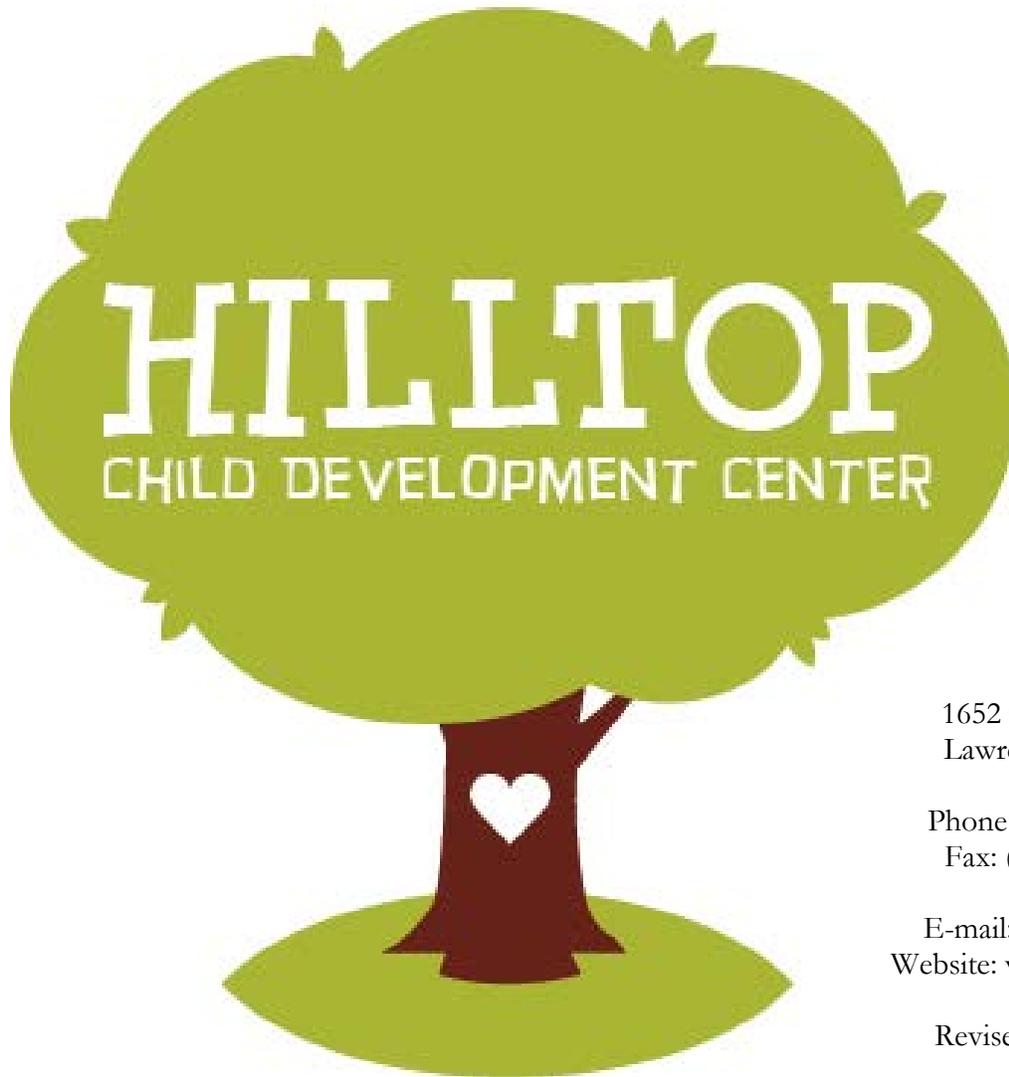


Hilltop Child Development Center Family Handbook



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Hilltop Philosophy and Commitments to Education

Our Mission	Hilltop is an inclusive community where children learn from passionate professionals in a nurturing and academically rich environment.
Our Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ∇ Community Spirit: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We foster a strong sense of community by providing an exceptional early childhood learning experience for the children of KU students, faculty, staff and the city of Lawrence. ∇ Support for Children and Families: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We support children and their families with open communication and collaborative solutions related to the social, emotional and educational development of each child. ∇ Excellence in Education: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We encourage our staff, our children and their families to engage in lifelong learning. ∇ Collaboration and Transparency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We cultivate positive alliances with parents, children and community partners. ∇ Celebration of Diversity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We honor and value all individuals.
Who We Serve	Hilltop serves the students, faculty and staff of the University of Kansas as well as the children of Lawrence and the surrounding community.
Our Goals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase parent involvement in order to make all families feel welcome, supported and engaged in the Hilltop community. 2. Develop clear policies and procedures to demonstrate organizational capability and codify institutional practices. 3. Recruit and retain the highest quality staff in early childhood education by investing in incentivized professional development opportunities. 4. Communicate Hilltop’s mission, progress toward strategic initiatives, and financial picture through regular messaging to families, staff, KU and community partners.

Hilltop Overview and Connection to KU

Hilltop is a private, non-profit facility incorporated in the State of Kansas. It is federally tax-exempted as a 501(c) (3) educational corporation. Hilltop is licensed by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment and accredited by NAEYC. Hilltop is governed by a Board of Directors composed of 9 Hilltop parent members and 6 public members (majority of board must be KU affiliated) who are interested and experienced in early childhood education. The Board of Directors functions in an advisory, policy-making capacity according to the by-laws and policies of the corporation. A copy of the by-laws is available in the office. Most of the board policies are listed in this handbook.

Many public board members come from the KU community. Hilltop parent board members are elected each year. Because Hilltop is designated as a University Affiliated Corporation and receives administrative support from KU's office of Student Affairs, a representative of that office serves as a Hilltop board member.

Hilltop History

The February Sisters Movement brought to the attention of the University Administration and the Student Body the need for campus childcare. Through the combined efforts of Molly Laflin, then a student representative on the Student Senate, and an initial allocation of \$20,000 by the Student Senate, Hilltop opened at its original site on Jayhawk Blvd. in the fall of 1972. The center was originally established to provide all day care for children whose parents were affiliated with the University as a student, faculty, or staff member. Presently, Hilltop provides full-day child care five days a week, after-school care and full-day summer care for school-age children with priority given to University students, faculty, and staff (priority doesn't apply to school age).

The program grew from three to eight classrooms as the need for quality child care increased through the '70s and '80s. By the early 1990s, the building was full and long waiting lists made it clear that more space was needed. Attempts to find additional space on campus had failed. In 1994, the university-wide Child Care Task Force assigned to study the need for campus child care proposed that a new, larger facility was needed. The Student Senate strongly supported the proposal and established a \$2.00 per semester student fee to help fund construction. This fee was doubled in 1997 when lack of university funding threatened to end hopes for the new facility. The continued strong support from the Senate and the student body convinced the university administration to move forward with plans for the new child care facility. Design work began in the fall of 1997 and continued with some difficult ups and downs until mid-1999. The ground breaking for the "new Hilltop" was held on June 27, 1999, and the move to the new building was completed in early August 2000. Hilltop underwent expansion in 2008, adding 6 new classrooms.

