medical Record
- Identification and Emergency Information
- California School Immunization Record
- Emergency Medical Consent Form
- Child’s Pre-admission Health History
- Authorization to Administer Medication
- Parent Notification Additional Children in Care
- Notification of Parent’s Rights
- Affidavit Regarding Liability Insurance
- Parent Contract

# **Program and Curriculum**

## **Ages Served**

TLC serves children 18 months to 3 years.

## **Meals**

Eating together is a special moment in our day for conversation and sharing. TLC will provide a morning snack and an afternoon snack. Organic foods will be served when possible. Snacks may consist of a fruit, a protein, and a grain. Water and whole milk will also be offered. If your child has a food allergy or a dietary restriction, please let us know. Parents are asked to provide a nutritious lunch for their child. For families of children who have dietary restrictions, they should provide daily snacks and lunches for their child. Meals are served family style. We encourage children to taste each item being served. By serving themselves, children develop independence and self-help skills. Children will be allowed to eat from their lunches in the order which they choose. Therefore we ask that you provide a variety of foods for your child to choose from. Uneaten food will be placed back into their lunch boxes so parents can get an idea of what and how much your child is eating. Also, try to pack foods where your child is encouraged to help him or herself.

## **Outdoor Education**

Play is essential to a child's development. It contributes to the creative, physical, and emotional well-being of the child. We believe that through hands-on, open-ended play experiences, children will learn to make sense of the world around them. TLC provides daily opportunities for outdoor play. Sensory tables, manipulatives, dramatic play areas, and gross motor activities are available choices for children throughout the day.

## **Change of Clothing**

Children will be engaged in many activities during the day, activities which will involve paint, sand, water, and mud. Parents are asked to bring two sets of clean, labeled clothing to school. These items should remain at TLC. Make sure to check your child's cubby periodically to ensure changes are available at all times. We ask that you supply clothing that your child will feel comfortable getting dirty or stained. Closed toe shoes with rubber soles are recommended. A hat for sunnier days should also be provided. Please apply sunscreen prior to coming to school. Teachers at TLC will re-apply in the afternoon with parental permission. Parents are also asked to bring diapers and wipes as needed.

## Toys:

Generally speaking, it is our policy to discourage children from bringing toys from home. We have many planned activities for your child to enjoy each day. Your child may bring a special stuffed animal or blanket for naptime.

## Birthday Policy:

Birthdays are a special occasion for everyone and we are glad to celebrate your child's birthday at school. We ask that you bring a nutritious snack to share with everyone. Please do not bring any sugary items, party hats, balloons, etc. It is our intention to celebrate your child's birthday during snack time in hopes of maintaining continuity within our daily schedule.

## Toilet Learning:

Self-toileting is a complex process. Toddlers have a myriad of things to learn and to remember! Here are some signs of readiness to watch for:

- Able to communicate
- Understands the physical signs he/she is wetting or having a bowel movement
- Able to pull his/her pants down
- Demonstrates a desire for independence
- Has a drier diaper for extended periods of time
- Wants to sit on the potty periodically

When your child has a desire to begin self-toileting, please let us know. We will honor your child's sense of autonomy and individual learning styles. Please dress your child in clothing he/she will be able to remove themselves.

## Parent Involvement

There are many opportunities for parents to participate at TLC and we welcome and encourage it! Feel free to drop by during lunch to visit with your child. This is a special time in which community building occurs. If you have a special talent you would like to share or would like to volunteer on an occasional basis, we would enjoy having you.

## Communication

Good communication is imperative and is of the utmost importance. We welcome questions, concerns, suggestions, or discussions of any kind that are oriented towards a positive outcome for the children. Here are a few ways we like to communicate with families:

### Daily Check-ins:

Check with the teacher each morning to share any concerns or information that may affect your child's day at school. If anything arises during the day concerning your child, we will give you a call if we deem necessary. You are also encouraged at any time to check on your child throughout the day. We will be more than happy to share some highlights with you.

### Newsletters:

Each month TLC will send families a newsletter comprised of information regarding curriculum and areas of study. We will also share any upcoming events, tips, and resources.

