



Family Handbook

Mission Statement

Smarty Pants Childcare's mission is to give each child a Smart Start, by providing them with the foundation and confidence necessary to succeed in today's school system while providing a safe, nurturing, secure environment for children to grow socially, emotionally, and intellectually.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to our Smarty Pants family. We look forward to a wonderful long relationship while caring for your most precious possession, your child. We are very glad you are here and we thank you for the opportunity to love, care for and teach your child.

Below are all of our center policies. Please take the time to read them over carefully and present any questions to the director. Please understand that our policies are based on regulations mandated by New York State. We have thought carefully about these policies. They are in place for the well-being of your children and the smooth and consistent operation of the center. Thank you for taking the time to read over these policies.

Days and Hours of Operation

Smarty Pants Childcare is open Monday through Friday from 6:30am to 6:00pm.

Smarty Pants Childcare will be closed for the following holidays:

Labor Day

Thanksgiving Day

The Friday after Thanksgiving Day

Christmas Eve

Christmas Day

Close at 4 on New Year's Eve

New Year's Day

Memorial Day

Independence Day

**You will NOT be invoiced for any day in which we are closed.*

Registration

The following items are needed for enrollment in our program:

Registration Fee and First Two-Weeks Payment

Medical report and Immunization Record

Family Registration Form

- *Consent for Emergency Medical Care*
- *Pick-Up consent*
- *Napping Agreement*

Infant Feeding Arrangements (if applicable)

CACFP Form

Contract

All appropriate forms must be filled out, signed, and on file PRIOR to admission.

Payment Procedures

Payments

Tuition payments can be made on a biweekly or monthly basis. This must be stated in your contract and can only be changed when a written notice is submitted in advance.

All payments are due by 6:00PM on Friday prior to childcare services being provided. After 6:00PM, the late fee of \$25 will be applied. If payment is not made within 10 business days, your child will not be accepted into care until payment, including all late fees, is made. If a period of 15 business days passes without payment received, the position will be filled with another customer.

There is a secure payment box located just outside of the director's office. It is locked and monitored by a security camera. This is where payments should be placed.

Payments can be made in the form of cash, check (made out to Smarty Pants), or automated debit from a checking account. Automatic payments can be set up with the director.

Fees

There is a \$40 registration fee (\$20 for siblings) due upon your child's enrollment. Every September thereafter, there will be a \$25 reregistration fee (\$10 for siblings) automatically applied to your September invoice.

There is an \$8.00/month Jumpbunch fee that is applied to the first invoice of the month. This fee is only applied to the invoice of children that attend the center when Jumpbunch is present. (Currently Fridays, but subject to change.)

Any payment not placed in the box by Friday, at close of business will incur a \$25 late fee.

There is a \$25 returned check fee. After two returned checks, payment via check will no longer be accepted.

There is a \$5 late pick-up fee applied to your bill for every five minutes that your child is not picked up past 6:00.

Daily rates are listed on a separate handout.

There is a 10% discount for the oldest child, when multiple children are enrolled for three days or more per week. Sibling discount does not apply to our Infant one and two classrooms.

There is a 10% Thank-A-Vet discount that is applied to the total daycare expenses of any veteran with the Thank-A-Vet discount card.

Absence Coupons

Absence Coupons will be distributed in 2 increments. The first set will be distributed in September and the next set will be distributed in March. If your enrollment takes place between October and February, you will receive the March Distribution in March. If your enrollment takes place between April and August, you will receive the September distribution in September.

The Coupons will be distributed as follows:

# of days in attendance	September Distribution	March Distribution
5	4	4
4	3	3
3	2	2
2	1	1

Please write the date that your child was absent or is going to be absent on the coupon and place it in the payment box. You will see a credit on your next invoice.

Once you have used all of your Absence Coupons you will be responsible for payment of all days absent, including vacation days.

If your child will be missing more than one consecutive week of care due to illness, you will be responsible for the first week absent and not for the days following. A doctor's note must be provided.

Unexpected Absences

If your child is going to be absent, please call the center by 9am. If no one is available please leave a message. If the absence is due to illness, please specify the nature of the illness including signs and symptoms. We do not issue refunds or credits for unexpected absences, unless an absence coupon is placed in the drop-box.

Inclement Weather

We will make every effort to keep our center open. On occasion, inclement weather may make closing necessary. If we close, we will notify WGRZ Channel 2, WIVB Channel 4, and our Facebook page. We are not responsible for errors in the school closing announcements.

