

Hilltop Child Development Center

Family Handbook

Teaching Little Jayhawks
Since 1972

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HILLTOP PHILOSOPHY AND COMMITMENTS TO EDUCATION

The primary purpose of Hilltop is to provide warm and loving care for children while simultaneously offering a stimulating and developmentally appropriate educational curriculum.

Our teachers foster this secure emotional environment by incorporating patience, a sense of fun, and generous use of encouraging words and gestures. While teaching styles vary from classroom to classroom, all staff members use a positive approach while caring, educating, and disciplining. They offer activities and experiences which promote creative and intellectual expression, stimulate learning, and build an accepting and comfortable climate for children. The results for your child will be a balance of learning, love, security, freedom, independence, consideration of others, and a strong feeling of self-worth.

Children at Hilltop will experience a well-rounded curriculum which draws from many areas of development including: Language and Memory, Large and Small Motor Skills, Dramatic Play, Art and Sensory, Health and Safety, Music, Pre-Literacy, Pre-Math, and Pre-Science. The curriculum is also designed at every level to build self-help, independence, and social skills. There is a balance of child-initiated vs. teacher-directed activities, and children have many chances to participate individually, in small groups, or as a large class. Your child's role is to be active, experimental, exploratory and selective.

Children learn, grow, and develop best in an environment which is planned by teachers, yet flexible with choices. Each classroom at Hilltop has a daily routine which helps children feel secure while providing a framework for activities with specific goals and objectives in mind. However, it is not rigid and may change if the needs of the children are better met in another way. Based upon assessments of the children's skills, teachers plan programs that address the needs and interests of the class, while working within appropriate guidelines for their age group. Skills and developmental progress are continuously recorded and reported to parents during conferences twice per year.

Hilltop makes the following commitments to education:

- **To provide a safe and healthy environment for children.** Nutritious meals and snacks are provided, good health habits are taught, and the center is maintained in accordance with Kansas Department of Health and Environment licensing regulations, National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation criteria, and the U.S. Child and Adult Care Food Program requirements.
- **To provide a positive, emotionally secure learning environment for children.** Teachers incorporate patience, love, respect and a wide variety of positive guidance techniques into their programs. This helps children learn to cooperate, care about others, and feel good about themselves.
- **To provide a high-quality developmentally appropriate program for young children.** Each program is planned to promote the physical, social, emotional, intellectual and creative wellbeing of the children.
- **To provide a daily curriculum that encourages and supports active and involved children who explore, experiment, observe, talk, absorb, relate, and process a wide variety of developmentally appropriate materials and activities.**
- **To hire and train well qualified dedicated teachers who understand and care about the needs of young children.**
- **To encourage family involvement in the program in as many ways as possible.** Family input and active family involvement in classroom and center activities help us build an even better program to meet each child's and family's needs.
- **To systematically assess all aspects of the program so that we can effectively meet our goals for children, families and staff.**
- **To base our program on the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct.** The ideals and principles in this code present a shared conception of our professional responsibilities to children, to families, to colleagues, to our community and to society.

HILLTOP OVERVIEW AND CONNECTION TO KU

HILLTOP OVERVIEW

Hilltop is a private, non-profit facility incorporated in the State of Kansas. It is federally tax-exempted as a 501(c)(3) educational corporation. Hilltop is licensed by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment and accredited by NAEYC. Hilltop is governed by a Board of Directors composed of six Hilltop parent members and six public members who are interested and experienced in early childhood education. The Board of Directors functions in an advisory, policy-making capacity according to the by-laws and policies of the corporation. A copy of the by-laws is available in the office. Most of the board policies are listed in this handbook.

Many public board members come from the KU community. Hilltop parent board members are elected each year. Because Hilltop is designated as a University Affiliated Corporation and receives administrative support from KU's office of Student Success, a representative of that office serves as a Hilltop board member. The Hilltop administrators are non-voting members of the board. A list of the current board members is posted on the bulletin board in the entry and on the Hilltop website.

HILLTOP HISTORY

The February Sisters Movement brought to the attention of the University Administration and the Student Body the need for campus childcare. Through the combined efforts of Molly Lafin, then a student representative on the Student Senate, and an initial allocation of \$20,000 by the Student Senate, Hilltop opened at its original site on Jayhawk Blvd. in the fall of 1972. The center was originally established to provide all day care for children whose parents were affiliated with the University as a student, faculty, or staff member. Presently, Hilltop provides full-day child care five days a week, full-day kindergarten care, and after-school care and full-day summer care for school-age children with priority given to University students, faculty, and staff.

The program grew from three to eight classrooms as the need for quality child care increased through the '70s and '80s. By the early 1990s, the building was full and long waiting lists made it clear that more space was needed. Attempts to find additional space on campus had failed. In 1994, the university-wide Child Care Task Force assigned to study the need for campus child care proposed that a new, larger facility was needed. The Student Senate strongly supported the proposal and established a \$2.00 per semester student fee to help fund construction. This fee was doubled in 1997 when lack of university funding threatened to end hopes for the new facility. The continued strong support from the Senate and the student body convinced the university administration to move forward with plans for the new child care facility. Design work began in the fall of 1997 and continued with some difficult ups and downs until mid-1999. The ground breaking for the "new Hilltop" was held on June 27, 1999, and the move to the new building was completed in early August 2000.

Since the year 2000, Hilltop has expanded again to meet campus needs. One new toddler classroom and two new two year old classrooms have been added to the east wing. Two new preschool classrooms and a new room for the kindergarten program have been added to the southwest wing. The original Sunflower Room has become a new, larger staff resource room and storage area. The original staff room has been modified to include additional office and conference room space. The expansion has allowed us to add approximately ninety more children and ten to twelve additional full time staff.

CONNECTION TO THE UNIVERSITY

From May 1976 through early 2000, Hilltop was recognized as university related through a liaison with KU's Department of Human Development and Family Life. In 2000, Hilltop was designated as a University Affiliated Corporation. Administrative support for the program has been transferred to Student Success. It is through this liaison that we receive a number of university services and a small amount of financial support to help pay for much needed part-time aides, and to pay for office supplies and printing services. Our staff also receives some KU staff privileges, but does not receive state salaries or benefits.

Hilltop entered into a formal management agreement with the University beginning in July of 1999. The University provides very important support for our program by covering the cost of building utilities and maintenance. In exchange for use of our wonderful new expanded facility, Hilltop is required to pay a \$106,333 annual bond payment. The remainder of the bond cost is paid from KU student fees and a \$30,000 contribution from the University.

SERVICE TO THE UNIVERSITY

Hilltop serves the University in many ways. First, the center provides quality child care and education for a wide age range of children whose parents study, teach, or work at the University. As many of Hilltop's parents are students, Hilltop's service is directly related to the University's outreach and affirmative action goals. As more and more parents with young children become students, faculty or staff, the need for high quality campus child care will continue to grow.

Hilltop also provides a work site on campus for students who are interested in working with young children. Other services to the University include being a site where students may volunteer for class credit or as part of a class assignment, where they can conduct special projects, implement research, or observe teachers, children, or special activities. Students from the Special Education Department are sometimes placed in Hilltop classrooms as part of their training programs.

CHILDREN INVOLVED IN RESEARCH PROJECTS

Sometimes university researchers are interested in working with Hilltop children. All such research projects must be approved by the University Experimentation Committee and by the Hilltop Executive Director or Program Director. Classroom teachers are also consulted. Individual parents are contacted for permission to have children participate in research projects and children are never allowed to participate without prior written consent from parents.

GENERAL INFORMATION

NOTE: In order to simplify the text in this handbook the term “parent” is used to mean a child’s primary care giver – in some cases that person is a foster parent, a grandparent, guardian or co-parent.

PROGRAMS OFFERED

Hilltop is licensed by the State of Kansas to provide child care for up to 290 children (full-time equivalency). The center meets all state licensing requirements. Hilltop currently serves children ranging in age from 1-12 years old at the campus site. Hilltop also offers two off-site programs for school-age children: before and after-school care at Sunflower Elementary and after-school care at Prairie Park Elementary. Both of these off-site programs are licensed for 28 children.

LOCATION AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Hilltop is located on the University of Kansas main campus, south of the Burge Union and next to the Stouffer Place Apartments. Contact information is provided on the cover of this handbook and below:

Address: Hilltop Child Development Center, Inc., 1605 Irving Hill Road, Lawrence, KS 66045
Phone: 785-864-4940
Email: hilltop@ku.edu
Website: www.hilltop.ku.edu

The center also has several electronic communication options:

- Follow us on Twitter: Use Twitter.com and follow @HilltopCDC
- Follow our blog: <http://hilltopcdc.wordpress.com/>
- Follow us on facebook: Just search Hilltop Child Development Center and “like” our page to receive information about upcoming events.
- Receive frequent email reminders about fees, events, Optional Care periods, etc. Email addresses will be collected from each family to facilitate this communication.

A staff member is in the office from 7:15 a.m. to 5:45 p.m. each day. Please call the office by 9:00 a.m. if your child is unable to attend. This helps the kitchen in planning and enables teachers to go on walks or trips as planned without feeling like they need to wait on your child to arrive. **If your child is sick, please describe the illness. This helps us stay aware of current health problems.**

Usually, at least one of the program administrators is scheduled to be in the building at all times. Their offices are located immediately inside the main entry to the building. Administrators are available to answer your questions about the center and its programs. Please feel free to stop in the office at any time or call to make an appointment with a specific administrator. Please see our website regarding specific administrative responsibilities.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Hilltop opens at 7:15 a.m. and closes at 5:45 p.m. Fees are charged if children are picked up later than 5:45 p.m. (see Late Pickup, p. 33). Children may not be taken to a classroom prior to 7:15 a.m. (7:40 a.m. on days with reduced hours).

School-age children attending after-school programs may attend the programs from the time public school is dismissed until 5:45 p.m. These children may also attend optional full-day care when public schools are closed.

Exceptions: Hours are reduced to 7:40 a.m. to 5:20 p.m. during all Optional Care periods, KU Fall Break, the Wednesday preceding Thanksgiving, and the Friday before Spring Break. On the last day of fall finals in December, Hilltop will be open at 7:15 a.m. to accommodate families with early morning finals.

A center calendar is distributed to families each year. Please be sure to check it for holidays, Optional Care periods, etc.

ARRIVAL

Arrival time is an important time for your child. Please bring your child to the adult in charge in your child's classroom. The person bringing the child to the center should **sign the child in** on the sign-in sheet in the child's classroom and put all belongings in the child's cubby. The time of arrival and the drop-off person's initials must be written on the sign in sheet. **Never drop your child off at the door or leave them in a classroom if there is no staff person present.** If there is no staff person present, please check with the office immediately. This rule applies to school-age children as well as younger children.

When your child arrives in the classroom, one of the adults in charge will perform a quick health check before you leave. This allows teachers to make sure there are no signs of illness or injury that they should be aware of and provides a moment for you to share information with the teacher if needed.

DEPARTURE

When you come to pick up your child, make a point of saying good-bye to the adult in charge. **Check your child's cubby daily for messages, artwork or written work. Then sign your child out.** If the class is on the playground, one of the teachers will have the sign-out sheet with them. Please remember all persons picking up a child from Hilltop should have identification with them in case the supervising adult has not previously met them. Hilltop staff members are trained to never release a child to an unidentified or unauthorized person. Please keep your child with you at all times when leaving the classroom and the building.

Departure after 5:30 p.m.: If you arrive to pick up your child after 5:30 p.m., part-time aides will be supervising the children. At 5:30 p.m. all children from the Preschool Wing are combined into one designated Preschool classroom; all children from the Toddler classrooms are combined into one designated Toddler classroom; all children from the Two-year old classrooms are combined into one designated Two-year old classroom. Jayhawk Room , Bobcat Room and Sunflower Room children remain in their classroom. At 5:45 p.m., children still in the center are brought to the office. Late pickup fees are assessed from the time children enter the office.

