**The Little Village Montessori School**

**Family & Community Handbook**

Dr. Chris Dockery, Founder, Head of School

**Recognized by Association Montessori Society**

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AMS Community Handbook

# **School Contact Information**

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Dr. Chris Dockery, Director

# **Hours/Days/Times of Operation**

The Little Village Montessori’s school year runs from August to May. Days of operation are Monday through Friday from 8:00am-3:30pm. The school is closed on all major national holidays, during winter, spring and summer breaks and on Community Development days.

# **Office Hours**

The front desk is staffed from 8:00 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. Monday through Friday throughout the year. School offices are closed on all major national holidays, during the weeks of winter break, spring break, and summer break (not including summer camps). Office hours may be modified on Community Development Days when children are not in attendance. The school year runs from August to May.

# **Posted Notices**

Posted notices including the state license, copy of rules, review of state evaluation report, communicable disease chart, persons in charge, current weekly menu, emergency plans for severe weather, fire, parental access and visitors’ policy are posted near the main entrance of the school and administrative office. Any policy not included in this handbook is available upon request. Please speak to the office administrator.

# **SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION**

This handbook comprises two major sections. Section 1 contains introductory information. Section 2 an overview of the Montessori philosophy and method. Section 3 covers the policies and procedures related to admissions, health and wellness, food and nutrition, classroom policies. Also included in the appendix are relevant forms and reporting documents. This handbook is thorough and contains information intended to aid us all as a community that exists to support the intellectual and social development of powerful, peaceful children according to the children’s authentic nature.

## ***History of The Little Village Montessori School***

The Little Village Montessori School was founded in 2018, as a ministry of the Dahlonega Presbyterian Church, by Dr. Chris Dockery and a board of directors that included Judy Broad AMS Lead Teacher Retired, Rev. Frank Colladay, Dr. Irene Kokkala, Victor Parker, LLC, Dr. Bob Michael, and Jaqueline Daniel, Director ConnectAbility, Inc. Located in historic downtown Dahlonega, Georgia, the school is the first preschool in Lumpkin County that is based exclusively on the Montessori method.

## ***The Little Village******Montessori School Mission Statement***

The Little Village Montessori School’s mission is to encourage development of the whole child by providing education based on the philosophies of Dr. Maria Montessori for children ages three through six. Our program cultivates academic, social and foundational skills that encourage independent thought, awareness of environment, empathy for others and individual confidence. Our curriculum is designed according to children’s developmental needs and characteristics and establishes the intellectual, social, emotional and physical rigor needed

## ***The Little Village Montessori School Objectives***

To help each child develop and educate his own individuality so that he can strive toward his unknown potential.

To enable the children to create a social structure among them that honors their contrasting needs as individuals and as a group and that makes their roles as individuals and as parts of the group complementary.

To guide each child along a path of development and education that is natural to him so that he may remain attuned to his own nature, nurture a reverence for the organic order of the universe, and become a whole and integrated human being who is both instrumental in his own growth and sensitive to the needs of all people.

# ***Overview of The Montessori Method***

The Montessori Method of education, developed by Dr. Maria Montessori, is a child-centered educational approach based on scientific observations of children from birth to adulthood. Dr. Montessori was an Italian physician and educator, who developed her time-tested method of teaching based on her scientific observations of young children's behavior. Her first "Children's House" was established in Rome in 1907. She found that children learned best in a homelike environment filled with developmentally appropriate materials that provide experiences, which contribute to the growth of self-motivated, independent learners. Her method has had over 100 years of success in diverse cultures throughout the world. The method is based on a perception of the child as one who is naturally eager for knowledge and capable of initiating learning in a supportive, thoughtfully prepared learning environment. It is an approach that values the human spirit and the development of the whole child—physical, social, emotional, cognitive. This approach is child-centered, with teachers serving as guides. In the Montessori school, play is a child’s work. While there is a focus on academics, the distinguishing feature is that children learn at their own pace. There are special Montessori toys called manipulatives that are self-corrective; this means that a child knows if they assembled a puzzle correctly, for example, based on the toy fitting together, not because someone showed the child how to do it. That focus on letting children learn at their own pace also affects how classrooms are arranged, with children ages three, four and five all being in the same room. This allows the older children to serve as role models for the younger ones, and also exposes children to different ages. Children generally have the same teacher for those three years, allowing close teacher-student relationships to develop. The mixed-age aspect also encourages older children to help the younger children, which helps build their self-esteem.

## **Key Philosophical Foundations**

*( from Montessori in the 21st Century.* The American Montessori Society.2003.)

• Deep respect for children as individuals

• Multiage classes allow teachers to develop close and long-term relationships with their students, allow them to know each other's learning style well, and encourage older students to become role models, mentors, and leaders to younger students.

• Integrated curriculum is carefully structured and connects subjects within programs (e.g., history and cultural arts to maximize the opportunity for learning and builds from program to program to progress from concrete to abstract learning).

• Independence is nurtured and leads to children becoming purposeful, motivated, and confident in their own abilities.

• Peace and conflict resolution are taught daily and children learn to be a part of a warm, respectful, and supportive community.

• The child creates, in a very real sense, the adult that is to be, through his/her experiences, interactions, and environments. Character development is a central focus of the AMS Montessori curriculum.

• Hands-on learning is central to the curriculum in all programs and leads to children being engaged rather than passive with their work.

• The environments are responsibly and carefully prepared with multisensory, sequential, and self-correcting materials to support self-directed learning.

• Teachers and children and parents work together as a warm and supportive community.

• Self-expression is nurtured in all children. Children experience art, music, poetry, theater, writing, and other forms of creative arts with confidence and passion.

## **Desired Learner Outcomes Common to Montessori Education**

Dr. Montessori carried her message across the globe, including the United States in 1912. Dr. Nancy Rambusch established the American Montessori Society in 1960. Montessori education in the United States appeals to those who embrace it because of its outcomes for students. The American parents who originally chose Montessori education matched their views of child rearing. They saw their children as moral beings, which over time would become the socially responsible people Montessori had envisioned. And they saw their children becoming confident, competent learners. The outcomes we aspire to teach are lifelong developments. The original American Montessori agenda of learner outcomes are as follows.

**Independence:** Is the child able to choose his or her own work, apply energy to that work, complete it to a personal criterion of completion, take and return the work to the place it is customarily kept, in such a way that another child will be able to find the work ready to do? Is the child able to seek help? Is the child able to locate resources to continue the self-chosen task without necessarily involving the teacher?

**Confidence and Competence:** Are the child’s self-perceived successes far more numerous than his or her self-perceived failures? Is the child capable of self-correcting work, upon observation, reflection, or discussion? Can the child manage the available array of “stuff” with a clear sense of purpose?

**Autonomy:** Can the child accept or reject inclusion in another child’s work or work group with equanimity?

**Intrinsic Motivation:** Is the child drawn to continue working for the apparent pure pleasure of so doing? Does the child, once having achieved a particular competence, move on to revel in mastery by showing others?

**Ability to Handle External Authority:** Is the child able to accept the “ground rules” of the group as appropriate in his or her dealing with other children? Is the child, distant from the teacher, able to function as if the teacher were nearby?

**Social Responsibility:** Independent and autonomous persons are always a part of a group and must attain independence and autonomy through participation in group activity. The loss of these qualities by one of a group is a loss for all. Do students attain independence and autonomy and, at the same time, develop social responsibility?

**Academic Preparation:** In Montessori education, children learn to learn by learning. Academic preparation entails activation and cultivation of inherent powers and processes through which the learner becomes a supplier of meanings or of things-meaningfully-known. Academic skills are essential to learning and knowing, not the aim of learning and knowing. Do students acquire academic skills and apply them in learning to learn?

**Spiritual Awareness:** Montessori views the child as a spiritual embryo. Implications are conveyed by the metaphor. All humans are spiritual beings as well as physical beings. They have spiritual health as well as physical health. Montessori sees no need to establish whether or not the source of spirit is theological and does not offer theological explanation. The spiritual embryo simply thrives on spiritual investment. The investment can be theological, humane, or a combination of the two. What are the spiritual outcomes of school experience?

**Citizens of the World:** All children are part of both a world political system and a world ecological system. Both systems have their constitutions and all must learn to live by the letter and spirit of their laws. As a naturalist, Montessori knew about the laws of mind and of nature and understood the consequences of disobeying either of them. What are the citizenship outcomes of school experience? Are the children acquiring civic virtue? Are they acquiring dispositions to understand the natural world, to cherish it, and to live harmoniously within it?

## **Important Aspects of The Montessori Method**

1.It is based on years of patient observation and study of children by Dr. Maria Montessori, who was a scientist uniquely educated and qualified for this task. She was a medical doctor, a student of psychology, and a professor of anthropology, a science that is concerned with man in a unique way. She worked out her methods and developed the materials by letting the children show her what worked and what did not work. It is not a "franchise" or "patented" operation. It is in the public domain. There are responsible organizations (such as the American Montessori Society) that operate on behalf of its proper development in this country.

2.It has proved itself of universal application. Within a single generation, it has been tried successfully with children of many nations. Climate, nationality, social rank, or type of civilization make no difference to its successful application. India, France, Holland, England, Burma, Mexico, Panama, Colombia, Canada, Italy, and the United States have many well-developed Montessori schools.

3.It has revealed the small child as a lover of order and of intellectual work, spontaneously chosen and carried out with profound joy, capable of concentration and eager to learn for the joy of learning.

4.It is based upon the child's imperious need to learn by doing activities, which develop his faculties at each stage in his mental growth. These stages are called "sensitive periods," and he more readily absorbs knowledge during those periods. While the method offers the child a maximum of spontaneity, it enables him to reach an even higher level of scholastic attainment than under other systems.

5.Though it does away with the necessity of coercion by means of rewards and punishments, it achieves a higher discipline. It is an active discipline, which originates within the child and is achieved through concentration on work, which he has chosen. Children with extremely active and curious minds are stimulated and utilize their intellectual energies constructively.

6.It is based on a profound respect for the child's personality and removes from him the preponderate influence of the adult, thus leaving him room to grow in biological independence. The child is allowed a large measure of liberty (not license) and he learns to handle it with responsibility.

7.It enables the teacher to deal with each child individually in each subject and thus guide him according to his individual requirements. Each child works at his own pace, hence the quick child is not held back by the slow, nor is the latter, in trying to keep up with the former, obliged to flounder along hopelessly out of his depth. Each stone in the mental edifice is "well and truly laid" before the next is added.

8.It does away with pressure and its trail of challenges. More than this, at every turn it presents endless opportunities among the children for mutual help, which is joyfully given and gratefully received. Since the child works from his own free choice, without pressure and coercion, he is freed from strain, feeling inferior, and other experiences, which are apt to be the unconscious cause of mental disturbances in later life.

9.The Montessori method develops the whole personality of the child, not merely his intellectual faculties but also his powers of deliberation, initiative, and independent choice, with their emotional complements. By living as a free member in a real social community, the child is trained in those fundamental social qualities, which form the basis of good citizenship.

10.Below is a partial list of Montessori publications available from Amazon.com or from a bookstore:

E. Mortimer Standing, The Montessori Method: A Revolution in Education

Rita Kramer, Maria Montessori: A Biography

Angeline Lillard, The Science Behind the Genius

Paula Polk and L. L. Jessen, Montessori from the Start

Nancy McCormick Rambusch, Learning How to Learn: An American Approach to Montessori’s Writings

Dr. Maria Montessori, The Montessori Method

Dr. Maria Montessori, Dr. Montessori's Own Handbook

Dr. Maria Montessori, The Advanced Montessori Method, I & II

Dr. Maria Montessori, The Absorbent Mind

Dr. Maria Montessori, To Educate the Human Potential

Dr. Maria Montessori, The Secret of Childhood

## **The Uninterrupted Work Cycle**

The American Montessori Society, requires us to uphold the standard of providing an uninterrupted work time. AMS Standard 3.9 states: *Schools are to allocate and protect large blocks of uninterrupted instructional time to support student learning. Optimal learning takes place during two- to three-hour blocks of time. Schools should make every effort to schedule enrichment programs and transition times to accommodate these blocks.*

The purpose of long, uninterrupted blocks of work time is to allow students to freely select work, eventually becoming absorbed in work that has a particular fascination for them at this point in their development. Interruptions disturb the development of the child's focus, concentration, and opportunity to deeply delve into work. During this uninterrupted work time, teachers also have the opportunity to present lessons to the children, ensuring that lessons are given and work is explored in all areas of the classroom.

The Little Village Montessori School will observe the following guidelines for uninterrupted work cycles. *Please note that the work cycle begins when the majority of children have arrived.*

At the **Early Childhood level**, a 3-hour uninterrupted work cycle, 5 days per week, is optimal, and a 2- to 3-hour work cycle, 4 days per week, is the required minimum for AMS-accredited schools. Schools provide large blocks of unscheduled time to ensure that individual children have the time to settle into a task that interests them and are not unnecessarily interrupted when they are engaged in a worthwhile activity.

During the work period, teachers observe the behaviors of the children and invite individuals and small groups to short lessons when they see opportunities to assist a child’s progress. Optimally, the majority of each morning and afternoon is devoted to self-motivated work. This time may include individual- or self-chosen small group activities and short lessons by the teacher for children who have accepted an invitation to the lesson.

The uninterrupted work period does not include whole-class lessons or other activities such as adult-led group circle meetings for which participation of all children is required. Outdoor play time, specials, and enrichment classes for the whole group should not interrupt and are not included in the work period.

#### The Little Village Montessori School/Parent Partnership Agreement

### **Work Cycle Ground Rules**

The following are guidelines established to enable the partnership of parents and teacher to help develop the students at The Little Village Montessori School. The expectation is that teachers, parents and children will abide by these guidelines in every way.

#### The Teacher’s Responsibilities During the Uninterrupted Work Cycle

*The teacher's primary responsibilities are:*

*To help each child help himself experience success.*

*To protect the child's right to engage in activities of his choice.*

1. The teacher's first duty is to prepare the classroom environment.

By preparation of the environment we mean that the teacher programs into the environment materials and outcomes of activity designed to ensure success and satisfaction for the child, as well as providing a challenging and stimulating intellectual growth as well as the development of sensory-motor and communication skills.

There is a place for everything and everything has a place. Within the environment, the materials are displayed in easily accessible places and are ordered within areas defined for certain activities, e.g., art area, housekeeping area, book corner, math area, etc.

Within each activity area, materials are displayed in a pleasing and orderly manner. Everything that would be needed to carry a particular type of activity through to completion is displayed together in a convenient and self-evident arrangement. This helps the child complete his activity without the interruptions that inevitably result when all the materials for an activity are not together but must be hunted for mid-activity. This arrangement develops in the child the ability to plan in advance and to gather the necessary materials at the outset of any activity (e.g., clothes washing, table washing, etc.). Materials are displayed on a programmed sequence in order of their use during the activity so that the procedure will be as self-evident (and therefore self-correctable) as possible.

Preparation of the environment includes the general atmosphere created within the classroom as a result of visual displays, floor plan and arrangement of furniture, suitability of the furniture being used, the general use of space in the room, and traffic flow. Within this context, the condition of the equipment is of the utmost importance. Materials are maintained in good repair, clean, pleasingly arranged, and colorful. The materials are changed frequently to insure interest in the environment as well as progress in concepts as presented in the materials and activities. This standard must be maintained at all times.

2. The teacher is an observer, and her effectiveness in meeting the needs of the child is a direct result of her ability to observe.

In order to develop keen observation, the teacher keeps daily observation records in which she records the materials and activities that most interest the child. Special skills that he is developing, needs, problems, etc. are also noted. The teacher records progress in the curriculum materials, evaluation of concepts learned, and rubrics for evaluation of student achievement.

3. The teacher is a mediator and guide.

"Never allow a child to risk failure unless he has a reasonable chance of success." The teacher's goal as mediator is to maximize success for the child and to minimize error. In order to minimize error, she provides materials, which have built-in feedback systems so that the child can correct his own errors as they occur. He thus becomes an independent learner who experiences success as he corrects his own errors.

 The entire environment is prepared in such a way that error is self-evident and as the child internalizes the ground rules he no longer needs the gentle reminder of the teacher on these rules but has developed these as his own habit of working.

4. The teacher maintains ground rules and sets limits for appropriate behavior in the classroom.

The teacher communicates and maintains the ground rules through demonstration, example, and gentle reminders. She most often accompanies her words with gestures and movements, which mean more to the child than mere words or admonishments. The teacher shows the child what she means.

The teacher's main goal is to help each child internalize the ground rules according to his own stage of development. The teacher never makes unrealistic demands on the child. If a child is emotionally or physically unable to observe a ground rule (and it is through keen observation that she diagnoses this problem) she never forces him. Rather she treats him with patience and respect and gives him the added assistance and support that he needs in order to develop on his own terms the ability to freely observe the ground rules.

Ground rules are extremely important, for only after the child has internalized the ground rules of social behavior (i.e., made the ground rules his own) is he truly free to learn and to create on his own or with others.

The teacher establishes a peacekeeping curriculum to guide students in problem-solving behavior and language skills. Peacekeeping becomes a way of life in the classroom for adults and students. The teacher acknowledges and reinforces students’ attempts at adhering to the peacekeeping curriculum in the classroom.

5. The teacher never arbitrarily interrupts the child from his work.

If she wants to invite the class to a group activity, the teacher does this at an appropriate time so as not to interfere with the absorption and concentration of the children in activities of their own choice. She is extremely careful of imposing her personal interests, wishes, or needs on the children without the sincere interest of the children involved, and she pays each child the courtesy of refusing her invitation to the group. Teachers work toward establishing a three-hour work cycle for the classroom, which enables students to concentrate on their work.

6. The teacher "corrects" a child who is breaking the ground rules in a one-to-one relationship.

The teacher's manner can be described as gentle but firm, her voice is quiet so as not to call attention of others. She never calls a correction to a child from across the room as this causes embarrassment for the child being corrected and creates a general disturbance. She goes up to the child and catches his attention either by stooping to his level and looking into his eyes or she may put her arm on his shoulder as a gesture of understanding.

7. When a teacher must "correct" a child or interrupt him in a harmful action, she does so in a positive manner.

She says, "Please do it this way," or "We do it this way," or "May I show you how to do this?" The teacher never derides, criticizes, or corrects in a negative way. If a child spills something or makes a mess of some kind and is aware of what he has done, it is unnecessary for the teacher to reinforce the error by saying, "Look what you've done. You've spilled the water," etc. If the child sees that he has spilled the water, she offers to help him clean it up if he needs help. She may show him where the materials for cleaning up are kept by way of encouragement. However, to call undue attention to the "mess" only reinforces the child's failure complex. Also, cleaning up is never referred to as an unpleasant chore. The child usually finds it very enjoyable if the teacher does not convey a distaste for clean-up. The teacher never says, "You spilled the water; aren't you ashamed." Clean-up is like any other activity to the young child and involves water play and other motor activities, which the child enjoys a great deal.

