



ESFORMES EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

PARENT HANDBOOK

2023-2024/5783/5784

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## YTCTE EECC Parent Handbook – 2023-2024

### INTRODUCTION

Dear Parents,

I am delighted to welcome you to the 2023-2024 school year! Our dedicated Moros are hard at work preparing for an amazing year ahead and we are eagerly awaiting the arrival of your smiling children.

For families returning to YTCTE, I look forward to seeing you and your children again and continuing to work with your family. For families new to YTCTE, I am excited to meet you and you can rest assured we are committed to supporting your child in the successful transition into our renowned program.

Your child's education, safety and wellbeing are of utmost importance to us. Please be sure to read through this Parent Handbook containing important information about our program and school policies. The information (organized alphabetically) offers guidance related to our standards and expectations and will promote a safe, meaningful and optimal learning experience for your child.

It is an honor to serve as the Director of the Esformes Early Childhood Center where we strive to provide the children with meaningful experiences and relationships that support a love of Torah and mitzvos, academic, and social-emotional growth. You should always feel free to contact me with questions, comments or concerns at [tlevine@ytcte.org](mailto:tlevine@ytcte.org).

On behalf of the entire Team, I thank you for your continued partnership, and for entrusting your child's education and development to YTCTE. It is going to be a fantastic school year!

With warm regards,

Mrs. Talia Levine

The first day of school is Tuesday, August 29, 2023

Please note the first day is a regular school day. School begins each day at 8:30 A.M. Dismissal for Junior Pre-K and Pre-K Monday – Thursday is at 3:00 P.M. Friday dismissal is at 1:30 P.M.

Dismissal for Kindergarten and aftercare is Monday-Thursday at 4:00 P.M. and Friday at 2:00 P.M.

### BIRTHDAY PARTIES

If your child will be celebrating a birthday at school, please contact the teacher at least three days in advance to schedule a suitable time. Parents are asked to provide simple refreshments such as juice, cupcakes or a cake. All refreshments must be peanut and tree nut free. All baked goods must come from a kosher bakery under strict rabbinical supervision and should be pareve. Please see the CRC (Chicago Rabbinical Council) list for acceptable supervisions; [https://www.crcweb.org/agency\\_list.php](https://www.crcweb.org/agency_list.php). Goody bags and party favors are not allowed. Siblings are not permitted to leave class to attend these parties.

If you are arranging an out-of-school party for your child, invitations may be distributed in school so long as all members of the class are being invited. Otherwise, invitations must be sent discreetly, outside of school.

### BITING POLICY

In an early childhood setting we understand that on occasion biting does occur; however, biting can be harmful and frightening to the children involved. We have therefore created a clear policy for dealing with such an occurrence to keep all of our students safe.

When a biting incident occurs we are very clear, firm and calm when dealing with the children.

1. First aid is given to the bite.
2. The child who bites, is removed from the situation and spoken to so that he/she understands that biting is unacceptable. If the child is in Pre-K or Kindergarten and has another biting incident that day (or week), parents will be asked to pick up the child for the remainder of the day.
3. Parents of both children are contacted. Names of the children are not shared with either parent.

*Administration reserves the right to ask parents to pick up their child or keep their child home if biting or any other harmful behaviors are occurring frequently.*

## BUS

Daily transportation to and from North Miami Beach, Hollywood, Miami Beach, Surfside and Aventura is available. Contact [transportation@ytcte.org](mailto:transportation@ytcte.org) for further information.

## CHANGE IN CONTACT INFORMATION

Please inform the office immediately if your address, phone number or e-mail address changes during the school year (especially your cell phone number). It is of utmost importance for the school to be able to contact you in case of an emergency.

## CHILDREN'S DRESS CODE

All boys need to wear tzitzis, a yarmulke and shirts with sleeves. Girls in our kindergarten classes need to wear skirts, blouses or dresses with sleeves. Please dress your children in comfortable clothing that they are able to manage themselves and need not worry about keeping spotless. Please send your child in sneakers. Do not send your child to school in open toe sandals, slippers, Crocs or flip-flops. Please label all articles of clothing with your child's full name including, yarmulkes, tzitzis, sweaters, raincoats and jackets.

