



# Family Handbook

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**YAAMAHANA  
FAMILY HANDBOOK  
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

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## **SECTION I** **INTRODUCTION**

Yaamahana/Chitimacha Child Development Center provides a program designed for Tribal children six weeks to five years of age. Yaamahana will also provide after school and summer care to four and five-year olds completing pre-kindergarten when space is available.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Yaamahana's mission is to promote the development of the child through quality and age appropriate learning experiences.

Our focus is to provide a safe and nurturing environment that supports the social, emotional, physical, intellectual and cultural development of the child.

#### **We believe in:**

- P Partnership with families
- L Learning through play
- A Awareness of culture
- Y Yaamahana – a place for children

### **YAAMAHANA'S GOALS FOR THE CHILDREN**

The Yaamahana staff shall provide a variety of developmentally appropriate activities, experiences, and materials that are selected to engage children in active, meaningful learning and to achieve the following goals:

- -develop trust in adults and peers
- -foster positive self-identity and sense of well-being
- -develop social skills and knowledge
- -encourage children to think, reason, question, and experiment
- -encourage language (speaking, listening) and literacy development (emerging reading, writing awareness, and skills)
- -enhance physical development and skills
- -encourage and demonstrate sound health, safety, and nutritional practices
- -encourage creative expression, representation, and appreciation for the arts
- -develop awareness of Chitimacha cultural heritage and language development (speaking and listening), and respect for other cultures

### **YAAMAHANA'S GOALS FOR THE FAMILIES**

The Yaamahana staff shall strive to work with families to achieve shared goals for children. Our goals for enhancing Child Care Provider/parent relationships include:

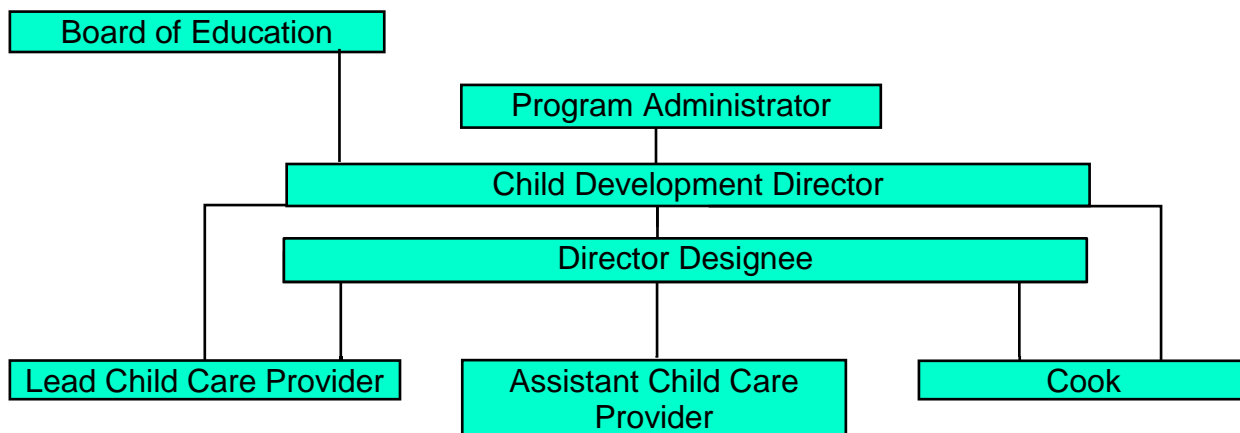
- -develop relationships based on mutual respect and cooperation
- -establish and maintain regular communication with parents
- -encourage parents to become involved in the program and participate in decisions about their children's care and education

## **MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AND PROCEDURES**

### **YAAMAHANA ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

The Chitimacha Board of Education, acting as the governing body, shall have the responsibility of overseeing Yaamahana to ensure delivery of high quality services to children and families in accordance with Tribal policies and procedures, Yaamahana goals and objectives, and Yaamahana policies and procedures.

