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The Mother Connection

3115 Albany Post Road * Office B * Buchanan, NY 10511

PARENT HANDBOOK

Policies and Procedures

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Updated 7/2024

THE MOTHER CONNECTION BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

PARENT HANDBOOK

INTRODUCTION

The Mother Connection is a non-profit organization that offers quality childcare for children, grades Kindergarten through Fifth, within a safe and nurturing environment—right in their own school. Our Before and After-School Centers are available to children in the Hendrick Hudson District 3 schools and are located within the three elementary schools. Licensed by the NYS Office of Children and Family Services, The Mother Connection provides caring and responsible supervision by highly qualified staff.

Our Programs offer a variety of activities, which includes recreation and games, arts and crafts and time to work on homework. Children are provided with the opportunity for quiet play and/or active play both in group and individual settings. There is time for students to have breakfast (must be brought from home) at our Before School Centers, and time for snacks (must be brought from home) in our After-School centers.

This Parent Handbook is a valid part of the enrollment agreement between the Before and After School Program and the parents and/or guardians of children who are enrolled in the Program. Enrollment in the Program constitutes an understanding that you will abide by the policies and procedures set forth in this Handbook. The Mother Connection reserves the right to review, make changes, and/or terminate any contract of care at any time.

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IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Main Administrative Office- Laura Mattioli-Executive Director:	914-737-8976
Frank G. Lindsey Center (FGL Grades 3-5 Meghan Walsh -Director):	914-257-5505
Buchanan-Verplanck Center (BV Grades K-2 Colleen Finnegan-Director):	914-257-5405
Furnace Woods Center (FWS Grades K-2 Christine Williams -Director):	914-257-5605

SECTION 1. PARENTS EXPECTATIONS OF THE PROGRAM

Parents/Guardians may expect that:

1. Their children are cared for in a safe, supportive environment.
2. They may speak with the Center Director about concerns related to their child or the Program. Parents may request a scheduled meeting during program hours. Other arrangements may be made if necessary.
3. They will be told about any behavior problems on the part of their child and will be able to meet with the Teacher/Director to help improve the situation.
4. They will be informed promptly if their child does not arrive at the Center per his/her enrollment schedule.
5. They will be responsible for following the policies, procedures and conduct guidelines outlined in this handbook.

SECTION 2. PROGRAM'S EXPECTATIONS OF THE PARENTS

The Program/Center expects that parents will:

1. Pay fees on time, according to our Fees and Payment Policies.
2. Pick their child up on time.
3. Keep their child's records/forms up to date.
4. Follow the Center's health policy.
5. Contact the Teacher/Director if their child will not be attending on a scheduled day. Fees will be incurred for failure to notify of an absence or change in schedule.
6. Respond to any communications from the Teacher/Director regarding their child's behavior and cooperate in efforts to bring about improvement in the situation.
7. Treat the staff with courtesy and respect.

SECTION 3. CHILDREN'S EXPECTATIONS OF THE PROGRAM

Children may expect:

1. To have a safe, supportive, and consistent environment.
2. To use all the Center's equipment, materials, and facilities on an equal basis.
3. To receive respectful treatment.
4. To have discipline that is fair and non-punitive.
5. To receive nurturing care from staff members who are actively involved with them.

SECTION 4. PROGRAM'S EXPECTATIONS OF THE CHILDREN

The Program/Center expects that the children will:

1. Be responsible for their actions.
2. Respect the school rules that guide them during the day while at the Center, and follow the specific rules set up by the Center.
3. Always Remain with the group and The Mother Connection staff at ALL times!
4. Take care of materials and equipment properly and return them to their proper places before taking out other items.

SECTION 5. FEES AND PAYMENT POLICIES

We encourage all payments to be made through ProCare online. If you must, you may drop a check or mail to the main office. (No cash accepted).

Payments will not be accepted at the centers!

Please **mail** or drop off payments to: **The Mother Connection**
3115 Albany Post Rd. Buchanan, NY 10511

Registration Fee and Sept. Tuition:

A non-refundable Registration Fee of **\$50** for the first child and **\$40** for each additional child must accompany the Registration and Enrollment Forms. One Registration Fee is applicable for both the Before School and After School Centers. Sept tuition refundable when requested in writing before Aug 15.

Tuition Payments:

All monthly Tuition will be billed through ProCare on the 1st of the month and due on the same day. A late charge of **\$25.00** will be assessed for payments made after the **7th day of the month**. If the monthly fee and late charge are not paid at that time, the child will not be admitted to the Center. There is a **\$25.00** fee charged for insufficient funds return. **Tuition is not pro-rated for days that the school is closed due to vacations, holidays, snow days, etc.**

Schedule Change Fee:

Once your child has started the Program, if circumstances require modification of scheduling, we will accommodate your request if space and staffing permit. An **administrative fee of \$25.00** will be charged for any schedule change. Should you wish to return to your original schedule later, we cannot guarantee that space will be available. Requests for schedule changes must be made to the Executive Director, in writing, at least two weeks in advance of when you wish for the schedule change to take effect.

