



VICTORY KIDS' ACADEMY

FAMILY HANDBOOK

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

2022 / 2023 SCHOOL YEAR

Victory Kids' Academy

WELCOME

Dear Family,

We welcome and thank you for taking interest in Victory Kid's Academy! This is a warm and safe environment where children can have fun and learn at the same time. Victory Kid's Academy provides a rich, meaningful educational experiences for all children and families I our care. We share a small amount of your child's life and are privileged to be given the opportunity to do so. We want you to know that your child (ren) is our child (ren) away from home. We work in partnership with parents and families to build mutual understanding and always welcome your participation. We have an open-door policy. Please know that you are welcomed to visit your child's classroom anytime! If there are any questions or concerns that you have regarding our program, please do not hesitate to ask.

Thank you for choosing **Victory Kid's Academy**. We look forward to providing your child with a caring and enriching environment.

Sincerely,

Sharon Simmons

Director

vkadaycare@gmail.com / (229) 435 - 0900

Victory Kids' Academy

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ABOUT US

Philosophy

Victory Kids' Academy provides a developmentally - based program in an environment especially designed for young children. We believe that children learn from their surroundings and get most of their ideas from adults and children who surrounds them daily. A child's parent and teacher are the most influential part of a child's success. Anyone who comes in contact with children, need to always be positive, polite, and have a God-fearing attitude.

We believe that the purpose of education is to build a better life for a person, and the world as a whole. Our staff support each child's disposition to learn while facilitating their learning and fostering competencies in all domains, including intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development. One bright idea can make something that is destructive become well. Education is the only way to have knowledge on how to accomplish and change things in our lives and our society.

Children learn best when they are taught in a warm and loving environment that has all the age-appropriate material a child need. The early years of a child's life are crucial for the cognitive development of children. It's imperative that a child's environment is well-arranged, attractive and welcoming to children. It conveys a sense of order and molds their behavior. When materials and furniture are age-appropriate it encourages children to become independent. At Victory Kids' Academy we strive to make learning exciting and exhilarating, and ready to explore learning.

Mission

Our mission is to teach children to excel in learning, by ensuring each child has appropriate social and emotional skills. We will demonstrate God's life-changing love and power. We will provide quality childcare in a loving, nurturing, educationally creative inclusive environment within a secure and exquisite facility that allows our team of employees to experience professional and personal growth.

Definition of Family

In this handbook we refer to family as a parent, legal guardian, sponsor, or anyone else who provides for the well-being, best-interest, and responsibility of the child in our care.

Hours of Operation

Childcare services are provided from 6:30 AM to 5:30 PM Monday through Friday.

Holidays

We are closed for certain holidays: New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, MLK Day, President's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Juneteenth, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and the day after Christmas.

We are also closed Tuesday-Friday for Christmas week and Tuesday-Friday for Thanksgiving week.

Admission & Enrollment

All admission and enrollment forms must be completed, and enrollment fees and first tuition payment paid prior to your child's first day of attendance.

An enrollment fee of \$55.00 is due at the time of enrollment. This fee is non-refundable.

A two-week, non-refundable tuition deposit is required for each child enrolled. This deposit will be held without interest and will represent tuition payment for the last two weeks of the child's enrollment.

Based on the availability and openings, our facility admits children from 6 weeks to 12 years of age.

Our process for introducing children to our program is to reserve a time for the guardian and child to visit the academy. Current children and teachers will introduce themselves to the children and make him / her feel comfortable. All children will be able to bring one item from home until they are comfortable enough to leave the item home.

Children are admitted without regard to race culture, sex, religion, national origin, or disability. We do not discriminate on the basis of special needs, if a safe, supportive environment can be provided.

Parents are expected to sign their children in and out Daily. This is extremely important each day!

Make sure that your child's items are labeled and stored in their personal cubby. Please check your child's cubby daily for your daily reports.

Inclusion

Victory Kid's Academy Program believes that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging in childcare. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program based on his/her individual capabilities and needs.

If your child has an identified special need, they will be integrated in the activities provided by the center unless contraindicated medically or by written parental agreement.

Early childhood educators at Victory Kids' Academy use developmentally appropriate practices and consider the unique needs of all children when planning. Staff will make every attempt to make any adaptations or modifications necessary to meet the needs of the children. Schedules, routines, and activities are flexible and early childhood educators will work with therapists. Special educators, and other professionals to integrate individual accommodations, modifications, and strategies into the classroom routines and activities. Any adaptations will be reviewed with families, and other professionals supporting the child.

Non-Discrimination

At Victory Kids' Academy Program equal educational opportunities are available for all children, without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, or parent/provider political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation or special needs, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state or local laws. Educational programs are designed to meet the varying needs of all students.

Family Activities

Each family is a child's first teacher. We value families as partners in the growth and development of children in our program. We encourage parents and other family members to be involved in the program, visit children's classrooms, participate in events, and provide feedback on the program. We offer a variety of ways in which families can participate in helping us establish and reach our program goals.

Please see the list of Family Activities at the end of this booklet.