## COMMUNICATION

An essential component to successful child education is effective communication with parents. We have set up three formal opportunities for parents to speak with the teachers:

1. Back to School Night – Tuesday, September 5th
2. Parent-Teacher Conferences – November 7th and 14th
3. Parent-Teacher Conferences – March 5th and March 12th

In addition, parents are encouraged to contact the school directly throughout the year for any matter related to their child's progress, safety, development or any other concern. Teachers cannot answer phone calls during school hours; however, the school secretary will gladly take messages for the teachers who will then return the call by the end of the following school day. Teachers are also available via email and you will be notified of your teacher's email address. To keep the parents informed regularly, we distribute a Class Newsletter each Friday, containing information related to school activities that is sent home with your child.

## DIRECTORY

The following should be contacted as needed:

**Personal Day-to-day Student Issues** (including lunch and carpool) - EECC Office- Mrs. Bryna Roth ext.401, e-mail – [broth@ytcte.org](mailto:broth@ytcte.org) and Mrs. Yael Attia ext. 410, e-mail - [yattia@ytcte.org](mailto:yattia@ytcte.org)

**Academic or behavioral issue** in the classroom: - Your child's Morah - *she is always the first point of contact*

**Academic or behavioral concern after speaking with your child's teacher:**

Director - Mrs. Talia Levine, [tlevine@ytcte.org](mailto:tlevine@ytcte.org) or School Psychologist - Mrs. Shiffy Goldberger - ext 414, [sgoldberger@ytcte.org](mailto:sgoldberger@ytcte.org)

**Transportation Questions** - e-mail [transportation@ytcte.org](mailto:transportation@ytcte.org) or ext 237

**Tuition Payments** - Mrs. Julie Kirschenbaum - ext. 220

**Financial Office** - email: [financialoffice@ytcte.org](mailto:financialoffice@ytcte.org)

## DISCIPLINE POLICY

We use positive child disciplinary methods to assist children with self-control and self-discipline. Our disciplinary culture is influenced by the Conscious Discipline method. Rules are respectfully and clearly articulated and consistently implemented in a fair manner. Logical consequences will be employed when necessary. Clear communication with parents along with parent involvement and support are also vital in encouraging our students to live up to their full potential. We have a School Psychologist on staff to help children with social, emotional and behavioral issues. Children may be referred to the School Psychologist by the Administration, and parents may be called in to discuss the issues and support the process.

## DROP-OFF AND PICK UP

Drop-off in the morning starts at 8:15 A.M. and runs until 8:35 A.M.

Pick-up in the afternoon for Junior Pre-K and Pre-K starts at 2:45 P.M. and runs until 3:15 P.M.

For Kindergarten classes, pick-up in the afternoon is from 4:00 P.M. - 4:20 P.M.

On Fridays, JPK and Pre-K dismissal runs from 1:15 P.M.-1:45P.M. and for Kindergarten and aftercare from 2:00 P.M. - 2:15 P.M.

A.M. and P.M. carpool takes place in and through the parking lot. Children are not to be dropped off or picked up on 11th Avenue during carpool times. When arriving for carpool, all vehicles are to get in line behind the last car and drivers are to pay attention to instructions from school personnel. Parents should ensure that the children exit their

vehicles swiftly and toward the sidewalk. Parents should depart immediately after the children safely exit their vehicle to make room for others in the carpool line.

Teachers will be available to assist the children from their cars in the morning at the front of the carpool line. **After 8:40 a.m. parents must walk the children into their classrooms but must first stop at the office to pick up a Late Note for their child.**

Our program starts promptly at 8:40 A.M. Please plan to arrive by this time so as to provide your child the time and opportunity to engage in our center activities, which are an integral part of the early childhood curriculum.