Schedule

Your child's schedule will be placed in writing within your registration during enrollment. It is necessary for us to have a daily drop-off and pick-up time for your child. This is so that we can have the appropriate number of staff members to attend to your child. In order to get the full benefit of our program, we ask for your child to be in attendance by 830am. This is when our daily routine begins. If you are going to pick up or drop off your child after their scheduled time, please give the center a courtesy call.

If you need to make any ***permanent*** changes to your set schedule, please notify the director, ***in writing***, at least 2 weeks in advance. Although we do our very best to accommodate your schedule changes, there may be times when we cannot accommodate your change due to teacher and child ratios.

Changes in Records

It is very important that you notify us immediately if there are any changes to your address, phone number (home or cell), emergency contacts, employment location or any other pertinent changes. The accuracy of your record is very vital should an emergency occur.

Drop off and Pick up

Although, drop off can be difficult for both the parents and child, we have found that giving your child a kiss, telling them you will see them soon and leaving quickly works the best. Often, when parents linger around, it gives the child an impression that the parent is staying and makes it more difficult in the long run. Parents should never "sneak out" on your child. Some children will transition easily into a group program, while others will have a harder time. Still, others will transition easily at first and 2-3 weeks into the program (when the novelty wears off and new toys and friends aren't exciting anymore) decide they don't "like" coming anymore. We are very accustomed to all of these transitions and with your support and confidence in our program we will all get through it together. If you have any concerns about this

transition, please bring it to the director or your child's teacher's attention. We will do everything we can to help make a smooth transition.

Upon arrival, your child's teacher will sign your child in. Upon pick-up, you must sign your child out of the building by writing the time of pick up and signing your name. This is a mandated requirement and a legal document.

Please list anyone authorized to pick up your child on the registration form. Only those individuals with advanced authorization to pick up your child, may do so. Please be sure to have photo ID ready. Our staff members are instructed to check the ID of anyone picking up a child that they are not familiar with. Please make anyone on your pick-up list aware of this requirement. If you or an authorized pick-up do not have ID, the child will not be released. No exceptions.

If a situation arises in which someone that is not on the pick-up list must pick up your child, you must put it in writing and give it to your child's teacher in the morning at drop-off. Phone calls for someone that is not on the pick-up list to pick up your child will not be accepted, permission must be in writing.

Please do not leave your car running in the parking lot. This is a NYS law and presents a serious safety risk.

When a parent or guardian of a child is in the building, you are responsible for your child's behavior. A child must be supervised by a parent at all times. Do not allow your child to run ahead or horseplay in the hallway. This is for the safety of your child as well as the other children in the center.

Daily Reports

Children ages 6 weeks- 2 years will be provided with a daily report. This report will let you know all about your child's day at Smarty Pants. If you have any questions or concerns about the report or would like additional information, please notify your child's teacher. If your child is in our 3 or 4 year old program and you would like a daily report, please notify your child's teacher and they will honor this request.

Napping Arrangements

Infants (6 weeks- 17 months) will sleep in the classroom and be supervised at a 4:1 ratio. Infants will only be allowed to sleep in a crib or pack-n-play and will be placed on their backs. They can have a thin blanket in the crib. Stuffed animals and extra-large blankets will not be used in the crib. They will nap as needed or as stated on the infant care schedule. Infants will NOT be allowed to sleep in a swing, bouncer or

car seat. If other sleeping arrangements are needed, the proper documentation MUST be provided by a health care provider.

Toddlers (18months- 3 years) will sleep in the classroom and be supervised at a 5:1 ratio. Toddlers will sleep on a cot. Nap time starts after lunch (12:15ish) and is over around 2:30. Any child that is not sleeping within 40 minutes of the beginning of the nap period will be given a quiet activity to do at the table. Any parent requesting that their child not take a nap or that their child's nap time be shortened, must put it in writing.

Pre-K and Kinder-Ready (3 years- 5 years) will sleep on a cot in the classroom. NYS OCFS has approved a waiver which allows our Pre-k and Kinder-Ready children to be supervised at one less than the ratio states, during nap time only. Pre-K will be at a 1:14 or 2:18 ratio and Kinder-Ready will be at a 1:15 ratio. The teacher does not leave the classroom until all children are resting quietly on their cots. Nap time starts after lunch (12:15ish) and is over around 2:30. Any child that is not sleeping within 40 minutes of the beginning of the nap period will be given a quiet activity to do at the table. Any parent requesting that their child not take a nap or that their child's nap time be shortened must put it in writing. *Our five year olds are weaned off of napping starting in July in preparation for Kindergarten.* At that time, two teachers will remain in the classroom during nap time.

