



DISCOVERY CENTER MANUAL

*Program Policies & Procedures
2023-2024*



LAKE AREA
Discovery
Center



To the Discovery Center Teaching Team:

This manual shares all the Policies and General Information shared with parents in the "LADC Parent Handbook", as well as the DHS Licensing Policies and Procedures for Child Management, Health & Safety, Accidents & Emergencies, and other Policies & Procedures for the Classroom, Daily Schedule and Student Accounts.

This Handbook/Manual is the basis of our Annual Orientation/Training. Hard copies are provided to all Employees. Please reach out anytime for additional/refresher training as needed, or if there are any questions on policy. Happy teaching!

Together for Children,

Janet Miller

Founder & Executive Director

651.762.7884

mainoffice@ladcfamilies.org



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GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Items from Home

Discovery & Kinderstart- Winter through Spring, each week, two (2) children are given a sharing bag to take home. The children may choose a favorite toy, book, etc. to put in the bag and bring back the following class day to “show and tell”. We ask that you please limit it to one (1) item unless it goes with something else. Please leave all other toys at home.

Explorers- Children in our Explorers classes are welcome to bring their favorite comfort items from home, to help with separation and transition times (blankets; stuffed animals; pacifiers; dolls, etc.)

2. Lost and Found

There is a lost and found near the classroom sign-in tables. Feel free to check it if you have misplaced an item. Please let the staff know if you cannot locate something. We will do our best to find it. We have a good track record of finding lost things if they have been labeled with the child's name.

3. Ideas for Parent/Child Separation

Children handle separation from their parents in different ways. You know your child best and we will work with you to make the transition into The Discovery Center a smooth one. Visiting the center prior to the first day is recommended. On your child's very first day, we recommend that you:

- Inform your child of what your plans are. Tell him or her that they are going to The Discovery Center and let them know where you will be while they are at school and when you will be back.
- Bring your child to a staff person and share whatever information is necessary.

4. Outside Days

During the winter months, the children go out on designated days; weather permitting.

- The temperature must be 10 degrees above zero with wind chill for us to go outside. Please send outdoor play clothing on those play days.
- The teacher will call for weather updates/temps: #763-512-1111 or check the Weather App on the phone.
- Children are always supervised, and teachers stay near equipment where injury could occur.

Children usually play on the playground but will on occasion go sliding on the hills, bike outside the playground, engage in water play, or go on a nature walk outside of the fenced playground area.

5. Parent/Teacher Organization

All Preschool parents are part of the school Parent/Teacher Organization. The primary goal of this parent-led group is to support classroom teachers and assist with family events and fundraising efforts. Watch for information to come throughout the school year.

6. Children's Arrival

Our classroom doors officially open 5 minutes prior to each class.

- Sign in for your child via the Procure Parent Engagement App. either on the PHONE or on the CLASSROOM IPAD.
- Your child participates in sign-in by locating their picture/name card on the table and placing it in the pocket chart near the classroom door.
- Please help your child wash their hands upon entering the classroom, before playing.
- Connect with one of your child's teachers before leaving. You are welcome to look around the room with your child, or do a quick game or activity together!

Procure Sign-In/Sign-Out Policy & Procedure

It is the PARENT/GUARDIAN'S responsibility to sign in their student, per DHS Licensing Requirements.

If a student is NOT signed in or out, the following steps will be taken:

- A warning will be given, as well as assistance with the App, procedure, etc. as needed.
- If the issue continues, a \$25.00 fee per incident will be assessed to the Student's Account.
- After 5 incidents, program services will be suspended. The student may lose their spot in the program.

7. Transportation

Parents are responsible for transporting their child to and from The Discovery Center. We ask that parents sign the child in, walk the child to the classroom door, and make sure a Discovery Center teacher knows that they have arrived. This will ensure the safety of all the children.

8. Parking / Parking Lots

- Please follow parking lot directional signs for the flow of traffic and parking.
- To help air-quality levels, leaving vehicles idle in parking areas during drop-off or pick-up is discouraged, unless the vehicle needs to idle in extreme heat or cold to maintain the interior engine temperature.
- No children should be left in an unattended car, idling or off. If you need assistance with dropping off or picking up a child, please connect with your site director and/or teaching team to arrange car-side assistance.

9. Drop-Off and Dismissal

- Children are dropped off or picked up from their classrooms or from the playground and need to be signed in and out by a parent/guardian before departing.
- Please make every effort to drop off and pick up your child to and from class following the reserved/confirmed attendance schedule from Admissions. The program cannot guarantee there are enough staff scheduled to accommodate early drop-off or late pick-up availability without prior approval.
- Concerning late pick-ups, children quickly become concerned while waiting. Also, teachers have limited time to prepare the room for their next class.

Early Drop-Off / Late Pick-Up Fee: If parents consistently drop off or pick up their child(ren), outside of the reserved/confirmed attendance schedule they will be assessed a fee of:

- \$25.00 for the first 10 minutes and \$1.00/minute per child thereafter. (With a 5-minute grace period)
- At the discretion of the Site Director, a family may lose the privilege of using the extended care program if early drop-off/late pick-up becomes a repeated issue.

10. Release of Children

Security check for picking up children:

- Each child's file contains information as to which person(s) are allowed to pick up a child. People who are unfamiliar with staff will be asked to show picture identification and teachers will check this with the file. If their name is not on the child's file, a parent/guardian will be called for approval for their child to be released to this individual. Permission by a parent or guardian may be given over the phone or via a note.
- If anyone new comes to pick up the child, (other than the person authorized), the staff will ask for picture identification. A child may never leave school without parental approval.
- If an unauthorized person comes to pick up a child and the parent cannot be reached by phone, the child will not be released. Staff will ask for a picture of the person, contact the child's parents, and inform the Director of the person's name and address.

11. Special Needs Students

Students with special needs may be assessed by the Early Education Assessment Team from the district in which they live. The Discovery Center staff may be a part of that process at the family's request.

12. Repeating Kinderstart (4's, 5's Class)

Should a student's parents/guardians request them to repeat a second year in Kinderstart rather than going to kindergarten, the student will need to attend their second year of Kinderstart at another LADC site, with the following exceptions:

1. The child's original site has two Kinderstart classes, the child may switch to the other Kinderstart class for their second year.
2. Lack of space at an alternative school if a site with reasonable driving distance does not have space for the same schedule by July 1.

3. If the child has a sibling and there isn't space/availability for the sibling's same schedule at the alternative location, by July 1.
4. The child was Discovery age in their first year of Kinderstart but attended the older class due to a lack of space in the appropriate class AND their teachers/staff agree to them staying and do not require a change of sites to aid in development (e.g. behaviors).
5. The Executive Director believes the situation warrants the child to be an exception to the policy

13. The Lake Area Discovery Center Board of Directors

The Discovery Center is a non-profit organization, governed by a Board of Directors.

- The Partnership Advisory Board is made up of one representative from each of the partner churches/schools. There are currently two advisory boards: school and non-school partnerships. The Advisory Boards discuss ongoing partnership issues and advise the executive board on policy and financial decisions. The Advisory Boards meet quarterly throughout the year.
- The Governing Board is made up of 5-9 executive board members, which includes a President, Vice-President, Finance Officer, Secretary, and two Partnership Representatives from each Partnership Advisory Board. The Executive Board oversees the financial and policy decisions of the Discovery Center. The Board of Directors meets every six weeks throughout the year. The Discovery Center Executive Director serves on the Board as a non-voting member.

Payment Policies

1. Tuition and Fees

Registration, Tuition, and Fee rates and information may be requested from The Discovery Center Main Office by emailing office@ladcfamilies.org or calling 651-762-7884. Tuition rates may be updated at any time.

2. Tuition Payment Options

Families may choose from 2 tuition payment type options:

- Automatic Withdrawal from Checking Account (\$.42/transaction)
- Auto-payment with Credit Card (A 3% service fee per transaction.)

Payment schedules available to families:

- Weekly schedule– The Inclusive / Weekly Tuition schedule is paid weekly, September through May during a full school year for the total number of weeks the student attends.
- Pay in Full

3. Vacation Vouchers

All students qualify for two (2) Vacation Vouchers per school year and one (1) "MEA" Voucher for the Thursday & Friday Childcare days in October.

- Vacation vouchers must be used toward 1 full week, or both MEA Childcare days. *Vacation Vouchers have the value of the student's weekly tuition rate and cannot be transferred to another school year.*

Account activities are available on your Procure Discovery Center Student Account at www.myprocare.com.

4. The Discovery Center Federal Tax ID #41-1937239

5. Holidays and In-Service Days

Programming is closed on Holiday and Staff In-Service Days, as noted on the school year calendar. Tuition will not be adjusted. These dates have already been included in the tuition rate formulas.

7. Tuition Assistance

If the tuition is cost-prohibitive, families may apply for tuition assistance. Tuition assistance may also be available through partnered churches/schools or for County Assistance (C-CAP), Think Small Scholarship, Schultz Family Scholarship, or Partnership-Employee Tuition Discount.

- Families are eligible to receive only one form of financial assistance.
- TO REQUEST AN LADC SCHOLARSHIP FORM, PLEASE CONTACT: mainoffice@ladcfamilies.org

8. Late Payment Fee & Policy

All tuition payments begin the Monday of the first week of attendance.

A \$35.00 late fee will be assessed if payment is not received within the week, it is due.

- Accounts unpaid will result in a notification that the child will get to “play at home” until the account is paid in full. This may result in a child losing their spot in class or having to re-enroll.

9. Leave of Absence Policy

Children who have a planned absence or absence due to illness longer than 2 weeks during the school year, may have their spot held in the program by paying half of the tuition during the absence. If no payment is received, the spot will be released, and the family may re-enroll with an additional registration fee (if a spot is still available).

10. Cancellations

The \$85 registration fee is non-refundable in the event of cancellation before the student begins attending. Exceptions include if a student moves out of the program service area, or if the program is unable to provide a schedule or program that meets the family or student's needs.

