

PARENT/GUARDIAN HANDBOOK

I. ABOUT US

MISSION STATEMENT:

Thank you for choosing Eco Baby Children’s Center. We look forward to working with you and being a part in your child’s early development.

At Eco Baby Children’s Center, it is our mission to provide high-quality care for your child in a safe, healthy, holistic environment. We believe in creating a peaceful environment that allows each child to learn through hands-on experiences with the world around them. We believe we have a responsibility to nurture feelings of trust and security through warm and respectful interactions with each child. We commit the energy, patience, and love required to meet the needs of children socially, emotionally, physically, and cognitively. We seek to do this through a calm, clean, child-centered environment that encourages self-discovery.

THE STORY BEHIND ECO BABY CHILDREN’S CENTER:

After the birth of her first child, Owner and Director, Robyn Scotland, began searching the Capital Region for quality daycare for her son so she could return to her teaching career. She immediately saw her “vision” for what her ideal daycare would be like and began working towards creating a holistic daycare center that encompasses her core beliefs related to natural parenting, natural foods, freedom of movement, etc. Robyn is now the mother of three children and she and her husband strive to live an eco-conscious life. They love the energy of downtown Troy!

Having children of her own has been life-changing for Robyn, igniting an immense passion for child health and development. As the Toddler families at Eco Baby began transitioning out of the program, many expressed a desire to stay with Eco Baby. Robyn found a location at 1915 5th Avenue and began renovating that space for 3 and 4 year old programs. During the summer of 2016, plans were in place to merge both centers together at 1915 5th Avenue. What started out as a small center on 4th Street, has grown to a center that currently provides care for children ages 18 months through 5 years of age. Eco Baby plans on continued growth in the upcoming years!

When Robyn’s children were younger, she spent lots of time researching topics such as breastfeeding, birthing options, and infant/toddler development. While she still loves learning about these topics, she currently enjoys researching and staying current on topics related to child health and development, early education, and child nutrition with a focus on the “whole child.” Robyn has returned to her career in teaching as a Special Education Teacher, but continues to be involved with Eco Baby in many ways. She is also studying to earn her Post Master’s Certificate in Educational Leadership.

WHAT MAKES US ECO-FRIENDLY?

- ✓ Certified Eco-Healthy through the Eco-Healthy Childcare Program
- ✓ VOC Free Paints
- ✓ MyKidsDay App reduces paper use
- ✓ Cloth Diapering Supportive
- ✓ All Natural-Foods, many Local and/or Organic Foods
- ✓ Local, Hormone Free Milk
- ✓ BPA Free, Eco-Friendly Dishware
- ✓ Shoe-Free Facility
- ✓ Many Eco-Friendly Toys
- ✓ Bamboo Sheets and Blankets
- ✓ Seasonal Organic Vegetable Garden Outside
- ✓ Indoor Organic Green Plants Add Oxygen to the Air
- ✓ Green, Non-Toxic, Cleaning Supplies
- ✓ No Artificial Air Fresheners
- ✓ Towels for Hand Drying
- ✓ We Re-use and Recycle
- ✓ Connecting with Local Businesses

II. PHILOSOPHIES

PHILOSOPHY OF EARLY EDUCATION:

Your child will develop and learn more in these early stages than in any other point in his/her life and our goal is to make the most of this crucial time. We have a deep respect and appreciation for all early learners. We believe children thrive best in a peaceful, holistic, supportive, and nurturing environment where they are encouraged to embrace opportunities for self-discovery. We believe that when allowed to unfold in their own way and own time, children discover and inspire the best in themselves and others.

During the early years, what children need most is to feel safe, secure and loved. Therefore, building quality, personal relationships with caregivers is at the core of our program. We believe this allows each child to feel secure, confident, and able to rapidly learn through new explorative experiences within their environment. We have structured our rooms and programs through the eyes of early learners with plenty of opportunities for self-discovery.

Our toddler classroom is child-centered and provides daily educational experiences through free and guided play. The children will have the opportunity to participate in role play, art, music, reading, gardening, puppet shows, physical activity, dance, family-style meals, etc. At Eco Baby Children's Center, we believe the path to early language literacy begins with basic conversations between caregivers and young children. Your child's caregivers will promote early language development by using simple words the children understand and by interacting with each child daily through the use of books, songs, puppet plays, etc.

In our 3 and 4-year-old classrooms, the children begin getting accustomed to more structured environments. While they will still be allowed plenty of time for free exploration, they will start participating in daily academic centers as well as a structured and educational "morning meeting". At this stage, children will focus on

letter/name/number recognition and writing, counting, shape sorting, early science exploration based on STEM research, and fine motor skills (cutting, tracing, etc.). By the time children reach our 4-year-old classroom, the children begin focusing on Kindergarten readiness by aligning lessons to the Core Body of Knowledge and the Early Learning Guidelines. While there is an emphasis on academics at this age, our programs continue to focus on building social/emotional skills through play-based activities, physical development through movement and exercise, and creativity by incorporating the arts and music on a daily basis.