8. If a child is behaving in an uncontrollable manner in the classroom and is disrupting the activities of others, doing harm to himself or others or the environment, the teacher removes the child from the environment.

She does this in as calm and controlled a manner as possible with no implication of punishment. She removes the child as a measure of protection for himself and the rights of others.

The teacher attempts to help the child by diverting his attention toward a productive kind of activity and does not attempt to render the child immobile. She takes her cue from the nature of the child's outburst, the possible cause of the problem, and the individual needs of the child. Her attitude must be, "This child is trying to tell me something. He needs help. How can I help him?" There is no room for pride or anger in the teacher of young children. Above all, there must be respect and understanding.

#### The Child’s Responsibility During the Uninterrupted Work Cycle

1. Children may work alone or in spontaneous groups. No one may touch another's work without being invited; therefore, there is no forced sharing.

2. Everyone walks around the work rugs.

3. Line rules for group stories or lessons include sitting quietly with arms and legs folded.

4. Each child hangs his own coat, buttons or zips it, and when leaving is responsible for dressing himself and gathering his belongings.

5. Athletic shoes with ties or classroom slippers help us walk quietly and make us sure-footed.

6. Children serve themselves refreshments and are in charge of cleaning the environment.

7. Children are directors of work and teachers are there to serve their needs. They push us; we don't push them.

8. Children talk quietly and ask for help on a one-to-one basis, not by yelling across the room. They do not interrupt a lesson but wait quietly in close proximity to the teacher until noticed before asking for help or direction.

#### The Parents’ Responsibility in the Uninterrupted Work Cycle

1. Parents and caregivers should leave toys at home and not fight with children over leaving them in the car at the school door. Children are grumpy when this happens.

2. Parents and caregivers should try to bring happy, relaxed children to school by allowing adequate time and a very slow pace in preparing for school.

3. Parents and caregivers should talk about ground rules with children in a "positive" manner, and practice talking quietly at home.

4. Parents and caregivers should encourage the ability to distinguish between appropriate indoor behavior and outdoor behavior. There is a difference.

5. Parent conferences are scheduled twice each year. A parent or teacher may schedule an optional third conference.

6. Parents and caregivers should avoid tangible rewards for accomplishments children naturally receive pleasure from.

7. Order is very important to children to give them a sense of security and peace.

8. Parents and caregivers should return folders and teacher communications promptly.

9. Parents should familiarize themselves with the school’s policies as well as the Montessori method and support the lead teacher’s efforts with consistency at home in applying these guidelines.

10. Parents should refrain from undermining their child’s potential in the classroom Parents need to make sure the child eats a wholesome and healthy diet, limiting sugar intake and limiting screens and an overreliance on technology both of which undermine the teacher’s efforts to help the child concentrate while at school.

9. Parents and caregivers should notify the lead teacher if they have a question or concern. An email or telephone message can be left with the office.

10. Parents are the child's primary teacher. The faculty and staff at The Little Village Montessori School can love, support, and encourage parents best by setting excellent examples. We must address parents' needs as well as the needs of our children. We must also trust one another and share the goal of providing the best educational environment for children to develop.

## **The Little Village Montessori School Staff Guidelines for Phase-In Adjustment Periods**

Entering school is a change for both children and adults. We ask families to be flexible for the first few weeks. Often, the first few days are shorter and with the presence of a parent or caring adult to whom the child is attached. Children will be phased in to the class slowly and securely. Each child is different, so each phase-in time will be different. TLVM teachers and staff are grateful for parents’ understanding and cooperation during this time.

### **Phase In Process For Families**

In the beginning, your child will come to school **every day** unless you are told otherwise. Please make arrangements for you or someone who is close to your child (caregiver, relative) to be available for this process.

Please enter the classroom with your child and sit in an adult-specified chair. Allow your child to freely explore the environment, stay beside you, or return to you as frequently as needed. Please do not engage your child at this time. Instead, it is best to **remain passive** while your child develops trust with the teachers and adjusts to the new space. It is a good idea to **bring a book or newspaper**. Please try not to converse or speak. Your voice may attract your child’s attention. Write down any questions you have and your child’s teachers will communicate with you after your visit. We also ask that you help your child with his/her toileting/diapering as we gain his/her trust.

The key to a successful phase-in process is that it’s done **gradually**. On your first day, you and your child (or someone close to the child) will be in the classroom for an hour or two. You will then **both leave and come back the next day**. On the second day or third day, your child will stay longer and **you may be asked to leave the room and wait in the school office**. We request that you stay nearby school in case we need you. By the end of the week, your child may be staying for lunch, or even naptime. Every child’s separation process is different; some children may phase in faster than others. This is not a reflection on you or your child. It may take a week, or two weeks, or even a month (all will be okay!) until your child feels comfortable saying good-bye to you. **We realize that this is a time-consuming process; it is solely for your child’s benefit**.

**The following tips will help with this process:**

1. Talk about school. Explain to your child what to expect: how long you’ll stay, who will be in the classroom, the teachers’ names, etc.

**2. Be positive**; your child can sense your own separation anxieties; if you’re enthusiastic, they will be too.

3. Read books about school when you’re home.

4. When/if your child cries, remain calm. **Try not to say**, “Don’t be afraid,” or “There’s nothing to be afraid of,” or “There’s no reason to cry.” **It’s best to address your child in a positive way**. “It’s okay to be afraid. Your teachers will take care of you.” Be prepared for tears they are natural and will resolve more quickly when you have left the premesis.

5. **Never sneak out, slink out, or “slip away.”** Tell your child that you’re leaving the classroom. Make sure you are consistent and give one quick good-bye, each time you leave.

6. When you leave, tell your child where you’re going, when you’ll be coming back, and what you’ll be doing. Please follow the teacher’s instructions on when to come back, when to leave, etc.

7. Don’t ask your child for permission to leave the classroom. For example, “Is it okay if I go now?” This can be confusing to your child. Be matter of fact instead.

8. **Please trust that we will comfort your child when you leave and that your child is safe. We will not allow your child to be in emotional distress longer than necessary, we will call you to return.**

When you’ve successfully completed phase-in, we ask that you have a **clear and consistent separation routine** with your child. Allow your child to WALK on his/her own into the classroom; do not carry them in. Also, allow your child to carry his/her lunch, backpack, or blanket into the classroom. Your child will feel independent and empowered by these tasks. At this point, you can briefly discuss your child’s needs at this time with a teacher. **Sometimes your child may cry and resist entering the classroom. This reaction is not unique** and often your concern for your child can transfer to feelings of anxiety for him/her. Say good-bye kindly and firmly. We will comfort your child. **This is the first opportunity for your family and our teachers to work together to make your child’s school experience a joyful one!**

### **Phase In Process For Teachers**

Please read the The Little Village Montessori School Guidelines for Phase-In above, which has been provided to the parents of your students and is also covered in more detail in the TLVM Employee Handbook. The phase-in process should be gradual and should be flexible to meet the needs of both your students and their parents. *Please be extra kind, gentle, patient, and understanding though this temporary period*.

Extra efforts and time spent early on with phase-in will go a long way to keep relationships with parents trusting and strong. A parent should never feel forced or rushed to leave the classroom. Consider offering an early drop-off period for parents who wish to come into the classroom in the morning to spend a few extra minutes with their child. Suggest an earlier drop-off for students who are slow to warm. The way that you communicate with parents during this time will be essential to the success of the phase-in process. The gym will be closed to students and used for phase-in parents for the first two weeks of school.

## **The Little Village Montessori Curriculum**

In the Montessori approach, The Children's House - also known as the Primary or Preschool level -- is a gathering of children from three to six years who live and learn together in a prepared environment that offers choices of individual activities that aid the child's work of "self construction." The Montessori guide cultivates in the children the ability to choose freely, to sustain focused and concentrated attention, to think clearly and constructively, and to express themselves through language and the arts. Through the active development of the will and the satisfaction of their authentic needs, the children become self- disciplined and socially cohesive.

Areas of activity of the primary level are practical life, sensorial exploration, language, mathematics, and cultural subjects. The extensive sets of Montessori materials in each of these areas are designed to appeal to the children's deep interest and to inspire repeated activity. The children's absorbent minds take in vast amounts of information and grasp sophisticated relationships and principles wholly and effortlessly.

In this atmosphere of faith and respect for the life force in each child, the guide presents work that is worthy of the children's attention. The classroom environment honors the children's innate dignity, active interest, and their overwhelming drive to develop and grow.

Practical life is the area of development in which the child comes to master his physical environment and his own physical being. The child is provided with materials that he uses to create, control, change, or care for the classroom and himself. Because practical life activities are the foundation for the child's future life as a whole person, it is the most basic and essential area of Montessori development. Practical life has three goals: (1) to bring the child to respect and love the physical world around him, both natural and man-made; (2) to develop techniques and skills that are basic for other areas of the child's development; and (3) to unite the child's growing body, developing intelligence, and strengthening will. The resulting condition of human integrity is what we call freedom. The success of our work depends upon this foundation.

Choice of activity is essential for the child. He acts upon his decision with intelligence, using his body and his environment in an act of work. This *process* of work, freely chosen, performed with self-discipline, utilizing physical skills in an intelligent way, is the child's daily *product.* Through his work, the free child creates the free adult.

Sensorial exercises employ an extensive set of materials, each of which isolates and then expands upon one sensorial property: shape, weight, texture, pitch, and so on, are matched, graded, or contrasted. The sensorial work allows the child to develop his sensory awareness and organize what he perceives to form concepts and abstractions. The purpose of the work is threefold: (1) the satisfaction of the work with the materials; (2) the ability to perceive one's environment with sensitivity and intelligence; (3) the appreciation of the natural order that intelligent awareness cultivates in one's life.

Intellectual work in math and language develops from the concrete sensorial materials, which the child manipulates in practical processes to form the foundation for the use of symbols to represent both the concrete and the process itself. We want the child to have the experience first and then to use the symbols that represent it. With the symbols, the child finally begins to communicate what he knows and does. In this way, the child's school life is not divorced from reality and does not become something apart from life, but is rather a natural development of his individual being.

Arithmetic, geography, reading and writing, grammar and syntax, music, art, science, algebra, and geometry are developed in gradual stages, from the concrete sensorial to the abstract conceptual through sequential materials and exercises.

### **Spontaneous Activity in Education**

The process by which the child struggles to unfold his own highest and best intellectual, emotional, and social development through choice of work, concentration and focus, independence and collaboration within a self-managing classroom

*Development of the Will, Freedom and Limits, Choice and Responsibility*
The integral elements of Montessori practice that empower the child to self-develop and self-educate with love and joy

*Support for Individual Style and Rate of Academic and Skill Development*The recognition and respect shown for each child’s individual process and pace of learning, which empowers the healthiest most authentic autonomy and industry

*Collaborative And Cooperative Rather Than Competitive Learning*The children’s spontaneous organization into groups for research and study, their caring support and assistance for one another in their struggles and successes

*Developmental Aids Rather Than Teaching and Learning Materials*The efficient, sparse, and elegant Montessori materials designed to provide the keys to self-development and auto-education

*Evaluation and Accountability*The integrated process through which the children self-evaluate while learning and demonstrate accountability for making their highest effort for their best development and learning, including recording regularly in their work journal and assessing periodically through individual conferences and reviews with the guides; as well as the guides responsibility to engage, as much as possible, each child in this process as he or she is best able

### **Education for Peace**

The ultimate aim of Montessori education, that toward which all healthy, authentic human nature is directed from within, that toward which human development is innately driven, that which gives human beings the deepest satisfaction

*Individual Pace and Rate of Character Development*
Recognition and respect for each child’s progress along the path of truthfulness, honest, empathy, compassion, and action in relation to immediate peers and in behalf of the social, economic, and spiritual health and well-being of the earth and the human family

*Peer Mediation*
The dynamic process through which the children are prepared and supported to resolve among themselves, guided and encouraged by the adult, their specific and acute or generalized and on-going interpersonal issues, according to Montessori principles and values and within school policy

*Self-managing Elementary Community*
The children’s own ordering, organizing, and managing the daily operations of their environment and community, whether of a practical or social nature

*A Force More Powerful*
The sum of the skills and attributes of character and integrity that the children develop by educating themselves and one another, and confronting issues their own issues in the present that will empower them to live in the world as adults in such a way that they can seek common ground and establish mutuality with others of various cultures and religions in order to pursue a peace that ensures human dignity and respect, social and economic justice, and the health and well-being of the planet

# **SECTION 2: POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

## ***Admissions Policies & Procedures***

### **Non-discrimination policy**

The Little Village Montessori School, admits students of any race, color, nationality, ethnic origin, or sexual orientation to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, nationality, ethnic origin, or sexual orientation in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, and other school-administered programs.

The Little Village Montessori School does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations. These activities include, but are not limited to, hiring and firing of staff, selection of volunteers and vendors, and provision of services. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our staff, clients, volunteers, subcontractors, vendors, and clients.

The Little Village Montessori School is an equal opportunity employer. We will not discriminate and will take affirmative action measures to ensure against discrimination in employment, recruitment, advertisements for employment, compensation, termination, upgrading, promotions, and other conditions of employment against any employee or job applicant on the bases of race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, disability, veteran’s status, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

### **Admissions Procedures**

##

We appreciate that you are considering The Little Village Montessori School for your child and your family.  Choosing a school that complements and supports your family’s values plays an integral part in your child’s development as a citizen of the world. The admissions process at The Little Village Montessori School is designed to provide you with information about our school.  The School Showings and Prospective Parent Presentations outlined below are filled with valuable information regarding both Montessori philosophy and pedagogy, as well as early childhood development.

### 1) **Attend a School Showing:**  Attend a School Showing at our campus.  Showings offer an overview of Montessori history, philosophy, and curriculum in the classroom setting.  This is an excellent opportunity to learn about Montessori education and The Little Village Montessori School.  Showings are held from September through May.  School Showings are for adults only, but infants in arms are welcome to attend.

### 2) **Schedule a Classroom Observation:**  Once you have attended a School Showing, we invite you to schedule a classroom observation. Observations offer a window into the daily life of a classroom designed specifically to meet the needs of the young child.  Observations are for adults only.  Please call or email to schedule an observation.

### 3)[**Submit an Application**](https://austinmontessori.org/apply)**:**  Apply online or in person any time.  A non-refundable $150 fee is required with each application. Once we have received an application, your child will be added to our waiting pool and you will begin receiving information regarding our upcoming admissions events via email. Children are selected from the waiting pool based on a number of factors designed to create balance within the individual classroom communities.

### 4) **Attend Prospective Parent Presentations:**  Parents interested in learning more about The Little Village Montessori School and the Montessori approach are encouraged to attend a Prospective Parent Presentation. Attendance of these presentations is taken into consideration when offering placement. These presentations will be repeated during the spring semester. These presentations are for adults only, but infants in arms are welcome to attend.

### **Placement Policy**

It is our school’s mission to provide families with a comprehensive Montessori education through the early childhood years. We keep this mission foremost in mind when placing new children.

We welcome applications from all interested families. Children are placed according to the needs of the individual classroom communities.  We strive for communities that reflect balance and diversity of socioeconomic level, race, ethnicity, age and gender. Criteria for placement is based on space availability, the child’s age and readiness for the program as well as the parent’s commitment to the Montessori philosophy and school culture.

**Waiting Pool:**Your child will be placed in our active waiting pool once we receive an application with the application fee. You will be notified by mail or phone if we are able to place your child.

If we are unable to place your child, we will send you an email in the late fall, asking if you would like to remain in the waiting pool or withdraw. It is possible that your child may be accepted at later date if a place becomes available.

**Montessori Readiness Assessment**

As part of the application process, parents/guardians will be asked to independently evaluate their childs’ readiness for the Montessori classroom in an effort to ensure a smooth transition and successful start for their child. As part of the partnership agreement with families and TLVM staff, an honest evaluation will assist TLVM teachers in areas they need to work to ensure success for the child new to the Montessori classroom. Parents are expected as part of the partnership agreement to support TLVM staff in these efforts by being open to adapting home routines and expectations for consistency.

The school also utilizes a comprehensive Montessori standards report that charts each child’s progress as it relates to specific expectations in a Montessori preschool classroom. Although the standards vary based on developmental level, a brief summary of the minimum standards are written below:

• Begins work promptly illustrating intrinsic motivation and a love of learning.

 • Participates in lessons, in small or large groups.

• Listens carefully, follows verbal directions to the best of the child’s ability.

• Handles materials and classroom work responsibly.

• Shows respect for classmates, faculty and parent volunteers.

• Accepts correction with needed and accepts responsibility for accomplishing goals.

 • Learns how to work in an organized manner.

• Takes pride in work accomplished.

• Works well independently.

 • Works well with others in cooperative learning activities.

 • Follows classroom guidelines.

• Evidence of parental support.

Upon admission to the school, students are assessed by the Lead Teacher, Assistant Teacher and the Director using the assessment detailed below.

Student Name:

These are some of the requirements/readiness skills the preschool teachers have asked that the Toddlers have mastered before entering into the preschool prepared environment. Please note that as the Montessori Philosophy, each child is still examined on individual basis.

 1.The child is potty trained (or strongly exhibiting toilet readiness) and exhibits independence in the restroom. YES NO

2. The child can sit independently on the line for short group lessons. YES NO

3.The child can sit for individual lessons. YES NO

4. The child has the beginnings of self-care, dressing oneself, pulling pants up/down, etc. YES NO

5. The child can follow simple directions. YES NO

6. The child can make his/her own selection of work. YES NO

7. The child can communicate their needs and wants. YES NO

8. Approval has been given by the preschool coordinator for the child to transition. YES NO

### **Tuition and Fees**

A tuition contract is a financial commitment. The school relies on these commitments in planning and budgeting for the educational programming in the upcoming school year. Sometimes families experience changes that result in the withdrawal of a student during the academic year. TLVM requires a 30-day notice in order to ensure a smooth transition for your child and our community. TLVM will publish its Tuition and Fees for the next academic year no later than February 14 on its website and will notify me/us through email of Tuition and Fees for the upcoming academic year

**Non-refundable Tuition Deposit**

TLVM requires a non-refundable deposit of $200 (“Tuition Deposit” or “Enrollment Deposit”) to be billed upon signing the Enrollment Contract. This Tuition Deposit that includes application and registration fees is required to be paid in order to reserve a spot for a child for the upcoming academic year.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Schedule Options** | **Enrollment requirements** |
| Full Day 8:00am-3:00pm | Child is Potty TrainedApplication Fees PaidChildren will turn 3 within the calendar year.  |
| Half Day (5 Half Days)8:00am-11:30am | Child is Potty TrainedApplication Fees PaidHalf days limited to children ages 3 and 4 |
| Annual Tuition & Fees Schedule is post on the TLVM website. Associated FeesApplication Fee (New Students)Registration Fee (All Students) Sibling Discount 5% |

All Tuition and Fees and other charges will be paid as set forth in the Enrollment Contract. All outstanding balances must be paid in full by March 31 of the current school year in order for a currently enrolled child to be re-enrolled for the following academic year. Any additional fees incurred after the signing of the Enrollment Contract will be paid by March 31 of the current school year. The fact that Tuition and Fees can be paid in installments does not create a fractional contract or in any way relieve the responsibility for the entire year’s tuition and fees upon the signing of this Enrollment Contract.