11. Withdrawing from the Program or Changing Attendance Schedule

- A two (2) week notice of withdrawal from the program prior to the child's last day is requested. This notice must be given in writing, even when a verbal notice is given to a director or Lead Teacher. If the notice of a withdrawal is not given, the parent(s) is required to pay the child's tuition for the two (2) weeks following the child's last day.
- Any remaining amount due from the “Annual Enrollment Fee” will be pro-rated to the amount of time attended and charged to the program account.
- Vacation Vouchers may NOT be applied toward tuition owed during a (2) two-week notice. Any unused vacation vouchers will be forfeited and have no refund/value.
- Schedule change requests will be assessed a \$30.00/update processing fee.

12. Current Student Re-Enrollment for the Following School Year and Summer Program

RE-ENROLLMENT INSTRUCTIONS for currently enrolled families:

- In mid-December, currently attending families will receive an email with Re-enrollment Instructions and the links to reserve space and schedule for the following school year.
- Summer WOW Camp spots will NOT be automatically placed. Current families may RESERVE SUMMER DAYS/SCHEDULES in February.

Enrollment Timeline:

December: Re-enrollment for current students

Mid-December: Enrollment for siblings of current students

Early January: Open enrollment

13. Annual Program Fee: \$235 / Student

Program Fees are combined into an ANNUAL PROGRAM FEE of \$235

- \$85 Enrollment Fee + \$50 Supply Fee + \$100 Fundraising (details on fundraising below)
- New Enrollment families will pay \$85.00 upon enrollment confirmation.

There are two payment schedule options for the remaining Supply and Fundraising Fees.

- \$150 payment in full, Sept 1
- Three (3) \$50 payments made Sept. 1st, Dec. 1st, and March 1st.

Returning families will opt for one of two options during the Re-enrollment process:

- \$235 payment in Full, February 1st
- \$85 Feb 1 (secures Fall spot); 3 remaining payments of \$50, Sept. 1st, Dec. 1st, March 1st.

Program Fundraiser Commitment Details

Lake Area Discovery Center is a non-profit organization, which means that no state or federal taxes are paid on an annual basis. To maintain that non-profit status, The Discovery Center must show the federal government that:

- The Discovery Center provides tuition assistance for families in need.
- The Discovery Center has a non-discriminatory policy whereby no child is denied the opportunity to attend the program based on color, race, or national/ethnic origin.
- The Discovery Center is an equal-opportunity employer.
- The Discovery Center holds an annual fundraiser.

The Discovery Center Board of Directors has chosen to hold an annual Fall Festival or to join the Partnered School Fundraising Event to fulfill its federal government fundraising commitment and celebrate young families. The fundraising fee money will be used for both tuition assistance and curriculum development, so every child attending benefits, as well as helping to “bridge the gap” between tuition and the classroom/curriculum enrichment, licensing, and accreditation fees that help maintain high-quality programming.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Staff/Child Contact

Children require physical contact for their care and for healthy development. Our physical interaction with children will involve the following:

- **Nurturing:** This includes such touching as hugs, handholding, carrying, cuddling, and back rubbing. This type of contact is never made against the child’s wishes.
- **Safety and Guidance:** This includes restraining the child from harmful situations, separating conflicting children, and guiding children by gently leading and administering first aid.
- **Hygiene:** This includes face and hand washing as well as assisting with such needs as diapering/toileting, cleaning the child up after becoming dirty, examining for rashes or unusual marks, and changing children’s clothes when necessary.

Health and Safety Issues

Be sure to keep The Discovery Center informed regarding your child’s health status. Inform your teacher when immunizations are given, allergies are discovered, food restrictions are required, or medicines are prescribed.

Public Health Nurse or Physician Assistant (PA): Periodically, a certified public health nurse instructs staff regarding child development, sanitation procedures, and administration.

- The Discovery Center will immediately notify the parent, legal guardian, or other person authorized by the parent when your child has any sign or symptom that requires exclusion from the program.
- The public health nurse or physician assistant will provide consultation services to The Discovery Center staff regarding medicines, and so forth. They conduct safety checks on the playgrounds, and the environment, and review the logs kept on illness/injury.

Staff and teachers will provide information to parents verbally and in writing about any unusual level or type of communicable disease to which your child was exposed, signs and symptoms of the disease, mode of transmission, period of communicability, and control measures that are being implemented at the Discovery Center and that you can implement at home.

Exclusion from the Program

A child will be excluded from The Discovery Center when these conditions exist:

- A reportable illness or condition, as specified in Part 4605.7040, that the commissioner of health determines to be contagious, and a physician has not had sufficient treatment to reduce the health risk of others.
- Chickenpox, until the child is no longer infectious, or lesions are crusted over.
- Vomited since admission that day.
- Has had abnormally loose stools since admissions that day.
- Has contagious conjunctivitis or pus draining from the eye.

- Has bacterial infection (i.e., streptococcal pharyngitis or impetigo) and has not completed antimicrobial therapy.
- Has unexplained lethargy.
- Has lice, ringworm, or scabies that is untreated and contagious to others.
- 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher temperature of undiagnosed origin before fever-reducing medication is given.
- Has an undiagnosed rash or a rash attributable to a contagious illness or condition.
- Has significant respiratory distress.
- Is not able to participate in the classroom/program activities with reasonable comfort.
- Requires more care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of children in a class.

**** The child must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school. ****

When your child is sick, please call The Discovery Center Main Office at 651-762-7884 OR
The office/classroom where your child is enrolled:

Notre Dame/Minnetonka 952-358-3500

Our Savior's/Stillwater 651-439-5704 x25

Redeemer/WBL 612-222-5655

St. Bart's/Wayzata 952-473-6189

Annunciation/Minneapolis 612-289-6823

Community of Grace/WBL 651-728-1416

Faith Lutheran/Forest Lake 612-300-7767

Faithful Shepherd/Eagan 651-262-2897

Hosanna, Forest Lake 651-464-5502

St. John the Baptist/Savage 952-890-6604

St. Jude's/Mahtomedi 612-757-2550

St. Helena/Minneapolis 612-729-9301

St. Joseph/Waconia Office 952-442-4500

St. Paul/Wyoming 651-462-5212

Trinity of Minnehaha Falls/Minneapolis
651-762-7884

Trinity Lutheran/Stillwater 651-232-1264

Allergies

The Discovery Center is a peanut-aware environment and strives to avoid peanut butter and whole peanuts/tree nuts in all food or beverage products purchased for the program. However, we are in facilities that are used by other groups and/or the public. Some students also bring bag lunches from home. The Discovery Center cannot be held liable for peanut-containing products that may be left in the building or are sent in bag lunches.

- Staff removes any food items from the home that may contain peanut butter or whole peanut/tree nuts, but since original packaging is not always available to check, staff cannot ensure items from home may have tree-nut exposure.
- If a student has a life-threatening food allergy, the classroom lead teacher will notify all classmate families of the presence of a severe food allergy. The lead teacher and site director will check the labels of all foods purchased for safety before purchasing.
- The teaching team will participate in any additional training or information sessions regarding a child's care (i.e.: epi-pen) at the request of the parents.
- Areas used by children who have allergies to dust mites or to components of furnishings will be maintained by the program according to recommendations of the program Health Consultant.

Student Allergies

Parents/Guardians will notify the center of student allergies via the following forms:

- Health Care Summary (Student File Packet)
- Emergency Card (Student File Packet)
- Special Health Needs / Allergy Action Plan Form (from Classroom Teacher)
- Individual Child Care Program Plan- Allergies (ICCP-Allergies) (from Main Office/Site-Director)

A student's allergy information will be reviewed at least annually or following any changes made to the allergy-related plan by the Site Director. All who are responsible for carrying out the individual childcare program plan will be updated following any changes by the site director.

Responsible staff persons will sign the ICCPP when they are notified of the change.

A child's allergy information will always be available for staff.

On-Site: child's file; posted in the classroom (classroom/extended care/playground copies of emergency cards) and carried off-site during field trips (classroom emergency cards taken with off-site/first aid bag).

- A child's allergy information is also posted/available to the staff person in the area where food is prepared and served to the child.

The lead teacher will notify the child's parent/guardian immediately in any instance of exposure or allergic reaction that requires medication or medical intervention. (As a licensed program, The Discovery Center must call emergency medical services when epinephrine is administered to a child in our care.)

- Teachers will ensure that the ICCPP and Allergy information is updated at least annually and revised as needed.
- Staff will acknowledge through documentation and date that they reviewed all updates and current information on a child's allergy record.

Teachers and the Site Director will ensure that the child's allergy information is always available on-site and in the emergency bag for field trips or outside the playground.

Food Allergy information will be posted in the school kitchen or snack prep area for staff to review. All Food Allergy information will be kept updated.

The teacher or Site Director will contact the child's parent/legal guardian as soon as possible in any instance of exposure or allergic reaction that requires medication or medical intervention. The teacher or site director will call 911 emergency in cases where epinephrine is administered to a child while at school, in the classroom, playground, or field trip.

Under-Immunized Policy

When a child is under-immunized due to medical conditions or family's beliefs, The Program will notify the parents when/if a vaccine-preventable disease occurs in the program and exclude under-immunized children when acute signs of illness are present, as listed under "Exclusion from the Program".

When a child is under-immunized due to the immunization schedule being not up to date, the program will notify parents about missing immunizations and advice for documentation on medical conditions, family beliefs, or request documentation of scheduled appointments for immunizations.

Personal Hygiene/Hand Washing

Children and staff members will wash their hands with soap and water when hand washing would reduce the risk of transmission of infectious diseases to themselves and others.

Hands are washed:

- Upon arrival at school
- After toileting/diapering
- After handling any raw food that requires cooking
- After playing in water shared by two/more people
- After handling pets or other animals or with materials that may be contaminated by contact with animals.
- Before and after eating
- Before preparing or serving foods

Adults also wash their hands:

- Before and after feeding a child
- After assisting a child with toileting
- Before and after administering medication
- After handling garbage or cleaning

Disposable gloves are available throughout the school. Wet or soiled clothing will be changed promptly using the items in the child's backpack provided by the home. Health guidelines prohibit us from washing out clothing that contains blood or feces. The school maintains a supply of extra clothing to use if there is not a change of clothes in the backpack. Loaned clothing should be laundered and returned the following school day.

