

# ABC CHILDREN'S ACADEMY

## **Parent Handbook**

Serving Russellville, Dover, Dardanelle, and Clarksville



### **ABC Children's Academy and Developmental Center Inc.**

Amanda Farmer – Regional Director  
[regionaldirector@myabcca.com](mailto:regionaldirector@myabcca.com)

Kristen White – CEO /  
[kristen.white@myabcca.com](mailto:kristen.white@myabcca.com)

Kirk and Dana Warren – Owners  
[dana.warren@myabcca.com](mailto:dana.warren@myabcca.com)

**Central Office – 479-567-5650**

#### **For Day to Day Operations:**

**Pope County Director:**

**Jessica Shelley**

[Russellville@myabcca.com](mailto:Russellville@myabcca.com)

Phone = 479-968-5048

Fax = 479-968-1498

**Yell County Director:**

**Cody Hull**

[Dardanelle@myabcca.com](mailto:Dardanelle@myabcca.com)

Phone = 479-229-2000

Fax = 479-229-2003

**Johnson County Director:**

**Jennifer Shiver**

[Clarksville@myabcca.com](mailto:Clarksville@myabcca.com)

Phone = 479-647-5080

Fax = 479-647-5081

Welcome to ABC Children's Academy and Developmental Center, Inc. We are happy to share with you and your child a positive learning experience. This handbook will provide you with a copy of our policies and procedures to help with a smooth transition into our center. Again, we say, "Welcome". Our doors are always open for visits to authorized guests. We ask that visitors call prior to arrival to schedule an appointment so a staff member can assist you.

**Hours of operation:** Our facilities are open Monday – Friday 6:30 AM to 6:00 PM.

## **Mission Statement**

ABC Children's Academy is committed to providing quality educational services to your children. With parents as partners in Early Childhood Education, ***we can change the world one student at a time.***

Our EIDT facilities give quality priority enrollment to children with need for therapeutic medical necessities. Our ABCSS program provides structured curriculum for children that are three to five years of age to prepare them for transitioning into kindergarten.

Our Tuition-Based and Voucher programs give our families the flexibility they need to enroll!

## **Vision**

ABC Children's Academy and Developmental Center, Inc. will provide a strong, effective, outcome-oriented program that is child-driven with hands-on experiences and structure to maximize kindergarten readiness. We are committed to enhancing development through experiences that encourage learning, honor diversity and respect for the whole person and their relationship with the world.

We believe our work with Early Childhood Education in young children is an investment in the future of America. With parents as partners in research, education, and health our children will achieve higher goals in learning, and positive interaction with their peers and the world in which they live. We strive to create a program with integrity that is dedicated to diversity, caring, professionalism, and an appreciation of the beauty of knowledge.

## **Purpose**

Our purpose is to provide **a safe, healthy, welcoming, and loved environment** for young children with a balance of activities, which are conducive to the individual growth and needs of each child. The center will strive to promote the social, emotional, and physical health and well-being of each child through are professional staff and our daily early educational programs.

## **Our curriculum is designed to:**

- Enhance children's healthy growth and development.
- Strengthen families as the primary nurturer of their children.
- Provide children with educational, health and nutritional services, with emphasis on early literacy, math, and science.
- Linking children and families to needed community services.
- Ensure a well-managed program that promotes the educational, physical & social development of the child and involves parents in decision-making.

**ABC CHILDREN'S ACADEMY** accepts 5 different Funding Sources to provide flexibility, inclusion, and convenience to our families. These are:

1. ABCSS (Arkansas Better Chance School for Success) Program
2. EIDT (Early Intervention Dayhabilitation Treatment) Program
3. Tuition-Based (Out-of-Pocket) Program
4. State-Funded Low-Income Voucher Program
5. Foster Voucher Program

## **ABCSS Program:** **(Arkansas Better Chance School for Success)**

- Our ABCSS classes begin at 7:30 am and end at 2:45 pm Monday through Friday. If you require Before Care (6:30am-7:30am) and/or After Care (3pm-6pm), we offer this program at a fee for service. Please see the Director or Call our Central Office for additional information if seeking these services.
- This program is in session from August – May each year, with limited spots for Summer-care enrollment. It follows a calendar like that of the School District located in your area. Most holidays and conference days are the same as the School Districts. In some instances, the dates may vary depending on the situation. Classes will be offered no less than 178 per school year for your families.
- ABC Program is an Income-Based, State-Funded Preschool Program and is free to families that qualify from 7:30am-2:45pm. For qualifications, please refer to the parent board at your center or call our Central Office at 479-567-5650.
- If a family meets the income guidelines, then the child must turn 3 years old by August 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year. This is a state mandated rule, and we are unable to make exceptions. Other enrollment requirements are:
  - a. *A copy of the child's birth certificate* (hospital copy or original accepted)
  - b. *A copy of the child's Social Security Card*
  - c. *A current/up-to-date immunization record*
  - d. *Proof of income:* (Copy of –)
    - a. Last year Tax return or W-2
    - b. 30 days worth of Current and Consecutive Paycheck Stubs
    - c. Notarized Letter of No-Employment (ABCCA Central Office has notaries available)
  - e. *Current Physical* (must include hearing and vision)
  - f. *ABCSS Addendum* (Provided by ABCCA)
- **IN-KIND:** The ABC program depends on local community and parent support for 40% of its operating costs. This simply means that parents help us meet this requirement by volunteering in the classroom, donating consumable and other supplies, and helping in other ways. However, in-kind donations are not a requirement for enrollment. We do encourage and appreciate any and all parental participation of any kind in our program.

## **General Handbook for ALL PROGRAMS:**

**ADMISSION:** To enroll a child you may be asked to meet with the Director to discuss your childcare needs and to view the center. You will need to complete all required forms and provide required documentation. **\*\*\*The parent that enrolls the child, known as the Primary Care Giver, has official and final say regarding the actions involving that child at our center, unless otherwise advised with a court order.** This includes but is not limited to...an authorize person to pick up child.

Our facility cannot deny access of any child to their biological parent (must be present on Birth Certificate) unless a Court Order is presented to the facility and on file. Access is defined as visiting the child at the center – not removing the child from the center. If Parents argue over who is allowed to pick up the child – our center

will be forced to petition for dismissal from center to protect all staff and families, we serve. Our Preschool cannot control parent's visitation of child as parental rights exceed our rights unless the visitation causes a risk or disrupts the structure of the school day.

- **Risks** would include but are not limited to...disagreements of court papers, kidnapping risks or accusations, stated visitation conflicts or need for our staff to supervise visitation – as our staff do not have skilled training in this area.
- **Registered Sex Offenders:**
  - Non-biological parents who are registered sex offenders are prohibited to be on your child's pick-up authorization list.
  - Biological parents who are also registered sex offenders must notify administration and arrangements shall be made at drop and pick up, as necessary. You will be required to wait outside of our facility for our staff to bring your child to you. Thank you for understanding our policies.

**ADVOCACY SERVICES:** More information for Resources available for families on our parent Board but some of the networking options are: Co-operative Extensions, Chamber of Commerce, Event centers for graduation, Fire and Police stations, Mental health agencies (Counseling associates and CSI), School Districts, local temporary evacs centers (local churches), as well as funding partners (local universities and hospitals)

**AGE REQUIREMENTS:** We service children from 6 weeks of age to 12 years old across all counties. Our ABCSS program services children 3 years – 4 years old (3 yr before Aug 1<sup>st</sup> of current year). However, if some children in School-age program are too developmentally mature for our program, we may limit the age to 8-10 years of age. Each child must be free of contagious diseases, in good general health, and current on all required immunizations (unless State Exemption paperwork is on file). School age children are not required to have Immunization Records in their files.

**ALLERGIES/FOOD SUBSTITUTIONS:** A Doctor's Note stating a child's allergies is required for our nutrition staff to alter servings.

- Our center makes every attempt to be peanut and tree nut free in that we do not serve products with actual chunks or pieces of nuts in them; however, some of our products are made in factories where other products containing nuts may be manufactured such that "traces" of nuts and or byproducts may be on the labels of our products as a disclaimer. It is important to ABCCA that our parents are aware of this disclaimer as well.

**ALTERNATIVE METHODS OF INSTRUCTION (AMI) PACKETS:** AMI packets are packets that follow our high-quality curriculum, and the intent is to provide a continuum of learning for our staff, family and children 's quest for kindergarten readiness. Standardly, Arkansas Better Chance Programs are allowed 2 AMI days per year. In the case of National emergencies accompanied by declaration from the State or Federal government, a grantee of additional AMI days may be allowed based on individual circumstances. An AMI day is strongly encouraged to bring families together for a fun study session and the paperwork will be required to be returned to school for credit for the school day. Alternative Methods of Instruction Packets (AMI) will be used only on emergency basis or inclement weather cases and teachers will be readily available for questions in some familiar mode such as on-site professional day via center phone; or in-person conference; or by email. Our goal is to provide the best high quality early educational experience for your child.

**APPEALS:** Please see the parent information section of each center for any appeal information needed for USDA, EIDT or OPTUM screening needs. Our friendly staff is always ready to help as well in any matter. The contact information for DCCECE licensing is 1-800-445-3316. The contact information for DPSQA (our EIDT program) is 501-682-1001. Patrons have the right to appeal any decision.