**Late Fees and Delinquent Accounts**

Tuition and Fees must be current by the first day of school or an enrolled child will not be able to attend school.

If a family’s account should become more than 30 days delinquent during the course of the school year in accordance with my selected payment plan, a monthly late fee of $35 per month will be invoiced until my/our account is no longer delinquent. Should a family’s account become more than 30 days delinquent, the family must make arrangements with The Little Village Montessori’s Business Office for appropriate payment of tuition and/or fees in arrears.

Failure to contact The Little Village Montessori’s Business Office within five business days of notification or if my balance becomes 60 days delinquent, the enrolled child will not be permitted to attend school. Any accounts with outstanding balances as of March 31 of the current academic year will not be allowed to re-enroll until the balance due is paid in full. If a family’s account becomes chronically delinquent, The Little Village Montessori may not permit my/our family to re-enroll.

**Fees Associated with the Collection of Delinquent Accounts**

In the event that The Little Village Montessori engages an attorney to collect all or any portion of the tuition owed by me/us, families/guardians must agree to pay The Little Village Montessori’s counsel fees equal to thirty percent (30%) of any balance due in the event the account is turned over to an attorney for collection, whether or not suit is filed. The parties hereby waive trial by jury in any action or proceeding to which they may be parties arising out of the Enrollment Contract.

**Schedule Changes**

A tuition contract is a financial commitment. The school relies on these commitments in planning and budgeting for the educational programming in the upcoming school year. Sometimes families experience changes that result in their desire to modify their child's program. Please note that TLVM will do our best to accommodate these changes but cannot guarantee this flexibility. If a family requests a schedule change that results in a lesser tuition, The Little Village Montessori reserves the right to credit the following year’s tuition in lieu of refunding or modifying the current tuition rate for the year already budgeted.

**Refund Policy**

No portion of Tuition and Fees, paid or outstanding, will be refunded or canceled, even in the event of absence, early withdrawal, or early dismissal except as described under the “Contract Termination by the Parent or Guardian” and the “Contract Termination by the Little Village Montessori” sections of this handbook or the Enrollment Contract.

The following refund policy will apply:

• Withdrawal at any time after enrollment and prior to the start of the new school year will result in one-third (33%) of the total annual tuition being due and payable to The Little Village Montessori School. The $200 Enrollment Deposit will be not be applied to the balance due.

• Withdrawal at any time after the start of school but before the December break will result in two-thirds (66%) of the total annual tuition being due and payable to The Little Village Montessori School. The $200 Enrollment Deposit will be applied to the balance due.

• Withdrawal at any time after the December break and before the end of the school year will result in total annual tuition being due and payable to The Little Village Montessori School. The $500 Enrollment Deposit will be applied to the balance due.

## ***Communication Policies***

### **Parental Access**

Parents of students enrolled at The Little Village Montessori have permission to access all center areas used by their child. This includes classrooms, dining room, sanctuary, playground and outdoor classrooms.

### **School Calendar and Closings**

The Little Village Montessori generally follows the University of North Georgia Calendar, Lumpkin County Schools calendar and the Little Village Montessori Independent calendar. The Little Village Montessori reserves the right to adjust the school calendar as needed throughout the year. In the event of inclement weather, which warrants school closing, information regarding school closing can be obtained by watching WSB-TV Channel 2 News. Please look for the info for University of North Georgia and Lumpkin County School Closings. If UNG and Lumpkin County Schools are closed the preschool will close also. If UNG and Lumpkin County School System decides to delay opening till 10:00 am, the preschool will also delay opening till 10:00am. Information can also be obtained by checking the Little Village Montessori Preschool website.

### **Changes to Contact Information**

If you have a change of address, email, or phone number, please call or email the office to let us know. It is vital that we have current contact information, especially phone numbers, to be able to reach you if your child is ill.

### **Changes in Home Situation**

Please inform your child’s teacher by note or personal conversation if there is a change in the home situation: death, divorce, or relocation (even within Dahlonega), a new baby, extended visits by friends or relatives, a new baby-sitter or care-giver, a change in carpool or in the child’s daily routine, or any fears, bad dreams, or fantasies. A change at home will often be reflected simultaneously or subsequently in behavior at school. Communication from parents will enable the guide to help the child as need arises.

### **Communication with Second Families**

In situations where parents are separated or divorced, please advise the school of additional addresses for mailing purposes so that everyone is fully informed about school functions, parent- teacher conferences, etc.

**Communication Regarding Illness, Injury or Emergency**

In the event of an illness or injury, staff will follow the procedures outlined in the Emergency Plan. Parents will be notified by phone if their child becomes ill or is injured at school. Parents will be notified via phone and any emergency information regarding evacuation will be updated on our website and Facebook pages. An emergency contact list that includes phone numbers provided by parents will accompany the emergency backpack used in the event of an evacuation or lockdown.

### **Communication Regarding Communicable Disease Notification**

If there has been a diagnosis of a communicable disease among the student body and there is a likelihood that children have been exposed, parents will be notified via email. The student with the diagnosis will remain anonymous in the reporting to parents.

### **Communication with Department of Child and Family Services & the Health Department**

Georgia Code 19-7-5 Mandates that we are a designated reporters of child abuse and are required by law to report any signs of physical abuse, sexual abuse, commercial child exploitation (sexual trafficking), neglect, maltreatment or endangering. We take our responsibility as guardians of children in our care very seriously and have a reporting protocol in place should a faculty or staff member have cause for concern.

We are also required to report any incidents of communicable disease to the Lumpkin County Health Department. We will also notify parents if there has been a diagnosis, however the individual child diagnosed will remain anonymous in this communication.

### **Website**

### <http://www.thelittlevillagemontessorischool.org>

### Our website includes the school calendar, this Parent Community Handbook, the Newsletter, Admissions Applications forms and other parent resources. School closings will also be posted here.

### **TLVM Social Media Presence**

### The school maintains a Facebook and Instagram page for parents during the school year, containing information about Montessori education, upcoming school events as well as announcements regarding members of the Little Village Montessori School community.

### **Proper Lines of Communication**

There are certain lines to follow in communicating with the school about your child’s experience at The Little Village Montessori School.

**Titles of TLVM Staff**

At the Little Village Montessori, we refer to our classroom teachers as Guides. Throughout this handbook and in school you may also hear them referred to as Directresses or Lead Teachers. Assistants in the classroom are also referred to by the same titles, Assistant Guide or Assistant Teachers. This labeling is part of the Montessori tradition that views the teacher as one who is working alongside children in aiding their learning, guiding and directing. “Teacher” implies a different dynamic in the classroom, so you will rarely hear that reference from your children or other staff as we use our words carefully in believing that they craft the school dynamic.

#### Contacting Your Child’s Guide or the Director

We value frequent, timely, open communication with you about your child. We will use a variety media to communicate with you, including phone, email, newsletters, written notes, conferences, parent gatherings, etc. Each guide will let you know how best to contact her or him.

Formal individual conferences between guides and parents occur twice a year. Guides or parents may request additional meetings when necessary.

Because the guides work with the children without a formal break, they are unavailable to answer phone calls or speak to you in person during the school day.

Emergency calls should be routed through the main office.
Evening parent gatherings are held throughout the year in the children’s classrooms.

Communicate directly with your child’s guide. Many times a child’s development presents challenges to both parent and guide. Working directly with the guide in a spirit of collaboration is the most effective way to resolve any issue and to build a solid partnership between school and home for future work on behalf of the child. Speaking to anyone else about the issue may be tempting at the time, but it is not in the best interests of your child, the guide or your child’s community.

Some popular literature asserts that to advocate for their children, parents must take an adversarial relationship toward their school. In fact, our experience is that such an approach is always counterproductive. You are, by definition, your child’s advocate. At the same time, the school is also an advocate for your child; we each bring our own view of what is happening and what is in the child’s best interest. Guides’ experience and training help them to evaluate and make sense of their observations of your child. We want to work together with you—on the same side of the table rather than from opposing sides—to develop mutual understanding in the interest of your child. The children of our Montessori communities approach their own problem solving in this collaborative way, and we, their adults, owe it to them to model the same productive behavior.

At times either you or the guide may feel the need for an additional perspective on the issues under discussion. If that is the case, either the guide or the parent may arrange a meeting to include the parent, guide, and director. In either event, it is expected that the parent and guide have made a concerted effort to work through the issue before meeting with the director.

Whenever an outside specialist—such as a speech and language pathologist, tutor, educational diagnostician, psychologist, counselor, occupational therapist, or physical therapist— is working with your child or conferring with you and the guide, the school expects the director to receive copies of written reports for a students’ files and to attend conferences in order to broaden the support network.

The Little Village Montessori asserts, as part of its enrollment contract signed by families, that a positive and constructive relationship between parents/guardians and TLVM staff and any other adults interacting with the TLVM community by virtue of their relationship with a child is essential to the mission of the Little Village Montessori. If any behavior, communication or interaction on or off campus is disruptive, intimidating, overly aggressive, or reflects a loss of confidence or serious disagreement with The Little Village Montessori’s policies, procedures or standards, TLVM may place restrictions on interactions with the Little Village Montessori staff and/or the TLVM community. In some cases, this may include dismissal of my/our family from the TLVM community.

## ***Health & Wellness Policies***

*Please note that these policies have been amended in response to the COVID 19 Pandemic that began in March 2020. Please see the updated response and protocol posted on the Little Village Website. Any policies listed in this handbook will not override COVID policies.*

### **Health & Immunization Records**

Prior to the first day of class, the office must have your child’s completed health form, Evidence of Immunization or Signed Affidavit of Exclusion for Immunization. She will be unable to attend school until the completed health form and the immunization records are received. This is in accordance with DECAL Bright from the Start and the Montessori licensing agency whose representative visits our campus at the beginning of each year to personally check all health records.

### **Medication Policy**

#### Prescription Medicine

Please send the dosage needed for one day only, in the original container from the pharmacy with the child’s name on it, and a dated note from the parent listing the times and amounts to be given that day. Prescription labels are not a substitute for the note. A child may not carry medication; a parent or other adult must personally hand it to the guide or assistant. This medicine needs to be handed directly to the guide or assistant, so that the medicine can be properly stored out of reach. When you have your prescription filled, you may ask the pharmacist to put the medication into two labeled containers, explaining that you need one to keep at school.

#### Non-Prescription Medicine

In general, we strongly discourage the sending of over-the-counter medicines. Medicine, including children’s Tylenol and cough drops, may not be given to a child by a staff member, except when it absolutely must be taken during school hours, and the parent has given the guide written instructions. The note must include the amount, time, duration, and under what circumstances the medication is to be administered. Send only the dosage needed for that day in the original container (so we know what it is). Please do not send vitamins with your child. If you do, we are *required to treat them as medicine, according to the instructions above.*

#### Noticeable Adverse Reaction to Medication

Children receiving medication either prescription or not prescription with parental authorization, will be monitored for adverse reactions by the staff. Any reaction requiring emergency assistance will be managed based on the procedures outlined in the Emergency Plan. Reactions that are do not require emergency response will warrant a call to the parents and the child will need to be picked up from school.

#### Medication on Extended Day or Field Trips

On camping trips and other extended day trips, prescription and non-prescription medicines are treated exactly as they are in the classroom. Please follow the policies above when preparing medications for children on camping trips.

### **Illness Policy**

State licensing mandates that a child with any of the following symptoms be isolated and the parent(s) notified and asked to remove the child from the school as soon as possible.

* Fever of 100.5° F
* Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool per day)
* Vomiting
* Nausea
* Sore Throat
* Severe cough
* Unusual yellow color to skin or eyes
* Unexplained Rash
* Skin or eye lesions or rashes that are severe, weeping, or pus-filled
* Stiff neck and headache with one or more of the symptoms listed above
* Difficult breathing or wheezing
* Complaints of severe pain

If your child is not feeling well in the morning, or has a green runny nose, please observe them closely before sending them to school and risking the health of other children.

**Exclusion of Sick Children Policy**

It is essential that we maintain a healthy school environment for the well being of all of our students and staff. Children must be free from symptoms for **24 hours** before returning to school. If your child develops any of these symptoms while at school, you will be called immediately. If a child has mild cold symptoms that do not impair his/her functioning, the child may remain in the classroom and the parent(s) notified when they pick up their child.

**Mandated Reporting of Communicable Disease Policy**

If your child is diagnosed with any communicable disease (chicken pox, whooping cough, fifth disease, pink eye, hand, foot and mouth, flu etc.) or head lice, please report this at once to the office as well as your child’s guide. We are required by law to report incidents of communicable diseases to the Lumpkin County Health Department

TLVM is required to report any suspected case of notifiable communicable disease to the local county Health Department. We will also notify parents of the incident of a diagnosis via email, but the individual student and family will remain anonymous in the notification.

### **Required Reporting of Abuse, Neglect, Maltreatment or Endangering**

Georgia Code 19-7-5 Mandates that we are a designated reporters of child abuse and are required by law to report any signs of physical abuse, sexual abuse, commercial child exploitation (sexual trafficking), neglect, maltreatment or endangering. We take our responsibility as guardians of children in our care very seriously and have a reporting protocol in place should a faculty or staff member have cause for concern.

### **Emergency Plans & Procedures**

The Little Village Montessori has adopted emergency plans and procedures for both medical and environmental emergencies. Please refer to the Emergency & Medical Plans and Procedures Handbook, also included in the Appendix. Emergency evacuation procedures outlined in the Emergency Plan are also posted on the school entry walls.

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**The Little Village Montessori**

# **Emergency & Medical Care Plans and Procedures**

 **Emergency Location Address**

150 Warwick Street Dahlonega GA 30533

Street intersection: Church St and Waters St

**Emergency Phone Numbers**

If an emergency requires calling for an ambulance, Police, and/or Fire Department, the following procedures should be followed:

* **Ambulance services: 911**
* **Police: 911**
* **Fire: 911**
* **Poison Control Center: 1-800-222-1222,**
* ***Ferrell Gas 706-864-6151* Emergency: 1-877-427-4321**
* **For all area-wide emergencies, listen to the radio for instructions from emergency personnel.**
* **Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) Child Care Services- 404-657-5562**
* **Lumpkin County Dept. of Child and Family Services**

**Nearest Hospital**:

Northeast Georgia Medical Center 227 Mountain Dr., Dahlonega GA 305331 (770) 219-9000

**Relocation Policy**

**Local Safe Haven**: *Dahlonega* *First Baptist Church,* 234 Hawkins St, Dahlonega, GA 30533 [(706) 864-3676](https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=Dahlonega+First+Baptist+CHurch&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8)

As you will see in this plan, in some situations we evacuate our building and go to our Safe Haven. In other situations, we ‘lock down’ or ‘shelter in place’ in our building.

**Secondary Safe Haven** If the danger is located in our immediate neighborhood and we need to travel farther, our second SAFE HAVEN is *University of North Georgia, 82 College Circle, Dahlonega, GA 30597*

**Transportation of toddlers, children with disabilities and chronic medical conditions:** DPC has three handicap accessible exits on ground level that will be used in the event of an evacuation to our safe haven including Children with Disabilities. Our facility meets building code standards and access guidelines for accessibility under the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA which states that children must be able to exit the building quickly in case of an emergency. All rooms are located on the ground floor, eliminating the need for transporting these children down the stairs in the event of an emergency exit.

**Dismissal of Children Policy**

**ON WALK TO SAFE HAVEN**: Once we are en route to our Safe Haven, no child will be released until we have reached our destination. A parent’s responsibility, should s/he arrive during our safe movement to our site, is to assist in whatever may be needed. We will release children only when we have received advisement from the Lumpkin County Emergency Services.

**SHELTERING IN PLACE**: Should we need to ‘shelter in place’ or ‘lock down,’ no parents will be allowed in or out of the building until we receive advisement from the Lumpkin County Emergency Services (listen to the radio).

**PARENT NOTIFICATION**: If possible, parents will be notified by e-mail and we will leave a message on the answering machine in the school office. Teachers will use their classroom lists to make calls by cellular phone should there not be enough time to notify parents by e-mail or change the message on the answering machine. If cellular phones are inoperable, the children will remain with their teachers at the Safe Haven until a parent or approved adult arrives to retrieve them.

***NOTE:*** *Whether we are in our Safe Haven or in our building, we will ONLY release children to those whose names are on the approved pick-up lists provided by the parents.*

**Reunification Policy with Families**

**When returning children to the facility:**

1. Calmly walk in a single file line. Be cautious and yield the way for emergency/parent vehicles entering the property.
2. Once inside the facility, staff will immediately take a head count of each classroom to ensure that everyone is present and accounted for. Lead teachers shall report the final head count to the Director or designee. Names of any missing children or missing personnel must be given to the Director and emergency official.
3. Pick up routines of children by parent(s) should remain as close to normal as possible.
4. DECAL will be notified with-in 24 hours by the Director or designated person in charge.

**When returning children to families at safe haven evacuation site:**

1. Children should be grouped together by classrooms. Be cautious and yield the way for emergency/parent vehicles entering the property.
2. The center will communicate its location to parents by:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
3. Staff will periodically take a head count of each classroom to ensure that everyone is present and accounted for. Lead teachers shall report the final head count to the Director or designee. Names of any missing children or missing personnel must be given to the Director and emergency official.
4. When children are picked up, release signatures from parents should be recorded in a notebook/clip board.
5. DECAL will be notified with-in 24 hours by the Director or designated person in charge.