PEOPLE AUTHORIZED TO PICK UP CHILDREN

Only people that you authorize on your child's emergency treatment card may pick up your child. If it becomes necessary for an unauthorized person to pick up your child, we need to receive your approval in the form of a note or phone call from you stating that person's name and telephone number. This person will need to sign a special form in order to take your child from the premises. If the individual is unknown to Hilltop staff, we will need to see some form of personal identification. We can only release your child to those persons you have authorized and they **must be at least 14 years old.**

PARKING FOR ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Parents may park for up to 20 minutes in the **designated loading zone spaces** on the east side of Hilltop's parking lot. Childcare Loading Parking Permits are required for Hilltop parents to park in our loading zone. The permit is only to be used for bringing and picking up your child at Hilltop. Parking in the loading zones for more than 20 minutes may result in your vehicle being ticketed or towed. The loading zone pass is **not** valid in Lot 19 west of the Burge Union. Permits are \$12.50 per fall and spring semester; there is no charge for the summer. Two permits are provided per family per \$12.50 fee. Permits may be purchased in our office during regular center hours. Checks should be made out to KU Parking.

Please always use caution when driving through our parking lot and the one next to the Burge Union. There are many pedestrians (adults and children) and cars pulling in and out of spaces in both lots. **Please keep everyone safe by driving slowly and carefully.** The posted speed limit is a maximum of 20 miles per hour.

EMERGENCY CLOSING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

1. The Executive Director will make announcement of any change in Hilltop's hours of operations via the media: KLWN, KANU radio, and the Knology Cable Channel 6 website. An email announcement will be sent to parents and staff as soon as possible.
2. In the event there is an emergency affecting only Hilltop (no heat, water, etc.), we will be closed or will operate on reduced hours.
3. If the KU Administration announces an official closing of the KU campus (all offices closed), Hilltop will be closed.
4. If inclement weather necessitates canceling KU classes, or if the weather is severe, Hilltop will only be open from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Hilltop reserves the right to cancel services or alter hours if weather conditions are extremely dangerous even if KU offices are open.
5. Because Hilltop incurs salary and other fixed costs even when closed, we cannot refund fees for the rare days we must be closed.
6. We do not follow the public school closings.

In the rare case of a serious health emergency affecting the center or the KU campus, we will notify all families and will follow directives from the local Health Department and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) concerning our operations.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS POLICIES

Fire drills are scheduled once a month throughout the year. Each classroom practices using two different escape routes. Tornado drills are held monthly from March through September. Fire and tornado drill procedures are posted in each classroom and all staff are trained to know what to do in these kinds of emergency situations. Classrooms serving children with disabilities have special emergency plans assigning responsibility for the disabled child. Outside speakers make it possible for staff and children on our playgrounds to hear alarm signals.

Emergency Security Plan – In response to the increasing number of security concerns brought about by school violence events in other areas we felt it was necessary to develop an emergency plan to assure the safety of both children and staff in the center. We now have the ability to contact the KU Public Safety Office immediately for assistance in case a dangerous situation is occurring in or near the center. There are also procedures in place to move all children and staff to the safest possible locations as quickly as possible. Drills will be held annually so children and staff can become accustomed to the procedures just as they do for our regular fire and tornado drills.

If a potentially dangerous situation exists on campus outside of our building, we will follow our shelter in place procedures. All doors and windows will be locked and access to the building will be monitored closely. All children and staff will remain inside the building, but all other regular activities will go on normally.

We also have an evacuation plan in place in case there is a need to move all children and staff out of our building. In situations like a suspected gas leak or bomb threat, staff will immediately move children to our designated evacuation site in the Horejsi Family Athletics Center located on the south side of the main athletics complex. The Horejsi Center is east of our building. Children will remain at our designated evacuation site until we know it is safe to return to our building. Parents will be notified of the emergency situation by cell phone and via the local media and KU website.

Recent concern about a potential pandemic influenza outbreak has led to the development of a Pandemic Influenza Management Plan for Hilltop. This plan includes important information to guide planning and response activities should a pandemic flu outbreak or other serious contagious illness affect Hilltop operations. This plan and Hilltop's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan covering other types of emergencies were developed through cooperation with the University's emergency management team. Hilltop plans are included in KU's Comprehensive Emergency Plan.

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Hilltop considers all information regarding enrolled children and families as confidential. Our staff will not discuss a child with anyone other than pertinent staff, regulating bodies, accrediting agencies, legal guardians, custodial parents, or with those persons or agencies authorized by the family with a signed, written release of information. Hilltop adheres to federal and state statutes concerning a child's information.

No information requested by someone outside of Hilltop, other than parents or guardians, will be given over the telephone unless Hilltop has a written release signed by the parents.

Please do not ask teachers or part-time aides to discuss information about other children or their families. Our staff is expected to adhere to the ideals and principles included in the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct. Confidentiality is an important part of that code.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT REGARDING CHILDREN

Hilltop Child Development Center admits children of any race, color, religion, national origin, sex and qualified children with disabilities to all rights, privileges, programs and activities of the center and does not discriminate on the basis of any of these factors in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, fee payments, food service program and other school administered programs.

Children with disabilities are also enrolled through our regular enrollment process if we are able to adequately meet the child's special needs. In many cases the necessary special services are available through USD 497 or the Tiny K Program if the child is under three. If we are unable to meet a child's special needs because necessary facilities, services or staff are not available, we will assist the family to find a more appropriate placement.

CENTER DIVERSITY AND OBSERVANCE OF HOLIDAYS

Hilltop is very fortunate to have families who represent a variety of cultures, faiths, and personal beliefs. Our children benefit every day from opportunities to interact with children and adults from different countries and cultures and we welcome the sharing of activities and customs with your child's classroom. Whenever possible, we recruit staff and volunteers who mirror the diversity of our center population.

Because we feel it is the parents' responsibility or prerogative to determine the extent that religion should play in their children's lives, we do not celebrate religious holidays at Hilltop. However, throughout the year, classrooms may learn about various holidays around the world and may study them in relation to planned curriculum themes.

Teachers are trained to keep in mind that there is a BIG difference between **learning** about a holiday and **celebrating** a holiday. While most (not all) of our families **celebrate** many different holidays, both commercially and spiritually, Hilltop does not attempt to recreate this or involve ourselves in one holiday over others. It is our place to make this a **learning** experience and give them a chance to know about the rest of the world and the rest of their own community that might not be like them.

We do plan some celebrations or projects around holidays such as Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Valentine's Day. Families who do not wish their children to take part in holiday or birthday celebrations at Hilltop should discuss possible options with the classroom teachers and the Executive Director. Alternative activities may be provided in the office or in another classroom or the family may choose to keep the child home when these activities are scheduled.

Many different types of families are represented in the center. Children learn to recognize and accept this type of diversity, as they do other types, through social interactions and planned learning activities in the classroom. Our goal is to help every child feel part of a cohesive, accepting, loving group. We do not want any child to feel different, left out, or discriminated against because of their race, nationality, family type, disability, or their family's religious preference or non-preference. Hilltop is a child's world, and in this world everyone is special and respected. As mentioned previously, in order to simplify the text in this handbook the term "parent" is used to mean a child's primary care giver – in some cases that person is a foster parent, a grandparent, guardian or co-parent.

NON-SEXIST POLICY

The Hilltop staff and Board support the elimination of sex role stereotyping in all Center activities.

TOILET TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

Hilltop has excellent toilet training programs in the toddler and two year-old rooms. Teachers and parents work together to determine when children are ready to begin training. Each child's readiness and needs are taken into consideration so that the training process is a positive one for the child. Parents who have children in the two-year-old rooms should work closely with the classroom teachers to ensure an effective training program, both at home and at Hilltop.

Children accepted in the rooms in the preschool wing should be completely toilet trained and must be out of diapers. These rooms (Chipmunk, Cottontail, Salamander, Dragonfly, Prairie Dog and Meadowlark) are not set up for toilet training. However, we realize that young three-year-olds, as well as some older children, may have occasional accidents.

MEALS

Fees automatically include breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack for all full-day programs and a snack for the Jayhawk & Bobcat Room programs. (During the summer and on full days when school is out, school-aged children receive breakfast, lunch & snack). Please observe the scheduled serving times for your child's class. **If your child will arrive after the serving time in his/her classroom, please provide breakfast or lunch at home before coming to Hilltop.**

Food or drinks from home should not be brought into the classroom unless it is something prearranged to be shared with the whole group for a meal or snack. If your child brings food with them on their way to school, please have them finish it before entering the classroom.

CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM

Hilltop participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program administered by the Kansas Department of Education. Hilltop's meals meet or exceed the daily requirements set forth by the Department. The Kansas Department of Education audits the program each year. Hilltop requires that parents sign an annual enrollment/income eligibility form related to this program. All children receive the same food services regardless of income category.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in this program on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation or marital or family status. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S. W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800)795-3272 (voice) or (202)720-6382 (TTY). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

SPECIAL DIETS, RESTRICTIONS, AND ALLERGIES

The Child and Adult Care Food Program requires that a child be served milk two times daily, and that certain food requirements are met daily. If your child is allergic to an item on the menu or has a medical condition that restricts certain foods, we **must** have a physician's written statement with suggested alternatives. In some cases Hilltop may not be able to provide the alternative and parents will need to bring the alternate food item.

If your child is on a restricted diet due to religious preference and your child cannot eat certain foods, please give us a list of these foods with suggested alternatives for each food item listed. You will need to share this with your classroom teacher and the Kitchen Manager. We may not be able to accommodate certain requests due to cost or preparation time required.

It is important that we post information about allergies or other food restrictions in our classrooms. We will ask for your written permission to do this.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS AT HILLTOP

If your child would like to celebrate a birthday or other occasion with classmates, you may bring a treat to share with the class. These are generally eaten at snack time. Many families bring sweets, but we also suggest and encourage nutritious snacks. Please be aware of any food allergies present in your child's classroom. As we must serve the children milk or juice during snack time, we will furnish the beverage. You and your family members are also

welcome to come and join the celebration or even plan games or activities. Please make arrangements with the classroom teachers, so they can be prepared for what type of treat or celebration will occur. Also, in the past some families have donated a book or other learning materials to the classroom for all of the children to use instead of providing birthday treats. This type of donation is always welcomed. **Please do not bring balloons – there are choking safety regulations we must adhere to.**

Unless all children in the classroom will be invited, DO NOT bring party invitations to Hilltop. Children's feelings are easily hurt if they are not invited. Please be sensitive to the feelings of all children. A class directory may be provided from the office upon request if you would like to mail invitations to a limited number of children or children in another classroom.

NAPS AND REST TIME

A nap or rest period is provided for all children after lunch. It is scheduled from 12:30 p.m. to 2:00/3:00 p.m. There is a great deal of a variation from room to room. Usually, the younger the child, the more rest needed. Quiet activities are provided for older children who do not need to sleep.

ADJUSTMENT TO SCHOOL AND LEAVING YOUR CHILD

If your child is new to Hilltop, we suggest a brief visit before your child's first day of attendance. Then, if your schedule allows, plan to stay 10-30 minutes the first day or two of enrollment, and/or pick your child up early. If you remain in the room, try to discourage lap sitting. Attempt to get your child interested in a toy, the teacher, or a peer. Never suddenly disappear as this can be quite distressing for a child. Tell your child you are leaving, that you will return, exchange hugs and kisses, and leave quickly with a smile.