Communal Water Policy

A sensory table is in the classrooms for children to stand and experience science and math concepts. Children with sores on their hands are not allowed to participate with others at the sensory table. After the activity ends, the water table is drained and refilled with fresh water before a new group of children comes to participate. Outdoor water play is limited to tubs and buckets or containers as well as the water table. We do not participate in swimming pool activities. Staff supervise all children by sight and sound in all areas with access to water in tubs, buckets, and water tables.

Drinking Water and Reusable Water Bottles and Cups Policy

Drinking water is made readily available throughout the day, both in the classroom and on the playground if outside for longer than 20 minutes. Water is accessible either from a water fountain (where available) or a small pitcher or jug of water with cups.

When drinking from a fountain, students are guided with proper use (mouth should not touch the fountain spigot) and observed that water flow is appropriate. Water fountains are cleaned and disinfected daily.

When reusable cups are used, all drinking cups are labeled with the child's name and/or are placed in the "dirty dish" bin to be washed and sanitized before future use.

Program water pitchers, dispensers, and reusable cups are cleaned and sanitized daily.

Skin Protection Policy

To protect against cold, heat, sun injury, and insect-borne disease, teachers ensure that children are wearing clothing that is dry and layered for warmth in cold weather; children can play in the shade and are wearing sun-protective clothing and/or applied skin protection. Permission for staff to apply sunscreen is included in the Permission Form in the student file packet.

Biting Policy and Information

Biting is a normal state of development for young children who are teething and are still developing language skills and is usually a temporary condition that is most common in children under the age of three. The Discovery Center provides an environment that encourages and promotes cooperative play, respect for others, and non-aggressive problem-solving between children. Young children/toddlers bite for a variety of reasons: sensory exploration, panic, crowding, seeking attention, or an intense desire for a toy. The Discovery Center teachers plan activities and supervise carefully for biting not to happen. There are times, however, when a teacher cannot be within immediate reach to prevent a bite.

Biting Incident Policy and Procedures

- The bitten child is consoled, and the area is washed with soap/water. Ice is applied to reduce any swelling/bruising.
- With a teacher's help, the child who bit helps the hurt child feel better by offering kind words, a hug, or help get the ice/water. (Older children are guided through a conversation about what choices can be made in the future.)
- A written incident report is given to the parents of both children involved when they are picked up that day. (Due to confidentiality, children's names are not used/released.)
- If a child bites two or more times within a 2-week period, parents/emergency contacts will be called to pick up the child. A time will be set up to meet with parents in person to talk through circumstances and the next steps.
- The safety and well-being of all children is a priority. The child may not return to class until a meeting is scheduled. If the child bites again before the meeting takes place, they may not return until after the meeting and a plan has been agreed upon.
- If biting persists after the initial parent meeting/plan, the "Persistent Inappropriate Behavior" Step 5 of the Behavior Guidance Plan will be followed. If all avenues have been exhausted here and staff feel a child would be better served in another program, the program will assist parents in finding a new program that best meets the needs of the child.

Toileting Procedures

During the school year, we know many children will show signs of readiness for toilet training. To help you with the transition from diapers to toilet training, we ask that parents help us by following some simple steps.

Signs of Readiness...

- Parents will know a child is ready to wear underwear to school when able to stay dry for at least two hours.
- Until that time, we ask that children be sent to school in pull-ups.

Once wearing underwear please,

- Dress your child in easy-to-remove clothing to help them be successful and independent. Tights, buttons, snaps, zippers, and overalls can be frustrating for little hands.
- Have your child use the bathroom upon arrival at The Discovery Center.
- Please let staff know if you would like them to remind your child to use the bathroom halfway through class.

The Discovery Center 3- to 5-year-old classrooms are not equipped with a changing table, so it is difficult to change a child should they have a bowel movement incident.

Toileting Accident Policy

If a Discovery or Kinderstart student has 3 bowel movements or urine accidents at school, within a 2-week period, staff will meet with the parents to discuss a different time of day to attend school that doesn't interfere with their biological clock. If this does not help, the child will need to play at home until independent with the use of the toilet. We look forward to working with you as your child moves toward more independence.

11. Diapering (Infant/Toddler Programs Only)

Children who are in diapers or pull-ups will be checked approximately two times per 2 1/2 hours and will be given attention in between times as needed.

Staff will check for wet and soiled diapers or training pants before nap and when a child wakes up from a nap. Diaper changing tables are used exclusively by one designated class/in each room with diapered children.

The program health consultant carefully oversees our diapering procedures. Only disposable diapers are accepted at our schools.

Emergency Preparedness

Procedures for administering First Aid/CPR staff training requirements: The directors, teachers, and all staff persons, substitutes, and unsupervised volunteers must satisfactorily complete pediatric first aid and in-person CPR training prior to having unsupervised direct contact with a child, but not exceed the first 90 days of employment. Each classroom is equipped with a first aid kit and staff members are instructed to correct usage of the contents. The Discovery Center conducts monthly fire drills, which are timed and logged. Tornado drills are practiced and logged April to September.

Hazards

The Discovery Center protects children and adults from hazards including:

- Floor coverings are secure to keep staff and children from tripping or slipping.
This program excludes baby walkers.
- Areas in the building or classroom that have been recently painted, carpeted, tiled, or otherwise renovated are ventilated before they can be used by children.
- Staff supervise all children by sight and sound in all areas with access to water in tubs, pails, and water tables.
- Smoke-free facilities
- The program prohibits the use of firearms and other significant hazards that pose risks to children/adults.

Written procedures are in place to protect children and adults from environmental hazards such as air pollution, lead, and asbestos, according to public health requirements.

The Discovery Center maintains the facilities, so they are free from harmful animals, insect pests, and poisonous plants. Pesticides and herbicides, if used, are applied according to the manufacturer's instructions when children are not at the facility and in a manner that prevents skin contact and inhalation. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques are used for the least hazardous means to control pests and unwanted vegetation.

Missing Child Procedure

- If a teacher is alone, children will be taken for a walk and find assistance.
- If additional staff are available, an adult will stand at each outside door to watch for the missing child.
- Staff will conduct a thorough search of the building and grounds before the police are contacted.
- If a child is not found within five to 10 minutes, the police will be called, and parents contacted.

Unauthorized Pick-Up Policy

If an unauthorized person attempts to pick up a child,

- The teacher will call the child's parent and/or other authorized adult on the child's emergency information. The teacher will not release the child until the parent or authorized person has been reached.

If a person who is incapacitated attempts to pick up a child,

- The teacher will call the child's parent and/or other authorized adult on the child's emergency information. The teacher will not release the child until the parent or authorized person has come to pick up the child safely.

If a person who is suspected of abuse attempts to pick up a child,

- The teacher will call the child's parent and/or other authorized adult on the child's emergency information. The teacher will not release the child until the parent or authorized person has come to pick up the child safely.

If no one on the child's emergency contact list picks up a child at the end of the day,

- A non-emergency police officer will be called to locate the child's parents. Based on the situation, the teacher will take guidance from the police policy and protocol. A staff member will remain with the child at the school until the police arrive. LADC Administration will be notified in this circumstance to assist contact with emergency individuals specified on the child's contact information.

Plan for Emergency Shelter/ Natural Disaster

Emergency shelter for children will be provided under the direction of the Director, School Partner Administration in cooperation with local authorities. The classroom teacher or assistant will call 911 if necessary for the emergency needs of children and staff. Program Emergency Plans are posted and available for review in each classroom.

Emergency/Accident Procedure

Every child will participate in periodic fire and tornado drills at school. Parents are encouraged to discuss the experience with the child. In the event of a real disaster, we urge the parents to follow these procedures:

- DO NOT call or come to your child's school or our Main Office. We will contact all parents when able. Be assured the center personnel are giving children any necessary care.
- Community disasters will be reported on the radio.
- The safest place in a disaster is to remain off the streets and out of the way of any rescue mission.

Fire Evacuation

Children will be taken out of the environment by means of the nearest exits and taken to a central meeting spot.

- Primary exits are located throughout each of the buildings; two exits are in each classroom.
- The Fire Department will be contacted: 911.
- Maps and Program Emergency Plans are posted in classrooms and specific information will be given as needed by your child's teacher.

Tornadoes

In case of a tornado emergency, staff will make sure all children are accounted for and move them to the designated shelter areas. The children will be taught to crouch down, and head towards the wall with their hands over their heads.

- Teachers will follow directions from LADC Administration, School Partners, and local government agencies for an emergency shelter plan if necessary.
- Detailed reports will be given to 911 if a tornado occurs and emergency help is needed at the school. Parents, please note a map of the tornado shelter location posted in each classroom. Maps and Program Emergency Plans are posted in classrooms and specific information will be given as needed by your child's teacher.

Emergency Closings

If due to broken or frozen water pipes, gas leaks, etc. The Discovery Center will follow the local school district announcements made on WCCO radio or TV news beginning at 6:30 a.m. or parents will be notified by phone and email.

- **SNOW** The Discovery Center will follow the local public school district or partnership school for all CLOSURE days due to SNOW, due to travel safety for families and staff.
- **COLD/ BLIZZARD** Any closure days for COLD, The Discovery Center will open regional sites to accommodate childcare needs. Parents will be informed of location(s) and how to RSVP by their site director.
 - *If Blizzard occurs during the school day, communication with parents regarding earlier pick-up times will be coordinated between teachers and parents or authorized adults. Teachers will monitor emergency weather recommendations of government agencies and the National Weather Service. Collaboration between Church and School partners will determine school closures.*
 - *If an emergency shelter is necessary, teachers and LADC administration will follow the governmental crisis team and response. Power maintenance will be a consideration in determining school closures.*

COLD WEATHER CHILCARE DAYS will be on a delayed start schedule, to be determined as needed bases. Look to communication from site directors and lead teachers for the schedule.

Building accessibility is at the discretion of the Discovery Center Partner; if the church or school partner decides to close the building due to cold weather, childcare will not be available on site. A regional location for childcare will be planned.