**Special Accommodations**

* Medical supplies including children’s medication and emergency contact information should be taken when facility relocates.
* The Director or designated staff person shall have a fully charged, working cell phone with them at all times.
* Keep a weather radio with extra batteries in a central location.
* Maintain an emergency or “ready-to-go” file which includes copies of sign-in/sign-out forms, medication administration forms, and incident/injury forms. The Director or designated staff should be responsible to take the emergency file. Additionally, there must be a designated back-up staff person should they be off site or unable to fill this responsibility.
* Take and maintain a current digital photo of each child enrolled in the program that can be used if it is necessary to post the child’s photo to aid in reunification.
* Become familiar with the National Emergency Family Registry and Locator System (NEFRLS) and the National Emergency Child Locator Center which have been developed to help reunite families who are separated during an emergency.

# **Annual Inspection**

The Executive Director and her designees will undertake a physical survey of the facilities and grounds for identification and correction of potential hazards. This inspection will occur during the summer of each year.

# **Staff Orientation to the Emergency Plan**

The Executive Director will orient employees to the Emergency Plan at least annually. Orientation includes a review of employees’ mandated roles as Disaster Service Workers during declared disasters, our emergency management program, and how to conduct and evaluate required drills.

The Executive Director may ask employees with specific skills to fulfill certain emergency management roles (e.g., first aid, CPR).

# **Home and Family Disaster Preparedness**

An immediate post-disaster consideration for most people is the well-being of family members and loved ones. Since it may not be possible for some employees to return home following a disaster, all employees are encouraged to inform their loved ones of The Little Village School plan and develop a home and family disaster plan.

# **Emergency Contact & Release Forms for Parents**

Each year all parents are asked to complete and sign the emergency contact and release forms that provide emergency and trip releases for the child and designate persons who are authorized to pick up their child.

# **Classroom Disaster Kits**

## Daily Emergency Packs Contain:

• Small box Kleenex in ziplock bag

• Pen and small memo pad in ziplock bag

• Box of bandages

• Latex gloves (several pairs) in a ziplock bag

• Emergency First Aid booklets (Teachers may have from first-aid training)

• Waterless soap

• Antiseptic cream

• Wet wipes

• An assortment of ziplock bags in a larger ziplock bag

• Laminated Class Roster with Allergies and Parents’ Emergency Numbers

• A three-day supply of students’ and teachers’ medication

• Epipen if child or adult has a prescription

## Evacuation Backpacks (2 per Classroom/Office):

• 3 Fleece Blankets

• 1 Wind-up Flashlight

• 2 Food Bars

• 2 Water pouches for each child and adult

• 25 5oz. paper cups

• Baby wipes in ziplock bags

• 3 Diapers for Each Child

• 3 Orange Safety Vests (for teachers to wear)

• Insulated Cooler Bag (to hold bottles from Infant Rooms)

• Small Safety Scissors

## Portable Disaster File

A portable disaster file, containing student emergency contacts and other disaster information, will be maintained in the School Office and there will be duplicates in each classroom’s disaster kits. The Office Staff will remove the office file box whenever the building is evacuated.

## Disaster Supplies

Disaster supplies projected to last for 12 hours, including food, first aid, blankets, and tools, will be kept in a supply closet. Some of these supplies will be stored in the classroom disaster kits.

# **Training, Drills and Responsibilities of Staff**

In accordance with State law, fire drills are conducted monthly. Building evacuation drills to our Safe Haven are conducted at least annually. All students and staff are required to participate in these mandated drills. The Office Staff will maintain a record of these drills. Staff/faculty will receive training on the TLVM School Emergency Plan implementation, including their respective assigned emergency response functions and use of supplies in the disaster kits.

**Classroom Staff**—Classroom staff are responsible for sealing rooms and caring for students. Specific responsibilities will be assigned to staff, but all staff should be comfortable with all classroom activities in order to act as a back-up. One teacher per classroom will be designated as leader and will be responsible for managing an individual classroom plan. Staff members who are outside of their classroom at the time of an emergency should return to their classrooms immediately.

**Office Staff**—Office staff are responsible for sealing public rooms on the first floor, giving assignments to visitors, parents, and caregivers in the building, and assisting teachers in caring for the students. Specific responsibilities will be assigned to the staff, but all staff should be comfortable with all office and classroom activities in order to act as a back-up. One office staff member will be designated as leader and will be responsible for managing the office plan. Staff members who are in a classroom at the time of an emergency should return to the office immediately.

# **Emergency Plan Procedures Defined**

## Evacuation

1. The Director or designated person in charge will contact 911.
2. Children’s emergency contact numbers will be taken to the evacuation area and parents will be notified of the situation.
3. Post a message on the front door of the facility or on the answering machine telling parents where the children have been relocated.
4. Use the nearest clear exit to evacuate the building during all continuous alarms.
5. Ensure the Director or designee has a fully charged, working cell phone to contact parents and/emergency personnel.
6. Know two evacuation routes.
7. Calmly walk to the outside assembly area located at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_unless the wind is blowing smoke or other hazards in that direction. If so, assemble inside at\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Be cautious and yield the way for emergency vehicles entering the property.
8. At the assembly area, staff will immediately take a head count of each classroom to ensure that everyone is present and accounted for. Lead teachers shall report the final head count to the Director or designee. Names of any missing children or missing personnel must be given to the Director and emergency official.
9. Do not re-enter the building until you are given the “ALL CLEAR” command. Many times the situation must be verified as safe, so be patient. Remember, this is for your protection.
10. DECAL will be notified with-in 24 hours by the Director or designated person in charge.
11. Medical supplies including children’s medication and emergency contact information should be taken when facility relocates.

## Lockdown

1. Lock outside doors and windows.
2. Close and secure interior doors.
3. Close any curtains or blinds.
4. Turn off lights.
5. Keep everyone away from doors and windows. Stay out of sight, preferably sitting on floor.
6. Maintain calm atmosphere in room by reading or talking quietly to children.
7. If phone is available in classroom, Director or designated person in charge will call 911 to ensure emergency personnel have been notified.
8. Remain in lockdown until situation resolved and police give the all clear.
9. DECAL will be notified with-in 24 hours by the Director or designated person in charge.

\*Notify parents/guardians about any lockdown, whether practice or real.

## Shelter-In Procedures (Tornado/Severe Weather i.e. thunderstorm, ice storm, etc.)

1. An emergency radio with extra batteries is located in the front office.
2. If a severe weather watch is issued staff will gather children at the shelter-in place centrally located in the two windowless bathrooms of the building.
3. Lead teachers will take a head count to ensure all children are accounted for. Names of any missing children or missing personnel must be given to the Director.
4. Children will sit with their backs to the wall and heads tucked between knees during a tornado warning.
5. Staff will keep children calm by reading books and singing songs.
6. Ensure the Director or designee has a fully charged, working cell phone. If possible, the Director will make contact with all parents to let them know of the situation.
7. No children are allowed to leave the Center while a severe weather watch is in effect without the legal parent or guardian.
8. When the threat has passed, staff may continue with the daily schedule.

# **Event Specific Guidelines**

## Structural Damage

### **FIRE-EVACUATE**

1. If heavy smoke or flames are seen or if the fire alarm is sounded staff will line children up at the nearest exit door.
2. A head count will be conducted of all children.
3. Teachers should search their rooms and close all doors before leaving. Director will shut down HVAC system (air conditioning and fans).
4. The Director or designee will search all areas within the Center and ensure all occupants have been safely evacuated.
5. Children will be escorted outside in a single file line.
6. Children will be taken to the designated assembly area located at: Dahlonega First Baptist Church \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
7. Emergency personnel (911) will be contacted by the Director after all persons have been evacuated.
8. At the assembly area, teachers will immediately take a head count of each classroom to ensure that everyone is present and accounted for. Lead teachers shall report the final head count to the Director or designee. Names of any missing children or missing personnel must be given to the Director and emergency official.
9. Ensure the Director or designee has a fully charged, working cell phone to contact parents and/emergency personnel.
10. Parents will be contacted (i.e. phone, email, text) to be made aware of the situation.
11. If the building cannot be reentered then all children will be taken to the designated evacuation area located at name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ address:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
12. If necessary, all parents and emergency contacts will be contacted via phone to arrange for pick up.
13. If the program will be closed for an extended time then DECAL will be notified with-in 24 hours by the Director or designee in charge.

*Fire Safety Tips*

* Each teacher should know at every moment where each child in his/her group is.
* Safe, orderly leaving is to be observed; there is much danger in running.
* Keep calm. Never try to hide. If the room is smoky, crawl along the floor.
* Feel the doors. If they are warm, do not open them.

### **CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING-EVACUATE**

*Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning:*

* Sudden flu-like illness
* Dizziness, headaches, sleepiness
* Nausea or vomiting
* Fluttering or throbbing heart beat
* Cherry-red lips, unusually pale complexion
* Unconsciousness

*If you suspect carbon monoxide poisoning:*

* Get the victim out and into fresh air immediately.
* Call **911** or emergency medical help at once.
* Get everyone else out.
* Open the windows.

*To prevent carbon monoxide poisoning:*

1. Be alert for the symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning.
2. Install and maintain carbon monoxide detectors.
3. Never operate internal combustion engines indoors.
4. Never use a charcoal grill indoors.
5. Have all fuel-burning appliances, flues, vents, and chimneys checked regularly.

### **DAMAGE TO UTILITIES-EVACUATE**

1. Staff will line children up at the nearest exit door.
2. A head count will be conducted of all children.
3. Teachers should search their rooms and close all doors before leaving. Additionally the Director or designee will search all areas within the Center and ensure all occupants have been safely evacuated.
4. Children will be escorted outside in a single file line.
5. Children will be taken to the designated assembly area located at: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
6. Emergency personnel (911) will be contacted by the Director after all persons have been evacuated.
7. At the assembly area, teachers will immediately take a head count of each classroom to ensure that everyone is present and accounted for. Lead teachers shall report the final head count to the Director or designee. Names of any missing children or missing personnel must be given to the Director and emergency official.
8. Parents will be contacted (i.e. phone, email, text) to be made aware of the situation.
9. Building will only be reentered if emergency personnel gives the all clear.
10. If the building cannot be reentered then all children will be taken to the designated evacuation relocation site at name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ address:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
11. Medical supplies including children’s medication and emergency contact information should be taken when facility relocates.
12. If necessary, all parents and emergency contacts will be contacted via phone to arrange for pick up.
13. DECAL will be notified with-in 24 hours by the Director or designated person in charge.

### ***\*Loss of Water***

1. Bottled water will be provided to wash hands, flush toilets and for drinking
2. A supply of bottled water is kept:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
3. The Director or designated person in charge will contact the water company for assistance if applicable. The phone number is:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
4. Parents will be contacted (i.e. phone, email, text) to be made aware of the situation.
5. If the water will not be restored with-in \_\_\_\_\_ hours then all parents and emergency contacts, if necessary will be contacted via phone to arrange for pick up.
6. The program will remain closed until water is restored.

### ***\*Loss of Electricity***

1. Flashlights are kept \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for emergency use.
2. Curtains and blinds will be opened to provide light.
3. The Director or designated person in charge will contact the power company for assistance. Number:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
4. If the Center also losses the cooling system then see emergency plan below.
5. Parents will be contacted (i.e. phone, email, text) to be made aware of the situation.
6. The Director will make a determination on if the Center can operate safely. If necessary, all parents and emergency contacts will be contacted via phone to arrange for pick up.
7. If the program will be closed for an extended time then DECAL will be notified with-in 24 hours by the Director or designated person in charge.

***\*Loss of Heat***

1. Children will be made comfortable by putting on coats and outer garments.
2. The Director or designated person in charge will contact a HVAC company for assistance.
3. Parents will be contacted (i.e. phone, email, text) to be made aware of the situation
4. If the temperature of the building drops to 65 degrees Fahrenheit or lower the program will then close. All parents and emergency contacts, if necessary will be contacted via phone to arrange pick up.

### ***\*Loss of Cooling System***

1. Children will be made comfortable by removing excess clothing and opening windows.
2. The Director or designated person in charge will contact a HVAC company for assistance.
3. Parents will be contacted (i.e. phone, email, text) to be made aware of the situation.
4. If the temperature of the building rises to 85 degrees Fahrenheit or higher the program will then close. All parents and emergency contacts, if necessary will be contacted via phone to arrange pick up.

***\* If the program will be closed for an extended amount of time do to the loss of any above utilities DECAL will be notified.***

## Emergency Response

### **LOSS OF A CHILD** (i.e. loss on site or during a field trip)

1. Teacher should let the Director know immediately that a child is missing.
2. The teacher will conduct a head count to ensure all children are accounted for.
3. Teacher will write down a description of what the child was wearing.
4. The playground, Center vehicles and bathrooms will be immediately checked.
5. The classroom cabinets and closets will be checked.
6. If child is not located call 911 or emergency personnel. Numbers posted next to: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
7. The Director or designated person in charge will contact the child’s parents.
8. Director will notify other parents regarding the incident as necessary.
9. DECAL will be notified with-in 24 hours by the Director or designee in charge.

### **DEATH OF A CHILD**

 If a child appears unresponsive:

1. Call for assistance from Director or other staff person.
2. Remove all children away from the child.
3. Do not move the child.
4. Call 911 or emergency personnel. Numbers posted next to: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
5. Contact parents and tell them only that the child is being transported to the hospital located at Hospital:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_address:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
6. Director will notify other parents regarding the incident.
7. DECAL will be notified with-in 24 hours by the Director or designee in charge.

### **SERIOUS INJURY**

1. Remove all children away from the injured child.
2. Do not move the child.
3. Provide first aid as trained in an approved First Aid training course until emergency personnel arrive. The first aid kit is located:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
4. Call for assistance as needed.
5. If necessary, Call 911 or emergency personnel. Numbers posted next to: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
6. Contact parents and tell them only that the child has been injured and is being transported to the hospital located at Hospital:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_address:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
7. Take the child’s emergency medical information form(s) with you to the hospital and remain with the child until a parent arrives.
8. Director will notify other parents regarding the incident as necessary.
9. DECAL will be notified with-in 24 hours by the Director or designee in charge.

## Communicable Disease

1. **A child shall not be accepted nor allowed to remain at the Center if the child has the equivalent of a one hundred and one (101) degrees or higher oral temperature and another contagious symptom, such as, but not limited to, a rash or diarrhea or a sore throat.**
2. **Parents will be notified of a contagious illness by the Guide or the Director.**
3. **Other parents will be notified of a contagious illness by the Guide or the Director.**
4. **The health department will be notified on any communicable diseases as outlined on the communicable disease chart.**

## Natural Disasters

### **LIGHTNING -Shelter in Place**

1. If outside- move indoors immediately.
2. Avoid use of telephone, electrical appliances, and plumbing as much as possible. (Please note: wires and metal pipes can conduct electricity)
3. Move away from windows. Cover windows with shades or blinds, if available.

### **EARTHQUAKE- Lock Down –Shelter in Place**

* Do NOT attempt to leave the building you are inside at the time of the quake.
* Take cover where you are, if possible, under a heavy piece of furniture, inside a doorframe, or against an inside wall.
* Stay away from windows.
* Use arms and hands to protect head and neck.
* If outdoors, move away from buildings, trees, and power lines.
* Stay in place until shaking stops.
* Once the quake is over, shut down gas, water, and electrical service; check for hazardous materials spills; and exercise caution before opening any closet doors.
* Do not restore utility services without approval from company officials.
* Approval must be received from officials of the Fire Department and utilities companies, as well as the Executive Director, before entering damaged buildings.

### **TORNADO-Lock Down–Shelter in Place**

* Call all students and employees into buildings.
* Shut down gas, water, and electrical service (time and safety permitting).
* Seek shelter in classrooms, away from windows.
* If time is short, seek shelter in an interior room with few windows or in a hallway, close all doors to room or hallway, and try to get as many walls between people and the outside as possible.
* Avoid corners of rooms.
* If possible, take cover under a heavy piece of furniture.
* Use hands and arms to protect head and neck.
* If outside and unable to reach shelter indoors, lie flat, ideally in a ditch or depression.
* Do not restore gas, water, or electricity to tornado-damaged buildings without approval of utility company officials.
* Check for hazardous materials spills in damaged buildings.
* Approval must be received from Fire Department officials and the Executive Director before entering damaged buildings.

### **HEATWAVE**

1. Follow the weather watch chart as provided on Bright from the Start website regarding outdoor play.

<http://www.decal.ga.gov/documents/attachments/Weatherwatchchart.pdf>

1. Ensure everyone drinks plenty of water.
2. If loss of air-conditioning occurs, follow emergency plan for loss of cooling system.

*Please note:*

*Children may not adapt to extremes of temperature as effectively as adults because they produce more heat (relatively) than adults when exercising and have a lower sweating capacity.*

## Terrorist Threat (Domestic & Environmental)

### **DANGEROUS PERSON-Lockdown**

1. If a person at or near your program site is making children or staff uncomfortable, monitor the situation carefully, communicate with other staff, and be ready to put your plan into action.
2. Immediately let staff know of dangerous or potentially dangerous person*.*
3. Initiate **LOCKDOWN**. (See lockdown procedures)
4. Call 911 from a safe place.

**If the person is in building:**

* Try to isolate the person from children and staff.
* Do not try to physically restrain or block the person.
* Remain calm and polite; avoid direct confrontation.

**If children are outside:**

* And dangerous person is outside: Quickly gather children and return to classrooms and initiate lockdown procedures. If it is not safe to return to the classrooms, evacuate to designated evacuation site.
* And dangerous person is in the building: Quickly gather children and evacuate to designated evacuation site.

**If children are inside:**

* Keep children in classrooms and initiate **LOCKDOWN**

### **CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS (NON-NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVES)-Lockdown-Shelter in Place**

* Follow procedures for Nuclear Weapons above and lock exterior doors.

### **BOMB THREAT-Evacuate**

1. Check caller ID if available.
2. Signal to another staff member to call 911, if able. (Write “BOMB threat” on piece of paper, along with phone number on which call was received.)
3. **Before you hang up**, get as much information from caller as possible.

**Ask caller:**

* *Where is the bomb?*
* *When is it going to explode?*
* *What will cause the bomb to explode?*
* *What does the bomb look like?*
* *What kind of bomb is it?*
* *Why did you place the bomb?*

**Note the following:**

* *Exact time of call*
* *Exact words of caller*
* *Caller’s voice characteristics (tone, male/female, young/old, etc.)*
* *Background noise*
* Do not touch any suspicious packages or objects
* Avoid running or anything that would cause vibrations in building. Avoid use of cell phones and 2-way radio
1. Confer with police regarding evacuation. If evacuation is required, follow **EVACUATION** procedures.