It is important not to give your child mixed messages – be positive and happy as you leave. Forlorn or worried glances from parents convey to children that this may not be a fun experience after all. Try not to feel guilty if you leave your child in tears, as teachers are very accustomed to this behavior, and almost all children cease crying within a very short period of time. Please feel free to call Hilltop to check on how the day is going, and remember that sometimes it takes a week or two before a child feels comfortable and secure about coming to school. If it is taking longer for your child to adjust, we will begin a joint plan of action.

If possible, initially pick up your child before the full-time classroom teacher leaves at 5:30 p.m. As noted earlier, children remain with a part-time aide from 5:30 p.m. to 5:45 p.m. Your child will eventually become secure with this arrangement. These same procedures can be used for a child who is not new to Hilltop but is having a difficult time coming due to some changes at home or at school. **Please keep the teachers informed of all changes or of any distress your child may be experiencing.**

WHAT TO BRING TO HILLTOP

All children should bring the following items to Hilltop:

1. A complete change of **LABELED** clothing including underwear and socks (2 or more complete changes for toddlers & two-year-olds).
2. A toothbrush.
3. Sunscreen **LABELED** with your child's name.

Children in the toddler and two-year-old rooms should also bring:

1. Diapers (bring at least a one-week supply) OR
2. Three pairs of cloth training pants or regular underwear if the child is toilet trained already. **Pull-ups are not used at Hilltop.**

Children who nap should bring a small **LABELED** blanket for rest time. You are also welcome to bring a "cuddly" or stuffed animal and/or a small pillow.

Hilltop provides cot sheets for each child. These are laundered weekly and/or more often if needed. Please take your child's blanket home at the end of each week for laundering.

BRINGING TOYS, FOOD, AND PACIFIERS TO SCHOOL

We prefer that children not bring toys, candy, and gum to school. All children will want to play with the new toys or eat the goodies, and it frequently causes quarrels among the children. Hilltop and Hilltop teachers cannot be responsible for toys brought to school, so it is best to leave them at home. Occasionally favorite toys are brought for sharing time or to complement a specific classroom theme.

Hilltop would like to encourage parents to monitor what toys a child brings to share as we encourage nonviolent actions between the children. Hilltop provides the children with toys that do not promote or imply violent actions. A cassette/CD or book to share with others is a great choice. Make sure items are labeled and picked up after school. If your child cares to share a video, an animal, insect or some "discovery," please make prior arrangements with the teachers. We are required by NAEYC to have written verification from a veterinarian that family pets visiting the center have all needed immunizations and are safe for contact with children.

Please do not bring bottles to the center. Hilltop allows pacifiers during the early fall transition in toddler rooms only during naptime. At other times of the day they will be left in the child's diaper cubby.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

If a Hilltop parent or guardian has a grievance or wishes to appeal an administrative decision, the first attempt to resolve the issue should be by the parties involved. If a solution is not reached, a formal grievance may be filed in writing with the Executive Committee of Hilltop's Board for the purpose of reaching a satisfactory solution for all concerned. A letter should be sent to the President of the Board stating reasons for the appeal and other pertinent information. The committee will examine the issue as quickly as possible and notify the parties involved of their decision.

Hilltop's Board has final authority in deciding issues relating to center policies and procedures. Appeals to KU administration or other outside entities will not be considered.

CELL PHONE POLICY

Our classrooms are "cell phone free environments". This policy maximizes opportunities for parent-child and parent-teacher communication during drop-off and pick-up times. You are welcome to use your cell phone in building hallways, but not in our classrooms or cubby rooms. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

PARENT LIABILITY STATEMENT

If a child under the age of 18 injures a person or damages property maliciously or willfully, the person so injured can recover damages from the parent, up to \$1,000 (as is provided by Kansas State Law), unless it is found that the malicious or willful actions were the result of parental neglect, in which case there is no limit to the amount of liability. This law holds the parent, not the teacher or center liable.

PROGRAMS AND CURRICULUM

CLASSROOMS – AGE REQUIREMENTS

There are currently seventeen classrooms available at Hilltop. Room placement is made according to age of the child enrolled as of August 31st for all rooms except toddlers who must be 12 months by August 1st. Children remain in the same classroom through the school year. There will normally be about a six-month to one-year age range in each classroom. Hilltop teacher:child ratios are included below. In many programs, the ratios are better than State of Kansas regulations.

Room(s)	Classroom Age Range	Ratio
Toddler Rooms	1-2 years	1:5
Early Preschool Rooms	2-3 years	1:7
Chipmunk, Cottontail, and Salamander Rooms	3-4 years	1:10
Dragonfly, Prairie Dog, and Meadowlark Rooms	4-5 years	1:10
Sunflower Room	Kindergarten, 5-6 years	1:12
Jayhawk and Bobcat Rooms	Kindergarten through 5 th grade	1:14

CLASSROOM PLACEMENT POLICIES

Toddler room enrollment is contingent upon the following by the child's start date:

- The child must be twelve months old by August 1st of the current year.
- The child must be walking independently. This is required by the Lawrence/Douglas County Health Department, which defines walking independently as walking across the classroom and out to the playground unassisted.
- The child must be eating independently.
- The child must not require a bottle during the day.
- The child must not require a morning nap.

If a child is set to begin at Hilltop and does not meet the walking requirements by his/her first day, the family may choose to either withdraw the child and reapply when the child is walking independently, or continue to pay tuition to secure enrollment until walking guidelines are met. Evaluation and assessment of a child's walking skills will be taken on a case-by-case basis.

Children in all other classrooms must be the appropriate age by August 31st. To enter kindergarten, a child must be five on or before August 31st. These guidelines follow those set forth by the Kansas Educational System. Factors in addition to age may also be considered in determining appropriate classroom placements. Effective teachers challenge a child regardless of ability or age, and our teachers strive to meet the developmental needs of all the children in their program. Very rarely does a child benefit from early placement in kindergarten. Many children who attend public kindergarten and first grade can already read, so early reading is not always the best indicator of kindergarten or first-grade readiness.

BEFORE- AND AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Hilltop offers an onsite after-school program for public school children in full-day kindergarten through fifth grades (the Jayhawk & Bobcat rooms). We provide transportation from as many schools as possible, dependent upon enrollment and the closing times of the schools. The teachers for the school-age program, who are also the van drivers, plan daily activities to meet the varied needs of young primary children. Care is also offered when the public schools are closed.

Hilltop also offers before- and after-school care at Sunflower Elementary School and after-school care at Prairie Park Elementary School for children in kindergarten through fifth grade. Lead teachers in all before- and after-school programs have experience working with school-age children.

OPTIONAL CARE

Hilltop offers several Optional Care periods each year. There are normally 6-7 weeks of Optional Care offered between semesters and during Spring Break for currently enrolled children. Please check your current Hilltop calendar for the current year's scheduled Optional Care weeks. Only parents who use this service pay for child care; other parents are not billed.

Applications for each Optional Care session are available **in the office** 3-4 weeks prior to the date of the session. Written notice that Optional Care applications are available – including the deadline for return the application – will be posted in the entry way. Email reminders will also be sent to families on our email list. These dates are also published in our newsletter well in advance and are indicated on the Hilltop yearly calendar posted in the entryway. **It is the responsibility of the parent to pick up the enrollment forms and meet the required deadline dates when requesting Optional Care.** All fees, including Optional Care fees, must be paid in advance. Due to lower enrollment and because many teachers take vacation leave during Optional Care, classrooms may be combined together at this time. An effort is made to have at least the Lead or Assistant Teacher present for each classroom. For a complete description of enrollment policies, including Optional Care enrollment, please refer to the “Enrollment” section in this handbook.

SUMMER SESSION

During the summer session, Hilltop offers full-day programs for toddlers, preschoolers, and kindergarten through fifth graders.

All Hilltop children participate in many field trips and outdoor activities over the summer. Some trips are by Hilltop van while others are walking trips. If the temperature or heat index reaches 95 degrees, outdoor activities, including swimming, will be restricted. If possible, Hilltop vans will be used to transport children to and from some field trip locations instead of having them walk during hot weather or if there is a sudden weather change.

GENERAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM

Children in all Hilltop classrooms will experience a well-rounded curriculum which draws from many areas of development. This includes language and memory, large and small motor skills, dramatic play, art and sensory, health and safety, music, pre-literacy, pre-math, and pre-science. As part of creative development, children will be allowed to use materials freely and to move with spontaneity. However, this freedom does not mean the child functions without direction. Teachers will encourage children to develop the habit of observing, questioning, and listening by modeling these behaviors themselves. They will help children feel free to make choices, to experiment, to change, and to respect the feelings and rights of others.

Toddler Rooms will also focus heavily all year long on self-help, independence, and social development. Children will gain experience and knowledge through both child-initiated and teacher-directed activities with a strong emphasis on curiosity, exploration, and fun! The teaching staff strives hard to maintain a very warm, comforting and loving environment for our toddlers as they are the youngest members of the Hilltop community.

Two-year-old Rooms will build on the skills from the toddler year, but will focus even more heavily on self-help skills, including toilet training and dressing. Children will also begin to experience more involved large group curriculum and will gain more exposure to making activity choices. As the children approach preschool, activities will begin to naturally take a more structured shape, but the emphasis will remain upon fostering inquisitiveness, expression, and again, fun!

Preschool Rooms are designed to offer a stimulating learning environment in preparation for school, while maintaining a play-based approach with developmentally appropriate activities. The teachers work hard to plan engaging projects and use innovative ideas that address the diverse needs of each group and promote creativity and exploration. Additionally, our older preschool rooms (Dragonflies, Prairie Dogs, and Meadowlarks) have a more

pronounced emphasis on handwriting, pre-reading, and pre-math skills as they approach the transition to kindergarten.

These rooms also continue to build on the toddler and two-year-old rooms' foundation of self-help skills, independence, and social development. There is a balance of child-initiated vs. teacher-directed activities, and children have many chances to participate individually, in small groups, or as a large class. Children will also begin to do a great amount of choice making in the preschool classrooms, providing them experience in controlling their own activities.

ART AND SENSORY CURRICULUM

There will be many opportunities in the day for your child to engage in music, art, and dramatic play. To sing, dance, move, create, construct or pretend is a very real part of a child's world. The teachers will provide a large number and variety of materials or props, show an interest in what the child is doing and help when the child expresses need for assistance. Children will have the opportunity daily to get their hands messy, explore, and nurture their individual abilities to creatively express themselves.

Please remember when children bring home artwork, it is vital to express an interest, but try not to impose adult standards or expect a child to tell you "what it is." We try very hard to focus on the process of the art experience, rather than the finished product. Comments pertaining to color, texture, or lines tell the child you appreciate his/her art without judging it or labeling it. We will date and display children's artistic endeavors here at the center, and children will also enjoy having some of their work displayed around home for short periods of time.

PRE-ACADEMICS

As described above, children learn through play. At Hilltop, there will be countless opportunities for your child to learn new concepts, new vocabulary words and to be exposed to a vast array of educational toys, supplies and equipment. Some of their learning will come about incidentally and informally; other times teachers will elect to teach directly. As children progress from classroom to classroom, there will be more and more emphasis placed on handwriting, pre-reading, and pre-math. However, if you desire formal reading instruction prior to kindergarten, we feel that parents should assume this responsibility at home.

TYPICAL DAILY SCHEDULE

Each classroom posts a typical daily schedule. It includes free choice, planned teacher instruction, large group, small group, outdoor play, meals, restroom time, and rest time (if appropriate).

COMPUTERS IN THE CLASSROOMS

The preschool and school age classrooms have computers for the children to use. A variety of educational programs and games are available for children who choose to use the computers.

GUIDELINES FOR REFERRALS AND/OR TERMINATION OF CARE

If there are serious concerns about a child's development, health or behavior, a conference will be scheduled so that the teachers and administrators can talk with a parent about the situation. A written action plan will be developed to outline steps to be taken to solve the problem(s). The director may set a 30-day trial period for the planned changes.