Yaamahana shall maintain an organizational structure that supports the accomplishment of program goals and objectives. The Child Development Director shall provide the program with vision and leadership, and ensure management functions are properly carried out. The hierarchy of Yaamahana is as follows:



### **RECORD-KEEPING**

Yaamahana shall establish and maintain efficient and effective record-keeping systems to provide accurate and timely information regarding children and families. The confidentiality of the information is of the utmost importance. A record for each child will be kept on file at the center. The record should include, but is not limited to the following:

- Pre-enrollment meeting verification form
- General information master form
- Emergency contact & release information form
- Copy of proof of degree of Indian blood, if applicable
- Copy of birth certificate
- Copy of social security card
- Proof of legal guardianship, if applicable
- Updated immunization record
- Payment and attendance schedule agreement form
- Authorization for photographing, videotaping, audiotaping and observing child
- Authorization for non-vehicular excursions
- Authorization for medication administration, if applicable

- Authorization for application of topical products
- Authorization for water activities
- Parental agreement form

Children’s records shall remain on file for a minimum of three years from the date of termination of the child’s enrollment at the center.

### **LICENSING**

The State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) establishes statewide minimum standards for the health, safety and well-being of children in early learning centers, ensures maintenance of these standards, and regulates conditions in centers through a program of licensing administered by the Department of Education, Licensing Division. As a Type III early learning center, Yaamahana shall meet the performance and academic standards of the Early Childhood Care and Education Network regarding kindergarten readiness as determined by BESE.

### **DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION POLICY**

Parents are advised the Louisiana Department of Education’s Child Care Licensing Division serves as Yaamahana’s licensing authority. Licensing surveys/ inspections regulations, and information regarding early learning centers including Yaamahana, is available online at the Department of Education website at [www.louisianabelieves.com](http://www.louisianabelieves.com).

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

Subject to Native American preference as permitted by applicable law, and in accordance with Federal law, Yaamahana/Chitimacha Child Development Center does not discriminate against any person(s) on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, age, handicapping condition, ancestry or whether the child is being breastfed.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY AND SECURITY OF FILES POLICY**

Confidential information is restricted and private. Through written records and daily interactions with children and families, employees may become aware of potentially sensitive information. Employees of the center shall not disclose or knowingly permit the disclosure of any information concerning the child and his/her family, directly or indirectly, to any unauthorized person.

The center will maintain the confidentiality of all children’s records. Written, informed consent from a parent must be received prior to releasing any information, recordings and/or photographs from which the child might be identified, except for authorized tribal, state, and federal agencies. All records are the property of the center and will be in a locked cabinet to secure them against loss, tampering or unauthorized use.

### **REQUIRED STAFF**

The center has a full-time, qualified Director who is responsible for overseeing, planning, managing, and controlling the center’s daily activities as well as responding to parental concerns and ensuring that minimum licensing requirements are met. In the absence of the Director, the Director Designee will assume the daily operations of the facility. When both the Director and Director Designee are not on the

premises due to a temporary absence, an employee at least 21 years of age will be appointed as Staff-In-Charge.

There shall always be a minimum of two staff present during hours of operation when children are present.

If children are picked up or dropped off at the facility by a public or private school bus, staff shall be present to safely escort children to and from the bus.

### **STAFF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The Yaamahana staff shall follow written policies and procedures that give instructions in carrying out daily routines. The policies and procedures help guide the staff in providing quality care in a safe and healthy environment. Parents have the right to review staff policies and procedures. If a parent is interested in reviewing this document, he/she can ask the Child Development Director for a copy.

### **ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES, FIREARMS**

The center prohibits the use of alcohol, tobacco, and the use or possession of illegal substances or unauthorized potentially toxic substances, knives, fireworks, firearms, pellet or BB guns (loaded or unloaded) on the child care center premises, on the playground and on any field trip.

