



**THE LEARNING TREE OF MADISON**  
***PARENT HANDBOOK***

Dear Parents,

Welcome to The Learning Tree of Madison. We are honored that you have chosen to receive more information about our center. We are an intimate daycare and preschool that provides child-care services for children from 6 weeks through 12 years of age. The Center in partnership with the families creates a warm, safe and loving environment where children thrive. We maintain a minimum of one staff member per four children under the age of three years and maintain a minimum of one staff member with no more than ten children over the age of three.

It is our belief that children are to be nurtured and supported as they develop and grow. At The Learning Tree of Madison children are provided with many opportunities to explore, create, and learn. Children have a tremendous capacity to learn and we believe that children learn best through play.

The Learning Tree of Madison is a warm, loving, intimate space where children are cared for and nurtured as we would our own children. We strive to support the whole family and we aim to be an extension of your family and offer a home away from home for the children. We know first hand how difficult it is to leave children in care outside the home. We understand the stress of balancing work, home, and child-care issues. We work with the entire family to help reduce parents' stress and maintain open and ongoing communication with families. We want families to feel part of the center and the activities even when they are unable to be present and experience it first hand. Using several mediums of communication we aim to keep families informed on what their children are doing on a daily basis. The Director, Teachers and Families communicate daily and pickup and drop off times provide an opportunity to share information about the child's day, interests, and activities. Staff schedules are structured in such a way that when parents pick up their children the staff present have been with the children for a good portion of your child's day. When this is not possible there is extensive staff communication and the staff will know details about how your child's day was.

The Learning Tree of Madison, together in partnership with the families, strives to create a loving, safe, and fun environment where children can blossom. Parent and family participation is strongly encouraged, and there are many events throughout the year to formalize the family-school connection. Families can also informally be involved in their children's school environment from reading books, sharing a craft, and working in the gardens with the children.

In addition to keeping the family-school connection, we offer a rich learning curriculum and hands on experiences for our little learners of all ages. Each learning experience is tailored to address individual needs and meets children where they are developmentally. We support, encourage, and guide them along their learning path.

The Learning Tree of Madison is located near the center of Madison. The grounds are semi-wooded, peaceful, and consist of birds, butterflies, and gardens. The playground is equipped for children to play on and climb. Children of all ages will enjoy outside time

as much as possible. We believe that allowing children to get fresh air with lots of physical activity outside is essential especially at these tender ages. There are many areas at The Learning Tree of Madison to explore and children are encouraged to share their discoveries back in the classrooms. Children are offered many different outdoor activities in which to participate from archeologist digging in our oversized sandboxes, to little farmers growing fruits, flowers, and vegetables in our gardens along with all sorts of adventures on the playground equipment.

The Learning Tree of Madison is a fun, vibrant place where children thrive and have lots of room to grow and play both inside and outside at the center. The classrooms are divided into activity centers; these spaces are dedicated to areas such as dramatic play, art, and reading. Preschool children are allowed to move from center to center depending on the type of activity in which they would like to participate. Children will also be encouraged to partake in the messy art center or to join in the activities in the wet center. Children can also spend time in the quiet area reading, coloring, and playing with blocks or puzzles. Children who are feeling energetic can bounce over to the dramatic play area where they can move around and be creative. Children can play musical instruments, dance, play in the kitchen, and dress up. This area of the room will also reflect the curriculum theme and may change from week to week adding to the excitement of the center. A daily routine is established to allow children to feel secure in knowing what to anticipate as the day unfolds.

We are committed to serve and admit all children and their families without regard to race, sex, culture or disability. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ability, national or ethnic origin.

Sincerely,

The Learning Tree of Madison

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

It is the Mission of The Learning Tree of Madison to provide the children and their families with a safe, loving, and fun environment where children thrive socially, emotionally, and educationally. The Learning Tree of Madison strives to offer children rich and exciting experiences and opportunities that both challenge and inspire them. It is a place where everyday is a new adventure and children are provided a variety of opportunities to grow, learn, and build confidence in themselves and others in a warm, nurturing and supportive environment.

## **OPERATIONAL INFORMATION**

### **THE LEARNING TREE OF MADISON**

560 Durham Road

Madison, CT 06443

Telephone: (203) 318-8181

Email: [Kimberly@TheLearningTreeofMadison.com](mailto:Kimberly@TheLearningTreeofMadison.com)

Web Page: [TheLearningTreeofMadison.com](http://TheLearningTreeofMadison.com)

### ***Hours of Operation***

The Learning Tree of Madison is open year round Monday through Friday from 7:00 am – 5:30 pm.

### ***Planned Closings***

The Learning Tree of Madison will be closed on the following days throughout the year:

Labor Day

Thanksgiving and the Friday after

Christmas Holiday December 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>

New Years Eve (Early Closing 1pm)

New Years Day

Good Friday

Memorial Day

Independence Day

The Learning Tree of Madison will also reserve three professional development days, for which at least 30 days advance notice will be provided.

### ***Services***

The Learning Tree of Madison uses the Connecticut Guidelines for the Development of Infant and Toddler Early Learning and State of Connecticut Preschool Curriculum and Assessment Frameworks in the development of curriculum and assessments. A

balance is maintained between child-lead experiences and teacher-lead activities to ensure children maximize their learning opportunities. Teachers spend time observing children's interests and interactions and take them into account when developing lesson plans. The Learning Tree of Madison provides the children many opportunities to learn through play, exploration and experimentation.