Connection to the University

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

Hilltop entered into a formal management agreement with the University beginning in July of 1999. The University provides important support for our program by providing janitorial services and assisting with part time salary support. The KU Student Senate also offers support with a required campus fee. This fee provides for tuition assistance for qualified KU Students as well as facility upgrades.

Service to the University

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

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

Children Involved In Research Projects

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

General Information

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

Programs Offered

Hilltop is licensed by the State of Kansas to provide child care for up to 314 children (full-time equivalency). The center meets all state licensing requirements. Hilltop currently serves children ranging in age from 1-12 years old.

Location & Contact Information

Hilltop is located on the University of Kansas main campus within the Central District. Contact information is provided on the cover of this handbook and below:

Address: Hilltop Child Development Center, Inc.
1652 Ousdahl Road, Lawrence, KS 66045

Phone: 785-864-4940

Email: hilltop@ku.edu

Website: www.hilltop.ku.edu

The center also has several electronic communication options:

- Follow us on Twitter: Use Twitter.com and follow @HilltopCDC
- Follow us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/hilltopcdc and “like” our page to receive information about upcoming events.
- Receive frequent email reminders about fees, events, Optional Care periods, etc. Email addresses will be collected from each family to facilitate this communication.

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

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

Hours of Operation

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

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

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

Arrival

Hilltop is a safe place for all children, however, please make sure that your child is with you at all times while in the building. Please do not leave your Hilltop student or any other siblings in your car during arrival or departure.

Arrival time is an important time for your child. Please bring your child to the adult in charge in your child's classroom by 9:00 a.m. The person bringing the child to the center should sign the child in on the sign-in sheet in the child's classroom and put all belongings in the child's cubby. The time of arrival and the drop-off person's initials must be written on the sign in sheet. Never drop your child off at the door or leave them in a classroom if there is no staff person present. If there is no staff person present, please check with the office immediately. This rule applies to school-age children as well as younger children.

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

Departure

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

Departure after 5:30 p.m.: If you arrive to pick up your child after 5:30 p.m., part-time aides will be supervising the children. At 5:30 p.m. all children from the Preschool Children combine into the Chipmunk Room, The PreK children combine into the Dragonfly Room; all children from the Toddler classrooms are combined into the Turtle room; all children from the Early Preschool classrooms are combined into the Butterfly room. The School-Age children will combine into the Jayhawk room. At 5:45 p.m., children still in the center are brought to the office. Late pickup fees are assessed from the time children enter the office.

People Authorized To Pick Up Children

Only people that you authorize on your child's emergency treatment information may pick up your child. If it becomes necessary for an unauthorized person to pick up your child, we need to receive your approval in the form of a note or phone call from you stating that person's name and telephone number. This person will need to sign a special form in order to take your child from the premises. If the individual is unknown to Hilltop staff, we will need to see some form of personal identification. We can only release your child to those persons you have authorized and they must be at least 18 years old.

Parking For Arrival & Departure

Parents may park for up to 20 minutes in the designated loading zone spaces. This permit does have a fee that is determined by the University each year. Permits will be charged and provided in August and January. The permit is only to be used for bringing and picking up your child at Hilltop. Parking in the loading zones for more than 20 minutes may result in your vehicle being ticketed or towed.

Always use caution when driving through the parking lot. There are many pedestrians (adults and children) and cars pulling in and out. Please keep everyone safe by driving slowly, carefully and obeying all traffic signs.

Emergency Closing Policies & Procedures

- The Executive Director will make announcement of any change in Hilltop's hours of operations via the social media accounts and via email.
- In the event there is an emergency affecting only Hilltop (no heat, water, etc.), Hilltop will be closed or will operate on reduced hours.
- If the KU Administration announces an official closing of KU classes or the entire KU campus, Hilltop will be closed.
- Hilltop reserves the right to cancel services or alter hours if weather conditions are extremely dangerous for our staff and families.
- Hilltop incurs salary and other fixed costs when closed, so fees cannot be refunded for the rare days closed.
- Hilltop does not always follow the public school closings.
- In the rare case of a serious health emergency affecting the center or the KU campus, families will be notified and will follow directives from the local Health Department and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) concerning our operations.

Emergency Preparedness Policies

Fire drills are scheduled monthly throughout the year. Each classroom practices using two different escape routes. Tornado drills are held monthly from March through September. Fire and tornado drill procedures are posted in each classroom and staffs are trained to know what to do in emergency situations. Classrooms serving children with disabilities have an emergency plan that assigns staff the responsibility for the disabled child. Outside speakers make it possible for staff and children on the playground to hear alarm signals.

Emergency Security Plan –Hilltop has the ability to contact the KU Public Safety Office immediately for assistance in case a dangerous situation is occurring in or near the center.

There are procedures in place to move all children and staff to the safest possible locations as quickly as possible. Drills will be held annually so children and staff can become accustomed to the procedures just as they do for our regular fire and tornado drills.

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

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

Confidentiality Policy

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

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

Please do not ask teachers or part-time aides to discuss information about other children or families. Staff is expected to adhere to the confidentiality ideals and principles in the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct.

Non-Discrimination Statement

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

Children with disabilities are enrolled through the regular enrollment process. Hilltop works with USD 497 (children over three), and the Douglas County Tiny K Program (children under three) to meet the needs of the children in care. If the staff are unable to meet a child's needs because necessary facilities, services or staffs are not available, families will be assisted to locate an appropriate placement.

Diversity & Observance of Holidays

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

It is a families' responsibility or prerogative to determine the extent that religion should play in their children's lives, so religious holidays are not celebrated at Hilltop. However, throughout the year, classrooms may learn about various holidays around the world and may study them in relation to planned curriculum themes. Teachers are trained to understand there is a BIG difference between learning about a holiday and celebrating a holiday. While most (not all) of our families celebrate many different holidays, both commercially and spiritually, Hilltop does not attempt to recreate this or become involved in one holiday over others.

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

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

Birthday Celebrations at Hilltop

Families may bring healthy treats to share with the class at snack time. **It is strongly encouraged to provide nutritious snacks.** Check with the classroom teacher to be aware of any food allergies present in your child's classroom. Snacks brought into Hilltop will be served along with the CACPF required snack. Families are welcome to come and join the celebration. Please make arrangements with the classroom teachers, so they are prepared.

Some families have opted to donate a book or learning material to the classroom use instead of providing treats; this is always welcomed. **Do not bring balloons.**...there are choking safety regulations we must adhere to.

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

Meals

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

Food or drinks from home should not be brought into the classroom unless it is something prearranged to be shared with the entire class for a meal or snack. If your child brings food with them on their way to school, it must be finished before entering the building.

