



# PARENT HANDBOOK

**1550 East 3300 South**

**Salt Lake City, UT 84006**

**801-631-2006**

**[thesammycenter@gmail.com](mailto:thesammycenter@gmail.com)**

**[www.thesammycenter.com](http://www.thesammycenter.com)**

# Table of Contents

<b>Welcome</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Mission and Vision Statements</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Nondiscrimination In Service Policy</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>About Our Staff</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Participant Qualifications</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Enrollment Procedure</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Confidentiality</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Payment Policy</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Withdrawal Procedure</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Absences and Late Arrivals</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Program Hours</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Curriculum</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Schedule</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Snacks</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Allergies</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Medications</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Dress Code</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Arrival Procedure</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Pick-Up Procedure</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Emergency/Alternate Pick-Up Arrangements</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Late Pick-Up</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Guidance</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Parent Education Requirements</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Parent/Teacher Conferences/Communication</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Parents Right to Immediate Access</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Mandated Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Communicable Diseases</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Band-Aid and Accident Reports</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Emergency Closing and Inclement Weather</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Parent Handbook Acknowledgement</b>	<b>11</b>

## **WELCOME**

Hello Parents! Thank you for choosing The Sammy Center. We are a social/emotionally based preschool program, created specifically for children who have unique social needs brought on by any stressful experiences, and who need additional support during these preschool years. Early identification of social-emotional challenges, and concrete strategies will help children overcome these challenges, and will make all the difference to a young child and their family. This is what we strive for at The Sammy Center. We are looking forward to getting to know you and your family. Please take the time to read the following policies. This booklet is meant to create a mutual understanding of the way our center operates. Feel free to contact me at any time with any questions or concerns.

Maria Soter, Founder

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

We believe that we all contribute to the same air our society breathes. The Sammy Center is founded on the belief that every single child is amazing and should be given every opportunity to reach their God given potential.

## **VISION**

We believe that a child who has experienced grief, trauma or loss has unique needs that need to be met. Creating a foundation of social emotional wellbeing will pave the way for positive future outcomes. Adverse situations permeate all socioeconomic backgrounds; therefore, The Sammy Center is a place of equity and diversity which knows no boundaries. We are a strength's focused center and meet every child right where they are. We want to help guide every child in reaching their potential as a human. The Sammy Center wants to help build children up at a young age to help mitigate and/or help them move through hardships and trauma so they can be successful adolescents and then adults.

## **Nondiscrimination in Service**

Admissions, the provisions of services, and referrals of clients will be made without regard to race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, national origin, age, or sex. Program services shall be made accessible to eligible persons with disabilities through the most practical and economically feasible methods available. These methods include, but are not limited to, equipment redesign, the provision

of aides, and the use of alternative service delivery locations. Structural modifications shall be considered only as a last resort among available methods.

## **OUR STAFF**

Founder/Director: Maria Soter

Administrative Director: Karlyn Smith

Education Specialist: Carolyn Christensen

Nature Specialist: Paul Mueller

Community Liaison: Anna Brown

Teacher 1: Tracy Halverson

Teacher 2 N/A

All prospective employees and volunteers are screened on a broad range of background information. The personnel selection process includes a thorough reference check and criminal history checks. All staff are CPR and First Aid Certified. Ongoing training in Early Childhood Education is required.

## **PARTICIPANT QUALIFICATIONS**

The Sammy Center is specifically for children between the ages of 3 and 5 who are determined to need a specialized social-emotional program. This determination is made through the completion of the Ages and Stages Social Emotional Questionnaire, or the ASQ-SE. ASQ-SE assessments will be completed quarterly to establish the need for continued enrollment or transition to partner services.

## **ENROLLMENT PROCEDURES**

1. Call 801-631-2006 to schedule a tour of the facility and receive registration instructions.
2. You must complete an enrollment packet prior to your child starting school.
3. You will receive a call and an email confirming your child's start date. By the start date, a signed Fee Agreement form must be received.
4. If enrollment space is not available, you will be placed on a waiting list (no payment required). If you find other care arrangements, please contact us to have your child removed from the waiting list.