There is an emphasis on nutrition and the environment. Healthy snacks and lunches are encouraged. The children have age appropriate opportunities to be involved in aspects of the food they consume. They will participate in the growing of fruits and vegetables in the gardens, the preparation of these special snacks, and will share meals together with staff. Children will develop an appreciation for nature, where their food comes from and taking care of the environment we all live in.

The unique background of the Director and Owner as a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist allows the Learning Tree of Madison to really focus on the child and their family. The center also provides special family educational nights. At these events discussions regarding parenting, age appropriate limit setting and other topics as requested by the families are provided.

### ***Enrollment***

The Learning Tree of Madison strives to provide quality programs and care for young children. All children are eligible for enrollment regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, gender or disability. The Learning Tree of Madison accepts children from 6 weeks through 12 years of age. Parents of children with disabilities who require modification of the school program, policies or procedures are requested to inform the Director upon acceptance into the program so that she may determine whether the requested modifications can reasonably be made within the financial, staffing, educational and other constraints of the program. This information will be kept confidential except the extent necessary for the appropriate care of the child.

To secure a placement in the program a non-refundable enrollment fee and one week non-refundable tuition deposit (which will be applied to the last week) is required and payment of the first week of childcare. Parents must complete all parts of the enrollment packet prior to starting the program including:

- Application for Child Care Services;
- Child Health Assessment and Immunization Record;
- Child Care Emergency Information
- Medication plan (if necessary signed by each child's primary healthcare provider).
- Permission Form
- Child Care Agreement Form
- Operating Policies Form
- Information Release Form
- Health Policies Form
- Field Trip Permission Form
- Emergency Transportation Form

- Emergency Medical Permission Form
- Child Pick Up Form
- Babysitting Agreement Form
- Activity Authorization Form

All incomplete forms will be returned to the parent or legal guardian for completion prior to the child's first day of attendance.

### ***Provisional Enrollment***

There is no provisional enrollment.

### ***Termination***

The Learning Tree of Madison will make every effort possible to meet the needs of the enrolled children and to make reasonable modifications and accommodations within the limitations of the Center's finances, staffing and resources. If the Director believes that the Center is unable to meet a child's physical and/or emotional or behavioral needs or the child's behavior endangers the physical and/or emotional safety of him/herself or others the Director reserves the right to terminate the child's enrollment.

Other causes for termination include abusive or highly oppositional behavior from the parent or family members of a child toward staff, any child, or other families.

Failure to make tuition payments maybe cause for termination. If payments are a month behind enrollment may be suspended or terminated until the full balance is paid. Even if terminated all balances of tuition are still owed and payable.

Families will be notified in writing before the date of termination unless the safety of the children and other families can not be guaranteed then a verbal notice of termination effective immediately will be given and will be followed up with a written notice.

### ***Withdrawal of Children***

Parents must give the center two weeks notice when withdrawing their child from the center. All tuition remains due for the two weeks. The deposit will be applied to the last week the child is at the center.

### ***Tuition***

Tuition payments are due on the Friday of the preceding week. Tuition payments are due even if the child is picked up early, is sick, or on vacation. A \$25 late fee will be assessed for each tuition payment that is not made by the close of business on Wednesday of that week.

### ***Arrival and Departure***

Children must be accompanied by a parent/guardian into the classroom to ensure proper supervision. Parents/guardians must also come into the classroom to pick up the child at the end of the day. The parent/guardian must sign the child in and out of the Center everyday in the log at the front desk.

There is a security system at the main door of the Center. Each parent is provided an access code. These codes will be changed annually and as needed. This information is not to be shared with anyone other than the designated pick up and drop off adults. Anyone on the emergency pick up or authorized pick up list will need to ring the bell to be let in the center and provide a picture identification as verification. This code is disabled when the Center is closed.

Parents/Guardians will fill out an Authorized/Emergency Pick Up Form. This form will list all the authorized people who can pick up or drop off the child. Parents will need to notify the child's teacher or director whenever there is a change from the typical pick up or drop off person and time. The person coming for pick up will need to provide a picture form of identification. If the person coming to pick up the child and is not on the Authorized/Emergency pick up list, parents must send in written authorization. Children will not be released to anyone without the written authorization.

In the event that a child will not be present on any given day the parent must notify the Director as early as possible that day.

### ***Late Pick up Policy***

If a child is not picked up by closing time, the parents are called on all the numbers provided. If the parents cannot be reached within fifteen minutes, staff will begin calling the emergency contacts. Staff will continue to attempt to reach the parents for 30 minutes if they are unsuccessful in reaching the parents or emergency contacts the police will be called for assistance locating the parents and to advise on further action. Two staff members that are at least 18 years old will remain with the child until they are picked up by the parent, person on the emergency pick up list or released to police.

In case of an unexpected situation that will cause delay in picking up the child parents are expected to call the Center so that staff can prepare the child for the delay and staff accordingly. Late fines will be imposed.

### ***Communication and Open Door Policy***

The Learning Tree of Madison, together in partnership with the families, strives to create a loving, safe, and fun environment where children can blossom. Parent and family participation is strongly encouraged, and there are many events throughout the year to formalize the family-school connection. Families can also informally be involved in their children's school environment from reading books, sharing a craft, and working in the gardens with the children.