CLASS SIZES AND STAFF RATIOS:

Toddlers: Our toddler room is child-centered and can accommodate up to 12 children. We have 1 care-giver for every 5 toddlers.

Three-year-old classroom: Our three-year-old room can accommodate up to 15 children. We have 1 caregiver for every 7 children.

Four-year-old classroom: Our four-year-old room can accommodate up to 15 children. We have 1 caregiver for every 8 children.

*** Per regulations, for children over 18 months of age, the child day care center may determine the group placement for a child based on the child's developmental readiness, within three months before or after the child's birth date except that, with parental permission, and in consultation with Early Intervention or Special Education staff working with the family, the child day care center may exercise greater discretion in the placement of a child with a developmental delay or disability based on consideration of such factors as the child's developmental readiness, appropriateness of the classroom environment, the level of care the child requires and the needs of the other children in care.

CHILD SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT:

Upon enrollment, we will ask each family to complete an Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3) within the first 45 days your child is in our care. This developmental screening tool looks at communication, physical development, social skills and problem solving skills. The questions can be completed in 10-15 minutes by a primary caregiver at home. Once completed, your child's classroom teacher will score your responses and share the results with you. This score allows us to determine your child's areas of strength, areas of weakness and allows us to identify possible areas of concern. The results of your child's screening will remain confidential and will be stored in your child's individual file.

*If you and/or your child primarily speak a language other than English, we will provide the necessary supports to allow you to complete this screening and all other assessments in a relaxed and comfortable manner.

*If results of any given child's screening or assessment proves necessary, we will modify our daily schedule and/or lesson plans to suit the needs of the early learners in our care.

FAMILY/TEACHER COMMUNICATION:

We pride ourselves on open communication with families. We want to form a partnership with you in the care of your child. You will have daily verbal communication with caregivers each day. You will also have an account for your child on the MyKidzDay website and app, which you can download onto your smartphone. This app allows you to “check in” on your child throughout the day and see when and what they have eaten, what they’re naps look like, when and what their potty/diaper changes have consisted of, and what activities they have done over the course of the day. Your child’s profile on the MyKidzDay app will be updated daily by your child’s caregivers. Please inform us of any questions or concerns that you may have.

Two parent/teacher conferences will be offered to all Eco Baby families every school year, the first in October and the second in March. These conferences will allow time for the parents and teachers to either meet privately or with the Director present and reflect on the child’s progress and development throughout the school year. Conferences are a perfect time to discuss any concerns and ensure everyone is on the same page regarding each child and their progress while in our care.

VISITS AND VOLUNTEERING:

We know and understand firsthand how hard it can be for many parents/guardians to leave their child in daycare so that they may return to work or school. Instead of thinking of us as simply a daycare, we hope you think of us your partners in the child rearing process. Like the saying goes, “It takes a village to raise a child!”

Our doors are always open for parent/guardian visits during normal business hours. Out of respect for napping children, we do ask that you call in advance to let us know you will be dropping by. If you decide to drop by during a meal/snack, you are more than welcome to eat the food we are providing with your child. Bring in your re-usable mug or canteen and we’ll gladly fill it for you with water, coffee, or tea before you leave.

We also encourage family volunteers in the classroom. Whether you want to chaperone a field trip, read a story during morning meeting, etc., we’d love to have you. If you have a special interest, skill, or cultural tradition you’d like to share with our classes, please let us know and we will arrange a time for you to join us!

PARENT RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS:

The health and well-being of all children and families is important to us at Eco Baby Children’s Center. You can find resources on child development, oral health, child and family health insurance, tax credits, childcare financial assistance, transitions into and out of childcare programs as well as information on separation and attachment on our website at ecobabychildrenscenter.com. If you would like additional information or supports, please contact the Director.

TRANSITIONS:

We will support families any way we can while transitioning both into and out of our programs. Before your child begins care at Eco Baby, you may visit as many times as you would like, both with and without your child present. If your child has an IEP or other

needs which would require modification to our program, we may schedule a time to meet with you before your child's start date to ensure we have the necessary supports in place.

For many young children during their first week or two, drop-off is the most difficult time of day. Having a special blanket, toy or picture may help them feel more comforted and secure during this transition. You may choose to spend some time with your child during drop-off to help them ease into the day or you may choose to "drop and run" (sticking around at drop-off doesn't work for all children and could end up making them more upset). Every child is different and we will help you figure out what works best for you and your child.

When it comes time for your child to transition from one classroom to the next, we will send you a notice one month prior to your child's transition date to inform you of the transition and allow ample time to answer any questions you may have. During the month leading up to your child's transition, we will give your child the opportunity to visit their new classroom as many times and as often as they would like. If desired, we will set up a time for you to meet with both your child's current teacher and new classroom teacher to ensure everyone is on the same page regarding your child's development.