Child & Adult Care Food Program

Hilltop participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) administered by the Kansas Department of Education (KDE). Hilltop's meals meet or exceed the daily requirements set forth by the program. Hilltop is audited by KDHE annually. Families are required to sign an annual enrollment/income eligibility form related to this program. All children receive the same food services regardless of income category.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in this program on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S. W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (866) 632-9992 (voice). Individuals who are hearing impaired or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through Federal Relay Service (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Special Diets, Restrictions, & Allergies

CACFP requires that a child be served milk two times daily, and that certain food requirements are met daily. If your child is allergic to an item on the menu or has a medical condition that restricts certain foods, you must have a medical doctor's note in order to complete the CACFP Meal Substitution Form.

If your child is on a restricted diet due to religious preference and cannot eat certain foods, provide a list of these foods with suggested alternatives for each food item listed. You will need to share this with your classroom teacher and the Food Program Coordinator. We may not be able to accommodate certain requests due to cost or preparation time required. Allergies or other food restrictions are posted in the classrooms with your written permission.

*Please do not bring nuts or nut products into Hilltop. Some children have life-threatening allergies to these items, so we strive to keep the building as free of them as possible. This also applies to items you might bring for teachers on Staff Appreciation days or as gifts.

Naps & Rest Time

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

Toilet Training Requirements

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

Children accepted in the preschool classroom wing should be completely toilet trained and out of diapers (including during nap times). Preschool and Pre-K rooms are not set up for toilet training. However, we realize that some children may have occasional accidents. Occasional accidents are defined as 1 or less accidents per week.

Adjustment to School & Leaving Your Child

If your child is new to Hilltop, we suggest a brief visit or two before your child's first day of attendance.

It is important to create a consistent routine for drop-off which you will be able to follow all year. Children should be at school by 9:00 a.m. Try hard not to give your child mixed messages – be positive and happy as you leave. Forlorn or worried glances from parents convey to children that this may not be a fun experience after all. Try not to feel guilty if you leave your child in tears, as teachers are accustomed to this behavior, and almost all children cease crying within a very short period of time. Please feel free to call or email Hilltop to check on how the day is going, and remember that sometimes it takes a week or two before a child feels comfortable and secure about coming to school. If it is taking longer for your child to adjust, we will begin a joint plan of action.

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

What to Bring To Hilltop

All full time enrolled children should bring the following items to Hilltop:

- Two complete changes of LABELED clothing including underwear and socks.
- A toothbrush.
- Sunscreen LABELED with your child's name. (Non-aerosol only)

Children in the Toddler and Early Preschool rooms (Bumblebees, Turtles, Caterpillars, Hummingbirds, Butterflies, Ladybugs, Crickets, and Tree Frogs) should also bring:

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

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

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

Bringing Toys, Food, & Pacifiers to School

Children should not bring toys, candy, or gum to school. All children will want to play with the toys or eat the goodies, and it frequently causes quarrels among the children. Hilltop is not responsible for any item brought to school from home.

Occasionally favorite toys are brought for sharing time or to complement a specific classroom theme. Hilltop encourages parents to monitor what children bring to share as we encourage nonviolent actions between the children. Hilltop provides toys that do not promote or imply violent actions. Books or CD's are great to share with others. Items must be labeled and picked up after school. If your child shares a video, animal, insect or some "discovery," please make prior arrangements with the teachers.

NAEYC requires written verification from a veterinarian that pets visiting the center have up-to-date immunizations and are safe for contact with children. Please do not bring bottles or pacifiers to the center.

"Super Hero" Paraphernalia

Hilltop asks all families to not send their children in clothing or bring any toys related to "superhero" characters. This includes extra clothes that are placed in cubbies. Although we know our children enjoy these characters, we want to teach the children how to appropriately interact with one another and solve their problems using appropriate language. The superhero characters represent violent and/or aggressive behaviors that we do not want the children to replicate. This includes clothing, shoes, hats, jackets, blankets, toys etc.

If a child does attend Hilltop with an unapproved character, the classroom will have the child change the piece of clothing into a more appropriate replacement.

Parent Liability Statement

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

Grievance Procedure

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

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

Programs and Curriculum

Classroom Age Requirements

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

Room(s)	Classroom Age Range	Ratio
Toddler Rooms	1-2 years	1:5
Early Preschool Rooms	2-3 years	1:7
Preschool Rooms	3-4 years	1:10
Pre-K Rooms	4-5 years	1:10
School-Age Rooms	Kindergarten through 5th grade	1:14

Classroom Placement Policies

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

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

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

Yearly classroom placements are completed by the Hilltop administration in late spring or early summer. **Hilltop does not guarantee any parent requests for classrooms.** Placements are made based on teacher feedback, administrative input and input from the Behavior Specialist on staff. Classrooms are paired based on the needs of each individual child's academic needs and social development.

After-School Programs

Hilltop offers an onsite after-school program for public school children in full-day kindergarten through fifth grades (Jayhawk & Bobcat rooms). Transportation is provided from as many schools as possible, dependent upon enrollment and the closing times of the schools. The teachers for the school-age program, who are also the van drivers, plan daily activities to

meet the varied needs of young primary children. Care is also offered when the public schools are closed.

Optional Care

Hilltop offers several Optional Care periods each year. There are normally 6-8 weeks of Optional Care offered between semesters and during Spring Break for currently enrolled children. Please check your current Hilltop calendar for the current year's scheduled Optional Care weeks. Only parents who use this service pay for child care; other parents are not billed.

Applications for each Optional Care session are available via email each semester. Email reminders are sent to families on Hilltop's email list. These dates are also published in the newsletter well in advance and are indicated on the Hilltop yearly calendar posted in the entryway. **It is the responsibility of the parent to read emails and sign up within the required timelines provided.** All fees, including Optional Care fees, must be paid in advance. Due to lower enrollment and because many teachers take vacation leave during Optional Care, classrooms may be combined during these times. Efforts are made to have at least the one teacher present for each classroom. For a complete description of enrollment policies, including Optional Care enrollment, please refer to the "Enrollment" section in this handbook.

General Education Curriculum

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

Toddler Rooms (Turtles, Hummingbirds, Bumblebees & Caterpillars) will focus on self-help, independence, and social development. Children gain experience and knowledge through both child-initiated and teacher-directed activities with a strong emphasis on curiosity, exploration, and fun! The teaching staff strives to maintain a very warm, comforting and loving environment for the toddlers as they are the youngest members of the Hilltop community.

Early Preschool Rooms (Crickets, Tree Frogs, Ladybugs, & Butterflies) build on the skills from the toddler year, and will focus even more on self-help skills, including toilet training and dressing. Children will begin to experience more involved large group curriculum and will gain more exposure to making choices with activities. As the children approach preschool, activities will begin to naturally take a more structured shape, and the emphasis will remain upon fostering inquisitiveness, expression, and again, fun!

Preschool (Sunflower, Salamander, & Chipmunk) **and Pre-K Rooms** (Dragonflies, Prairie Dogs, Cottontails and Meadowlarks) are designed to offer a stimulating learning environment in preparation for school, while maintaining a play-based approach with developmentally appropriate activities. The teachers plan engaging projects and use innovative ideas that address the diverse needs of each group and promote creativity and exploration. The Pre-K

Rooms have a more pronounced emphasis on handwriting, pre-reading, and pre-math skills as they approach the transition to Kindergarten.