Potty Training

Smarty Pants will assist you in potty training with the understanding that it will be most successful if we work together. We encourage parents to bring their children in underwear and supply many extras. We believe that pull-ups make children comfortable when an accident happens and they do not learn as quickly. It is against NYS OCFS regulations to launder soiled items. Soiled items will be sent home in a plastic bag. Please be sure to replace any soiled clothing the following day of attendance.

Conferences

We strive to provide open lines of communication between you and all of our staff members. Should an issue arise, please feel free to discuss it with the teacher as well as the director. You are always welcome at the center and may set up a conference at any time. You will have an opportunity to schedule formal conferences each January. These conferences are a good mid-year point where parents and teachers can discuss each child's portfolio and the individual goals they have for finishing out the school year.

Court Order

If there is a court order keeping one parent or guardian away from the child, *Smarty Pants Childcare* must have a written note or court order from the custodial parent or guardian on file to that effect.

Unless proper documentation from the court has been submitted, we will be under the assumption that both parents have equal rights to pick-up and drop-off their child.

Safety and Security

Access

Each family will be granted an access code to the building. It is very important that you do not give out the code. Please do not prop or hold the door open for anyone. If you see someone come in behind you, please notify the director immediately.

Each classroom has two forms of egress. One door leads directly to the outside and the other leads to the hallway.

Fire

There are fire drills practiced once per month. The alarm is set off and the children are lead outside to our central meeting point. We practice our primary and secondary means of egress.

In the event of an actual fire or emergency in which the children and staff cannot reenter the building, the children will be evacuated immediately and transported to the *Hilbert College Gymnasium located at 200 South Park Ave.* by means of the Fischer Bus Company. If Hilbert College is not available, we will be transported to the *Wesleyan Church of Hamburg located at 4999 Mckinley Pkwy.* All parents will be notified by phone immediately upon arrival at one of these safe locations. Our staff is trained an prepared for emergency situations and will inform you of exactly what took place during the emergency.

There are several fire extinguishers located throughout the building and our staff has been educated about the use of fire extinguishers.

Shelter-in-Place

Shelter-in-place drills are practiced twice per year. These drills are necessary in-case of a situation in which it is safer to remain in the building rather than evacuate. An example of such situations are: extreme weather conditions, extreme temperatures, a public disturbance, or rabid animal sighting. This drill is conducted

very discreetly as to not frighten any children. Generally, shelter-in-place means simply staying indoors, closing all windows and shades, and remaining away from windows and doors.

In the event of a situation that may make it necessary to shelter-in-place beyond normal program hours the parents will be notified by phone of the situation. Children will be fed all necessary meals and snacks with our back-up food supply. Children will participate in regular routines. We will do quiet activities, sing songs, and play. The teachers will remain on-site with the children and do everything they can to keep the situation calm and relaxed.

Injury

All of the staff at Smarty Pants are trained in CPR and First Aid within the first three months of employment.

If a minor accident or injury occurs, the area will be cleaned and bandaged appropriately by one of our staff members trained in First Aid. All injuries will be documented and the parents will be notified at pick-up. This document will be kept in your child's file. If you would like a copy please notify the director. Should a more serious injury occur, you will be notified immediately. If a parent or emergency contact cannot be reached, depending on the seriousness 911 will be called. Should your child need to be transported to the hospital, a staff member will accompany them. Should an extreme situation arise 911 would be notified immediately and parents would be notified immediately following.

Mandated Reporting

Smarty Pants staff is required by law to report any suspected signs of child abuse and/or neglect. Every staff member is trained as a Mandated Reporter.

No child is to be left unattended in a vehicle. It is the duty of the Smarty Pants Staff to protect all children. If any staff member sees a child left unattended, they have been instructed to verbally remind the parent of this policy. If a family has already had a reminder, the staff member has been instructed to call Child Protective Services. Please be sure to bring siblings in with you when picking up or dropping off your children.

No child is to be transported without a car seat. According to NYS law, your child must remain secured in a federally-approved child restraint device up to the age of seven. It is our duty to be sure each child is restrained in a car seat when leaving our care. If any staff member notices that a child is not in a car seat, they have been advised to stop the transportation of said child. We will keep your child in our care while you go to get a car seat. (This same policy applies for siblings that do not attend Smarty Pants) If a child, seven years old or younger, leaves the daycare

premises without a car seat, Child Protective Services will be called. If you would like more information on car seat safety, please visit: <http://www.dmv.org/ny-new-york/safety-laws.php>.