DHS Licensing Policy Information for Parents

(Minnesota Rules 9503.0090 subpart 1)

Nondiscrimination Statement

The Lake Area Discovery Center admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the schools. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, tuition assistance programs, and athletic or other school-administered programs.

- 6-15 months: Infant Class; max. capacity of 8 students each / Student: Teacher Ratio= 4:1
- 16-32 months: Explorers Classes; max. capacity of 14 students each / Student: Teacher Ratio= 7:1
- 3's/4's years: Discovery Classes; max. capacity of 20 students each / Student: Teacher Ratio= 10:1
- 4's/5's years: Kinderstart Classes; max. capacity of 20 students each / Student: Teacher Ratio= 10:1

A. Program Description

Lake Area Discovery Center is a non-profit, Christian-based early childhood program designed for children from 6 months to 5 years old/prekindergarten students.

License Capacity: (6-15 months= 8 / 16 months-32 months: 14 / 33 months-prekindergarten: 40)

The Discovery Center is staffed by one licensed teacher and one teacher assistant per licensing capacity.

Core Lead Kinderstart teachers are 4 year-degreed Early Childhood Specialists and/or have MA Education. All staff members are CPR and First Aid certified within 90 days of employment.

Daily Schedule: The program is open Monday through Friday, 7:00 am-5:30 pm

Extended Day/Wrap-Around Care: AM 1.5-2 hours / PM 2.5-3 hours.

Core Class: 6.5-7.25 hours full day

- **Discovery & Kinderstart** (3, 4 5 years old): A hands-on classroom experience. Included in the weekly curriculum are both a letter of week-based lessons and theme-based lessons, focusing on kindergarten readiness skills, one-on-one time with teachers, and social experiences.
- **Explorers** (20-35 months old): A hands-on classroom experience. Included in the weekly curriculum are color, letter, and number introductions, one-on-one time with teachers, and social experiences.

The Discovery Center is staffed by one licensed teacher and one teacher assistant per licensing capacity.

Core Lead Kinderstart teachers are 4 year-degreed Early Childhood Specialists and/or have MA Education. All staff members are CPR and First Aid certified within 90 days of employment.

Daily Schedule Example:

Below is an overview of a typical day; teachers may choose to alter the times/activities due to weather or other factors.

Arrival Time: 15 Minutes *Children Arrive, Wash Hands & Explore Learning Centers*

Circle Time: 15 Minutes *Calendar/Weather/Story*

Learning Centers: 1 Hour *Open play & activities at Classroom Learning Centers*

Transition Time: 10 Minutes *Music & Movement*

Small Group Time: 20-Min. rotations *Snack- Individualized Cooking and Concept Development*

Large Muscle Time: 30 Minutes *Playground or Gym-time*

Children Picked-up or Transition to Lunch (mid-day) or After-School Care

** Children who are in pull-ups/diapers are checked at 10:30 am / 2:15 pm (+ individualized attention as needed.)*

** Explorer Students are in Nap Time 12:00-2:00 pm. Resume with Snack and Center Time 2:00-3:00 pm*

C. Licensure, Mission/Philosophy and Curriculum Model

This program is licensed and will comply with the standards set forth by the Department of Human Service for the State of Minnesota.

Mission: We, with the early childhood community of the Twin Cities Metro Area, seek to support parents and children through a creative environment that promotes and teaches Christian values, honors diversity, and fosters fellowship within the total community.

Philosophy: Children entering our programs have already established the foundations of their personalities. Future growth stems from these early years. Young children bring themselves, as well as part of their home, to the school as they begin this new experience. Our teachers strive to give children the necessary help to build bridges between their home and school lives and provide them with an environment that fosters the child's emotional, social, spiritual, intellectual, and physical development. Emphasis is placed on respect for ourselves, others, and our school.

Families are invited to share information about children's culture, religion, home language, and family structure with program teachers through the "Family Information Sheet" in the student info packet. This information will be used to develop and maintain positive relationships between teachers and families.

Conferences / Learning Assessments: Discovery, Kinderstart, and Explorer Programs

- Conferences will be held twice a year (fall and spring). If an additional conference time is requested, an agreeable time between staff and parents can be scheduled. It is during these conferences that parents are notified as to their children's intellectual, physical, social, emotional, and spiritual development and receive written reports.
- Children are assessed on skills and objectives by their primary lead and assistant teachers, both individually and in small groups. Teachers are trained in conducting assessments through program orientation, teacher mentorship, and classes through Eager to Learn. (Preschool screening is done outside of the program by the child's districts/counties.)
- Data Privacy: The Discovery Center obtains and uses information about all children enrolled to assist in the planning of their educational program in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Human Services.
- Federal and state laws allow parents and guardians to inspect and review all official records, files, and data relating to their child. Access to such information by third parties is limited and controlled in accordance with the legal rights of data privacy. Currently, the only others who could potentially access a child's file would include the public health nurse, the DHS licensing agent, and accreditation officials.
- All information regarding the assessment of children will remain confidential and will be stored in a locked office. They are available to review between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. by parents, teachers, directors, and the state licensing agents. No information will be released without parents' permission. Any changes in regulations governing access to files and familial rights will be shared.
- The Discovery Center uses the Development Continuum Assessment from The Creative Curriculum. Ongoing observation through classroom play and activities is our primary way of collecting facts and learning as much as possible about each child. To help us remember and use what we learn from our observations, we document what we see on each child's continuum. We also collect samples of child's work samples over time to keep in their portfolios. In addition to sharing this information with parents at conferences, teachers use assessment results to give direction for planning and adjusting lesson plans, better curriculum, improved instructional practices, target professional development for teaching staff, and adjust program resources.
- The Discovery Center staff encourages and supports parents to make the primary decisions about services that their children need and encourages them to advocate to obtain those needed services.

Discovery Center Program Goals

- To provide a safe and stimulating environment that nurtures the natural wonder in each child.
- To create a setting that fosters the child's physical, social, emotional, cultural, spiritual, and intellectual development.
- To honor and respect the diversity within each child as well as all of God's creation.
- To facilitate enjoyment of school and model a positive attitude toward learning which will allow them to face future experiences with skill and confidence.
- To acknowledge the parent(s) as the first and most important teacher and to support them on their parenting journey.

Components of the Curriculum Model:

Learning Centers are changed every week and are developed around a particular theme. The following centers are a part of the daily curriculum.

- **Sensory:** *sand, water, beans, etc.*
- **Home Living/Dramatic Play:** *creative, imaginary play.*
- **Writing Table:** *Eye-hand coordination, pencil grasp, printing*
- **Art:** *self-expression & creativity.*
- **Computer:** *technology, shapes, colors, numbers, and letters*
- **Cognitive/Table Toys:** *Fine motor skills, patterns, number, letter, shape, and color concepts*
- **Blocks:** *perceptual learning; the exploration of shapes, sizes, eye-hand coordination, balance, and math.*
- **Large Motor:** *practice skills, physical strength, coordination, and balance.*
- **Snack/Individualized Cooking:** *social skills, nutrition, food groups, math concepts of volume/measuring; culture.*
- **Books/Language/Literature:** *language development: letters, numbers, and words.*
- **Conversation Time (PreK):** *Multi-layered learning, including, listening/sitting quietly, and understanding spoken words; waiting while others are talking; recognizing new vocabulary words; cooperating and being considerate of others; learning more about God and God's love; knowing their ideas have value.*

Additional Curriculum Enrichment Resources:

- The Creative Curriculum®, a leading scientifically based, comprehensive curriculum format for children birth to age 5, includes 50 Objectives for Development and Learning in 10 areas.
- Handwriting Without Tears® uses fun, child-friendly activities to prepare children for writing. It expands their exposure to language, colors, shapes, movement, letters, numbers, counting, and how each relates to writing using music, writing, and handwriting activities.
- STEM is curriculum enrichment that focuses on experiences in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math throughout all areas of the classroom.

We have created a unique blend of the following models that is the daily operating philosophy on how The Discovery Center interacts with children and families.

The components are:

- **The Bank Street Model** is based on theme units that are carried out in interest areas such as music, art, reading, and dramatic play. Teacher-made materials are widely used to meet children's individual needs.
 - **Program Philosophy:** *We believe strongly in the Bank Street approach. All curriculum webs from a central focus so that children will have greater recall. Our environment is set up in centers so children may choose a wide variety of experiences each day. Our day includes Art, Science, Dramatic Play, Blocks, Manipulatives, Music, Computer, Cooking, Cognitive Games, Stories, Math, and Large Muscle. The "Letter of the Week" is also part of our weekly schedule.*
- **High Scope Model** is based on Key Experiences. Each day is centered on specific objectives, or "key experiences". To accomplish this goal, High Scope uses a Plan-Do-Review cycle to help children make deliberate, systematic choices in their day.
 - **Program Philosophy:** *We incorporate the High Scope approach into the daily schedule. Opening Circle Time and Story is the "Plan", Center Time is the "Do", and the Question of the Day at snack is the "Review".*
- **Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE)** is based on the philosophy that the parent is the first and most important teacher. The classrooms are designed to facilitate parent-child interaction through sign-directed centers. The centers are usually theme-based and many of the cognitive games are homemade, which gives parents ideas of activities they can do at home.
 - **Program Philosophy:** *We believe very strongly that the parent is the first and most important teacher, so our classrooms are set up to invite parents and children to experience the centers together when they arrive at school. Each center contains a sign explaining the objective for parents. A detailed explanation of the activities called "A Peek at Our Week" is emailed out weekly and is available when parents sign in.*

- **Montessori Model** is based on sound ideas of how children learn. There is a sense of order in the classrooms and children work independently at their own pace. All games are self-correcting for immediate feedback.
 - *Program Philosophy: We incorporate Montessori principles through the sense of order that is present in our classroom. All shelves and bins are labeled for children and each classroom contains the same developmental areas. Teachers create cognitive games for each unit which are always self-correcting. This allows children the ability to work at their own pace.*
- **Christian Emphasis:** We believe teachers who have a strong relationship with God will assist children in building strong relationships with God and others.
 - *Program Philosophy: Children are immersed in a "Spiritual Emphasis" each week through a wide variety of activities. Our lessons always contain daily Christian songs, prayer before meals, and modeling of Christian values by the teacher. Once a month the children in Discovery and Kinderstart classes attend "Worship Time" which is a hands-on, Bible-based lesson written and taught by program staff. Pastors and Faith-formation Directors are always welcome to be part of this Worship experience for children. Birthdays celebrate each child as a special gift from God through a "glitter" blessing to remind them that they are a child of God and sparkle in His love! Other opportunities include Christmas concerts, and the various Family Nights put on throughout the school year.*

Developmental Goals and Objectives

(Minnesota Rules, part 9503.0045, subpart 2)

Physical Development: To provide an environment that fosters growth in gross and fine motor development at developmentally age-appropriate levels for each child.