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

Art & Sensory Curriculum

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

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

Pre-Academics

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

Guidelines for Referrals and/or Termination of Care

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

Program Referral: Hilltop may recommend to the families supplemental services for a child with developmental, psychological, or medical problems. USD 497's Lawrence Early Childhood Special Education Services provides a free developmental screening for preschool age children who are referred to them by parents or teachers. Douglas County Tiny K Early Intervention will do screening for children under three years of age. Areas tested include hearing, vision, speech/language, gross and fine motor skills, cognition (thinking and reasoning skills), and social development. If special services are needed, USD497 or Tiny K staff will provide them or the child will be referred to other agencies or programs. Families may also receive services from the KU Child & Family Services Clinic or the local Success by 6 Family Resource Team.

Child Care Termination: If the parent(s) refuse to follow through on the referral or recommendation of services, or if these services are provided and the child's condition does not improve satisfactorily, or if continued enrollment of the child does not represent the best interest of the child, the center, staff, or other children, Hilltop administration reserves the right to give written notice to the parent or parents indicating termination of all child care services at the end of 10 days. If the child's behavior is physically or emotionally dangerous to other children or staff, immediate termination may be necessary. Child care services may also be terminated immediately if the behavior of a parent or other primary caregiver is verbally or physically abusive or disrespectful to a staff person or other children or parents in the program.

Staffing

Professional & Support Staff

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

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

Part-Time Employees

Hilltop employs many part-time aides to assist in the classrooms. The majority of whom are KU students. Part-time aides help supervise children during rest time while teachers have planning and break time. They assist teachers during other parts of the day, particularly during late afternoon hours. Extra adults in the rooms allow teachers to plan walks, field trips, and other special activities that require additional supervision. Part-time aides supervise children while teachers attend outside meetings and act as substitutes when a teacher is absent.

Part-time aides are trained and supervised by the Curriculum Director and Operations Manager. Full-time teachers assume responsibility for hands-on training of the aides in the classrooms with the children.

Volunteer Information

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

Practicum Students

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

Health and Medical Information

Medical & Dental Requirements

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

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

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

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

Religious exemption from immunizations: Families may have a religious exemption. If there is an outbreak of a communicable disease the children will not attend care until the incubation period has cleared.

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

The Douglas County Health Department gives physicals and immunizations for a small fee or you may make an appointment with your own physician. Required KDHE health forms are available from Hilltop, the Health Department, or online on the KDHE website. Yearly dental check-ups are recommended for children 1 year and older.

When to Keep Your Child At Home & When Your Child May Be Sent Home

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

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

- A temperature of 101 by mouth or 100 by electronic device.
- Two episodes of vomiting and/or diarrhea in a 24 hour period
- Any undiagnosed rash.
- Sore, discharging eyes, ears, or running nose.
- A fresh cold, accompanied by sneezing, coughing and congestion.
- Lack of appetite, listlessness, irritability, or unusual fatigue.

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

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

Children should not be given medication to reduce a fever before bringing him/her to school. This masks the problems and your child could then infect others or become ill later in the day.

If your child has been exposed to any of the following contagious diseases: whooping cough, chicken pox, cryptosporidiosis, giardiasis, hepatitis, rubella, mumps, measles or diphtheria, report it immediately to the office. These illnesses must be reported by Hilltop to the Health Department. Information about any contagious disease occurring in a classroom will be posted in that room. It will tell you about the number of cases, symptoms to look for, the cause and incubation periods.

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

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

If your child has **head lice**, use an effective shampoo, wash and clean all bedding, furniture, rugs, toys, clothing and car seats and call us. Hilltop policy requires that all nits (eggs) be removed from the head before the child can return to school the following day. A child will be sent home if only a few nits remain. Please notify us if your child has been exposed to someone with head lice. For more information on procedures here is a link to the KDHE. http://www.kdheks.gov/c-f/head_lice.htm

Accidents & Emergency Procedures

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

Hilltop will contact you if we think a physician should see an injured or ill child, and we will prepare them to be picked up. In case of a more severe emergency, we will call an ambulance and notify you immediately. For minor accidents, teachers will note the incident on an individual accident report form. More serious injuries that may require medical treatment will result in a more detailed two-page accident report being filed.

If your work, home or cell phone number changes, notify the office immediately. All families must have an additional person listed on their emergency treatment card. Hilltop must have a way of contacting at least one family member in case of emergency, at all times.

Administering Medication

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

If you want your child to be given a non-prescribed medication, Hilltop must receive a note from your doctor or nurse. The medication must be in the original container, must be labeled clearly and will be kept in a locked box. There are locked boxes in all classrooms.

Medicine will normally be given once a day at the noon hour. Exceptions to this policy will be at the discretion of the administration.

Parents must fill out and sign an individual initial medication form and give it to the classroom teacher to be posted in the classroom. There are two types of forms, one for prescribed medication and the other for non-prescribed.

Teachers will write the time the medicine was administered and her/his name on the form that you filled out.

Teachers can administer medicine only if the above is followed by the parent.

Unless we receive a specific request from a parent to keep medicine on hand (i.e. asthma, allergies) all medication that is not being administered will be disposed of; so please take it home if you want to keep it.

Teachers will administer medication while on field trips, if necessary. Emergency medications will be carried in the classroom backpack and kept with a teacher at all times.

Wellness & Outdoor Play

If your child is not well enough to go outside with his/her class, please do not send your child to school. Hilltop does not have staff to remain inside with one child. It is healthier for children to go outside every possible day rather than be confined indoors. If a physician recommends outdoor restriction, it may be possible for you to make arrangements with the office personnel while his/her class plays outdoors for a short duration (up to 2 days).

The children in the Toddler and Early Preschool classrooms do not go outdoors if the temperature or wind-chill is below 20 degrees, for older children it is below 15 degrees. If the temperature or heat index is 95 degrees or higher, children do not go outdoors and swimming trips may be altered. If an air quality alert should be issued for our area due to air pollution, outdoor play will be restricted or cancelled until an all clear is issued.

Sunscreen Policy

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

*Please do not bring aerosol sunscreens as they are a hazard to children with asthma or breathing problems.

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

Appropriate Clothing for Indoor and Outdoor Play

Children should be dressed in comfortable clothes. Avoid sending your child to school in expensive or special clothes that might be damaged during active or messy play. Teachers dress informally to allow participation in all types of activities. Tennis shoes are recommended for safe climbing and walking (rather than slick bottomed shoes, flip-flops, or cowboy boots).

Children go outside in the winter months so send them with mittens, hats, and boots, so they can enjoy playing for 10-30 minutes in cold weather. Fresh air and exercise are important to children's health and well-being.

