

# FOREVER YOUNG CHILD CARE CENTERS, INC.

Where being a kid comes naturally!

Caring for children since 1979

## WELCOME!

We are happy to welcome you into the Forever Young family! Forever Young is a parent supported, non-profit infant child-care center. The center enrolls children between six weeks and two years of age. This parents' handbook provides information about the philosophy, policies and procedures that govern our Forever Young family.

### HOLIDAYS

The following list details holidays on which Forever Young is scheduled to be closed or to be open on a modified schedule. Generally speaking, Forever Young follows the State of California's holiday calendar. Forever Young follows a fiscal calendar of July 1 – June 30.

July	Independence Day
September	Labor Day
October	Columbus Day*
November	Veteran's Day; Thanksgiving Day and the Friday following
December	Christmas Eve; Christmas Day
January	New Year's Day; Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
February	Lincoln's Birthday*; President's Day
May	Memorial Day

\* These holidays are frequently used as in-service days for training our staff. Because of the changes made to the State Holiday schedule, these exact days may not be used for the in-service days. Staff will advise families at least 30 days in advance of the actual date.

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## **ABOUT FOREVER YOUNG AND GENERAL POLICIES**

### **HISTORY**

In 1979, Susan Weiss and Teven Laxer and several friends with infants and young children conducted a study of Sacramento-area day care centers. They found that the majority of centers were: too authoritarian, too academic, did not have an educational philosophy that allowed for the development of the whole child, only "baby-sat" the child, were sexist and intolerant of cultural and/or physical differences, did not allow parental and staff involvement in child care and other program decisions, and offered no meals or meals with little nutritional value.

Weiss and Laxer also found that most area day care programs created "institutionalized" children who knew how to survive in an organized, often rigid, environment. These children were not, however, developing a strong sense of identity, confidence, and self-worth. In these day care settings, children were not allowed creative free play and were not gaining a sense of their own needs or how to fulfill those needs. Seeking an alternative for their children, Weiss, Laxer, and their friends established Forever Young in 1979. To assure full parent involvement, policy decisions and overall management responsibility for the center were placed with a volunteer parent-elected Board of Directors. The center's administrative philosophy emphasized democratic management principles and encouraged the involvement of parents and staff in the day-to-day operation of Forever Young. Staff and family were encouraged to associate in an intimate and family-like way.

Staff was, and is, trained in developmentally oriented child-care practices, specifically in the techniques of RIE (Resources for Infant Educators) formed by Magda Gerber, a pioneer in the field of infant and early

childhood education. The FY staff emphasizes tolerance and non-violent, non-sexist behavior in their interactions with each other and with the children. Further details are provided in the Philosophy/Curriculum section below.

A vegetarian diet was chosen for the children in order to encourage the eating of a healthy diet. Whenever possible, FY provides a vegetarian diet with little or no salt and sugar.

The founding families also had broader social goals in mind when starting Forever Young. In creating a day care center for their children, they sought to counter the prevailing values of excessive conformity to mainstream institutional expectations by establishing an alternative education environment that emphasized respect for others and their differences, respect for the natural world, and love of one's self and one's neighbor. Forever Young still retains this commitment with a day care center that lovingly encourages and nourishes the growth of the whole child.

### **PHILOSOPHY/CURRICULUM**

Forever Young uses the teachings and methods of many early childhood experts, but those of Magda Gerber form the foundation of Forever Young's organizational and educational philosophy. Magda Gerber's ideas are memorialized in the philosophy of Resources for Infant Educators (RIE). According to Gerber, in the parents' absence, children need adults who will both nurture and educate them, or act as *Educators*. In comparison to a teacher, who educates, and a caregiver, who nurtures, the educator does both, thereby providing a continuum of care from parent to educator. Providing this continuum from family to center is a fundamental component of the Forever Young program. Forever Young has material on RIE and Magda Gerber, which is available on the website. Additionally, there is more information at [www.rie.org](http://www.rie.org).

Using RIE principles, Forever Young has developed the following curriculum:

- Provide a predictable environment that allows children an opportunity to anticipate and make choices.
- Assure that children have the opportunity to develop an intimate, stable relationship with one person, the educator.
- Allow children to develop gross motor and sensory skills without direct teaching by the educators.
- Provide a safe, cognitively challenging, and emotionally nurturing environment in which children can move freely and explore the world.
- Children are allowed long, uninterrupted play periods that foster interaction and creative interchange. The educator observes during these play times but does not intervene or attempt to direct the children's activities.
- Forever Young's daily activities for our children provide an opportunity to learn through play and hands on experience. Activities offered are connected to monthly themes.

Forever Young seeks to create a balance between adult stimulation and independent exploration in a safe environment.

Forever Young's philosophy is to respect each child and his or her developmental level. Consequently, we stress choice in activities, independence, exploration and self-sufficiency.

We believe that healthy, happy and confident children are successful children. Therefore, the child's social, emotional, and physical development takes precedence over directed academic learning. In addition to offering children freedom of choice, we also foster participation in-group activities. We believe that children learn cooperation and positive social interaction skills through group participation.

Forever Young's policy is to allow children to work out conflicts or frustrations with their peers without immediate adult intervention. However, if a child is having difficulty, the staff will intervene by suggesting words that can be used to convey the message the child is trying to communicate. Extremely aggressive or hostile behavior, or repeated problems, may result in redirecting the child or removing the child from the other children for a short period of time. These methods are used to help children resolve conflicts because, when given the opportunity to be responsible for working out their problems, children learn to accept the natural consequences of their behavior.