Gross Motor

- Develop balance/spatial relationship
- Develop coordination skills
- Develop confidence/skill with playground equipment
- Develop eye-hand coordination
- Complete cycle of activity

Fine Motor

- Develop skills using classroom tools
- Develop success with dressing skills
- Eye-hand coordination
- Concentration

Activities

- Running, jumping, climbing, hopping, ball play, balance beam, relays, obstacle course, exercises, creative movement, blocks /construction, riding toys, skipping, galloping, circle games, parachute.

Activities

- Cutting, pasting, painting, puzzles, stringing, pouring, play dough, dressing boards, coloring/markers, printing/pencil skills, peg work, sewing, manipulatives, scooping, sorting, spooning.

Intellectual Development: To provide an environment that fosters growth in language, math, science, sensorial skills and geography at developmentally age-appropriate levels for each individual child.

Math

- Problem-solving & creative thinking, math vocabulary, Understand math concepts & processes, recognition of symbols & quantities, Exposure to geometry: concept & vocabulary.

concepts, exposure to phonics; develop motor skills for writing.

Sensorial

- Size, shape, color, and texture, vocabulary to describe sensorial concepts, develop awareness of environment and materials in their surroundings.

Language

- Pre-reading and reading skills, vocabulary, exposure to language

Activities

-Pegs, quantity to symbol 1-5,
quantity to symbol 1-10,
sandpaper numerals,
Geometric solids, sets,
processes (add, subtract),
money, time, thinking
activities, symbols.

Activities

-Storytelling, flannel boards,
puppets, board games,
classification, rhyming,
matching, sequencing,
phonics, letter recognition,
reading, printing.

Activities

Shapes, computer, board
games, "what if's".

Objectives for Emotional Development:

To provide an environment that fosters an opportunity for growth in self-esteem.

- Develop a safe, secure, and predictable environment.
- Provide a warm, nurturing atmosphere.
- Provide opportunities for children to experience many successes.
- Validate and respect the feelings of others.
- Develop an environment where a positive self-concept is nurtured.
- Group times
- Storytime

- Free choice
- Sand/Water play
- Outside play
- Creative movement
- Dramatic play
- Blocks, music
- Large muscle
- Sharing opportunities
- Thinking skills.

Objectives for Social Development: To provide an opportunity for each child to develop growth in relationships with peers, adults, and the environment, and to assist each child's progress through the "Five Stages of Play" by developing skills in,

1. Cooperation, taking turns, listening, and group skills
2. Problem-solving in interrelationships
3. Effective communication
4. Role-playing
5. Respect for self, environment, and others

- Large muscle time
- Large and small group time
- Home Living
- Sharing opportunities
- Service projects
- Music,
- Sand and Water play
- Snack time
- Stories
- Discussions

Through classroom centers and activities:

- Block/building
- Dramatic play
- Creative movement
- Free choice

Culturally Appropriate Activities to Promote Intellectual, Physical, Social and Emotional Development**Activities that promote progress in 3, 4, year-olds in developmental domains:**

Activities are documented using principles of authentic assessment and will be provided for parents to review during conferences in the Fall and Spring via teacher Observation Notes and Work Samples and the Learning Continuum.

Objectives for social/emotional development:

-Demonstrate increasing competency in recognizing and describing emotions.

Objectives for approaches to learning:

-Demonstrate ability to complete a task or stay engaged in an experience.

Objectives for language/literacy development:

Communicate information using home language and/or English.

Objectives for creativity and the arts:

Participate in art and music experiences.

Objectives for cognitive development:

Uses senses to explore materials and the environment.

Activities

- Sing songs/play games related to emotions; happy, sad, angry, scared faces, etc.
- Create self-portraits
- Reading stories/ Storytelling using "I was (happy, sad, etc.) when..."
- Paint to music/ different emotions
- Put a puzzle together

- Storytime
- Play games, take turns
- Craft project with 3 steps
- Rhyming activities
- Sing songs
- Guessing Games ("I spy...")
- Dictated stories
- Sing a story
- Clap in rhythm

SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL:

- Uses words to handle emotions instead of actions
- Shares and takes turns
- Participates in group play

APPROACHES TO LEARNING:

- Demonstrates problem-solving ability
- Seeks out new experiences
- Stays on task

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY:

- Identifies rhyming words
- Uses words and sentences
- Demonstrates understanding of print concepts
- Recognizes letters, writes name

CREATIVITY AND THE ARTS:

- Expresses self in creative ways
- Demonstrates an appreciation for art and creativity

- Move to music
- Create w/a variety of tools, materials and techniques
- Collect objects for a nature hike
- Child-directed manipulation of sensory objects/ materials
- Experimentation w/objects stimulates auditory, olfactory tactile responses.

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT:

- Demonstrates ability to count in sequence
- Counts objects
- Recognizes/duplicates patterns
- Sort objects/Identifies shapes
- Recognizes colors
- Understand the sequence of objects
- Uses senses to understand the environment
- Knows identifying information (full name/address/phone/parent names)

PHYSICAL AND MOTOR

DEVELOPMENT:

- Able to perform basic large muscle motor activities
- Uses tools for writing, drawing, cutting
- Follows basic health and safety Rules
- Can get dressed/ready Independently

Developmental Goals for Toddlers and Twos:

Social/Emotional

Mobile Infants:

- Are active, enthusiastic explorers who crawl, cruise, walk, and roll.
- Enjoy watching other children; begin to imitate
- Engage in social referencing, look at faces, recognize emotional expressions, and use this information to react to new situations and people
- Increased mobility gives a new strategy for regulating emotions
- Feel more capable and want to control actions and effects.
- React with frustration and sometimes anger when things do not go their way.

Toddlers

- More independence is explored as they learn about and responds to the feelings of others as they gain better control over emotions.
- Practice making decisions, doing things for themselves, and handling their emotions.

Two-year Olds

- Increased language skills and vocabulary help to talk about feelings and themselves.
- Become self-aware and understand adult expectations for their behavior and self-conscious emotions develop.
- Develop empathy and begin to use words to express emotions as well as recognize and respond appropriately to the emotions of others.

Physical Development:

Mobile Infants

- Skilled at pulling themselves up to stand, using support, and walking around objects from this position
- Around one year, will begin to take first steps and walk without support, stacking blocks, and other toys.
- The pincer grasp between thumb and index finger becomes more coordinated.

Toddlers

- Gross and fine motor skills have developed; walking, running, hopping, and throwing.
- Fingers and hands are used to place puzzle pieces, make marks with a crayon, roll, pound, and squeeze playdough and paint.

Cognitive Development:

Mobile Infants

- Show increasing ability to act intentionally, use tools and understand cause and effect.
- Often imitates the actions of others.

Toddlers

- Language and memory skills affecting “toddler thinking” i.e.: separation anxiety, understanding of people leaving and coming back.
- Engage in lots of pretend play, exploring daily and special events with social roles.
- Egocentric, believing they can control the world and that everyone thinks and feels as they do.

Language Development:

Mobile Infants

- Understand more than what they can speak.
- Begin waving “good-bye” and pointing with the index finger.
- Can respond to requests and questions by using gestures, sounds, and sometimes words.
- At 1 year, may begin saying a few recognizable words.
- Enjoys looking at pictures in books, which helps to build a strong vocabulary.

Two-year Olds

- Start to combine various gross motor skills during play and move more easily from running to jumping and climbing.
- Begin to coordinate arms and legs to try complicated tasks such as pedaling and steering a tricycle.
- Find motor skills advance; scribbling, drawing, and stringing large beads.

Two-year Olds

- Better able to collect new information and link it to what they already know.
- Consistent, predictable routines help with understanding of time and order to daily events.
- Attention span increases, allowing more complex problem-solving and may investigate the cause when something unexpected happens.

Toddlers

- Able to listen to and enjoy more complex stories.
- Most have at least 50 words in expressive vocabulary by 18 months old.
- Begin putting two words together to express other thoughts, like, “Daddy go” or “Me do”.

Two-years Old

- Continue to increase language skills, ability to listen, and ability to speak.
- Between 2 and 3 years, vocabulary continues to increase, and sentences become more complex.
- Engage in conversations, offering ideas and asking questions.

E. Health Care Summary and Immunization Record

Health Care Summary: DHS requires that a health care summary be completed by the child's health care provider and submitted within 30 days of the child's first day of school. Updated forms will be required annually.

Immunization: DHS requires that either a child's immunization records or a signed notarized statement of parental objections to immunization be submitted by the child's first day of school.

F. / G. Accident and Illness at School

Minor accident/illness:

- The Discovery Center staff will isolate the sick child and always keep them within sight and sound.
- Keep the child lying down on a cot and protected from excessive cold and heat.
- The parents will be notified of the illness, advising them of the care given and informing them of the policy for the care of children who become ill or injured at school. If neither parent is available, the individual listed under the emergency contact on the child's emergency form will be contacted.
- Staff Provides immediate first aid, calls 911, and reaches parents, the school's emergency care policy on emergency permission release goes into effect.
- The child will be transported by ambulance, and the parent, or designate will be contacted.
- All Accident reports will be kept on file in the child's permanent file.
- An analysis of the Accident Log is reviewed annually to identify potential hazards. Parents or designate will be contacted.
- All accident reports must be signed by the parent and will be kept on the file in the school's Accident Log and the child's permanent file.
- An analysis of the Accident
- Log is reviewed annually to identify potential hazards.