1. Program Referral: Hilltop may recommend supplemental services for a child with developmental, psychological, or medical problems. USD 497's Lawrence Early Education Program (L.E.E.P.) will provide a complete developmental screening free of charge for preschool age children who are referred to them by parents or teachers. Tiny K Early Intervention will do screening for children under three years of age. Areas tested include hearing, vision, speech/language, gross and fine motor skills, cognition (thinking and reasoning skills), and social development. If special services are needed, L.E.E.P. or Tiny K Early Intervention staff will provide them or the child will be referred to other agencies or programs. Families may also receive services from the KU Child & Family Services Clinic or the local Success by 6 Family Resource Team.

2. **Child Care Termination:** If a parent or parents refuse the recommendation, or if these services are provided and the child's condition does not improve satisfactorily, or if continued enrollment of the child does not represent the best interest of the child, the center, the staff, or the other children, Hilltop administration reserves the right to give written notice to the parent or parents indicating termination of all child care services at the end of 21 days. If the child's behavior is physically or emotionally dangerous to other children or staff, immediate termination may be necessary. Child care services may also be terminated immediately if the behavior of a parent or other primary caregiver is verbally or physically abusive or disrespectful to a staff person or other children or parents in the program.

STAFFING

PROFESSIONAL AND SUPPORT STAFF

Hilltop's staff consists of administrators, classroom teachers, and support staff. The administrative staff includes an Executive Director, Finance Director, Program Director, and two Assistant Directors. The support staff includes an Administrative Assistant, Kitchen Manager, Cook, and two Kitchen Assistants. Hilltop makes every effort possible to hire a diverse staff that reflects the diversity found in center families.

Full-time Lead Teachers in most classrooms have at least a bachelor's degree in a child related field. Most Assistant Teachers have two years of college, preferably a bachelor's degree. Child care staff members have a vital influence on a child's behavior and development, so teachers who have formal educational training and previous teaching experience are selected. Care is taken to choose teachers who have knowledge of developmental needs of children and who are qualified to plan and direct activities which meet the cognitive, physical, and social needs of young children. Teachers work as a team, jointly planning daily learning experiences which promote creative and intellectual expression, stimulate learning, and build an accepting and comfortable climate for children.

PART-TIME EMPLOYEES

Hilltop employs many part-time aides each semester to assist in the classrooms, the majority of whom are KU students. Part-time aides help supervise the children during rest time while teachers have their breaks and planning time, and also assist teachers during all other parts of the day, particularly during late afternoon hours. Having an extra adult in the room allows teachers to plan walks, field trips, and other special activities that require additional supervision. Part-time aides also supervise children while teachers attend outside meetings and act as substitutes when a teacher is absent.

Our part-time aides are hired, trained, and supervised by the Program Director, while full-time teachers also assume responsibility for hands-on training in the classrooms with the children. Each aide must also complete approximately two hours of in-service training with the Program Director.

VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

Volunteers are a vital part of the Hilltop program, as they serve as extra teachers' aides in the classroom. Their assistance allows classroom teachers to individualize more of the curriculum for the children. KU student volunteers represent many departments, including, but not limited to, Applied Behavioral Sciences, Psychology, Music Therapy, Education, and Social Welfare. They generally aide for course credit or as part of a class project, but often for their own personal experience. Although most volunteers are KU students, people from the community are also encouraged to participate at Hilltop. Parents are certainly welcome to assist classroom teachers, so if you have family members who would like to volunteer their time, we would love it! Volunteers must be 14 years of age, submit mandatory KDHE paperwork, and complete required orientation.

PRACTICUM STUDENTS

Special Education practicum students often help teach in some of our classrooms as part of course requirements. Teachers utilize the valuable services of these volunteers to enrich their programs, while providing these students with training and experience in inclusive classroom settings.

HEALTH AND MEDICAL INFORMATION

ILLNESS OCCURRING AT THE CENTER

Upon arrival each day your child will be observed by a staff member for symptoms of possible illness, fever, or contagious diseases and **will be sent home immediately** if such symptoms are present. If your child becomes ill and/or has a temperature of 101 and/or has two episodes of vomiting or diarrhea, we will call you to take your child home. We cannot care for sick children, as we do not have the facilities or the extra staff.

MEDICAL AND DENTAL REQUIREMENTS

The Health Department requires a pre-entrance health assessment conducted within six months prior to enrollment for all children attending a child care center. It is the responsibility of parents to complete these requirements on or before the child's first day of attendance or to have scheduled appointments by that first day. Parents who do not comply with these regulations will be asked to withdraw their children because they jeopardize Hilltop's licensing status.

Immunizations required by the Kansas Department of Health are as follows:

Antigen	Minimum Age to Start	Routine Immunization Schedule	Booster Interval
Measles, Mumps & Rubella (MMR)	12 months of age	1 dose must be given after 1st birthday ; there must be at least 4 weeks between 1 st & 2 nd dose	At time of school entry (4-6 years of age)
Diphtheria, Tetanus Pertussis (DtaP)	2 months of age	3 doses given at 2 months, 4 months & 6 months of age. There must be a minimum of 4 weeks between doses, with 6 months between 3 rd & 4 th dose.	At 12-15 months & at school entry (4-6 years)
Polio (IPV)	2 months of age	3 doses given at 2 months, 4 months, & 6-18 months – there must be 6 weeks between doses.	At time of school entry (4-6 years)
Pneumococcal (PCV)	2 months of age	4 doses given at 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, & 12-18 months.	Only to certain high risk groups
Haemophilus Influenzae Type B (Hib) (not the "flu" vaccine)	2 months of age	3 doses given at 2 months, 4 months, & 12-18 months.	none
Hepatitis A (HepA)	12 months of age	2 doses given between 12 - 24 months of age – there must be 6 months between doses.	Only to certain high risk groups
Varicella	12 months of age	1st dose given after 12 months, with a minimum interval of 3 months between doses	At time of school entry (4-6 year of age), but can be administered before the age of 4, as long as there are 3 months between the 1 st and 2 nd dose
Hepatitis B	Birth	3 doses given at birth, 1-2 months, and 6-18 months.	none

These timelines are critical. As your child receives additional immunizations, please bring in a statement showing the immunizations received and the date received. **Be aware that if immunizations are given prior to the designated age, they will not be accepted by the Kansas Health Department**, the licensing agency for child care facilities. A Kansas Immunization Requirements sheet is available upon request and a copy is posted in the entry area.

Toddlers & Preschool Age Children: Additional immunizations that are now **REQUIRED** for toddlers and preschool age children include the Hepatitis B Vaccine (HBV), Haemophilus Influenza Type B (HIB), Varicella (VAR), Hepatitis A (HepA), and Pneumococcal (PCV). See schedules of vaccinations in the front entry or at the Health Department.

Kindergarten Age Children: Children entering kindergarten are required to have at least one dose of the DtaP and one dose of the polio vaccine on or after their 4th birthday. **A second MMR immunization, Varicella (chicken pox) and HBV (Hepatitis B Vaccine) are now required before a child enters kindergarten. If your child attends our kindergarten program, the State of Kansas kindergarten immunization form must be completed for our records.** A photocopy of the form you turn in to your child's public school is acceptable.

The Douglas County Health Department gives physicals and immunizations for a small fee or you may make an appointment with your own physician. Required KDHE health forms are available from the Health Department, online on the KDHE website, or at Hilltop. Yearly dental check-ups are recommended for children 2 years and older.

WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD AT HOME

Parents should keep children at home and notify the center whenever there are signs of illness, including:

- A temperature of 101 by mouth.
- Vomiting or diarrhea within the last 12 hours.
- Any undiagnosed rash.
- Sore, discharging eyes, ears, or running nose.
- A fresh cold, accompanied by sneezing, coughing and congestion.
- Lack of appetite, listlessness, irritability, or unusual fatigue.

Children must be fever free without medication for a full 24 hours before coming back to school. If your child is sent home with a fever of 101 degrees or higher, he/she will not be allowed to come back to Hilltop the next day.

This policy will be strictly enforced. If a child's temperature is in the 100.0 to 100.5 degree range we will take the temperature a second time (approximately 15-30 minutes later). If the second reading is again above 100 degrees, the parents will be called. If the child has other significant symptoms or the temperature is over 101.0 degrees, the parent will be called immediately and asked to take the child home.

Please do not give your child medication to reduce fever before bringing him/her to school. This masks the problems and your child could then infect others or become ill later in the day.

If your child has been exposed to any **contagious disease**, such as whooping cough, chicken pox, cryptosporidiosis, mumps, measles, diphtheria, or scarlet fever, please report it immediately to one of the teachers, administrators, or the office. If your child has one of these illnesses, we must report it to the Health Department. Information about any contagious disease occurring in a classroom will be posted in the classroom. It will tell you about the number of cases, symptoms to look for, the cause and incubation periods.

Children with **chicken pox** may return to school after an absence of 5-7 days from the onset of illness, but may return to school before the recommended time period has elapsed if he/she has a written permission from the physician.

When a child has more than one incident of vomiting or diarrhea, she/he should be kept **home at least 24 hours** after the symptoms disappear. We **strongly** suggest that normal eating habits and normal bowel movements have resumed before returning to Hilltop, even if it has been 24 hours since the last episode.

If a child has **ringworm** or **impetigo**, she/he can return to school when adequate treatment controls the spread. This is usually after being treated for at least 24 hours.

Children with **pink eye** should be kept at home until 24 hours of treatment with antibiotics has been completed.

If your child has **head lice**, please use an effective shampoo, wash and clean all bedding, furniture, rugs, toys, clothing and **car seats** and call us. Hilltop policy requires that **all nits** (eggs) be removed from the head before the child can return to school, so a child will be sent home even if only a few nits remain. Please notify us if your child has been exposed to someone with head lice.

ACCIDENTS AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In spite of precautionary measures, young children do have accidents. All of our teachers have had first-aid training and are able to tend to minor injuries. In case of head bumps, it is routine procedure to attempt to notify you of the accident by phone and to give you the details. We watch these children for symptoms associated with concussion, such as dizziness, dilated eyes, and vomiting.

We will contact you if we think a physician should see an injured or ill child, and we will prepare them to be picked up. In case of a more severe emergency, we will call an ambulance and notify you immediately. For minor accidents, teachers will note the incident on an individual accident report sheet, while more serious injuries that may require medical treatment will result in a more detailed two-page accident report being filed. All families are required to give us a DETAILED schedule of where each parent is at all times of the day, including university buildings and room numbers, so we can find you in case of emergency.

If your work or home phone number changes, you need to notify the office immediately. All families must also have an additional person listed on their emergency treatment card.

ADMINISTERING MEDICINE – HILLTOP POLICIES

It is a Kansas State Department of Health licensing requirement that **prescribed** medicine can only be administered if it is in the pharmacy container labeled with the child's full name, name of the medication, dosage, name of the physician, and date it was filled.

If you want us to give your child a **non-prescribed** medication, we must receive a note or phone call from your doctor or nurse, and the medication must be in the original container. The **non-prescribed** medicine policy is a Hilltop policy.

1. All medication must be labeled clearly and will be kept in a locked box. There are locked medicine boxes in all classrooms.
2. Medicine will normally be given once a day at the noon hour. Exceptions to this policy will be at the discretion of the administration.
3. Parents must fill out and sign an individual initial medication form and give it to the classroom teacher to be posted in the classroom. There are two types of forms, one for prescribed medication and the other for non-prescribed.
4. Teachers will write the time the medicine was administered and her/his name on the form that you filled out.
5. Teachers can administer medicine only if the above is followed by the parent.
6. Unless we receive a specific request from a parent to keep medicine on hand (i.e. asthma, allergies) all medication that is not being administered will be disposed of; so please take it home if you want to keep it.
7. Teachers will administer medication while on field trips, if necessary. Emergency medications will be carried in the classroom backpack and kept with a teacher at all times.