Forever Young creates a learning environment that, along with being non-violent and non-sexist, also presents and respects a diversity of ethnic and cultural viewpoints.

## **STAFF**

Each staff member is required to have current First Aid and CPR certificates. Forever Young actively recruits staff with at least twelve early childhood education units and encourages staff to continue their education.

Each employee at Forever Young is treated with respect and fairness. Every parent is encouraged to refrain from activities that divert staff from their assigned responsibilities. Parents are encouraged to keep their personal relationships with staff separate from the center.

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The Forever Young Board of Directors is composed of four to six parents, whose children attend the center. The Board works in partnership with the Executive Director to oversee the management and operation of the overall program. Members of the Board volunteer and are elected and serve as long as they wish or until their child ages out of the center. The Forever Young Executive

Director, hired by the Board of Directors, is responsible for all curricular decisions and manages the day-to-day operations of the center.

## **NONVIOLENT PHILOSOPHY**

Forever Young teaches children to resolve problems by encouraging the children to talk to each other, to express their concerns, and to respect each other. Forever Young actively discourages children from using violence to resolve conflicts. In order to promote a nonviolent environment at the sites, Forever Young does not allow the following:

1. *Toys that promote violence.* Children are not allowed to bring to the sites toys or other items that encourage violent behavior. These toys or items may include; toy guns, knives, swords, or "action hero" figures and accessories, or dolls where the characters use violence to resolve their problems.
2. *Halloween costumes or birthday party themes that promote violence.* At Forever Young, children are not allowed to wear Halloween costumes that promote violent behavior. This includes costumes that have toy guns, knives, or swords, or costumes of "action heroes" that use violence to resolve their problems. Similarly, if a parent wishes to celebrate a birthday or a special occasion at one of the sites, parents are asked to make sure that the party theme is consistent with Forever Young's nonviolent philosophy.

## **RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS**

Forever Young has a neutral policy on religious holidays. We believe that each family, not the center, guides the development of their children's spiritual values. Forever Young children are too young to appreciate or comprehend their religious differences. Emphasis on religious holidays celebrated only in some Forever Young families and not in others may lead to confusion and, perhaps,

a sense of isolation or exclusion for some of the children.

Consequently, the daily activities at Forever Young are developed around this neutral religious policy. These activities include crafts and games organized around themes corresponding to the season, the holidays, or events of particular time of the year. These themes bring focus and continuity to the activities of the center with those at home and in the world. The cultural aspects of a holiday season are integrated into Forever Young's daily activities but do not emphasize any particular religion or holiday. Because of the Forever Young policy, Educators are sensitive to the religious differences of the Forever Young families and the different practices and celebrations during the year.

Forever Young attempts to include different cultural ways of celebrating holidays as they occur during the year. A special emphasis is put on folklore and traditional holiday or seasonal observances; this gives the children a sense of connection to their own heritage and with cultures around the world.

## **AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR POLICY**

In accordance with its non-violent philosophy, Forever Young actively discourages any aggressive behavior by children. Aggressive behavior is pushing, hitting, biting, or kicking that could result in harm to other children.

Forever Young recognizes that isolated incidents of aggressive behavior are a common part of development, and can occur for many reasons, including:

- a child's stage of development
- teething pain
- conflict between children
- stress.

In these cases, Forever Young staff will evaluate the causes of the aggressive behavior and take appropriate actions to prevent the behavior from reoccurring (such as providing a teething ring or redirecting the child, and letting the child know that such behavior is

not OK). Staff will provide written notification to parents of children that have been involved in an incident of aggressive behavior and the actions taken to prevent it from reoccurring.

In some cases, however, a child may show a pattern of aggressive behavior.

Although this can occur for many of the same reasons as described earlier, a child that repeatedly acts aggressively towards other children can jeopardize the safety of other children, and can create a hostile environment for other children at the center.

As a result, when a child demonstrates a pattern of aggressive behavior, the Executive Director will meet with the child's parents to discuss the potential causes of the behavior and the appropriate actions, both at home and at school, that are necessary to eliminate the aggressive behavior. The Executive Director will also notify the Board of Directors whenever a child demonstrates a pattern of aggressive behavior (three or more incidents within a consecutive five day period or other situations which the director determines shall be brought to the board, whichever comes first) and the actions the Executive Director is taking to address the aggressive behavior. Depending on the potential causes of the behavior, the Executive Director may recommend that the family seek professional counseling or medical services for the child. The center will assist in whatever ways possible to implement the counselor's recommendations to modify the behavior.

At the same time the Executive Director shall notify the Board of additional steps the staff is taking to minimize the risk of additional injuries to other children at the center until the pattern of aggressive behavior has subsided, including, whenever possible, grouping children for play in ways to reduce direct contact between the child who has demonstrated a pattern of aggressive behavior and other children who have been the recipients of that behavior. These steps

shall also be discussed with the parents of any child who is injured by a child demonstrating a pattern of aggressive behavior.

In rare cases, it may be necessary for Forever Young to remove a child from the center when all other efforts to address a child's pattern of aggressive behavior have failed. In addition, Forever Young may remove a child if a family has not cooperated with staff or a counselor's interventions, or if the child constitutes an on-going threat to other children at the center.

## **FOREVER YOUNG'S PROGRAM PROCEDURES**

### **ENROLLMENT**

The center enrolls children from six weeks of age until two years of age.