Soiled Clothing

Check your child's cubby or diaper cubby each day for soiled clothing daily. Hilltop may not always have extra clothing for children. Hilltop has adopted the following policy:

- If a child consistently has accidents and does not have extra clothing, the teacher will call the parent to ask that either clothing be brought to school or that the child be taken home. Please note that Kansas Health Department regulations prohibit Hilltop staff from rinsing out clothing soiled from toileting accidents. These will be wrapped in plastic and must be taken home by families.

Reporting Child Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse or Neglect

The Kansas Child Protection Act mandates that all personnel working in a licensed child care center must report suspected child abuse or neglect. There is a penalty for violation of this reporting law. This act protects the people reporting to the Kansas Department of Children and Families (DCF) from any liability, civil or criminal. All records and reports concerning child abuse and neglect filed with DCF or the district court are confidential and will not be disclosed. All staff at Hilltop are aware of their responsibilities regarding this Act.

Enrollment Policies

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

Enrollment Acceptance Policies for Non School-Aged Children

Hilltop prioritizes enrollments for families in which one or both parents, or primary caregivers are University of Kansas students, staff or faculty. For Hilltop enrollment purposes, students must be enrolled for at least six (6) credit hours which require the KU campus fee during fall and spring semesters. An exception will be made for doctoral students taking a smaller number of dissertation hours. Note: some KU classes, continuing education classes, and independent studies courses do not require this fee and do not establish eligibility. Summer enrollment at KU for parents/guardians is not required. Verification of student enrollment and KU tuition payment or KU employment status for fall semester is required by September 15th if the KU student or KU staff status is used as a factor in determining Hilltop enrollment priority. If the KU student or staff/faculty status is used for Hilltop enrollment priority and a parent was never enrolled or employed at KU or dropped enrollment/employment before September 15th, enrollment of the child will be terminated immediately. For Hilltop enrollment purposes, full and part-time employees of the University, KU Medical Center and designated University Affiliated Corporations (Athletics, the Alumni Association, the Endowment Association, Student Housing, the Unions, Continuing Education, KU Center for Research, Hilltop, etc.) are considered University affiliated.

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

- Children of Hilltop full-time staff.
- Siblings of children currently attending Hilltop according to the date of application.
- Children of KU students according to application date.
- Children of KU faculty and staff according to date of application.
- Children of non-KU affiliated families according to application date.

Enrollment Acceptance Policies for School-Aged Children (Grades K-5)

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

Jayhawk & Bobcat Rooms (Grades K– 5)

Enrollment procedures vary for school age K-5th grade children. KU affiliation does not apply to school age enrollment. Administration will consider schools available for pickup, transportation capabilities and siblings as we enroll our classrooms. These rooms are incredibly limited on spaces each year.

Enrollment Acceptance for Children Funded By DCF

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

Optional Care Enrollment

If you need care during these Optional Care periods, it is important to remember the following policies:

- Enrollments will be accepted up until the deadline. If applications are received after the deadline, children's names will be placed on a waiting list for available spaces. Enrollment is not guaranteed after the deadline. An additional \$25 late Optional Care application fee will be added to your fees.
- Optional Care enrollment/fee agreements will be available via email each semester. It is the family's responsibility read the email and register, indicate on the form whether or not they wish to enroll for the Optional Care period, and to register electronically by the deadline to the operations manager or designated email.
- Optional Care enrollments may not be cancelled or changed after the signed application/fee agreement due date. There can be no refunds for cancellation of Optional Care enrollment after the due date of the application.
- Parents are responsible for paying Optional Care fees as specified in the fee agreement. **Fees for Optional Care are in addition to your standard fee agreement.**

Optional Care Enrollment Guidelines

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

- Classrooms may be combined in each wing in order to meet parent requests and adequate cost-effective teacher/child ratios.
- An attempt will be made to employ at least one regular classroom teacher per room for each Optional Care session. When this is not possible, aides will be hired to substitute for the teacher.

Summer Enrollment

If a child has been accepted for the summer session, and the parent must withdraw the child prior to the first day of the session, notice of withdrawal must be given by May 1 in order to have the security deposit returned.

After the session has begun, a withdrawal request cannot be accepted and all fees shown on the fee agreement are due in full.

Fees are payable as designated in the fee agreement. Fees are payable for all days in the contract period whether or not the child is present.

Re-Enrollment

Requests for changes in current enrollment may be honored if classroom teacher/child ratio permits. If the requested change in enrollment is not available, the family may choose to withdraw and place the child's name on the waiting list. See "Re-admittance After Withdrawal."

KU affiliates with University required activities may make an appointment with Hilltop administrators to discuss readmission options.

Notice of Withdrawal

If date falls on a national holiday or weekend, notice is due the next business day.

Canceling enrollment prior to beginning of a semester:

- Fall Semester—notice required by June 1st
- Spring Semester—notice required by November 1st
- Summer Semester—notice required by May 1st

Within the Fall and Spring Semesters: After the semester has begun but before the deadlines listed in (1) above, a written notice of withdrawal is required 21 days in advance of the date of withdrawal in order to have the security deposit refunded (also see Financial Policies section).

Summer: Request to withdraw a child from the summer will not be accepted after the session has begun.

Withdrawal of acceptance of enrollment prior to the beginning of a semester: All withdrawals require at least a 21 day notice. The exception is summer enrollment. Withdrawal after May 1st will not receive the deposit back.

Exception for DCF Families: Enrollment may be terminated by DCF families by providing a two (2) week written notice of termination in advance of the ending date. Payment by the family is due for the notice period whether or not the child is brought to the center for care.

Re-Admittance after Withdrawal

If a parent withdraws a child from Hilltop and later wishes to re-enroll the child, a new application for admission must be completed and the application fee paid. Choosing to stop enrollment for the summer and asking to return in the fall is considered a withdrawal from the program. The child is placed on the waiting list according to Hilltop admittance priorities. The date of the new application is the date used for placement on the waiting list.

Financial Policies

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

- Establishing and following sound financial principles and practices.

Developing a budget which:

- Identifies funding sources sufficient to meet the goals of the center.
- Monitors expenses carefully to stay within the expense portion of the budget.
- Maintains a fee structure and tuition subsidy program that allows families with varying degrees of financial need to share fairly in the financial support of the program.

Application and Re-Application Fees

Families may apply for care when a child is at least three months of age. The name of the child is placed on the waiting list according to priority status – student, staff/faculty or Non-KU. An initial application fee of \$35/\$25 for KU Students is charged at the time an application for admittance is made. When a child is withdrawn from Hilltop and the parent applies

for admittance at a later date, another application fee is required along with the application form. This process is called re-application.

Security Deposit

A \$350 security deposit is required at the time an acceptance to Hilltop is received. This deposit guarantees the child's enrollment in the center for a specific starting date. The security deposit is held throughout the child's continued enrollment at Hilltop. When a child is withdrawn from Hilltop, the security deposit is refunded within sixty (60) days after the last day of the child's enrollment IF:

- Fees have been paid in full according to the family payment plan included with the fee agreement.
- Additional charges incurred have been paid in full at the time billed.
- Written notice of withdrawal has been given according to the designated deadlines in the section "Notice of Withdrawal Policies" on page 27.