Late Pick Up Charges:

For children contracted to be picked up at **4:45pm**, a charge of **\$5.00** will be levied *for every portion of a quarter hour* beyond the scheduled pick-up time, until 6:00pm. For each subsequent occurrence, a charge of **\$10.00** will be levied *for every portion of a quarter hour* beyond the scheduled pick-up time.

For children contracted to be picked up at **6:00pm**, a charge of **\$5.00** will be levied *for every portion of a quarter hour* beyond the scheduled pick-up time. For each subsequent occurrence, a charge of **\$10.00** will be levied *for every portion of a quarter hour* beyond the scheduled pick-up time.

If a child is not picked up by 6:00pm, and the parent or guardian cannot be reached, the emergency person listed in the child's file will be called to pick up the child. *The late pick-up fee will be charged.* **Repeated late pick up may result in the child's dismissal from the Program.**

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Attendance on Days Contracted:

Although the Centers are located within the schools, notes or phone calls to the nurse, teacher or office regarding your child's absence are not forwarded to The Mother Connection. **Parents or Guardians must contact the Teacher/Director (of the Center in which the child is enrolled) directly if the child will be not attending the Center on a scheduled day.** Absentees without prior notification may be mistaken for a missing child and unnecessary concern and time spent in searching for the child may occur.

A **\$5.00** penalty will be assessed for the first failure to report an absence and a **\$10.00** penalty for each successive failure within the school year. If a child does not arrive at the Center as intended, the Teacher/Director will contact the parents. If the parents cannot be reached, the Teacher/Director will contact the emergency persons listed in the child's file.

Attendance on Days NOT Contracted:

Children who are enrolled on a regular basis and wish to attend on a day not contracted may do so on a drop-in basis if there is availability. The Teacher/Director must be notified at least 24 hours in advance or call the main office. Please refer to the Tuition Fees section in your registration packet for current drop-in fees.

Tuition Statements/Receipts:

Monthly invoices will be sent via ProCare. **Tax I.D. # is 13-3190194**

SECTION 6. REGISTRATION AND ENROLLMENT FORMS

Registration Applications via ProCare or "Contracts" are effective on a yearly basis from September through June (or remainder of the year for late registrants). Due to space restrictions, enrollment in the Program is limited. Children already enrolled in the Program must register by the due date indicated to ensure that a space is held for their child. The Registration Application via ProCare must be completed in full and tuition paid to be enrolled.

After the due date, formal registration will begin, and new registrations will be considered. Registrations received after the due date indicated (which includes previously enrolled children) will be on a first come, first served basis. Applicants are reviewed, and applicants are enrolled in the order in which online forms and fees are received. Space is dependent upon the availability of space and staffing. A Waiting List is kept for all Centers. Once an opening at a Center becomes available, those families on the Waiting List are contacted in the order in which they were placed.

SECTION 7. HOURS

The Before School Centers: 7AM-SCHOOL OPENS

No one should bring his or her child before **7:00am**. Children must be escorted to the door of the Center and signed in each day. Children are escorted, by the Center staff, to the school monitors prior to the start of school. Parents are encouraged to sign their child in and depart the center to ensure a smooth drop off transition.

The After School Centers: SCHOOL DISMISSAL-4:45/6:00*

When school is dismissed, their teacher instructs children attending The Mother Connection After School Program, to go directly to the Center. The Centers are open until **6:00pm** (late pick-up) or **4:45pm** (early pick-up). The designated person on their Registration Form must sign children out each day. If the child is to be picked up by someone other than the designated person, the parent or guardian must notify the Director by phone or written notification. ID will be required before releasing a child to an undesignated person.

*15 min grace period will be given to parents with children in multiple schools.

SECTION 8. EMERGENCY/WEATHER/SCHOOL CLOSING PROCEDURES

School Closings and Delays due to emergencies or weather:

Parents will be notified through our text messaging system and the school districts automated calls. In the case of early dismissal or cancellation of afterschool programs, your child will go home on their regular bus unless you call the school and notify them of an alternate arrangement. Please notify the school in writing at the beginning of the school year if you do not want your child sent on the bus.

AS SOON AS I AM NOTIFIED BY THE SCHOOL DISTRICT, I SEND A BLAST TEXT TO OUR PARENTS

PLEASE BE SURE TO UPDATE YOUR CELL PHONE NUMBERS!

- If the Hen Hud School District is **closed**, **the Before or After School Program will be closed.**
- If Hen Hud schools have a delayed opening, **the Before School Program will be closed.**
- In the event of an emergency **early dismissal or half day**, **After School Programs will be closed.**
- In the event the school district **cancel**s all after-school activities, **After School Programs will be closed.**
- In the event of **closing after children are already in our program**, Mother Connection will contact parents, or your emergency contact for early pick-up. Please be sure your emergency contact person can pick up your child. **Tuition is not pro-rated for days that the school is closed due to vacations, holidays, snow days, etc..**

School Closings and Early Release & Half days:

School closings due to Holidays, conference days & all other scheduled closings all programs are closed. If school is closed, there are no programs.