Confidentiality

Unless we receive your written consent, information regarding your child will not be released with the exception of that required by our regulatory and partnering agencies. All records concerning children at our program are confidential.

Staff Qualifications

Our Qualified Caregivers are hired in compliance with the state requirements and qualifications as a base minimum. Typical staff certifications are as follows:

<u>Position Title</u>	<u>Education/Certification</u>	<u>Experience</u>
Teacher	Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education	3 years
Teacher Assistant/Aide	Child Development Associate Credential	1 year

Caregivers participate in orientation and ongoing training in the areas of child growth and development, healthy and safe environments, developmentally appropriate practices, guidance, family relationships, cultural and individual diversity, and professionalism.

We strongly discourage families from entering into employment arrangements with staff (i.e. babysitting). Any arrangement between families and our caregivers outside the programs and services we offer is a private matter, not connected or sanctioned by Victory Kid's Academy Program.

Child to Staff Ratios

Children are supervised at all times. All caregivers receive scheduled breaks which reduce fatigue and help to ensure alertness.

We maintain the following standards for child to staff ratios:

<u>Age</u>	<u>Child to Staff</u>	<u>Maximum Group Size</u>
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≤ 12 months	<u>6 to 1</u>	<u>12</u>
13-35 months	<u>1 to 8</u>	<u>25</u>
3 years-old	<u>1 to 15</u>	<u>14</u>

Source: National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education.

Communication & Family Partnership

Daily Communications. We will be using Procure. Parents will need to download the App to receive messages. In the event of an emergency after the center closes the director may be a contacted. Anything else will be handled the next business day.

Bulletin Boards. Located throughout the center, bulletin boards provide center news, upcoming events, faculty changes, holiday closing dates, announcements, etc.

Newsletters. Quarterly newsletters provide center news, events, announcements, etc. These newsletters are available at the sign-in/sign-out desk for your taking.

Email. We encourage you to provide an email address that you use regularly so that we may send you announcements, event invitations, newsletters and general updates.

Family Visits. Family participation is encouraged. Visit our classrooms, volunteer, come along on a field trip, or eat a meal with your child. Signing in is required for the safety and protection of our children. Each visitor must wear a visitor's badge while on premises and sign-out upon leaving. (Currently Discontinued)

Family Night. Family nights are scheduled on a regular basis. These nights include snacks, drinks and fun filled age-appropriate activities for families. Family Nights allow families and children time to share, learn, and have fun. Families have an opportunity to be a part of their child's learning experience and connect with other families (Currently Discontinued)

Open Door Policy-Due to Covid19 this policy is Discontinued until further notice!

We are delighted to have family members participate in our program. Parents/Guardians are welcome to visit the program any time during regular program hours. The infant room welcomes parents/guardians to nurse or feed their infants.

Open Door Policy does not mean the doors will be unlocked. For the safety and protection of the children, external doors will be kept locked at all times.

Our team will always do their best to speak with parents/guardians. Since staff days are devoted to caring for children, it is usually not feasible to have a long discussion during regular program hours. If a situation requires a longer discussion, kindly arrange for an appointment.

Publicity

Occasionally, photos will be taken of the children at the center for use within the center or on our website. Written permission will be obtained prior to use of photographs.

Unless the family indicates that they want their child to participate, we will not use pictures and names of children for publicity.

CURRICULA & LEARNING

Learning Environment

We provide a rich learning environment with curricula that are developmentally appropriate to the specific ages in each classroom. We have a flexible day routine that allows children to advance at their own pace. We strongly believe that learning happens through play. Learning and exploring are hands-on and are facilitated through interest areas. Our program is designed to enhance children's development in the following areas: creativity, self-expression, decision-making, problem-solving, responsibility, independence, and reasoning. We encourage openness to that which is different from us, and the ability to work and play with others.

Curricula & Assessment

Victory Kids' Academy uses the Mother Goose Time... As part of this curriculum, we gather information about each child's developmental abilities and evaluate progress so we can modify and adjust what we are doing in our classroom so as to deliver the best individualized instruction for each child. This evaluation is communicated to families periodically during the school year using various formal and informal tools, forms, and resources.

For information about your child's day, please see copies of daily schedules and lessons plans posted in each classroom.

Developmental Screening

Victory Kids' Academy uses the Mother Goose Assessment. To coincide with curriculum-based assessment(s), we monitor each child's achievement of developmental milestones, share observations with parents/guardians, and provide resource information as needed for further screenings, evaluations, and early intervention and treatment. The developmental screening process is a collaborative one, involving parents/guardians and done in conjunction with the child's primary care provider and health, education, and early intervention consultants. Developmental screening is conducted with written consent from the child's parent/guardian(s).

Outings and Field Trips

Weather permitting; we conduct 30 minutes of supervised outdoor play and/or walking trips around the campus 2 times a day for all children. Children are accounted for at all times. A permission statement for participation in walking trips is included in the enrollment package.

From time to time, there will be supervised field trips, and we encourage you to join your child on the trip. *Permission Slips* for each trip must be signed by the child's family. Families will be advised in advanced when field trips are planned.