Fees

Fees are set annually by the Board of Directors, approved by university, and are based on the classroom age and the family fee level according to family size and income. **Exception:** during the fall and spring semesters there is only one fee level for the school age programs.

Determination of Family Fee Level

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

Families indicating C fee level in section 1 of the Fee Level Questionnaire form have a fee payment plan agreement at the C fee level for the fall/spring semester and no further information is required until the summer semester unless the family income/size changes during the year and makes the family eligible for a lower fee level.

Families who indicate that their gross monthly income will be at the A or B fee level in section 1 must complete sections 2, 3, and 4 of the Fee Level Questionnaire. A deadline will be communicated to families on the Fee Level Questionnaire form for the return of the application form with all documentation attached.

Fee payment plan agreements will be prepared at the C level for families failing to return a completed Fee Level Questionnaire form before the semester begins.

Grace Period – Fall Semester Only: If a family returns the Fee Level Questionnaire form and verifying documents no later than seven (7) days after the beginning of a semester, a revised fee payment plan will be issued retroactive to the first day of the semester.

Children enrolled after the semester begins: The Fee Level Questionnaire form is required with return of acceptance letter.

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

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

Jayhawk Room, Bobcat Room: Fall and Spring Semesters: These programs do not have a sliding scale; there is one fee level for these enrollment types. Summer Session: Fees for summer school-age programs are on a sliding scale and a Fee Level Questionnaire form needs to be provided unless the family income is in the C fee level range.

Families Eligible for DCF Funding: Families may be eligible for full or partial funding from the Kansas Department of Children and Families (DCF). Families must complete and return the Fee Level Questionnaire as described above. Childcare benefits on the family's Vision card may be used to pay the fees due. Fees due that exceed the amount of benefits on the Vision card must be paid by the family according to the due dates stated below. Hilltop must receive all documentation to determine the payment level placement.

Supply / Activity Fee

There is a \$30 supply/activity fee charged per semester in August and January and \$25 each June and July during the summer program. The supply/activity fee is used by each classroom to purchase materials for their curriculum and attend field trips.

Fee Payment Plans

Fees are determined according to the information provided on the Fee Level Questionnaire form and the Enrollment Start Date Information form. Once the fee level is determined, fees are entered online on the FACTS Management Systems website. The website will list the fees due, due dates and bank account being used to pay the fees.

Optional Care Sessions: Optional care fees are added to the regular semester fees in the FACTS Management System for each Optional Care Period—Optional Care weeks – and due dates for application for these weeks of care – are listed on the school calendar. Applications will be emailed from Hilltop approximately 3 to 4 weeks before the optional care period.

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

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

Fee Payments

Hilltop uses an online payment system called FACTS. After a child is accepted to the Hilltop program, instructions are given to the family regarding how to set up family, child and payment information on the FACTS website.

Families must set up payment information in the FACTS system for payments to be withdrawn from a checking or savings account for fees due one week prior to beginning enrollment. Failure to do so will result in a delayed start of Hilltop services.

Credit or debit cards are not accepted at Hilltop or on the FACTS system.

Fees are payable in advance. Families may choose to have fees paid either monthly on the 5th or 20th, or half of the monthly fees on the 5th and the second half of the monthly fees on the 20th.

Payments received after the 20th of the month are considered late. If the 20th falls on a holiday or weekend, payment is due the following business day.

Hilltop accepts funds provided by the DCF, KVC and DCCDA. If the plan is written for less than the amount of the fees due, the parent is responsible for payment of the fees not covered in the DCF plan. Parents must notify Hilltop of any changes in their DCF plans. Contact Hilltop's Finance Director to get information on how to use the DCF payment with FACTS.

Late Payment Fees

Late payment fee of \$15.00 is assessed when a payment is not made by the scheduled payment date plus a five day grace period. An additional five day grace period will be allowed after the first grace period to provide the family an opportunity to secure funds for payment during which time the child may not be present at Hilltop but fees continue to accrue. If payment has not been received by the end of the additional five day grace period, your child is considered to have withdrawn and becomes ineligible for future enrollment. As soon as fees are paid in full – but no later than the fifth day of the additional grace period, the child may return to Hilltop. Thereafter, the next time fees are in arrears by the payment due date services are immediately discontinued. In extenuating circumstances, appeals may be made to the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors.

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

If a pattern (3 per semester) of late/failed payments continues, the family will be notified they may no longer use Hilltop's services. The security deposit is forfeited at time of notice. Unpaid Fees: Hilltop will take action to recoup unpaid fees through Small Claims Court or by a collection agency.

Returned Fees or Check Charge

FACTS Management Systems charges a \$30 fee if funds aren't available when withdrawn from the chosen account. Families are notified by e-mail or a letter from FACTS if a failed payment occurs. Failed payment must be paid according to the late payment fees section above. Payment can be made at Hilltop for failed payments and Hilltop will enter the payment in the FACTS system.

Late Pick Up Fee

There is a late pick-up charge if a child is picked up after 5:45 p.m.

- First time each semester – grace period up to 5 minutes; after 5 minutes, \$1 per minute/child
- Second time - \$1.00 per minute per child
- Third time - \$5.00 plus \$1.00 per minute per child
- Fourth time - \$10.00 plus \$1.00 per minute per child plus a conference with the director
- Fifth time - \$25.00 plus \$1.00 per minute per child

Receipts for Payments

Monthly receipts are available through FACTS. The statement includes Hilltop's Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) for tax and FSA reimbursement purposes. If you have trouble accessing your receipt, please contact the Finance Director.

Forms for cafeteria plan reimbursement of dependent care expenses should be turned in at the front desk. The Finance Director will review the dates and amounts of the claim and sign the form. The form will be available at the front desk once completed.

Absence Policy

Sickness: Should a child have a continuous illness necessitating absence from the center for more than one week, the full daily fee is charged for the first week of illness; if the illness continues beyond one week, the daily fee will be reduced to $\frac{1}{2}$ for continuing absent days after the first week. Credit will be applied to the next pay period. A physician's statement is required for the reduction.

Optional Care Periods: No credit is given for absences for any reason.

DCCDA Support: DCCDA will pay for five absences per month. DCCDA assigns a daily absence rate to children based on the amount of monthly assistance they receive. Assistance is reduced by the amount of the daily absence rate for each absence in excess of five in a given month.

All Other Days: Parents pay for all other absent days during the contract period. No credit is given for family vacations, visits to grandparents, etc. Hilltop offers several weeks of Optional Care; hopefully parents can schedule vacations and special visits for their children during these times.

Notice of Change in Fee Schedule

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

Holiday Fee Policy

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

Emergency Closing Fee Policy

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

End of Year Statements

Statements of receipts for the calendar year are available through FACTS. The statement includes Hilltop's Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) for tax and FSA reimbursement purposes. If you have trouble accessing your receipt, please contact the Finance Director.

