

Welcome Parents and Guardians!

The staff at *Elite Day Care* would like to welcome you and your child and/or children to our educationally enriched program at Elite! It is our privilege to have you and hope to impart this message throughout the school year, as each child, family, and employee is significant to us here at Elite.

We have designed this Parent Handbook to provide you with all the essential information about *Elite's* services, activities, policies and procedures, as well as your important contribution to the success of your child's experience.

At Elite Day Care we have a strong belief that parents are the primary and most important educators of their child, with the vital responsibility for his/her development. We are grateful to share this responsibility and together as a team, you and our professionally licensed and caring teaching staff will provide the very best support your child needs in order to succeed in school and later in life.

Please review this Parent Handbook in its entirety, and keep it on hand for reference, as we hope you will find it informative and useful. Please remember that our staff at *Elite Day Care* are always available and open to hear your thoughts, ideas, and/or suggestions. We encourage you to be an active participant in our *Elite* program, for **together** we can make a world of a difference.

Sincerely,

Elite Day Care

General Procedures

Admissions Policy

Meet with Director to discuss and obtain the following:

- Orientation
- Application Registration
- Our philosophy, goals, and objectives.
- Our program/classroom description and location.
- Parent involvement opportunities and activities.
- The program calendar/schedule.
- Parent Handbook.

Hours of Operation

Day care hours are from 7:00AM to 6:00PM. Hours of care are scheduled based on need. Teachers will be in their classrooms promptly at 7:00 AM. Your child's hours of care will have been set up for you during your orientation. If it is necessary to change the hours, please inform the teacher after you have first discussed this with the office staff.

If there is an emergency and you will be late bringing your child, please phone the office in advance.

Pick Up and Drop Off

When you pick up your child in the afternoon, please make sure the teachers know you are taking him/her. If he/she has to go indoors to his/her cubby, please accompany your child.

Only authorized escorts will be allowed to pick up your child. You will need to fill out an Escort Authorization Form. (For your convenience we have enclosed a copy of the aforementioned form.) Escorts must be **18 years of age or older**. If there is a change in your child's escort, please notify our office in advance. **We will not release your child to anyone whose name has not been registered with us.**

In the event that your child has not been picked up after dismissal time, regular attempts will be made to contact you as well as an emergency contact. While you are being contacted, a teacher or assistant will remain with your child. If all contacts are unable to be reached, the director will assume responsibility for your child. Attempts to contact you will be continued until someone from the emergency contact list is reached and arrives to pick up your child.

Extended Care

During extended care, teachers will have a list of all the Extended Care (EC) children and count to confirm that each child is actually in attendance that day. There will be a dated sign-out sheet.

Absences

If your child is going to be absent for a day or more, please call to inform the center. All cases of illness should be reported immediately. A return from illness of more than 3 days must be accompanied by a doctor's note permitting reentrance.

Emergency School Closings

Local emergencies are defined as conditions that prevent or impede a contracted child care program or office from being accessible or providing child care services in a safe and healthy environment under DOHMH regulations or meeting DOHMH staffing requirements for the operation of a licensed child care center.

If the Mayor declares a city emergency and/or announces that all public schools should be closed, Elite daycare will be closed.

There will be effective communication between you and Elite's staff if an emergency closing should occur. There will be an automated call stating the school closing and as much information known at the time including, reason for closing, and expected date of re-opening.

Clothing and Linens

As a parent you know the significance of being prepared. Please leave a complete set of clothing in your child's cubby in the event he/she will require changing.

For painting, water-play, cooking, and art projects, please provide your child with a smock. An eco friendly alternative that is sufficient could be an adult's worn-out shirt or the like.

Since your child will be playing outdoors (barring inclement weather), please make sure he/she has the appropriate outer wear: hat, mittens, sweater, scarf, and boots.

During the summer months, we ask that your child bring a bathing suit, small towel and a pair of sturdy water shoes (**no flip flops**) so that your child can participate in outside water activities.

To avoid confusion, all clothing that your child has in his/her cubby should be clearly labeled with his/her name.

Diapering

Diapering will take place in a designated area and will occur in a safe, sanitary, and respectful manner. All diapering and cleaning supplies will be stored off the diapering surfaces and out of reach of the children. Diapering supplies for your child are required to be sent in, and must be labeled with your child's name.