### **SMOKING**

Smoking is prohibited in all areas used by the children. The only designated smoking area for employees and visitors is the outdoor area by the soft drink machine. Smoking is not allowed in any other location on the premises, even in inclement weather. Smoking for employees is limited to break periods, lunch, and before and after work hours. Smoking is not allowed in the presence of children on any field trip. When employees smoke during work hours, they are required to wear an over-shirt or smock over their clothing to limit the effects of third-hand smoke.

### **SEX OFFENDERS**

The child care staff shall not permit an individual convicted of a sex offense to have physical access to the facility. The Director shall immediately notify law enforcement personnel and the Licensing Division if they have knowledge that a registered sex offender is on the premises of the center.

### **UTILITY FAILURE**

When the facility experiences any utility failure including loss of electrical power or plumbing failure for at least one hour, the Director will alert the Program Administrator of the utility failure. The Program Administrator and Director will determine if the utility failure compromises the health, safety, and well-being of the children. If it is determined that the utility failure does compromise children's health, safety, and well-being, parents will be contacted to pick up their children within thirty minutes of the initial contact. The staff shall be required to remain one hour after children have departed. Should the power/plumbing be restored within an hour of dismissing the children and before 3:30 PM, the staff shall contact all parents to give them the option to return their child/children to the facility for the remainder of the day.

## **SECTION II** **PROGRAM COMPONENTS AND POLICIES**

### **ENROLLMENT ELIGIBILITY**

The center accepts Native American children from federally recognized Tribes. Within one month of enrollment in a federally recognized Tribe, proof of Degree of Indian blood must be submitted. Failure to provide the paperwork may result in termination of enrollment.

The center will also accept non-Indian children who are dependents of Indian households, located within St. Mary Parish, State of Louisiana. The parent or legal guardian of the non-Indian child must be residing with an enrolled member of a federally recognized Indian Tribe to whom they are legally married.

When space is available and upon the discretion of the Director and/or Board of Education, Yaamahana will accept non-tribal children of full-time and part-time employees of the Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana and Cypress Bayou Casino Hotel. Proof of employment from the Human Resource Department must be provided with the enrollment application. The tribal employee must be the natural parent or legal guardian of the child. Proof of legal guardianship must be provided with the enrollment application. Enrollment takes place each year in the latter part of July or August. First available space at the time of enrollment will be filled with tribal children. Once a tribal employee's child is enrolled, the child's place at Yaamahana will be secure until the following year's enrollment/re-enrollment. The same procedure will be followed for infants, with one exception. If a tribal infant is born after enrollment/re-enrollment and there are no available spaces in the infant room, a non-tribal infant may lose his/her place. The parents of the non-tribal infant will be given a two week notice so they can find alternative care for the infant. If the employee resigns or is terminated from his/her position with the Tribe or Casino, the child will be allowed to remain enrolled for no longer than two weeks after separation of employment.

The education and care of Indian children is the priority, with the privilege of enrollment to non-Indian children dictated by physical restraints and limitations of the facility. Therefore, Indian children will be admitted first, and thereafter, qualified non-Indian children.

### **ENROLLMENT OF CHILDREN**

In order for a child to be enrolled, the following steps must be completed:

1. Completing an enrollment packet: Packets are available online at [www.chitimacha.gov](http://www.chitimacha.gov) (Departments and Services – Child Development Center) or you may pick up a hard copy at Yaamahana. Completed packets must be returned to Yaamahana prior to the child's admission.
2. Scheduling and attending a pre-enrollment meeting with the Child Development Director. You can schedule a meeting when you pick up an Enrollment Packet or call 923-0100 to set up a meeting. The pre-enrollment meeting will include a review of policies and procedures, a tour of the facility, an opportunity to meet the Yaamahana staff, and a time for the Director to answer questions the family may have about the program. At the pre-enrollment meeting, the Director and the parents shall determine that the individual needs of the child (children) can adequately be met by the center's program and facilities.
3. Prior to enrollment, classroom visits by the family will help make separation easier. The family can schedule these visits with the Director at the pre-enrollment meeting. The family shall not be charged for these pre-enrollment visits, however, a parent is required to remain with the child.