Enrollment is limited to 20 children per day. Full-time slots, part-time slots, and drop-ins are available. We strive to maintain an overall educator-to-child ratio of one to three. This educator-to-child ratio is lower than state requirements.

### **ADMISSIONS**

Forever Young maintains a waiting list that is updated on an as-needed basis. The first priority list consists of Forever Young families, in good standing, both past and present. This list also includes any currently enrolled part time Forever Young family who wishes to increase the number of days a child is enrolled. A family's place on this first-priority list is determined solely by the date of filing an admission application or submitting a written request for additional days. The second priority list consists of all other interested families and is maintained on a "first-come, first-served" basis. *The Executive Director, however, has discretion to enroll out of list order, in extraordinary circumstances.*

## ENROLLMENT AVAILABILITY

Forever Young has full-time and part-time schedules (either M-W-F or T-R) available. Enrollment is based on the choice of these fixed days. After enrollment, the schedule can be altered by providing a 30-day written notice, depending upon availability at the discretion of the Executive Director.

If your child is absent, Forever Young does not offer make-up days. When space is available, you may purchase an extra day at the current hourly drop-in rate for each site. Check with the Executive Director for extra space availability. If you are part-time and your child's regularly scheduled day falls on a holiday, the Executive Director may, at his or her discretion, offer a make-up day depending upon availability.

## REGISTRATION

The following forms, provided in the enrollment packet, are required by state law prior to your child's first day at Forever Young:

- Your child's immunization record or a signed waiver.
- Your signed and dated FY Enrollment Contract.
- Physician's Report (Child's Pre-Admission Health Evaluation).
- Parent's Report (Child's Pre-Admission Health History).
- Identification and Emergency Information Form.
- Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment.
- Personal Rights Form.
- Notification of Parents' Rights.
- Needs and Service Plan.

In addition to the state-required forms, Forever Young requires the following:

- Enrollment fee (non-refundable).
- First month's tuition (non-refundable).
- Emergency Information Card and Child Pick-Up Authorization.
- Allergy List Form.
- Permission Slip for Diaper Cream / Sunscreen / Lotion / Powder.
- Photo Consent Form.
- Food Program Enrollment Forms.
- Family Contact Information Form.
- Parent Participation Plan.

Forever Young may require additional signed consents for specific purposes (field trips, etc.). Additionally, state law requires a Needs and Service Plans to be filled out quarterly (typically in July, October, January, and April).

A Re-Enrollment Packet must be completed by the beginning of each fiscal year, July 1. It is essential that our records be kept up to date. We ask that you complete a new Emergency Information Card and Child Pick-Up Authorization if you have any changes in address, phone numbers, medical or dental information.

## ENROLLMENT FEES

For new children, an enrollment fee of \$100 per child is charged to all families. Payment is due upon enrollment. This enrollment fee covers the cost of paperwork processing and time necessary to enroll each child and is **non-refundable**. Arrangements for installment payments can be made with the Executive Director, if necessary.

For returning children, a re-enrollment fee of \$75 per child is due on July 1 each year. The re-enrollment fee is waived for any families who initially enrolled on or after April 1<sup>st</sup>.



The enrollment and re-enrollment fees are not refundable.

## **TUITION RATES/FEES**

In addition to the enrollment fee, the payment for the first month of tuition is also charged upon enrollment (initial or re-enrollment). This tuition payment secures your child's enrollment at FY and is also non-refundable.

All current rates for tuition are available in writing on our Forever Young Tuition Rate Schedule.

If a child begins enrollment after the first of any month, tuition for the remainder of the first month is prorated. Forever Young offers a multi-child discount. A 5 percent tuition discount will be applied to the child with the lowest tuition when a family enrolls two or more children. Any questions about the application of this discount should be directed to the Executive Director.

Generally, changes in tuition will be announced with the Re-Enrollment Packet, which is usually made available to families on the first business day in June. If changes are made during the school year, they will be announced 30 days in advance. Tuition is payable in full without regard to the child's attendance. Sick days, vacation and holidays are counted as part of the child's attendance. Tuition and all extra charges are due and payable by check or money order only (**NO CASH**) on the first day of each month and is late on the sixth day of each month regardless of the day of the week on which that falls. If payment is not received by the fifth of the month, a late fee of \$5 per calendar day is charged. Absent extraordinary circumstances, and at the discretion of the Board of Directors, if payment is not received by the last day of the month, the child's enrollment will be discontinued.

A \$20 fee will be charged for a returned check. In addition to any late fees, after the second returned check, parents are required to pay all tuition and other charges by

certified check or money order until other arrangements have been made with the Executive Director.

## **TOILET LEARNING AND DIAPERS**

Children are offered the use of a toilet when they show interest. Parents are encouraged to talk with their child's educator and the Executive Director about their toilet learning plans for their child. Diapers and wipes are included in the cost of tuition.

## **CHECK LIST FOR YOUR CHILD'S FIRST DAY**

Your child will need the following (marked with your child's name with a permanent marker):

- 3 changes of clothing.
- 3 to 5 pre-made bottles with your child's name and the date on each bottle.
- A blanket.
- A crib sheet.

And if you wish:

- A pacifier.
- A sleepy time plush toy.
- A shirt worn by Mom or Dad to comfort your child.