Afternoon dismissal is called by carpool number. As soon as your afternoon carpool arrangements are finalized (prior to the start of the school year), please inform the school of your arrangements by either calling the school office at 305-947-4007 or sending an e-mail to [broth@ytcte.org](mailto:broth@ytcte.org). Once we have this information, you will then be assigned a carpool number. Please make sure to post this number in a visible position on your front windshield, so that the teachers calling carpool can see it easily and keep the line running efficiently. When you arrive to pick up your child, line up in the carpool line, stay with your car and assist the teachers in placing the children in your car. Please do not talk on your cell phone during carpool. Securing the children with seat belts or in car seats is the responsibility of the carpool driver. When assisting multiple children with their seatbelts, please move to the front of the line to make room for other parents.

All JPK and PreK carpools must arrive at school for the afternoon pick-up by 3:15 P.M. Monday through Thursday and by 1:45 P.M. on Friday. For Aftercare children and Kindergarten, carpool ends at 4:20 P.M., Monday through Thursday, and 2:15 P.M. on Fridays. Parents need to realize that by coming late they inconvenience school staff, and jeopardize their child's safety. It is the carpool parents' responsibility to remember whose day it is to drive, and to be on time.

You are responsible for arranging alternate rides for your children (and the children in your carpool) in the event you are unable to pick up your carpool.

If your child will be going to a house other than his/her own, or if you are changing your child's carpool arrangements, please send an e-mail or call the school office no later than 1:30 P.M. All drivers involved in the carpool must be informed of the change of arrangements by the parent. No child will be allowed in another car unless the school has received an e-mail or a call from that child's parent. The school cannot be responsible for last minute changes in carpool arrangements. This is often distressing to the child and creates a lot of unnecessary confusion at dismissal time.

### EXTENDED CARE HOURS

Before care: Monday – Friday begins at 8 a.m.

Aftercare for JPK and PreK: Monday – Thursday until 4:00 p.m.  
Friday until 2:15 p.m.

Arrangements for Aftercare should be coordinated through the Early Childhood office. There is an additional fee for Aftercare. Parents must contact the financial office to make payment arrangements.

### FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of each family to keep current with the financial obligation agreed upon with the school. Admission to class at the beginning of the school year is contingent upon finalizing tuition arrangements and timely payment of fees and tuition.

Unpaid tuition is grounds for expulsion from Yeshiva Toras Chaim Toras Emes.

Any family with outstanding obligations during or at the end of the school year, including, but not limited to: tuition, fees, and lost book fees, may not receive report cards or achievement test scores. Timely payment of obligations helps ensure a more productive and efficient program for your child.

### FOUL LANGUAGE POLICY

Personal and spiritual safety is of paramount importance in our Yeshiva. Saying, writing or hinting at 'curse' words (referred to as *Nivul Peh*), is forbidden. The following is our policy of outcomes and consequences for foul language:

First Offense -

The teacher speaks to the child and calls the parent to inform them.

Second Offense -

EECC administrator speaks to the child in the office. Call the parent to notify them of the offense and ask them to speak to their child at home.

Third Offense -

EECC administrator speaks to the child in the office and the child remains in the office for the duration of the class activity. Call to parent to notify them of the offense and ask them to speak to their child at home.

#### Fourth Offense -

EECC administrator speaks to the child in the office and the child sits in the office for the duration remaining of that class segment and works on logical learning task. Call to parent to notify them of the offense and ask them to speak to their child at home.

#### Fifth Offense -

Child is suspended from the office until the end of the day.

Meeting or conversation with parents (potential recommendation for out of school support).

During the early childhood years, we do keep in mind the developmental level of all children involved when administering consequences.

#### HEALTH PORTAL

In cases of emergency, parents will be notified immediately. It is the responsibility of each parent to fill out the emergency information properly and keep the information up to date with the school office, so that, if necessary, we may be able to contact the parents at once. School wide emergency situations and instructions will be communicated via text, whatsapp and/or email.

School policy prohibits the faculty or staff from administering oral medication to any student without parental permission.