Severe accident/illness:

- **Infectious and communicable disease**
 - If there is exposure to a communicable disease, parents will be alerted, in writing or by phone, so that they may be aware of the incubation period for the disease, and symptoms should the illness have spread. When a child becomes sick in the classroom, parents will be notified of illness by phone. If exposed to a contagious illness or condition, parents will be informed in writing with information for the procedure to inform the child's health care professional. Parents will also be informed by the teacher if an emergency or injury occurs requiring medical attention.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SOURCE: 911

White Bear Lake/Stillwater/

Mahtomedi/Eagan/Forest Lake:

- St. John's Northeast– 651-779-4400
- Lakeview Hospital– 651-439-5330

Minnetonka:

- Gillette/Minnetonka Clinic- 952-936-0977

Waconia:

- Ridgeview Medical Center- 952-442-7850

Wayzata/Edina/Minneapolis:

- Fairview Southdale- 952-924-5000

Savage:

- M Health Fairview Ridge 952-892-2000

H. Administration of Medicine

- The Discovery Center staff will administer physician-prescribed medicine accompanied by an authorization form completed by the parent.
- Medicines must be stored in the original container with the child's name as well as information on dosage amounts and times. You may request that your pharmacy issue two bottles of the medication so that you will be able to keep some at home and some at school.

- If an over-the-counter medication (such as pain reliever, Cortisone cream, or cough medicine) is to be administered at the school, you must obtain written instructions from your child's physician and fill out a medicine form.
- Prescriptions can be honored for 2 weeks from the issue date. We need written physician permission to extend administration beyond this time frame.
- For chronic conditions (such as diabetes or asthma) your physician needs to complete a health plan. Associated medications may be given for up to 6 months.
- Medication is stored in the child's classroom in a designated "medicine box" that is stored out of the reach of children, as well as with the signed medication form, individual childcare plan, and administration record.
- Medication and instructions are available for easy access for the teacher to include in a first aid bag to take along to a re-location site in case of emergency, field trip, or outside. The first aid bag is always kept with a teacher, or out of children's reach.

Field Trips- Discovery & Kinderstart Classes

- Signed permission slips provided by the Lake Area Discovery Center for each child going on a field trip must be on file with the Lead Teacher prior to going on the field trip.
- Parent volunteers for field trips are greatly appreciated and are encouraged to volunteer. AM and PM classes may be combined for some field trips and will use an alternating time schedule for each trip. We will ride a bus to and from field trip locations. Any child who rides with a parent in their own vehicle must also return in this same vehicle. A child who rides the bus must ride to and from the field trip on the bus.

** There is an additional charge for field trips to help cover the cost of field trip specialists and bus/transportation. If the cost is prohibitive for your child to participate, please contact your lead teacher or office@ladcfamilies.org.

J. Research and Public Relations

If The Discovery Center or any child in our program is involved in any type of experimental research or public relations activity, a signed permission form will be obtained from a parent(s) before it is undertaken, for each occasion. This will be maintained in the child's school records.

K. Snacks/Lunches

- Snacks are served each session (a.m. & p.m.) Snacks and milk are provided by the program. Snacks include cereal, crackers, fruit, vegetables, cookies, fruit snacks, raisins, etc., and meet nutritional regulations put out by the USDA's Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).
- A planned snack schedule is sent home monthly.
- During the school year, The Discovery Center offers daily hot/cold lunches, served by a qualified caterer.
- All food meets the NSLP (National School Lunch Program) guidelines, with fresh and wholesome menus and increased daily fruits and vegetables. Menus to meet dietary, allergy or ethnic needs are available.
- For foods that are known to cause choking (i.e.: hot dogs, grapes, carrots, chicken nuggets), teachers dice into pieces small enough to chew/swallow. Popcorn, hard candy, nuts, and peanut butter use is avoided.

For young children in feeding chairs with trays, staff will need to separate with enough space in between that food is unreachable by another child. The program has purchased rubber pads for wooden low chairs to lessen the possibility of children pushing chairs on hard surface floors.

Child Meal Pattern Child Care Food Program

Milk 1% Pre School and Toddlers / Whole milk for 1-year-olds

Federal regulations require that each child's lunch consists of items from the four food groups and meets the USDA's CACFP food guidelines. For menu ideas and nutrition information please go to the USDA's website @

www.mypyramid.gov

Child and Adult Care Food Program Child Meal Pattern				
Minimum Portion Size				
	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12 and 13-18 ^{1,2}	
Breakfast <small>Serve all three components for a reimbursable meal.</small>				
Milk³	4 fluid oz	6 fluid oz	8 fluid oz	
Vegetables, fruits or portions of both⁴	1/4 cup	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	
Grains^{5,6}				
• Whole grain-rich or enriched bread	1/2 oz eq	1/2 oz eq	1 oz eq	
• Whole grain-rich or enriched bread product, such as a biscuit, roll or muffin	1/2 oz eq	1/2 oz eq	1 oz eq	
• Whole grain-rich, enriched or fortified cooked breakfast cereal ⁷ , cereal grain, rice and/or pasta	1/4 cup	1/4 cup	1/2 cup	
• Whole grain-rich, enriched or fortified ready-to-eat breakfast cereal (dry, cold) ⁸				
• Flakes or rounds	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	1 cup	
• Puffed cereal	3/4 cup	3/4 cup	1 1/4 cup	
• Granola	1/8 cup	1/8 cup	1/4 cup	
Lunch and Supper <small>Serve all five components for a reimbursable meal.</small>				
Milk³	4 fluid oz	6 fluid oz	8 fluid oz	
Meats/meat alternate				
• Lean meat, poultry or fish	1 oz	1 1/2 oz	2 oz	
• Tofu, soy product or alternate protein product	1/4 cup	3/8 cup	1/2 cup	
• Cheese	1 oz	1 1/2 oz	2 oz	
• Cottage cheese	2 oz or 1/4 cup	3 oz or 3/8 cup	4 oz or 1/2 cup	
• Large egg	1/2	3/4	1	
• Cooked dry beans or peas	1/4 cup	3/8 cup	1/2 cup	
• Peanut butter or soy, when or flavored, sweetened or unsweetened ⁹	2 tbsp	3 tbsp	4 tbsp	
• Nuts, nut butter or soy, when or flavored, sweetened or unsweetened ⁹	4 oz or 1/2 cup	6 oz or 3/4 cup	8 oz or 1 cup	
• Products, soy nuts, tree nuts or seeds ⁹	1/2 oz = 50%	3/4 oz = 50%	1 oz = 50%	
Vegetables or 100% vegetable juice⁴	1/8 cup	1/4 cup	1/2 cup	
Fruits or 100% fruit juice^{4,10}	1/8 cup	1/4 cup	1/4 cup	
Grains^{5,6}				
• Whole grain-rich or enriched bread	1/2 oz eq	1/2 oz eq	1 oz eq	
• Whole grain-rich or enriched bread product, such as a biscuit, roll or muffin	1/2 oz eq	1/2 oz eq	1 oz eq	
• Whole grain-rich, enriched or fortified cooked breakfast cereal ⁷ , cereal grain, rice and/or pasta	1/4 cup	1/4 cup	1/2 cup	

L. Behavior Guidance Plan

(MN Rules, part 9503.0055, subparts 1-6)

The Discovery Center promotes a positive approach to managing the behavior of all children. All behavior guidance methods used are tailored to the developmental level of the children that the program is licensed to serve. These policies and procedures are in place to protect the safety of all children and staff and the goal is to limit or eliminate the use of suspension, expulsion, and other exclusionary measures.

The following techniques are implemented by Discovery Center staff as a positive model of acceptable behavior.

- Prevention: A well-designed environment prevents frustration, interruptions, and hazards. We strive to maintain stimulating classrooms so that the children can be engaged in productive and positive activities.
- Positive Redirection: This technique involves redirecting unacceptable behavior to an acceptable alternative. We will recognize children for their appropriate behavior and successful interactions.
- Modeling: Teacher and peer-modeled appropriate behavior is provided to help the children pattern positive responses. When needed, staff will demonstrate such things as “gentle touches” to make an impression on children.
- Boundaries: The Discovery Center has clear and simple rules in each classroom. Such guidelines as “walking feet, inside voices, listening ears and gentle touches” help the children to achieve acceptable standards.
- Problem-solving: We appeal to the child’s growing intellectual and moral reasoning by using natural and logical consequences. Asking questions often helps a child to develop correct responses. We regularly remind the children to “use their words” to resolve issues.

Children are in the process of learning appropriate behavior. They are constantly experimenting with different types of actions and are looking for direction and limits. Our methods include recognition and encouragement of appropriate behavior as often as possible.

When inappropriate behavior becomes apparent, the following FIVE-STEP BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE PLAN is carried out by staff to ensure the safety of all the children and staff.

1. **STEP ONE—TEACHER PRESENCE** The teacher may need to stand near, look at, put a hand on the shoulder, etc. to show a child their behavior is not acceptable.
2. **STEP TWO—REDIRECTION** The teacher leads the child to a new activity to avoid conflict; may separate from the toy, etc.
3. **STEP THREE—PROBLEM-SOLVING WITH CHILD** The teacher helps the child to solve problems, think of alternative solutions, models words to use instead of physical reaction, lets the child voice their feelings, and acknowledges other feelings, etc.
4. **STEP FOUR—NATURAL AND LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES** The teacher calls upon the child to assist in remedying the situation. (i.e., after a child knocks over another’s toy blocks purposely, that child would be asked to help pick them up, etc.) All consequences for unacceptable behavior are immediate and relate to the observed inappropriate behavior.
5. **STEP FIVE—SEPARATION FROM THE GROUP** No child will be separated from the group unless the following has occurred: Less intrusive methods, as listed in Steps 1 through 4, of guiding the child’s behavior have been tried and were ineffective. The child’s behavior threatens the well-being of the child or other children in the group.

(Exclusionary measures are not considered until all possible interventions have been exhausted, and there is agreement that seclusion is in the best interest of the child.)