Open, on-going, and clear communication with the families is vital to the care and well being of the children in the center. The Director, Teachers and Families communicate daily and pickup and drop off times provide and opportunity to share information about the child's day, interests, and activities. A variety of mediums are used to communicate with families such as written, telephone and email communication.

Parents are encouraged to share with staff on a daily basis any factors positive or negative that may impact a child's behavior or feelings so staff can be prepared to support a child. The Center will also keep families informed of any special activities that parents may want to discuss with the child and or participate in at the Center.

The Learning tree of Madison has an open door policy and parents are welcome to visit at any time. The Learning Tree of Madison wants to recognize and include diverse cultures and traditions of its families with the Center. The Center encourages families to share them with the Center for the benefit of everyone.

Through out the year and as requested by families the Learning Tree of Madison will host workshops and meetings. These workshops will cover a variety of topics such as parenting, age appropriate limit setting, and other topics, as requested by the families. There will also be opportunities for families to participate in the Center such as seasonal events and family projects.

### ***Clothing***

Children create art projects with various mediums; play outside digging and exploring while at school. Although the art material is non-toxic and washable clothing may get stained. For these reasons parents should send children dressed to school appropriately in clothing that allows children to freely express themselves and busy themselves in fun and sometimes messy activities. Parents also need to ensure that their children have at least one seasonally appropriate change of clothes clearly labeled with the child's name. Infants and toddlers may require several changes of clothing. Parents are expected to provide ample supply of diapers and wipes. Closed toe shoes that entirely cover the feet are safest for school.

Outdoor play is an integral part of the program and children should come dressed seasonable appropriate to participate in all outdoor activities. In winter this includes hats, gloves, snow pants, boots all clearly marked with the child's name.

### ***Sunscreen And Insect Repellant***

Although there are shady areas on the playground parents may want to provide sunscreen to be applied only to exposed skin. Since the playground is surrounded by a wooded area parents may wish to have non-DEET containing bug repellant (unless written approval from child's physician) applied once a day and only to children older than two months. A written permission slip is required to have staff apply sunscreen and/or bug repellant which is provided by the parent and labeled with the child's name, and directly handed to the teacher or director and may not be left in a child's cubby at anytime.

### ***Meals***

Mealtime is viewed as an important social and bonding time. At the Learning Tree of Madison there is an emphasis on nutrition and the environment. Healthy snacks and lunches are encouraged. The children have age appropriate opportunities to be involved in aspects of the food they consume. They will participate in the growing of



fruits and vegetables in the gardens, the preparation of these special snacks, and will share meals together with staff. Children will develop an appreciation for nature, where their food comes from and taking care of the environment in which we all live.

It is the parent's responsibility to provide nutritious meals, as well as morning and afternoon snacks. The center will provide a place to refrigerate and/or heat meals if necessary. Children need to have their food in a clearly labeled bag and it is suggested to also pack an ice pack. The Learning Tree of Madison is a Peanut Free Zone. No peanuts or peanut products should be sent in with your child for snacks or lunch.

We ask parents to join us in our effort to teach healthy eating habits and ask parents not to send in soda, candy, colas or soft drinks of any kind, unless prescribed by a physician for specific conditions. Children will be provided water all day as needed. Parents are asked to supply a water bottle clearly labeled with the child's name. This practice is both good for the environment by cutting down on disposable cups being thrown away and allows a child to independently have water when they are thirsty.

### ***Infant/Toddler Feeding***

The parents will provide the center with a written description of their child's eating history before the child enters the program. During feeding times:

- The child's caregiver will be present, interact and supervise the child(ren) during feeding at all times.
- When highchairs are used children will be strapped in at all times.
- The trays, arms and seats will be cleaned and disinfected before and after each use.
- Bottle fed infants will be held or fed seating up. Bottle propping, feeding in cribs will not be permitted.
- Infants will be fed on demand to the extent possible but at least every four hours and usually not more than hourly.
- Infant toddler food will only be supplied by the parents.
- Breastfeeding will be supported by allowing nursing mothers to come in and feed their babies. Expressed milk from nursing mothers may be brought from home labeled with the child's name, and date the milk was expressed.
- Only clean or disinfected bottles will be used. All bottles filled with milk or formula will be kept in the refrigerator until immediately prior to feeding. Any contents left in the bottle after feeding will be discarded. A record will be kept as to how much and the time of each feeding. A copy will be provided to the parents at the end of each day.
- Bottles will be warmed by placing in a pan of warm water not to exceed 120 degrees F for five minutes, gently mixed and temp tested before feeding. Bottled milk or formula will never be warmed in a microwave.

### ***Preschool/School Age Feeding***

Children will participate if appropriate in the setting up and cleaning up of the table before and after meals. Children will only eat while sitting down to decrease choking. Children will eat in social groups with a caregiver to guide and encourage but not force

appropriate conversation and eating behavior. Food will not be withheld as a punishment.

### ***Naptime***

- Teachers will check children's cribs and cots to ensure it is clean and safe. Before sleeping equipment can be used for another child it needs to be cleaned and disinfected.
- Children's cots will be cleaned and sanitized daily after naptime.
- Cot sheets will be provided by the parents and will be removed from the cots daily and stored in a sealed bag clearly labeled with the child's name. These naptime sheets will be sent home at the end of the week to be laundered or sooner if it was soiled.
- Cribs will be cleaned and disinfected once a week or before another child uses that crib.
- Crib sheets supplied by the parents will be removed at the end of the week and sent home to be laundered or sooner if it was soiled.
- Infants will be put to sleep on their backs without loose bedding or soft objects. Children who can turn over themselves will be allowed to assume a sleeping position that is comfortable for them.