Parties

We encourage birthday parties or class celebrations but we do require that you follow our strict

guidelines regarding food restrictions to ensure the safety of all children in the classroom.

The following items are **acceptable**: *Cakes* (may not contain peanuts or peanut products), *Pretzels or light chips*, *100% Juice*, etc.

Goodie Bags are permitted to be handed out at the end of the day during dismissal.

Please do not send gum, candy, or toys to school with your child. If, on occasion, you wish to provide a treat to be shared with the other children, please consult with the teacher first.

Fees

Tuition fees must be paid timely and time of payment to be arranged during orientation, in order to continue your services with the Elite Day Care. Failure to pay your fees will result in the termination of your child care. Money orders, Cash and Credit Card are the only form of acceptable payment. Please make your money orders payable to "Elite Day Care"

Change of Information

If there is a change in address, phone number, emergency contacts, health providers, health conditions, work/school schedule, your family situation, or other related information, please let us know. You may be asked to update the Emergency Information sheets at your child's center. For the safety of your child, please keep us informed of your most current contact information.

Transitions

Elite Day Care will assist in the transition of children into, within, and eventually out of the Elite Day Care program. All transitions will be executed as smooth as possible. Children and families will be given the opportunity to participate in planned program activities, designed to ease their transition from home or other child care settings into the Elite Day Care.

Classroom Daily Activities

Providing your child with a regular daily schedule helps to establish expectations for students and gives children a sense of stability. This structure allows for a more successful and fun learning environment as children feel free to explore and engage.

The daily schedule includes a balanced program of child-initiated and adult-directed activities, including individual, small group, and large group activities, a balance of activity and movement with reflection and relaxation. A schedule of daily activities is posted in each classroom for both the children and adults to be aware of what happens next. A day at Elite Day Care will include the following:

- The **Arrival time** is an important time for your child. It's a time to greet his/her friends, settle in, and say goodbye to you.
Please ensure you do share a short, warm and clear Goodbye with your child and state when you will (or who will) be picking up your child.
This serves to reassure your child and provides a necessary foundation for your child's emotional development and sense of trust. This time can set the tone for the entire day.

- **Mealtimes** We will provide breakfast and snack for your child. We ask you to provide lunch daily. Meals are served in family style so that your child can eat in an unhurried manner, and share conversation with friends. Each meal is approximately 30 minutes, and snack times 15 minutes.
- **Large group time** is a time when adult initiated activities include all children and adults participating together in singing, movement experiences, and reenacting stories. It includes class meetings and involve brief introductions accommodating children's interest and initiatives.
- **Small Group times** are opportunities for teachers to enhance individual needs in language growth and support pre-literacy and pre-numeracy development. This enrichment time allows your child to be engaged with a small group of friends and develop necessary social and emotional skills. Activities included in small group times include indoor gardening, reading, writing, drawing, painting, cutting and/or work with various materials for repurposing projects.
- **Outdoor time** provides your child a chance to enjoy outdoors through running, jumping, climbing, playing with balls, or riding tricycles and wagons, and tending to our outdoor gardens.
- **Rest times** are part of the full day programs so your child has time to sleep, rest, or relax quietly in their cots/cribs. It is important for young children to have this quiet time.
- **Departure time** We know you and your child are anxious to see each other and talk about your day. We warmly reassure your child we look forward to a new day tomorrow.

Health and Safety

Your Child's Health

Your child's health impacts his/her total development and ability to benefit from the Elite Day Care program. At Elite we do our utmost to ensure the health and safety of each child.

The first day of enrollment, parents/guardians are required to have for their child a **complete yearly physical exam**. . (For your convenience we have enclosed a copy of the aforementioned form.)

The physical examination needs to be filled out; this means the height, weight, BMI and preferably the BPI (Depending on the age).

- ✓ The "General Appearance" section needs to be checked off.
- ✓ The Developmental box needs to be dated, checked off, and include written results.

- ✓ **All** Screening Tests need to be dated, checked off, and include written results. This includes:
 - ☐ Blood Lead Level
 - ☐ Hearing and Vision
 - ☐ Hemoglobin or Hematocrit
 - ☐ TB test (dated with the date it was done, **and** read)
- ✓ **All** Immunizations need to be filled out with the proper dates.
- ✓ The Recommendations box needs to be checked off.
- ✓ The actual medical form needs to be stamped, signed, and dated by the doctor.