### **CHEMICAL OR RADIATION EXPOSURE-Shelter in Place Or Evacuate**

1. If emergency is widespread, monitor local radio for information and emergency instructions.
2. Prepare to **SHELTER-IN-PLACE** or **EVACUATE**, as per instructions.
3. If inside, stay inside (unless directed otherwise).
4. If exposed to chemical or radiation outside:
* Remove outer clothing, place in a plastic bag, and seal (Be sure to tell emergency responders about bag so it can be removed).
* Take shelter indoors.
* If running water/shower is available, wash in cool to warm water with plenty of soap and water. Flush eyes with plenty of water.

### **CHEMICAL ATTACK (AREA-WIDE) – Lock Down – Shelter in Place**

* Call students and employees into building.
* Seek shelter in your classroom and take roll.
* Close all windows and doors.
* Shut down HVAC systems (air conditioners and fans).
* Tape plastic sheeting over windows and doors in all rooms used as shelter.
* Place wet towels or clothing in cracks under exterior doors and under doors to rooms used as shelter.

**Localized Chemical Attack (Agent released inside a building) – Evacuate the Building**

* Evacuate building and take roll.
* If vapors are migrating, go to our Safe Haven.
* Approval must be received from Emergency Service/Health Department officials before reentering building.

### **RADIOLOGICAL RELEASE (“DIRTY BOMB,” NUCLEAR REACTOR BREACH)**

**Lock Down – Seal It Up**

* Call students and employees into buildings.
* Seek shelter in safe rooms and take roll.
* Close all windows and lock exterior doors.
* Shut down HVAC systems (air conditioners and fans).
* Tape plastic sheeting over windows and doors, exhaust fans, electrical outlets, and vents in all rooms used as shelter.
* Tape plastic sheeting over exterior doors.
* Place wet towels or clothing in cracks under exterior doors and under doors to rooms used as shelter.

### **BIOLOGICAL ATTACK (AREA-WIDE) – Lock Down – Seal It Up**

* Call students and employees into our building.
* Seek shelter in classrooms and take roll.
* Shut down HVAC systems (air conditioners and fans).
* Close windows and doors.

**Localized Biological Attack (Agent found inside a building) –EVACUATE**

**Call the Administration**

* Place a plastic sheet, towel, or cloth over the item or substance and leave the room.
* Close and, if possible, lock door to room where item or substance was found.
* Tape plastic sheeting at entry to room where item or substance was found.
* Shut down HVAC system (air conditioners and fans).
* Evacuate entire building and lock exterior doors; take roll.
* If necessary, tape plastic sheeting at all entrances to building.
* Do NOT handle, shake, touch, or in any way disturb the item or substance.
* If item must be handled, wear surgical gloves.
* Record names of all persons who came in direct contact with the item or substance, or were in the room at the time of discovery.
* All persons who came in direct contact with the item or substance should wash hands with soap and water.
* Approval must be received from Emergency Service/Health Department officials before reentering building.

### **NUCLEAR WEAPON Lock Down – Shelter in Place**

* Call students and employees into building.
* Seek shelter in classrooms, away from windows.
* If time is short, seek shelter in hallways (close doors leading to hallways).
* Kneel on ground in the “duck and cover” position.
* If time allows, shut down gas, water, and electrical service to buildings used for shelter.

# **EMERGENCY CONDITIONS: CLASSIFICATIONS**

**from the Department of Homeland Security**

<http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/display?theme=29&content=320>

## LEVEL 1: Low Condition (Green)

This condition is declared when there is a low risk of terrorist attacks.

## LEVEL 2: Guarded Condition (Blue)

This condition is declared when there is a general risk of terrorist attacks. In addition to the protective measures taken in the previous threat condition, Federal departments and agencies consider the following general measures in addition to agency-specific protective measures: checking communications with designated emergency response or command locations; reviewing and updating emergency response procedures; and providing the public with any information that would strengthen its ability to act appropriately.

## LEVEL 3: Elevated Condition (Yellow)

 An elevated condition is declared when there is a significant risk of terrorist attacks. This includes any event outside our area OR within our area that may affect commerce, transportation, and communication AND utilities, like electric power and gas. This includes public lighting, traffic lights, etc. as well as residential utilities.

## LEVEL 4: High Condition (Orange)

A high condition signifies an event outside or within our area that may require immediate evacuation. This situation includes any event that presents an immediate danger to area residents. Such events may include explosions, chemical/biological, and nuclear events that may pose an immediate threat to life, property, and safety in our area.

Law enforcement personnel (NYPD) and or State/Federal authorities will coordinate all evacuations.

**Note: Unless directed otherwise, the best form of security during an emergency is to stay local and remain at school.**

# **Medical Accident Procedures**

## For Children's Care

**Hospital**

Northeast Georgia Medical Center Medical Center 227 Moutain Dr. Dahlonega GA 30533 1 (706) 219-9000

Northeast Georgia Medical Center 743 Spring St NE, Gainesville, GA 30501

In case of child injury, basic first aid will be applied. In the event of a serious injury, a parent will be notified. If the parents are not available, the emergency numbers on the child’s emergency card will be called. If these person(s) cannot be reached, the school’s pediatrician(s) may be called for medical direction and/or the child taken to the hospital ER.

**For minor scrapes/bruises ("boo-boos"):** wash off the area with soap and water, put on a Band-Aid if appropriate, and fill out an accident report stating what happened so that parent(s) can receive it at pick-up time. If another adult is picking up, call the parent(s) at work that day, or at home that evening.

**For bites:** check to see whether skin was broken. Quickly wash off the area with soap and water if unbroken skin; fill out form stating what happened so that parent(s) can receive it at pick-up time and advise them to confirm that their child's tetanus immunization has been administered. Call parents to notify. Also inform office.

**For sick child (fever of 101.0° in ear, three diarrheas, one incident of vomiting, unexplained rash, or child complains of ills):**call the parent(s) immediately, explain the problem, and tell them to come and pick up their child. Until a parent arrives, the sick child shall be placed on a cot in an isolated area; decide what's manageable for the child. Consider calling 911 if the temperature is over 104 and is accompanied by additional symptoms (trembling limbs, eyes glazed, etc).

**Serious wounds (bump on the head, loosening of teeth):**apply ice to the area,call the parent(s) immediately, and explain what happened. Describe the nature of the wound and tell them to come pick up their child. Child should be kept quiet. **Call Parents immediately.**

**Serious wounds (nosebleeds):**using plastic gloves, pinch the area at the top of the nose, place sterile gauze or tissue lightly at the base of the nose to catch the drips (make sure child breathes through his/her mouth), and hold the pressure for 3-5 minutes. Have another staff member call the parent(s) immediately, tell them what happened, and decide with the parent if that child needs immediate medical attention. Nosebleeds can be scary for a child, as noses may bleed profusely; remain calm, speak reassuringly to the child about what is happening.

Should the nosebleed be slight or spontaneous and the child stays at school, after following above procedures, gently wash the child's face and hands (before you remove the gloves). Child may read quietly for a while before returning to more active work. Instruct the child to leave his/her hands away from the nose.

**More serious wounds (bloody wounds that do not clot, possible stitch wounds):**if actively bleeding use plastic gloves, sterile gauze, and apply pressure to the area. If not an immediate crisis, have another staff member call the parent(s) immediately, tell them what happened, the nature of the wound, and state that the child needs immediate medical attention. Parent(s) may decide to:

* Meet you at the hospital **(staff should bring copies of both the child's medical authorization release form and medical records form)** *or*
* Come and take the child to his/her own physician.

The teacher calls the family that night to follow up.

Very serious wounds (possible broken bones): get weight of the child off the affected area. If not an immediate crisis, call the parent(s), tell them what happened, the nature of the wound, and state that the child needs immediate medical attention. Parent(s) may decide to:

* Meet you at the hospital **(staff should bring copies of both the child's medical authorization release form and medical records form)** *or*
* Come and take the child to his/her own physician.

The teacher calls the family that night to follow up.

Immediate medical emergency (choking):

1. Trained staff person in CPR performs the Heimlich maneuver.
2. If child becomes unconscious and is not breathing, start rescue breathing and have someone call 911. Stay with the child when s/he is transported to the ER.
3. If child is breathing and object has been dislodged, take the child to the Emergency Room anyway to be checked out by a physician. **Staff should bring copies of both the child's medical authorization release form and medical records form.**
4. Notify the Administration and parents as soon as possible.

Immediate medical emergency (open fracture, unconscious child):

*When at school:*

Two adults—lead teacher and member of the Administration—accompany child to the ER of either Northeast Georgia Medical Plaza Urgent Care Center 400 108 Prominence Ct. Dawsonville, GA 30534 or Northeast Georgia Medical Center 743 Spring St NE, Gainesville, GA 30501

1. Call 911 and go to the hospital with the child with **copies of both the child's medical authorization release form and medical records form.**
2. At the hospital, tell ER staff that you are from The Little Village Montessori School in order to get immediate attention.

*When on a trip:*

1. Teacher calls 911 and goes with injured child to the nearest hospital with **copies of both the medical authorization release form and medical records form in his/her emergency bag**.
2. Another adult calls the School to notify the Administration and give details of the accident.
3. School will:
	1. Send staff person to remain with the teacher and the child until the parents arrive.
	2. Send teacher to accompany class back to school.
	3. Call parent(s), notify them of the details of the accident, and direct them to the hospital used.

**On the day of the incident, teachers must fill out an accident/illness form for all accidents/illnesses. All signed and completed accident reports must be kept on file in the accident report binder in the school office.**

## For Staff Care

*When an employee is injured:*

Report to the Administration, in writing, details of the accident within twenty-four (24) hours. Every injury is to be reported.

*In the case of minor injury*, teachers are responsible for administering first aid to themselves, if needed.

*In the case of more serious injury*, teacher(s) will request assistance from the Administration.

*In the case of major injury*, the teacher will:

* Ask Administration to call 911 so that s/he may be transported to the ER for treatment or
* Be accompanied by another staff person to the ER for treatment.

*When a teacher becomes ill during the school day:*

If immediate attention or sick leave is required, the safety and supervision of the children will remain an immediate responsibility for all staff members.

**Reporting Incidents of Child Abuse/Neglect Procedures, Identification and Assessment**

***What to Do When Child Abuse is Disclosed:***

**1.** Find a private place to talk with the person disclosing.

**2.** Reassure the person making the disclosure with statements such as:

a.“I believe you.”

b. “I am glad you told me.”

c. “It is not your fault this happened.”

d. Affirm that abuse is wrong.

**3.** Listen openly and calmly, with minimal interruptions. Try to keep your own emotions and nonverbal cues neutral.

**4.** Write down the facts and words as the person has stated them. The first statement made spontaneously has forensic significance to the investigators and the exact words can be important.

**5.** Respect the individual’s need for confidentiality by not discussing the abuse with anyone other than those required by agency policy and the law. The staff member should not tell the parents/guardians of the child that a report is being made until the safety of the child has been established.

**What NOT to SAY When Someone Discloses to You:**

1. Don’t ask “why” questions such as:

a) “Why didn’t you stop him or her?”

b) “Why are you telling me this?”

2. Don’t say “Are you sure this is happening?”

3. Don’t ask, “Are you telling the truth?”

4. Don’t say, “Let me know if it happens again.”

5. Don’t ask, “What did you do to make this happen?”

If a disclosure is made, don’t try to get all the details. It is not your role to be an investigator. Remember that disclosures are made in different ways. Understand that some disclosures are more subtle or indirect.

Above all, MINIMIZE the number of questions you ask the child and avoid the use of leading questions or questions that suggest an answer (e.g., “Did your uncle touch you in the private area too?” “Was he wearing a blue jacket?”).

***Identification and Assessment***

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| All public health employees must participate in training related to the identification and intervention of child abuse as part of new employee orientation and receive an annual update. Such training provides personnel with knowledge and skills needed to appropriately respond to child abuse allegations and determine needed prevention efforts. Some possible indications of child abuse include:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of Abuse** | **Physical Indicators** | **Behavioral Indicators** |
| **Sexual Abuse** is the exploitation of a child for the sexual gratification of an adult or older child. Sexual abuse is most commonly perpetrated by an individual known to the victim, rarely is the offender a stranger. One-third of all sexual abuse is perpetrated by another child. Sexual abuse includes touching offenses: fondling, sodomy, rape; and non-touching offenses: child prostitution, indecent exposure and exhibitionism, utilizing the internet as a vehicle for exploitation. **Note:** Sexual abuse does not include consensual sex acts involving persons of the opposite sex when the sex acts are between minors at least 14 years old or between a minor and an adult who is not more than four years older than the minor.  | **Possible Signs of Sexual Abuse:** Difficulty walking or sitting  Torn, stained or bloody underclothing  Pain, swelling or itching in the genital area  Pain on urination  Bruises, bleeding, discharge or laceration in external genitalia area  Presence of sexually transmitted disease  Frequent urinary or yeast infections  | **Possible Signs of Sexual Abuse:** Inappropriate sex play or advanced sexual knowledge and promiscuity  Hysteria, lack of emotional control  Sudden school difficulties  Withdrawal or depression  Excessive worrying about siblings  Difficult peer relationships, resists involvement with peers  Self-imposed social isolation  Avoidance of physical contact or closeness  Sudden massive weight change (loss or gain)  |
| **Emotional Abuse** is a pattern of behavior that impairs a child’s emotional development or sense of self-worth. It frequently occurs as verbal abuse, but can also include the following: rejection, terrorizing, shameful forms of punishment, withholding physical and emotional contact; developmentally inappropriate expectations; exposure to domestic violence that may impact a child’s personal safety. Emotional abuse is usually not an isolated incident, but instead it is a pattern of behavior that occurs over a period of time.  | **Possible Signs of Emotional Abuse:** Speech or other communicative disorder  Delayed physical development  Exacerbation of existing conditions, such as asthma or allergies  Substance abuse  | **Possible Signs of Emotional Abuse:** Habit disorders (sucking, rocking)  Antisocial or destructive behaviors, including delinquency  Neurotic traits (sleep disorders, inhibition to play)  Behavioral extremes (passivity or aggression)  Developmental delays  |
| **Neglect** is the most common form of child abuse. It is the failure of a parent or other caregiver to provide for the child’s basic needs. Neglect may be: **Physical**: Lack of adequate food, shelter, clothing, or medical care **Emotional**: Inattention to a child’s emotional needs, or permitting the use of alcohol or other drugs **Educational/cognitive** neglect **Lack of supervision** for optimal growth and development **Medical**: Failure to provide medical or mental health needs  | **Possible Signs of Neglect:** Consistent hunger  Poor hygiene  Inappropriate dress  Consistent lack of supervision  Unattended physical problems or medical needs  Delay in seeing medical care for an injury  Underweight  Poor growth patterns  Failure to thrive  Distended stomach, emaciated look  Children with special health care needs are at higher risk for neglect  | **Possible Signs of Neglect:** Self-destructive behaviors  Begging, stealing food  Extended stays at school (early arrival and late pickup)  Constant fatigue, listlessness, or falling asleep in class  Assuming adult responsibilities and concerns  States there is no caretaker in the home  Frequently absent or tardy  Truancy or never enrolling child in school  Neo-natal abstinence syndrome  |

***Reporting Procedure***1. Any suspected cases of child abuse shall be reported immediately, and at least within 24 hours. An oral report shall be followed up with a written (or online) report with the patient’s name and address, the nature and extent of the injuries, and any other information that might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injuries and the identity of the perpetrator. The reporter may choose to consult with the District Health Director before making the report, so long as the report is still made within the required time.
2. Depending on the identity of the suspected abuser, the report shall be made either to the Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) or to the employer of the suspected abuser. If the suspected abuser had access to the child through her or her work as a volunteer or employee of a hospital, school, social agency, or similar facility, then the report shall be made to the person in charge of such hospital, school, social agency, or facility. In all other cases, the report shall be made to DFCS in accordance with its procedures.
3. After making the report, the employee should notify the District Health Director (DHD) that a child abuse report has been made and provide a copy.
4. Sexual abuse is a common type of child abuse. However, it is important to remember that *not all sexual activities of minors are reportable as child abuse*. In particular, sexual abuse does not include (a) consensual sex acts involving persons of the opposite sex when the sex acts are between minors at least 14 years old, or (b) consensual sex act between a minor and an adult who is not more than four years older than the minor.
5. The statewide phone number for the DFCS Child Protective Center *to make an oral report* is 1-855-422-4453. Contact information for local county DFCS office can be found at http://dfcs.dhs.georgia.gov/county-offices. To access the online DFCS Mandated Reporter Form visit https://cps.dhs.ga.gov/Main/Default.aspx. Mandated reporters also have the following options to submit this form electronically (use only one option per report): Option One: E-mail to CPSIntake@dhs.ga.gov. The system may restrict you to receive only one auto-reply per day per email stating that the CPS report has been received. Option Two: Fax to 229-317-9663. Faxed reports convert to a PDF (Adobe) format and are automatically forwarded to the CPSIntake@dhs.ga.gov e-mail box.
6. If you provide an e-mail address, you can receive a confirmation e-mail. If the child is in a life threatening situation or immediate danger, a report should be made **immediately** to law enforcement or the district attorney in the county where the child lives or is receiving treatment. The identifying employee should follow up with DFCS as soon as possible to make an official report in accordance with DFCS reporting forms and procedures.
7. The incident as reported or observed shall be documented in the child’s health record and a copy of the written report shall be maintained in the child’s health record. A child abuse report must be labeled as confidential and not available for release pursuant to the Georgia Open Records Act or any other form of request. If there is a request for child abuse records, then legal counsel should be consulted before any response is made.
8. The reporter must follow up to assure that the report was received.
9. The obligation to report arises when there is “reasonable cause to believe that child abuse has occurred.” “Reasonable cause” means you have an objective, factual basis to believe that the child may have been abused. This does not mean you that are sure beyond a reasonable doubt that the child has been abused. It means that your belief is based on more than a hunch.
10. Public health personnel **do** have the authority to photograph injuries without the knowledge or consent of the child’s parent or guardian.
11. Pursuant to O.C.G. A. § 15-11-131, a physician licensed to practice in Georgia who is treating a child may take temporary protective custody of the child, without a court order and without the consent of a parent, guardian, or custodian, if the physician has reasonable cause to believe the child is in a circumstance or condition that presents imminent danger to the child’s health as a result of suspected abuse.
12. The responsibility of a mandated reporter is to ensure that a report is made whenever there is reason to believe that a child has been the victim of abuse. It is the responsibility of DFCS to review the report and decide whether further investigation is warranted. If the report is on a family that already has an open case with DFCS, the current suspicions must still be made to the DFCS intake worker.
13. Mandated reporters may contact DFCS to find out whether their report was substantiated. Even if the report was not substantiated, it is the responsibility of the mandated reporter to report future concerns regarding the child.