Continued enrollment is contingent upon the parents', emergency contact persons' and child's adherence to the policies and procedures as outlined in this handbook including, but not limited to, timely payment of all fees and tuition. Parents are required to notify The Sammy Center immediately, should any of the information collected at the time of enrollment or any time thereafter change.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The Sammy Center strives to protect everyone's right of privacy. Confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with employees who have a "need to know" to care for your child most appropriately and safely. Confidential and sensitive information about faculty, other parents and/or children will not be shared with parents.

## **PAYMENT POLICY**

All custodial parents and/or legal guardians are required to sign a Fee Agreement prior to enrollment of their child at The Sammy Center. Parents are required to indicate to whom all billing information and correspondence are to be addressed. Annual, non-refundable \$150 to hold slot.

Tuition is \$750.00/per child per month. Speak with the Administrative Director at the time of enrollment for payment arrangements.

Cash, check, money order, or credit card are all acceptable forms of payment. Credit card payments are to be made through our Venmo account. When paying through Venmo, there will be a \$15.00 service fee added to the tuition. Receipts will be given for all tuition payments. All cash payments must be handed directly to the Administrative Director. There will be a \$40.00 fee charged for tuition checks returned by the bank. Returned tuition checks will not be re-deposited. Parents or legal guardians will be responsible for re-issuing a second check. If at any future time the bank returns a parent's check, all future tuition payments must be made by cash, certified check, or money order.

All payments are due in advance of provided service. Families are not permitted to carry balances on tuition accounts. Monthly payments are due on or before the first day of the month. Late payments will result in an additional fee of \$15 per week. Non-payment of tuition is grounds for dismissal from the program. However, if you anticipate difficulty with paying on time, please discuss the matter with the Administrative Director immediately.

Tuition is charged based on enrollment, not based on attendance. No refunds or credits will be issued for absenteeism, scheduled school holidays, child illness, or for closings due to emergency situations, inclement weather or acts of God.

The Sammy Center will accept childcare subsidies once licensing is final.

## **WITHDRAWAL PROCEDURE**

Two weeks written notice is required when withdrawing a child for any reason. When proper notice is given, any unused tuition will be refunded within thirty days of the withdrawal. If the required notice is not given, any unused tuition will not be refunded. Your child's records are available to be transferred to your child's new educational setting, upon your written request.

## **NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE OR LATENESS**

Parents who know in advance that a child will be late or absent are required to notify the center so that we can best prepare for the day.

## **PROGRAM HOURS**

The Sammy Center is open Monday through Friday. Students may attend from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. or half day options available (subject to change sessions and hours). We will be closed on the following days:

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day (July 4<sup>th</sup>)
- Pioneer Day (July 24<sup>th</sup>)
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day and the day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Eve

If the holiday falls on a weekend, the program will be closed on the Friday preceding the holiday, or the Monday following the holiday.

## **CURRICULUM**

At The Sammy Center, our teachers use Creative Curriculum (CC) and implement various Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculums.

### **DAILY SCHEDULE (Example)**

Morning

8:30 - 9:00 Arrive and Activities

9:00 - 9:15 Group Gathering

9:30 -10:30 Activities and Snack

10:30 -11:30 Outside

11:30 -12:30 Activities

12:30 -1:00 Lunch

1:00 - 1:30 Group Gathering

1:30 - 2:00 Activities

2:30 - Depart

The daily schedule is flexible and subject to change based upon the age and needs of each group.

## **Food**

Children will bring a lunch which will be labeled and stored in the fridge or on a shelf. Water will be available for children throughout the day. Parents will be asked to rotate the snack basket and bring in snack for 12 children. Teachers will assist the children with their lunches.

## **ALLERGIES**

Parents are required to disclose information detailing any allergies, food or otherwise, from which their child suffers, at the time of enrollment or when the allergy is discovered. Parents who have children with allergies must also sign a "Release and Waiver of Liability for Administering Emergency Treatment to Children with Severe Allergies" form. Any medication required to treat an allergic reaction must be provided in accordance with the Medication Policy.

## **DISPENSING MEDICATION**

The Sammy Center will only dispense over the counter and/or prescription medication that is in its original, labeled containers, and is accompanied by a doctor's note with explicit dosage and administration instructions. Parents are required to submit a completed a Medication Form before medication is dispensed. Medication will be stored in a locked area, out of the reach of children.