### Email:

Families can contact TLC at [traceylawyerchildcare@gmail.com](mailto:traceylawyerchildcare@gmail.com) with any information about your child. TLC will also contact families via email regarding events, closures or any other important concerns at TLC.

### Conferences:

Parent conferences will be held twice a year, Winter and Spring. Conferences are opportunities for us to share your child's development over the course of the year. Please feel free to call for additional conferences. We will be happy to meet with you.

## Daily Schedule

At TLC our commitment is to provide high quality care to young children and their families. Our program incorporates the Reggio Emilia Approach. Children work on projects important to them. Projects are generated from children's interests and teachers create curriculum based on their interests. Children will find engaging and interesting activities daily. Children will communicate, investigate, and make choices, all while being supported in a nurturing environment. Our daily schedule will follow a similar preschool schedule, but TLC will honor the natural rhythms of children when fully engaged. We therefore are flexible and can adapt our schedule to accommodate the children's educational needs.

## Guidance Policy

Cognitive development is possible only with healthy emotional and social development. We believe children learn with adult guidance to create appropriate and acceptable behavioral patterns. Our school culture is one of cooperation and mutual respect based on a strong sense of community. TLC is committed to creating an environment where children know they are cared for and listened to by adults and by their peers. Here are our goals and guidance methods.

Our goals are to:

1. Guide children in developing respect for self, others, and the environment
2. Help children learn problem solving skills
3. Assist children in practicing responsible decision-making
4. Teach cooperation, collaboration, and compassion
5. Encourage and support development of self-confidence, self-control, and responsibility.

Our guidance methods are:

1. Model appropriate behavior
2. Provide simple, clear, consistent limits and expectations
3. Focus on the child's behavior and not on the child
4. Structure the classroom and activities to avoid potential conflicts
5. Reinforce appropriate behavior
6. Offer appropriate choices
7. Use natural and logical consequences
8. Teach problem solving strategies.

Under no circumstances will corporal punishment, psychological abuse, threats or derogatory remarks be used when helping children resolve conflicts. If a child's behavior continues to be disruptive or harmful to others, a parent conference will be scheduled. Together we can identify the problem and discuss possible solutions to support your child.

If for any reason your child is asked to withdraw, a 30-day advance notice will be given if possible. If advance notice is not practical, prepaid funds will be refunded.

### Illness, Medication, and Immunizations

The state requires that all medical forms, including health and immunization history, must be completed and returned to TLC prior to your child's first day of attendance (forms are at the end of the handbook). If this is your child's initial experience in daycare, please understand your child will be ill more frequently than in the past. With this in mind, parents should plan on having alternative care for their children when illnesses arise.

Every effort is taken at TLC to reduce the spread of illness by encouraging hand washing and other sanitary practices. To keep us all healthy, please evaluate your child's health before sending him or her to daycare. For the wellbeing of all concerned, we ask for your due diligence in this matter. Thank you!



**If your child shows any of these signs of illness, please do not send your child to daycare. The following includes:**

<b>Stomach ache</b>	<b>Irritability</b>
<b>Fever</b>	<b>Cough</b>
<b>Sore throat</b>	<b>Earache</b>
<b>Rash</b>	<b>Runny nose</b>
<b>Vomiting/Nausea</b>	<b>Sneezing</b>
<b>Diarrhea</b>	<b>Headache</b>

**If your child is unable to participate fully in all indoor and outdoor activities, then your child MUST stay at home.**

Any child with a fever above 100° F, who has vomited, or who has diarrhea, will need to remain at home until all symptoms have subsided for a 24 hour period. A child may return 24-48 hours after the first dose of an antibiotic has been administered.

Any communicable diseases will require a doctor's note stating your child is no longer contagious and may resume normal activities at daycare. Children will be evaluated upon arrival at school each morning. Children who are ill or who may become ill will not be allowed to remain at daycare. If your child becomes ill while at school, parents are asked to pick up their child as soon as possible. If parents cannot be reached, the emergency contact will be called and asked to pick up your child.

## **Medication**

Parents will provide any medications needed by the child, including over the counter and prescription medicine. Written authorization is needed to administer **ANY** medication. All medicines must be in their original container with the pharmacist's or manufacturer's label, child's name, dosage instructions, current date, name of medication and times to be administered clearly written.