4. The Enrollment Packet includes a checklist of required documentation. When the application is returned to the Director, the completed checklist of required documentation should also be returned to indicate that the applicant has included all documentation to complete the application.

Documents needed for enrollment include:

- Completed enrollment packet (one per child)
  - Proof of degree of Indian blood, if applicable
  - Birth certificate
  - Social Security card
  - Proof of legal guardianship, if applicable
  - Immunization record
  - \$50.00 registration fee (Make checks payable to Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana)
  - Proof of monthly income (ex. Check stubs, child support payments, government payments, etc.), if applicable
5. When space is available and the applicant has submitted an incomplete enrollment packet (missing documentation that is required by the checklist), the parent must submit the missing documentation or evidence of acquiring the documentation within 3 working days after notification of available space or the child will be dropped to the bottom of the list and the parents of the next child on the list will be notified. The registration fee will not be reimbursed.
  6. Only Native American families are eligible for CCDF Tuition Assistance. Once all enrollment information is returned to the Director, the family's information will be reviewed by the CCDF Program Administrator to determine eligibility for the CCDF program. Applicants for CCDF Tuition Assistance will receive a letter indicating approval/denial for services within 10 working days, excluding weekends and holidays, of the receipt of the completed application packet. Eligibility for CCDF Tuition Assistance is based on the information contained and provided in the completed application packet. Non-tribal families and Tribal families not receiving CCDF tuition assistance are eligible to apply for the Louisiana Department of Education's Child Care Assistance Program. To request an application, email [LDEccap@la.gov](mailto:LDEccap@la.gov) or call 1-877-453-2721.

#### **AFTER SCHOOL AND SUMMER CARE**

When space is available, after school care will be offered only to children currently attending pre-k at the Chitimacha Tribal School. After school care will be provided on school day afternoons from 2:30 PM – 5:30 PM. Full day care will not be provided during school holidays or other school closures. Since after school care is only offered to CTS pre-kindergarten students when school is in session, parents will not be charged tuition during school holidays. When space is available, full day summer care will be offered to children just completing pre-k.

#### **WAITING LIST POLICY**

The number of children enrolled in each room is based on the age of the children and the size of the classroom and is limited as follows:

|                    |             |
|--------------------|-------------|
| Infants -          | 8 children  |
| Younger Toddlers - | 8 children  |
| Older Toddlers -   | 10 children |
| Three-Year-Olds-   | 14 children |
| Four-Year-Olds-    | 8 children  |

Enrollment packets for unborn children will be accepted two months prior to the infant's due date. When space is available, parents of the first child on the waiting list for the room will be notified. If the parent does not respond within three working days after notification of an available space, the child will be dropped to the bottom of the list and the parents of the next child on the list will be notified. Situations may arise that require the Director's discretion. For example, a space is available and an unborn infant is next on the waiting list. The Director may give the space to the second child on the waiting list knowing that a space will be available around the time the unborn infant turns six weeks old.

### **HOURS OF OPERATION AND HOLIDAYS**

Yaamahana is open Monday through Friday, 7:00 A.M. to 5:30 P.M. (subject to change due to the needs of the community). Yaamahana does not offer care for children during night time hours. Families can choose full-day care or half-day care (morning only 7:00 A.M. – 12:00 Noon). The center is closed for two staff development days and one facility maintenance day each year. Notification will be sent prior to the scheduled dates.

The following national and local holidays will be observed:

|                                 |                  |
|---------------------------------|------------------|
| Labor Day                       | Mardi Gras       |
| American Indian Day             | Good Friday      |
| Thanksgiving Day, and day after | Memorial Day     |
| Christmas Day and day after     | Independence Day |
| New Year's Day                  |                  |

When any holiday falls on Saturday, the preceding Friday will be observed as a holiday. A holiday which falls on Sunday will be observed on the following Monday (except Easter Sunday).