A child who requires separation must:

- Be within an unenclosed part of the classroom where the child can be continuously seen and heard by a staff member.
- Return to the group contingent upon stopping or bringing under control the behavior that precipitated the separation and be returned to the group as soon as the behavior that precipitated the separation abates or stops.

SEPARATION REPORT: All separation from the group is documented on the Daily Log and include the following:

- The child's name; staff person's name; time; date,
- Information indicating that less intrusive methods were used to guide the child's behavior, and
- How the child's behavior continued to threaten the well-being of the child or other children in care
- If a child is separated from the group three or more times in one day, the child's parent will be notified, and the parent notification will be indicated in the Daily Separation Log.

If a child is separated five or more times in one week, eight times or more in two weeks, the procedures under "Persistent Inappropriate Behavior" will be followed.

PROHIBITED ACTIONS:

The Discovery Center prohibits the following actions by or at the direction of staff:

No child will be subjected to emotional stress, which includes but is not limited to...

- Name Calling
- Ostracism
- Shaming
- Spanking
- Using language that threatens, humiliates, or frightens the child.
- Making derogatory remarks about a child or child's family
- Punished for lapses in toilet habits.
- Food, light, warmth, clothing, or medical care withheld as punishment for unacceptable behavior.
- No physical restraints will be used, other than to hold a child to protect them from hurting themselves or others (see positive manual hold).

- No mechanical restraints will be used on a child, such as tying.
- Separating from the group, except as outlined in Step Five, "Separation from the Group."

No child will be subjected to corporal punishment, which includes but is not limited to....

- Rough Handling
- Slapping
- Shoving
- Kicking
- Hitting
- Biting
- Ear Pulling
- Pinching
- Shaking

PERSISTENT INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

If a child is consistently showing unacceptable behavior the following steps will be taken:

- The persistent unacceptable behavior will be observed/recorded by the teaching team along with written documentation on how the teachers responded to the behavior. This documentation is kept in the child's file.
- Staff will inform the Site Director of the inappropriate behavior, their observations, documentation, and Response to the behavior. The Site Director will give feedback and offer suggestions to staff on other ways to handle the behavior.

If the teachers and Site Director feel the behavior is not diminishing after implementing the Behavior Guidance Plan or if a child has been separated from the group more than 3 times in one day or 5 or more times in one week, the child's parents will be notified, and the parent notification will be indicated in the Separation Log.

- A meeting will be set up with the child's parents, the teaching team, and the Site Director. If needed, other professionals will be consulted i.e.: District Early Childhood Special Education; Private Psychologist, Health Care Professional, or the Wilder Foundation.
- If all avenues have been exhausted here and the staff feels a child would be better served in another program, staff will assist parents in finding a new program that best meets the needs of the child.

Manual Restraint / Physical Hold: We promote the rights of children served and strive to protect their health and safety during the "Emergency use of physical hold"; using a manual restraint/physical hold when a child poses an imminent risk of physical harm to self or others, and it is the least restrictive intervention that would achieve safety. *(Property damage, verbal aggression, or a child's refusal to receive or participate in programming on their own do not constitute an emergency.)*

Positive strategies and techniques are required before using a manual restraint/physical hold.

The following must first be used to attempt to de-escalate a child's behavior before it poses an imminent risk of physical harm to self/others:

- **Follow the first 5 Steps of the Program Behavior Guidance Plan** (Teacher Presence/Redirection/Problem-Solving/Natural and Logical Consequences)
- **Other strategies that could be used include:**
 - Reinforce appropriate behavior.
 - Offer choices to the person, including activities that are relaxing and enjoyable.
 - Use positive verbal guidance and feedback.
 - Actively listen to a child and validate their feelings.
 - Speak calmly with reassuring words, consider volume, tone, and non-verbal communication.
 - Simplify a task or routine or discontinue until the child is calm.

Physical contact or instructional techniques must use the least restrictive alternative possible to meet the needs of the child. The following is allowed on an emergency basis when a child's conduct poses an imminent risk of physical harm to self or others and less restrictive strategies have not stopped the behavior.

- **Physical escort:** physical intervention or contact used as a behavior management technique to guide or carry a child to safety or away from an unsafe or potentially harmful and escalating situation.
- **One staff person provides arm restraint** in a standing or seated position.

Manual restraint/physical hold is discontinued as soon as the behavior ceases.

A Behavior Update Report Form is completed after the use of a manual restraint/physical hold and includes:

- The names of staff and children involved in the incident.
- The positive/alternative measures from the Behavior Guidance Plan that were attempted to de-escalate the incident and maintain safety and identify when/how/long the alternative measures were attempted before the physical hold was implemented. *(If possible, an observing staff member will fill out the form and description.)*
- The Behavior Update Report Form will be shared with and signed by the student's parents and filed in the student's file.
- The Site Director will be notified.

M. Pet Policy

Pets may be brought to "Show and Tell" at the Discovery Center only if:

- Animals appear to be in good health.
- Documentation is available to show that the animals are fully immunized (if the animal should be protected) and that the animal is suitable for contact with children.
- The Discovery Center staff will supervise all interactions between children and animals and instruct children on safe behavior and make sure that any child who is allergic to a type of animal is not exposed.
- **Due to the risk of salmonella poisoning, we refrain from using reptiles as room pets.**

N. Parents are free to visit the center anytime during the hours of operation.

- Parents may review the Child Care Program Plan and Parent Handbook anytime by emailing mainoffice@ladcfamilies.org
- If parents have any questions or comments concerning the program that haven't been answered by the site director/teaching staff, they are welcome to call DHS/Licensing (information below).

O. Department of Human Services, Licensing Division #651-431-6500

P. Nap & Rest Program Policy (MN Rules, part 9503.0050 Minnesota Statutes, sections 245A.1435, 245A.146)

Staff position themselves to always hear and see any sleeping or at-rest children, including when staff are engaged with other children who are awake.

QUIET / REST TIME POLICY- 3, 4, 5 YEAR OLDS

- Children who attend all day have a half-hour Quiet/Rest Time following lunch. This is a time for non-napping children to rest their bodies before starting afternoon programming. (Parents may request a nap for their child.)
- Children in Quiet/Rest Time will have the option of choosing a restful activity on a carpet square or mat, engaged in a quiet/rest activity.
- Quiet/Rest Activities vary daily and may include reading books, listening to stories, using a “Quiet-Time Bag” with small manipulatives, puzzles, games, or watching an educational movie.
- Lights/Partial Lights are on; Quiet/Rest Time Rooms are not dark. Children are seated, not lying down.
- If a child lays down and falls asleep/wants to nap during this time they will be provided a cot to lay on. If the child falls asleep, they will be allowed to sleep past the allocated 30 minutes until they wake up on their own.
- A child who is not asleep will not be required to remain on a mat/cot longer than 30 minutes.
- A floor mat map is followed to place children’s mat/cot in quiet areas, physically separated from children who are engaged in an activity that will disrupt a napping or resting child.
- Mats/Cots are placed clear of aisles, allowing unimpeded access for both adults and children on at least one side of each piece of napping and resting equipment. Mats/Cots must be placed directly on the floor and are never stacked when in use. If bedding is used, separated bedding is used for each child and is washed weekly and when soiled or wet. Blankets, if used, are washed weekly and when soiled or wet.

NAP TIME POLICY FOR TODDLERS (EXPLORERS CLASSES) and Napping Preschoolers

- Toddlers and Napping Preschoolers who attend The Discovery Center all day have nap time for 2 hours following lunchtime. Children may sleep longer than 2 hours if requested by the parents.
- A floor cot map is followed to place children’s cots in quiet areas, physically separated from children who are engaged in an activity that will disrupt a napping or resting child.
- Cots are placed clear of aisles, allowing unimpeded access for both adults and children on at least one side of each piece of napping and resting equipment. Cots must be placed directly on the floor and are never stacked when in use. If bedding is used, separated bedding is used for each child and is washed weekly and when soiled or wet. Blankets, if used, are washed or dry-cleaned weekly and when soiled/wet.
- A light source (lamp or overhead) will be always on in a classroom, regardless of rest/nap times.
- No soft items are allowed in the infant crib/sleep equipment (i.e.: blankets, pillows, stuffed toys, etc.)
- Children who have completed a nap or rested quietly for 30 minutes WILL NOT be required to remain on a cot or in a crib or bed.

Children are welcome to bring special blankets, stuffed animals, pacifiers, or other comfort items from home. Separate bedding for each child is provided by the parent and washed weekly by the parent or more often when soiled or wet. Soiled or wet blankets and clothing are bagged and sent home to the parents.

Q. Communicating Concerns, Suggestions or Grievances

(MN Statutes, section 245A.04, subdivision1, (d))

A parent(s) / guardian’s suggestions and concerns are considered valid and will be addressed. Your ideas and feedback help us make continual improvements to our program. We will work with you to resolve problems that may arise. To address concerns and suggestions at the most appropriate and effective level, we suggest the following:

- Parent(s) / guardian should direct any concerns by speaking or scheduling a conference with the Lead Teacher.
- If issues are not resolved (within one week), or you have additional concerns, parents/guardians are encouraged to contact the Site Director for more information or help. If the Lead Teacher is also the Site Director, parents/guardians are invited to contact the Executive Director via mainoffice@ladcfamilies.org.
- Continued issues not resolved within two weeks will result in a sit-down/in-person meeting with the lead teacher, site director, and/or program or executive director.

The Discovery Center staff encourages parents to raise concerns so that staff can work collaboratively with them to find mutually satisfying solutions to then be incorporated into classroom practice.

R. Mandated Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Policy

(MN Statutes, sections 245A.145, subdivision 1/245A.66, subdivision 1)

Parents will be sent a form upon registration and given any time per request to the teacher, staff, and LADC Main Office.

<https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/DHS-7634A-ENG>

Who Should Report Child Abuse and Neglect

Any person may voluntarily report abuse or neglect.

If you work with children in a licensed facility, you are legally required or mandated to report. You cannot shift the responsibility of reporting to your supervisor or to anyone else at your licensed facility.

If you know or have reason to believe a child is being or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years, you must immediately (within 24 hours) make a report to an outside agency.

