



PARENT HANDBOOK

**10320 Gladiolus Drive
Ft. Myers, FL 33908
Office: (239)481-2100
Fax: (239)481-1350**





The mission of Gladiolus Learning and Development Center is to provide educational and developmental child care for children of low income working families and to strive to provide for the social, emotional, economic, and developmental needs of those children and their families.

Gladiolus Learning and Development Center does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, physical or mental handicap, or sexual orientation.

Table of Contents

| | |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| Mission Statement----- | 2 |
| Program Philosophy----- | 3-4 |
| Confidentiality----- | 5 |
| Center Hours----- | 5 |
| Open Door Policy----- | 5 |
| Enrollment ----- | 6 |
| Parent Involvement----- | 6 |
| Sign-In Sign-Out----- | 7 |
| Pick Up Policy----- | 7 |
| Late Pick Up Policy----- | 7 |
| Release of Child----- | 8 |
| Telephones ----- | 8 |
| Meals----- | 9 |
| Toys----- | 9 |
| Clothing----- | 10 |
| Class Size/Ratios ----- | 10 |
| Conferences and Reprints----- | 11 |
| Child Care Fees----- | 11 |
| .Absences----- | 12 |
| Health Policy----- | 13 |
| Medication Policy----- | 15 |
| Birthdays----- | 15 |
| Discipline Development ----- | 16 |
| Daily Schedules----- | 18 |
| Potty Training----- | 18 |



Program Philosophy: We believe each child is special and holds the future in his or her hands. We offer a quality child care program for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school age children that facilitates and nurtures the individual needs and abilities of each child. Our program is based on the Creative Curriculum philosophies which stress a developmentally appropriate setting that allows children to be active explorers and encourages learning through play, movement, music, stories and fosters social interaction between other children and adults. Our program provides a balance of small group and individual time, active and quiet time as well as indoor and outdoor opportunities to meet the needs of the children. Children learn through play how to make choices and take control of their actions; this helps build self-confidence.

Children with or without special needs benefit from exposure to and interaction with one another. All children deserve the same opportunities. Any special therapeutic or behavioral programs required are integrated into our developmentally appropriate environment.

Gladiolus Learning and Development Center:

1. Offers a curriculum which encourages social, emotional, physical and intellectual growth.
2. Teaches the child to relate to others, to value friendships, and to respect all people.
3. Provides a safe, comfortable environment for early learning and growth processes.
4. Helps each child learn to develop self-discipline and independence and to deal with his or her emotions in an appropriate manner.
5. Provides a well-balanced schedule of activities and quiet times.
6. Provides a nutritious breakfast, lunch and snack that contribute to the growth and development of a happy, healthy individual.



Information and Procedures

1. Confidentiality: The staff at Gladiolus Learning and Development Center maintains the family right to confidentiality. Confidential information is respected and not shared.

2. Hours: Center Hours are 6:30 AM to 6:00 PM Monday through Friday for children in the two year old class through school age class. **Early Head Start, Infant and toddler classroom hours are 6:30AM to 5:30PM Monday through Friday.**

Scheduled holidays include: Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day (observed), July 4, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day & Day after December 25, day before or after, December 31, January 1. And teacher in-service days. All children must arrive by 9:00 AM each day. Children will not be accepted after 11 am without prior consent. If your child will be late or absent, please call before 9:00 AM. (239) 481-2100

3. Open Door Policy: We believe in an "open door" policy for parents and guardians. Parents are welcome to visit without advance notice at any time to spend time observing or participating in activities. Parents are welcome to join activities in the classroom or observe from a distance.

4. Enrollment: Gladiolus Learning and Development Center has an enrollment capacity of 163 children. We take children on a first come, first serve basis. We offer child care for children four weeks through twelve years.

Infants: 4 weeks-12 months

EHS: 6 weeks-3 years

Toddlers: 12 months-24 months

Two's: 24-36 months

Preschool: 36-48 months (must be potty trained)

Pre-Kindergarten/ *Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten 48-60 months

School Age: 5 to 12 years (Before and After school care, holidays, summer)

***Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten** is a free program offered from 9:00 AM to 12:15 Noon. Before and After **VPK** care is available at an additional charge. Free lunch is included!