## **CENTER HOURS AND CHILD ABSENCES/APPOINTMENTS**

Forever Young is open from 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. This means that you and your child must leave the center by the closing time. There is a late charge of \$1 per minute if your child is still at the center after closing time. The late pick-up fee is added to your next monthly statement and is due and payable at that time. The center will be closed for all state holidays (see Holidays list on Page 1).

If a child is going to be absent or arrive later than their regular time, we ask that you please call the center before 8 am and notify

staff. If your child is going to be picked up earlier than their regular time, please let the staff know when you drop your child off. If your child needs to be ready at a specific time for an appointment or special event, please tell staff, and they will try to accommodate your need. Also, please keep staff updated on vacations and other changes in attendance.

## **SIGN-IN AND SIGN-OUT**

State law requires that each child be signed in and out indicating the time the child enters and leaves the center by a parent or guardian using a complete signature. On the sign-in and sign-out sheet, the parent or guardian shall also record the phone number where he/she can be reached that day. Additionally, the parent or guardian needs to make contact with a staff member during the signing in and out procedure. This enables the staff member to greet the child, do a brief health check, and find out any information needed for the child's day (i.e., when the child last ate, how the child slept the night before, medications, etc.).

When it is time to say good-bye, please be clear with the staff when you are ready and if you want assistance from them. Please let the staff know your wishes and they will try to accommodate your or your child's request. There are times, however, when it is not possible to accommodate a request, and the child will have to say good-bye within the limitations of the moment or you and your child may have to wait until an educator can assist in the manner requested.

No child will be allowed to leave the center with someone other than the parent or guardian unless a parent or guardian has signed a written permission note for that specific person. Please inform anyone picking up your child that they must bring a picture identification so that staff can ensure that the person is the one authorized to pick up the child. In case of emergency or illness when the parent can't be reached, a child will be

released to a person whose name is on the Identification and Emergency Information Card under "Authorization for Pick-Up."

## **CHILD CUBBIES**

Children have one or more cubbies that contain their personal items, artwork, diapers bedding, etc. Check with the staff for the location and purpose of each cubby. Parents are responsible for checking and organizing the children's cubbies.

## **CLOTHING, SHOES AND TOYS**

Children's clothing should be weather appropriate, washable, and suitable for active play. Clothing may get stained by paint, clay, dirt, juice, etc. All clothing should be labeled with your child's name. Forever Young is not responsible for lost, damaged, or soiled clothes. There should be at least two sets of spare clothes and a pair of shoes in case of accidents, spills, etc. Children who are toilet learning will need additional sets of spare clothing and shoes. All wet or soiled clothing will be bagged and placed in your child's cubby to go home.

When choosing shoes for your child, please make sure they are safe for active and outdoor play. **Open toe shoes, flip flops, and slick-bottom shoes are NOT permitted.** Sandals which cover your child's toes (i.e. fishman style sandals) may be worn in warm weather. Rain boots and umbrellas may be used when needed, but you must bring an FY approved pair of shoes for your child to wear during school hours.

Parents may be called to bring in clothes or pick up their child if no spare clothes are available when needed.

It is quite natural for young children to want to bring toys to school. Children may bring a plush toy and/or blanket to nap with, books or CD's to share, or a specific item to participate in a "event" day. All items should be labeled with child's name. Again, Forever Young is not responsible for any breakage or loss that might occur.

Parents should assist their child in selecting appropriate items to bring into day care. Please be aware of any small pieces or parts that can potentially be a choking hazard. Any such items are not permitted as well as any items not following Forever Young's non-violent philosophy.

## **NAPS**

Children are on their own schedules and may nap as frequently as they need.

Parents need to provide a blanket and crib sheet labeled with the child's name. Bedding will be laundered each week by staff. A small pillow and/or nap buddy (a plush toy) may be brought in so long as it fits in your child's cubby.

## **PARENT VISITATION**

Parents are always encouraged and invited to spend time visiting their child's program. Parents are particularly encouraged to visit Forever Young after their child has been at the center for a few months. These visits enable parents to become familiar with Forever Young's programs, activities, and routines. Parents are encouraged to spend a large portion of a day at their child's program to experience the full range of activities. Parents can earn up to four parent participation hours per fiscal year for visitation.

## **EXCESSIVELY LATE CHILD PICK-UP**

Since Forever Young is not licensed to provide 24-hour care, if a child is not picked up at either site by 6:15 p.m., reasonable attempts will be made to contact persons listed on the Emergency Information Card and Child Pick-Up Authorization.

If by 7:30 pm arrangements have not been made by authorized persons to pick up the child, the following procedures will begin:

1. The Executive Director will contact the Sacramento Police.

2. The police will take the child to Sacramento Child Protective Services (CPS).
3. CPS will transfer the child to the Child Receiving Home until arrangements are made by the parent(s) for the child's release.

The late charge of \$1 per minute accrues from 6:00 pm until the child is placed in the custody of the Sacramento Police. This fee is payable the next time the child is signed into the center.