You can find addition resources regarding transitions, separation and attachment on our website at ecobabychildrenscenter.com.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY:

We take pride in owning a small business in Troy, NY. We believe that small businesses have a social responsibility to give back to the community which supports them. We vow to buy much of our food and supplies from local farms, businesses, stores, and vendors. Supporting local farms and vendors will help our community as a whole thrive. We also look forward to being a part of various children's events in downtown Troy.

SIGN LANGUAGE:

We often use basic signs along with words when communicating with young children because we believe there are many benefits to using sign language. Signing allows early learners to clearly communication while building verbal language skills, it reduces stress and frustration, reinforces verbal language by adding visual kinesthetic emphasis to auditory input, and builds on a child's natural tendency to use gestures. Sign language won't delay verbal language development, but may instead, accelerate it.

If you would like to use sign language at home with your child, please talk with your primary care-giver to learn the signs that your child is using while in our care.

SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE:Toddlers, Three-Year-Olds, Four-Year-Olds

7:00 – 8:45am ~ Drop off, free play
 8:45 – 9:00am – Diaper Check/Bathroom Time/Wash Hands
 9:00 – 9:30am ~ Breakfast and Clean-up
 9:30 – 10:00am ~ Morning Meeting (calendar, weather, songs, and stories)
 10:00 – 10:30am ~ Art/Sensory Activity/Centers for 3 & 4-year-old groups
 10:30 – 11:45am ~ Outdoor Play weather permitting/Clean-up for Lunch
 11:45 – 12:30pm ~ Lunch, clean up
 12:30 – 2:30pm ~ Nap (quiet play will be provided for children who do not nap)
 2:30 – 3:00pm ~ Snack, clean-up
 3:00 – 4:00pm ~ Outdoor Play (weather permitting)
 4:00 – 5:30pm ~ Prepare for pick-up, free-play/music/art activities

**Please note: Hand washing will take place before all meals and snacks and after bathroom use.

**Please note: Additional bathroom breaks/diaper changes are always provided as needed on an individual basis. We change diapers as often as needed. We have only included organized time for bathroom breaks/diaper checks to make sure that we offer the opportunity to children who are potty learning to use the bathroom.

III. HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIESSHOE FREE POLICY:

For everyone's health and safety, we are a "shoe free" facility. While this may seem logistically challenging at times, we feel that the benefits to the children in our care outweigh the inconveniences. When your child enters the facility, they will be required to remove their shoes. These shoes will be stored in their individual cubby and can double as their "outdoor shoes." If parents wish to enter our facility, which we welcome, they will be asked to remove their shoes at the door. We have a basket of slippers for your convenience. Staff will also abide by this policy and will remove outdoor shoes upon entering the building. They may keep a pair of indoor slippers at our facility for indoor use only. *****THE SHOES YOU BRING YOUR CHILD IN SHOULD BE EASY TO GET ON/OFF FOR FIRE SAFETY AND QUICK EVACUATION.**

MEALS AND SNACKS:

At Eco Baby Children's Center, we understand the importance of quality nutrition. We vow to serve only natural foods, and vow to provide local and organic foods as available. Our foods will never contain any artificial preservatives or high-fructose corn syrup. Our milk and eggs are supplied from local farms. Fruits and vegetables are from local farms as available. We seasonally participate in a local CSA farm share. All of our meals/snacks are prepared on-premises.

Food is always prepared using cold water from the faucet that has run for minutes to reduce any contaminants.

Filtered water is always available to all children of an appropriate developmental age when they are thirsty.

The cost of your child's tuition includes two meals, breakfast and lunch, and an afternoon snack. Our menus are available on our website or you can request a hard copy. We welcome parent input and suggestions. If you would like to see a certain item on our menu, just ask!

Our menu is vegetarian. There is some research to support that a whole foods diet, that is free of meats, may increase environmental stability over time.

Please make sure to notify us of any food allergies and we will make accommodations as necessary. **We do require a doctor's note for any food allergies/restrictions.** We participate in CACFP (Food Program) and do follow their dietary guidelines.

MICROWAVE:

We do not use a microwave for either cooking or bottle warming.

BREASTFEEDING:

We believe in providing as much support as possible to breastfeeding mothers. We support mothers who wish to visit their child and breastfeed them at our facility. The mother can choose to breastfeed in a comfortable chair in a private area or in the room in which the child is being cared for. We support a mother's right to breastfeed where she feels most comfortable and feel that it is healthy for other children to witness breastfeeding in a supportive environment.