***Report Contents***Reports should contain the following information: 1. Name, age, address and current location of the child.
2. Name and address of the child’s parents or caretakers, if known
3. Name and address of suspected perpetrator
4. Location where the abuse took place, if known.
5. The nature and extent of the child’s injuries, including any evidence of previous injuries.
6. Any other information the reporter believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injuries and the identity of the perpetrator.
7. Photographs, if available

See Georgia Child Protective Services Mandated Reporter Form, Appendix B. The report becomes part of the child’s health records, but it should be labeled as confidential and not available for release. If a request for release of records related to child abuse is made, then contact legal counsel for advice on how to respond. ***Rights of the Mandated Reporter***All reports are confidential, and the identity of the reporter will not be disclosed to the child’s family. However, a public health reporter should provide his or her contact information. Mandated reporters who provide their name at the time of filing the child abuse report may request information from DFCS on the outcome of a report. Legally, DFCS cannot share any information other than whether the allegation was substantiated. Mandated reporters are to receive a letter of acknowledgment and acceptance for investigation or screen-out of the case (see Appendix C). ***Penalties for Failure to Report***Any public health employee who suspects a case of child abuse and who knowingly and willfully fails to file a report shall be guilty of a misdemeanor O.C.G.A. §19-7-5 (c)(2)(h). Moreover, the employee may be subject to employment discipline up to and including termination.  |  |  |
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## ***Food and Nutrition Policies***

### **Breakfast at Home**

The children’s work at school is directly affected by the nutritional quality of their meals. Please provide your child with a nutritious breakfast each morning.

A breakfast that includes a balance of protein, carbohydrates, and healthy fats such as, whole grain bread, oatmeal, eggs, nuts, beans, fruits, or vegetables is essential to the child’s development, learning, and enjoyment at school. This is both the universal experience of our guides as well as the finding of well-respected public health research studies. A child who has not had breakfast is not ready to come to school.

Parents and caregivers should read the labels of the foods you buy, and avoid sugar, corn syrup, artificial sweeteners or coloring, artificial flavoring, and other additives. Most nutritionists believe that these substances interfere with the child’s ability to learn and ability to have acceptable behavior. Such things as Pop-Tarts, sweet rolls, and pre-sweetened cereals may be convenient, but not only are they very poor foods, they may be hazardous to your child’s emotional, mental, and physical growth. Good nutrition directly affects a child’s health, concentration, and behavior. We highly recommend the book “Disease Proof Your Child” by Dr. Joel Fuhrman.

### **Snacks**

In the Children’s House, the children enjoy a light, healthy morning snack each day. The school provides part of the morning refreshment and parents sign up to provide the rest. Children who stay in the Children’s House until 3:00 p.m. bring their lunches from home and a healthy afternoon snack is also provided. The articles below provide information and guidelines for lunches at school.

### **Box Lunch at School**

All full day and lunch option half day students bring their lunches from home. Nutritious foods (whole grains, vegetables, fruits, beans, and cheese) and beverages (water and plain unsweetened plant or cow’s milk) are to be brought in reusable containers.

In our school, the guides have lunch with the children. Lunch is a social experience and an opportunity to refine manners. It is a time to enjoy pleasant conversation and good food. Children, guides, and assistants all bring their lunches from home.

As a school community, we share common attitudes and expectations about lunches.

We help the children become consciously aware of flavors and textures of their food. This expands their vocabularies as well as their eating pleasure. We may discuss the sources of the foods we eat. If it comes from a plant, we discuss the part of the plant we are eating: stem, leaf, fruit, or root. Other discussions may cover the way the food product is made, where or how it grows, its nutritional value or group, etc.

Although we bring our lunches, we do not eat out of our lunch bags. Lunch is set up pleasantly with glasses, placemats, stoneware plates, silverware and cloth napkins. The children enjoy learning to prepare for, serve, and clear away after a meal. They learn to wait for everyone to be ready before beginning to eat. The children are helped to peel and pour for themselves. They also learn to offer help to one another and to request, accept, and decline help as needed.

Each child is encouraged to eat only as much as his/her hunger requires, although generous time is provided. When a child is through eating, s/he wraps uneaten food and returns it to his/her bag or box. Cores, pits, and peelings are put in the compost bucket. If you find old peelings or unwrapped leftovers in your child’s lunchbox, it would be a helpful reinforcement if you would make an appropriate comment reflecting your understanding of the lunchtime procedure.

We send home all leftover food so that you and your child can determine from it the amount appropriate for the following day. Continue decreasing portions of any food left over each day. When no food comes home, you will know for the present time that you have determined the proper amount. Of course, there will always be fluctuations. If for days your child continues to bring home an empty lunchbox, ask if s/he would be hungry for a slightly larger lunch, or try sending a little something extra. Continue to increase the size of the lunch until something leftover comes home; then cut back just a bit.

We hope these suggestions will help us to be sure each child has enough, but not too much, for his/her own individual needs. The more we do, taking lead from the needs shown to us by the child, and the less we say about the size of his/her appetite, the better we will be able to help him/her to eat what is really needed.

#### LUNCH SUGGESTIONS:

**Protein:** Beans, natural nut or seed butters on whole grain bread, tofu, hummus, yogurt\*, cheese, meat, nuts and seeds.

**Grains:** Whole grain bread, tortillas, crackers, brown rice, or quinoa.

**Vegetables:** Fresh, organic, vegetables, raw or cooked, such as carrots, celery, cucumber, sweet potato, broccoli, cauliflower, leafy greens, or avocado.

**Fruits:** One or two different organic fruits in small portions such as banana, apple, orange, grapes, kiwi, or berries.

**Drinks:** Water or plain unsweetened plant or cow’s milk.
Please do not confuse quantity with quality. Send only as much food as your child will eat. For example: half a sandwich, half a banana, wedge of vegetable.

\*Plain yogurt with no added sugar or other additives but fresh fruit is the only yogurt to be included in our school lunch.

Please do not send “fast food,” candy, cupcakes, cookies, potato chips, carbonated drinks, fruit juice, fruit rolls (“fruit leather”), pudding, Jell-O, snack packs, or gum. These will be returned home unopened.

Some guides invite children to bring leftover foods for re-heating. Please do not send frozen foods, TV dinners, hot pockets, or other uncooked or highly processed “convenience” foods.

Elementary children who forget their lunches do not call home to have their parents bring them a lunch. Instead, the other children in the community offer them small portions of what they brought, and the cumulative effect of this generosity is a balanced lunch.

Teaching your children the importance of good eating habits while they are very young will benefit them for the rest of their lives. It is very important to practice these food habits in the home for the sake of consistency and for your child’s well-being.

**Please buy organic fruits and vegetables. If organic is not available refer to the Dirty Dozen and Clean Fifteen list by the Environmental Working Group.**

**MORE IDEAS FOR LUNCHES**

* Dates stuffed w/seed butter or goat cheese topped with a nut or piece of fruit.
* Carrot sticks dipped in nut or seed butter (no sugar)
* Cucumber rounds spread with farmer’s cheese or hummus (covered with another round for a sandwich)
* Whole grain bread with avocado and tomatoes.
* Avocado Strips
* Dates, figs, prunes (pitted, not too many!)
* Sprouts-alfalfa or other (easy to do yourself)
* Brown rice crackers
* Rye crisp (lots of fiber)
* Oven crisped tortilla chips (corn tortilla cut into wedges and baked until crisp – a homemade chip)
* Slices of nitrite-free hot dogs
* Melon balls, strips, or cubes
* Fresh grapes
* Oranges cut in half (peel on)
* Grapefruit segments
* Non-processed, natural cheese in cubes or slices
* Pitted olives
* Sunflower seeds and raisins
* Fruit butter (100% fruit, no sugar) on whole grain bread or crackers with nut or seed butter
* Fresh peas, straight from the pod
* Whole romaine lettuce leaves to dip in hummus or mashed black beans
* Cold, cooked eggplant
* Leftover sweet potato cubes or slices
* Green or red bell pepper strips (red is sweeter and has more vit. C)
* Hard boiled eggs or deviled eggs
* Grated carrot
* Cherry tomatoes
* Raw zucchini in strips or rounds
* Ricotta or cottage cheese with dates, dried apricots, and sunflower seeds (great color and texture)
* Cottage cheese mixed with raisins, cinnamon, and vanilla on whole grain bread
* Walnuts, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, cashews, almonds, or pistachios
* A cup plain yogurt blended with frozen strawberries (or any fruit) - perhaps with a dash of vanilla
* Fresh coconut, in strips or grated
* Apple sandwich - two pieces sliced apple filled with tahini.
* Bean taco on a whole grain tortilla with avocado, lettuce, and tomatoes
* Mashed beans on toasted whole grain bread with mustard
* Spring rolls filled with fresh vegetables with a nut butter dipping sauce
* A small thermos with warm vegetable soup
* A small thermos with leftover rice and vegetables
* A small thermos with brown rice and black beans
* Kale chips
* An assortment of cut vegetables with a hummus dip or seed butter dip
* Whole grain pasta salad
* Edamame in their pods
* Vegetable sushi made with brown rice
* Celery stuffed with tahini
* Baba ganoush with vegetables to dip in it
* Small whole grain pita stuffed with hummus and tabouli
* Sliced and baked butternut squash
* Guacamole with sliced jicama instead of chips
* Cold soba (buckwheat) noodles with vegetables
* Grilled tofu sliced onto a whole grain tortilla with coleslaw
* Cooked beets
* Black bean salad with corn, green onion, tomatoes, and avocado.
* Kale salad
* Roasted Brussels Sprouts
* Vegetable pizza made on a small whole grain pita or English muffin with tomato sauce and vegetables
* Small fruit salad made with fruits in season mixed with chopped dried fruit.

### **The No Sweets Birthday and Holiday Snack List**

Our birthday celebration at school is rich with ritual and personal expression. Summer birthdays may be celebrated on the half-year date if desired, e.g. August 6 birthday could be celebrated on February 6.

Food can be a part of the celebration but is not essential to it. If you choose to help your child bring food to share with the children, let it be because you and your child have time to plan, shop and prepare something special together. Please keep cookies, ice cream, cakes and cupcakes for enjoyment at home. We cannot accept sweets at school birthday celebrations.

A tray of hors d’oeuvres can be a special treat for birthdays and holidays. Preschool children are old enough to be more adventuresome in their treats, and we want to encourage this at school. Healthy appetites are encouraged and celebrated from sharing meals together. You could pick the idea at home and spend a little time discussing the special foods your child favors: various cheeses, olives, mushrooms, new vegetables and fruits, and crackers. Let your child, under your guidance, put together a platter of his/her own hors d’oeuvres or set up a do-it- yourself tray. Ethnic dishes are especially welcome.

Before you send a special snack, please have your child make a plan with the guide. Below we have listed some ideas for a special snack:

* Variety of fruit slices (mango, fresh coconut pieces, kiwi, melons, apples, etc.).
* Variety of raw, sliced vegetables with yogurt dip (squash, tomato, bell pepper, cucumber, radishes, etc.).
* Fruits or vegetables on skewers.
* Tiny party sandwiches on whole grain bread.
* Dried fruits or a mixture of fruits and nuts (e.g., almonds and apricots).
* Bagel chips or baked corn chips with yogurt dip or mild salsa.
* Whole wheat crackers with cheese and olives.
* Whole wheat bread sticks to dip into spaghetti sauce.
* Stuffed celery sticks with raisins (“ants on a log).
* Small whole grain bagels and cream cheese spread or humus.
* Quartered pita bread sandwiches with fresh tomato and basil or cucumber and cream cheese.
* Small rice cakes with nut or seed butter.
* Cantaloupe rings, strawberries or blueberries.

### **Holiday Refreshments**

We have six holidays of the year that students are allowed to include sweets in their special snacks or meals. Please note that the recommended foods may include sugar, but are minimally processed and include healthy foods as a basis.

1. Halloween
2. Thanksgiving
3. Christmas / Hanukkah / Winter Solstice
4. Valentine’s Day
5. Passover / Easter / Spring Equinox
6. May Day/End-of-Year Party

Items for special holidays might include:
1. Homemade cookies or wholesome cakes

2. Homemade nut bread, banana bread, carrot bread, zucchini bread, etc.

3. Frozen yogurt or homemade frozen fruit pops
4. Frozen bananas on a stick rolled in coconut or nuts
5. Fruit smoothies

## **CLASSROOM POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

### **Daily Schedule**

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| **The Little Village Montessori Daily Schedule** |
| **8:00-8:15** | **Good Morning Drop Off**  |  |
| **8:15-11:15** | **Presentation and Montessori Morning Work Cycle**  | **Active Period-Small Muscle Manipulative, Free Choice*****Montessori Manipulatives include Language and Reading, Science & Nature*** |
| **10:00** | **Morning Snack** |  |
| **11:15-12:00** | **Outdoor Classroom Time**  | **Active Period-Large Muscle, Teacher Directed** |
| **12:00-12:15** | **Wash Up & Preparations for Lunch** |  |
| **12:15-12:45**  | **Lunch** |  |
| **12:45-1:00**  | **Cleanup After Lunch****Half Day Student Pick Up Time** |  |
| **1:00-2:00**  | **Afternoon Rest /Quiet Work Time**  | **Quiet Period-** |
| **2:00-2:15** | **Afternoon Snack and Restore Classroom** |  |
| **2:15-3:00**  | **Free Work Time/Outdoor Classroom & Prepare to go home** | **Quiet or Active Period- Free Choice, Large and Small Muscle Activity-(*Language and Reading, Arts & Crafts, Dramatic Play) Science & Nature- Going Out and Field Trips scheduled during this time*)-** |
| **3:00-3:15**  | **Parent Pick Up**  |  |

**Resting Time Procedures**

Rest time (or nap time) is an important part of the day. It allows children a time to recharge and to process the experiences of the day. This restful period (from 1:00 to 2:00 PM) also prevents the child from becoming overly worn-out. When a child is exhausted they can become moody and difficult even (or especially) at nighttime when bedtime comes around.

The naptime process is also a lesson in practical life. The children begin by preparing their sleeping area by placing their crib-sized, fitted sheet and blanket (both labeled and brought from home on the first day of school) on their school-provided sleeping mat. They must rest quietly on the mat for one hour and can fall asleep if they want to.

The children again demonstrate the qualities of a normalized child: a love of work (choosing whether to fall asleep or to just rest), concentration on work (focusing on the quiet nature of rest), self-discipline (following through with the rest time process), and sociability (respecting the other children who are also resting or sleeping.)

Children are never forced to sleep and if they done resting after an hour they are free to select a quiet activity as to not disturb the other children who are still resting or sleeping.

### **Transportation Policies and Procedures**

Routine Transportation will not be provided at this program. The Little Village Montessori does not currently have official transportation services. Parents are responsible for drop off and pick up based on the procedures outlined below. Our field trips and going out opportunities are arranged within walking distance of the school in the local community of downtown Dahlonega and the University of North Georgia. Guides and parent chaperones accompany the children on these excursions by foot. A binder that includes emergency medical information for each child accompanies the Guide on these excursions off campus. Any special event that requires transportation off campus, will be arranged with the whole TLVM family community and parents will transport their own children to the event site.

In the event of an emergency or if parents don’t arrive to pick up the child, it may become necessary for a guide, assistant or administrator to transport a child. In their application packet, parents will complete an Emergency Transportation Form authorizing staff to transport their children in their cars in the event of an emergency. All TLVM Staff will keep on file a transportation record form, an emergency medical information form and a transportation checklist. Copies of Valid Drivers’ Licenses are required of all TLVM staff and are maintained in their personnel records. A Transportation Checklist will be completed upon delivery of the child to the intended location, this is an account of the details of transportation as well as the name and signature of the person receiving the child.

###  **Arrival & Departure**

School starts at 8:00 a.m. The staff assists children with arrival from 8:00 to 8:15 by meeting the child at the front entrance. Parents are expected to depart at this time with a swift goodbye and not accompany the child to the classroom, fostering independence. A late arriving child will be escorted to the classroom by a parent, however the child will enter the classroom independently so as minimally interrupt the morning work cycle. We strongly encourage a prompt arrival, as the particular manner in which we begin our day or the particular lesson with which we begin affect the remainder of the day. It can be difficult for the entire community if a member is tardy.

If you are in a carpool, please give a list of its members to the staff. We encourage parents involved in a carpool to meet to establish rules for conduct in cars. If possible, parents may want to drive their own children to school for the first few days in order to ease the transition. The guide or assistant dismisses the children to their parents at the school or classroom entrance. If any person other than a parent or designated driver is to pick up a child, the individual must be listed on the student information form, and advanced written notice must be given to the guide. The notice may apply to a day, week, year, etc.

When conversing with your child after departure, let her know that you are interested in all aspects of her day, not only school progress. A question such as, “What did you do today?” may imply to her expectations of an evaluative nature. Also, when she brings home her work, set aside a time to share it when you can be focused and exhibit your true interest and appreciate her pleasure. Genuine comments from you, which express neither excessive praise nor negative criticism, are appropriate. Questions you might have regarding the meaning or progress of her work should be addressed at a conference with the guide.

#### Late Arrival

A late-arriving child must access the classroom via the front office, as the entrance to the classrooms are locked at 8:30 a.m.

The period of time between 8:00 and 8:15 a.m. is planned for arrival. The children put away lunch boxes/backpacks, change into inside shoes and wash hands. They attend to their morning responsibilities such as checking the calendar, calling time and temperature, watering plants, checking the growth in their garden plots, sweeping the walks, checking roll and so on. They encounter their friends and exchange greeting and updates on their interests and doings. Some children are invited to lessons upon arrival, announcements are made, or a class lesson may begin early. Then they settle into their work.

When a few children arrive late, the whole process is thrown off. The arrival, greeting and responsibility period is extended past the point of being a pleasant lead-in to the day. It becomes so long that it fragments the children’s attention and creates irritability in them. They need to settle into their work and not be interrupted and distracted by the late arrivals.

The children work in groups of two, three or more. They wait for the arrival of their work partners in the morning, because the work depends on collaboration and companionship. If late arrivals are the norm and therefore expected, the children cannot judge whether a child is absent or will be arriving late. A child cannot decide whether to join another work group for the morning, recruit a new partner or merely sit and read for fifteen to thirty minutes. Meanwhile, all around the classroom others are settling into their first work, groups have consolidated. Still the child doesn’t know what to do and so becomes restless and tense.