## **WITHDRAWAL**

Parents may withdraw a child from the program at any time. Absent extraordinary circumstances, a 30-day written notice is required prior to withdrawal. **Parents wishing to withdraw their child, but who fail to provide a 30-day written notice to the Executive Director will nevertheless still be required to pay for the full 30-day period.**

## **FOREVER YOUNG'S HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURES**

### **GENERAL GUIDELINES**

The primary aim of our center is to protect your child to the greatest degree possible. Health checks are done every day as each child enters the center. The check consists of observing the child's general appearance, feeling body temperature, and observing the skin for rashes or obvious signs of illness. After this check, the staff may determine not to accept a child for that day. If a child should seem extremely fatigued or ill during the day, the parent will be called to pick up the child. Forever Young staff consults regularly with health care professionals on issues regarding children's health and also uses this information in making assessments. *Forever Young does not have the resources to care for a sick child.*

If this is your child's first group experience, it is quite possible that he or she will have more

colds than before. We are counting on the cooperation of parents in keeping children home who are ill, or who seem unusually fatigued, or show symptoms of possible illness. When a child becomes ill with a communicable disease, the parent is to notify the Executive Director immediately so that other parents can be made aware that their child may have been exposed.

## CONTAGIOUS DISEASES

The Executive Director will notify the families of children exposed to contagious illness at the center. In addition, parents are required to notify the center within 24 hours of any serious illness in the family, including diagnosis and cause of the infection. This must be done even if the child is kept home or if it is a sibling or parent who is ill.

Parents are asked to let the center know when a child has contracted a contagious disease. When the Executive Director is notified that a child at the center has contracted an infectious disease, the Executive Director will post a notice informing all parents.

The following infectious diseases or symptoms will exclude a child from the center:

1. Fever over 100.6 degrees.
2. Diarrhea (two or more unusually watery bowel movements, especially if accompanied by other symptoms, such as fever or vomiting, or if there are two or more cases among the children, their families, or the staff).
3. Vomiting (especially if accompanied by another symptom).
4. Being too sick to participate in daily activities (fatigue, irritability, loss of appetite, complaints of pain, change in appearance, persistent cough, or difficulty breathing).
5. Chicken pox.

6. Measles and Rubella.
7. Mumps.
8. Tuberculosis.
9. Whooping cough.
10. Giardia.
11. Epiglottitis.
12. Hepatitis.

In addition, certain rashes, until diagnosed, may be grounds for exclusion. Children with suspected pink eye, lice, strep throat, pinworm and ringworm, will be excluded until diagnosed and treated.

Parents should provide the staff with information regarding their child's normal temperature. The body temperature of infants varies from child-to-child, therefore this information aids staff in deciding if a child is ill.

## A SICK CHILD

If your child develops any of the listed symptoms after arriving at the center, you will be called to pick up your child. *In order to minimize the other children's exposure to illness, when you are notified to pick up your sick child you must do so within 30 minutes.*

**Please note:** sick children must be isolated from the other children and Forever Young is not staffed to provide sick childcare.

If your child is not picked up within 30 minutes after you or your authorized representative has been notified, you will be charged a \$1 per minute payable upon arrival. Staff will make every effort to make your child comfortable until you arrive.

When it is determined that a child is ill, staff will attempt to contact the parents immediately. If the parents cannot be reached, the staff will contact those people authorized to pick the child up from the center. Remember, it is always the parents' responsibility to be available or have someone available to care for their child

should he or she become ill at day care. Forever Young staff cannot act as a guardian for your sick child until they have completed their shifts.

Generally, a child who has been ill cannot return to the center until 24-48 hours after initial treatment with medication, if needed, or as recommended by a medical professional. In addition, the child must be **FEVER-FREE** and no longer showing symptoms of illness. The staff consults with the County Health Department or health consultant as needed. The final decision as to whether a child may return rests with the Executive Director or a designated staff member.

## **MEDICATION**

The center must follow state day-care center regulations when administering prescription and nonprescription drugs to children. The regulations are as follows:

1. No medication will be administered unless an approval and instruction sheet is filled out, signed, and dated by the parent. The dosages and times for each administration of medication must be detailed in writing and must be in accordance with label directions as prescribed by the child's licensed health care provider.

An approval note from the child's licensed health care provider is required to administer nonprescription drugs, such as pain relievers like Tylenol and Advil, that state "consult a physician" for children under a certain age or weight. For other nonprescription drugs, a written document containing the parents' approval and instructions must be kept in the child's record.

Any lotions or ointments, and the instructions for their use (i.e., sunscreen or diaper rash ointment) must be provided by the parent.

2. Directions for when to administer the medications must be very clear. "As needed" is not acceptable because it is too vague. You may put "if irritable anytime after \_\_\_\_\_."
3. Each medication must be in the original container and have the child's name on it and must be dated. Each medicine container must have an unaltered label.
4. Forever Young will maintain a record sheet for each child of what drugs were administered to the child and will provide that information to parents on a daily basis.
5. Medication must be stored centrally and must be kept in either a secure cupboard or in a refrigerator inaccessible to children.
6. When the child no longer requires the medication, or the child leaves Forever Young, all medications will be returned to the parent or disposed of if attempts to contact the parent fail.
7. Children may never carry their medicine in or out of Forever Young. Medicines may not be left unattended in diaper bags or parent or child cubbies.

## **ACCIDENT AND INCIDENT REPORTS**

If a child is injured at the center, a report is written explaining how the injury happened and what course of action was taken. The report will be given to the parent at the end of the day and a copy will be placed in the child's file. In addition, if your child exhibits inappropriate or aggressive behavior towards another child that results in an injury you will receive an incident report. You may also receive other incident reports concerning your child's behavior at the discretion of the staff.

Every attempt is made to write an accident report. If you notice an injury when you are at home, please check with the staff the next

time you are at the center. Please communicate your concerns with the staff.