### ***Diapering Policy***

Diapers are checked at least every two hours and changed whenever soiled or wet. The time, number and nature of changes are recorded. Parents must provide disposable or cloth diapers and wipes. During each diaper change children are washed and dried with an individual washing materials such as single use disposable wipes supplied by parents.

All diaper changes are recorded including the time, number and nature of the diaper change and parents are provided a copy.

### ***Infant Shoe Policy***

To ensure the cleanliness of the infant rooms there is a no shoe policy in these rooms. All adults, including teachers and parents, must remove, replace, or cover with clean foot coverings any shoes they have worn outside that play area. If children, staff, and any other adults are barefoot in the infant room their feet must be visibly clean.

### ***Building Security and Access***

The Center's playgrounds are fenced in. Doors to the building are locked at all times. Entrance to the center is through the main entrance in the back of the building away from Route 79, which is a secure access door. Each parent is provided an access code. These codes will be changed annually and as needed. This information is not to be shared with anyone other than the designated pick up and drop off adults. Anyone on the emergency pick up or authorized pick up list will need to ring the bell to be let in the center and provide picture identification. This code is disabled when the Center is closed.

Children must be accompanied by a parent/guardian into the building and into the classroom to ensure proper supervision. Parents/guardians must also come into the classroom to pick up the child at the end of the day. The parent/guardian must sign the child in and out of the Center everyday in the log at the front desk.

Parents/Guardians will fill out a Pick Up Form and Child Care Emergency Information Form. These forms will list all the authorized people who can pick up or drop off the child. Parents will need to notify the child's teacher or director whenever there is a change from the typical pick up or drop off person and time. The person coming for pick up will need to provide a picture form of identification. If the person coming to pick up the child is not on the Authorized/Emergency pick up list, parents must send in written authorization (or in an emergency may call the center). Children will not be released to anyone without the written authorization. Parental emergency numbers and contact information for all emergency authorized contacts and authorized adults who may pick up the child are kept on file for each child, in each classroom and in Director's office.

### ***Environmental Safety***

Smoking is not allowed at the Center either inside or on its grounds. Firearms, lethal weapons or other hazardous material are strictly prohibited. The only exception to this policy is when they are required as part of a families occupation and they are legally authorized to carry firearms. Possession of alcohol and illegal drugs are prohibited. All staff will maintain sobriety while providing care and education. Anyone who enters the center and appears to be under the influence of any such substances will be required to leave the premises immediately. No child will be released to a parent or authorized pick up person should they appear to be under the influence.

## **CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT POLICY**

According to the Connecticut General Statutes Sec 17 – 101a, it is the public policy of this state to protect children whose health and welfare may be adversely affected through injury and neglect; to strengthen the family and to make the home safe for children by enhancing the parental capacity for good child care; to provide a temporary or permanent nurturing and safe environment for children when necessary; and for these purposes to require the reporting of suspected child abuse, investigation of such reports by a social agency, and provision of services, where needed, to such child and family.

It is the mission of The Learning Tree of Madison to keep children at the center safe and appropriately cared for. Teachers and staff have a responsibility to prevent child abuse and neglect of the children at The Learning Tree of Madison. Teachers and staff under no circumstances will engage in abusive, neglectful, corporal punishment, humiliating or frightening punishment. Staff will not ever physically restrain a child unless it is absolutely necessary for the health and safety of the child or other people. In accordance with the laws and regulations of the state of Connecticut and according to

the standards in early childhood education it is the policy of The Learning Tree of Madison to report all suspected abuse or neglect as soon as there is reasonable cause to believe that a child(ren) has been or is being abused and/or neglected.

According Sec. 46b-120 of the Connecticut General Statutes the Definitions of Abuse, Neglect and Uncared for are listed below. For this purpose child is any person under sixteen years of age.

**Abused** - means that a child or youth has been inflicted with physical injury or injuries other than by accidental means, has injuries that are at variance with the history given of them, or is in a condition that is the result of maltreatment, including, but not limited to, malnutrition, sexual molestation or exploitation, deprivation of necessities, emotional maltreatment or cruel punishment.

**Neglected** – means a child or youth who has been abandoned, is being denied proper care and attention, physically, educationally, emotionally or morally, is being permitted to live under conditions, circumstances or associations injurious to the well-being of the child or youth, or has been abused.

**Uncared for** – means a child who is homeless or whose home cannot provide the specialized care that the physical, emotional or mental condition of the child or youth requires.

All teachers and staff at The Learning Tree of Madison are mandated reporters of suspected child abuse and neglect and receive on –going mandated reporter training.

Once teachers or staff become aware of or suspect abuse or neglect of a child(ren) at The Learning Tree of Madison they are to immediately inform the Director. Then under the guidelines established through Connecticut state law and the Department of Children and Families the following steps will occur:

- An oral report will be made within 12 hours to the Commissioner of Children and Families and/or a law enforcement agency. (*CT General Statutes Sec. 17a-101b*).
- Within forty-eight hours of making an oral report, a written report will be submitted to the Commissioner of Children and Families, a copy of the written report will also be submitted to executive head of the state licensing agency, and a copy will remain on file at The Learning Tree of Madison. (*CT General Statutes Sec. 17a-101c*)
- All oral and written reports will contain all of the information as noted on the DCF reporting form if they are known.
- Staff and teachers will cooperate with the Department of Children and Families and Law Enforcement in any investigation.