Transportation Policies

Trips Off Of the Premises

Classrooms must have adequate adult coverage in order to leave the premises. When leaving campus to go on field trips not in close proximity to Hilltop, there must be three (3) adults present to assist with supervision, specifically a lead teacher, an assistant teacher, AND a part-time aide, administrator, or a volunteer. In some instances, at the discretion of the administration, one teacher and another Hilltop employee may be authorized to accompany children to specified locations. All trips away from the building must be pre-approved by the administration.

The State Health Department requires that all child care centers obtain signed parental permission for any trips off the premises. The general permission form that each parent signs gives Hilltop teachers permission to take children on walking field trips on campus. Children are not allowed to leave Hilltop until this general permission form is signed and returned. Walks to other destinations and all van trips require a separate parental permission form for each trip. If a parent forgets to sign for each separate trip, we will make every effort to contact the parents to get permission. If you do not wish your child to attend the field trip, you will be responsible for care until the class returns. On all field trips teachers take along emergency treatment cards, children's health records and a first aid kit.

General Transportation & Emergency Transportation

No child will be transported in a private car.

Hilltop owns four fifteen-passenger vans. The main purpose for having these vans is to transport school-age children to and from several elementary schools during the school year. The vans are also used to transport children to and from a variety of activities, including field trips. Parents must provide appropriate car seats. See the regulations in the following section.

Hilltop staff will not drive a sick or injured child to a doctor's office or hospital. In the event a child must be transported to a doctor's office or hospital and the parents or other designated people on the emergency treatment card are not available, an ambulance will be called. The notarized emergency treatment form you provide at the beginning of each enrollment period gives Hilltop staff permission to call an ambulance for transportation to the hospital and for the hospital to administer emergency care in such cases.

Emergency treatment forms and completed child health assessment forms will be taken on all field trips. Should a child require immediate medical attention while on a field trip, Hilltop staff will attempt to reach parents and/or other designees per the emergency treatment form. If a trip to the emergency room or doctor's office is necessary, all health-related forms will accompany the child.

When a staff member accompanies a child to the source of emergency care, she/he will remain with the child until a parent or parent's designee assumes responsibility for the child. Any serious injury requiring hospitalization shall be reported by the next working day to the County Health Department and within 72 hours to NAEYC, Hilltop's accrediting agency.

Car Seat Regulations

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

- Children who weigh less than 40 lbs. should have a regular car seat with restraint harnesses, either rear-facing or forward-facing, depending on size and age. If a child weighs slightly less than 40 lbs., but has grown too tall for the restraint harnesses on his or her seat, a high-backed booster may be used.
- Children who weigh over 40 lbs. and are under age 8 must ride in a booster seat with a high back.

To fit correctly, even while using a booster, a seat belt must not cut across the child's neck or abdomen. The child must be tall enough that the lap belt rides across the hips while the shoulder belt goes across the chest and is never worn under the arm.

All car seats or boosters must have a sticker stating that the seat is federally approved and must not have passed its expiration date. All of them come with this information when purchased. Check with the Fire Department to make sure the car seat your child is using has not been recalled.

All car seats or boosters should be in good repair, be properly functional, and be new enough to adhere to all current safety standards.

If a car seat or booster aged child is driven to a field trip by a family member, they must be driven back to Hilltop as well. Car seats and boosters will be installed **ONLY** at Hilltop. This is due to the sometimes complex arrangement of seats, the safety of a trained installer, and the importance of teachers remaining in supervision of the children while on a field trip. If a family has trouble locating an appropriate car seat for financial or other reasons, the Hilltop office can assist in finding a good seat at low-cost or no-cost.

Communication with Families

Center-Wide Communication

Reminders about important fee payment dates, enrollment deadlines, and special events are posted on the TV across from the front door. Please check this communication board daily for important messages.

Parents will be added to our email list so that they can receive reminders concerning important deadlines and other Hilltop information. Please stop by the office to notify us if your e-mail address changes. You may also follow us on Twitter or visit our Facebook page for updates on Hilltop info.

News of outside events and community resources are posted in the front entry area on the middle shelf.

Individual Classroom Communication

The teachers will communicate with families about classroom information and children's activities. In the Toddler and Early Preschool Rooms, teachers complete charts that state how much each child ate, how long he/she slept, and details of diapering or toileting trips. Teachers may write notes about the day on a posted chalkboard or bulletin board. Lesson plans are posted near the entrance to the rooms. Often teachers send communication – either written in and placed in cubbies or via email or the Shutterfly website - to parents stating upcoming plans, themes, or events. It is essential to begin a routine of reading the information posted in the classroom or online, so you may stay up to date on events.

A good time to talk to teachers personally for a brief chat is during drop-off and pick-up, as long as they have the opportunity to do so while still supervising the children. If you wish to discuss a topic at length, you may arrange a time with the teacher when they can step away from the classroom or set up a conference.

Open House & Fall Parent-Teacher Nights

Open house is scheduled before the first day of the fall semester, to familiarize families with the school, the teachers, and classroom. In the fall there will be an evening parent-teacher meeting (for adults only) to allow parents to become acquainted with the staff and learn specifics about the routine and curriculum. This is a great opportunity to meet fellow parents, as well as the chance to ask and answer questions. Prior to the start of the fall semester, a Pre-school Transition Night will be held to orient Early Preschool families to the Preschool Wing.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled at least twice a year to report children's progress in a variety of areas. Sign-up sheet will be posted in classrooms with several dates and times choices. A written conference report will be given to families and one will be kept in your child's file at Hilltop. Additional conferences may be arranged upon parent or staff request. Please contact the Lead Teacher if you would like to schedule a conference.

Family Involvement

Families are encouraged to become involved at Hilltop by actively participating in activities and functions. Join classrooms on field trips or walks whenever you can! Families are encouraged to participate in center events including family picnics, fundraisers, social gatherings, etc.

Families are always welcome to observe to see your child in relation to other children and, learn about their daily routine. Parents of Toddlers and Early Preschoolers are asked to use caution in when going into the classroom unless you plan to take your child home at the end of the visit. Young children assume that when they see you arrive, it is time to go home. It may be stressful for a child if a parent leaves multiple times during the day so it is discouraged.

Parent Members of the Hilltop Board of Directors

At least half of the Hilltop Board of Directors must be comprised of Hilltop parents. Other members include University personnel and persons in the community who are interested and supportive of the program. Parents are eligible to become board members after one (1) year of enrollment, and elections are held annually in the fall. This is an important way families can support the center and be involved in decision making. Current members are posted on the Hilltop website.

Meals with Children

Hilltop encourages families to come and eat with their children by making reservations in advance. Breakfast is \$1 and lunch is \$2 and is paid at the front office. Space limitations and food supplies limit this to two (2) guests per classroom day. The first month of each semester is a transition time in classrooms, so you are encouraged to schedule meal visits after the first month. Remember, that it may be difficult for a child who anticipates going home with you after lunch, so delay eating lunch with your child until he/she understands this is a brief visit.