PHYSICAL EXERCISE/OUTDOOR PLAY:

We believe that daily, physical movement is an integral part of early child development. When weather appropriate, each child will be provided with the opportunity for both structured and unstructured outdoor play each day. Please provide comfortable clothing and appropriate shoes for outdoor play. In the colder months, children may have the opportunity to play outside if the appropriate clothing has been provided (coat, snow pants, hat, boots, gloves, etc.). On days when the weather is uncooperative, we will provide some form of structured and unstructured indoor movement for children. Our structured gross motor activities could include, but are not limited to, dancing, stretching, yoga, organized games, walking, etc. If for some reason, you do not want your child to participate in a certain type of activity, please inform us in writing.

The children will have the opportunity to play outside in two different courtyards on the premises. The children will also go on short walks to various locations in downtown Troy, primarily to Barker Park. We have been approved through the Office of Child and Family Services to walk the children to Barker Park to play on their age-appropriate equipment.

During the warmer months, the preschool-aged classrooms will participate in local field trips. Examples of typical trips include, but are not limited to: attending the Kid's Music Series at Barker Park in July and August, visiting the local firehouse and post office, going bowling at Uncle Sam Bowling, visiting the Troy Music Academy and spending

some time visiting and learning about other local businesses in downtown Troy. At Eco Baby, we believe that having the children participate in local walking trips not only teaches them the valuable skills needed to walk on downtown sidewalks but enhances their learning experience by exposing them to environments and situations they wouldn't normally see here at the center. You will be notified in advance of all local field trips.

TOILET LEARNING

We do not believe in toilet training, but toilet learning. We feel that toilet learning is an evolving process that is learned over time. Our caregivers will work with you as you embark on this process and they will follow your child's lead in the process. Each room contains an appropriately-sized toilet to make toilet learning more readily accessible to children. We will not force children to use the toilet, but will assist them when they display cues of interest. We will never discipline a child for having a toilet related accident.

**Children do not need to be fully using the potty to enter our preschool classrooms.

DIAPERING

We are supportive of cloth diapering families and are able to accommodate all types of cloth diapers. However, we support the family's choice to send in the type of diaper that they choose.

Diaper Creams/Powders: We do not supply diaper creams. If you wish a diaper cream to be used, you must supply it and fill out a form for topical treatment. For the respiratory health and safety of all children, we do not allow powders at our facility.

TEETH BRUSHING:

While brushing your teeth is an important skill that children love to learn, we are not able to accommodate teeth brushing at our facility at this time. We hope that you are working with your child on teeth brushing at home.

TEETHING:

Your child will most likely deal with teething symptoms while in our care. We understand that this can be quite an uncomfortable time. We hope to work with you to develop appropriate holistic ways to soothe your child's sore gums. Per our policy on medications, we are not able to administer any oral medications for teething.

DISCIPLINE POLICY:

At Eco Baby Children's Center, age-appropriate rules are established for each room to ensure the safety and happiness of all children. Our goal is to help children develop self-control and take responsibility for his/her actions. We are clear and consistent with our rules in each of our classrooms. We explain rules to children in developmentally appropriate ways (simple verbal language & sign language). When a rule is broken, the caregiver will provide discipline without prolonged delay in the following 3 steps:

1. Explanation: The caregiver will explain to the child on his/her eye level how his/her behavior breaks a rule and why this rule is necessary. This gives the child a chance to self-correct his/her behavior.
2. Choices: The caregiver will give the child choices in how they might display more appropriate behavior in a situation.
3. Redirection: The caregiver will gently redirect the child to a new activity.
4. Discipline: If and only if, multiple attempts at explanation and redirection have been used and/or the child's behavior has the potential to harm themselves, other children, or staff, the child will be separated briefly from group activities. At this point the caregiver will gently explain how the behavior breaks a rule and why the rule is necessary. We do not use the phrase "time out," but instead suggest to the child that they have some "calm time" to themselves. The child will be given space to calm down and reflect on the situation. They will remain in close proximity to the caregiver and the caregiver will interact with the child before they return to group activities. Again, our goal is for children to develop ways for building self-control and taking responsibility for their actions.

Aggressive Behavior: If a child continues to show repetitive acts of aggression, we will develop strategies to reduce acts of aggression. Aggressive acts will be documented in writing and reported to the family. If aggressive behavior comes to a point that it jeopardizes the safety of other students or staff, the child's enrollment may be terminated at our discretion (see termination policy).

BITING:

Biting is a normal behavior in the development of many young toddlers. However, when it happens, we understand that it is scary and frustrating for everyone involved. It is our job to provide a safe setting for all children. We take the following proactive measures when biting occurs:

1. Let the biting child know in words and sign language that biting is unacceptable.
2. Avoid immediate responses that reinforce biting (ex: negative attention). Instead, we focus on caring for the child who has been bitten. The biter is talked to in a level that they can understand.
3. We will examine the context of the biting for any habitual patterns.
4. We will not attribute willfulness or maliciousness to the child.