For field trips, please dress your child appropriately for the season. Walking shoes are a must. Sandals and flip-flops are not appropriate for walking and make it difficult for your child.

The safety of children and staff will be guarded in all activities of child care programs. Proper restraint systems (seat belts) and the correct use of them are critically important during travel to/from the childcare program as well as during field trips. There will be proper supervision in training for adults and drivers on field trips.

Transitions

Your child's transition in childcare should be a positive and exciting learning adventure. We will work with you and your child to ensure the smoothest possible transition occurs as new routines and new people are introduced.

Transition from home to center

Prior to your child's first day, you will have an opportunity to tour the center, meet with your child's peers and teachers, and communicate any anticipated concerns. At this time please share the best communication methods that the teacher may use to reach you.

Transition between learning programs

Children are transitioned to the next program based on age, developmental readiness, state licensing requirements, and space availability. During the transition, current and future teachers will meet with you to propose a plan to introduce your child into the new program. To enter the three-year old class your child must be potty trained.

Transition to elementary school

Transition activities such as a field trip to a local elementary school, creating a mural of special friends and special times at our center will be part of your child's education at our center. We will provide you with information on local schools, what to expect, and ideas on how to talk to your child about going to elementary school.

Electronic Media

Our normal daily routine does not include electronic media (television/TV, video, DVD) viewing and computer use but from time-to-time, we may use a television show without advertisements as a teaching aid and discussion stimulator. All Electronic Media will be screened prior to use and will consist of non-violent and high-quality educational material. Our focus is to provide your child a positive experience with increased understanding of the world. Electronic Media will be offered only as a free choice, used to meet a developmental goal, and limited to no more than 150 minutes per week per child.

Georgia rules prohibit any screen time for children under two. This includes TV, videos and computers.

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism is vital for all children because it sets social goals and promotes respect for all people and the environment we inhabit. We utilize books, music, games, and a wide range of activities as aids to teach our children respect for our world and the diversity of life upon it.

Celebrations

Our holiday policy encourages an enhanced understanding of and respect for different cultures and beliefs of children, families, staff and community.

We celebrate Christmas, Thanksgiving, Valentine's Day, Fourth of July, MLK, Veteran, Memorial, Good Friday, Juneteenth and New Year's Day.

Rest Time

Infants sleep according to their own schedule and are put to sleep on their backs. Caregivers/teachers directly observe infants by sight and sound at all times and check on sleeping infants every 10 minutes.

After lunch, all children less than 3 years of age, participate in a quiet rest time. Children are not required to sleep and may be given quiet activities.

Infants will be put to sleep in separate, clean, sanitized, cribs that meet Federal Crib Safety Standards denoted in the US Product Safety Commission Full-Size Baby Crib and Non-Full-Size Baby Crib Regulation, following the method recommended by the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD).

Toilet Training

The most important factor in making the toilet learning experience successful and as low-stress as possible is a family/teacher partnership that supports the child. Research indicates that children cannot successfully learn how to use the toilet until they are physically, psychologically, and emotionally ready. Many pediatricians say that most children under 24 months of age are not physically capable of regulating bladder and bowel muscles. Most positive toilet training occurs only after children show signs of physical control or awareness of their bodily functions and when they demonstrate an interest or curiosity in the process. We are committed to working with you to make sure that toilet learning is carried out in a manner that is consistent with your child's physical and emotional abilities and your family's concerns.

Whenever we are given permission from the parent that the child is ready to begin potty training the potty process will begin. We will only start potty training when both parties agree it is the proper time to start. Both parties must agree on when it is time to stop wearing pull-ups. Parents are asked to bring extra clothes, underwear, or pull-ups at this time.

GUIDANCE

General Procedure

Victory Kid's Academy is committed to each student's success in learning within a caring, responsive, and safe environment that is free of discrimination, violence, and bullying. Our center works to ensure that all students have the opportunity and support to develop to their fullest potential and share a personal and meaningful bond with people in the school community.

Thoughtful direction and planning ahead are used to prevent problems and encourage appropriate behavior. Communicating consistent, clear rules and involving children in problem solving help children develop their ability to become self-disciplined. We encourage children to

be fair, to be respectful of other people, of property, and to learn to understand the results of their actions.

Discipline Policy

Disciplinary actions used to correct a child's behavior, guidance techniques, and any activities in which the children participate or observe at the Center shall not be detrimental to the physical or mental health of any child.

We have created a discipline policy that reflects our philosophy of positive guidance with children

Challenging Behavior

Children are guided to treat each other and adults with self-control and kindness.

Each student at **Victory Kids' Academy** has a right to:

- Learn in a safe and friendly place
- Be treated with respect
- Receive the help and support of caring adults

When a child becomes verbally or physically aggressive, we intervene immediately to protect all of the children. Our usual approach to helping children with challenging behaviors is to show them how to solve problems using appropriate interactions. When discipline is necessary, it is clear, consistent and understandable to the child. We maintain a zero tolerance to bullying. If you have any concerns about this at any time, please report it to the Director of the Center.