Before school starts every student must have the health portal completely filled out, with up to date emergency contacts, medical history, medical protocols, including but not limited to medical conditions, allergies and administration of medicine directives, consent to treat and signatures, etc. including the most up to date immunization forms and doctor checkups for each and every child. These forms must be completed before the school year begins on August 30th. Florida state law mandates each student to have a completed and submitted medical portfolio with all required forms.

Be reminded that only valid medical exemptions from childhood vaccinations will be accepted. Religious exemptions are not acceptable for any required immunization.



HEALTH/ILLNESS In order to keep your child healthy and reduce the risk of spreading contagious diseases we ask that you adhere to the following policies:

1. Do not send your child to school if they have any of the following symptoms:

- Fever (over 100 degrees)
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Discharge of the eyes or ears
- Heavy nasal discharge
- Persistent cough
- Unidentified rash

Children who develop these symptoms while at school will be brought to the office by a staff member. The parents will be notified to pick up the child. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached the person(s) designated as the emergency contact on the child's record will be contacted. It is the responsibility of each parent to fill out the emergency information properly and keep the information up to date with the school office and on the school portal, so that, if necessary, we may be able to contact the parents at once. Emergency contacts should be local so that in case of an emergency, they are present and available. The child will remain in the office until a parent or other designated individual arrives. Children must be free of symptoms and fever-free without medication for 24 hours before returning to school. If you wish for your child to return sooner, you must present a doctor's note stating they are not contagious and in good health to return to school.

2. Please notify the school at once if your child has been diagnosed with a contagious disease.

Please keep your child home if he/she develops any symptoms of contagious diseases. Children with contagious illnesses should be cared for at home until a doctor verifies that it is safe for them to return to school and they are no longer contagious.

### KINDERGARTEN SCREENING

Each of our Kindergarten students are screened one time during the school year by an outside agency, Pediatric Psychology Associates. This screening is done individually with each kindergarten student and has both academic and social emotional components. The screening informs school administration about academic and social benchmarks for each child.

## LICE POLICY

The recurrent problem of lice and nits in children's hair requires constant attention. School policy is to isolate and immediately send home any child found with lice or nits. That child may return only after appropriate treatment has been given and are determined lice free. It is the responsibility of the parent to keep a child with lice or nits out of school to prevent other children from getting lice and to spare their own child the embarrassment of being separated from their classmates. The problem seems to be particularly acute following vacation periods and therefore all parents are strongly encouraged to check their children's heads and treat accordingly before the school year begins and after extended vacations from school. The school will conduct a check prior to the beginning of the year and periodically thereafter.

## LOST AND FOUND

Please be sure to label all clothing items sent to school. All items not labeled will be collected and stored in the office. On the first of each month, all collected items will be sent to a local gemach.

## LUNCH

1. Children should bring a lunch to school each day, unless they are signed up for hot lunch. Please be sure to send in a drink with your child, even if they receive hot lunch. Please remember to send snacks as well.
2. All lunchboxes should be clearly labeled with your child's name.
3. All laws of *kashrus* must be carefully observed. All packed food sent into school must bear a kosher symbol that is approved by the Chicago Rabbinical Council. See the CRC list for acceptable supervisions; [https://www.crcweb.org/agency\\_list.php](https://www.crcweb.org/agency_list.php).
4. All lunches must be nut free. Nuts and nut products are not allowed in the classrooms.
5. Please do not send grapes, popcorn, carrots, hot dogs or hard candies because they are a choking hazard.
6. Children are not allowed to share their lunches with other children in the class. Please remind your child not to share their lunch with others.

7. Hot lunches and pizza may be ordered online. The lunches are fleishig on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Please do not send dairy snacks on the days the lunch is fleishig.

### MEDICATION

The secretary will not administer prescription medication to a child without written permission from a parent or legal guardian and physician. Prescription medication, including Epi pens must be accompanied by precise written instructions from a doctor. The child's name must be typed on the original label of any prescription and be for the sole use of that child. The secretary will dispense medication according to instructions on the label (prescription or over the counter). Medication should be brought to the EECC office in the original container and given to staff directly. Children should not transport medication at any time without first notifying the school.