5. Parent Involvement: Parents are recognized as their child's first teacher. Parents are welcome to visit and observe or participate in daily activities. Daily notes are sent home to keep the school/home connection. Other important information is shared by the classroom teacher. Parents are always welcome in the classrooms.



6. Electronic Attendance System: In order to maintain the safety of each child while in our care, families are required to clock each child in and out daily. Please check your child's cubby for important information.

7. Pick Up Policy: Children can **ONLY** be picked up by parents or other designated responsible adults age 18 or older. Parents must update designated pick up lists as needed. In an emergency situation, the parent may approve another responsible adult to pick up their child. A valid photo ID is required for all people picking up a child from our Center. This ongoing policy is in place to prevent any unauthorized persons from removing children from the Center.

8. Late Pick Up Policy: All children enrolled in EHS, Infant and Toddler classroom must be picked up from the Center by 5:30pm. Children ages 3-12yrs must be picked up from the Center by 6:00 PM. The charge for late pick up is \$15.00 per child for each 15 minutes or any part of fifteen minutes thereafter that you are late *Late pick up charges are to be paid at the time of the late pick up or the next morning. The proper authorities will be called if late pick up becomes a habit.

9. Policy regarding the release of a child to a person who appears intoxicated or impaired: STAFF ARE INSTRUCTED THAT RELEASING A CHILD TO AN INTOXICATED OR IMPAIRED INDIVIDUAL IS INTOLERABLE. If an adult attempts to pick up a child and appears to be intoxicated or impaired, or if the staff has concerns about the safety of the child if released to the adult, staff have been advised to call law enforcement immediately. Law enforcement will be asked to make the determination whether the adult is capable of driving the child. An exception to this policy would be if they can confirm that there is another authorized responsible adult with the impaired adult, who is not intoxicated or impaired and will be driving the vehicle used to transport the child. The program is required to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

10. Telephones: In order for our staff to meet the needs of your children, it is important for them to give direct attention to the children. At times, the telephone answering machine may pick up. Please be sure to leave a message with your name, telephone number and reason for the call and we will return your call as soon as possible.



11. Jewelry: Please do not send your child with jewelry. It can become a hazard and safety concern. We will not be held liable for any lost jewelry.

12. Meals: We provide well balanced meals which meet the USDA meal pattern for children. We serve breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack. Weekly and monthly menus are posted in the classroom. Any special dietary concerns can be addressed with a note to the Center along with a doctor's note. Food is not to be sent to the Center unless requested.

Children must be at the Center by 8:50 AM for breakfast.

13. Toys: We request that all personal belongings be left at home unless requested for a special activity. We cannot be responsible for lost or broken toys sent in from home.

14. Television and video policy: Television and video viewing is NOT a regular occurrence in our classrooms. At times, teachers use videos to present theme related materials.

15. Clothing: Children should wear rugged, washable play clothes, socks and closed toed shoes. Open flip-flops and sandals should not be worn. Dress clothes and jewelry should not be worn. Smocks or oversized shirts are provided for messy play; however clothing may still get dirty! Weather permitting, outdoor play occurs daily. Please plan for an active day with food, sand, water, and art activities. Please provide a change of clothing including shoes in case of an accident. Place the clothing in a labeled plastic bag so it can be contained in your child's cubby. Remember to send in a change of clothing after a dirty set has been sent home.

16. Diapers and Wipes: Diapers and wipes must be provided by the parent for each child requiring such weekly. We request 25 diapers per week and a container of wipes to start. Parents must check the supply and provide more as needed.

17. Class Size/Ratios: Class size and ratios are maintained according to the APPLE and Florida Statutes and Regulations for childcare.



18. Conferences and Reports: Parents will be kept up to date with children's progress and development through conferences and written reports. Parents are welcome to visit and discuss their child with the Director and teacher at any time. You may schedule a conference at any time.