## **DRESS CODE**

Children are engaged in various activities during the day. Some of these activities can be messy and/or athletic in nature. Additionally, children are engaged in outdoor play daily, weather permitting. Due to these activities, children are required to be dressed in seasonably appropriate, comfortable clothing. Coats, hats, gloves, scarves, and winter boots must be provided in the fall and winter months.

## **ARRIVAL PROCEDURE**

We strongly encourage parents to arrive by 8:15 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. so that children are included in greeting activities. Upon arrival, the parent or the adult dropping the child off must sign the child into care on the sign-in sheet and help children put away their outerwear and get settled for the day.

## **PICK-UP PROCEDURE**

Parents or other authorized adults are required to sign their child out of care on the sign-out sheet. We ask that cell phones are put away during this time to facilitate communication with the teachers and children. Once a parent signs their child out, the parent is then solely responsible for supervising their child while on program premises.

Parents must park in an available parking space, either in front of the building or in the back of the building and may not leave a vehicle idling. Please be aware that it is against the law to leave an infant or child in a car unattended.

Parents will use the Kaymbu app and/or receive written weekly reports at pick-up. The classroom teacher will be able to briefly discuss the day with you or another authorized adult at pick-up. However, should you feel it necessary to have an in-depth discussion or meeting, it is most appropriate to schedule the meeting for a later date because the teacher is responsible for supervising the remaining children in the classroom.

## **EMERGENCY/ALTERNATE PICK-UP ARRANGEMENTS**

At enrollment, parents will complete Emergency/Alternate Pick-Up information. Parents are encouraged to include all persons who, during events, may at one time be asked to pick-up their child from The Sammy Center. In an emergency the child's parents will be called first. If they cannot be reached staff will call the persons listed on this form until someone can be reached.

Should the staff contact a parent, and the parent is unable to pick up the child, it is then the responsibility of the parent to arrange for their child to be picked up by someone on the emergency list.

The persons on the Emergency/Alternate pick-up form will be required to provide photo identification. There will be no exceptions to this rule.

All changes and/or additions to the Emergency/Alternate Pick-Up form must be made in writing and be dated and signed. Only custodial parents have the right to make changes or additions to this form.

### **LATE PICK-UP**

Our program sessions end at 2:30 p.m. Parents who pick-up children after these times will be charged \$1.00 per minute, to be paid in cash at the time of pick-up (total late fee will be calculated based on the time on the staff's cell phone). If payment in cash is not possible, it is to be paid at drop-off the following program day. If balance is not paid, payment will be combined with tuition payment.

### **GUIDANCE TECHNIQUES**

Staff encourages children to respect other people, to be fair, respect property, and learn responsibility for their actions. We will use the following techniques in doing so:

- Planning to prevent problems; being pro active
- Consistent clear rules
- Encouragement of appropriate behavior
- Positive guidance
- Redirection
- Involving children in problem-solving.

The “calm-down space” will be used if other management techniques are ineffective. The calm-down space may be used selectively for children who are at risk of harming themselves or others. The time will be just long enough for the child to regain self-control. Staff will accompany children in the calm-down space. Children may also choose to use the calm down space if they feel they need a time away from the other children.

### **PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES/COMMUNICATION**

Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled quarterly and include an overview of the observations of the child while at the program. Topics will include the child's strengths, achievement of developmental milestones, and social-emotional growth in a classroom environment. Parents are welcome to request an additional conference at any time and are encouraged to communicate freely with staff and the Director. During program time, staff members are usually not available to have long conversations. Parents are welcome to write notes, call or send e-mails to the Director. If you leave a message, the Director will return your call as soon as possible.



## **PARENTS RIGHT TO IMMEDIATE ACCESS**

Parents of a child in our care are entitled to immediate access, without prior notice, to their child whenever they are in care at The Sammy Center.

In cases where the child is the subject of a court order (e.g., Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order), The Sammy Center must be provided with a certified copy of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed. In the absence of a court order on file, both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. The Sammy Center cannot, without a court order, limit the access of a one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, it is suggested that the parent keep the child with them until a court order is issued, since our rights to retain your child are secondary to the other parent's right to immediate access. Staff will contact the local police should a conflict arise.