### **MEDICAL EMERGENCIES**

In the event of a medical condition or accident requiring immediate treatment, a staff member will perform first aid or CPR while another staff member calls 9-1-1 immediately, and then contacts the parents and the child's physician. Parents incur the cost of the services from the call.

### **IMMUNIZATION RECORDS/ REQUIREMENTS**

As part of state licensing requirements, we must have evidence that each child has received the standard childhood immunizations. This evidence is required prior to admission to Forever Young.

Failure to maintain *current* immunization records on all children is an infraction of state licensing requirements which will result in penalties and fines against Forever Young. For this reason, and to insure the health and safety of our children, it is the Forever Young policy that parents *must* provide evidence of immunizations at the appropriate age intervals, as recommended by the American Pediatric Association, upon enrollment and re-enrollment.

Forever Young immunization requirements are as follows:

2-3 months	1 each of Polio, DTaP, Hep B, Hib
4-5 months	2 each of Polio, DTaP, Hep B, Hib
6-14 months	3 DaTP; 2 each of Polio, Hib, and Hep B

15-17 months	3 each of Polio, DTaP; 2 Hep; 1 MMR (on ,or after 1 <sup>st</sup> birthday); 1 Hib (on or after 1 <sup>st</sup> birthday, regardless of any Hib doses given before the 1 <sup>st</sup> birthday)
18 mos – 5 years	3 Polio, 4 DTaP, 3 Hep B, 1 MMR (on or after 1 <sup>st</sup> birthday), 1 Hib (on or after 1 <sup>st</sup> birthday), 1 Varcella (chickenpox)

Temporary delays in receiving immunizations must be explained in writing. A medical reason (documented by a physician), or a religious or personal belief (evidenced by signing a waiver) will be accepted for failure of a child to receive all appropriate immunizations.

The Executive Director is required to keep the children's records current, and will request information on immunization status. If parents do not comply with a request for information within two days of the request, either by providing immunization records, or by informing the Executive Director in writing of the reason for the delay, the child will not be allowed to attend Forever Young. As soon as the information is provided to the Executive Director the child will be allowed back in the center.

### **FOREVER YOUNG'S NUTRITION/FOOD POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

#### **GENERAL NUTRITION**

When possible, Forever Young provides vegetarian meals with little or no added salt, sugar, preservatives, or artificial additives or colorings. Children are fed on demand any meals/snacks they require. Children at Forever Young are offered a choice of foods at meal and snack times. Offering a variety of foods encourages children's ability to naturally select foods that are healthy and

fosters a sense of control in the eating process.

Allowing children to choose their own food also builds their confidence in their ability to feed themselves. Parents are invited to join their child for lunch.

Parents are invited to earn parent participation hours by bringing food from home such as muffins, bread or other dishes. Such foods should follow the same nutrition guidelines noted above.

## **BIRTHDAYS AND SPECIAL EVENTS**

You may bring a special snack to share with the other children on this day, however a **no-sugar or low sugar** snack is encouraged. Forever Young has recipes for special treats upon request.

Please inform the staff regarding a birthday party or other special event you want to celebrate at Forever Young. The event must be arranged at least a week in advance. Forever Young cannot guarantee that an event can be scheduled to meet a family's exact needs but every attempt will be made to accommodate requests.

## **SPECIAL DIETS**

If your child has a specific food allergy, please inform the staff in writing and, if possible, an accommodation will be made. Parents are required to provide updated information to the staff as new foods are added to their child's diet. New foods must be tried at home before they are added at the center. In addition, parents must inform the staff of any special diet that a child may require and a doctor's note may be necessary.

## **BOTTLES AND PACIFIERS**

Bottles and pacifiers will be given to children who use them. Pre-made bottles must be brought in daily and clearly labeled with the child's name, date made, expiration date, and have a lid. Children are not allowed to carry a bottle around; they, must be either sitting,

held, or lying down when drinking a bottle. Children are also not permitted to sleep with a bottle.

Parents are asked to provide 3 to 5 premade bottles daily. If pacifiers are used, parents are asked to bring pacifiers that can remain at the center. These items should be clearly marked with your child's name.

## **FOREVER YOUNG'S COMMUNICATION WITH FY FAMILIES**

### **PARENT CUBBIES**

There are parent cubbies for each family to receive newsletters and other information from the staff. Please check both cubbies daily.

### **NEWSLETTER AND PARENT BULLETIN BOARDS**

Forever Young has a monthly newsletter which is filled with information about holidays, upcoming events, parent education, birthdays and anniversaries, monthly themes and songs the children are learning, policy updates, children's milestones, parent hours ideas, and wish lists. These monthly newsletters are delivered as a hardcopy to your parent cubby.

Forever Young also has a parent bulletin board where relevant information is posted. *You are responsible for the information in the newsletter and on the bulletin boards.*

### **MONTHLY BOARD MEETINGS**

Forever Young holds monthly board meetings during the year. Each family is required to attend one board meeting during each fiscal year (July 1 – June 30).

The meetings have several purposes:

1. To allow the Board of Directors, the Executive Director and staff to share information about current center business operations, new centerwide activities, fundraisers, and events, children's

projects and events, and new policies that have been implemented;

2. To help parents understand the importance of completing parent participation hours and to offer parents the chance to sign-up for specific tasks or projects;
3. To enable parents to identify issues and concerns to the Board of Directors;
4. To offer parents the chance to mingle and make the personal contacts that are vital to the family and community atmosphere Forever Young strives for.