APPROPRIATE HAND WASHING

Parents and teachers can help prevent the spread of disease by modeling frequent hand washing and by requiring their children to wash hands when arriving in the classroom, before eating, after going to the bathroom, and after blowing noses or sneezing. Please practice these procedures at home and we will do the same at Hilltop.

APPROPRIATE CLOTHING FOR INDOOR AND OUTDOOR PLAY

All Hilltop children should be dressed in comfortable clothes. Teachers will be dressed informally to allow participation in all types of activities. We recommend tennis shoes for safe climbing and walking (rather than slick bottomed shoes, flip-flops, or cowboy boots). The children will be going outside almost every day, so please make sure your child is appropriately dressed. **We do go outside in the winter months!!** Make sure your child has mittens, hats, and boots, so that he/she will enjoy playing for 10-30 minutes in very cold weather. Fresh air and exercise are very important to your child's health and well-being. In order to enjoy the outdoors, all children need appropriate clothes to help them feel more comfortable outside. **Please avoid sending your child to school in expensive or special clothes that might be damaged during active or messy play.**

WELLNESS AND OUTDOOR PLAY

When your child is not well enough to go outside with his/her class, please do not send your child to school. We do not have the staff to have one teacher remain inside with one child. Also, we feel that it is far healthier for children to go outside every possible day rather than be confined indoors. If a physician recommends it for a day or so, it might be possible for you to make arrangements with the office personnel while his/her class plays outdoors. The children in the toddler and two-year-old classrooms do not go outdoors if the temperature or wind-chill is below 20 degrees, others below 15 degrees. If the temperature or heat index is 95 degrees or higher, children do not go outdoors and swimming trips may be altered. If an air quality alert should be issued for our area due to air pollution, outdoor play will be restricted or cancelled until an all clear is issued.

SUNSCREEN POLICY

Hilltop staff will only apply sunscreen that has been provided by a child's family. The sunscreen must be clearly labeled with the child's name and given to one of the full time teachers for safe storage. It cannot be kept in the child's cubby or backpack. Parents must sign a parent authorization form available in the classroom before staff can apply sunscreen. This authorization will be effective for a period of one year and protects our staff from liability if your child has an adverse reaction to the sunscreen provided. We ask that parents apply sunscreen in the morning before leaving children at Hilltop. Staff will apply additional sunscreen at appropriate times later in the day. The morning classroom schedule does not allow time for staff to apply sunscreen to all children.

Insect repellants can only be applied in special situations. The approval of a physician and written permission from the parent are required.

SOILED CLOTHING

Please check your child's cubby or diaper cubby each day for soiled clothing. Because we do not always have extra clothing for children, we have adopted the following policy: if a child has an accident or becomes wet for any reason and does not have extra clothing, we will call the parent to ask that either clothing be brought to school or that the child be taken home. Please note that Kansas Health Department regulations prohibit Hilltop staff from rinsing out clothing soiled from toileting accidents. These will be wrapped in plastic and must be taken home by families.

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

The Kansas Child Protection Act mandates that all personnel working in a licensed child care center must report suspected child abuse or neglect. In fact, there is a penalty for violation of this reporting law. This act protects the people reporting to SRS from any liability, civil or criminal. All records and reports concerning child abuse and neglect filed with SRS or the district court are confidential and will not be disclosed. All teachers at Hilltop are aware of their responsibilities regarding this Act and will alert the Executive Director should they see any signs of abuse or neglect. The director will contact Social and Rehabilitation Services reporting any suspected cases. An SRS representative may interview a child or staff member at the center, and parents will be notified following the interview.

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

Because the Hilltop staff know that every parent is concerned about child sexual abuse we:

1. discuss child sexual abuse during staff orientation for teachers and aides.
2. have several books on sexual abuse, some of which are suitable for reading to children. Let us know if you'd like to check one out.
3. comply with the Kansas law which states that the name, address, and birth date of every staff member and volunteer must be sent to the Kansas Bureau of Investigation for police felony check and SRS child abuse confirmation check.
4. urge parents to make unannounced visits to the center at any time.

ENROLLMENT POLICIES

Non-Discrimination Statement: Hilltop Child Development Center admits children of any race, color, religion, national origin or sex and qualified handicapped children to all rights, privileges, programs and activities of the Center and does not discriminate on the basis of any of these factors in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, fee payments, food service programs and other school-administered programs.

ON-SITE ENROLLMENT ACCEPTANCE POLICIES FOR NON SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN

As a general principle, Hilltop will prioritize enrollments for families in which one or both parents or primary caregivers are University of Kansas students, staff or faculty. Changes in the KU student or staff/faculty status during the child's enrollment period **may affect the length of the child's enrollment**. For Hilltop enrollment purposes, students must be enrolled for at least six credit hours which require the KU campus fee during fall and spring semesters. An exception will be made for *doctoral* students taking a smaller number of dissertation hours. Please note: some KU classes, continuing education classes, and independent studies courses do not require this fee and do not establish eligibility. Summer enrollment at KU for parents/guardians is not required. **Verification of student enrollment and fee payment or KU employment is required by September 15th**. If a parent was never enrolled or employed at KU or dropped enrollment/employment before September 15th, enrollment of the child will be terminated immediately. If KU eligibility lapses during the year, the child can continue through that year; however, new enrollment for the next year will not be available until after April 1st. For Hilltop enrollment purposes, full and part-time employees of the University, KU Medical Center and designated University Affiliated Corporations (Athletics, the Alumni Association, the Endowment Association, Student Housing, the Unions, Continuing Education, KU Center for Research, Hilltop, etc.) are considered University affiliated.

As vacancies occur, children are accepted from the waiting list in the following order:

1. Children of Hilltop full-time staff.
2. Siblings of KU affiliated children currently attending Hilltop according to the date of application.
3. Children of KU students according to application date.
4. Children of KU faculty and staff according to date of application.
5. Acceptances for children of non-KU affiliated families are made for up to a one academic year (August through July only). Continued enrollment for the next year may be possible dependent upon availability of non-KU openings after April 1st of the enrollment period.

Non-KU affiliated requests: No application fee is required for families not affiliated with KU to place a child on the waiting list. If a child on this waiting list is accepted for enrollment, the \$15 application fee will then be charged. Children on this waiting list will be accepted for enrollment only if there are no KU affiliated children on the regular waiting list for the child's age group. Acceptances for the fall enrollment will be made after April 1st only.

ON-SITE ENROLLMENT ACCEPTANCE POLICIES FOR SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN (GRADES K-5)

If there are too many currently enrolled children who wish to be enrolled in these programs in the fall, enrollment priority will be as follows:

Kindergarten Program

1. Children who are enrolled during the summer are enrolled using the general enrollment priorities outlined on above.

Jayhawk & Bobcat Rooms (Grades K– 5)

For each priority described below, children will be accepted according to the general enrollment priorities described on page 25.

1. First priority –kindergarten through third grade children currently enrolled in the Jayhawk or Bobcat Room in the spring semester also attending the summer program. These are next year’s first through fourth graders.
2. Second priority – children enrolled in Hilltop’s Kindergarten Program in the spring semester also attending the summer session.
3. Third priority – fourth grade children currently enrolled in the Jayhawk or Bobcat Room in the spring semester also attending the summer program. These are next year’s fifth graders.

Acceptances for any unfilled spaces are made from the waiting list according to date of application and KU affiliation status. Acceptances for non-KU affiliated families are made after April 1st.

If there is a Hilltop administered off-site after school program available at the child’s school, children at that school will not be given priority to attend the Hilltop center (Jayhawk or Bobcat Room) after school program. These children may be accepted into the Jayhawk or Bobcat program if there is no current waiting list for the Jayhawk or Bobcat room and the off-site program has no openings.

ENROLLMENT ACCEPTANCE POLICIES FOR BEFORE- AND AFTER-SCHOOL OFF-SITE PROGRAMS

Hilltop offers a before- and after-school program at Sunflower Elementary and an after-school program at Prairie Park Elementary.

1. Enrollment is for five days a week for both before- and/or after-school care.
2. Re-enrollment the following year: First priority for enrollment is to children currently enrolled in the off-site program requesting care for the following year. Second priority is to children currently enrolled at Hilltop who request care at the off-site program.
3. Enrollment at Hilltop may be available when no care is provided at Sunflower and Prairie Park during spring break, summer session, and the Optional Care offered the week immediately following the summer session for children enrolled in the summer session. Children enrolled in the Sunflower and Prairie Park programs have priority after children enrolled at the Hilltop site. If there are more off-site children requesting care during the summer session than space allows, priority will be as follows: first – siblings of currently enrolled Hilltop children; second – all others according to original application date.
4. School-age children applying for summer only enrollment will be accepted AFTER children currently enrolled at Hilltop’s off-site programs at Sunflower and Prairie Park Elementary schools.

CONTINUING ENROLLMENT FOR CHILDREN FROM NON-KU AFFILIATED FAMILIES

Children from non-KU affiliated families enrolled in a toddler classroom will be enrolled for one academic year (August – July). Continued enrollment for the next year may be possible depending on availability of non-KU openings after April 1st.

Children from non-KU affiliated families enrolled in a two year old (must be 2 years by August 31st of that year) or preschool classroom (must turn 3 by August 31st of that year) may continue enrollment until their kindergarten year. Continued enrollment in the kindergarten program may be possible depending on availability of non-KU openings after April 1st.

If a Non-KU affiliated family accepts enrollment for the summer session, they are guaranteed to continue enrollment into the next year (August – July) no matter the age group. Continued enrollment for the following year will be determined by the policy stated above.

ENROLLMENT ACCEPTANCE—CHILDREN FUNDED BY SRS

Hilltop accepts enrollments funded by SRS. The parent agrees to pay the difference between the fees charged less the SRS assistance received.

OPTIONAL CARE ENROLLMENT POLICY

Hilltop staff members are encouraged to take their vacation time during Optional Care periods rather than during the regular semesters when the center is fully enrolled. This sometimes means that we are unable to accept all Optional Care applications because we do not have enough qualified adults to meet the required adult:child ratios in classrooms. **If you need care during these Optional Care periods, it is important to remember the following policies:**

1. Enrollments will be accepted up until the deadline according to the date and time of the application. **If applications are received after the deadline, children’s names will be placed on a waiting list for available spaces. An additional \$25 late Optional Care application fee will be due at the time of the application’s approval.**
2. An additional Optional Care sign up period is available during the first two weeks of regular enrollment in August. During this period, families may only sign up for **ALL** Optional Care weeks and public school out days. If families do not need all available Optional Care weeks and public school out days, they must sign up during regular sign up periods. **Families are financially responsible for ALL Optional Care periods and public school out days registered for. Absolutely no exceptions will be made.**
3. Optional Care applications/fee agreements will be available **at the front** desk three to four weeks before each Optional Care period. It is the family’s responsibility to pick up the form, indicate on the form whether or not they wish to enroll for the Optional Care period, and to return the form by the deadline to the office where it will be “timed in.”
4. **Optional Care enrollments may not be cancelled or changed after the signed application/fee agreement due date. There can be no refunds for cancellation of Optional Care enrollment after the due date of the application.**
5. Parents are responsible for paying Optional Care fees as specified in the fee agreement. Fees for Optional Care are in addition to your standard fee agreement.
6. Optional Care hours are **7:40 a.m. to 5:20 p.m.** and may be shortened to 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. if necessary.

Optional Care Enrollment Guidelines

These guidelines may be put into effect at the discretion of the administrative staff.

1. Classrooms may be combined in each wing in order to meet parent requests and adequate cost-effective teacher:child ratios.