**ARKIDS FIRST INFORMATION:** ABC Children’s Academy provides information and applications concerning the ARKIDS First Program. For your convenience, applications are in the Parent Center of each facility.

**ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE:** Parents must sign their child in and out every day utilizing our Procure Connect System. Your Director or Onsite Lead will make sure this procedure is set up as part of enrollment. Due to the safety risk, dropping a child off or picking your child up without using our Procure Connect electronic system is prohibited and we reserve the right to refuse acceptance of the drop if not completed. Please understand that you may be asked to show your I.D. upon pick-up if the staff member at the door has not seen you or the person designated to pick up your child. The I.D. must match the call sheet with the person’s name and date of birth, provided by the Primary Caregiver, to pick up the child.

For the safety of your child, the parent and/or guardian is responsible for escorting the child to and from the facility. Never allow your child to leave the building without an adult or to run into / through the driveway alone. Never take a child out over or through the playground fence. Always enter the playground through the building, if the facility has an Open-Door Pick-Up/Drop-off Policy. This is for the SAFETY of all children!

- **Parent / Visitor Policy:** We always encourage authorized Parents and family members to be interactive with their child’s early education. With historical pandemics across the Nation, virtual meetings have become our new normal. However, our staff will be happy to connect face-to-face safely with scheduled visits or parent-teacher conferences. ABCCA has a protected Closed-door policy to ensure public health and safety for all, please ring our doorbell and a greeter will assist you. At certain facilities, an Open-Door Drop-off/Pick-up Only procedure may be in place. This means that the doors will remain unlocked for busy drop-off/pick-up times for entrance to parents but will remain locked for the other periods of the day for the safety of the children. All parent feedback and concerns can be addressed on an individual basis by scheduling an appointment and a relationship of trust and safety to all children will be established. Due to background check requirements, the center cannot be used as a means for scheduled custodial visits as this is not the intent of our educational program.
- **Pandemic Situations:** Should there be a Pandemic situation in the US or State of Arkansas– an alternate plan of operation will occur that limits parents and visitors and adjust operations with a heightened sense of safety. During Pandemic, ABCCA will follow guidance of the local and state authorities – see specific Pandemic procedures and Ready to Learn Plans. All children, staff members, therapists, and parents shall participate in a health screening prior to entering our facilities.

**ATTENDANCE:** A child needs to be present 5 days a week, if at all possible. **An average daily attendance of 85 percent is required.** Our program hours are from **7:30 – 3:00 each day**, with Before care offered from 6:30am-7:30am and Aftercare offered from 3:00pm-6:00pm. No child shall be at the center more than 10 hours a day. **Most of the instructional portion of the day occurs from 8:00 AM to 12:00 PM each day.**

**If your child will be absent or late, please notify the center by 8:00 AM. Because routine is critical to the development of the children, children will not be allowed to arrive after 9:00 AM without calling the facility and making them aware prior to 9:00 AM. If a child is approved to drop off after 9:00 AM, the parent is**

**required to have fed the child breakfast.** Due to therapeutic necessities of those children in the **EIDT program,** exceptions to the 9am policy can be made by ABCCA Central Office, if arriving to the facility after 9:00am without notice is not a habit. **If this occurs, employees must call Central Office prior to turning the EIDT enrolled child away for the day.**

Children learn and thrive when well rested and well fed. When children arrive late, they have trouble sleeping or napping during the center's scheduled nap time - anywhere from 11:30 - 2:00pm depending on your child's room. Frequent tardiness or absenteeism will lead to a parent conference with the program administrator. Should tardiness or attendance not improve after a parent meeting then ABCCA will have the right to move towards dismissal from our program.

**BEHAVIORAL GUIDANCE:** Love and understanding are the best forms of Behavioral Guidance; however, the safety and wellbeing of each child requires a degree of order. A safety agreement signed upon enrollment by parents or caregivers is a requirement of participation in our program. ABCCA safety agreement further details our program guidelines in regards to anti-bullying policies and other factors that preserve the integrity of our program. When misbehavior occurs, we consider the social, emotional, and physical development of the child and use appropriate techniques that may include positive intervention, redirection, restriction from certain play areas, and/or moment of time to breath and gain the feeling of love and safety in hopes to manage and guide behaviors. Continuing problems may require a conference with the parent to decide a course of action. Cooperation and a supportive attitude between parents and the Center can usually redirect behaviors not acceptable in group care.

- **\*\*Reminder that corporal punishment to include spanking the bottom region or spitting of hands is not allowed in a childcare center per State regulations. This action is prohibited by parent or staff.**

**BITING POLICY:** Biting is approached seriously by the center, but we also understand that biting can be a normal process of development in a Toddler as well. However, biting could be an anti-social behavior caused by reasons such as 1) development stages 2) emotional difficulty 3) teething or 4) other illnesses. When a child bites, the reason for biting should be identified so that a behavioral plan can be created. The Co-op also has a Behavioral Therapist that may come into the classroom and give ideas to Teachers and Parents about strategies to help with biting as well. Possible corrective measures could be, but not limited to medication for teeth and gums, oral sensory input ideas needed from therapy services, moving the child up to a more age-appropriate group, physician check for illnesses or dental problems, or redirection to another activity. Employees shall document a child incident/accident form each time a child bites for each child (the biter and the one who was bitten) for each parent to sign respectively. We are careful not to disclose who bit or was bitten. We use phrases like..."was bitten by another child..." ("bit another child today, please discuss with him/her about biting) After a child has bitten 3 occasions, a conference will be scheduled for the parent of the child that bit, for the teacher and director to discuss corrective measures to take which may include a recommendation for Doctor's visit to rule out ear infection and/or a referral for special ideas from a Occupational Therapist. If approved, a child may be sent home, not as punishment, but to take a break from the situation if biting is aggressive and severely injuring other children. After the behavioral plan is implemented, and the biting does not cease or improve within three weeks' time, dismissal will be considered. Children in the ABCSS and/or Voucher funded Program(s) will require approval from the state regarding dismissal.

**BIRTHDAYS:** ABCCA will celebrate children’s birthdays on the last Friday of each month for all children who have a birthday during that month. If the last Friday is a scheduled day that we are closed, an alternate Friday will be designated, and parents will be notified at the beginning of the month. Parents may take birthday cake, cookies, etc. to the center to celebrate their child’s birthday. Any food items used must be purchased in its original container or purchased in a licensed facility such as a bakery. Celebrating birthdays is an option, not a requirement of parents.

**CAMERAS:** ABCCA does not utilize cameras directly in our classrooms as our team hires well-qualified and trusted staff who are inspired to use their creativity and spontaneity for teaching. Our management team monitors classrooms regularly and face to face monitoring allows our teachers coaching beyond what cameras can do. We want our staff up and in the classrooms for teaching support and not behind a desk watching cameras. ABCCA does support the policy of cameras not directly viewing children for example on payment areas or entry and exit doors where affordable for additional risk prevention. ABCCA Admin facility is the only facility with external non-classroom-based cameras. We feel parents have the right to know if their child is being recorded or not. Our ABCCA policy is that we do not directly view or record children and feel this prevents the risk of hackers and privacy issues with cameras.

**CAR SEATS:** All Children must be transported in appropriate car seats. Unfortunately, our ABCCA facilities are not able to store your family’s car seats. Storing car seats causes crowded hallways / lobbies that is against fire-codes and has increased risk for the seats to become mixed up with another child’s or lost. Additionally, the time it takes the person picking up the child to remove and/or install a car seat backs up our drop off and pick-up line. The best practice would be for the family to work with whoever is picking up their child to have an appropriate car seat buckled in place ready when picking up your child.

**CHARGES:** Our Center's fees and charges shall be posted on our parent board. Charges are subject to change with the fluctuating economy. ABCCA has a variety of programs. Should you be participating in our Tuition based program – please note all charges are direct drafted each Monday of the week your child attends. Direct draft is the ONLY form of payment accepted and is a condition of enrollment. Financial Contracts must be signed and filed for attendance whether your funding source is privately paid or paid by the state as nominal fees may occur for registration or field trips. These fees shall be fully disclosed on our parent boards. Again, ABCCA requires Direct Draft of Childcare fees through Tuition Express as the method of payment for enrollment.

**CHILD’S FILE:** The enrolling parent has control of the child’s file. When custody disputes occur, a subpoena is the best practice for either parent to request file copies. Our children’s files can be lengthy in quantity. At times, parents request copies of files for court proceedings. This task can be extensive and could take up to 30 days; although, we will try to get the information to the parents sooner. The copies are 50 cents per page to copy as most of the paperwork such as hurts and hugs reports are already given to families.