If biting changes from a relatively infrequent occurrence to an expected outcome, we will do the following:

1. The caregiver will document each biting occurrence, including attempted bites.
2. The caregiver will anticipate biting occurrences and implement preventative measures. They will teach non-biting responses to situations and reinforce appropriate behavior in biting situations.
3. The caregiver may make changes to the room environment to reduce any triggers to potential biting situations (competition for toys or materials, congestion, etc.)

MEDICAL RECORDS AND CONFIDENTIALITY:

We require current medical information on each child prior to enrollment and this must be updated annually.

We maintain strict confidentiality of all medical records and will keep each child's records on file for a minimum of 3 years after the child leaves our care.

ADMINISTERING MEDICATIONS:

Eco Baby Children's Center, LLC has chosen not to participate in the Medication Administration portion of the NYS OCFS licensing for liability purposes. This means we are not able to any medicine besides over the counter, topical creams/ointments/sunscreens/bug repellents or emergency rescue medications (epi-pens, emergency inhalers). If your child requires medication while in our care, please ask your physician to come up with a dosing schedule where your child will not need to receive a dose during daycare hours, or you may make arrangements to come to the center to administer the medication yourself. You must inform our staff of any medications that your child is taking at home.

Over the counter, topical creams can be administered, but you first must complete the OCFS Medication Permission Slip and you must supply the cream, ointment, sunscreen, bug repellent, etc. This form must be updated every 6 months. This also applies to diaper creams (please see additional information under "Diapering"). The product must be sealed appropriately and you must label the product in permanent marker with the child's name. Please note: We will not administer a product if it comes in an aerosol can and we prefer to administer products made with natural ingredients. If you would like suggestions about earth-friendly, natural products, please let us know. A helpful online resource is the Skin Deep Cosmetic Safety Database by Environmental Working Group, which can be found on the internet. Below is a list of some of our favorite brands, although there are too many to mention them all:

- California Baby
- Earth Mama Angel Baby
- Episencial
- Nature's Baby Organics
- Nature Babycare
- Burt's Bees
- Homestead Company

IMMUNIZATIONS:

We require that current immunization records from the child's pediatrician be kept on file and be updated annually. Parents/guardians are responsible for providing this information from the child's pediatrician. The American Academy of Pediatrics has designated a set immunization schedule that they feel is the most beneficial for children in America. However, many families today are choosing to follow alternative schedules that best meet their needs. We will support each individual family on their choices in this delicate matter, as long as it complies with the OCFS regulations.

PROCEDURES FOR ILLNESS:

Unfortunately, illness is inevitable from time to time in the daycare environment. We will do our best to minimize viruses and infections from spreading through the following measures:

If a child becomes ill while in our care, we will remove that child from the main rooms and have them rest in the quiet/sick room that will be staffed by a caregiver. We will take your child's temperature only through topical methods, for sanitary reasons. We will notify the parent/guardian that his/her child is not feeling well. We ask that parents/guardians make plans so that you or an emergency contact can pick your child up within 2 hours after being called to do so. We cannot provide proper sick care for children, except for short amounts of time. We know that it may be difficult to re-arrange schedules due to sudden illness, but we appreciate your cooperation. It is to the benefit of all children in our care and helps to minimize the spreading of illness.

If your child arrives at Eco Baby Children's Center and is displaying signs of illness, we will assess the situation and determine if it is safe for your child to stay.

Below you will find our policies regarding some of the more common daycare illnesses:

Vomiting: If a child is vomiting, they cannot attend daycare at Eco Baby Children's Center. They must remain out for a full day following the last time he/she vomited. If a child vomits while in our care, they will be kept comfortable and taken to the sick room or be provided a space to rest away from the other children. A parent/guardian or emergency contact will need to pick the child up. The child must remain out of daycare the following day. He/she may return to Eco Baby Children's Center after a full day has passed and it has been at least 24 hours since he/she vomited.

Diarrhea: A child who has watery stools more than once a day will be sent home. If a child is sent home with diarrhea, they must remain out of care for the following day. He/she may return after a full day has passed and it has been at least 24 hours since the last time the child had a diarrhea. If your child has an allergy, condition or takes medication that causes diarrhea, please inform me and obtain a note from his/her pediatrician stating the cause of the diarrhea.

Fever: A fever is the one of the body's natural defense mechanisms. If your child seems warm while in our care, we will take their temperature using a temporal scanning device. We do not take temperatures orally, rectally, under the armpit, or use any thermometers containing mercury on premises. If the child has a low grade fever (99-100.5 degrees) and no other symptoms, we will notify you, but they may remain in our care. However, if your child has a high fever (100.5 or higher) or the fever is accompanied by multiple other symptoms, you will be required to pick up your child. We do not support parents/guardians administering fever reducing medications prior to drop-off to bring down a fever. **If the child is sent home with a high fever, he/she must remain out of care the following day. He/she must be fever free/medication free for at least 24 hours before returning to care.**

Common Cold Virus: The common cold virus in daycare is inevitable. Your child will need to stay home or will be sent home if he/she has an uncontrollable and consistent

cough, a consistent thick, green discharge from the nose, or are too uncomfortable to participate in all the daily activities.