*The meetings are not intended to solve individual complaints that parents have about the program or individual concerns parents have regarding their children. These individual issues should be raised privately with the Executive Director, and when appropriate, may be discussed with the Board of Directors.*

The meetings are an opportunity to build our parent community and to learn more about the Forever Young program. The Board of Directors and the staff understand that everyone is busy, however, a foundation of the Forever Young philosophy is parent participation and involvement in the care of our children.

## **PARENT PARTICIPATION: The Backbone of Forever Young**

Parent involvement in administration, fundraising, and maintenance of Forever Young is a unique and essential part of the success of our day care center. Parents provide the center with invaluable labor and resources and help defray operating expense, which directly benefits our children. Parents, through their participation, also have the opportunity to directly influence the direction and purpose of Forever Young.

Parent participation is a term and condition of each enrollment contract. Just as parents commit to paying tuition, by enrolling their children at Forever Young it is understood

that parents will commit hours of volunteer time to help the center.

## **Why is parent participation critical to the success of Forever Young?**

Forever Young was started and designed by parents, and continues to be governed by a Board of Directors composed of parents. Parents have historically been active in every aspect of the center's functioning. Parent participation is crucial to the program because:

1. Parent participation saves the center money, particularly in the areas of site maintenance. Without the help of parents to clean, repair, and contribute to the general upkeep of our two sites, Forever Young would have to increase enrollment fees to pay for those and other services. Parent participation allows us to use that money for other purposes directly related to child care, including:
  - a. Lower staffing ratios. Forever Young has one of the lowest staff-child ratios in the area. For example, licensing regulations require that the ratio be one staff member to every four infants; at Forever Young this ratio is generally supplemented by an extra "floating" staff member. These lower staff ratios allow staff to be more responsive to individual children's needs. It also makes it possible for children at Forever Young to become toilet taught at their own pace.
  - b. Staff benefits. Creative ideas can be enhanced when parents support staff in prep work. Parents often prepare special treats for the staff to reinforce the terrific job and honor the responsibility of staff for Forever Young children.
  - c. Program materials. When parents share their hobbies interests', and talents, our program is expanded.



- d. Staff training. Parents have access to resources in their professional and private lives, which can be shared with staff. Parents can assist with training through their own talents or abilities or by researching information.
2. Parent participation earns the center money through fund raising efforts. In order to keep tuition competitive, Forever Young parents raise funds each year to pay for equipment, materials, and other program necessities which the center would otherwise have to forego.
3. Parent participation supports the center. The Board of Directors permit parents to help shape Forever Young policies. As with any nonprofit organization, the Board of Directors has ultimate legal responsibility for the center.
4. Parent participation allows parents to become true partners in their child's early childhood education. By volunteering, parents get to know first hand what their children are experiencing in our program. Communication with staff is facilitated when parents volunteer. Children experience greater consistency between home and day care when parents are familiar with the program.
5. Parents are encouraged to visit. For the visits, they may count up to 4 hours as parent participation. The purpose of the visit is so the parents can spend a quantity of time seeing the large picture of the day.
6. Parent participation enriches the Forever Young program. There are a number of opportunities at our center for parents to provide input into the program. For example, parents contribute their skills and expertise by implementing projects with the children. Parents expand our children's awareness and sensitivity to our multi-cultural society by sharing knowledge and traditions of their cultures. Parents also enrich our children's view of

the world by introducing them to their careers and hobbies.

7. Parent participation frees staff from routine tasks so that they can be more available to the children. When parents volunteer to prepare program materials, pick up groceries, go to the library, and mend toys and books they free staff to spend time with our children.

*Ultimately, Forever Young would not be the unique and exceptional program that it is without parent participation.*

### **Forever Young Parent Hour Policy**

Two parent families with children enrolled at Forever Young are required to complete 2 hours of parent participation hours each month (24 hours for the fiscal year). Single parent families with children enrolled at FY are required to complete 1 hour of parent participation hours each month (12 hours for the fiscal year).

Parent hours are tracked according to Forever Young's fiscal year, which runs from July 1<sup>st</sup> through June 30<sup>th</sup>. Included in the parent hours requirement, each family must attend and participate in the following each fiscal year:

- One Board Meeting,
- One Site Maintenance Work Day, or One Quarterly Saturday Cleaning Day.

Parent hours are cumulative for the entire fiscal year. This means that parent hours earned in any given month that are over the monthly requirement are carried over and counted for other months within the same fiscal year.

Attendance at Forever Young Board Meetings counts as 1 parent hour per family per board meeting, even if both parents attend.

Members of the Forever Young Executive Board (President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary) automatically fulfill their

monthly parent hour requirements for the time period they are in office.

Members-at-large of the Forever Young Board should submit their parent hours for tallying each month.

Parents that are members of or oversee various Forever Young committees should submit their hours for tallying each month.

Parents are encouraged to submit their parent hours as soon as they complete such hours (or at least in the same month when the parent hours are earned).

An updated chart of parent hours earned will be posted monthly.

### **How do I get reimbursed for expenses?**

In order to be reimbursed for doing Forever Young shopping, you must fill out a reimbursement form provided by the center and attach your receipt(s). Forever Young will make every effort to reimburse you within 30 days.

### **What happens if our family does not complete our parent commitment on time?**

Families are charged \$25 for every uncompleted parent participation hour. Additionally, families are charged \$50 if they do not attend one Board Meeting per fiscal year (July 1 – June 30).