2. An attempt will be made to employ at least one regular classroom teacher per room for each Optional Care session. When this is not possible, aides will be hired to substitute for the teacher.

POLICIES FOR SUMMER ONLY ENROLLMENTS

1. If a child has been accepted for the summer session only, and the parent must withdraw the child prior to the first day of the session, notice of withdrawal must be given by April 1 in order to have the security deposit returned.
2. **After the session has begun, a withdrawal request cannot be accepted and all fees shown on the fee agreement are due in full.**
3. Fees are payable as designated in the fee agreement. Fees are payable for all days in the contract period whether or not the child is present.

RE-ENROLLMENT POLICIES

- a. Requests for changes in current enrollment may be honored if classroom teacher/child ratio permits. If the requested change in enrollment is not available, the family may choose to withdraw and place the child's name on the waiting list. See "Re-admittance After Withdrawal," pp.29
- b. Re-enrollment of KU Affiliated children: Children whose families are KU affiliated in the fall semester are eligible for enrollment through the spring and summer sessions of that year even if their KU affiliation lapses. For additional Non-KU affiliated enrollment priorities, please refer to the Continuing Enrollment For Children from Non-KU Affiliated Families policy.
- c. If a request for a child's re-enrollment for the summer and/or fall semester at Hilltop or any of its off-site programs is not received by April 1st, it is assumed the family will not be using Hilltop's services and the child's enrollment will be terminated at the end of the current contract period and will lose any enrollment priority. If the family decides they do want to re-enroll after that date, a new application will be required and the child's name will be added to the waiting list.
- d. Acceptance letters for re-enrollment (summer and/or fall) must be returned within fourteen (14) days after issuance. Otherwise, the place will be filled from the waiting list.
- e. KU affiliates with University required activities may make an appointment with Hilltop administrators to discuss readmission options.

TWO CHILDREN FROM THE SAME FAMILY

As a general policy, two children from the same family will be placed in separate classrooms if possible.

NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL POLICIES

1. Canceling enrollment prior to beginning of a semester:
 - a. Fall Semester—notice required by June 1st
 - b. Spring Semester—notice required by November 1st
 - c. Summer Semester—notice required by April 1st
 - d. If date falls on a national holiday, Saturday, or Sunday, the date of notice is due the next business day.
2. Within the Fall and Spring Semesters: After the semester has begun but before the deadlines listed in (1) above, a written notice of withdrawal is required 21 days in advance of the date of withdrawal in order to have the security deposit refunded (also see Financial Policies section).
3. Summer Session: Request to withdraw a child from the summer session will not be accepted after the session has begun.

4. Withdrawal of acceptance of enrollment prior to the beginning of a semester: There will be no refund of deposit on withdrawals of enrollments received after June 1 for fall semester, after November 1 for spring semester or after April 1 for summer session.
5. Exception for SRS Families: Enrollment may be terminated by SRS families by providing a 2 week written notice of termination in advance of the ending date. Payment by the family is due for the notice period whether or not the child is brought to the center for care.

RE-ADMITTANCE AFTER WITHDRAWAL

If a parent withdraws a child from Hilltop and later wishes to re-enroll the child, a new application for admission must be completed and the application fee paid. The child is placed on the waiting list according to Hilltop admittance priorities. The date of the new application is the date used for placement on the waiting list.

FINANCIAL POLICIES

To meet the goals of the center, it is essential that Hilltop maintain financial integrity by:

1. Establishing and following sound financial principles and practices.
2. Developing a budget which
 - a. identifies funding sources sufficient to meet the goals of the center.
 - b. monitors expenses carefully to stay within the expense portion of the budget.
 - c. maintains a fee structure and tuition subsidy program that allows families with varying degrees of financial need to share fairly in the financial support of the program.

APPLICATION AND RE-APPLICATION FEES

Families may apply for care when a child is at least three months of age. The name of the child is placed on the waiting list according to KU status – student, staff or faculty. An initial application fee is charged at the time an application for admittance is made. When a child is withdrawn from Hilltop and the parent applies for admittance at a later date, another application fee is required. This process is called re-application.

SECURITY DEPOSIT

A \$350 security deposit is required at the time an acceptance to Hilltop is received. This deposit guarantees the child's enrollment in the center for a specific starting date. The security deposit is held throughout the child's continued enrollment at Hilltop. When a child is withdrawn from Hilltop, the security deposit is refunded within thirty (30) days after the last day of the child's enrollment **IF**:

1. Fees have been paid in full according to the family payment plan included with the fee agreement.
2. Additional charges incurred have been paid in full at the time billed.
3. Written notice of withdrawal has been given according to the designated deadlines.

KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM DEPOSIT

A kindergarten program deposit is required from all families accepting enrollment in the kindergarten program. This kindergarten program deposit is separate from Hilltop's regular security deposit required for all programs.

1. Deposit for new enrollment acceptance into the kindergarten program: If your child will begin his/her enrollment at Hilltop in the kindergarten program, the total required kindergarten deposit is \$500, \$350 of which fulfills the regular security deposit.
2. Deposit for continuing enrollment into the kindergarten program: If your child is currently enrolled in a Hilltop preschool program and will be continuing into the kindergarten program, you are required to pay an additional kindergarten program deposit upon acceptance into the kindergarten program. The total for the additional kindergarten program deposit and your initial enrollment security deposit is \$500 combined.
3. If kindergarten enrollment is accepted by April 1, the kindergarten deposit can be paid in two installments: half by April 1, and the remaining half by May 1. If enrollment is accepted after April 1, the full amount of the deposit is due at the time of the acceptance to the program.
4. If kindergarten enrollment is continued through the entire academic year (ending in May), the total kindergarten deposit may be refunded at the end of your May enrollment as long as regular withdrawal policy requirements are met. If your child continues enrollment in a Hilltop program beyond May and your initial enrollment deposit was \$350, the \$150 additional kindergarten deposit will be credited to your child's fees for May. If your child's initial enrollment deposit was \$75, the \$425 additional kindergarten deposit will be credited to your child's fees for May.

5. The regular \$350 security deposit will be refunded after the child is no longer enrolled in any Hilltop program as long as the regular withdrawal policy requirements are met.
6. Withdrawal from the kindergarten program after May 1 will result in forfeiture of the entire \$500 deposit. Transfer to a Hilltop after-school program or choosing to continue in a preschool classroom after the May 1 deadline will also result in forfeiture of the entire \$500 deposit. In order to continue in a preschool classroom or accept enrollment into a Hilltop after-school program, a new security deposit of \$350 will be required.

FEE SCHEDULE

Fees are set by the Board of Directors, approved by university, and are based on the classroom age and the family fee level according to family size and income. EXCEPTION: during the fall and spring semesters there is only one fee level for the before- and/or after-school programs – Jayhawk Room, Bobcat Room, Sunflower Elementary and Prairie Park Elementary programs.

DETERMINATION OF FAMILY FEE LEVEL

Family Income Form: Families having children enrolled in the toddler through kindergarten classrooms are to submit an Enrollment Start Date and Fee Level Information form prior to the beginning of the fall semester. **All** families having children enrolled for the summer session are to submit a Fee Level Information form. Family income includes gross salary from employment, financial aid grants, scholarships, fellowships, tuition/fees paid by the University (i.e. GTA/GRA fee waivers), or other sources (family funds, unemployment payments, social security, etc.). Loans are not counted as income.

Families indicating D fee level will receive a fee agreement at that level for the fall/spring semester and no further information is required until the summer semester unless the family income/size changes during the year and makes the family eligible for a lower fee level.

Families indicate on the Enrollment Start Date and Fee Level Information form their family fee level. Families who indicate that their gross monthly income will be at the A, B, or C fee level must complete an Application for A, B and C Fee Levels—it should be picked up at the time the Enrollment Start Date and Fee Level Information form is returned. There is a deadline for the return of the application form with all documentation attached. Applications received by the deadline will receive first consideration for tuition subsidies available. Late applications or applications missing required documentation will receive secondary consideration for tuition subsidies if funding is still available.

Fee agreements will be prepared at the D level for families failing to return a completed Enrollment Start Date and Fee Level Information form and the completed Application for A, B and C Fee Levels form.

Families in the A, B, or C fee level in the fall semester must provide a new application and documentation for the spring and summer semesters.

Grace Period – Fall Semester Only: If a family returns the Application for A, B, and C Fee Levels form and verifying documents no later than seven (7) days after the beginning of a semester, a revised fee agreement will be issued retroactive to the first day of the semester.

Children enrolled after the semester begins: The Enrollment Start Date and Fee Level Information form is required with return of acceptance letter. Fees will be at the D level unless the Application for A, B, and C Fee Levels form is provided prior to the first day of enrollment.

During the Semester: A family may submit an application for a change in fee levels during the semester. The application and documentation must be provided at least fourteen (14) days prior to the end of a month for the change to be effective at the beginning of a following month.

A family requesting a change from the A, B, or C level to the D level, is to provide a written notice of the change. The change in fee will be effective the next payment period.

Jayhawk Room, Bobcat Room, and Off-site School Age Programs: **Fall and Spring Semesters:** These programs do not have a sliding scale; there is one fee only per type of enrollment. **Summer Session:** Fees for summer school-age

programs are on a sliding scale and an Application for A, B, and C Fee Levels form needs to be provided unless the family income is in the D fee level range.

Families Eligible for SRS Funding: Families may be eligible for full or partial funding from the Department of SRS. A Child Care Plan must be received from SRS prior to the child's first day of enrollment. Otherwise the family must complete and return a fee agreement and pay fees according to the agreement until an SRS plan is received. Hilltop will adjust fees previously paid that will be covered by SRS either by a credit to the following month or refund.

Families Eligible for Tuition Subsidy Funding: Families at the A or B level **MAY** be eligible for a tuition subsidy. The Application for A, B and C Fee Levels form is used to determine tuition subsidy eligibility. Families receiving subsidies must submit a new application form each semester. There is no guarantee that subsidies will be continued the following semester or year. If one child in a family receives a subsidy, it is not guaranteed that a sibling will also receive one. More information is available on the scholarship information sheet in the office. Due to the demand for tuition subsidies, late applications will be considered only after all timely applications have been processed.

SUPPLY/ACTIVITY FEE

There is a supply/activity fee charged per semester during the fall and spring semesters and per month during the summer program.

FEE AGREEMENTS

A completed, signed fee agreement is due no later than the first day of enrollment for fall, spring and summer sessions. **A child may not attend Hilltop until a fee agreement is on file.** The agreement is written according to the information provided on the Family Income Form – enrollment starting date, payment plan, and at the determined fee level.

Optional Care Sessions: A separate fee agreement is prepared for each Optional Care Period—in January, March, May, and sometimes the week following the last week of the summer session. Optional Care weeks – and **due dates for application for these weeks of care** – are listed on the school calendar. Applications may be picked up at the Hilltop front desk.

The first day of a child's enrollment for the fall semester is the date shown on the Enrollment Start Date and Fee Level Information form. Families have a choice as to the starting date for their child(ren): it may be one or two weeks prior to the first day of the regular fall semester, or the first day of the regular fall semester.

For children enrolled in the Jayhawk room, Bobcat room, and off-site programs, a public school out optional enrollment form is available near the beginning of the fall and spring semesters and is to be completed indicating if care is needed for the special days when the public schools are closed for in-service or conferences. Billing for these special days is separate from your standard fee agreement.

FEE PAYMENTS

A fee schedule showing amount due and due date is provided in your family Fee Agreement. **PLEASE READ YOUR FEE AGREEMENT CAREFULLY!**

Fees may be paid by check, cash, or money order. Credit or debit cards are not accepted.