- When an accusation of abuse or neglect by a staff member or teacher is made, the Director will immediately inform the parents/guardians that a report has been made to the Department of Children and Families and/or a Law Enforcement Agency.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES**

The Learning Tree of Madison is committed to providing a safe and healthy learning environment for the children. Despite our best efforts with hand washing, sanitizing, and proper nutrition germs will still spread. With the assistance of parents keeping sick children home, we can prevent the spread of even more germs and illnesses in our center. The teachers and staff are trained in First Aid and CPR.

### ***Hand Washing Policy***

Children and staff wash their hands:

- Upon their arrival for the day;
- Before and after diapering and using the toilet;
- After handling bodily fluids including after sneezing, blowing nose, coughing;
- Before and after preparing and consuming meals and snacks;
- Before and after water play, sand play, or other sensory play; and
- When moving from one classroom to another.

### ***Sick Policy***

Children are not allowed at the Learning Tree of Madison if they are displaying any of the following symptoms:

- Fever of 100 or above (a child is only considered fever free when they do not require the use of ibuprofen or acetaminophen for a full 24 hours)
- Diarrhea (a child can return when they have been free of diarrhea for a full 24 hours)
- Vomiting (a child can return when they have been free of vomiting for a full 24 hours)
- Undiagnosed rash
- Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)
- Nasal discharge - colored discharge or discharge that requires constant wiping
- Any contagious illness – unless child has been on an antibiotics for a full 24 hours and with the doctors permission they can return to school
- Head lice, scabies or other infestations – child may return after full course of treatment and is nit or larva free
- Headache that will not respond to ibuprofen or acetaminophen
- Or if cannot participate in the daily activities of the Center

If a child develops any of these symptoms at school, parents will be contacted and asked to pick up the child immediately. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached within one hour an emergency contact person will be called. The child will be allowed to rest

on a cot away from other children or in the director's office. A staff member will remain with the child at all times.

Children may return to the Center when they are symptom free for 24 hours or has been on antibiotics for the appropriate amount of time determined by the child's pediatrician.

Any infectious illness should be reported to the director so that an infectious disease notification can be posted and sent home to parents to alert them to any illnesses their child may have been exposed to.

The Center reserves the right to require a note from the child's pediatrician upon returning to the program. The Learning Tree of Madison makes the final decision as to whether a child can attend or is to be excluded from the Center.

### ***Outdoor Play***

Outdoor play, fresh air and sunshine is vital for the healthy development of children. Children will spend time outdoors daily in every season except when weather conditions are deemed extreme or unsafe. Parents are responsible for sending children with appropriate clothing for being outside such as boots, gloves, mittens, hats, snow pants and raincoats. In a situation where a child is too sick to go outside then they are too sick to come to school.

### ***Medical Records Policy***

Upon enrollment all children are required to have a current medical and immunization record. The health form, including a physical examination and current immunizations record must be on file at the Center prior to admission. These records need to be updated annually.

### ***Medication Administration Policy***

In general the Learning Tree of Madison does not administer medication unless it is evident that a parent cannot give the medication within the hours prescribed. A parent and the child's healthcare provider must sign a written Administration of Medication Form and provide the medication in the original container labeled with the child's name and provider's instructions. The child's medication will need to be given to the director or child's teacher if the director is not available. Under no circumstances can the medication be left in the child's cubby. The medication will be locked in the director's office. The staff that is trained as required by the Connecticut Health Department in the administration of medication will administer the medicine. No medication will be administered without Administration of Medication Form signed by both the parent and child's medical provider. This form can be accepted via fax.

The following non-prescriptive topical medications can be administered with the written consent of parents. Physician's order is not required for the following:

- Diaper changing ointments
- Medicated powders
- Insect repellent

- Teething medication
- Sun screen
- Other non prescription topical medications

### ***Safety, Accidents and Injuries Policy***

Accidents, scrapes and bumps do happen from time to time while children are playing and exploring. In the event that a slight injury does happen at the center a staff member will administer first aid, and fill out an accident report. Staff will provide the parent with a verbal and written accident report of the incident. The parent will sign the accident report and a copy will be given to the parent and one will be filed in the child's file. In the event a more serious injury occurs attempts will be made to notify the parents immediately so they can determine with the staff the form of treatment (coming to the center to assess the child, taking the child home or to the child's healthcare provider) and necessary steps will be taken to obtain immediate medical attention.

### ***Accident/Injury Report***

Teachers must fill out an Accident/Injury Report for each incident. In the event that a slight injury does happen at the center a staff member will administer first aid, and fill out an accident report. Staff will provide the parent with a verbal and written accident report of the incident. The parent will sign the accident report and the report will be maintained in the child's file. The same process is used when it is an emergency illness or injury. All reports need to be signed by the director. The accident/injury will also be filed in the Accident/Injury Log. This log will be reviewed quarterly with the Health Consultant.