In the event a parent must view the video footage of their child, he or she is required to schedule an appointment with the director. Victory Kids' Academy does not send or email any video footage pertaining to a child to his or her parent.

Physical Restraint

Physical restraint is not used or permitted for discipline. There are rare instances when we need to ensure a child's safety or that of others and we may restrain a child by gently holding her or him only for as long as is necessary for control of the situation.

Notification of Behavioral Issues to Families

If a child's behavior/circumstance is of concern, communication will begin with the parents as the first step to understanding the child's individual needs and challenges. We will work together to evaluate these needs in the context of our program. If the issue is not resolved after working together the following will occur:

- 1st Warning: Child Will Suspended For 1 Day
- 2nd Warning: Child Will Be Suspended For 3 Days
- 3rd Warning: Parent Will Be Given A Letter Of Termination For Their Children Attending Victory Kids' Academy

If a child intentionally harms a teacher in any form, the child will be expelled from Victory Kids' Academy (ex. Hitting, Spitting, kicks, touches in a harmful way).

If a child unintentionally harms a teacher in any form, they will be suspended for 3 days.

If a child intentionally breaks, rips, or harm any property belonging to Victory Kids' Academy, parents will be held liable for replacing the property.

If a child has repetitive behavioral issue(s), that child will be expelled from Victory Kids' Academy.

On rare occasions, a child's behavior may warrant the need to find a more suitable setting for care. Examples of such instances include:

- A child appears to be a danger to others.
- Continued care could be harmful to, or not in the best interest of the child as determined by a medical, psychological, or social service personnel.
- Undue burden on our resources and finances for the child's accommodations for success and participation.

TUITION AND FEES

Payment

Prices Are As Follow:

6wks – 12 Months.....	\$125.00
12 Months – 24 Months.....	\$120.00
24 Months – 36 Months.....	\$115.00
36 Months – 48 Months.....	\$100.00
Hourly Rate.....	\$7.00
Daily Rate.....	\$30.00
2 Consecutive.....	\$60.00
3 Consecutive.....	\$80.00
After School.....	\$65.00
Fill Day for School – Aged.....	\$80.00
Annual Registration.....	\$65.00

A non-refundable registration fee of \$65.00 is due semi-annually the first Friday in January and first Friday of August (if a weekend, the day of the week that follows) or the day of enrollment. This fee will not be pro – rated.

Victory Kids' Academy will no longer accept Cash App payments for registration fees, tuition fees, and late payments.

If a parent's child is unable to attend VKA, due to COVID-19, then the parent is still charged for the days unattended.

When a parent's child stops attending VKA and resumes attendance after 2 weeks, the parent will have to reapply and pay another registration fee.

Sibling Discounts

Parents will only be charged one registration fee. The discount will be taken from the oldest child's daycare fee.

Late Payment Charges

Late payments can pose serious problems for our programs. Therefore, we have put procedures in place to reduce their impact.

If payment is not received on the day that it is due, a late fee of **\$25.00** will be added to your next tuition payment for each week that it is late. If your account has not been paid in full within 7 business day, your child may be discharged from the program.

Any payments made will be applied to the oldest charges and late fees may still apply if the account is not paid in full by the next tuition due date.

If payment is more than 30 business days past due, we may attempt to recover payment in small claims court and/or your account may be sent to a 3rd party collections agency. You will be responsible for all expenses associated with these actions including all court and attorney fees.

Returned Checks/Rejected Transaction Charges

All returned checks or rejected ACH (automatic debits) or credit card transactions will be charged a fee of \$30. This charge may be collected electronically. Two or more returned checks or rejected transactions will result in your account being placed on "cash only" status.

Late Pick-up Fees

Late pick-up is not a normal program option and will only be considered as an exceptional occurrence. Please arrive in time to allow our staff to leave at a reasonable time. Please call and inform us in advance if you will be arriving after hours. Late fees of **\$1 per minute** will be assessed beginning at **5:35 PM** and will be due upon arrival. Late fees will be due when you arrive to pick up your child. Your child will not be allowed into our facility unless the fee is paid.

Special Activity Fees

From time-to-time there will be additional fees associated with special activities or field trips. These fees are due prior to the event, activity or trip.

Additional Fees/Credits

- **Vacation** – to retain your child's spot during vacation, 50% of your regular tuition is due. Vacation days can be used, if a two-week written notice is given in advance for the days the child will not be in attendance. Tuition must be paid prior to going on vacation. These fees are non-refundable if you choose not to return.
- **A non-refundable enrollment** – registration fee of \$55.00 is due annually on January 2 or the time of enrollment.

Credits & No Credits

- **Credits will be given for Excused Absences** – if your child is hospitalized. A written doctor's note is required to receive a credit.
- **Credit will not be given for Sick Days** – there are no credits for sick days. Sick days are considered in determining tuition and are not refundable.
- **Credit will be given for Inclement Weather** – if we do not open due to inclement weather on a day that your child is scheduled to attend, your account will be credited for that day.