Epi pens must come with the original updated prescription. Any Student who needs an Epi pen must have two non-expired Epi pens on hand in the office at all times, and Benadryl if needed. Both Epi pens and Benadryl require written permission from a parent/guardian and a physician.

### NUT FREE POLICY

As a number of the children in the Early Childhood Program have severe allergies to nuts, no food items containing even traces of peanuts, tree nuts or nut oils will be permitted.

### PARENTS ON CAMPUS

To enable the smoother functioning of our school day and the children's emotional well-being, parents should visit campus only for a previously scheduled meeting or a special class or school event or a volunteer opportunity. This includes the first day of school. This restriction applies to after school hours as well.

### PTA

Our active Parents' Association serves an important supportive role in enhancing the children's educational and social well-being. You are urged to get involved. Contact [pta@ytcte.org](mailto:pta@ytcte.org)

### SAFETY AND SECURITY

In the event of an emergency of any kind, parents will be notified as soon as possible. It is the responsibility of each parent to fill out the emergency information section on

school forms properly and keep the information up to date with the school office. School-wide emergency situations will be communicated via text messaging.

Fire drills and evacuation drills are conducted periodically to make certain our children can vacate the building safely and rapidly.

Lockdown drills are conducted periodically to ensure our children's safety in the unlikely event of a security breach.

All access gates are locked 24/7 (other than the walk-in gate by the boys' building during AM carpool). Each family is furnished a transponder for their vehicle's entry into the school parking lot/carpool line. To gain access through the walking gates, press the buzzer and wait to be granted access.

### SIGNING IN / SIGNING OUT

If arriving late to school (after 8:40 A.M.) see procedure above, detailed in the Drop-off and Pick-up section. For early dismissal, notify the office in advance. When arriving at school, proceed to the carpool line and ask Security to call the EECC office to dismiss your child. Your child will be escorted to your car.

### SNACKS

Parents are responsible to send in healthy snacks for their child/children. Please remember not to send in any products containing nuts. Parents are also asked to send in an extra snack if your child/children will be staying in aftercare.

### TOILET TRAINING POLICY

Children must be completely toilet trained prior to enrollment in our school (including the 3 year old classroom). The child should be in cloth underwear and not in diapers, pull-ups, or training pants. Children are expected to use the toilets and clean up properly without assistance from teachers or teacher assistants. Assistance with hand washing reminders and clothing fastening will be given as necessary. In the event the child is found not to be fully toilet trained as indicated by 2 or more "accidents" (inability to reach the toilet on time, wetting or soiling undergarments) in one week, he/she will be asked to stay home to work towards readiness. The child may return to school when complete toilet training is achieved. Soiled garments will be placed directly in a Ziploc bag, to be sent home. Please be sure to send back a clean pair of clothing to school the following day.

### TOYS FROM HOME

Please do not send any toys to the program as they might break or get misplaced. We provide a wide variety of materials for children to play with. In the event a child brings a toy or other personal belonging to school, the school assumes no responsibility if the item is lost or damaged.

### VISITOR ATTIRE

A Yeshiva has the inherent holiness of a Torah Institution. Therefore, parents and all visitors, including childcare providers, whether they enter the building or wait outside, need to come dressed in a respectful manner, in accordance with the tznius (modesty) standards of the Yeshiva. Parents must take responsibility for the dress of their child's private therapists, caretakers and babysitters when sending them to school. Women should wear dresses or skirts and blouses with sleeves. Men should wear a yarmulka. Similarly, all adults accompanying classes on trips need to represent the standards of the Yeshiva and dress with modesty. Women should wear dresses or skirts that cover the knee, blouses that cover the collar bone and sleeves that cover the elbow. All garments should not be form fitting or tight. Men should wear long pants and a yarmulke or head covering.