Family Feedback

Family feedback information is an important part of the evaluation process for the program. Once a year you will be asked to fill out a Parent Feedback Survey. This is an opportunity to provide input into your child's program, reflect on teachers' efforts and evaluate the program. The administrators, teachers and Hilltop's Board of Directors take these evaluations seriously, so please let us hear from all of you. Hilltop staffs believe that families play an important role in program evaluation and goal setting, so please participate and give feedback. The results of the annual program evaluation and goal setting process will be reported to families and staff early in the fall semester.

This Center is for you and your child, and staffs are here to serve you and your child the best we can. If something is concerning you, please do not delay in voicing your concerns, as small worries tend to grow if they are not spoken. Please stop by and talk to an administrator at any time. If one is not available, leave your name and phone number and someone will contact you. The teachers are also available to talk with you in before and after school or during their planning periods.

Parenting Information for Families

A part of Hilltop's mission is to provide our families with information that makes the difficult job of parenting a little easier. A newsletter is published several times per year that will have reports on center activities, and include useful child development and parenting information. There will be ideas for fun activities to do with children at home.

Private Child Care For After Hours

Hilltop families in need of child care after Hilltop hours may approach employees directly or send requests via the admin office. Employees who are interested will contact the family and arrangements will be made after Hilltop hours. Hilltop staff do not solicit jobs. Hilltop will not circulate a list of names or phone numbers due to privacy.

Full time teaching staff may provide child care as long as the family does not have a child currently enrolled in the teacher's classroom. The personal relationships formed when teachers babysit for families could make it difficult with regards to perceived favoritism and professional confidentiality. Children may find it hard to understand the differing roles of child care provider and teacher and to "share" a special person who comes to their home. Please do not put full-time teachers in this situation by asking them to care for a child enrolled in their classroom.

Hilltop provides an opportunity to post child care requests with the knowledge that Hilltop does not have responsibility for actions or behavior of any staff person while employed by a family away from the center.

Hilltop Policy Statements on Positive Discipline

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

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

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

Hilltop uses a wide variety of discipline methods. Discipline is most effective when an adult goes to the individual child, bends down to the child's eye level, uses eye contact and simultaneously touches the child's shoulder or arm. Staff may use a firm, but not angry, voice to get and maintain the child's attention. The primary goal is to win the child's cooperation. In order to be successful, Hilltop suggests families use the following techniques:

- Use distraction, suggestions or re-direction.
- Use quiet, brief, private talks away from other children. Do not lecture or accuse.
- Use positive statements. ("When... then" or "as soon as...then..."; "When we finish putting away the blocks, then we can go outside.") Statements such as, "If you don't... then we can't..." is negative and may not win cooperation.
- Remind children of appropriate behaviors. ("We throw balls outside. If you have trouble remembering, then you will have to leave the area." "We walk inside." "Remember to use your inside voice.") Model a soft voice.
- Use and state logical or natural consequences and why it happened. Abuse a toy/lose the toy is a logical consequence. Consequences should be related to the misbehavior and should be fair.
- With the child's help, problem-solve and brainstorm for solutions and then help the child select a solution to try.
- Ignore annoying, unimportant behaviors.
- Remove the child from the area. ("It appears you are having trouble playing in the area right now. You can come back later." "You will have to leave the area for _____ minutes and then come back when you are able share.")

- Separate children. (“It appears that you two are having trouble playing together right now. WE can find a solution to your concern or you will need to find different activities.”)
- Remove a privilege. A child may lose the opportunity to play with a toy for specific period of time.
- Give choices. (“You may share the blocks or find something else to do. You decide.” “You may leave the area by yourself or I’ll assist you. You decide.”) Choices said in a fair, firm, but friendly way are usually very effective.
- Use positive statements. Tell the children what they should be doing instead of focusing on the negative. Only use “NO” or DON’T” in case of emergencies.
- Use calming music, stories, books or songs.
- Avoid sarcasm, nagging, threatening, name calling, accusing or disclaimers. A disclaimer is a statement such as “Why can’t you always do that?” after a positive statement.
- Use a great deal of positive reinforcement and encouragement. Be specific and descriptive. (“I see you are really working hard on that puzzle.” “Thank you for picking up the blocks.” “I’m glad that you remembered to share the book.” “I appreciate it when you tell someone you are angry.”) Statements such as “use your words” are sometimes too vague. Unconditional statements such as “I love the colors you are using in your picture” are always appreciated by the children.
- Avoid commands or demands that “back a child against a wall”. Children may want to appear brave or tough around others and to save face they defy an adult. After a calm, implicit direction, break eye contact, turn away briefly and give a child a few moments to comply. Avoid power struggles.
- Use love and physical affection. Touch the child’s arm, pat a head, give a hug, and allow a child to sit on your lap or knee. Some children may want you to exclude other children so don’t play favorites or overdo the lap sitting to the exclusion of others.
- If the preceding positive discipline techniques are not effective Hilltop will use the following:
 - Sit and Watch: A child may be asked to sit away from the group for several minutes or until he/she is calm. The purpose is to give the child an opportunity to see appropriate behaviors or appropriate use of materials or to settle down before joining the group. (“You can join us when you feel you can...”) The child is sometimes given the responsibility of when to return to the group, and other times will need to be invited to rejoin by a teacher. The child must be in view of an adult.

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

Points to Remember: Always remain calm. If you lose control the children behaving appropriately will feel threatened and the children who are misbehaving will feel they have power over you. Do not let little intimidating things get to you.

- Go to the child or the problem, sit or squat down to child's level and talk firmly. Unless it is an emergency or you are prevented from getting to the child, never yell or scream across the room as it can berate or humiliate him/her, and it gives the child negative attention in front of peers. Negative attention is attention that should not be reinforced.
- Maintain a good sense of humor. Laugh a lot and think of imaginative or clever ways to deal with noncompliance.
- Pretend, sing, or repeat rhymes to help during routines, transitions, and clean up. You may find that having an imaginary friend to help with cleanup is sometimes fun.
- If a child says or does something that you do not like, tell the child. "I don't like it when you. . ." Be specific about what bothers you. Use "I" messages.
- Remain the adult even when you are having fun. Do not let children jump on your back or hit you. Walk away after telling the child that you don't like it when they do that behavior and make sure you make it clear what behavior is acceptable. ("If you would like to be my friend, you may hold my hand.")
- Always model polite, respectful behavior.

It is Hilltop's policy, and a licensing requirement not to use physical punishment such as hitting or shaking, pushing, pinching, threats, sarcasm, prolonged isolation, denial of meals, or derogatory remarks about the child or the family. Every staff member and volunteer has read and is familiar with the discipline policy and signs they agree to follow all of Hilltop's discipline methods and policies.

***Hilltop is a private, non-profit organization. We reserved the right to make additional changes to our policies and procedures as necessary and pursuant to the organizations bylaws. All changes will be communicated via email and on our website to all parents listed on child's enrollment materials.**