Conjunctivitis: This is a contagious infection of the eye. It can be characterized by a yellow discharge and tearing. The eyes may be crusty in the morning. With conjunctivitis, the child will need to stay home and may return to daycare when conjunctivitis is cleared, after 24 hours on medication, and/or with written permission from his/her pediatrician.

Strep Throat: Strep throat is a contagious infection. Often children will display a fever combined with a sore throat, although this is not always the case. If your child is diagnosed with strep throat, they will need to stay home. The child may return to daycare with written permission from his/her pediatrician or after being on medication for 24 hours.

Ear Infection: Ear infections are not contagious, but can be very uncomfortable for children and often require the attention of your health-care provider. If an ear infection is suspected, please contact your child's health-care provider.

Coxsackie Virus (Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease): This virus can be characterized by small blisters or red spots on the palms and soles, and/or small painful ulcers in the mouth. Symptoms may include fever, sore throat, stomach pain, and diarrhea. If your child displays these symptoms or is diagnosed with Coxsackie Virus, they will need to stay home until they are fever-free and any open sores have healed.

Chicken Pox: If a child develops chicken pox, he/she may not attend daycare until after the sores are scabbed over and are dry. Please notify us as soon as possible if you feel that your child may have been exposed to chicken pox. We will notify all parents if a child in our care develops chicken pox.

Head Lice: If a case of head lice is suspected, the child's family will be notified immediately. The child will need to be picked up. The child must be free of any lice eggs before they can return to daycare. This is more of a nuisance than a health hazard, but it is the only way the infection can be stopped. If there is a reported case, all children will be checked for any signs of head lice.

Herpes Simplex Viral Infections (Cold Sores): Children with open sores near or around the mouth that cannot be covered may not attend daycare. This virus is highly contagious. Children can return to daycare when the blisters are crusted over or with a note from the pediatrician stating that they child may return to daycare.

Yeast Infection/Diaper Rash: This can be common in babies and young children in diapers. Some children are susceptible than others. If your child develops red, raised, round spots in the diaper area, please work with your child's health-care provider to discuss ways to control this uncomfortable issue. There are many holistic treatments, as well as prescription antibiotics and creams.

ALLERGIES:

Parents/guardians must inform our staff in writing of any allergies. We ask that if you are supplying food, you send foods your child has already eaten at home. If an allergy poses a dietary restriction, our kitchen will accommodate this.

***Please note: We do not offer peanut butter at our facility or provide any foods that contain nuts. Soy nut butter, or sunflower butter, which is not related to the nut family, is offered instead. Thank you for your understanding in this delicate matter. We do however offer foods that may have been manufactured in a plant that processes peanuts/tree nuts.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES:

All staff members are certified to administer appropriate first aid procedures and any injury will be documented in writing and reported to the parent/guardian by the close of the same business day, unless the injury requires the parent/guardian or another listed emergency contact to pick up the child. If we deem that the child needs to be picked up, we will call you or your listed emergency contacts if we are unable to reach you.

In the rare case of a medical emergency, your child's caregiver will call you or your designated emergency contacts. If we deem that the situation requires immediate attention, 911 will be called and the child will be taken to a hospital by ambulance, accompanied by a staff member. We err on the side of caution when deciding if an ambulance needs to be called. Every effort will be made to contact a parent, legal guardian, or designated emergency contact before your child is treated. Once transferred to a hospital, the child will only be released into the custody of the parent/guardian when it is deemed that hospital care is no longer required.

Dental Health Emergencies: Sometimes, accidents can happen that involve oral trauma. Hopefully this will never be the case, but in the event that oral trauma occurs, it will require the immediate attention of a dentist. The parent/guardian will be notified immediately to pick the child up and take them to the dentist. In the event we are unable to reach you, we will notify your listed emergency contact(s) that they will need to pick the child up.

FIRE DRILLS:

We will conduct at least monthly, pre-arranged evacuation drills at least monthly to be in compliance with NYS regulations. Each room displays a visual evacuation chart by their door. For speedy exit, we have clean slippers for children. Our facility is hard-wired to the Troy Fire Department and we have a partial sprinkler system.

In order to decrease confusion, if a parent/guardian is present during a fire drill, we ask that you participate in the fire drill and stay with your child until the drill has ended.

SHELTER IN PLACE DRILL:

Per NYS Regulations, we will perform two shelter in place drills per year.

SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE/MALTREATMENT:

All staff members of Eco Baby Children's Center are mandated reporters according to the policies set forth by New York State and the New York Child Protective System. Mandated reporters are required to report instances of suspected child abuse or maltreatment to the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment. We are not required to notify the parents of other persons legally responsible either before or after the report. For more information about child abuse and maltreatment, please refer to NYS OCFS regulation 418-1.10 or call the Child Abuse Public Hotline at 1-800-342-3720.