The few children who arrive late are out of harmony with the others. They see their partners settled into work with others and forget to put away their things; they forget to tend to their morning responsibilities; their greetings and chit chat are an interruption to the concentration of others, and they see that the work groups have formed without them. They may spend the rest of the day trying to catch up and fit in.

If the child has settled in and the work partner arrives, everything is up in the air again. Should the child abandon the newly joined group or remain with them and leave the late arriver on his own? *Multiply this times five late arrivals and consider the effect on the class.*

We must ask for your help in keeping this serious responsibility for meeting our children’s needs.

#### Safe Departure

**Safe Departure for Full Day Students:** Currently, parents will pick children up at the main entrance of the school/church. As we are located in the historic district of Downtown Dahlonega, GA, our main entrance faces a city street and therefore we cannot organize a drop off/pick up lane for students without blocking street through traffic. Parking is ample along the main entrance and it is safer for parents to walk their children to and from the classroom at this time.

**Safe Departure for Half Day Students:** Currently, parents will pick children up at the main entrance of the school/church. Half Day students will be escorted by a staff member outside to the parking lot for parent pickup so as to minimize disruption to the school day. As we are located in the historic district of Downtown Dahlonega, GA, our main entrance faces a city street and therefore we cannot organize a drop off/pick up lane for students without blocking street through traffic. Parking is ample along the main entrance and it is safer for parents to walk their children to and from the building at this time. Pickup will occur between 11:30-12:00pm. Half Day Students electing the Lunch Option will have a pickup time between 12:30-1:00pm

### **Emergency Pick-Up for Inclement Weather**

In the event of inclement weather, which warrants The Little Village Montessori Preschool to close early, all parents will be notified by phone.

**Attendance**

For the children to self-develop and self-educate, they must experience the rhythm of regular attendance. They must be present for the day-to-day events in the prepared environment. They need to experience the unfolding of the individual children and the evolving of the community. Much of the development of the children in Children’s House is subtle and indirect. Although most of the activities are individual and the guide works with each one individually, there exists a web of unconscious interconnectedness in the community. Montessori calls this ‘society by cohesion’. The individual child cannot be a part of this social cohesion unless he is present regularly.

Each individual child is important to the whole group. Each moment of the group’s life is important to the individual members. For this reason, we ask that your child attend school regularly. If your child will be absent, please let us know. If there is some compelling reason for your child to be absent for an extended period of time, please consult with the guide. When a child of this age-level is absent, it may be difficult for her to reconnect and resume her self-development and self-education.

The absorbent mind and the sensitive periods that characterize this stage of development require a predictable flow of days, a predictable sequence of events within those days, and a predictable response to the urges and drives that so strongly direct development. For this reason, The Little Village Montessori School provides a 5 days-per-week program. We ask that you make every effort to avoid absences if at all possible.

***After the guide has sent the attendance policy and called the parent about absences, the corresponding letter will be written on school letterhead and signed by hand by the executive director.***

Once a student misses more than 10, days of school, without approval from the Director, that student is placed in a probationary period; if additional school days are missed from this point forward, termination may result. Five (5) tardies may constitute one day’s-absence. Any student not picked up at dismissal time will be placed in Extended Care, and the parent will be invoiced accordingly.

**Clothing**

The child should be dressed in comfortable clothes that he can self-manage for the bathroom. Although aprons are worn for some activities to protect clothing, please realize this does not always prevent clothes from becoming stained. Soft-soled, practical shoes allow for a maximum range of safe movement. Therefore, cowboy boots, thongs and clogs may not be worn at school. Parents will provide children with a pair of soft soled shoes for wearing in the classroom. Children will change from their outside shoes into their inside shoes before they begin their work. See the Guide for examples. Please label with your child’s name or initials, all removable garments such as coats, sweaters, scarves and gloves.

**Guidelines for School Clothes that Promote Safety, Comfort, and Concentration**

The Montessori classroom is a prepared environment. The materials, furniture, pictures and posters, the books and music have all been selected to create an ambiance that is conducive to long concentration, higher-level thinking, and creative expression. Our intention always is to incorporate only the finest and most enduring manifestations of our culture.

The clothing worn by the children becomes a part of the classroom environment and has an effect on the ambiance. Just as we would not hang posters of popular movie, TV, or video themes, characters, or scenes on the wall, we also ask that you reserve clothing with such depictions for use outside of school. We prefer plain T-shirts, but those depicting ecology, nature, the environment, flora or fauna, the arts, sports or travel that are in keeping with the spirit of serious study are also welcome. We are confident that the children will not be deprived of fads and pop culture by their exclusion from the classroom. Many of us enjoy party attire, clothing for just hanging out, neighborhood playwear, haute couture, and cutting-edge fashions, but we wear them elsewhere.

**Please save the following for enjoying outside of school:**

* double laces, long shoe laces, or cord or leather shoe laces, which are very hard to keep, tied.
* cowboy boots, jellies, flip-flops, clogs, girls’ slip-on dress shoes, rain boots, dress sandals, light up shoes, socks that have beads or other adornments that make noise, shoes with more than one inch heels, or any other shoes inappropriate for a casual athletic activity.
* buckles, belts, or suspenders children cannot handle by themselves.
* baggy sleeves or sleeves that are too long.
* bracelets, dangling jewelry that distracts, or headbands that won’t stay on.
* super-hero, cartoon, concert, and advertising T-shirts.
* costume-like clothing such as army camouflage, dance clothes, and clown shirts.
* jumpsuits and overalls.
* clothes so expensive you’ll get upset if something happens to them.
* sports uniforms.
* straps or neck openings that fall off the shoulders.
* trendy fashions that are short or tight.
* fun fashions or other fad clothing that have bare midriffs.

**\*The general principle for clothing and shoes is that they should be:**

* 1. safe and appropriate for running, jumping, hiking, climbing, and playing sports.
	2. in the spirit of the serious working environment of the classroom.

### **Backpack Packing List**

In addition to their packed lunch box, Parents should ensure that children have the following in their backpacks.

* 1. Change of clothing (including top, bottom, socks)
	2. Pull-up or extra underwear
	3. Brush/comb
	4. Indoor shoes (students change into soft soled shoes upon entering the school, when they go outside, they put on their regular shoes)
	5. Nap sack which includes a small blanket, small travel pillow and pillow cover. The child’s name should be labeled on all items. \* Parents should bring the nap items and plan to launder them weekly.
	6. Toothbrush and toothpaste in its own container (drawstring bag or other container)
	7. Items for outdoor play: sunscreen, bug spray \* medical authorization form must be signed for these items to be applied and is included in the application packet
	8. Water Bottle with Lid

###  **Social/Emotional Development**

As described in this Handbook’s section on “Supporting Children’s Emotional and Social Development,” The Little Village Montessori School has a distinctive way of looking at and working with conflict in the classroom – one that seeks to uphold the best practices in Montessori education, child psychology, contemporary conflict-resolution studies and education for peace. Our approach to this and all topics related to our work with children is one of action on behalf of the child and the community of children as well as open- ended inquiry and curiosity. We fully expect our work to continue to evolve. Nevertheless, this handbook describes our current policy and promise to update this description as our school and our understanding evolve.

Our work with children’s conflict has always been and will continue to be tailored to the specifics of the situation – hence our reluctance to relegate it to the status of a “policy” issue – but it proceeds from the following core principles.

* We aim for the Montessori classroom to be a **safe** place, both physically and emotionally, for children to explore the limits of their current capacities and knowledge and stretch to new abilities, while refining their social and emotional skills.
* Children’s behavior proceeds from positive, universal human needs. The role of the adults in a child’s life is to help the child find healthy, age-appropriate, pro-social ways to meet those needs.
* The child’s physical, intellectual, social and emotional development proceed together, and solutions to delays, obstacles or complications in any area often involve giving extra support in all or several areas. No single area is more important than the others.
* The Montessori materials for social-emotional development include lessons in grace and courtesy; classroom routines and procedures which illuminate how to balance individual and community needs; collaborative work in groups of mixed gender and age; and the childrens’ many interactions, both joyful and challenging. The social frictions that naturally arise in this very rich environment of interaction are “teaching moments” for the guide to observe and respond with particular support to all involved. Guidance given for values, character, and social-emotional development is woven throughout the curriculum. It is given not in the abstract but in the context of the children’s real-life relationships.
* In any situation involving inter-personal conflict, all parties hold part of the solution; focusing on only one party or the other is counterproductive and often harmful to the full development of all parties.

As in all aspects of Montessori education, adults at school and at home are committed to helping children take as much ownership for their social-emotional learning as they are willing and able, observing carefully before intervening and intervening in ways that empower the children to be more self-reliant in future situations.

Any time a child gives or receives aggression perceived by the guide as excessive, whether it be physical or verbal, the guide will respond first with changes in the prepared environment, materials, discussion, mediation, problem-solving sessions, relationship coaching and/or natural or logical consequences, as deemed appropriate and in consultation with the Director. The guide will contact parents of the children involved and the child demonstrating aggression towards other children, the staff or school property will be sent home for the day. Guides will describe what was actually observed or reported, what they expect to see in children in a particular situation, and how they worked with or will work with the children to develop a plan for bringing about positive change. They will confer with the parents on how to support the child(ren) at home and throughout subsequent school days. The child will be allowed to try again the following school day.

When a child receives or gives aggression repeatedly (i.e., there is a pattern of such interaction), the guide, with guidance from the Director, will decide when to refer the family for external assistance. If the school concludes that the children and their families need more support than the school can give, the school may require that the family engage outside professionals to work with the child and the Support Team. Depending on the area(s) of development that need support, such professionals could include family counselors, children’s counselors, occupational therapists, parenting educators, or academic tutors. TLVM staff will work in consultation with parents and external support to form a Support Team for the child in question, working together until the negative pattern has been replaced with a neutral or positive pattern and the children have the tools they need to maintain the positive pattern on their own.

If the family is not willing or able for any reason to engage the needed professionals, it may be necessary that the family withdraw the child from the school.

The school will aspire to insure that all communications from the school in relation to children’s conflicts are confidential, respectful, professional and offered in the spirit of working together. The school will expect the same from parents. Because solutions to conflictual situations often involve working with several families and the whole community of children, the school needs to know that all parents are modeling for their children respect for and willing cooperation with the school’s policies and procedures, the guides, the administration, and the other children and families – both in speech and in actions.

Evening parent meetings are held throughout the year in the children’s classrooms. Other communications, including weekly memos and monthly newsletters, are sent home with the children.

 **Discipline & Biting Policy**

##### **Approach to Discipline**

We believe that the people who work with young children on a regular basis must be sensitive, warm, caring, knowledgeable, and interested professionals. They must be able to identify individual qualities, to design and implement a program and an environment that will be conducive to positive growth in all areas of development. Teachers must offer authentic role models for interactions with others and display a sincere enthusiasm for active learning.

The educational philosophy of The Little Village Montessori School is that real, effective discipline is one that comes from within a person. Developing this inner discipline is one of the objectives of The Little Village Montessori School. It is our belief that inner discipline develops in a child through active involvement in self-chosen tasks and the development of self-control. The development of inner discipline in a child is always the goal of a Montessori school. The clear organization of the physical environment; the structure, consistency, and predictability of daily school life; the indirect manner of teaching interpersonal skills through the lessons of "grace and courtesy"; the reliance on peer modeling and coaching channel positive behavior and appreciation and empathy help to limit difficulties.

Children are encouraged to express their feelings and opinions in a non-judgmental atmosphere, and adults use active listening and empathic understanding to help interpret a situation with those involved. The teacher sets the tone for bringing the child into harmony by avoiding harsh words, bribes, and generalizations. As children feel accepted for who they are and what they feel, they develop positive self-esteem. The happier children are with themselves, the more likely they are to reach out and interact cooperatively with others.

With Toddlers

Living peacefully with others is an overwhelming challenge for toddlers when their strongest and most impulsive language is through their bodies and not their words. Cognitively, motor messages override verbal messages at this developmental age. Even when words do come, sometimes they do not accurately or effectively express what the child is trying to say.

Toddlers expend enormous amounts of energy getting their bodies to do what they want them to do and to go where they want them to go. Frustration can precipitate tears or whining and even biting, pushing, or pinching. Though not acceptable behaviors, these responses are effective toddler ways of communicating frustration. Thankfully, most toddlers do usually develop acceptable ways of venting these feelings as they become more comfortable in the environment.

For minor, nonchalant misbehaviors, gentle redirection toward work, which will re-engage the interest of the student, is often all that is necessary.

For recurring, minor misbehaviors, a teacher may temporarily limit the child's choice of workspace and/or quietly state the impact of such behavior on class materials or on other children's feelings. We help the child use language to describe what s/he needs or wants.

When a toddler persists in inappropriate behavior, the adult stays by the child’s side until the child has calmed and can refocus his/her attention positively. During periods of unacceptable behavior, teachers continue to interact with the child, using gentle, positive support and clear, simple language. Teachers may meet with parents to share concerns and discuss ways to replace the aggression with positive coping mechanisms.

 With Preschool

For minor, nonchalant misbehaviors, gentle redirection toward work, which will re-engage the interest of the student, is still often all that is necessary.

For recurring, minor misbehaviors, a teacher may temporarily limit the child's choice of workspace and/or quietly discuss the impact of such behavior on class materials or on other children's feelings.

For more serious misbehaviors, staff members will immediately intervene to protect the child from the hurtful consequences of his/her own actions, to ensure the safety of others, and to prevent serious damage to the environment. See the protocol for aggressive behavior outlined below. The child may be temporarily removed from the group activity to reflect with a teacher on what happened and on what s/he can do to remedy the situation. A phone call or conference must be convened with the parents to inform and decide together an appropriate course of action, if follow-up is needed. Teachers must also inform the Director of concerns and decide together an appropriate course of action, if follow-up is needed. Refer to the guidelines for aggressive behavior and biting policy below.

**Aggressive Behavior Policy:**

It is our belief that if the ground rules are consistently followed and positively reinforced, the necessity of external discipline will be diminished. However, children must feel safe in order to be able to learn. Disruptions that result in other children being physically injured, or witnessing violent aggression to staff or property, must be dealt with urgently as it undermines their sense of security in their learning space and disrupts the peace and order of the prepared environment. When such external discipline is deemed necessary, the following procedure will be observed without failure:

 1. The guide will suggest alternative activities.

2. Persistent misbehavior in a group setting may be dealt with by temporarily removing the child from the group, but allowing them to remain in the classroom. Behavioral expectations are made very clear and the child is asked if s/he is ready to return to the group.

3. The guide will talk with the child who constantly seems to be in need of discipline; explore ways of making life more pleasant. **Problem-solving skills** are reinforced as well as suggestions for alternatives behavior choices.

4. The guide will teach the child that emotions are real and valid, and how to deal with them in constructive ways with kind words rather than physical responses.

5. If these interventions prove ineffective, the behavior persists or becomes aggressive towards other children, staff or property, parents will be notified and joint action will be taken, beginning with immediate removal from the school for the day. **This means after one incidents of physical violence against another child, staff or school property**, **the parents will be called by the administration to pick up their child. The child will be allowed to return to school the next day assuming that parents have addressed the behavior at home. Every incident occurring after this initial trial period will result in the parent being called to remove their child from the school and after three more incidents of removal.** a meeting is then set up between the guide, the school administration, and the parents of the child who exhibiting the behavior. **Upon reviewing the circumstances and patterns of inappropriate, aggressive behavior, the TLVM administration may suggest that the parents consider having their child evaluated for therapy. The school maintains a list of local support services that parents may reference.**

**6. If the above procedures are not successful, the referred behavior management professionals can discuss other alternatives with the parents, including the option of the child taking a break from school.**

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1. Under no circumstances shall any child be subjected to corporal punishment in any

manner upon the body or to verbal abuse.

##### **Biting-Incident Policy**

**Biting incidents are taken very seriously in our school and though we understand biting by a toddler to mean something different from a bite by an older child, the response we use in both age groups is the same.**

Biting often results from frustrated, inadequate communication and/or lack of impulse control—two developmental tasks that toddlers, and even some older children are intensely engaged in. Toddlers are in the process of mastering language and often lack the words to fully express their needs, feelings, and thoughts. In the absence of words, toddlers employ their bodies; they push, grab, scratch, and sometimes bite. A bite by an older child is more unusual, but usually still stems from the inability of a child to be successful when using words to resolve a conflict.

Because impulse control is still being developed in young children, there can be a lag between what a young child wants immediately and learning to be calm and wait for something. Often giving words to children who have bitten once or teaching them to take turns will help with the behavior and typically there will not be another bite. It is not unusual however, for a toddler to bite once or twice.

When a child bites another child at The Little Village Montessori School, our policy is that both sets of parents are called and informed of the incident without using the other child’s name. The parents of the child who has bitten are given some advice by the classroom guides that speaks to the developmental tasks discussed above.

Right after the biting incident, the child who has bitten is told that biting hurts, and that biting is not allowed. The child is asked to use her/his words to resolve conflict and express feelings, not her/his teeth. The child is then encouraged to participate in repairing the bite. This means attending to the hurt child by giving the hurt child an ice pack after the wound is washed with soap and water.

The hurt child is usually calmed by one of the other teachers who administers first aid and attends to the child until s/he feels okay. The hurt child is also told that the teachers will be very careful so that the child will not get hurt again. The biting child is then "shadowed” in the classroom by a teacher, given a lot of guidance and language and is watched for other biting attempts or impulsive behavior. After both children are calm and feel more comfortable an incident report is written by the teachers and placed in both children’s files.

If the biting behavior continues, **and this means after two bites (one initial and one additional)**, a meeting is then set up between the school administration and the parents of the child who is biting. **Every subsequent bite after the first bite occurs, the parents are called by the administration to pick up their child. Upon reviewing the circumstances and patterns of behavior, the TLVM administration may suggest that the parents consider having their child evaluated for oral/motor sensory therapy and/or play therapy. The school maintains a list of child psychologists and local services that parents may reference.**

**If the above procedures are not successful, the referred child psychologists can discuss other alternatives with the parents, including the option of the child taking a break from school.**

**Discipline Policy for Events on Campus Outside of School Hours**

TLVM Discipline policy applies to any/all events held on campus outside of school hours. The TLVM Guide will correct adverse behavior in these instances as s/he does during regular school hours. Parents are expected to familiarize themselves with the TLVM discipline policy and aid/support the Lead Teacher and Assistant Teacher in holding the children to the expectations set forth at the school. Parents countering this policy undermine the efforts of the TLVM staff, and the policies outlined in this handbook that are designed to maintain a safe environment for the children and minimize the liability of the school and therefore Dahlonega Presbyterian Church. Parents that fail to support school staff in enforcing the behavioral and discipline policy are subject to the school Termination and Suspension Policy outlined in the Enrollment Contract.