If screenings indicate a need for additional treatment or services, consult with your child's health care provider to ensure that all necessary services are received. Be aware that Elite may contact your child's health care provider for information to ensure that their follow-up care is complete. As always, all information is kept confidential.

Health History Forms

In order to collect essential information and identify any needs or concerns regarding your child, you will be asked to complete Health History forms and update them annually. If your child has any specific allergies, takes any medications, or has any health/safety needs please inform the staff at your child's center before your child starts attending school. This includes if your child has any diagnosed conditions such as asthma. Some health conditions may require a follow-up plan, physician documentation, staff training or other accommodations that we may need to put in place to ensure your child's optimal health and safety while in our program. Our Health History forms also ask for some information on your child's physical, psychological and social development, so that we know what is considered usual for your child and what would be cause for concern.

Daily Health Checks

Upon arrival in the classroom each morning, your child will be observed by his/her teacher for any adverse signs indicating illness or injury. Particular attention will be given if he/she has been absent due to illness or has been exposed to communicable disease. If your child is observed to be responsive and in good health, he/she will begin the daily routine as usual.

Sick Child Policy

Under no circumstances should you bring your child to daycare if he/she is displaying any symptoms of illness or is unable to participate in normal daily routines.

If it is determined that your child is not able to participate in daily routines due to the following symptoms, you or an authorized person from your Emergency Contact List will be contacted to come pick up your child.

- Appearance or Behavior: The child is unusually tired, pale, has a lack of appetite, is more difficult to wake, confused, and/or is more irritable than typical.

- The child complains of not feeling well and/or is unable to comfortably participate in classroom activities.
- Fever: Temperature of 100° F or higher taken under the arm, 101° F taken orally, or 102° F taken rectally. For children under 4 months, the lower rectal temperature or 101° F is considered a fever threshold; (a child needs to be fever free for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to daycare, that means the child is fever free without the help of Tylenol®, or any other fever reducing substances.)
- Diarrhea: The increased number of watery stools that cannot be contained by diaper or the child's ability to use the toilet.
- Vomiting: Two or more times within a 24 hour period. The child must be symptom free for 24 hours before returning to daycare.
- Rash: Child is frequently scratching body rashes, not obviously associated with diapering, heat, or allergic reactions to medicine.
- Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis): When the eye is red or pink with white or yellow eye discharge. Other symptoms include matted eyelids, eye pain, and or redness of the eyelid or skin around the eye.
- Head Lice or Nits: The child will be sent home at the end of the day and will not be able to return until treatment has started and nits have been removed. (different for ages 0-2).
- Open sores or oozing sores on the: mouth, nose, or body.
- Breathing difficulties, sore throat, swollen glands, loss of voice, hacking or continuous coughing.
- Runny nose (with green, yellow, or bloody discharge).
- Shows any signs or symptoms of a communicable disease, including but not limited to: Impetigo, strep throat, ringworm, chicken pox, whooping cough, scabies, MRSA, etc.
- Shows any signs of a possible severe illness.
- Child is continuously crying or requires more attention than we can provide without hurting the health, safety, or well-being of the other children in our care.

Note: These guidelines are to be used as a reference and cannot be a substitute for the advice of the child's doctor.

While waiting to be picked up, your child will be allowed to rest quietly in an isolated part of the classroom or he/she will be placed in the office until he/she is picked up. In both locations, the child will be under close staff supervision.

In case of a serious injury and all head injuries you will be contacted right away. You will decide with staff if you would like to take your child to the emergency room/urgent care pediatrician, or if you would like to call 911 to get an ambulance to escort your child to the E.R.

Returning to School After an Illness

If your child has been temporarily removed from his/her classroom and sent home due to illness or symptoms of illness, there are certain guidelines that must be met in order for him/her to return. Elite's general rule for common symptoms such as fever, vomiting, and diarrhea is that a child may only return after a 24 hour period, providing that he/she is symptom free or with a note allowing re-admission from his/her physician. With regard to more serious symptoms or illnesses, more guidelines must be met to allow the child's return to school.

We are currently not permitted to administer any medication. Please ask your doctor to arrange dosages according to your schedule so you may administer the medication yourself.