19. Child Care Fees: Payments are accepted by cash, money order and credit card. Personal Checks may be used when paying 1 month in advance. A 3% convenience fee is added to credit card payments. **Tuition is due regardless of attendance.** Fees are expected to be paid each Monday for that week of service. Tuition not paid in full by Friday will result in a late fee of \$15 weekly. Other arrangements must be agreed upon in writing with the Executive Director. You will be charged each week according to the schedule agreed upon when enrolled, regardless of attendance, part time care students require a minimum of 3 days tuition.

Absences:

1. Children are to attend the program on the days scheduled. Regular attendance is required. **Tuition does not change is a child is absent.** We require that all children arrive by 9 AM, or call in to notify administration of tardiness.

2. Parents must notify the Center of any absence prior to the occurrence; vacations or extended illness, etc. Please get a doctor's excuse when your child is seen by the doctor or is out due to immunizations, testing, or illness.

3. Parents will be charged a fee for each scheduled day the child is enrolled, even if absent or a holiday.

4. Parents will receive 1 week of vacation allowance after 1 year enrolled. Vacation is allowed for the schedule your child attends. For example: if they attend 3 days weekly, they receive 3 days' vacation. A re-enrollment fee will be charged if you choose to dis-enroll your child.

5. ELC FAMILIES ONLY: Only 3 unexcused absences are allowed per month. If you have more than 3 unexcused days you will be charged an extra fee. Failure to pay the fee will result in termination.



Health Policy

IN ORDER TO PROTECT THE HEALTH OF ALL THE CHILDREN IN OUR CARE, WE FOLLOW THESE PROCEDURES:

1. Parents **MUST** provide the Center with proof of a physical exam, current immunization/shot records (DCF form 680) or letter of exemption from a physician prior to enrollment.
2. Physical exams and shot records must be kept current. Failure to maintain records will result in suspension.
3. When a child becomes ill, he or she will be isolated from the other children if possible, and the parent will be notified to pick up the child within an hour. 911 will be called if a true emergency arises or a child's fever reaches 103 degrees.
4. It is the parents' responsibility to make us aware of phone number changes. If we cannot contact a parent when a child is ill, or another emergency contact cannot be reached, the parent may be reported for neglect. If THE PARENT CANNOT BE REACHED, WE WILL CONTACT THE PERSON INDICATED BY YOU ON YOUR CHILD'S EMERGENCY CONTACT FORM. A PARENT WILL BE CONTACTED TO PICK UP A SICK CHILD WHEN THE CHILD EXHIBITS ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS
Fever - 101.0 degrees F. or higher
Diarrhea - After 2 loose stools
Vomiting - 2 episodes in one day, or vomiting accompanied with other symptoms.
Rash - that is unexplained, except for diaper rash.
Irritability. listlessness, or unusual behavior which is not consistent with the child's temperament, will be noted by the teacher who will have the office manager call the parent.
THE child must be picked up within 1 hour of receiving a call.

Teachers have the right to refuse to accept a child into care if any symptoms of illness pertaining to the health policy listed in this handbook are exhibited.

If your child contracts any of the following infectious diseases he/she must be excluded until the following occur

Chicken Pox/Shingles - After all blisters have scabbed over.

Croup - After the cough has subsided.

Ear Infection - After three doses of medication or after 24 hours

Fever - After the temperature has returned to normal with-out the aid of fever reducing medication. (**may not return the next day after being sent home with fever**)

Head Lice - After one complete treatment and removal of all nits. Child must be checked on re-admittance. We have a NIT FREE policy.

Impetigo - After 24 hours of medication.

Pink Eye - when the eye is red or pink with white or yellow eye discharge. Other symptoms are matted eyelids, eye pain, and redness of the eyelid or skin surrounding the eye. After the child has been on medication for 24 hours and has no matter in his or her eyes..

Ringworm - After medical treatment with a fungicidal ointment. Must be covered with a bandage until gone.

Roto Virus - After the child has had one formed stool.

RSV - After the wheezing and coughing have subsided.

Strep Throat - After the child has been on medication for 24 hours.

Thrush - After 24 hours on medication.

If your child contracts any communicable disease, please inform the Director. If your child is exposed to a communicable disease while at the Center, a notice will be posted.