**CLOTHING/SHOES:** Parents should send an extra change of seasonally appropriate clothing with the child’s name in permanent marker to be kept at the center. Clothing should be easily managed by the child for their toileting needs. Overalls and one-piece jump suits are difficult for children to manage and not recommended. No belts unless your child can unfasten and fasten it without help. PLEASE MAKE SURE YOUR CHILD’S NAME IS ON ALL COATS AND SWEATERS WORN TO SCHOOL! Tennis shoes are the best. We are active and shoes are important. Comfortable shoes good for running, jumping, and climbing are necessary. Slick bottom shoes are dangerous. Sandals without a strap, flip-flops and cowboy boots are not allowed. Regardless, a pair of shoes

for all ages (if the child is walking), shall be brought to school each day so that the child may participate in outdoor activities.

**COMMUNICABLE DISEASE SITUATIONS:** ABCCA follows all Governmental Policies related to any Local epidemic or National Pandemic situations. All precautions shall be posted for families which may include but not limited to a closed-door policy with utilization of a car rider drop off and pick up line. Additional safety measures will be implemented in a specific plan which will be linked to our company website: [www.abcchildrensacademy.com](http://www.abcchildrensacademy.com). Alleviations of charges such as “after-care” may not apply unless a long-term closure greater than two weeks is ordered by the Arkansas Dept. of Health, local, State or Federal Authorities.

- **INFECTIOUS DISEASE POLICIES:** Our goal is to provide a safe, high quality learning environment that fosters growth and preparation for kindergarten. The founding principle is safety from the spread of infectious disease. Please see our Health policy. Spitting and scratching can lead to the spread of infectious disease. Our infectious disease policy or safety agreement policy is such that scratching and spitting in other mouths or open areas will require a meeting with Parents or caregivers to discuss a behavior plan that is safe for the learning environment of all parties.
- **Catastrophic Circumstances:** ABCCA, only in low critical shortage situations, may be forced to temporarily close a classroom for a day or week depending on CDC and national data.

**COMMUNICATION:** ABCCA exists to create a positive safe environment for early childcare education. Professional and positive communication with children, staff and parents collectively is a key component to building connections and fostering learning. All communication whether written, verbal or electronic should be non-threatening as a contingency of enrollment. If a parent has a complaint, please ask to speak to our managerial staff as we will diligently address any parental concerns with timeliness and respect. At no time are parents or caregivers permitted to address other children on our premises with concern.

**COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:** ABCCA has a Community Involvement Plan posted on our Parent Board which incorporates at least one Activity per month that creates educational bonds between Children and their Community. Each Facility has the Community activity of the month posted on the front door of the center and encourages Parent and family participation. Exploring the world around us is a strong form of social acceptance and early education.

**COMPLIANCE MONITORING:** Childcare facilities are subject to compliance monitoring by the Division of Childcare and Early Childhood Education (DCCECE), EIDT facilities regulated by the Division of Provider Services and Quality Assurance (DPSQA), and the Arkansas Better Chance Program is duly regulated by DCCECE and the Department of Education. Results of these monitoring visits can be found on the Better Beginnings Website located at [www.arbetterbeginnings.com](http://www.arbetterbeginnings.com) under the Find Childcare Tab. Or available upon request onsite at your child’s facility.

**CONFIDENTIALTY:** We uphold the respect for other’s privacy with high regard. The hallways and classroom doorways are not always private but if you need to conference in a private area – one will be provided for you. ABCCA would like to disclose that your child’s medical or confidential information will only be shared with relevant staff or contracted agencies for the purpose of safe programming operations, therapy services needed, increasing developmental and cognitive education and/ or payment of services if indicated. Due to the privacy of other families and laws around civil rights of others, there is absolutely no video or audio recordings of our children or staff or other family or associated partners without written authorization from the owner of ABC Children’s Academy.



**COOPERATIVE EXTENSIONS:** Educational Service Cooperatives are part of the Arkansas Dept of Education and required to monitor children in Arkansas, so no child is left behind. Cooperative Extensions are committed to and strives toward academic excellence for all students by enhancing effective teaching, developing leadership, offering technical assistance, providing extensive support, and promoting state and regional initiatives to all participating school districts. ABCCA is required to coordinate our patron's information with all cooperative extensions and this handbook exert is formal notification that your child's information may be shared with cooperative extensions as a matter of developmental and educational success for your child – upon enrollment in our facility.

**DIAPER BAGS / DIAPERING:** Our center allows disposable diapers only. The use of disposable diapers instead of cloth diapers lends for a more efficient diapering process as well as the highest quality in sanitary conditions. For safety reasons, Licensure has recommended we ONLY allow **TRANSPARENT or MESH Diaper Bags or Backpacks for children 0-3 years old**, due to potential to hide hazardous materials. Please bring enough diapers and wipes, as well as a change of clothes for your child. Those items will be stored in a cubby or on a shelf designated for your child. Should our center have to use our company stock of diapers or wipes if the parent lacks bringing enough, a \$2 charge per diaper and \$4 charge for a package of wipes shall be added to your account.

**DRESS CODE:** Children are required to come to the center fully dressed ready for learning. Dress your child in comfortable weather, appropriate play clothes that are easily managed by your child for their toileting needs. Overalls and one-piece jump suits are difficult for children to manage and not recommended. No belts unless your child can unfasten and fasten it by without help. It is a requirement to put shorts under skirts because there is a lot of tumbling and floor play that occurs in childcare. Each child needs a change of clothing clearly marked with your child's name and placed in a small paper bag to be kept at the center. ABC Children's Academy requires children who are not potty-trained to bring diapers or pull-ups to avoid unsanitary conditions for other children. Our Center cannot be responsible for Lost or stolen items.

**DRILLS/CODES:** Tornado and Fire drills shall be practiced monthly. An Evacuation procedure shall be practiced in the case of a Terroristic attack requiring total center transport. Code Lock-Down and Code Intruder are to be practiced every 3 months. In the case of an authentic mandated code, ABCCA's Data Specialist will notify parents/guardians of all safety codes via ProCare message once authorization is given by authorities and the building is secure. It is imperative that parents register an email and phone carrier upon enrollment, as this is the way that parents are notified of URGENT alerts.

**DRIVEWAY:** Please enter the driveway with as much caution as possible. Please do not stop in the entrance of the drive, pull forward and walk back. Be courteous to one another. Each center may have a drop off and pick up line available during the school year. Car-rider lines will be posted at each center. If you are using the drop off and pick up line, you will still be asked to sign a clipboard, so we have the most accurate count of person(s) dropping off and picking up children.

**DROP POLICY:** Please review your financial contract which reminds our families that to drop our childcare services, we must have a 1-week written notice via "DROP FORM" must be completed, so that ABCCA has an opportunity to extend services to an alternate family and not lose out on funding. No Refunds for week/weeks charged without notice will be issued.

**EMERGENCIES:** In the case of an Emergency or Accident, our director's will call 911 if they feel your child is in danger. We will also call the parents. If there is a question as to the severity of the Incident, our directors are authorized to err on the side of your child's safety. If an Ambulance responds and the Paramedics do not feel it is an immediate crisis, they usually wait until parents arrive to transport the child. Our insurance will pick up additional coverage after the child's insurance is filed if the incident is a result of an accident on our premises only.

**EMERGENCY CARE FOR PATRONS:** All centers have first responders or trained staff as an emergency resource. ABCCA employees a few on-staff registered nurses. Should your child need extended nursing duties (ex: tube feeding, suctioning) then we can accommodate those needs. Our centers are not human development centers, such that we do not provide one on one total Nursing care; however, we gladly open our doors for your child's personal care nurse to participate in our program day if total one on one nursing care is needed.

**ENROLLMENT:** Each child must have one and only one enrolling parent or caregiver, that is the foundation for decisions about the child's account and other related matters. Should the family be divorced, it is the responsibility of the enrolling individual to pay for childcare services and then in turn collect from the non-custodial individual. Children only have one financial account. Likewise, unless there is an ex parte order in place restricting visitation from one biological parent to the specific child – each biological parent should not place restrictions on pick up and drop off or visiting the child at preschool. The daycare teachers cannot be mediators for children. Disgruntle domestic disputes involving the preschool and the children will be discussed with the Director in order to provide a peaceful and safe place for all families.

**EQUAL RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITY DISCLOSURE STATEMENT:** ABC Children's Academy, and Developmental Center, Inc. does not discriminate (employee, child, or family) against race, color, religious creed, sex, age, handicap, or other factors not related to enrollment or the needs of job performance. Each employee and family will be treated on his or her own merits.

**EVACUATIONS:** In the case of an onsite emergency – your child will be transported to a safe location, and you will be contacted on the numbers indicated on your application. A note will be posted on the door with the address and number of where your child was taken. If there is a risk of health concerns, your child will be transported in our staff's personal vehicles and may not have proper car seats based on urgency to evacuate. In these cases, the owner/director attempts to obtain a police escort for safety of transport.

**FIELD TRIPS / TRANSPORTATION:** Each field trip will be posted indicating place, day, time, and money needed if any. Parents will be asked to sign a field trip roster giving permission for their child to participate in the activity. Children will be transported in the center's vans in car seats buckled in a seat belt, accompanied by adequate staff. A roster of the children in each van will be kept. Due to seatbelt guidelines from the National Highway of Transportation and Safety Assoc. – a child must be 4 years of age in order to be transported by our booster seats. We will have in-house community activities for our children 3 years of age and younger. Charges for field trips vary based on activity and shall be billed on Monday the week after the field trip is scheduled.