Any other medication that does not fit the above criteria will not be administered. Parents are most welcome to come to TLC to administer alternative medicines for their child.

## Emergencies

### **Accident Policy:**

Minor bumps and scrapes are inevitable, but we make every effort to keep your child safe throughout the day. If your child receives a minor injury, first aid will be administered. An accident report will be filled out, and the report will be placed in your parent box. Should an accident require emergency medical attention, your child will be taken to Cottage Hospital's Emergency Room. Parents will be contacted immediately. If a parent cannot be reached, the emergency contact designated on your child's information form will be called. Please make sure all parties can be reached at a moment's notice.

### **Emergency Preparedness:**

Fire drills will be held once a month. Children practice this to become familiar with the procedure. In the event of an emergency, an evacuation is mandatory; we will relocate to Hope Elementary School. Otherwise, children will remain at TLC. Each family will provide an emergency kit for their child, which will remain at daycare. The emergency kit should include:

- 1 small bottle of water
- A few favorite snacks
- A family photo
- 2 diapers

## **Attendance**

### Drop Off and Pick-up

All families must sign in their child daily. State licensing requires parents to sign in and out using their full signature each day. If someone other than a parent or guardian will be transporting your child from school, we ask that you list the adult on the emergency release form. We must have written permission from you if the adult is not on the release form before we will allow your child to leave the childcare. Please alert the adult transporting your child that he or she will be asked to show identification before leaving TLC. All persons should be 18 years or older.

### **Late Pick-up Fee**

Sometimes we all run a little late. This is understandable. Please make sure to pick up your child on time. A fee of \$1.00 per minute past 4pm will be charged. This fee will be due along with the next month's tuition.

## Holidays and Vacations

TLC is a 12-month program and we follow the local elementary school yearly schedule. We are closed on all major holidays, one week for Thanksgiving, two weeks for winter break, and one week for spring break. A yearly calendar displaying school closures will be provided each fall.

## Substitute/Emergency Care

Although I will be happy to provide parents with a list of other providers in the area, it is ultimately the parent's responsibility to arrange for substitute and/or emergency care for their child.

## **Enrollment and Tuition**

### Enrollment

Families wishing to enroll their child at TLC must complete an enrollment packet. A \$150.00 non-refundable registration fee is due to reserve your child's space. If payment is not made, TLC will not hold a space for your child. If you have a change in plans, this fee will not be refunded. A \$100.00 supply fee is also required yearly.

### Tuition

Tuition is due on the first of each month. Yearly tuition will be paid in 11 equal installments, September-August. Parents are required to pay full tuition each month regardless of school closures, family vacations, and absences due to illness.

### **Tuition Payment**

Tuition checks should be made payable to Tracey Lawyer Childcare or TLC. Payment is due at the beginning of the month and must be received by the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month. Monthly payments in cash are also accepted. A \$10.00 late fee will be charged if tuition is paid after the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month. A \$35.00 fee is charged for all insufficient fund checks. If payment for tuition is not paid by the agreed dates, enrollment for your child will be withheld until payment is made in full, including all late fees.

## Schedule Changes

A cancellation or change in your child's schedule requires a 30-day written notice. Families are responsible for the month's tuition prior to the change. If you request additional days, and the schedule permits, you are responsible for the additional tuition costs for that month.

## Withdrawal

If a family finds it necessary to withdrawal from TLC, a 30-day written notice is required. Parents are expected to pay their tuition for the 30 days after the notification is received.

## Rates

TLC believes children benefit the most from a full day experience. However, we do offer part time enrollment for families. We offer 2-5 day options for full day schedules and 2-5 day options for part time schedules. Prices are as follows:

Full Day Rate: \$60.00 per day

Half-day Rate: \$40.00 per day

\*For any arranged additional hours needed before 8am and after 4pm, a fee of \$10.00 per hour will be charged. Example: If you need an early drop-off *or* a late pick-up, you will be charged \$10.00. If an early drop-off *and* late pick-up are needed, you will be charged \$20.00.