Open Door Policy

Smarty Pants Childcare has an Open Door Policy in which you are able to visit our center at any time of the day. You are also welcome to call and check on your child at any time.

Breastfeeding Policy

We encourage and support breast feeding. If you are a breastfeeding family and have the opportunity to stop in to feed, please do so. We will provide a private space for you. If you do not have an opportunity to stop in, we encourage you to bring in breastmilk bottles for our staff to feed your baby.

Clothing

Children should wear comfortable play clothes and shoes that can be easily fastened. Some activities can be messy. Do not send your child in clothing that you do not want stained. Please dress your child appropriately for the weather. Please provide boots, hats, gloves and snow pants in the winter months and a bathing suit, towel and water shoes in the summer months. All of these items should be labeled with your child's first and last name. This is so your child can experience outdoor play year around. Smarty Pants Childcare is not responsible for any lost or stained clothing.

Holidays/Birthdays

Smarty Pants will celebrate major holidays. If there is a holiday that your child does not participate in, please inform the director. You may provide a store bought treat on your child's birthday or holiday party. The treat must have its original label so that our staff can check for any allergens that may be present. This is to ensure the safety of all of our children at the center.

Confidentiality

Our staff follows a strict confidentiality policy. We will not release or discuss any information related to your child or family without written authorization by you.

Please note that we are mandated reporters, and by law we are to report any suspected child abuse to the proper agencies.

Social Media

In order to adhere to our confidentiality policy, our staff has been instructed not to use social media in direct relation to Smarty Pants childcare. For example, staff members are not allowed to “friend” parents of children in their care. To help our staff follow this policy, please refrain from “friending” staff members. Smarty Pants Childcare will have an official Facebook page that will be used for marketing purposes only. This page will be updated only by the owner/director.

Babysitting

Smarty Pants allows employees and families to use their relationships in a positive way, such as babysitting. It is expected that relationships remain professional outside of Smarty Pants. Discussions involving other families and staff from Smarty Pants is strictly prohibited. Violation of this policy can result in immediate termination of staff members.

Health and Sickness

Smarty Pants Childcare does not allow children who are ill to attend. If your child is sick throughout the night, they should not attend childcare. Children should be allowed to fully recover from an illness in the comfort of their own home. This will allow for them to recover quickly and will lessen the exposure to other children and staff.

If your child gets sick while at the center, **they MUST be picked up within one hour**. If parents cannot be reached, the person designated as the emergency contact will be notified.

Please understand that the following is a Department of Health Regulation and will be strictly enforced.

Our staff is instructed to complete a health check every morning. If ANY of the following symptoms are present, your child will not be admitted to the center:

Fever of 100.5 or higher

Vomiting

Fatigue or irritability

Neck pain

Skin rash or irritation (not including diaper rash)

Three loose bowel movements within 24 hours

Red, goopy, watery eyes

Severe coughing, sneezing, runny nose or sore throat

For your child's comfort and well-being and the safety of the other children in the center, they may return when approved by a physician AND/OR:

Chicken pox... 24 hours after lesions have crusted

Hand Foot & Mouth ... 24 hours after lesions have crusted & fever free

Conjunctivitis (Pink eye)... 24 hours after start of treatment (if drainage and excessive tearing have stopped)

Croup... After illness has subsided

Diarrhea ... 24 hours after last loose stool or after one normal bowel movement.

Impetigo ... 24 hours after start of treatment

Fever ... 24 hours after temperature returns to normal without the use of medication

Influenza ... 24 hours after symptoms subsided

Lice ... 24 hours after the start of treatment and hair is nit/egg free

Strep Throat ... 24 hours after the start of antibiotic treatment

Poison Ivy ... After lesions have dried up

Pinworm or Ringworm ... 24 hours after start of treatment

For any other illness, please contact the director.

Medications

With written permission, our staff members may apply over-the-counter topical ointments such as, diaper creams, sunscreen, Vaseline or insect repellent.

Any other medication, prescription or over-the-counter, will only be administered according to the following policies:

- The child's parent and physician must both complete and sign the State issued Medication Consent Form. This form can be found on our website.
- All medications must be in the original packaging and must be accompanied by the original package insert or printed pharmacy instructions.
- All medications must be labeled with your child's first and last name.
- The exact name of the medication must be written on the consent form. For example, if the consent form specifies Tylenol, you must provide Tylenol, not the generic name.