- **School-Age Child Pick-Up:** It is the responsibility of the child and the School District to ensure that the child being picked up for afterschool care gets on the ABCCA van, as the school districts have disallowed ABCCA vans from waiting in pick-up line due to the back-up of traffic. All children that enter the ABCCA van at pick-up and drop-off are accounted for on ABCCA roster. If a child is going to be absent from school that day, it is preferred that parents call the ABCCA facility so that we know to not be expecting them at Pick-Up that day. Children that do not get on the ABCCA van and ABCCA was not

notified earlier in the day, ABCCA will notify parents via phone call once the van arrives back to the facility, as they are unable to wait at the school district.

- Fieldtrips require an added level of safety and supervision such that if a child needs extra supervision that is not available by Preschool staff, their parent or guardian will be asked to attend fieldtrip with the child to prevent any injury or incident from occurring and allowing the child to participate in the community outing as well. Some examples of safety concerns are running from the teacher trying to escape areas, unfastening seatbelts, or making attempts to open van doors, unable to transition in line without leaving the line to hide or hitting and/or physical harm to teachers or peers when asked to follow safety directions to name a few examples. Should the extra staff or parents not be able to attend, unfortunately, the child for their own safety and well-being will have to remain at the center in an alternate classroom which usually is a fun and exciting treat as well.

**FINANCIAL CONTRACTS AND CHARGES:** Some programs with ABCCA are on a fee-based payment system and subjected to a signed financial contract from enrolling parents or guardians. Please refer to your financial contracts for more details of payment terms. One highlight emphasized in this parent handbook section is the terms of non-reduced fees for holidays. Our staff work tremendously hard and get only a few paid days off a year. Our parents usually agree that a rested teacher makes for a happy teacher. We have found that it helps to outline to parents on the forefront to budget and know that fees are consistent through the year thus paying for the Three days off at Thanksgiving or Christmas or other holidays (though tough at times because children do not attend those days) come well deserved for our teachers. This explanation helps parents to understand.

**LATE CHARGES:** A late charge of \$5.00 for any part of 10 minutes will be due for time after 6:00 unless prior arrangements have been made. A late charge will also be applied for children that attend greater than 10 hours a day.

- a. **DECLINE FEES:** There will be an additional \$30 decline fee added to each declined transaction. ABCCA also has to pay financial institutions decline fees when our patrons' accounts do. not clear such that waiving decline fees for previously agreed upon charges is not permissible.

**FOOD:** Children are served a nutritious breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack daily. Please do not send any candy, gum, soda, or prepared fast food unless approved by the center for special occasions.

**HAPPY TRASH:** Happy trash, your throw away "junk", can become a means of creative expression in the classroom. Check with your child's teacher for special needs such as:

- \*Colorful scraps of fabric
- \*Tissue paper
- \*magazines
- \*Brown paper bags
- \*catalogs
- \*clothes pins
- \*Anything that you think we could use
- \*newspapers
- \*paper towel rolls
- \*film canisters
- \*items such as lace, tape, buttons, etc.
- \*empty containers-coffee cans, Pringles cans
- \*thread spools

**HEALTH POLICY/ILLNESS:** To control the spread of communicable illnesses among children and staff, health policies are necessary. A full health screening (aka well-child physical) is performed by a doctor or a doctor's assistant is required before entering the ABCSS or EIDT program.

- a. **IMMUNIZATION:** All children must be current on their immunizations prior to enrollment and must remain current to stay in the program. The only exception to this is that the child must have an State-Exemption on file. Your child's immunization record may be checked on the national registry.
- b. **DAILY HEALTH CHECKS:** On arrival, your child will have a daily health check for obvious signs of illness or injury. Please report any symptoms of illness your child may have had. Children displaying symptoms of contagious illness and children who are not well enough to participate in daily activities will not be admitted or sent home upon discovery.
- c. **COMMUNICABLE ILLNESS:** Parents are also required to notify the staff if their child has been exposed to a communicable illness so that appropriate precautions to prevent the spread of the illness can be taken, and so that parents of children can be notified if the exposure will affect their children.
- d. **NOTIFICATION OF ILLNESS:** Parents will be notified if their child becomes ill, where they are required to be sent home from the center, and parents will be given a **30 minute** grace period to pick up their child. After thirty minutes, staff will begin calling the emergency pick up numbers on your call sheets. Please arrange emergency personnel if your job does not allow you the benefit of taking off to pick up your sick child without penalty. This protects all the children and staff in the center. Until the child is taken home, efforts will be made to isolate the sick child from the other children. If your child is sent home for a contagious illness, fever, or rash that can be treated with medication, they cannot return for **24 hours after medication starts and a Doctors Note, the child must also be fever free for a full 24 hours before returning to the facility.**
  - PLEASE KEEP TELEPHONE NUMBERS CURRENT AND UPDATED DAILY SO THAT SOMEONE IS AVAILABLE IN CASES OF EMERGENCIES.
- e. **MEDICATIONS:** Medications can be given at the center only if ABSOLUTELY necessary. For the safety of all our children, medications must be given directly to the Person-In-Charge! Prescription medications will only be given if prescribed three times a day. Please ask your doctor to prescribe once or twice daily treatments if possible. If prescribed once or twice a day, parents are expected to administer the medication at home. The medication must be in the original container with the prescription label. All medications must be prescribed by a doctor; (OTC) medication (Children's Liquid Tylenol / Ibuprofen, Benadryl / Hydrocortisone cream) will ONLY be given at the Nursing staff's discretion and after parent conference. Prescription medication is required to be locked in the nurses or site lead's office. Administration of medication to a child should always have an additional staff member as a witness. Parent's MUST complete a medication form before ANY medication can be administered.
- f. **ILLNESS CRITERIA:** Licensing regulations state that children may be sent home or denied admission based on, but not limited to the following symptoms:
  1. Temperature of 101° F or higher
  2. Impetigo – red, oozing, erosion capped with a golden yellow crust that appears “stuck on.”
  3. Scabies – crusted wavy like ridges and/or tunnels in the webs of the fingers, hand, wrist, and trunk.
  4. Ringworm – flat, spreading red-outer ring shaped lesions.
  5. Suspected Chicken Pox
  6. Head Lice
  7. Culture-Proven Strep Throat – that has not been treated for at least 24 hours.
  8. Suspected Conjunctivitis (pink eye) – red, watery eyes with thick yellowish/green discharge.
  9. Persistent Diarrhea – parents will be notified if a child **has two watery or abnormal stools in one day** and will be required to pick the child up immediately if the child has a third watery or abnormal stool in one day.
  10. Vomiting – two or more instances, NOT related to food or diet change.
  11. Suspicious or unusual skin rashes, skin eruptions, or discharges.
  12. Severe cold symptoms accompanied by persistent coughing, fever, sore throat, with yellow/green discharge from the nose, eyes, or mouth.
  13. Unusual changes in behavior: A child who does not feel well enough to participate in the usual daily activities, including going outside to the playground.

- g. **RETURNING FOLLOWING ILLNESS:** A child may return to school after an illness only when their presence will not endanger the health of the other children and when they are well enough to participate in the regularly scheduled daily activities. A child may return when:
1. 24 hours fever free without fever reducing medications.
  2. Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea has subsided for 24 hours
  3. If an antibiotic has been given over a 24-hour period for known strep-throat, pinkeye, impetigo, or ringworm
  4. Chicken pox lesions are crusted, usually five to ten days after onset
  5. Scabies is under treatment. Parent must bring bottle or doctor's note for proof of treatment
  6. Lice are under treatment, nits are REMOVED, no live bugs or nits are present. Parents must bring bottles in for proof of treatment.
  7. Conjunctivitis treatment (eye drops) that have occurred for 24 hours and the eyes are no longer discharging
  8. The child feels well enough to participate in daily activities, including outdoor play.
  9. ABCCA has nurses on staff that may assess your child's health care needs. A doctor's note may be required to return to school should symptoms show contagious factors, or our staff need clarification on doctor's orders.

**HOLIDAYS:** The center is closed for ALL facilities:

1. New Year's Day
2. Memorial Day
3. July Fourth
4. Labor Day
5. Wednesday before Thanksgiving Day - Friday after Thanksgiving
6. Christmas Eve - The Day after Christmas (or the day of observance thereof)
7. First Friday of each August and April for Training.

**\*\*Holidays/ Snow Days / Public School Breaks / Training days are not exempt from payment. Rates may vary on these weeks of care based on your routine payment versus needs for care as regulated by public school closings.**

**IMMUNIZATIONS:** Up –to-Date Immunizations records -or- your Doctor's signature on a State approved Immunization waiver form is required within two weeks of enrollment to continue enrollment with ABCCA.

**INCLEMENT WEATHER:** If the public school closes due to hazardous road conditions in winter weather, our Arkansas Better Chance program will close as well. Our Tuition Based program will open at 9:00am-4:00pm for those parent's that need services for work that day unless the roads are so hazardous that it would endanger employees to travel. **PARENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK FOR UPDATES.** Please call each county's admin center before you make a trip to town to make sure staff was able to make it to work with the winter roads to travel. Inclement weather days are not excluded from payment as they are not predictable, and our centers will make every attempt to open.