Fees are payable in advance. Generally fees for the first half of the month are due on the 1st, and are considered late after the 5th of the month. Fees for the second half of the month are due on the 16th, and are considered late after the 20th of the month. However, for the months of August, December, and January, all fees are due in one payment. This is due to the shorter schedule for these months. Optional care fees are due the first day of optional care enrollment. Parents may pay monthly or by the semester by adding together semi-monthly payments on their fee agreement.

Families whose child care is partially funded by SRS must pay the fees on or before the fifth (5th) day of the month. A Vision Card machine in the Finance Director's office can be used to deduct the fees from your Vision Card. If the

SRS plan is written for less than the amount of the fees due, the parent is responsible for payment of the fees not covered in the SRS plan. Parents must notify Hilltop of any changes in their SRS plans.

LATE PAYMENT FEES

Late payment fees are assessed when a payment is not made by the scheduled payment date plus a five day grace period. An additional five day grace period will be allowed after the first grace period to provide the family an opportunity to secure funds for payment during which time the child may not be present at Hilltop but fees continue to accrue. If payment has not been received by the end of the additional five day grace period, your child is considered to have withdrawn and becomes ineligible for future enrollment. As soon as fees are paid in full – but no later than the fifth day of the additional grace period, the child may return to Hilltop. Thereafter, the next time fees are in arrears by the payment due date services are immediately discontinued. In extenuating circumstances, appeals may be made to the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors.

If a payment is still unpaid two weeks after the original due date, the family may no longer use Hilltop's services.

Late payment fees are as follows:

- First time each year - \$15.00
- Second time each year - \$15.00
- Third time each year - \$30.00
- Fourth time each year - \$40.00
- Fifth time each year – Discussion with the Executive Director and Finance Director regarding the child's enrollment.

NOTE: Each "year" is from August 1 through July 31

Unpaid Fees: Hilltop will take action to recoup unpaid fees through Small Claims Court or by a collection agency.

RETURNED CHECK CHARGE

There is a charge each time a check is returned for non-payment. Currently the amount is \$30.00 per incident. The charge is set by the University of Kansas and is subject to any change made at KU. The check must be redeemed in cash or money order within five (5) days of notice of returned check. Notice is placed in family message cubby. If a pattern of returned checks continues, the family will be notified they may no longer use Hilltop's services. The security deposit is forfeited at time of notice.

LATE PICK UP FEE

There is a late pick-up charge if a child is picked up after 5:45 p.m. (5:20 p.m. on early closing days):

- First time each semester – grace period up to 10 minutes; after 10 minutes, \$1 per minute/child
- Second time - \$1.00 per minute per child
- Third time - \$5.00 plus \$1.00 per minute per child
- Fourth time - \$10.00 plus \$1.00 per minute per child plus a conference with the director
- Fifth time - \$25.00 plus \$1.00 per minute per child

RECEIPTS FOR PAYMENTS

Receipts will be placed in the family message cubby usually within a day or two of making the payment.

When making payments in the office, please be sure to give payment directly to a staff person. If payment is made in cash, you will receive a temporary cash receipt. Later you will receive a permanent receipt.

Tuition payments for children enrolled at the Hilltop site are deposited with the university. Payments of application fees, security deposit, fund-raising, and for care at one of the off-site locations are deposited in a separate Hilltop bank account. Families having a child enrolled at Hilltop and a child enrolled in one of the off-site programs need to write separate checks for fees.

Forms for cafeteria plan reimbursement of dependent care expenses should be turned in at the front desk. The Finance Director will review the dates and amounts of the claim, sign the form, and place it in the child's cubby. Additional receipts will not be issued unless specifically requested.

ABSENCE POLICY

1. **Sickness:** Should a child have a continuous illness necessitating absence from the center for more than one week, the full daily fee is charged for the first week of illness; if the illness continues beyond one week, the daily fee will be reduced to ½ for continuing absent days after the first week. Credit will be applied to the next pay period. A physician's statement is required for the reduction.
2. **Optional Care Periods:** No credit is given for absences for any reason.
3. **All Other Days:** Parents pay for all other absent days during the contract period. No credit is given for family vacations, visits to grandparents, etc. Hilltop offers several weeks of Optional Care; hopefully parents can schedule vacations and special visits for their children during these times.
4. **Tuition Subsidy funding** will pay for a maximum of five absences per month. The parent is responsible for payment of the scholarship amount for all absences each month over five.
5. **SRS Funded Child Care:** SRS determines the number of hours per month the agency will pay for each child funded by SRS. SRS will pay for absence hours up to 15% of the total monthly plan. **The parent is responsible for payment for any absent hours SRS does not pay.**

NOTICE OF CHANGE IN FEE SCHEDULE

Families will be notified 45 days in advance of any change in the fee schedule UNLESS a change is necessitated by a substantial change in a major funding source or a catastrophic event.

TUITION SUBSIDIES

A limited number of partial tuition subsidies are available to KU student families each year. Funds may be available for students that meet eligibility criteria outlined in the Application for A, B and C Fee Levels form. Hilltop also receives United Way funding (administered through Douglas County Child Development Association) to assist some families who do not qualify for other subsidy programs.

HOLIDAY FEE POLICY

Because Hilltop incurs salary and other fixed costs even when closed, Hilltop families are charged for holidays when the University is closed. The included holidays are: Labor Day, Thanksgiving and the day after, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, and Independence Day.

EMERGENCY CLOSING FEE POLICY

Because Hilltop incurs salary and other fixed costs even when closed, Hilltop cannot refund fees for those rare days when the center must be closed due to emergencies.

END OF YEAR STATEMENTS

Statements of receipts for the calendar year are available at the front desk after the first of the year for use in preparing your income taxes. It is the responsibility of the parent to stop by and request these forms as not everyone needs these statements.

TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

TRIPS OFF OF THE PREMISES

1. For all classrooms there must be adequate adult coverage in order to leave the premises. When leaving campus to go on field trips not in close proximity to Hilltop, there must be three adults present to assist with supervision, specifically a lead teacher, an assistant teacher, AND a part-time aide, administrator, or a volunteer. In some instances, at the discretion of the administration, one teacher and another Hilltop employee may be authorized to accompany children to specified locations. All trips away from the building must be pre-approved by the administration.
2. The State Health Department requires that all child care centers obtain signed parental permission for any trips off the premises. The general permission form that each parent signs gives Hilltop teachers permission to take children on walking field trips on campus. Children are not allowed to leave Hilltop until this general permission form is signed and returned. Walks to other destinations and all van trips require a separate parental permission form for each trip. If a parent forgets to sign for each separate trip, we will make every effort to contact the parents to get permission. If you do not wish your child to attend the field trip, you will be responsible for care until the class returns. On all field trips teachers take along emergency treatment cards, children's health records and a first aid kit.

TRANSPORTATION AND EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION POLICIES

1. No child will be transported in a private car.
2. Hilltop owns four fifteen-passenger vans. The main purpose for having these vans is to transport school-age children to and from several elementary schools during the school year. The vans are also used to transport children to and from a variety of activities, including field trips. Parents must provide appropriate car seats. See the regulations in the following section.
3. Hilltop staff will not drive a sick or injured child to a doctor's office or hospital. In the event a child must be transported to a doctor's office or hospital and the parents or other designated people on the emergency treatment card are not available, an ambulance will be called. The notarized emergency treatment card you provide at the beginning of each enrollment period gives Hilltop staff permission to call an ambulance for transportation to the hospital and for the hospital to administer emergency care in such cases.
4. Emergency treatment cards and completed child health assessment forms will be taken on all field trips. Should a child require immediate medical attention while on a field trip, Hilltop staff will attempt to reach parents and/or other designees per the emergency treatment card. If a trip to the emergency room or doctor's office is necessary, all health-related forms will accompany the child.
5. When a staff member accompanies a child to the source of emergency care, she/he will remain with the child until a parent or parent's designee assumes responsibility for the child.
6. Any serious injury requiring hospitalization shall be reported by the next working day to the County Health Department and within 72 hours to NAEYC, Hilltop's accrediting agency.

CAR SEAT REGULATIONS

In order to travel in a Hilltop van for a field trip, all families must adhere to the following guidelines:

1. In the rare case that a toddler still weighs less than 20 lbs., he/ she will need a backward facing seat with harnesses.
2. Children who weigh less than 40 lbs. should have a regular forward-facing car seat with restraint harnesses. If a child weighs slightly less than 40 lbs., but has grown too tall for the restraint harnesses on his or her seat, a high-backed booster may be used.

3. Children who weigh over 40 lbs. and are under age 8 must ride in a booster seat. Boosters come in two basic types: high-backed or backless and may be with or without a shoulder belt positioner. The type each child needs is completely dependent upon height. Staying in a high-backed booster as long as possible is the safest choice.
4. Please note that it is possible for a seat belt or booster seat to fit properly in a smaller car, but not in a 15 passenger van due to the height of the seat belts and seats. To fit correctly, even while using a booster, a seat belt must not cut across the child's neck or abdomen. The child must be tall enough that the lap belt rides across the hips while the shoulder belt goes across the chest and is never worn under the arm.
5. All car seats or boosters must have a sticker stating that the seat is federally approved. All of them come with one when purchased. This is Kansas law.
6. All car seats or boosters should be in good repair, be properly functional, and be new enough to adhere to all current safety standards.
7. If a car seat or booster aged child is driven to a field trip by a family member, they must be driven back to Hilltop as well. Car seats and boosters will be installed ONLY at Hilltop. This is due to the sometimes complex arrangement of seats, the safety of a trained installer, and the importance of teachers remaining in supervision of the children while on a field trip.
8. If a family has trouble locating an appropriate car seat for financial or other reasons, the Hilltop office can assist in finding a good seat at low-cost or no-cost.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS AND FAMILIES

PARENT INVOLVEMENT STATEMENT

Parents are encouraged to become involved in their child's program and to actively participate in activities and functions at Hilltop. You are also encouraged to observe at any time and to become friends with the teachers. Parents play an important part in program evaluation and goal setting.

CLASSROOM NOTES TO PARENTS

Most communications are through notes put in the family message sections of the child's cubby. Please check it every day. Please also look daily for messages or reminders posted in the entry bulletin board, classroom bulletin boards, and/or sign in/sign out sheets in classrooms, and through our email list.

PARENTING INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

An important part of Hilltop's mission is to provide our families with information that makes the difficult job of parenting a little easier.

We usually publish a newsletter at least once each semester containing reminders of important upcoming dates, deadlines and events. They also include reports on center activities, useful child development and parenting information, and ideas for fun activities to do with children at home. Families with children in our toddler, preschool, and kindergarten age classrooms will also receive six free issues of Scholastic's Parent & Child Magazine. This excellent magazine contains lots of very useful and interesting information in the areas of child health and safety, nutrition, discipline, intellectual, social-emotional and language development, and provides fun activities for children and families and great ideas for kid-friendly meals and snacks.

Parents may also sign up for our email list so that they can receive e-mail reminders concerning important deadlines and other Hilltop information. Please stop by the office to give us your e-mail address or notify us if your e-mail address changes.

INDIVIDUAL CLASSROOM COMMUNICATION

Because some children arrive before the teachers arrive or leave after teachers leave, teachers for each program have developed certain ways to communicate with parents. In the toddler and two-year-old rooms, teachers check either daily report forms or daily report charts that state how much each child ate, how long he/she slept, and details of diapering or toileting trips. Some teachers also write a summary of the day on their chalkboard or bulletin board. All teachers post their lesson plans near the entrance to their rooms, and will often send letters to parents stating upcoming plans, themes, or special events. A good time to talk to teachers personally for a brief chat is during drop-off and pick-up, as long as they have the opportunity to do so while still supervising the children. If you wish to discuss a topic at length, we can always arrange for the teacher to step away from the classroom or set up a conference.