PETS/ANIMALS:

We believe that animals can be a wonderful addition to the learning environment. Having a class pet is part of our program. Per NYS Regulations, all animals must be up to date with medical care and in good health.

IV. ADDITIONAL POLICIES/PROCEDURES**TUITION/FEES (as of September 2016):**

Toddlers (18 months – 36 months): \$260/week

3-5 Year Olds: \$245/week

*At this time, we only accept part-time families under specific circumstances. Please call the Director at 518.687.1574 for more information.

**All tuitions are scheduled to increase at a cost of living increase in September of each calendar year, or at any other time necessary with reasonable notice.

Registration Fee: There is also a \$30 non-refundable registration fee due upon enrollment. In order to hold your position, a 2-week deposit must be paid. This will be applied to your first and last week of care.

Payment is expected the Friday before the upcoming week or on Monday mornings. All payment policies apply whether a child is present or not. Parents/guardians may pay via cash, credit card, or check (made out to Eco Baby). If payment is made more than 2 days after the due date, a \$20 late fee will be charged. If a check is returned for any reason, a \$30.00 returned check fee will be charged.

Discounts: If you have more than one child enrolled in Eco Baby, a 10% discount from the usual tuition fee is offered and applied to the child with the lowest tuition rate. These discounts are only available when tuition is paid in advance.

Late pick-up fee: Our center closes promptly at 5:30 pm each day. Many of our staff members have other obligations/family commitments they need to attend to after work. There is a \$1.00 per minute late fee for families who pick their child up after 5:30 pm.

This fee is due directly upon pick-up or by the close of business on the following day. If we find that you are repetitively late, we will request a meeting with you to discuss your child care needs and how we may or may not be able to meet them. In the event your child has not been picked up by 6:00 pm and we cannot reach you, all emergency contact persons you have identified will be called. If by 6:30 pm we cannot reach you or any of your emergency contacts, the police will be notified.

ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE:

Eco Baby Children's Center is open promptly each day at 7:00 am. Children must be picked up before closing at 5:30 pm. Upon arrival, you will sign your child into Eco Baby Children's Center. You will also sign your child out upon pick-up. No child will be able to leave with a person other than a parent/guardian unless their name is on your release form. Parents must also give oral/written permission prior to pick-up.

Our programs are located within The First United Presbyterian Church on 5th Avenue. Children may be dropped off using our side entrance through the parking lot on the corner of 5th Avenue and Fulton. Three-year-olds and four-year-olds should be dropped off at our upstairs entrance and toddlers should be dropped off using our downstairs entrance.

PARKING:

Considering that we are located in an urban environment, we understand that parking may be difficult. We have implemented the following measures to make parking as easy as possible:

1. We have a designated spot in the parking lot on the corner of 5th and Fulton.
2. There is also ample street parking within a close proximity of our entrance.

WHAT IS SUPPLIED BY ECO BABY CHILDREN'S CENTER:

- ✓ Breakfast, Lunch, and Afternoon Snack
- ✓ Filtered Water
- ✓ BPA Free Cups, Plates, Bowls, Silverware
- ✓ Bibs
- ✓ Non-toxic Materials for Arts/Crafts
- ✓ All Learning Supplies
- ✓ Smocks for Art Activities
- ✓ Many Eco-Friendly/Wooden/Open Ended Toys
- ✓ Age-Appropriate Books and Literacy Materials
- ✓ Age-Appropriate Musical Instruments
- ✓ Developmentally Appropriate Outdoor Toys
- ✓ Outdoor Vegetable Gardening

ITEMS REQUESTED FROM HOME:

- ✓ Diapers/Pull Ups
- ✓ Wipes

- ✓ Change of clothes (2-3 sets)
- ✓ Come dressed in ready-to-play clothing
- ✓ Shoes for outdoor play
- ✓ Reusable Water Bottle for outdoor play
- ✓ Weather appropriate gear for outdoor play in colder months
- ✓ Bathing suit, towel and shoes that can get wet for water play in warmer months
- ✓ Sunscreen
- ✓ Bug spray, as desired
- ✓ Blanket for naptime (send home weekly for washing)

NAPS:

We believe that rest and naps are very important to child development. We strive to provide a calm, soothing environment that encourages children to rest when they are tired. We have set aside time from 1 pm to 3 pm for nap/quiet time. If a child chooses not to nap, they may play/read quietly. We will never force a child to take a nap.

Toddlers (18 months to 36 months) will nap on cots with blankets provided from home. We also have two cribs for our younger toddlers if needed. To prevent the spread of germs and illness, you should bring your child's sleep items home and wash them weekly.

Children in our three-year-old classroom will nap on cots with blankets provided from home. To prevent the spread of germs and illness, you should bring your child's sleep items home and wash them weekly.