Parents must notify the Center when a child will be absent due to illness, extended illness requires a doctor's excuse.



Medication Policy

No medication shall be given by child care personnel without the signed permission of the parent or legal guardian. All medication must be in the original container with the child's name, name of the physician, medication name, and medication directions written on the label. Non-prescription medicine brought in by the parent or legal guardian can only be dispensed if there is written authorization from the parent or legal guardian to do so.

Medication which has expired or is no longer being administered shall be returned to the parent or legal guardian. An emergency authorization form completed at enrollment must be kept up to date and accurate. It is the parents' responsibility to inform the Center of any changes. Medication taken twice daily must be given at home.

Birthdays

Birthdays are a special time for everyone. If parents would like to provide decorations or a special treat please check with your child's teacher to arrange the time of the celebration.



Expectations for Children's Behavior: Children are not permitted to behave in a manner that may hurt themselves or another person, or damage any property. Staff works with children according to individual children's needs and stages of development. Children's developmentally appropriate social behavior, self-control, and respect for the rights of others are encouraged. Staff practice positive behavior management methods using Conscious Discipline techniques as a guide. Behavior management is used to help children develop internal controls and to learn appropriate behaviors without damaging their self-esteem.

Discipline

Discipline is the way we teach children to behave appropriately. We strive to teach our children self-discipline and self-control. Staff is responsible for consistently maintaining the safety and welfare of the children in the group. Lessons in discipline include: clearly telling children what is expected of them, reinforcing good behaviors, reinforcing class rules, teaching consequences of unacceptable behavior, removing a child from an undesirable situation, and conflict resolution. Teachers are always a good role model for students. Staff is required to use positive communication, informing children of the behavior they expect. Physical punishment, shaming, fear, withholding food, rest, or toileting are **NEVER** used.



Character Development

Along with families, teachers play a central role in developing children's morals and values. The best way to develop those values (character development) is to nurture a sense of community in the classroom. Identified below are different characteristics our program has adopted.

Empathy: the ability to understand the feelings of others and respond appropriately.

Responsibility: doing what needs to be done and applying appropriate effort to complete a task.

Respect for Others: showing consideration, using manners and being polite.

Respect for the Environment: caring for living things, not littering and wasting materials.

Negotiation/Conflict Resolution: working peacefully to solve problems.

Cooperation: working together to reach a common goal.

Self-Control: the ability to handle one's emotions appropriately.

Character Development is included in all aspects of the daily schedule.

Daily Schedules and Lesson plans will be posted in each classroom. A newsletter with upcoming events is also posted.

Guidelines for dis-enrolling a child: Parents must notify the Center in advance if they plan to withdraw their child from the program. There will be a re-enrollment fee of \$40 if you dis-enroll your child and choose to re-enroll him/her within a 90 day period. All charges must be paid in full at time of dis-enrollment.

Note to Parents/ Guardians:

Through the use of daily child reports, assessments, observational tools, and parent teacher conferences Gladiolus Learning and Development Center allows for the ongoing communication between teachers and parents. We rely on you for the sharing of goals, expectations and also for problem solving. Please do your part to keep open communication with your child's teachers.

Two Year Old Potty Training: see your teacher for a potty training policy.

Toilet training should begin at home in conjunction with toilet training at the Center. We will assist your child in toilet training with the understanding that it will be successful only if we work together. Pull-ups and wipes are required until your child goes two weeks accident free. If multiple accidents occur in a week, your child will need Pull-ups for another two week accident free period.



Parent's Printed Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

If you have any questions or concerns regarding details in this parent handbook or if you need additional clarification please feel free to contact us person or by phone or email.

Gladiolus Learning and Development Center is governed by a Board of Directors who are responsible for the program. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Executive Director who in turn will contact the Board, 239-481-2100. More information is available on our website **www.Gladdkids.net**

Gladiolus Learning and Development Center abides by the Child Care Statutes mandated by the State of Florida. Sections 402.26- 402.319 License # C20LE8512

By signing above, I acknowledge that I have read this Parent Handbook.