### **HAZARDOUS WEATHER/SNOW DAYS /NATURAL DISASTER EMERGENCY *Emergency Closing and Inclement Weather Policy***

The Learning Tree of Madison will make every effort to stay open. In the event that most businesses in our area are forced to close or in the event of a condition that could endanger the children (i.e.: furnace outage, hazardous weather conditions, interruption of electric or telephone service, flooding in the building or in the neighborhood, etc.) we will close. A delayed opening, early closing or closure due to severe weather or emergency will be posted on WTNH News Channel 8 ([www.WTNH.com](http://www.WTNH.com)) and the Center voicemail will indicate if The Learning Tree of Madison is closed and an email will also be distributed to all parents. We will make every effort to distribute information on expected inclement weather prior to any anticipated delays or closures.

In the event that a closing becomes necessary during the school day you or your emergency contact person will be notified by telephone, email and announcements will be made on WTNH News Channel 8 ([www.WTNH.com](http://www.WTNH.com)) and all children must be picked up within one hour of notification. The children will remain on the premises in a safe area of a classroom or another space in the Center depending on the situation (downstairs away from windows in cases of high winds or tornado warnings).

Ratios will be maintained at all times and two staff will remain until all children are picked up. Staff with CPR/First Aid certification & Administration of Medication certification will remain on the premises, as needed, until emergency personnel can arrive if evacuation is deemed necessary. Parents will be notified after the immediate danger has passed.

## **EVACUATION PLAN**

### ***Fire, Flood or Other Natural Disaster***

The staff assigned to the classrooms will remove all children from the building and into the fenced playground by the nearest emergency exit. The floater/director will check all bathrooms and other hiding places, including climbing equipment and playhouses. The first two cribs in the Infant room have wheels. Staff will place four infants in each crib and wheel them out to the back of the parking lot. The preschool classroom and before and after school children will exit the nearest emergency exit and proceed down the side driveway to the fenced in playground. Evacuation plans are posted in each classroom. Fire drills are practiced monthly. If it is necessary to leave the playground area, staff and children will go to the Madison Town Campus Gym located at 4 Campus Drive the designated safe shelter. Children will be transported to shelter by any means necessary. In the event that local emergency personnel recommend other evacuation procedures, those procedures will be followed and all staff will accompany the children. All staff will remain at the shelter with the children until all children have been picked up or until it is deemed safe to return to the school. In the event of a return to the school all parents and emergency contacts will be re-notified. Should the children and staff return to the Center, each parent or emergency contact will be notified again.

## **MANAGING PRO-SOCIAL BEHAVIOR**

At The Learning Tree of Madison we believe children shine brighter when they are praised for positive behaviors and interactions and are more apt to continue in that manner. Teachers offer consistent recognition of children when they are cooperating, sharing, and are appropriately expressing and managing their emotions. Children are re-directed to positive activities and interactions. With our youngest children we limit the use of "No". Teachers instead offer alternatives and redirect them to areas of play that are appropriate.

There will be times when children require teacher intervention and these are viewed as growth and learning opportunities. These offer unique opportunities for children to learn empathy, how to share, and express emotions appropriately. We limit our use of time outs and if necessary offer the child a quiet place to collect themselves. Teachers are always present to assist a child during this time. Teachers process with the children what happened, how things could be handled differently in the future, and how they and others might have felt at that time. This provides the children with the opportunity to reflect on their behavior and learn to self correct their actions and take others' thoughts and feelings into account. This is a high level skill to develop, which teachers continually model for the children.



In all classrooms teachers set clear and consistent boundaries and limits for children. Teachers respond to all children with respect and model appropriate interactions while providing on-going feedback to the children. The Learning Tree of Madison staff members are prohibited from abusive or neglectful discipline (sexual, physical, verbal or emotional) and are subject to immediate termination in the event that any such allegation is found to be valid.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Confidentiality of the children and families the Center serves is taken very seriously and all staff must respect and ensure the privacy regarding history, records, and any other information about the children and their families. All staff will sign a document that confirms they have read and understand and agree to the Center's confidentiality policy. Confidential information is shared only with permission from parents with the child's teachers, program consultants, and the director and is used only to plan for the child's individual needs, interests, and development. Written consent from the family is required to disclose information to other's beyond members of the family, staff, consultants, and regulatory agencies except in cases of suspected abuse neglect or a threat to a child's welfare and safety. The Director will make the final decision about what information will be shared (even with a signed permission).

Staff is prohibited from posting comments about work, any child or family at the Center on any social media sites. Any infraction of this stipulation will result in immediate employee termination. If legal action is taken against a staff member or the Center for such breaches of confidentiality due to staff actions, that Staff member will be held completely responsible for any and all legal fees, fines, penalties, court fees and law suits.

### **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM PLAN**

#### ***Curriculum***

The Learning Tree of Madison uses the Connecticut Guidelines for the Development of Infant and Toddler Early Learning and State of Connecticut Preschool Curriculum and Assessment Frameworks in the development of curriculum and assessments. There is a balance between child-lead experiences and teacher-lead activities to ensure that children maximize their learning opportunities. Teachers spend time observing children's interests and interactions and take them into account when developing their lesson plans. The Learning Tree of Madison provides children with many opportunities to learn through play, exploration, and experimentation.

At the center, emphasis will be placed on both nutrition and the environment. Healthy snacks and lunches will be encouraged. The children will have age appropriate opportunities to be involved in aspects of the food they consume. They will assist in the growing of fruits and vegetables in the gardens, help with preparation of special snacks, and will share meals together with staff. Children will also develop an appreciation for

nature, find out where their food comes from, and discover how to take care of the environment we all live in.