ATTENDANCE & WITHDRAWAL

Absence

If your child is going to be absent or arrive after 9:00 AM, please call us at (229) 435 – 0900. We will be concerned about your child if we do not hear from you. If your child is absent in the beginning of the week without any communication with the facility, we do not expect your child towards the end of the week. Staff is assigned to work in accordance to what is needed. Lack of communication can result in not having proper staffing to accommodate the number of children we have.

Vacation

Vacation days only apply if your child is normally scheduled to attend on those days. Each child is given 5 vacation days each calendar year after 5 months of enrollment. The Academy has to be notified within two weeks of taking a vacation.

Withdrawal

A written notice, two weeks in advance, is required by the center when a child is being withdrawn. Failure to notify will result in forfeiture of your two-week deposit.

Closing Due to Extreme Weather

Should severe weather or other conditions (i.e., snow, storms, floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, blizzards, loss of power, loss of water) prevent us from opening on time or at all, notification to the families will be announced on through Procure.

If it becomes necessary to close early, we will contact you or your emergency contacts as soon as possible. Your child's early pick-up is your responsibility to arrange.

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

General Procedure

We open at **6:30 AM**. Drop off and pick area is located at front of Victory Kids Academy Daycare entrance. Please do not drop-off your child prior to the opening. Parents are expected to accompany their children.

We close at 5:30 PM. Please allow enough time to arrive, sign your child out, and leave by closing time.

Parents are required to download and use the Procare App. on their phone to sign their child in and out of Victory Kids' Academy.

If a parent does not have a cell phone, he or she may sign in and out using the tablet located in the foyer with the assistance of a Victory Kid's Academy's employee.

Your child will not be allowed into the facility if you arrive after 9:00 A.m. without a reasonable excuse. Our teacher's take value in managing their time and teaching. Children arriving consistently late can disrupt classroom activities. Children are not allowed to be dropped off during our resting time which is between the hours of 12 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Cell Phone Usage

The times you spend in the center dropping off and picking up your child are the primary windows of time we have to communicate with you about your child. In order to make the best use of these opportunities, as well as to be attentive to your child and other children, we ask that you NOT use your cell phone at any time while visiting the center.

Authorized & Unauthorized Pick-up

Your child will only be released to you or those persons you have listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. If you want a person who is not identified as an Emergency and Release Contact to pick-up your child, you must notify us in advance, in writing. Your child will not be released without prior written authorization. The person picking up your child will be required to show a picture ID as verification. Please notify your pick-up person of our policy.

In order to safeguard your child, we will need copies of any court ordered custody agreements. Without a custody agreement, we are not able to prevent the release of your child to a parent.

If a child has not been picked up after closing and we have not heard from you, attempts will be made to contact you, and the contacts listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. Provisions will be made for someone to stay with your child as long as possible, but if after **1 hour** we have not been able to reach you or a person listed as an Emergency and Release Contact, we will call the local child protective services agency.

Right to Refuse Child Release

We may refuse to release children if we have reasonable cause to suspect that any person picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way that may endanger the child. To protect your child, we may request that another adult listed as an Emergency and Release Contact pick-up the child or we may call the police to prevent potential harm to your child. Reoccurring situations may result in the release of your child from the program.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

What to Bring

- **Infants:** Enough clean bottles for a day's use, at least 6 diapers per day, and at least 4 changes of clothes per day. All bottles must be labeled and dated. Please label diapers and wipes.

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- **Toddlers:** Six diapers, wipes, a blanket that is labeled, and at least two changes of clothes per day
 - **Older Toddlers:** Labeled wipes, blanket, and at least three changes of clothes or more per day if going through the toilet training program.
 - **Preschoolers:** At least one change of clothes, socks, shoes, blanket, and wipes.
 - **After School Care Children:** Books for homework, appropriate play clothes.

Please label all items brought from home with your child's name (i.e., clothes, bottles, diapers, pacifiers, crib sheet, blanket, etc.) to prevent items from becoming misplaced or lost. We are not responsible for lost or damaged items. Blankets and soiled clothing will be sent home on an as needed basis for laundering and return to the center. If you require your child to use a specific kind of wipes, please supply the brand for your child.

Every Friday parents are asked to take all their child's belongings home to wash and bring back the following Monday.

From time-to-time parents will be asked to bring in Lysol spray and Sanitizing Wipes. This will help in reducing germs in our facility.

Cubbies

Upon enrollment each child will be assigned a "cubby." Cubbies are labeled with your child's name photo. Please check your child's cubby on a daily basis for items that need to be taken home.

Lost & Found

You can look for lost items and bring found items to the Lost-and-found Box located at the Front Office. Please note that we are not responsible and will not replace lost personal property, especially cell phone.

Toys from Home

We request that you do not allow your child to bring toys from home into the center unless they are part of a show-and-tell activity or within the first two months of starting our program.