Lice Control

To prevent the spread of head lice, children found to have lice or nits will be sent home and may only return to the classroom when they have been treated and declared lice and nit free. A letter/statement from a physician, health department nurse, or appointed staff person stating that the child is lice/nit free is required in order for your child to return to school. Head lice screenings will be conducted throughout the school year. Please note that having head lice is not a reflection on you, your child, or the cleanliness of your household, but since lice spreads very quickly, we urge you to have it removed as soon as possible.

Safety

Elite staff maintains safety in all aspects of their jobs working with your family, children and other staff members.

Classroom Safety:

- A minimum of two staff members at each center have current CPR certification.
- First aid kits and emergency procedures are maintained in one designated location, and are readily accessible to staff, but kept out of reach of children.
- A diagrammed evacuation plan is posted near the exits in each classroom.
- An emergency light source is available at all times.

Emergencies:

- Each class practices safety drills for fire, natural disasters, bus evacuation, and pedestrian safety.
- Medical/ Dental emergencies:

- In the event of a **medical emergency** or events involving many people that may accompany a major natural or manmade disaster, Elite staff will follow the following procedures:
 - The situation will be assessed by asking the child/adult how they feel if they are conscious. If unconscious the person will be inspected gently. The child/adult will not be moved unless they are in imminent danger of further injury.
 - If there is an injury, 911 will be called and kept on the line until the dispatcher hangs up.
 - Beyond basic First Aid, any medical attention will be executed by qualified medics. Staff will use gloves when coming in contact with any blood, vomit, or other bodily fluids.
 - No medication will be administered by the Elite staff.
 - The injury will not be discussed with the injured. Only reassuring, calm words will be spoken.
 - Police will be provided with any factual details that they need to know.
 - The parent will be contacted immediately.

In the event of a **Dental emergency**:

- Staff will wear gloves.
- The mouth will be rinsed with water.
- Dental floss may be used to dislodge any trapped food.
- If there is a swelling present, an ice/cold pack will be applied for 15 minutes over the affected area, (not applied directly to the skin).
- If there is pain due to an incoming tooth, ice chips may be used.
- The parent will be contacted with a recommendation for follow-up dental care.

Fire drill tests are performed once every month and fire alarms are tested to ensure that they are in working order.

Playground Safety:

Routine playground safety inspections and rules will be established and maintained at all times. *The Consumer Product Safety Commission and national guidelines related to playground safety will be followed.*

Our Elite staffers thoroughly inspect the playground area each day prior to the children's outdoor play time. This inspection includes, but is not limited to the search for hazardous objects:

- Glass, needles, or other sharp objects
- Dangerous equipment that may cause falls, cuts, pinching, puncture wounds, or serious injury
- Inadequate ground cover underneath play structures and swings

- Unfamiliar person(s) who does not have a legitimate reason for being in or around the playground area
- Poisonous foliage, bees/wasps nests, animal/animal waste, trash/garbage

Elite staff routinely reviews the playground safety rules with their students. Rules such as where it is safe to run, the playground boundaries, appropriate position for sliding down the slides, appropriate sand play, and how to play safely on the wheel toys (children are encouraged to wear helmets), for both the driver and pedestrian, are some that are regularly reminded to the children.

We believe that proper supervision is of utmost importance in preventing playground accidents/injury. There are always a minimum of 2 staff persons strategically located on the playground during outdoor play. Parents and other volunteers may increase the ration of adults to children, but they will not replace the staff in meeting the staff-to-child ratio.

First Aid kits are carried around the playground by a staff member, unless there is a suitable location to store the kit that is out of reach of the children.

Safe Sleep Policy

All infants birth to twelve months of age, will be placed on their backs to sleep in a safety approved crib with a firm mattress and tightly fitted sheet. All pillows, quilts, blankets, comforters, stuffed toys, and other soft objects will be removed from the cribs. A doctor's note will be required in order for any modifications to be made to the sleep position.

Supervision

It is Elite's policy that no child shall be left alone and/or unsupervised at any time, regardless of circumstances. If the bathrooms are located outside the classroom, the child must be escorted to and from the bathroom. Classrooms and premises are checked daily and after the children leave to ensure that no child has been accidentally left behind. All of Elite's use video surveillance equipment in each classroom to ensure the safety and protection of the children and teachers.