At the Learning Tree of Madison staff work to encourage creativity and independence. They work together and actively prepare for lessons and activities. **(Information taken from NAEYC Accreditation Criteria for Teaching Standard)**. Teachers create areas to prevent a child from feeling frustrated and becoming disruptive through:

- Environmental design
- Schedules that meet the needs and abilities of the children
- Effective transitions
- Engaging activities

Teaching staff and program staff work together as a team to develop and implement daily teaching and learning activities.

Teachers design an environment that protects children's health and safety at all times. The environment supports the children's needs for physical movement, sensory stimulation, fresh air, rest, and nourishment. These spaces are organized and materials selected to stimulate exploration, experimentation, discovery and conceptual learning. The teaching staff create and maintain a setting in which children of differing abilities can progress, with guidance, toward increasing levels of autonomy, responsibility, and empathy.

Teachers create classroom displays that help children reflect on and extend their learning. They ensure that children's recent works predominate in the classroom displays (art, emerging writing, graphic representation, and 3-D creations) and some artwork is displayed at children's eye-level.

Teaching staff and children work together to arrange materials in predictable ways so children know where to find things and where to put them away. The children are held responsible for putting things away.

### ***Infant Program***

The infant program accepts children from the age of 6 weeks to 17 months. Infants and their families are greeted warmly each morning by the child's primary caregiver. The Infant Room Teachers spend most of the day holding or touching infants, in one to one interactions that are warm and caring. A typical day includes a large portion of time where the staff is playing, reading, singing and talking with the babies. Emphasis is placed on building bonds and trusting relationships between the babies and staff. We believe it is important for each infant to have an individualized napping, feeding and diapering times. These routines are viewed as a time for learning and special one on one time for building trusting relationships. Napping, feeding and diapering times are not rushed transitions. These times represent a learning opportunity where the children are encouraged to be a part of these routines and each child is given the individual time and attention that is vital to establishing a loving and trusting relationship and environment. Children assimilate all experiences, routines included, in their growing concept of the

world and of themselves. The staff at the Learning Tree of Madison is committed to provide each child with a positive, safe, loving environment where children can achieve developmental milestones while feeling secure and stimulated to tackle the next new learning experience.

All children under the age of one are placed on their backs at naptime. Once a child is able to turn over itself, they will be placed to sleep on their back however they are allowed to sleep in a position that is comfortable for them. A minimum staff ratio of 1 staff member for every 4 children is maintained in the infant program. The staff are committed to provide care, nurturing and educational experiences that are vital for the infants to build trusting relationships while exploring their environment.

The environment in the infant center is structured to provide sensory experiences that support active learning and exploration. As infants explore with their hands and mouths, staff is vigilant in maintaining a safe clean environment. Infants learn through utilizing all of their senses including their eyes, ears and mouths as well as legs and feet. The staff play with the babies and observe how they engage with adults, other babies and how they react to their surroundings. Staff utilizes this information in developing plans for key experiences that will support the growth and development of the babies emotional, social, physical, linguistic and cognitive areas of learning. These plans are reviewed with all staff that engages in the infant program so that there is continuity and consistency of care.

As the babies develop and grow, their individualized routines begin to form a pattern conducive for group feedings and group napping, thus the schedule for children ages 9 months to 17 months is adjusted accordingly.

An important aspect of The Learning Tree of Madison is the school-family alliance. Pick up and drop off time is a valuable learning and information sharing time for both the staff and family about the child. In addition to this very important mode of communication the Center also sends written notes, emails, texts, videos and picture updates on the child's day as often as practicable.

### ***Infant Room Schedule (6 Weeks To 8 Months)***

The younger infants in the room operate on a very flexible timetable geared to the infants' individual needs. Each baby eats and naps according to their own schedule. Diapering occurs throughout the day as needed and at regularly scheduled times with no longer than two hours between diapering changes.

A written record is kept of the times, number and nature of the changes, the time and amount of feedings and the time and length of naps. A copy of this record is given to the parents at the time of pickup each day. A copy is maintained at the center as well.

Staff develop a weekly schedule. Based on the observation of the children, experiences are planned to provide a daily balance of activities including: outdoor and indoor play, active and quiet playtime, individual and small group activity, play designed to stimulate

gross motor and fine motor skills as well as child initiated and staff initiated activities. Weather permitting; children spend time outdoors each day. The curriculum is designed to include play experiences based on the children's cues that foster growth in personal, social, cognitive, sensory-motor and language-communication domains.

### ***Infant Room Schedule (9 Months To 17 Months)***

7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Arrival and activities in the classroom room
9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Classroom, snack and diapering
9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Morning activity time
10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	Outside time weather permitting, classroom activities
11:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.	Diapering, Lunch and transition to Naptime
12:15 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.	(Approximately) Diapering, nap and individual activities – activities are for those who are awake
3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	Snack, diapering as needed
3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Outside time weather permitting, classroom activities
4:30 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.	Diapering as needed classroom activities

A record is kept as to the amount and time of each feeding and the amount and nature of diaper changes as well as nap information. A copy of this record is given to the parents at the time of pickup each day. A copy is maintained as the center as well.

Staff develop a weekly schedule. Based on the observation of the children, experiences are planned to provide a daily balance of activities including: outdoor play and indoor play, active and quiet playtime, individual and small group activity, play designed to stimulate gross motor and fine motor skills as well as child initiated and staff initiated activities. Weather permitting, children spend time playing outdoors each day.