Our four-year-old children rest on mats with blankets provided from home.

TOYS/BATTERY OPERATED TOYS:

We have many eco-conscious toys for infants and toddlers. We generally don't support the use of battery-operated toys. In the rare instance we have something that is battery operated; we have deemed that its benefits are important for child development. In this rare case, we will always appropriately recycle batteries.

TELEVISION:

We rely on self-discovery and human interaction between children and teachers and caregivers, and therefore do not use television in our facility.

APPROPRIATE CLOTHING FOR CARE:

As stated above, we believe that children learn through play and experiences with the world around them. This includes, but is not limited to, various daily art/sensory/gardening activities using various mediums. While we do use smocks, we cannot guarantee that clothing will not become stained. This is part of our infant and toddler environment. Also, we always encourage the children to try a wide variety of foods, some of which could potentially leave stains (ex: beets, berries, etc.). We do use bibs for infants and toddler, but sometimes bibs do not cover the child enough to totally eliminate the possibility of food stains on clothing.

Therefore, we ask that children come in ready-to-play clothes. Please do not send your child in clothing/jewelry/etc. that are not appropriate for our daily activities. Given the above disclaimer, we are not responsible for lost/damaged personal items.

TOYS FROM HOME:

We ask that parents/guardians do not bring toys, book, etc. from home. It is very easy for them to get mixed up with our toys or for other children to want to play with them. If your child has a special sleep toy or blanket used for naps, you may bring it with them, but must label it clearly with the child's first and last name. Due to our policy on napping, babies under the age of 6 months will not be allowed to have any stuffed animals or blankets in the crib with them while sleeping.

FOOD FROM HOME:

We respect the family's right to supply their own food for their own child. If families desire to send in specific food items for their child's meals/snacks, they may do so. Families should inform the care-giver upon drop-off of any foods that will need to be refrigerated/heated.

However, due to our beliefs on the importance of local/natural/organic foods, we will not allow families to bring in foods from home to share with the group or any other children.

INCLEMENT WEATHER/CLOSING:

Eco Baby Children's Center will close for inclement weather when the Troy City School District is closed. If the Troy City School District has a two-hour delay, we will open on a two-hour delay. Please stay tuned to the local school closings for this information. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause, but we do not want you or our staff traveling on roads that have not been deemed safe by the local school district.

HOLIDAYS:

Upon enrollment and at the beginning of each calendar year, you will be provided with a list of the holidays that we will be closed. You will be asked to sign this notice, stating that you have received it. We do our best to be open and available to you, but there are some holidays that we close out of respect for the families of our staff. Thank you in advance for understanding.

CELEBRATORY EVENTS:

Out of respect for religious diversity, we do not celebrate specific religious holidays. However, out of the love for celebration, we will have organized celebrations around Halloween, Thanksgiving, seasonally themed celebrations, Earth Day, the 4th of July, and individual birthdays. You will be notified of these celebrations at least a week in advance and may participate if you wish. If for religious reasons, you do not want your child to participate, you must inform us at least 2 days prior to an event so that we can make alternate arrangements for your child.

DIVERSITY:

We embrace diversity in our daycare culture and do not discriminate against families based on race, ethnicity, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, economic status, etc. We are an equal opportunity employer and do not discriminate against employees based on race, ethnicity, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, economic status, etc.

TERMINATION PROCESS:

Eco Baby Children's Center reserves the right to terminate your child's enrollment in our program at any time. If this happens, you will be notified immediately in writing. We seek to accommodate all children in our program. It is only on rare occasion that that a child's behavior may warrant the need to find a more suitable environment. Examples include:

-A child seems to be in danger to him/her, other children attending our center, or anyone else in the daycare center.

-Medical, psychological, or social service personnel working with the daycare determine that continued care at the daycare is not in the best interest of the child.

-Any other situation in which the accommodation required for the child's success and participation place an undue burden on daycare resources and finances, and removal is in the best interest of the child or daycare center.

At any point that a child's behavior/circumstance is of concern to Eco Baby Children's Center, we will provide written documentation and communication as the first steps to understanding the behavior/circumstance.

Termination from our program may also occur for the following reasons:

-The parent/guardian fails to abide by our policies or those requirements set forth by NYS OCFS.

-A parent/guardian demands special services, which are not provided to other children, are not recommended by professionals and which cannot be reasonably delivered by the daycare (including requests that are outside the philosophy of the daycare)

-A parent/guardian is physically or verbally abusive or threatening to any staff member of Eco Baby Children's Center.

-If tuition is not paid in full within 10 business days of the due date, your child's slot will be relinquished and available to be filled.

-If the parent/guardian wishes to remove their child from Eco Baby Children's Center they must give a two week written notice. If they do not give a two week written notice, they will be responsible for paying a \$250.00 fee to Eco Baby Children's Center.