HILLTOP HAPPENINGS

News and notes of interest to Hilltop families, including information about community programs, events and resources, are posted in the front entry area on the middle shelf. **Reminders about important fee payment and enrollment deadlines are posted on the large bulletin board across from the front door. Please check this bulletin board daily for important messages.**

PARENT MEMBERS OF THE HILLTOP BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Hilltop parents are invited to become board members. Parent board member elections are generally held in the spring, and this is an important way families can support the program and be involved in decision making. Hilltop board members are selected from parents of Hilltop children, University personnel, and persons interested and experienced in early childhood education. Current parent members and a full listing of the board are posted in the front entry area on the middle shelf. At least half of the members of the Board of Directors must be Hilltop parents.

OPEN HOUSE AND PARENT-TEACHER MEETINGS

Open house is scheduled before the first day of the fall semester, so families can become familiar with the school, the teachers, and your child's classroom. Early in the fall semester there will be an evening parent-teacher meeting for adults only which will allow parents to become more acquainted with the staff and to learn specifics about the routine and curriculum. This evening also provides an opportunity for an exchange of ideas pertaining to activities for young children, as well as the chance to ask and answer questions.

CENTER FAMILY EVENTS

We encourage families to take part in a variety of center events including fall parent-teacher nights, classroom parties and field trips. Our annual Hilltop Hustle 5K/1K race and walk is a fun fundraising event held in the spring. If you would like to be a part of event planning for your classroom or the center please let us know. Your help is always appreciated.

PARENT CONFERENCES AND CHILD PROGRESS REPORTS

Parent-teacher conferences will be scheduled at least twice a year to report your child's progress in a vast variety of areas. There will be a sign-up sheet posted in your child's classroom with many time and date choices. A written copy of the conference report will be given to parents and one will be kept in your child's file at Hilltop. In addition to the two scheduled conference per year, special conferences can also be arranged at any time during the year upon parent or staff request. Please contact the lead teacher or director if you would like to schedule a meeting.

POSSIBLE PARENT GROUPS

Parents may request and help organize any type of parent group that interests them. Please talk with an administrator if you wish to organize or participate in a group. We welcome ideas and involvement of this kind!

PARENT OBSERVATIONS

We encourage parents to visit their child's classroom because parents not only have a right but also a responsibility to see what is occurring in the program and to give input when needed. By observing, you will see your child in relation to other children and learn a great deal about their routine at Hilltop. However, parents of very young children are asked not to go into the classroom unless you intend to take the child home at the end of the visit. Young children do not understand why they are not leaving with the parent(s) and it may become very stressful for the child, the teachers, and the other children after the parent leaves. It is often difficult enough to separate once per day, so we strongly discourage doing it a second time.

FAMILY FEEDBACK

Family feedback information is an important part of the evaluation process for all staff and for the program. At least twice a year you will be asked to fill out a parent feedback survey. This is your opportunity to provide input into your child's program, to praise the teachers' efforts, to provide constructive criticism, to evaluate the total program, etc. The teachers, administrators, and Hilltop's Board of Directors take these evaluations very seriously, so please let us hear from all of you!

The results of our annual program evaluation and goal setting process will be reported to families and staff early in the fall semester.

PARENT CONCERNS

This is **YOUR CENTER**, and we are here to serve you and your child the best we can. If something is bothering you, please do not delay in voicing your concerns, as small worries tend to grow if they are not spoken. Please stop by and talk to an administrator at any time, and if they are not available, leave your name and phone number and someone will contact you. The teachers are also available to talk with you, either in the morning, afternoon, or during their planning periods.

PARENT INPUT REGARDING SAFETY

If at any time you should observe a safety hazard in the building, on the playground, or during walks or field trips, please talk to the Executive Director immediately.

MEALS WITH CHILDREN

Parents may eat meals with their children at any time. However, reservations must be made in advance by notifying the office. Because of space limitations and food supplies we limit this to two guests per classroom each day. Breakfast is \$1 and lunch is \$2. Please pay in the office. Also, please remember that it may be difficult for a child who anticipates going home with you after lunch, so delay eating lunch with your child until he/she understands this is only a brief visit. The first month of each semester is a transition time in all classrooms, so we ask that you do not schedule meal visits during this time.

BABYSITTING BY HILLTOP STAFF

Hilltop families looking for child care away from the center (outside of center hours) should approach employees directly or post requests in our office. Employees who are interested in babysitting can then contact the family requesting care, and it is the family's responsibility to make all arrangements with the staff person. Hilltop staff are not allowed to solicit baby-sitting jobs by posting information about themselves in the center, and we do not circulate a list of names and phone numbers.

Full time teaching staff may provide in-home child care as long as the family does not have a child currently enrolled in the teacher's classroom. The personal relationships that are formed when teachers baby-sit for families make it difficult for teachers to remain objective. Real or perceived favoritism can become a problem along with concerns about professional confidentiality. Young children also find it hard to understand and relate to the differing roles of baby-sitter and teacher. It is hard for them to "share" the special person who comes to their home to play and entertain. Please do not put our full-time teachers in this difficult situation by asking them to care for a child enrolled in their classroom.

Hilltop provides an opportunity to post babysitting requests with the understanding that the program has no responsibility for the actions or behavior of any staff person when they are away from the center.

HILLTOP POLICY STATEMENTS ON POSITIVE DISCIPLINE

Discipline is an essential part of child care. Discipline helps children feel secure, meets their needs, and builds self-control and self-esteem. The objective of discipline is to promote behaviors that are beneficial to the child's development and welfare and to change and/or eliminate behaviors that are harmful or distressing to a child or to others. This is different from punishment. Corporal or negative verbal punishment may change children's behaviors, but often through fear. It stresses what children should not do, but rarely teaches them what to do. Children controlled by punishment such as spanking or severe consequences may "behave" to avoid a penalty chosen by the adult. It often teaches children to hide their mistakes, and does not build long lasting inner controls or cooperation. Punishment may also cause the children to focus on revenge rather than on changing behaviors.

Before we examine various techniques adults may use when disciplining, we must first look at the environment. How the environment is set up has a great deal of influence on how most discipline problems can be prevented, greatly reduced or even eliminated. Many times changing the routine, the activities, the room arrangement or the use of space has a profound effect on how children will get along with each other. We work on trying to satisfy each child's need for individual space, for social interaction, for quiet and rest or movement and stimulation, for new materials, for self-directed or teacher directed activities, for age appropriate materials and behavior expectations, or for an abundant amount of love and affection.

The following is from the Discipline Policy given to Hilltop staff:

At Hilltop we use a wide variety of discipline methods. Remember that discipline is most effective when an adult goes to the individual child, bends down to the child's eye level, uses eye contact and simultaneously touches the child's shoulder or arm. Make sure to use a firm, but not angry, voice. We need to get and maintain the child's attention. A primary goal should be to win the child's cooperation. In order to do this we suggest that you use some of the following techniques:

- Use distraction, suggestions or re-direction ("Have you tried..."); distraction works wonders with young children.
- Use quiet, brief, private talks away from other children. Make sure you do not lecture or accuse.
- Use positive statements. ("When... then" or "as soon as...then..."; "When we finish putting away the blocks, then we can go outside.") "If you don't... then we can't..." is negative statement and will not win cooperation.
- Remind children of appropriate behaviors. ("We do not throw. If you have trouble remembering, then you will have to leave the area." "We walk inside." "Remember to use your inside voice.") Model a soft voice.
- Use logical or natural consequences and point out the consequence and why it happened. Abuse a toy/lose the toy is a logical consequence. Consequences should be related to the misbehavior and should be fair.
- With the child's help problem-solve and brainstorm for solutions and then help the child select a solution to try.
- Ignore annoying, unimportant behaviors.
- Remove the child from the area. ("It appears you cannot play in the area right now. You can come back later." "You will have to leave the area for ____ minutes or for the rest of center time.")
- Separate children. ("It appears that you two cannot play together right now. You may either find a solution to your problem or you will need to find different activities.") Some teachers use a timer. When it rings, children can play together again.
- Remove a toy. A child may lose the opportunity to play with a toy for specific period of time.
- Give choices. ("Here are your choices: you may share the blocks or find something else to do. You decide." "You may leave the area by yourself or I'll assist you. You decide.") Choices said in a fair, firm, but friendly way are usually very effective.
- Use positive statements. Tell the children what they should be doing instead of focusing on the negative. Only use "NO" or DON'T" in case of emergencies.

- Use calming music, stories, books or songs.
- Avoid sarcasm, nagging, threatening, name calling, accusing or disclaimers. A disclaimer is a statement such as "Why can't you always do that" after a positive statement.
- Use a great deal of positive reinforcement and encouragement. Be specific and descriptive. ("I see you are really working hard on that puzzle." "Thank you for picking up the blocks." "I'm glad that you remembered to share the book." "I appreciate it when you tell someone you are angry.") Statements such as "use your words" are sometimes too vague. Unconditional statements such as "I think you are a neat kid" are always appreciated by the children.
- Avoid commands or demands that "back a child against a wall". Many children want to appear brave or tough around others and to save face they must defy a teacher. After a calm, implicit direction, break eye contact, turn away briefly and give a child a few seconds or longer to comply. Try to avoid power struggles.
- Use love and physical affection. Touch the child's arm, pat a head, give a hug, and allow a child to sit on your lap or knee. However, some children want you to exclude all other children so don't play favorites or overdo the lap sitting to the exclusion of others.

If the preceding is not effective we use the following:

Sit and Watch: A child may be to stand or sit away from the group for several minutes or until he/she is calm. The purpose is to give the child an opportunity to see appropriate behaviors or appropriate use of materials or to settle down before joining the group. ("You can join us when you feel you can...") The child is sometimes given the responsibility of when to return to the group, but sometimes must be invited to rejoin by a teacher. The child must be in view of an adult.

Time Out: A child who does not respond to the above methods or is repeatedly disruptive or aggressive may need to be further removed from the rest of the class. After a few minutes, the child is encouraged to rejoin the activities after a teacher has redirected the child and briefly discussed appropriate behaviors so that the inappropriate behaviors are not repeated. For severe or repeated problems, a child may be brought to the office to calm down or to be removed from peer attention for inappropriate behavior. All consequences for misbehavior should be logical, developmentally appropriate, and as immediate as possible.

Points to Remember:

1. Always remain calm. If you lose control the children behaving appropriately will feel threatened and the children who are misbehaving will feel they have power over you. Do not let little intimidating things get to you.
2. Go to the child or the problem, sit or squat down to child's level and talk firmly. Unless it is an emergency or you are prevented from getting to the child, never yell or scream across the room as it can berate the child, can humiliate him/her, plus gives the child negative attention in front of peers. Some children like negative attention so do not reinforce it.
3. Maintain a good sense of humor. Laugh a lot and think of entertaining, imaginative, or clever ways to deal with noncompliance.
4. Pretend, sing or repeat poems or rhymes to help during routines, transitions, and clean up. You may find that having an imaginary friend to help with clean up is sometimes fun.
5. If a child says or does something that you do not like, tell the child "I don't like it when you.... Be specific about what bothers you. Use "I" messages.
6. Remain the adult even when you are having fun. Do not let children jump on your back or hit you. Walk away after telling the child that you don't like it when they do that behavior and make sure you make it clear what behavior is acceptable. ("If you would like to be my friend, you may hold my hand.")
7. Always model polite, respectful behavior.

It is Hilltop's policy, as well as a licensing requirement, not to use physical punishment such as hitting or shaking, pushing, pinching, threats, sarcasm, prolonged isolation, denial of meals, or derogatory remarks about the child or the family. Every teacher, aide, and volunteer is familiar with our discipline policy and reads and signs a five page paper describing the methods outlined in this excerpt, but with more details. They agree to follow all of Hilltop's discipline methods and policies.