### VISITING AND PARKING

When picking up or dropping off a student during the school day, enter the parking lot and park where directed by the security guard. Cars can only be parked on N.E. 11th Avenue with prior approval from a security guard. Please do not park on neighboring swales. With ongoing security concerns, this remains a critical issue – cars should not be parked in front of either school building between 7:30AM and 5:30PM on school days.

### VPK

In order to receive VPK funding, as stated on your tuition contract, all parents with a child in VPK are required to sign VPK attendance papers. Failure to comply will result in the month's VPK credit to be forfeited and will be added to your TADS payment or obligation.

### WEATHER-RELATED CLOSINGS AND EMERGENCIES

In the event of an impending storm, the administration will decide on canceling school on a case by case basis. There will be no school if a hurricane warning is in effect in Miami-Dade County. For any other set of circumstances or other emergencies, parents

are encouraged to visit our website [www.ytcte.org](http://www.ytcte.org) and click on their child's division, or call the YTCTE Automated Information Line - 305-209-0495 for a message regarding schedule changes and school closures. This number is designed to work even if there is no power in the Yeshiva.

In addition, a text or whatsapp message will be sent directly to your cell phone, conditions permitting. Check for an email message as well.

After a school closure, the campus must be thoroughly inspected and electrical power must be restored before reopening. Information about resumption of classes will be made available through the website, and where possible, calls will be made and texts, whatsapp messages and e-mails will be sent.

In a situation where the school opens, please exercise good judgment and common sense. If you feel travel is not safe in your immediate area, or there are other safety concerns, act accordingly.

If it becomes necessary to evacuate and send the children home, we will need to contact you. It is therefore imperative that you keep the school current as soon as you change a phone number or e-mail address.

Looking forward to a wonderful school year filled with growth and Siyata Dishmaya!

## STATEMENT OF POLICY

### NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY:

YESHIVA TORAS CHAIM TORAS EMES A/K/A TORAS EMES ACADEMY OF MIAMI ADMITS ALL JEWISH STUDENTS OF ANY RACE, COLOR, NATIONAL OR ETHNIC ORIGIN. ALL SCHOLARSHIPS AND PROGRAMS ARE ADMINISTERED IN A NON-DISCRIMINATORY FASHION AS TO RACE, COLOR, NATIONAL OR ETHNIC ORIGIN.

ADMISSION TO YESHIVA TORAS CHAIM TORAS EMES IS OPEN TO ANY STUDENT WHO DEMONSTRATES MINIMAL ACADEMIC ABILITY FOR THE AGE APPROPRIATE GRADE LEVEL. AN ENTRANCE EXAMINATION AND INTERVIEW WITH THE PRINCIPAL ARE PART OF THE ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE.

DISMISSAL FROM YESHIVA TORAS CHAIM TORAS EMES IS THE FINAL STEP OF THE DISCIPLINE PROGRAM IN USE AT THE SCHOOL. A STUDENT WHO IS OVERLY DISRUPTIVE, WHO IS A BAD INFLUENCE OVER THE OTHER STUDENTS, OR IS A POTENTIAL THREAT TO THE OTHER STUDENTS, MAY BE EXPELLED TO PROTECT THE OTHER STUDENTS AND TO MAINTAIN YESHIVA TORAS CHAIM TORAS EMES AS A SAFE AND SECURE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH TO STUDY. FULL DUE-PROCESS RIGHTS FOR THE STUDENT AND PARENTS ARE GUARANTEED INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO AN OPEN HEARING AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT THE STUDENT'S POSITION. NON-PAYMENT OF TUITION IS ALSO GROUNDS FOR EXPULSION.

A STUDENT WHO FAILS TO MAINTAIN MINIMAL ACADEMIC PROGRESS WILL BE RE-ENROLLED WITH THE PROVISIO THAT HE/SHE EITHER BE RETAINED, PLACED IN A REMEDIATION PROGRAM, A SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM OR SOME OTHER SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT, AS DETERMINED BY THE PRINCIPAL.