**INFANT FEEDING:** Parents must bring in at least four bottles each morning that are clean and ready to be used. Infant rooms are designed with hand-washing sinks and the Department of Health does not allow bottles to be washed in hand-washing sinks. Therefore, ABCCA cannot guarantee there will be enough evening staff to wash bottles in the appropriate areas, outside of the classrooms. All bottles should be taken home each day and washed at home, then sent back to school clean for the next day. Should your child be on medically prescribed nipple flow per PCP, our facility is required to follow that medical plan as a contingency of enrollment. If you forget the bottles, parents are required to plan for bottles to be brought to school immediately. Storing of Bottles at school is prohibited as it may lead to increased contamination verses washed daily at home.

**INFECTIOUS DISEASE POLICIES:** Our goal is to provide a safe, high quality learning environment that fosters growth and preparation for kindergarten. The founding principle is safety from the spread of infectious disease. Please see our Health policy. Spitting and scratching can lead to the spread of infectious disease. Our infectious disease policy or safety agreement policy is such that scratching and spitting in other mouths, face, or open areas will require a meeting with Parents / Caregivers to discuss a behavior plan that is safe for the learning environment of all parties.

**KINDERGARTEN READINESS AND TRANSITIONS:** Each center has a Kindergarten Readiness and Transition Plan posted on the Parent Board. At least four times a year, ABCCA presents our children and families with an activity that makes a smoother transition to kindergarten. Activities include familiarizing children with actual experiences at a Kindergarten building including but not limited to: library, cafeteria trays, milk cartons, large hallways, standing in line or meeting the teachers.

**PARENT ADVISORY BOARD:** Each County Director is responsible for locating, encouraging, and facilitating a Parent from their County that would meet at least twice a year and present the county Directors with ideas, theories or needs for training areas that ABCCA could sponsor for our Parents. A sign in sheet should be logged for parent meetings. WE LOVE OUR PARENTS and hope we can establish an Advisory Board that will use our facilities in the evenings so ABCCA can better serve your specific needs.

**PARENT INVOLVEMENT:** ABCCA has a Parent Involvement Plan posted on our Parent Board which incorporates at least one Activity per month that creates educational bonds between Children and their Parents and/or Extended Involvement. Each Facility has the parent activity of the month posted on the front door of the center.

**MEALS:** This center participates in the Federally Funded Child Nutrition Program, and we provide balanced meals and snacks for your child daily. No food may be brought to the center unless prior arrangements are made with the Director. This is to protect other children who have allergies and to maintain compliance with CACFP that all children receive a well-balanced meal. Enrollment into this facility is the agreement of this meal policy by caregiver.

- a. **CIVIL RIGHTS:** Civil rights are an integral component to child nutrition programs to ensure non-discrimination based on the six classes of race, sex, age, color, national origin, and disability. Civil rights certifications are made upon application and assured during participation in the Child and Adult Care Food Program. A civil rights complaint form is in each parent center at your site.
- b. **ALLERGIES:** A list of your child's allergies shall be kept in the classroom as well as with the Nutrition staff, under a cover sheet. We make sure outside food is not accepted to protect those children with allergies. Exclusion or Segregation of Students shall not occur for children with allergies. A Medical Need must be described in the Doctor's Note to exclude foods from children's meals.
- c. **PEANUT BUTTER:** Due to the large number of Peanut Allergies, we are not allowing Peanut Butter in the Buildings. However, Families should be aware that we may have products with Peanut oils in them.
- d. **THICKENED LIQUIDS:** If your child requires thickened liquids for medical wellness, a detailed order from your child's physician is required to be kept on file with specifications for the thickened consistency along with a copy of your child's swallow study. At no time is our staff allowed to deviate from this physician order even with parental consent. If a parent tells us that their child no longer needs thickened liquids, ABCCA is required to have a physician's note detailing orders to stop thickening liquid. We cannot stop simply because parents no longer thicken liquid at home. If our facility is not supplied by parents or caregiver the thickened product to follow the doctor's order, our

facility can NOT provide services to your child until the parent brings the thickened product prescribed by your child's physician. Our staff is unpermitted to deviate from physician's order and due to a variety of thickening products specific to each child with low shelf lives, our facility does not stock thickening products.

**MEDICAL EQUIPMENT:** Should your child have medically prescribed equipment for daily health routines, that equipment must be sent to center daily to meet the health plans of your child. Storing equipment at center will be individually approved based on space and may be required to be transported home each day for skilled maintenance by family.

**NATIONAL OR STATE EMERGENCIES /PANDEMICS/CRISIS:** Should a national emergency, pandemic or any other crisis occur that closes the public school system, our Arkansas Better Chance program will more than likely close; however, we understand the need for childcare for working families such that we will attempt to keep our private tuition program open. Arkansas Better Chance program is a different program than our Tuition based program and is subject to charges. Our Tuition Based program when open is subject to charges even if parents feel they want to keep their children home.

**OPEN HOUSE AND ORIENTATION PROCEDURES:**

Our ABC program has enhanced family orientation procedures that include a guided tour, introduction to teaching staff, opportunity to ask questions of the Administrator and information about family programming and family-friendly supports. Please feel free to always contact us and visit our parent pamphlets on community supports you may find helpful to you. You will receive information for the time and date of the open house via mail or by telephone.

Our program has enhanced family orientation procedures that include a guided tour, introduction to teaching staff, opportunity to ask questions of the Administrator and information about family programming and family-friendly supports. Please feel free to always contact us and visit our parent pamphlets on community supports you may find helpful to you. You will receive information for time and date of open house.

- **Protected Door Policy:** We always encourage Parents to come schedule appointments to visit with teachers. As a matter of public health, ABCCA has a protected door policy. We always encourage authorized Parents and extended family members to be interactive with their child's early education. With historical pandemics across the Nation, virtual meetings have become our new normal. However, our staff will be happy to connect face-to-face safely with scheduled visits or parent-teacher conferences. All visitors shall participate in a health screening prior to coming inside. ABCCA has a protected door policy such that for public health and safety for all, please ring our doorbell and a greeter will assist you. All parent feedback and concerns can be addressed on an individual basis by scheduling an appointment and a relationship of trust and safety to all children be established. Due to background check issues, the center cannot be used as a means for scheduled custodial visitations as this is not the intent of our educational program.

**OUTDOOR PLAY:** The children will play outside in the morning and afternoon weather permitting. Our normal recess times will always be implemented if temperatures are between 38 degrees and 98 degrees. If it is under or over those temperatures, teachers will use their discretion and recess may only be 5-10 minutes long. ABCCA has limited availability for extra staff as our staff has to stay with the children as a group. If your child cannot play outside for the day due to illness or preference, it may be best for the child to stay home that day so that we can safely monitor all children at play. Please dress your child in play clothes and the appropriate outerwear. (Sweater, Jacket, Coat) Outdoor play consists of running, jumping, climbing, sweating, digging in the sand and dirt and many other creative things children think of doing outside. We do wash our

hands and faces when we come in from recess, and we wash many other times of the day. At times, a child may look a little grubby by the end of the day because they have played hard and had fun. Remember PLAY is a child's WORK. ABC Children's Academy places emphasis on keeping hands and faces washed to prevent the spread of germs.

**PARENT INTEREST BOARD:** Each County Director is responsible for locating, encouraging, and facilitating a Parent from their County that would meet at least twice a year and present the county Directors with ideas, theories or needs for training areas that ABCCA could sponsor for our Parents. A sign in sheet should be logged for parent meetings. WE LOVE OUR PARENTS and hope we can establish an Interest Board that will use our facilities in the evenings so ABCCA can better serve your specific needs. Parent Centers in each facility provide helpful information to families such as WIC, Medical Home info, Civil Right notices, developmental stages for children and much more. Also visit our parent page on our website at [www.abcchildrensacademy.com](http://www.abcchildrensacademy.com)

**PARENT INVOLVEMENT:** ABCCA has a Parent Involvement Plan posted on our Parent Board which incorporates at least one Activity per month that creates educational bonds between Children and their Parents and/or Extended Involvement. Each Facility has the parent activity of the month posted on the front door of the center.

**PAYMENT OF FEES:** Fees are posted on parent boards. Exclusion of ABCSS and EIDT funded children only, an annual enrollment fee of \$75.00 is paid upon enrollment and renewed each September to cover costs of supplies. The weekly fee is set upon enrollment according to the type of childcare and the days requested. Childcare fees must be paid each week regardless of absenteeism. Childcare fees will be processed automatically on Monday. If payment is not processed by Friday morning of that week, the child may not return until payment has been processed. Payments can be made by listing Bank Account, Debit or Credit Cards on Tuition Express forms. NO CASH OR CHECKS ACCEPTED. Tuition Express form is required to be completed BEFORE enrollment, regardless of funding source or program.

**PERSONAL ITEMS:** Please be advised that ABC shall not be held responsible for children's or family's personal items lost at school. Valuables should not be sent to school because there are not locked areas for children's valuables. Medical Equipment shall be maintained to the best of our ability, but we are not a medical facility. We shall not be responsible for the replacement of medical equipment or lost or stolen personal items. We ask that clothing be labeled and do our best to make sure that items are sent home with the correct families. Please understand this assumed risk when enrolling in our facility.