**Partnership with Professional Evaluations and Services**

In order to be in full partnership around the education of one’s child, parents need to be in communication about all relevant aspects of their child's care. Parents must agree as part of the enrollment contract that if their child has received a professional evaluation with emotionally or educationally-relevant outcomes, they will send the Little Village Montessori staff a copy of the results of the evaluation immediately. Parents must also agree that if their child has received professional services, they will share the nature, timing and duration of these services with the Little Village Montessori. If services are ongoing, parents will sign a release of information permitting ongoing communication regarding educationally-relevant matters between the provider(s) and TLVM staff directly involved with their child’s educational and emotional experience. As with all portions of the educational record, these reports and conversations will be kept confidential.

As part of the re-enrollment process, parents will have the opportunity to notify TLVM of evaluations and services their child has received within the last 12 months. I/we agree that we will report these services at least in this forum (if not sooner) and that failure to communicate professional evaluations and services received is a violation of this Enrollment Contract and could be grounds for termination.

**Termination and Suspension Policy**

The Little Village Montessori will pursue all possible options to avoid suspension or termination of any student due to behavioral, social/emotional or academic concerns, which may include the following steps:

1. Documentation and communication of concerns with parents, teacher, assistant teacher and Director.
2. Meetings with parents to discuss plans for success.
3. Referrals for appropriate evaluation and services.
4. Upon completion of evaluations, school will receive reports with the intention to learn

 how to best support the student.

1. As needed, staff opportunities for supportive services in order to support a child.
2. Development and implementation of behavior intervention plan for home and program.
3. Appropriate follow up with parents, teacher team, and Director.

If after taking the warranted steps above, the TLVM staff and administration feel the student is unable to be successful at The Little Village Montessori School, the school may dismiss the student. Dismissal of a student requires the approval of the Director. Written notification will be made prior to the child’s date of suspension or termination and will include the reason for dismissal. This must include a written explanation of any possible conditions for return.

In addition to classroom concerns as noted above, the following are also possible reasons for student suspension or termination:

1. A clear indication that parent’s educational goals are not aligned with the Montessori

philosophy, mission, and goals of The Little Village Montessori School as determined by TLVM staff.

1. Parent(s) not willing to:
2. follow all school procedures and policies related to attendance, punctuality, TLVM partnership agreement, behavior and discipline, nutrition, drop off/ pick-up, and school conferences.
3. find positive ways to communicate with the staff and administration regarding questions or concerns about school programs.
4. engage in conversations initiated by the school related to questions and concerns.
5. represent the school in a positive manner to the community at large.
6. Parent(s) not willing to seek professional help in assisting with their child who is aggressive and a potential threat to the safety and wellbeing of himself/herself and/or others.
7. Tuition accounts more than 30 days in arrears without written arrangements being

 made with the Director and Business Manager.

1. Excessive absences according to the Attendance and Punctuality Policy.

When a student is dismissed from the school, initiated by either the parent or TLVM, the school will prepare the student for termination in a manner consistent with the child’s developmental ability.

**Contract Termination by the Parent or Guardian**

The Little Village Montessori believes that a positive and constructive working relationship between families and TLVM is essential. Parents/Guardians may terminate my/our Enrollment Contract by providing TLVM 30 calendar days notice of termination in writing and that this termination is effective on the first day of the month following the end of the 30 day period. The non-refundable enrollment deposit is an automatic forfeiture in all cases of contract termination.

**Contract Termination by The Little Village Montessori**

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary herein, The Little Village Montessori reserves the right in its sole and absolute discretion to terminate a family’s/guardian’s Enrollment Contract at the end of the Provisional Period, or its extension, or anytime that the Little Village Montessori concludes that it is in its best interest to do so or in the best interest of my/our child. Under this circumstance, The Little Village Montessori shall refund the prorated portion of tuition based upon the effective date of the termination excluding the non-refundable Tuition Deposit.

**Responsibility for Waste, Loss, Damage or Theft**

## Parents are responsible, as indicated on the enrollment contract and in a written request by The Little Village Montessori staff, for the replacement cost of any supplies, materials, or equipment, which my/our child wastes, loses, or damages. The Little Village Montessori is also not responsible for damages to, or theft of, personal property brought to or left on the school’s grounds

### **Toilet Readiness**

Typical toileting development of children ages three and four assumes that children of this age are no longer in diapers. Our classrooms are not equipped with diaper changing facilities. In the event a young three year old student is in transition for toilet readiness, the guide will work with a child and parent in this area for a period of four weeks as school begins. At the end of four weeks, the child's progress will be assessed. Children who are not showing complete toilet readiness may not remain in the preschool program. Conference with parents/guardians may result to determine a timeline for reevaluation as part of the Probationary Period outlined in the TLVM Montessori Readiness Assessment.

 **Field Trips & “Going Out”**

*“When a child goes out, it is the world itself that offers itself to him. Let us take the child out to show him real things instead of making objects which represent ideas and closing them in cupboards.”* -**Maria Montessori**

#### Parental Authorization

Written parental authorization is required for a child to participate in field trips, special activities away from the center and water related activities occurring in water that is more than two feet deep.

#### Learning Outside the Classroom

Little Village children regularly pursue their learning outside the classroom. This section contains information about policies and procedures related to Going Out and Field Trips. Other articles in Section 2 of this handbook address the philosophical and pedagogical rationale for such excursions into the outside world.

A word about terminology: a *field trip* is usually a trip planned by the guide or the children for the whole class (e.g., UNG Symphony Concert); a *Going Out* is a trip planned by and for 2-5 students whose studies or responsibilities in the classroom take them out of the classroom (e.g. a trip to the public library or a trip to interview a veterinarian or a trip to buy aquarium plants).

A lot of emphasis is placed on having children experience the Montessori approach in nature. At the Little Village Montessori School we are so fortunate to have a spacious outdoor classroom and ready access to local parks/greenspaces within walking distance of the campus. The children are presented lessons in nature, are able to explore the world around them, do practical life lessons in environmental stewardship and so much more.

We are also fortunate here in north Georgia to have so many beautiful days to enjoy the outdoors. However, the weather can sometimes be unpredictable so it is important to check out the local weather forecast and send your child in weather-appropriate attire. If it is going to be a hot, humid day we will adjust the schedule accordingly to spend more outdoor time outside in morning before it gets too hot. If it is too hot, rainy, icy, etc., we will limit the outdoor time or cancel it and move the lessons and free play to inside.

In order to protect your child, we do require you to send in a container of sunscreen for us to apply to your child when they spend time out in the sun. We also ask you to send in a container of bug spray for the times when the biting bugs are active (primarily during the summer months after heavy rainfall.) We have an authorization form for parents to complete for the administering of both products.

#### Going Out and Field Trip Procedures

FOR DRIVERS IN CHARGE OF CHILDREN

In field trips that require transportation other that on foot, parents are responsible for transporting their children or organizing a carpool. We gather the drivers for the children into our classroom before going to the cars. The guide reads the procedures to the children and to drivers together, so that the tone is set for everyone, thereby avoiding confusion.

IN TRANSIT

Children must be seat-belted at all times. Lively conversational tones are normal. Please discourage loud, boisterous behavior by engaging children in conversation, telling them a story or having books available. Loud, rousing music ill-prepares the children for the event or for their return to the classroom. Soft, soothing music or story tapes are fine.

The guide will have presented etiquette appropriate to the event in advance. The driver is encouraged to ask the children for a review. “What special manners or customs do we need to remember for an expert art exhibit?”

UPON ARRIVAL

After parking the car but before unloading, unbolting or opening any doors, the adult establishes which doors will be used (curb side only) and where the children will stand to wait while the adult locks up, pays the parking attendant, or puts coins in the meter.

The children walk two-by-two beside and behind the adult and never pass each other or the adult. When approaching a parking lot or street, the two children in front stop beside the adult two feet back from the curb and wait to hear when it is safe to cross. The other children stay close behind.

THE DESTINATION

Certain field trips require more supervision than others. Sometimes it will be necessary for the children to stay with the adult driver for the entire outing, other times the class will come together as a unit. Talk to your guide about what kind of help is needed. Help focus the children in the group by directing their attention to the speaker. Ask the guide to assist you if your own child is having a difficult time. Having a parent come on a field trip (or to an event) may be over- stimulating for your child.

When parents accompany children on a field trip where a speaker, guide or docent takes questions from the children, only the children ask the questions. The guide or assistant might ask certain questions on behalf of the children in such a way that the speaker answers to the children. “Perhaps the children would enjoy hearing why this dinosaur is called triceratops.” “Could you tell the children how you became interested in this subject?” If adults ask their own questions on the adult level the speaker tends to answer to the adults at length and above the children’s heads. The children tend to lose interest and become restless. For the children’s sake, your indulgence is greatly appreciated.

RULES
1. Each passenger will board from the curb side of the vehicle.

2. Each passenger will take a seat and buckle up.
3. While the van is in motion, the children will remain seated.
4. No objects may be passed around from person to person.
5. Conversation will be held in soft voices and only with one’s seatmate.

6. No games will be played.
7. No snack/food is to be eaten.
8. Movements will be soft and gentle.
9. All objects (lunch boxes, books, etc.) will be kept away from windows.

**Materials in The Prepared Environment**

The classroom environment contains pocket-sized items such as money, rocks, shells, and imported educational materials. Because of the self-correcting nature of the materials, any material that is missing a part is removed from the classroom until that part is found or replaced. This is not a punitive action. On some occasion, if your child’s pockets should contain such an item, please return it promptly. It can take six or more weeks for us to replace an item, and some items are irreplaceable. Toys, books, and money are to be left at home. If there is a unique item you believe would be of interest to your child’s class, send the guide a note asking if and when it may be brought to school.

Electronic toys, trading cards, books, and money are to be left at home. If there is a unique item you believe would be of interest, please consult the Guide.

Parents/Guardians are responsible, upon written request by The Little Village Montessori, for the replacement cost of any supplies, materials, or equipment, which my/our child wastes, loses, or damages as indicated in the Enrollment Contract. The Little Village Montessori is not responsible for damages to, or theft of, personal property brought to or left on the school’s grounds

***Additional Programs and Services***

**Casetta After Care**

**\**Based on parental needs, Casetta may be offered in the future during the hours of 3:30 – 5:00 pm*** Care during this time is provided for children who depart from the classroom after extended day. Snack will be provided for them by the after-school program. The remainder of the afternoon will be free activities indoors and out. Games, arts and crafts are a few of the choices that will be available for them.

We plan for the entire program to be warm and nurturing. The atmosphere will be relaxed and homey.

In keeping with the culture of the school, clothing and bedding should reflect the guidelines outlined in the Clothing section of the handbook. Just as nothing cartoony or trendy would be appropriate for the classroom, it is also not appropriate in the Casita.

There is no set pick-up time for the Casetta; however, your child/children must be picked up no later than 5:30 p.m. In order to eliminate complications arising, we ask that you keep your total departure time to 5 to 10 minutes. Brief questions and comments can be addressed, but concerns, comments, or conversations that would take more than a couple minutes should be scheduled with the Casetta Leader.

To apply, complete an enrollment form and return it to the office. People who have formerly been enrolled in the program will have the opportunity to re-enroll first. Any openings remaining will be offered to others by date of application.

**Late Pick-up**

Please recognize that the guides need every moment after departure to prepare for the following day. They must work efficiently and speedily in order to prepare the environment, confer with the assistant, do the record keeping, plan the next day’s presentations, hold parent conferences, and get home at a reasonable hour. The office staff also needs every moment in order to get their work done and go home on time. Any student not picked up at dismissal time will be placed in Extended Care (this is not a Casetta program as detailed in the handbook), and the parent will be invoiced accordingly.

1. The regular departure procedure is followed.

1. Child will remain in the classroom, or within the immediate outdoor extension area, under the supervision of the Guide.
2. Parents will be called.
3. Authorized pickup persons will be called, if parents cannot be contacted.
4. The parent/guardian will be invoiced accordingly $15/hour with a minimum $15 charge.

**After 3:30 p.m.:**

1. If child is registered as a drop-in for the Casetta, and there is space in the Casetta that day, child will be sent to the Casetta, and parent will be charged the regular $10/day drop-in rate.
2. If child is not registered for the Casetta, Casetta is not scheduled or there is no space in the Casetta that day, child will be sent to the office, and parents will be charged $15/hour, with a minimum of $15 charge.

In the event that an unusual circumstance forces you to be late for pickup, please make the necessary arrangements to have an authorized pickup person pick up your child or have your child sent to our Casetta program.

Due to licensing restrictions, we cannot accommodate children in the Casetta program if they have not previously been registered for the Casetta. The school offices, library and playground areas are not open to children after school, as we do not have staff available to supervise children in these areas. Leaving a child unsupervised is not an option.

**Snacks for the Casetta**

Parents are asked to sign up to provide some of the snacks for the Casetta. A list of weeks will be posted for parents to choose the week of their child’s birthday so that a special treat can be sent in that day. As per the State Health Department, all food must be in sealed containers and/or be uncut fruit or vegetables. The children will be involved in the daily preparation of the snacks, and, in this way, participate in meeting the ongoing needs of themselves and other children in the Little Village community.

The guidelines for appropriate snack foods for the Casetta are the same as the food guidelines for school lunches and classroom snacks. What follows are some ideas for healthy snack foods the children will enjoy. Please note that popcorn and nuts are NOT appropriate for children younger than four as they present a choking hazard.

* Fresh organic fruit - any kind is great. Children seem to prefer bananas, grapes, watermelon, strawberries and mango.
* Unsweetened applesauce
* Quesadillas - organic cheese and whole wheat tortillas
* Organic cheese and whole grain crackers
* Plain yogurt and fresh fruit
* ̈Whole grain bagels and organic cream cheese
* Peanut butter on apples – peanut butter with no additives
* Mini pizzas on whole wheat English muffins or bagels
* Whole wheat bread sticks
* Raw, organic vegetables with sour cream and yogurt dip
* Corn

To feed the aesthetic appetite, please feel free to send a bunch of flowers, for arranging, when bringing snack.

We appreciate your support on providing the snack ingredients. If you have any questions, please feel free to leave a message with the Casetta Leader, and he/she will return your call after 5:30pm.

**The Little Village Library**

#### Library Birthday Book Program

We invite our families to participate in our The Little Village Montessori **School** **Birthday Book Program**. The birthday child is given an opportunity to select a book and present it to the school; the book is placed in the library with a nameplate in the child’s name. This is a fun way to honor children as well as provide books and resources for our library.

####  Read-Aloud Book Club

The Read-Aloud Book Club provides parents with convenient and inexpensive access to a large, carefully chosen collection of books for reading aloud. These are books selected to:

---Generate a high level of interest; Stimulate the exploration of values; Promote the development of thinking abilities; Support interesting language usage; and Develop a sense of literary aesthetics

BENEFITS

\*Members have checkout privileges from a special collection of books for parents to read aloud to their children.

\*The books are housed in a special section of the Little Village Montessori School Library for easy access by children.

\*Books are conveniently-sized, lightweight paperbacks with covers reinforced inside and out with self-adhesive plastic.

\*The collection is selected from books listed in *The Read Aloud Handbook* by Jim Trelease, *Classics To Read Aloud To Your Children* by William E. Russell and the sequel *More Classics To Read Aloud To Your Children* as well as *The New York Times Parent's Guide To The Best Books For Children.*

PROCEDURE

\*A selected book will be sent home with child in a mailing envelope.

\*When a book is returned, another may be selected for at-home reading.

\* Each book is checked out for a period of two weeks.

\*At the end of the original check out period, an additional and final two-week renewal period is granted upon request.

\*After a grace period of seven days, a late fee is assessed for outstanding books.

\*When a book is lost or damaged beyond normal wear, a repair or replacement charge is assessed, and a bill for payment is given the club member.

\*All "fines," book repair costs, or replacement monies must be paid in order for a member to keep club privileges.

MEMBERSHIP FEE
\*An annual membership fee grants checkout privileges for an entire school year.

\*Membership dues are used to acquire books for the club.

### **The Little Village Community Garden**

In partnership with the Georgia Appalachian Studies Center and their pilot program Saving Appalachian Gardens and Stories, we have a series of sites for gardening experiences for children. The SAGAS greenhouse on the campus of the historic Vickery House provides salad tables that children will cultivate and harvest for their lunchtime meals. The SAGAS demonstration garden will offer a “Going Out” excursion so that children may assist in the garden work. Additionally, we plant heirloom seeds collected from local seed keepers and donated by the UNG seed bank in raised beds and planters located on our TLVM campus for children to experience the rewards of gardening and cultivating their own food.

### **The Little Village Internship Program**

We are located just across the street from the University of North Georgia Dahlonega Campus and benefit from proximity to accredited academic programs and cultural services. Our internship program welcomes University students into the classroom for observation and practicum experience. We have a variety of internship opportunities for students majoring in a variety of areas including but not limited to teacher education programs. We also welcome interns pursuing the Montessori Early Childhood credential. Applicants must pass a criminal background check and be fingerprinted as required by DECAL Bright from the Start.

### **The Little Village Fundraising Program**

The Little Village Montessori is a ministry of the Dahlonega Presbyterian Church and as such has status as a Non-Profit Religious Organization in the State of Georgia. Throughout the year, the school and family community will have the opportunity to participate in a series of fundraisers such as the Annual Story Supper, Toddler Opera and Broadside Sales to raise money for school operations or special projects. Donations of money, supplies, services or specific items from the TLVM Wish List are always appreciated and are tax deductible.

### **The Little Village Community Program**

The Little Village Community is made up of students, guides, administrators, and families (of all shapes and sizes). As we are a community, we celebrate through a series of events throughout the year. TLVM community will have the opportunity to participate in Open Houses to welcome new families, Community Potlucks, Maypole Picnics and other special celebrations. Family and TLVM Community members are invited into the school to celebrate birthday milestones, holiday or cultural celebrations or to join the children for a noon meal, as long as guides and administrators are notified in advanced. We celebrate our strong community that nurtures our children and therefore our future.

### **The Little Village Summer School Workshops**

The Little Village Montessori offers week long summer workshops for children ages 3-6 during the months of June and July. Camps are one week in duration and families can choose to participate for one week or for all four. Each camp is thematic and offers us the chance to do special projects and performances as well as welcome special guests that include local artists, musicians, performers, dancers and storytellers. Camps are 9:00-1:00. Snacks are provided. Workshops will culminate with a final program on Fridays. For more information on the Summer School Workshops, please see the Little Village Montessori Website. www.thelittlevillagemontessorischool.org/happenings