Accidents

In the event of an accident involving your child, our staff will use the proper First Aid and reporting procedures.

An accident report form will be written up for any accident involving a child that requires the staff to provide First Aid (splinters, bruises, bumps). The accident will be reported to you the same day as the accident occurs.

Blood Borne Pathogen Control

Here at Elite Day Care we have implemented work place practices/controls to eliminate or minimize exposure to blood borne pathogens. Staff that may have occupational exposure to

blood or other potentially infectious materials are trained annually in the prevention of cross contamination of blood borne pathogens.

Communicable Disease Control

Our staff at Elite Day Care are constantly working to lower the risk of spreading communicable diseases through preventative health practices and appropriate reporting procedures:

- All children must have a signed Childhood Immunization Certificate indicating that all required immunizations are current and up-to-date.
- All our staff and regular volunteers have an initial health exam and/or tuberculosis screening.
- Adults and children regularly wash their hands with soap and water.
- Our classrooms surfaces are cleaned and disinfected regularly with chemical free agents.
- All toothbrushes are stored in appropriate holders with the brushes upright and not touching one another.
- If a child is ill or appears to have a communicable disease, measures will be taken to prevent the spread of disease by keeping the child isolated from the others, but under adult supervision, while contact is being made to the parent or emergency contact person.

Hand washing

Staff, parents and volunteers working in the Elite Day Care classrooms will teach/model hygiene practices to maintain a healthier environment and lower the risk of spreading communicable disease.

Hands will be washed at the following times:

- After cleaning/handling soiled items
- After contact with bodily fluids, even if wearing gloves
- After touching pets/animals
- After using the bathroom
- After wiping noses, mouths, etc.
- Before and after diapering
- Before mealtimes
- Before preparing or serving food
- After playing outdoors
- After tending to indoor gardens.
- After putting hands in mouth/nose
- After sneezing/coughing into hands
- When visibly soiled

Hand washing is conducted in the following way:

- Hands are rinsed with warm water
- Soap is applied, (available within the child's reach)

- Hands are lathered from front to back of hands and between fingers rubbing vigorously for approximately 20 seconds
- Hands are dried with disposable paper towel

Curriculum

Our Curriculum

Elite implements The Creative Curriculum, which is research based and developmentally appropriate, is guided by child development principles of how young children grow and learn. The staff people in our classrooms are well versed in the various objectives to promote learning through play and are sensitive to the individual needs of each child. Your child is supported through select materials in a well-structured space and is encouraged to engage, explore and reflect as he/she makes connections and finds meaning in the intentional environment. Themes are reflected in a holistic approach which incorporates the focus throughout the centers in the classroom.

Each child's social, emotional, cognitive, language and physical development is supported through the curricula. These are some principles incorporated in all component areas:

- Health education: personal health, dental safety and nutrition
- Mental health: self-esteem, feelings/emotions, and social competence
- Problem Solving, self-regulation and coping strategies
- Math/Science
- Language and Literacy
- Respectful cultural connections
- Community/social studies
- Creative art, music and movement
- Large and fine motor skills, coordination and balance

Developmentally Appropriate Materials, Equipment and Activities

The equipment, materials, and activities at Elite are checked for safety, developmental appropriateness and cultural diversity for all our children. Our equipment, materials, and activities are selected to achieve goals towards school readiness, such as:

- Fostering a positive concept of self
- Developing social skills
- Encouraging children to think, reason, question, and experiment
- Scaffolding (taking children to a higher learning level of thinking)
- Fostering language development and literacy skills

- Enhancing physical development
- Encouraging and demonstrating sound health, safety and nutritional practices
- Encouraging creative expression and appreciation of the arts
- Respecting cultural diversity

One third of each day is set for free play for the children to interact with a variety of materials and activities and allow their imagination and reason to guide their play

Elite maintains a sufficient quantity of materials and equipment to meet the developmental needs of the children, including those with special needs and/or disabilities. The equipment and materials are provided to reflect the curriculum, and interests of the children's life experiences, in a variety of complexities (i.e. 5 piece puzzles as well as 10-12 piece puzzles).

We use materials of various textures such as non-toxic playdough, finger paint, clay, sand and water. They are accessible, attractive, inviting, and designed to provide the necessary sensorial experience that is vital to young children's development.