The following is a chart of the fees incurred for uncompleted requirements:

<b>Requirement per fiscal year</b>	<b>Penalty</b>
_____ Parent Hours	\$25 each
One Board Meeting	\$50

When a family leaves Forever Young, any fees for uncompleted parent hours are due on the last day of attendance. For continuing families, any fees for uncompleted parent hours for the previous fiscal year will be due with payment of August tuition.

The Board of Directors may, at its discretion, waive any of these penalties for families with unusual circumstances.

## **PARENT CONCERNS**

Parents may have a problem or concern pertaining to the provision of care in the program or to a Forever Young policy or a procedure. If the problem concerns an individual educator, the situation should first be brought to the attention of, and discussed with, that educator. Parents are encouraged to discuss matters with Educators in a cooperative and constructive manner. Educators are required by the Forever Young Personnel handbook to maintain a "positive open communication with the children's families" by "providing open communication with parents on a daily basis." If, after discussion with the educator, the parent still has concerns, the problem should be referred to the Executive Director.

The Executive Director is responsible for resolving any parent problem or concern pertaining to the provision of care in the program. In most instances problems can be resolved after a dialogue between the parent and the Executive Director. In instances where an impasse develops between the parent and the Executive Director over the proper approach or solution to a problem, the Executive Director will refer the situation to the Board of Directors. The President will refer the problem to an appointed committee made up of three Board Members for ultimate resolution. The Executive Director will inform the parent of the referral to the President. The parent will be informed by the President that the appointed committee is reviewing the complaint. The matter will be reviewed by the committee no later than fifteen days after referral by the President. The appointed committee will take prompt action to resolve the problem and will notify the parent and the Executive Director of its decision.

A parent has seven days, after receipt of the decision, to appeal the decision by filing, in writing, a notice of appeal with the Board President. The president will place the matter on the next agenda for the Board of Directors' meeting. The matter will then be considered in an executive (closed) session of the Board. Within fourteen days of consideration of the appeal, the Board will respond to the parent, in writing, of its decision. The Board's decision is final.

If a parent's problem or concern pertains instead to a policy or procedure and not to an educator, the above-described procedure also applies.

## **FAMILY REMOVAL POLICY**

### **Child's behavior:**

Forever Young is committed to providing individualized attention and care to each child enrolled in the program. However, the center may not be able to properly care for children with behavioral or other problems. If, in the opinion of the Executive Director, Forever Young is unable to properly care for such a child, the enrollment of that child will be terminated.

In extreme cases of unresolved aggressive behavior by a child, the Board may also terminate the child's enrollment (see Forever Young Policy on Aggressive Behavior).

### **Parent's behavior:**

While Forever Young makes constant efforts to work out problems, there are times when situations arise when more serious measures must be taken. In the case of problems resulting from a parent who has disrupted the program, failed to comply with essential Forever Young requirements or procedures, or engaged in abusive conduct to the staff, the following procedure designed to provide prompt and early resolution of problems in an atmosphere of confidentiality shall be used:

1. The Executive Director shall meet with the parent in question. If, after the meeting,

the Executive Director is satisfied that the parent will conform his or her actions to the best interests of the program, no further action will be taken. The Executive Director shall make a short written record of this meeting.

2. If the Executive Director is not satisfied, or if the conduct of the parent was particularly abusive or disruptive, as determined by the executive Director, the Executive Director may take any of the following actions;
  - a. Issue a written warning to the parent that such continued conduct or disruption will result in termination of the family from the program.
  - b. Request the parent to attend a conference with the Executive Director and a designated Board Member. During the conference, the Executive Director and the parent shall agree on a specific plan of action as to how the parent will modify his or her behavior. A period of time shall be agreed upon, after which the parent's performance shall be reevaluated by the Executive Director. The Executive Director and the Board Member shall make a short written record of the conference.
  - c. Recommend termination of the family to the Board. The child shall remain in the program until the Board makes its determination. The Board shall take prompt action on the Executive Director's recommendation after reviewing all relevant information and written records, including any written statement by the family. Any determination by the Board on the Executive Director's recommendation shall be recorded in writing.
  - d. Immediately terminate the family from the program in instances where the Executive Director determines that the health, safety, or welfare of the program is threatened by the

continued presence of the family.  
Upon taking this action the Executive Director shall immediately notify the president of the Board, who shall call a special Board meeting as soon as possible to discuss the action or the President shall otherwise inform each member of the Board of the action.

If the Executive Director takes any of the actions described in (a) through (d), inclusive, the President of the Board shall be immediately notified and written record shall be prepared detailing the reasons for the action.

If the Board, pursuant to subdivision (c), or the Executive Director, pursuant to subdivision (d), terminates a family from the program, the family shall immediately be notified in writing of the decision by first class mail return receipt requested. The notice shall inform the family of their appeal rights as provided herein.

A family that is terminated from the program may appeal the decision within seven days of receipt of the written notice by submitting a written statement to the Board of Directors requesting the Board to reconsider the Board's or Executive Director's decision and detailing the reasons why the decision should be reversed or modified. In considering the request, the Board shall review all relevant records, including the written statement by the family and any written response by the Executive Director. The Board may also meet individually with the Executive Director and parent to hear oral statements. The Board shall promptly mail a final decision, the family shall be notified in writing by first class mail return receipt requested, and the decision shall be recorded in writing.