**PHONE CALLS:** Phone calls may be recorded for quality purposes.

**PHOTOS:** Please be advised that only Photos of your child can be taken with your personal cameras. ABC cannot allow Parents to photograph other children at anytime. Also for privacy and security reasons pictures taken at the center cannot be posted in the internet, without parents prior approval via signature in the enrollment packet.

**PICKING UP CHILDREN:** The charges for aftercare will be posted on parent board which is also stated in the financial agreement in the enrollment packet.

- b. **LATE CHARGES:** A charge of \$5 of any part of 10 minutes after 6:00pm will be added to your fee. We do not want to charge this fee so PLEASE don't be late.



- c. **METHOD OF PAYMENT:** Bank Account/Debit-Credit Card ONLY. **Cash and Checks are not accepted.** Direct Draft only through Tuition Express. Charges will be drafted on the Monday of the week in attendance. Bank Account/Debit-Credit Card. **Cash and Checks are not accepted.**
- d. **DECLINE FEES:** If payment is Declined there will be an additional \$30 decline fee added for each declined transaction. A decline fee is added to the account due to ABC Children's Academy being charged for each declined transaction by the bank itself.

If an EMERGENCY situation prevents the parent from picking up the child on time, it is the parent's responsibility to contact the center prior to the close of the classroom hours to make the staff aware of the situation and the approximate time the child will be picked up. A written note will need to be faxed to the center. ABCCA prefers not to deny access to a biological parent – such that both biological parents need have permission to pick up the child unless there is an exparte or restraining order. If parents cause disputes over pick up related to custody, we will have to petition for dismissal of your child's enrollment.

- If parents or emergency contacts cannot be contacted to transport to After care, then we will have no other option than to call Police for assistance as our staff must be dismissed from work when their shift ends. It is the parent's responsibility to keep their phone numbers current within our records.
- A written note will need to be faxed to the center or sent with the person regarding permission for alternate person other than someone on the pick-up list to receive child. Likewise, the Parent must be available to be Called by the center when the person arrives to speak to the person for verification.
- ABC Children's Academy cannot deny access to a biological parent – such that both biological parents need to have permission to pick up the child unless there is an exparte or restraining order. If parents cause disputes over pick up related to custody, we will have to petition the Arkansas Better Chance Division for dismissal of your child's enrollment.

**PLAYGROUNDS:** At ABC Children's Academy, we strive to adhere to current trends in Playground safety and Play Areas that encourage Developmentally Appropriate Play. Our playgrounds have recently undertaken remodels that might leave some parents wondering about the absence of certain play equipment. Research shows that children learn best by being able to move and manipulate things in their environment, including outside spaces. For this reason, our newer and revamped "PlayScapes" will have more moving parts such as painted tires, tricycles, balls, outdoor blocks for building, water and sand play, ring toss, bean bags, pogo sticks, areas for jumping over things, dramatic play areas, and lots and lots of room to run! These activities allow children flexibility in play as opposed to a static piece of equipment such as a jungle gym or swing set. Research shows only about 18% of children play on large equipment and then get bored quickly. Imaginative play is the best for accelerated learning and what our teachers promote for our children during outdoor play. So, rest assured as parents, we are providing the best and safest activities to build gross motor, social, and imaginative skills on the playground!

**PROGRAMS:** The following high quality early childcare programs are available for our patrons: (1) Arkansas Better Chance (2) Blended Arkansas Better Chance / HeadStart (3) Tuition Based Program (4) Childcare Voucher and Foster Voucher Program (5) EIDT (Early Intervention Dayhab Treatment) program which is funded by ARKids A or Tefra. Please see our Director for any questions.

- We also offer therapy services through local co-ops or private therapy company's at parent choice. Payment of these services are through the family's insurance provider or local co-op extension.

**RELIGIOUS PRACTICES:** The US Constitution mandates a separation of Church and State. ABC Children’s Academy assures parents that no religious activity is paid for by our State Arkansas Better Chance funds. Likewise, because we operate an Arkansas Better Chance State funded program in all of our facilities to some capacity – all religious teaching is prohibited regardless of the funding source. Our ABCSS program provides non-religious instruction and activities during the ABC day. Celebration of Holidays may occur at a secular level only and not teach or promote a religious theme as that is a protected right reserved for families outside of our facilities. ABC Children’s Academy and Developmental Center, Inc. upholds the First Amendment to the US Constitution and instructs and implements non-religious educational programs.

**REST PERIOD:** All children are required to be provided a rest time after lunch. The Toddler rooms rests from 11:45 to 1:45 and the preschool rooms rest from 12:30 – 2:00. Children are not forced to sleep or criticized for not sleeping. We do require the child to rest quietly so other children can rest as well. We provide a state approved elevated cot or foam filled rest mat, 24 x 48 x 2 inches, as well as blankets and sheets for each child. For risk management purposes, children keep their shoes on at naptime in case of need for evacuation. Please do not bring bedding from home as bulkiness is impossible to store and launder. For risk management purposes, children keep their shoes on at naptime in case of need for evacuation.

**\*\*Mid-Day Drop Off policy:** We do our utmost to make sure all children have the best day possible. We do this by keeping a predictable routine throughout the year. It causes challenges in the classrooms when children deviate from routine and get dropped off in mid-day or mid-nap as this tends to disrupt the other children's naptime routine. If you choose to allow your child to sleep in past 9:00 am in the morning - Please respect our naptime schedule and the other children's need for routine and structure by waiting to drop your child off after 1:30 pm when children start to arise from nap.

**SAFE SLEEPING:** Your application for enrollment contains information regarding SIDS – Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. There are tips to reduce the risk of SIDS for your child. We are required to place children on their backs to sleep. Studies have shown that families that place children on their tummies to sleep in evenings but attend daycares that place children on their backs – are at a 18% higher risk for SIDS. Therefore, it is important that Childcare and families work together to be consistent with safe sleeping on backs.

**SCHOOL SUPPLIES:** All families will receive a supply list each August to begin the new term. It is state mandated that ABCSS students will not be required to bring ANY school supplies, ABC Children’s Academy will provide all needed supplies for each ABCSS classroom. All Blankets and Crib Sheets will be provided by the facility and laundered at the center at minimum once weekly and as needed, as well to ensure cleanliness and convenience to parents. Bulky quilts or blankets from home are prohibited, as the classrooms have no storage available for large blankets and pillows and this collect dust, dander, pet hair, and germs from child’s home.

**SCISSOR POLICY:** The use of Scissors is an important piece of a child’s development. We want Parents to be aware that although we will do our best to monitor safety with our blunt-nosed scissors that an inherent risk of hair cutting is possible. We ask that our teachers put scissors up and replace them with hole-punches during center time unless a controlled environment of scissor use is possible. However, even with a controlled situation, in an instance, a child may turn and cut hair of another child. We discuss scissor safety and monitor closely; however, we wanted to provide an extra reminder to parents that we use Scissors in our facility in our art centers and that hair cutting is a risk.

**SCREENING:** Our program screens all children and will send parents notification of any indicators suggesting developmental delays of any type. Parents are notified of results. Special Services such as Developmental Therapy, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, and Social/Emotional regulation Therapy may be offered based on your child's screening results or in the event a Parent or Teacher has a concern and only with Parents approval. Please see below ways referrals are potential made:

- a. The child's parent has a concern of any kind
- b. A Referral from your child's physician (PCP)
- c. The teacher may have observed without a functional concern without a screening within class routine.
- d. A – 1.5 score on a Screening checklist tool that measures developmental skills
- e. A -1.0 score of a screening tool that is also coupled with an identified functional developmental concern

*If your child is identified through screening process as having areas of developmental concern, by law – ABC Children's Academy will refer your child to your area's local co-operative extension.*

**SEPARATION OF AGREEMENT:** Reasons a child or person may be discharged from the center are; 1. ongoing breach of safety plan that increase imminent danger to a child or staff member. 2. Non-payment of fees and charges. 3. Family's refusal to follow Center Policies. 4. Legal or physical threats to center staff or program in attempt to bully or manipulate staff.

**SPECIAL NEEDS:** Our program accepts all children. No child is denied enrollment due to special medical, health, or developmental needs. We will work with special services providers to ensure that your child has the supports needed to foster development.

**SPECIAL OCCASIONS:** We are happy to celebrate special days with you and your child. All events must be coordinated with the director and she will provide a list of appropriate foods for your child's room.

**SHOES: TENNIS SHOES ARE THE BEST.** We are active and shoes are important. Comfortable shoes good for running, jumping and climbing are necessary. Slick bottom shoes are dangerous. Sandals without a strap around the heel and rubber flip-flops are not allowed. Cowboy boots are allowed unless a child kicks another child. Regardless, a pair of shoes for all ages (if the child is walking), shall be brought to school each day so that the child may participate in outdoor activities.

**SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY:** Our program is determined to keep family satisfaction at the center of our focus. Our managerial team will work hard to resolve any concern with quality and urgency. If families support or post negative feedback on any social media page regarding our program's integrity, unfortunately, we will assume you are withdrawing from any of our childcare services/programs and not accessing our resolution systems. Your enrollment to our center is contingent on your agreement with this policy; in other words, if you are attending any of our center's programs – this policy applies for enrollment.

**SOLICITATION POLICY:** Our program focuses on daily children's curriculums and safety such that all solicitation for service bids shall be by appointment only through an email to [regionaldirector@myabcca.com](mailto:regionaldirector@myabcca.com). No walk-in appointments are appropriate.

**TARDIES:** Car-rider line and Arrival begins at 7:40am Monday through Friday. It is especially important that your child is here by this time. Anyone coming in after 8:15am will be considered tardy. If a child is tardy 5 times this will count as one absence. 10 absences in a 5-month period can result in dismissal from the program. The ABC program is a high-quality program, and we have a long waiting list of children for this program.

**TERMINATION OF SERVICES:** To terminate Childcare services, you must submit a written notice (“DROP-FORM”) one week in advance. Failure to give notice will result in billing for one-week fees, if payment is scheduled. A one-week payment may be made in lieu of the required notice. If your child does not attend the center for 3 days and you do not notify us as to the reason for absence, your child will be automatically dropped, and you will be responsible for that week’s payment.

**TOILETING:** We strive to progress children in all areas and potty-training is one of them no matter child’s age. For health and sanitary reasons, if a child is not yet potty trained, Pull-ups that Velcro on the sides must be sent to school daily as a tool to help children in toileting in a safe and manageable way. If a child has two or more accidents per day (not at naptime) related to urine, a pull-up will be necessary during the day to keep room sanitary. Because of the time required to sanitize a room after an accident related to feces, a pull up with Velcro sides shall be used after 1 incident of which feces. Our teachers will attempt toileting every 45 minutes – 60 minutes throughout the day to assist with potty training reminders for your child when ready for potty training. There may be more frequent reminders than are necessary – children may not be quite ready for underwear, but it will happen at their own pace.

- **TODDLERS:** Each child needs no less than 5 diapers or underpants if toilet training, a zip lock baggie of wipes and one or two changes of clothing. These items are kept in personal cubbies in child’s class.

**TOYS:** The center carefully selects toys and games designed to complement your child’s growth and development. Safety is also a major concern in this selection. Please do not bring **toys, money, gum or candy**. Special “Toy Days” are posted from time to time and your child will be able to bring a safe toy from home.

**School Age:** Many School-Agers ask to bring their electronic devices in the summer. However, those articles are brought with the inherent risk that others may want to play with them or that the electronic devices may be damaged or stolen. Electronic devices that take pictures will need to not be utilized in the center for privacy reasons of other families.

**TOYS AND TREASURES:** Children should not bring toys and treasures from home. Exception to this: if the child is asked by the teacher to bring something for “show and tell,” such as a book or an item for enrichment to a classroom activity.

**VISITORS / VOLUNTEERS:** Parent / Visitor Policy: We always encourage authorized Parents and extended family members to be interactive with their child’s early education. With historical pandemics across the Nation, virtual meetings have become our new normal. However, our staff will be happy to connect face-to-face safely with scheduled visits or parent-teacher conferences. All visitors shall participate in a health screening prior to coming inside. ABCCA has a protected door policy such that for public health and safety for all, please ring our doorbell and a greeter will assist you. All parent feedback and concerns can be addressed on an individual basis by scheduling an appointment and a relationship of trust and safety to all children be established. Due to background check issues, the center cannot be used as a means for scheduled custodial visitations as this is not the intent of our educational program.

Visitors and Volunteers may be asked to fill out background checks depending on their need for the frequency of visits. ABC encourages parental and extended family support and interaction. We have a **closed-door policy** but do not deny access parental access to children (unless epidemic/pandemic situations arise – see pandemic policy). With our closed-door policy, we ask that any visitor calls prior to arriving to schedule an appointment so a staff member can assist you. However, Daycare is not a mode of regimented visiting for any family member as ABCCA has a responsibility to the others in our classrooms. Parents or Observers that wish to stay all day or lengths of time that impair daily routine is disallowed for risk management and program

integrity. Please trust that we are regulated often by several governing bodies and our staff are well-trained in the care of your children. Feel free to come visit briefly as much as you need (provided America is not in a Pandemic situation); however, ABC Children’s Academy and Developmental Center has a direct policy prohibiting all day observations.

- Should any individual such as a member on a pickup list, or an enrolling caregiver have criminal charges pending that involve crimes against children – our ABCCA policy will not allow those individuals to be on our premises, such that alternate drop off and pick up arrangements will have to be made. This policy is to protect all families we serve. We understand that in America, our justice system is “innocent until proven guilty” such that if charges are resolved, all regular operational policies apply; however, if charges are pending – disallowance from property is imposed to alleviate any risk to other families. Thank you for understanding.

**VOUCHER PROGRAM:**

Arkansas Department of Human Services (DHS) has childcare assistance available for income eligible families for the Part of the Day ABC does not cover (before and after care). An application for childcare vouchers is included in the enrollment packet. We are available to give you information and assist you in any way possible at any time. Registration and field trip fees are charged to the parents even if they are on the 100% vouchers unless the funding is from the TEA program. Unless the family has 100% voucher pay the parents will be expected to pay their co-pay weekly. Vouchers pay for only a few absentee days per year such that families need to maintain their child’s regular attendance throughout their enrollment. Parents will be charged and be required to pay for all absentee days not covered by the voucher program. There are cases of extenuating circumstances such as medical leave or summer visitation by which vouchers can be placed on hold, but enrolling families must get this pre-approved with State Case Worker. Parents who do not have 100% vouchers, will be charged the difference weekly.

Arkansas Department of Human Services (DHS) has child care assistance available for income eligible families. An application for childcare vouchers is included in the enrollment packet. We are available to give you information and assist you in any way possible at any time. Registration and Field trip fees are charged to parents even if they are on 100% vouchers unless the funding is from the TEA program. Voucher covers only a few days per year of absentee such that families need to maintain child’s enrollment throughout the month. Parent’s shall be responsible for monthly fees not covered by vouchers due to absenteeism. There are cases of extenuating circumstances such as medical leave or summer visitation by which vouchers can be placed on hold, but enrolling families must get this pre-approved with State Case Worker. Parents who do not have 100% vouchers, will be charged the difference weekly.

- Should any individual such as a member on a pick up list, or an enrolling caregiver have criminal charges pending that involve crimes against children – our ABCCA policy will not allow those individuals to be on our premises, such that alternate drop off and pick up arrangements will have to be made. This policy is to protect all families we serve. We understand that in America, our justice system is “innocent until proven guilty” such that if charges are resolved, all regular operational policies apply; however, if charges are pending – disallowance from property is imposed to alleviate any risk to other families. Thank you for understanding.

**VOUCHER CONT...( ABSENTEEISM ) :**

- The Voucher Program offers absentee days on a month-to-month basis not exceeding 40 days as

outlined in our Financial Contract. PLEASE READ FINANCIAL CONTRACT CAREFULLY

- Families who have extenuating circumstances such as a medical need or possible summer visitation with non-custodial parent will be required to contact their voucher case worker to obtain approval from State Administrator to place childcare vouchers on hold. The center must have approval from State before this placing the vouchers “on hold” can occur.
- Enrolling families will be charged a \$30 / week holding fee for each week vouchers are on hold up to 6 weeks as this spot cannot be assigned to another family.

**WEAPONS:** No unauthorized personnel, student, or non-student, including adults and visitors, shall possess, use or distribute a weapon on our ABCCA preschool campus, at any location. A “weapon” means any object, device or instrument designed as a weapon or through its use is capable of threatening or producing bodily harm or which may be used to inflict self-injury including, but not limited to, any firearm, whether loaded or unloaded; air guns; pellet guns; BB guns; all knives; blades; clubs; metal knuckles; num-chucks; throwing stars; explosives; fireworks; mace and other propellants; stun guns; ammunition; poisons; chains; arrows; and objects that have been modified to serve as a weapon. Please leave these weapons off our campus while visiting our business. This policy is for the protection of all and foremost the children we serve.

**WELFARE OF ALL CHILDREN:** Please be advised that: 1. State law to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect mandates all employees of ABC Children’s Academy. 2. Children are subject to be interviewed by Child Care licensing, DHFS Special Investigations and Law Enforcement for investigative purposes at any time.

\*In cases of extreme behaviors that cause social emotional and/or physical harm ( or threat thereof) from one student to another, the director reserves the right to implement a 1 to 3-day suspension for our team to develop a plan for the safe care of all parties involved which would allow the student to return to our center. The plan may range from parent meetings to behavioral referrals to dismissal depending on the severity of the action.

Please be advised that state law mandates us to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect. Children are subject to be interviewed by Child Care Licensing, DCFS Special Investigations, and Law Enforcement for investigative purposes at any time with or without notification to or from the Parents. These are State Laws in every school and preschool designed to protect children. All compliance and site monitoring reports are available to view on the DCCECE website. The contact information for DCCECE licensing is 1-800-445-3316.