NUTRITION

Foods Brought from Home

Food brought from home is permitted under the following conditions:

- Perishable food to be shared with other children must be store-bought and in its original package.
- Baked goods may be made at home if they are fully cooked, do not require refrigeration and were made with freshly purchased ingredients. A list of ingredients is required, and there must be enough food for all children.
- Foods should be labeled with the child's name, date, and type of food.
- Children will not be allowed to share food provided by the child's family unless the food is intended for sharing with all of the children.
- Leftover food will be discarded except for foods that do not require refrigeration and/or come in a commercially-wrapped package that was never opened.

Good Lunch Box Suggestions for a Balanced, Nutritional Lunch.	
Bean & cheese dip Tortilla chips (crackers) Tropical fruit salad Broccoli Milk	Chicken strips Whole Wheat Roll Orange wedges Broccoli Milk
Cheese quiche Fresh fruit cup Broccoli Milk	Whole Wheat Macaroni & Tuna Salad Green Beans Carrots Milk

Victory Kids' Academy will not distribute a child any unhealthy foods as treats, but will give the children a healthy food, snack or toy as a reward.

Food Prepared for or at the Center

Food prepared for or at the center will be properly planned, prepared and portioned according to the Child and Adult Care Food Program (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/care/>) and the state requirements for food service. Water is offered whenever the child asks anytime throughout the day. Our mealtime is as follows:

Breakfast-----7:30 A.M – 8:25 A.M.

Lunch-----11:15 A.M. – 11:45 A.M.

Snack-----2:00 P.M. – 3:45 P.M.

Food Allergies

If your child has a food allergy, you must notify us verbally and in writing so that we can make appropriate substitutions. The written notification should list appropriate food substitutions and must be updated at least annually.

Food allergies can be life threatening and each child with a food allergy should have an action plan for emergency care completed by the family physician.

Meal Time

At mealtime the dining table is set with plastic plates and flatware, and the server & teacher will serve each child. The teacher may designate a child each day to help with serving to include children in their meals. Everyone sits at the same table. Good table manners are modeled and encouraged. Monthly menus are posted for viewing by parents / caregivers.

A caregiver who is trained in first aid for choking is present at all meals.

Infant Feedings

Infant feedings follow these procedures:

- Infants will be held for bottle-feeding until able to hold his or her own bottle. Bottles will never be propped.
- Infants are fed “on cue” to the extent possible (at least every 4 hours and usually not more than hourly) and by a consistent caregiver/teacher.
- Breastfeeding is supported by providing a place for nursing mothers to feed their babies. Expressed breast milk may be brought from home if frozen or kept cold during transit. All breast milk and formula shall be returned to the child’s home or discarded at the end of each day. Previously frozen, thawed breast milk must be used within 24 hours. Bottles must be clearly labeled with the child’s name and the date the milk was expressed. Frozen breast milk must be dated and may be kept in the freezer for up to 5 days.
- Breast milk and formula brought from home must be dated and labeled with the child’s name.
- Labels on all milk/formula containers should be resistant to loss of the name and date/time when washing and handling.
- Solid foods will only be introduced after a consultation with the child’s family.

Children 24 Months and Older

- No child shall go more than 4 hours without a meal or snack being provided.
- Children are encouraged to self-feed to the extent that they have the skills. Children are encouraged, but not forced to eat a variety of foods.
- Round, firm foods that pose a choking hazard for children less than 4 years of age are not permitted. These foods include hot dogs, whole grapes, peanuts, popcorn, thickly spread peanut butter and hard candy.

HEALTH

Immunizations

Immunizations are required according to the current schedule recommended by the U.S. Public Health Services and the American Academy of Pediatrics, www.aap.org. Every 1st of the month, we check with the public health department or the American Academy of Pediatrics for updates of the recommended immunization schedule. Our state regulations regarding attendance of children who are not immunized due to religious or medical reasons are followed. Unimmunized children are excluded during outbreaks of vaccine preventable illness as directed by the state health department.

All caregivers, teachers, and staff are required to be current with all immunizations routinely recommended for adults by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Physicals

Routine physicals are required according to the current recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, www.aap.org. A copy of your child’s physical should be received before but must be received no later than 15 days after your child begins the program. Families are responsible for assuring that their child’s physicals are kept up-to-date and that a copy of the results of the child’s health assessment is given to the program.

Illness

We understand that it is difficult for a family member to leave or miss work, but to protect other children; you may not bring a sick child to the center. The center has the right to refuse a child who appears ill. You will be called and asked to retrieve your child if your child exhibits any of the following symptoms. This is not an all-inclusive list. We will try to keep your child comfortable, but he/she will be excluded from all activities until you arrive.

- Illness that prevents your child from participating in activities.
- Illness that results in greater need for care than we can provide.
- Illness that poses a risk of spread of harmful diseases to others.
- Fever (100°F or higher under the arm, 101°F or higher in the mouth, 102°F or higher in the ear) accompanied by other symptoms.
- Diarrhea – stools with blood or mucus, and/or uncontrolled, unformed stools that cannot be contained in a diaper/underwear or toilet.
- Vomiting – green or bloody, and/or more than 2 times during the previous 24 hours.
- Mouth sores caused by drooling.
- Rash with fever, unless a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease.
- Pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge, until on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Head lice, until treatment and all nits are removed.
- Scabies, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Chickenpox, until all lesions have dried and crusted.
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough), until 5 days of antibiotics.
- Hepatitis A virus, until one week after immune globulin has been administered.
- Tuberculosis, until a health professional indicates the child is not infectious.
- Rubella, until 6 days after the rash appears.
- Mumps, until 5 days after onset of parotid gland swelling.
- Measles, until 4 days after onset of rash.
- Has a physician or other health professionals written order that child be separated from other children.