All materials and equipment are stored in a safe, orderly fashion when not in use. They are organized in a logical manner with related items stored together and labeled. They are kept in good repair to ensure that there are no sharp edges, broken parts, splinters or other safety hazards.

Developing Cognitive, Numeracy, Language and Literacy Skills

The above skills will be developed in our classrooms through:

1. Labeling, classifying, and/or sorting objects by different attributes
2. Encouraging the children to tell stories about their experiences
3. Guiding children in pre-literacy experience drawing, copying or scribbling
4. Using flannel boards, puppets, songs, and finger plays
5. Extending the children's thinking and learning during activities by adding new materials, asking open ended questions, offering ideas or suggestions, joining in their play, facilitating problem solving
6. Observing natural events such as seeds growing, life cycles of pets and other animals, weather etc.
7. Creating an environment rich with numeracy through routine activities involving numbers and counting objects:
 - Models of numbers will be on display
 - Available puzzles, games, books, charts, graphs with appropriate number

- concepts of counting, sorting, seriating, addition, subtraction, geometric shapes, time etc.
- A variety and appropriate supply of manipulatives to practice counting, sorting, seriating etc.
8. Planning field trips to provide new learning experiences
 9. Water play and other sensory activities
 10. Establishing a Library for reading books and poems daily:
 - Placed in an area partitioned off from the rest of the room that contains comfortable seating, bookshelves, a variety of books, puppets, flannel board characters to familiar stories, and magnet boards with letters and story pictures.
 - Books will be circulated in the classroom every two weeks
 11. Providing a writing center in the classroom which contains:
 - A place for the children to sit
 - Writing supplies such as pens, pencils, crayons, markers of various sizes and color, variety of paper sizes, folders/notebooks, word cards with pictures, stencils, and alphabet letters
 12. Providing many meaningful prints representative of the different primary languages used by the families of the enrolled children:
 - Signs, directions, rules, messages, helpers' charts, word wall etc.

Child/Adult Interactions

Your child will be provided with opportunities to build trust, develop an understanding of his/her self and others, and to encourage respect for feelings and rights of others through child/adult (staff members) interactions. All interactions between your child and adults are respectful and supportive of his/her gender, culture, language, ethnic background and family composition.

Child Guidance and Behavior

Positive behavior is encouraged and reinforced through praise and approval from your child's teacher. Children who respond inappropriately are never punished harshly, hit, humiliated,

embarrassed or deprived of food. Our teachers guide behavior with patience, understanding and encouragement to do better next time.

When teaching children how to manage their own behaviors, our staff employs positive behavior strategies. Child guidance and classroom management decisions promote positive social skills, foster mutual respect, strengthen self esteem, and support a safe environment.

Challenging behaviors are addressed using specific strategies delegated for special behaviors. Elite's staff works to understand the root of your child's challenging behavior in order to effectively support him/her. Some strategies to help support your child may be:

- Modifying programmatic structures as appropriate
- Increased observations to determine cause/triggers
- Helping your child to develop appropriate behaviors

Interventions focus on Supporting your child's sense of security providing children with clear statements of safe and appropriate behaviors and possible strategies and replacement behaviors. Removal from the group (e.g. "Quiet time") may be used in a calm, consistent, and non-punitive manner to help your child develop self control. Punishments are not used as a strategy for correcting behavior because it does not teach children appropriate replacement behavior. If possible, our program may choose to place additional support staff (e.g. Family Workers, social workers) in a classroom for a portion of the day, to provide additional support and guidance for the children.

In some cases, children may benefit from shorter hours of attendance for a limited time. In these cases, the center will contact their executive director to determine appropriate measures for both the child and the family.

Equal Opportunity Program

Elite Day Care is committed to a policy of equal opportunity and does not discriminate in the terms, conditions, or privileges on account of race, creed, age, color, sex, national origin, physical, disabling conditions, citizenship status or otherwise as may be prohibited by federal and state law.

"Education is a natural process carried out by the child and is not simply acquired by listening to words but by experiences in the environment" (Montessori.)

At *Elite Day Care* we combine various philosophies to provide your child with the optimal learning experience in a warm and intentional environment. We look forward to your child's wonderful education experience and to partnering with you as your child builds precious memories to shape a lifetime.