We do NOT except verbal consent for any medications. If your child is going to see the Dr. and you think medication will be prescribed, you can print the form off of our website and bring it with you. We will NOT give any child any medication without this form.

Immunization and Physical

Each child must have on file an updated immunization record as well as a current physical record. NYS OCFS follows the guidelines of the American Academy of Pediatrics. The center must be provided with an immunization and physical record

after each check-up appointment. Your family may be denied childcare services if the proper forms are not provided to the center in a timely fashion.

Nutrition

Smarty Pants Childcare provides breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack. Our meals and snacks are provided by Riva's Daycare Catering. Their menu has been approved by a licensed clinical nutritionist and follows the guidelines of the Child and Adult Care Food Program. They will accommodate most dietary needs. Please report any special dietary needs to the director. If your child does not like what the scheduled meal is for the day, you may pack your child a lunch. Should you choose to provide your own meal for your child, please be sure it is a nutritious meal and peanut and tree nut free. Fast food lunches will not be permitted at Smarty Pants childcare. During meal time, children are encouraged to use manners, utensils, and appropriate conversations. A new menu is posted on our website each month. Please notify the director if you are in need of a paper copy.

Infant formula and purees are provided under the guidelines of the Child and Adult Care Food Plan (CACFP). This is a grant that Smarty Pants receives for following a dietary plan and having 20% of our families qualify for free or reduced lunches. Should Smarty Pants lose this grant, infant families will be responsible for providing their own formula and purees until their child is ready for table food.

Toys

Please do not send any toys from home with your child. If your child needs a special toy or item for sleeping, it will be allowed, but it will remain in their cubby until rest time. Smarty Pants is not responsible for any lost, stolen or broken toys from home.

Behavior Policy

Many children at this age level will "test the waters" by tantrums, hitting, or saying "no". These behaviors are completely age appropriate and will be handled with simple redirection and rewarding and encouraging positive behavior. We will however ask a child to "take a break" if their behavior is causing harm to themselves or another child in the classroom or becomes a distraction to other children. "Taking a break" will involve sitting in a designated spot in the classroom where the child will be able to regain composure. While "taking a break" the teacher will discuss what is bothering them and appropriate ways to handle the situation. If a child's behavior becomes a constant issue, a conference will be requested to help correct the issue and a personalized behavior plan will be established. In extreme cases we will bring in a specialist from *The Early Childhood Direction Center*.

Biting Policy

If a child bites, staff will first respond to the needs of the child that was bitten. They will clean the bite with soap and water and apply ice. After the bite is taken care of properly, staff will sit down with the child that bit and explain that it is not appropriate to bite others, it is hurtful and dangerous. Both parents will be notified of the incident. The name of the child that bit is kept confidential. All biting incidents are documented on our standard incident report. As upsetting, and as wrong as it is, biting is not unusual behavior, especially when young children are in groups. Our teachers express strong disapproval of biting. They work to keep children safe and to help the child who bit learn different, more appropriate behavior. When there is an episode of ongoing biting, we develop a plan of specific strategies, techniques and timelines to address it. In extreme cases we will bring in a toddler specialist from *The Early Childhood Direction Center*.

Withdrawal Policy

A two weeks' notice must be given in writing if you are withdrawing your child for any reason. If two weeks' notice is not given, you will be invoiced for the two weeks after the last day of attendance.

Termination of Care

Smarty Pants reserves the right to immediately end care for non-payment, failure to abide by any Smarty Pants policies, or behavior of the child, which is harmful to the physical or emotional well-being of the other children (after a behavior plan is unsuccessful) or any other reason that Smarty Pants sees acceptable.

Expectations of Families

- ✓ Smoking is prohibited in and around the facility.
- ✓ Cell phones should be put away upon entering the building. This allows for open communication between you and your child's teacher as well as ensures the safety of your child.
- ✓ Inappropriate language is not acceptable
- ✓ Threatening behavior will result in immediate termination of your child's enrollment.
- ✓ Weapons of any kind will not be allowed on property.

- ✓ Do not leave your vehicle running while running in to pick up or drop off your child.
- ✓ Drugs or alcohol will not be allowed. We reserve the right to hold your child at the center, if it is suspected that you are under the influence of drugs or alcohol until the proper authorities or family members are notified.