Children who have been ill may return when:

- They are free of fever, vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours.
- They have been treated with an antibiotic for 24 hours.
- They are able to participate comfortably in all usual activities.
- They are free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling (not related to teething) unless:
 - The child's physician signs a note stating that the child's condition is not contagious, and;
 - The involved areas can be covered by a bandage without seepage or drainage through the bandage.
- If a child had a reportable communicable disease, a physician's note stating that the child is no longer contagious and may return to our care is required.

If a parent's child is unable to attend VKA, due to COVID-19, then the parent is still charged for the days unattended.

Allergy Prevention

Families are expected to notify us regarding children's food and environmental allergies. Families of children with diagnosed allergies are required to provide us a letter detailing the child's symptoms, reactions, treatments and care. A list of the children's allergies will be posted in the main area and kitchen. We are trained to familiarize ourselves and consult the list to avoid the potential of exposing children to substances to which they have known allergies.

Medications

Our center does not administer prescription or over the counter medication to children except in the following cases: **Non-prescription topical ointments** (e.g., diaper cream or teething gel), sunscreen and insect repellent require a note signed by the family, specifying frequency and dosage to be administered as well as the length of time the authorization is valid which cannot exceed 12 months.

Sunscreen and Insect Repellent Policy

Sunscreen and insect repellent must be: 1) Safe for the age of the child; 2) In the original container; and 3) Within the expiration date noted on the product. Aerosols, as well as combined sunscreen and insect repellent are prohibited.

Prior to use at a center / school, sunscreen and repellent should be applied to the child at least once at home to test for any allergic reaction. A Parent Release – Sunscreen and Insect Repellent form must be signed by the parent / guardian before either is used. This permission slip must be updated annually.

Communicable Diseases

When an enrolled child or an employee of the center has a (suspected) reportable disease, it is our legal responsibility to notify the local Board of Health or Department of Public Health. We will take care to notify families about exposure so children can receive preventive treatments. Included among the reportable illnesses are the following:

- Bacterial Meningitis
- Botulism
- Chicken Pox
- COVID-19
- Diphtheria
- Hemophilus Influenza (invasive)
- Measles (including suspect)
- Meningococcal Infection (invasive)
- Poliomyelitis (including suspect)
- Rabies (human only)
- Rubella Congenital and Non-congenital (including suspect)
- Tetanus (including suspect)
- H1N1 Virus
- Any cluster/outbreak of illness
- Tuberculosis

COVID-19

- Children 3 years old and over is required to wear a mask before entering the facility. Masks must be labeled.
- Staff is required to wear mask throughout the day unless no one is in space.
- Temperatures are check daily before the child or staff enters the facility and throughout the day.
- Parents with no mask on is required to wait outside facility.
- Parents are not required to pay at this time if child is out due to COVID-19.
- The undersigned agrees to release, discharge, hold harmless and indemnify Victory Kids' Academy, its agents, employees and any others acting on the daycare's behalf (the Releasees) of and from any and claims, demands, causes of action and / or legal liabilities for injuries to or death of my child's occurring during, or resulting from, or participation in the above – mentioned program or activity and related in any way to COVID-19, even if the cause, damage, or injuries are alleged to be the fault or alleged to be caused by the negligence or carelessness of the Releases.

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

SAFETY

Clothing

Please dress your child in practical clothing that allows for freedom of movement and is appropriate for the weather. Your child will be involved in a variety of activities including painting, outdoor play, sand, weather, and other sensory activities. Our playground is used as an extension of the center, and daily programs are conducted outside whenever weather permits.

One particular aspect of concern is the risk associated with children's clothing that may become entangled with climbing or sliding equipment that could lead to choking or other serious harm. All drawstrings from children's clothes should be removed as a precaution.

Sandals and flip-flops are not appropriate for center play and make it difficult for your child to participate in some activities.

Parents, please be mindful to dress your child in a coat that's suitable, pertaining to the weather during the winter months (Ex. When it's time for the children to participate in outdoor play, parents make sure your child is equip with a winter, warm coat, hood, and mittens if possible.)

It is difficult and too time consuming for staff to change children before and after play. Staff will not change your child's clothes to accommodate play time.

Extreme Weather and Outdoor Play

Outdoor play will not occur if the outside temperature is greater than 90 °F or less than 40 °F degrees. Additionally, outdoor play will be cancelled if the air quality rating is 25 or below.

Communal Water-Play

Communal, unsupervised water play is prohibited. Supervised children are permitted to engage in water-play. Precautions are taken to ensure that communal water-play does not spread communicable infectious disease. Water will be changed out daily and as needed throughout outdoor playtime.