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**Commitment:** We are here for your children--The Owner – Kristen White, or Regional Director – Amanda Farmer - is always open to discuss questions or concerns. Feel free to call our Central Office at 479-567-5650.

### **Listing of Facilities:**

1. **ABC Children’s Academy – Main Russellville Site 1 (Pope Co. Director Located here; Pre-K EIDT)**
  - a. Director = *Jessica Shelley (Asst. = Brooke Butts)*
  - b. Address: 500 East 3<sup>rd</sup>, Russellville, AR 72801
  - c. Phone #: 479-968-5048
  - d. **Childcare license #: 23451**
  - e. **EIDT License: 34169**

- f. Director Email = [russellville@myabcca.com](mailto:russellville@myabcca.com)
  - g. Site Lead Email: [Russellville.abcca@gmail.com](mailto:Russellville.abcca@gmail.com)
2. **ABC Children’s Academy – Russellville Site 1 Annex (School-Age; ABCSS)**
    - a. On site Lead: *Tia Hefner (Asst. Katherine Caples)*
    - b. Address: 520 East 3<sup>rd</sup>, Russellville, AR 72801
    - c. Phone: 479-968-1663
    - d. **Childcare License #:** 31125
    - e. NON – EIDT Facility
    - f. Site Lead Email = [nutrition@myabcca.com](mailto:nutrition@myabcca.com)
  3. **ABC Children’s Academy – Russellville Site 2 (Infants/Toddlers – EIDT)**
    - a. On site Lead: *Kaleigh Sinclair (Asst. Jovanna Zuniga)*
    - b. Address: 308 East 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Russellville, AR 72801
    - c. Phone #: 479-968-5084
    - d. **Childcare License #:** 24034
    - e. **EIDT License:** 34171
    - f. Site Lead Email: [r3.abcca@gmail.com](mailto:r3.abcca@gmail.com)
  4. **ABC Children’s Academy – Russellville Site 3 (Infants/Toddlers – TB/Vouchers)**
    - a. On site Lead: *Kaleigh Sinclair (Asst Nikki Cooper)*
    - b. Address: 1101 South Erie, Russellville, AR 72801
    - c. Phone: 479-968-5100
    - d. **Childcare License #:** 24543
    - e. NON – EIDT SITE
    - f. Site Lead Email: [r3.abcca@gmail.com](mailto:r3.abcca@gmail.com)
  5. **ABC Children’s Academy – Russellville Site 4 (Pre-K - ABCSS)**
    - a. Onsite Lead: *Rachel Calvin*
    - b. Address: 2005 East Fairway Blvd. Russellville AR 72802
    - c. Phone #: 479-219-5204
    - d. **Childcare License #:** 30074
    - e. NON – EIDT site
    - f. Site Lead Email: [r4.abcca@gmail.com](mailto:r4.abcca@gmail.com)
  6. **ABC Children’s Academy – Dover Site 1 / Dover Site 2 (**
    - a. Onsite Lead: *Marie Herdman*
    - b. Address: 110 Library Road, Dover AR 72837
    - c. Phone: 479-331-1305
    - d. **Childcare License # :** 28776
    - e. **EIDT License #:** 34166
    - f. Director Email: [dover@myabcca.com](mailto:dover@myabcca.com)
  7. **ABC Children’s Academy – Dover Site 1 / Dover Site 2 (**
    - a. Onsite Lead: *Elizabeth Warren*
    - b. Address: 105 Library Road, Dover AR 72837
    - c. Phone: 479-331-1450

- d. **Childcare License #:** 28777
  - e. **EIDT License #:** 34167
  - f. Site Lead Email: [dover1.abcca@gmail.com](mailto:dover1.abcca@gmail.com)
8. **ABC Children’s Academy – Dover Campus – Site 3 (School Campus; Pre-K ABCSS)**
- a. Onsite Lead: *Amber Srutka*
  - b. 75 Pine Hill Road, Dover AR 72837
  - c. Phone #: 479 264-2775
  - d. **Childcare License #:** 30075
  - e. NON – EIDT site
  - f. Site Lead Email: [dover3.abcca@gmail.com](mailto:dover3.abcca@gmail.com)
9. **ABC Children’s Academy – Clarksville Site 1 (Johnson County Director Located here – EIDT facility)**
- a. Onsite Lead: *Magali Gamez / ECDS: Danelle Hernandez*
  - b. Address: 108 Cherokee Lane, Clarksville, AR 72830
  - c. Phone: 479-647-5080
  - d. **Childcare License #:** 30070
  - e. **EIDT License:** 34164
  - f. Site lead email: [abcca.office@gmail.com](mailto:abcca.office@gmail.com)
  - g. ECDS email: [ecds2.abcca@gmail.com](mailto:ecds2.abcca@gmail.com)
10. **ABC Children’s Academy – Clarksville Campus – Site 2 (Johnson Co. CENTRAL OFFICE; ABCSS)**
- a. Director: *Jennifer Shiver / Onsite Lead: Julieta Gamez*
  - b. Address: 2023 West Clark Road, Clarksville AR 72830
  - c. Phone #: 479-979-5058
  - d. **Childcare License #:** 30392
  - e. NON-EIDT SITE
  - f. Director’s Email = [clarksville@myabcca.com](mailto:clarksville@myabcca.com)
  - g. TRC’s email = [referrals.c1@myabcca.com](mailto:referrals.c1@myabcca.com)
11. **ABC Children’s Academy – Clarksville Site 3**
- a. Onsite Lead = *Anallely Galan*
  - b. Address: 105 Cherokee Lane, Clarksville, AR 72830
  - c. Phone = 479-647-5080
  - d. **Childcare License #:** 30999
  - e. **EIDT License:** 34162
  - f. Email = [c3office.abcca@gmail.com](mailto:c3office.abcca@gmail.com)
12. **ABC Children’s Academy – Main Dardanelle Site 1 (Yell County Director Located here)**
- a. Director: *Cody Hull (Asst. Yeimi Mendoza)*
  - b. Address: 2106 State Hwy 22 W, Dardanelle, AR 72834
  - c. Phone: 479-229-2000
  - d. **Childcare License #:** 23429
  - e. **EIDT License:** 34165
  - f. Email = [dardanelle@myabcca.com](mailto:dardanelle@myabcca.com)
13. **ABC Children’s Academy – Dardanelle site 2 / Dardanelle Site 2 Annex (ABCSS)**



- a. On site Lead = *Barbara Pierce (Asst. Cindy Jackson)*
- b. Address: 1309 & 1315 North 2<sup>nd</sup>, Dardanelle, AR 72834
- c. Phone: 479-229-4186
- d. Childcare License #: 24854
- e. NON EIDT Site
- f. Site Lead Email: [d2.abcca@gmail.com](mailto:d2.abcca@gmail.com)

**ASSOCIATED PARTNERS / CONTRACTS:**

**14. Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) Therapy**

- a. On Site Clinical Director: *Michaela Papasan*
- b. Address: 3205 West Main Street, Russellville, AR 72801
- c. Phone #: 479-567-5470
- d. ASSOCIATE PARTNER for ABCCA
- e. NOT A CHILDCARE FACILITY
- f. Email – [mpapasan@rvaba.net](mailto:mpapasan@rvaba.net)

**16. Cynergy Rehab Group - Speech, Occupational, and Physical Therapy for Kids**

- a. On Site Clinical Director: *Justin Harrell*
- b. Address: 1915 West Main, Russellville AR
- c. Phone = 479-968-1198
- d. ASSOCIATE PARTNER for ABCCA
- e. NOT A CHILDCARE FACILITY
- f. Email – [Jharrell@crgtherapy.com](mailto:Jharrell@crgtherapy.com)

**ABCCA - LIST OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

- 1. **President** – DANA WARREN – 4800 South Frankfort, Russellville, AR 72802; 479-477-0385
- 2. **Vice President** – KIRK WARREN – 4800 South Frankfort, Russellville, AR 72802; 479-477-1121
- 3. **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** – KRISTEN WHITE – 820 E 4<sup>th</sup> St, Russellville, AR; 479-477-1902; 479-567-5650
- 4. **Chief Financial Officer (CFO)** – JACOB WHITE – 820 E 4<sup>th</sup> St, Russellville, AR; 501-690-8851; 479-567-5650
- 5. **Regional Director** – AMANDA FARMER - 820 East 4<sup>th</sup> St, Russellville, AR; 479-567-5650
- 6. **Secretary** – BRITTANY BAKER – 820 East 4<sup>th</sup> St, Russellville, AR; 479-567-5650
- 7. **Research Advisor** – MALINDA MCSPADDEN – PO Box 626, Alma AR 72921, 479-632-2003
- 8. **Community Development Advisor** – LADD SHANNON – Pottsville, AR : 479-886-1959
- 9. **Financial Advisor** – BILL LAWTON – Russellville AR: 479-968-2552

**10. Curriculum Support** – KIM VIA – 820 East 4<sup>th</sup> Steet, Russellville, AR; 479-567-5650

**11. Data Specialist** – HEATHER COFFMAN – 820 East 4<sup>th</sup> St, Russellville, AR; 479-567-5650