If there is an early release or half day the After-school programs are not open.

SECTION 9: ALLERGY AND ANAPHYLAXIS POLICY

To prevent an allergic reaction:

Food

- Individual children's food allergies will be posted in a discreet location visible to staff and volunteers involved in the care of a child and will be reviewed routinely.
- Staff and volunteers will always read food labels.
- Staff and volunteers will wash their hands with soap and water to prevent food from going on toys, clothes, etc.
- Tables will be cleaned before and after eating.
- Children will be supervised while eating and will not be allowed to share food.
- Parents of all students will provide food for their children. If we provide any food, it will be cleared with parents of students with allergies.
- Ingredients will be reviewed when used in projects such as art or science.

Insect Stings

- Children will be encouraged to wear closed toe shoes.
- When eating outdoors, children must keep food covered until eaten.

Latex

- Latex free gloves will be used by all staff and volunteers.

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Staff and Volunteers

- Staff will be trained on how to recognize the signs and symptoms of allergic reactions and on the importance of administering epinephrine quickly.
- Staff will be made aware of which staff are trained to administer medication.
- Staff will review any Health Care plan and will also review children's allergies in the program. These plans will be reviewed often.

Children

We will have Individual Allergy and Anaphylaxis Emergency Plans for children known to have food or other allergies that include clear instructions of action to take when an allergic reaction occurs.

- We will teach children that certain foods can make some students very sick.
- We will teach them to only eat food given to them by parents or other trusted adults and not to share food with each other.
- Teach them the importance of washing their hands before and after meals.
- To seek out an adult if they feel sick or need help.

Section 10: HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

The Centers must be provided with a current Health Form upon admission to the Program. A copy of the child's school medical record (submitted to the school nurse) would be acceptable. You would need to ask nurse to give us a copy.

If your child has a known medical condition (asthma, diabetes, seizure disorder, etc.), please be sure all Health documents are completed and returned before the first day of school.

All centers are authorized to administer medication. (ie- Epi Pens, diabetes and asthma medication) If a child needs any other type of medication staff must be trained by either the parent or health care professional.

If a child has any of the following conditions, the parent or guardian (or emergency contact) will be notified to pick up the child immediately: Contagious Disease, Lice, Fever over 100 F, Vomiting or Diarrhea, or Accident Requiring Medical Attention.

In case of accident or illness, the parents of the child will be called immediately. In serious cases, the child will be taken to one of the local hospitals by emergency vehicle (accompanied by a staff member) and the parents will be called as soon as possible.

The Mother Connection is mandated by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or maltreatment. This includes the reporting of parents who appear to be impaired by drugs or alcohol.

Section 11. WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAM

Parents wishing to withdraw their child/children from the Program must email the main office or send in writing at least 30 days prior to the discontinuation of our services. The Mother Connection does not provide partial monthly reimbursement, since a spot was held for your child for that month. You will also be responsible for the days you have not paid for up to the 30 days. Registration fees are non-refundable.

Section 12. DISCIPLINE AND DISCHARGE

Children are entitled to a pleasant and harmonious environment at the Centers. The Before and After School Programs cannot serve children who display chronically disruptive behavior.

Chronically disruptive behavior is defined as verbal or physical activity which may include, but is not limited to, such behavior that: requires constant attention from the staff, inflicts physical or emotional harm on other children, abuses the staff, ignores, or disobeys the rules which guide behavior during Program time. If a child cannot adjust to the Program setting and behave appropriately, then the child may be discharged.

Reasonable efforts will be made to assist children to adjust to the Program setting.

Our discipline policy is to start by giving the child a "warning" at the first sign of disruptive behavior. If the child needs to be spoken to again, a "time out" is issued. If behavior is still a problem, an Incident Report will be written up, signed by the Teacher/Director or Head Teacher, and presented and signed by the parent/guardian picking up that child that day. A conference may be requested. If necessary, the child may be suspended from the Program. And, in some instances, a child may be discharged from the Program.

The Mother Connection reserves the right to discharge any child(ren) from the program that consistently displays behavior that is in direct conflict with our ability to provide effective care to the child(ren) in the program.

Section 13. PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Parents are expected to always treat all staff with courtesy and respect. Disrespectful, threatening, and/or vulgar/obscene language will not be tolerated. Parents are expected to observe these same standards when dealing with parents of other children in the program when on school property. Instances of these behaviors will be addressed directly with the Executive Director. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in termination from the program.

We aim to address all parent concerns in a timely manner. If you have a concern, you may address it verbally or in writing to the site Director and/or the Executive Director. Staff will provide acknowledgement of your concern within 24 hours in cases where your concern cannot be immediately addressed. In some instances, immediate resolution to a concern is not possible, and parents agree to allow the program reasonable time to come to a conclusion regarding the issue raised. Similarly, if the program raises a concern to a parent regarding their child(ren), parents agree to work with the program in a timely manner to come to a resolution. In all cases, parents and the program are expected to work collaboratively to come to a solution. Failure to do so may result in discharge from the Program.

We look forward to a wonderful year with your children!