Injuries

Safety is a major concern in child care and so daily safety inspections are completed inside and outside the center area in order to prevent injuries. First aid will be administered by a trained caregiver in the event that your child sustains a minor injury (e.g., scraped knee). You will receive an incident report outlining the incident and course of action taken. If the injury produces any type of swelling or needs medical attention, you will be contacted immediately. Each classroom is equipped with a first aid kit meeting the state regulations.

In the event of a serious medical emergency, the child will be taken to the hospital immediately by ambulance, while we will try to contact you or an emergency contact.

Biting

Biting is a normal stage of development that is common among infants and toddlers – and sometimes even among preschoolers. It is something that most young children will try at least once.

When biting happens, our response will be to care for and help the child who was bitten and to help the biter learn a more appropriate behavior. Our focus will not be on punishment for biting, but on effective behaviors that address the specific reason for biting.

Notes will be written to the family of the child who was bitten and the biter's family. We will work together with the families of each to keep them informed and to develop strategies for change. If the biting continues to occur after three incidents, the child will be suspended from our program.

Respectful Behavior

All children and families will be treated with respect and dignity. In return, we expect the same from all our families and staff. We will not tolerate hostile or aggressive behavior, or disrespectfulness.

If parents have disagreements, argues among each other, fight, or show disrespect towards each other while on VKA premises, your child will be removed from Victory Kids' Academy care. Also, if parents have conflict with each other, daycare staff will not get involved or take sides. We are only responsible for doing what the custody parent desires and caring for the best interest of the child. Parents are not allowed to text or call provider with disagreements or to remove someone from the pick-up list or contact with child. They will need to make adjustments on enrollment form.

If this occurs, we reserve the right to ask to control you to control your behavior or to remove your children from our care.

Smoking

The poisons in secondhand smoke are especially harmful to infants and young children's developing bodies, therefore the indoor and outdoor center environment and vehicles used by the center are non-smoking areas at all times. The use of tobacco in any form is prohibited on the center's premises.

Prohibited Substances

The use of alcohol or illegal drugs is prohibited on the center's premises. Possession of illegal substances or unauthorized potentially toxic substances is prohibited.

Any adult who appears to be inebriated, intoxicated, or otherwise under the influence of mind-altering or polluting substances is required to leave the premises immediately.

Dangerous Weapons

A dangerous weapon is a gun, knife, razor, or any other object, which by the manner it is used or intended to be used, is capable of inflicting bodily harm. Families, children, staff or guests (other than law enforcement officers) possessing a dangerous weapon will not be permitted onto the premises.

In cases that clearly involve a gun, or any other weapon on our premises, the police will be called, and the individual(s) involved will be immediately removed from the premises. This policy applies to visible or concealed weapons.

Child Custody

Without a court document, both parents/guardians have equal rights to custody. We are legally bound to respect the wishes of the parent/guardian with legal custody based on a certified copy of the most recent court order, active restraining order, or court-ordered visitation schedule. We

will not accept the responsibility of deciding which parent/guardian has legal custody where there is no court documentation.

Suspected Child Abuse

We are required by law to report all observations of child abuse or neglect cases to the appropriate state authorities if we have reasonable cause to believe or suspect a child is suffering from abuse or neglect or is in danger of abuse or neglect, no matter where the abuse might have occurred. The child protective service agency will determine appropriate action and may conduct an investigation. It then becomes the role of the agency to determine if the report is substantiated and to work with the family to ensure the child's needs are met. Our center will cooperate fully with any investigation and will maintain confidentiality concerning any report of child abuse or neglect.

EMERGENCIES

Lost or Missing Child

In the unlikely event that a child becomes lost or separated from a group, all available staff will search for the child. If the child is not located within 15 minutes, the family and the police will be notified.

Fire Safety

Our center is fully equipped with alarms, lights, cameras, sprinkler system, and fire extinguishers.

Our fire evacuation plan is reviewed with the children and staff on a monthly basis.

Emergency Transportation

In the event your child needs to be transported due to a medical emergency, if no other authorized person can be contacted and the need for transportation is essential, an ambulance will be called for transportation. A proper escort will accompany and remain with the child until a family member or emergency contact arrives.

CENTER POLICIES

Our center policies not included in this handbook are reviewed monthly and updated as needed. They are available for review upon request to the center director.

Family Handbook Acknowledgement

Please sign this acknowledgement, detach it from the handbook, and return it to the center prior to enrollment.

This handbook may be updated from time-to-time, and notice will be provided as updates are implemented.

Thank you for your acknowledging the policies and procedures we have established for the safety and welfare of all children in our care. We look forward to getting to know you and your family.

I have received the **Victory Kids' Academy Program Family Handbook**, and I have reviewed the family handbook with a member of the Victory Kids' Academy Program staff. It is my responsibility to understand and familiarize myself with the Family Handbook and to ask center management for clarification of any policy, procedure or information contained in the Early Victory Kids' Academy Program Family Handbook that I do not understand.

Recipient Signature

Date

Center Staff Signature

Date