Where to Report

If you know or suspect a child is in immediate danger, call 911.

- All reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring in a licensed facility should be made to the Department of Human Services, **Licensing Division's Maltreatment Intake line at #651-431-6600.**
- Reports regarding incidents of suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring within a family or in the community should be made to the **local county social services agency or local law enforcement.**
 - Ramsey County: Non-Emergency #651-266-4444 / Social Services: #651-266-8500
 - Washington County: Non-Emergency #651-430-6457 / Social Services: #651-430-6455
 - Carver County: Non-Emergency #952-448-4200 / Social Services: #952-361-1600
 - Hennepin County: Non-Emergency #612-370-3879 / Social Services: #612-348-3552
 - Scott County: Non-Emergency #952-445-1411 / Social Services # 952-496-8686
- The child suspected of being abused will be supervised, kept in sight and sound at all times, and provided any physical or emotional care needed until parents, guardians or authorities arrive.
 - The child's identity will be protected and kept anonymous.
 - All policies and procedures will be placed and enforced to prevent any further victimization.

If your report does not involve possible abuse or neglect but does involve possible violations of MN Statutes or Rules that govern the facility, you should call the Department of Human Services, Licensing Division, at 651-431-6500

Retaliation Prohibited

Lake Area Discovery Center shall not retaliate against the mandated reporter for reports made in good faith or against a child with respect to whom the report is made. *The Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Act contains specific provisions regarding civil actions that can be initiated by mandated reporters who believe that retaliation has occurred.*

Failure to Report –

A mandated reporter who knows or has reason to believe a child is or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused and fails to report is guilty of a misdemeanor. *In addition, a mandated reporter who fails to report maltreatment that is found to be serious or recurring maltreatment may be disqualified from employment in positions allowing direct contact with persons receiving services from programs licensed by the Department of Human Services and by the Minnesota Department of Health, and unlicensed Personal Care Provider Organizations.*

Internal Suspected Maltreatment

In the event of an internal or external report of alleged or suspected maltreatment of a program employee, the employee will be supervised at all times while on-site until the Internal Review is completed. After the Internal Review is completed, any additional actions will follow the Corrective Action Plan if needed.

**** All allegations of abuse will be overseen by the program's Executive Director, who will make decisions regarding media relations and the notification of the insurance carrier if the program is under a DHS active investigation.**

Recognizing Grooming Behavior as Potential Maltreatment of Minors

Grooming is a process of manipulation and trust-building that a perpetrator uses to create an atmosphere where they can exploit a child. It is often very subtle and difficult for other adults to name; typically, a perpetrator seems like a loving and attentive adult in that child's life. The child's reactions to this attention are the most telling indicator of whether they are comfortable. Grooming often takes place before the act of abuse or throughout the period of abusive behavior.

It is important to note that perpetrators of child sexual abuse (CSA) are often found in positions of trust and authority (examples include family members, family friends, leaders of after-school activities, teachers, etc.) and are often very socially adept and charming; the act of grooming includes not only winning the trust of the child but of their parents or caregivers as well.

The grooming process involves some, if not all, of the following six stages.

Stage 1: Targeting the Victim

The perpetrator targets a victim by sizing up the child's vulnerability (e.g., emotional neediness, isolation, family challenges, low self-confidence). Research done with perpetrators indicates that they strategically choose children and families with identified vulnerabilities and that they have consistent access to in order to build an (apparently) trusting and helping relationship.

Stage 2: Gaining the Victim's Trust

The perpetrator gains trust by gathering information about the child, building a "special relationship", and getting to know their needs. Confusingly, perpetrators mix effortlessly with responsible and positively motivated caregivers because they exhibit a sense of warmth and concern for the child. Extravagant gifts, extra attention, excessive time, and affection may distinguish one adult in particular and raise concern for greater vigilance. This stage can also involve breaking rules the child's caregivers have set (for example, allowing the child to smoke or drink, or buying the child items the caregivers won't allow) to create the stage for secret-keeping and threats.

Stage 3: Filling a Need

Perpetrators will look for opportunities that will be helpful and fill a need for their target. Perpetrators often work on gaining the trust of caregivers and identifying their burdens/challenges to exploit them to gain access to the child. Caregivers are often relieved to have "help" and/or to see their child connect with a caring adult so they can deal with other pressing challenges or basic needs. They may provide the child with something the caregivers cannot provide (childcare after school, tutoring, specialized treatments, etc.), resulting in that relationship becoming deeper and more idealized by the child.

Stage 4: Isolating the Child

Perpetrators use the developing special relationship with the child to create situations in which they are alone together. This isolation further reinforces a special connection and allows them to avoid oversight and scrutiny from others. Babysitting, tutoring, coaching, and special trips all enable this type of isolation. A special relationship can be even more reinforced when a perpetrator cultivates a sense in the child that they are loved or appreciated in a way that others, not even caregivers, can provide. Caregivers may unknowingly feed into this through their own appreciation for the unique relationship between their child and the other adult.

Stage 5: Sexualizing the Relationship

Once a significant trusting relationship has been created, the perpetrator progressively begins to sexualize the relationship. Desensitization occurs very slowly and is often portrayed as innocent encounters (for example, "accidentally" walking in on the child or having the child walk in on them when one is in a stage of undress or creating situations [like going swimming] in which both parties are less clothed or naked). There is usually a gradual intrusion of physical boundaries as well; games involving tickling, roughhousing, and having the child sit on a knee or cuddle under a

blanket are common tactics. Touching progresses slowly to see how the child responds. This is how the perpetrator determines whether to keep pushing further. At that point, the perpetrator exploits a child's natural curiosity, using feelings of stimulation to advance the sexuality of the relationship.

Stage 6: Maintaining control

Once the sexual abuse occurs, perpetrators commonly use the child's affection for them, as well as secrecy, threats, and violence to maintain the child's continued participation and silence, particularly if the child attempts to withdraw (for example, "no one will believe you", destroying a favorite/comforting possession, threatening pets, etc.). The perpetrator may threaten to end the relationship, thereby ending the emotional or other benefits the child associates with that relationship. The perpetrator may use the fact that if they tell someone, the perpetrator will be harmed as a means of preventing the child from telling others. The child may feel that exposing the relationship will humiliate and isolate them from others, making them feel less worthy and even more unwanted. Several layers and factors keep children stuck in these abusive relationships.

Breaking the Cycle

Sexual predators are capable, charming, and manipulative; they are often successful in their attempts with multiple victims before they are caught. While parents and caregivers often feel blamed for what happened, it is neither the fault of the child nor the caregiver; the blame lies completely with the perpetrator.

Several ways exist to help empower children, leaving them less vulnerable to predatory behavior. These include:

- Teaching children the proper names of their sexual body parts
- Teaching children what kind of touch is and isn't appropriate.
- Teaching children to say "no" to unwanted touch anywhere on their bodies.
- Letting children know that you are a safe adult to talk to, that you will always believe them, and that they can come to you with any problem for help.

What to do if you suspect a child is being groomed

Refer to the Mandated Reporter / Maltreatment of Minors policy above for steps to report suspected maltreatment.

Program Organizational Chart

The Program Organizational Chart identifies the program roles and the flow of supervision and reporting.

1. Executive Board of Directors- 2023/20024:

- **President**, Linda Friesen
- **Treasurer**, Carrie Hackman (DHS Licensing Controlling Individual)
- **School-Partner Rep**, Bruce Richards
- **Church-Partner Rep**, Melanie Lugo
- **Member-at-Large**, TBA

2. Executive Director- Janet Miller (Founder, DHS Licensing Authorized Agent)

3. Administrative Team:

- **Office Admin/Director of Licensing:** Lynne Maurice
- **Office Admin/Director of Employee Orientation & Trainings:** Lisa Swenson
- **Program Directors of Curriculum:** Emily Sullivan and Tammy Junker
- **Director of Quality Rating/Accreditation:** Shannon Goldstein
- **Directors of Admissions:** Matt Lindholm and Megan Engelke
- **Business Administrator:** Paula Barber
- **Admin Support Team:** Health Consultant: Beth Griffin, PA; Child Behavior Specialist/Psychologist: Dr. Jenna Edlund; Business Office/Facilities: Andrew Sullivan and Steve Miller; CPA: Doug Pahr; Marketing Consultant: Megan Peterson

4. Regional Directors: Jennifer Cassidy, Lily Strain, Kristen Shadis

5. Site Directors:

- **Annunciation Catholic School/Minneapolis:** Peter Lagermeier
- **Community of Grace Lutheran Church/White Bear Lake:** Mercedes Finstuen
- **Faith Lutheran Church/Forest Lake:** Morgan Lindholm
- **Faithful Shepherd Catholic School/Eagan:** Nicole Schram and Heidi Delesha
- **Hosanna Lutheran Church/Forest Lake:** Cemantha Wibstad
- **Notre Dame Academy Catholic School/Minnetonka:** Heather Discher
- **Our Savior's Lutheran Church/Stillwater:** Georgia Morgan (Manager)
- **Presentation of Mary Catholic School/Maplewood:** Susie Wolter
- **Redeemer Lutheran Church/White Bear Lake:** Tonya Sisterman and Sarah Klassen
- **St. Bart's Catholic School/Wayzata:** Hannah Zellmer
- **St. Helena's Catholic School/Minneapolis:** Jenn Leflar
- **St. Joe's Catholic School/Waconia:** Aimee Sieve
- **St. John the Baptist Catholic School/Savage:** Becky Melton
- **St. Jude of the Lake Catholic School/Mahtomedi:** Shannon Buncher
- **St. Paul Lutheran Church/Wyoming:** Lily Strain
- **Trinity Falls Lutheran Church/ Minneapolis:** Josie Bergmann and Hannah Norton
- **Trinity Lutheran Church/Stillwater:** Ashley Perez and Mary Green

6. Lead Teaching Team

7. Assistant Teaching Team

If you have any questions about the contents of the Program Policy & Procedure Manual or Classroom/Program, please call or email the Lake Area Discovery Center Main Office 651-762-7884 / mainoffice@ladcfamilies.org.