The curriculum is designed to include play experiences based on the children's cues that foster growth in personal, social, cognitive, sensory-motor and language-communication domains.

### ***Toddler Program (ages 18 months to 3 years of age)***

The Toddler Program at the Learning Tree of Madison is an exciting classroom filled with new discoveries for the children. Toddlers are soaking up the world around them and determining who they are in this world. This is also a time period when they are increasing their verbal communication. In this classroom you may see children being read to and participating in sing-alongs and other activity songs and stories. Children in this classroom enjoying playing games that involve moving their bodies in new ways. They are busy sorting toys, filling and emptying things, and stacking toys. Children love playing in the sensory areas where they can engage in water play or other similar experiences. Toddlers are busy however at the Learning Tree of Madison we ensure that we balance all these wonderful, exciting, and rich new experiences for them with quiet activities as well. Children at this age can very easily become over stimulated. In this classroom we balance child lead and teacher lead activities. Teachers plan a curriculum around the children's' interest however where children want to go with the lesson plan is up to them. Outdoor time is a chance for toddlers to really work on their

large muscle development, exploring, and can also be a time for quiet focused play in the sandboxes.

In this classroom teachers are supporting children's need for independence by allowing toddlers to make limited choices, transition times are not rushed allowing children time to try new skills of getting dressed by themselves and supporting their efforts before they become frustrated. Teachers set consistent limits in this classroom to assist toddlers in making good decisions. There is a consistent but flexible schedule in the toddler classroom to enable the toddlers to develop a sense of security and knowing what to expect while still accommodating to the individual and group needs.

A key element in this classroom is the parent-school bond. This bond is formed through on-going open communication. Parents receive written communication at the end of the day about the child's day, what they ate, how long they rested, toileting or changing information and about the fun activities the child engaged in. However, pick up and drop off time is still considered a valuable learning and information sharing time for both the staff and family about the child. In addition to this very important mode of communication the Center also sends written notes, emails, texts, videos and picture updates on the child's day as often as practicable.

### ***Toddler Schedule***

It is requested that all children arrive by 9:30 a.m. and all families must transition from the classroom before 5:30 for building closure.

7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Arrival - Teachers greet children and families, eat breakfast, and free morning activities
9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Morning snack and diapering/toileting
9:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Circle Time – stories, songs, finger play, music and movement and thought sharing and ideas
10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Center Time and Small Groups - art/sensory/manipulative experience time
10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	Outdoor Experiences (weather permitting) or Indoor Experiences – children make nature discoveries, large movement activities, and small group activities
11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Lunch – Diapering/toileting
12:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Approximate Naptime
2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.	Afternoon snack and diapering/toileting
3:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.	Afternoon Circle Time - stories, songs, finger play, music and movement and thought sharing and ideas
3:30 p.m. - 5:15 p.m.	Indoor or Outdoor Experiences

## ***Preschool Schedule***

It is requested that all children arrive by 9:30 a.m. and all families must transition from the classroom before 5:30 p.m. for building closure.

Important development and learning are occurring in the preschool years including physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and language. They are developing a stronger sense of self and relationships between children are changing and taking on new meaning and they are using language more to communicate and negotiate. Social and emotional growth is an underlying goal of the preschool program. Teachers in the preschool program create a warm, loving and creative environment where students feel secure and supported to explore, learn and grow. The teachers get to know each child individually and work to establish a cohesive community of friends. At the learning Tree of Madison, play is the foundation from which children learn important social and intellectual skills. The classroom is set up to allow for more independence and provide children with choices. There is a balance between child lead and teacher lead activities. Teachers integrate ideas and concepts in multiple domains through themes, projects, play and other opportunities to ensure students are developing an understanding of the concepts and making connections across content areas. These youngsters are busy in this class learning, exploring, experimenting and playing. The teachers organize the day to allow for periods of active and quiet time. Parents are welcome in the Center and in the preschool room at all times. Family members are welcome to participate in the program in anyway they feel comfortable from observing, to reading a story to sharing a skill or talent with the class.

7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	Arrival - Teachers greet children and families, eat breakfast, and free morning activities
9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Morning Meeting – Teachers and Children gather in a whole group to plan for the day to encourage a sense of community. This is a time to discuss the weather, the calendar, share a story or share music and movement.
9:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Center Time and Small Groups – Children play and work in learning centers that the teacher has prepared. Teachers observe and interact one on one with children and also work with small groups on projects, book reading, or math games.
10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Morning Snack Time – children clean up wash hands and sit with the teacher for snack. Teachers sit with children engage in conversation and model mealtime behavior.
10:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	Group Time – Children share revisit experiences of the morning. Teachers lead music, movement and read and discuss a book.
11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Outdoor Experiences (weather permitting) or Indoor Experiences – children make nature discoveries, large movement activities, and small group activities
12:30 p.m. – 12:45 p.m.	Group Meeting – Calming activity prepare for lunch
12:45 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.	Lunch – Teachers sit with children engage in conversation

and model mealtime behavior.

1:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.

Approximate Rest time or Naptime – quiet activities for those children who do not sleep puzzles, book reading, drawing, or writing.

2:45 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Afternoon snack

3:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Afternoon Circle Time – Reflect on the day, plan for tomorrow, share a story

3:30 p.m. - 5:15 p.m.

Indoor or Outdoor Experiences