Visitors are asked to schedule appointments with the Director and are allowed in the childcare facility only at her discretion. An employee will always accompany visitors throughout the center.

## **MANDATED REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE**

Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. The employees of The Sammy Center are considered mandated reporters, under this law, and are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior, or condition prior to making a report. Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. We take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities. The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children. As mandated reporters, staff cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in "good faith." Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the child's body
- Severe verbal reprimands
- Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, season
- Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (car seats, seat belts, etc.)
- Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol
- Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child
- Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation

## COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Please do not send your child to school if the following symptoms are present:

- Fever of 100 degrees or above (within the past 24 hours).
- Needs fever-reducing medication to maintain a normal body temperature.
- Vomiting for any reason.
- Diarrhea.
- Chronic cough.
- Excessive mucus coming from nasal passages, mouth, or eyes.
- Needs cold medicine to suppress sneezing, coughing, or runny nose.
- Has an unexplained rash which has not been treated by a doctor.
- Any other symptoms of communicable disease.

When a child is prescribed antibiotics by a doctor, parents must wait 24 hours after the first dose of medication before sending the child to school.

Parents are required to pick up an ill child within 45 minutes of notification by phone. If a parent is reached, but cannot pick their child up within 45 minutes, it becomes the parent's responsibility to arrange for alternate pick up with someone listed on the child's emergency contact form.

Children will be excluded from participation in the program if they exhibit symptoms of any communicable disease. They will not be permitted to return to the program until they are no longer contagious. Guidelines for determining the contagious period for a specific illness are based on the recommendations by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Children must present a doctor's note stating they are no longer contagious and can return to the program. The Sammy Center reserves the right to refuse to allow a child to return if staff believes the child to be too ill to participate in the program.

If your child will be absent due to illness, we request that you notify the center director. This enables our faculty to keep track of any illnesses, which may occur at our school. This information will only be shared with faculty on a "need to know" basis. If your child has a communicable disease, we ask that you share the diagnosis with the center director, so that the parents of the children in the school may be notified that a communicable disease is present. Once again, only the communicable disease information will be shared. We will take all measures necessary to protect your child's confidentiality. You are not required to disclose this information by law, and your continued enrollment will not be based whatsoever on your decision to share, (or not) the reason for your child's absence from school.

## **BAND AID AND ACCIDENT REPORTS**

Should your child sustain a minor injury during the school day, a staff member will complete a Band-Aid Report. The Band-Aid Report will be placed in a sealed envelope and put in the child's cubby.

If your child sustains a more serious injury, requiring medical attention, a staff member will complete an accident report. The parent will receive a copy of the Accident report when the child is picked up, and the parent will need to sign the form.

## **EMERGENCY CLOSING AND INCLEMENT WEATHER**

If the Salt Lake School District is closed or declares a delayed opening due to inclement weather, The Sammy Center will also be closed or delayed.

If The Sammy Center must close during the day, staff will attempt to reach the child's parents first to arrange for pick up. Should the staff be unable to reach the parents, the persons listed on the emergency contact form will be called until pick up arrangements can be made. Staff will notify the parents or emergency contact person at the time of the call; of the pick-up location should the children need to be evacuated from the childcare center. Parents or emergency contact persons should report directly to the alternate location if one is given.

Should the center need to close for an emergency, tuition will not be refunded.

## **Parent Handbook Acknowledgement**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ the parent/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_, have received a copy of the Parent Handbook for The Sammy Center. I understand that I must read, understand, and agree to abide by the policies set forth in The Sammy Center Parent Handbook.

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Parent Handbook. While I understand that the Parent Handbook is neither a contract nor a legal document, I recognize that it is my responsibility to read and understand the policies, provisions, and procedures contained in the handbook.

In addition, I understand that the contents of the Parent Handbook may be subject to change. I recognize that any such revisions will supersede, modify, or eliminate the current contents of the current handbook. I understand that I will receive an updated copy of the handbook at the time of revision and will be required to sign a new statement of acknowledgement.

Moreover, I recognize that it is my responsibility to contact the Administrative Director for any questions I may have about the contents of the Parent Handbook now and in the future.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_