In the event of power failures, severe weather such as hurricanes, etc., Yaamahana will not be able to reimburse families for days missed. Yaamahana continues to incur operational expenses even though the center is closed.

### **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE**

A parent or designated adult must sign (full name) the child in upon arrival and sign out upon departure. Children who leave and return to the center during the day shall be signed out/in. A child will not be able to leave the center with anyone other than a designated adult. These designated adults will be listed on the Emergency Contact and Release Information Form.

**Since routines are so important for young children,** parents **must** have their child in attendance by 9:30 AM each day. Please keep in mind that breakfast will be served until 9:00 AM. Due to the lunch schedule and rest time, children should not be dropped off between 9:30 AM and 2:00 PM. Exceptions shall be made for special circumstances like doctor's appointments as long as the office staff is alerted prior to the appointment.

A fee of \$1 per minute per child will be assessed to anyone picking up a child after 5:30 P.M. At 5:45 P.M., the fee will increase to \$1.50 per minute. If morning part-time services are chosen, please pick up your child by 12:00 P.M. If your child is not picked up by 12:00 P.M., a fee of \$1 per minute per child will be assessed. At 12:15 P.M., the fee will increase to \$1.50 per minute. The late fee is due on the following day before your child will be allowed to attend.

At arrival and departure, parents and Child Care Providers shall share information related to child's health and/or safety (Example – whether child slept well; medication, notified of illness in group; injuries reported).

When a child is picked up after 5:25 PM, the Child Care Provider shall have the child and his belongings in the front hallway to assist the parent in an easy departure.

### **PAYMENT SCHEDULES, ABSENCES, AND WITHDRAWAL**

Payment for child care will be set up in weekly, biweekly, or monthly schedules. If receiving CCDF Tuition Assistance, any increase or decrease in household income must be reported immediately.

**TUITION PAYMENTS ARE DUE IN ADVANCE OF SERVICES. For example: The child is enrolled for 3 days a week (T, W, TH) and the parent selected a 2 weeks tuition payment schedule. If the child starts on a Wednesday, tuition is due on that day for that week (W & TH) and by the close of business on Tuesday for every two weeks thereafter. The Enrollment Packet Attendance and Payment Schedule Agreement Form will be adhered to, unless another arrangement has been agreed upon.**

**Once tuition payments are 5 business days (1 week) past due, the Director will send a letter to the parents stating that a payment must be made by the 10<sup>th</sup> day or the child will no longer be able to attend Yaamahana.** If the parents choose to re-enroll their child, all tuition fees, late fees and a new registration fee shall be required before the child is accepted. Once parents withdraw the child, they have 30 days to pay the balance before their account is turned over to the Finance Department.

**Late Fees – Once tuition payments are five business days (1 week) past due, a \$5.00 late fee per family will be assessed. This late fee will continue to be assessed weekly to all accounts with a past due balance. Late fees will not continue to be assessed once the child is withdrawn/dismissed from Yaamahana.**

Please make all tuition payments including cash payments at Yaamahana. Make checks, money orders, and cashier's checks payable to the Chitimacha Tribe of Louisiana. When making a payment in cash, exact change is requested. All payments can be placed in the locked brass mailbox located in Yaamahana's front entryway. If you prefer to give your cash payment directly to a person, please give the payment to the Director, Director Designee or Administrative Secretary only. **A \$25.00 fee will be assessed to all NSF checks. Should we receive a NSF check, only cashier's checks or money orders will be accepted and you will have seven days to correct your account.** After seven days your account will be considered delinquent and the child will not be able to attend until the account is updated.

Yaamahana shall not credit you with absences since your child's place is reserved for him/her and our expenses continue although he/she is not present. The center shall not allow families to withdraw their child for a couple of weeks for family vacation s or other events and then re-enroll their child to avoid tuition payments during the child's absence. The Director must be notified two weeks in advance of withdrawal. This allows another child the opportunity to enroll.

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

When a child enrolls for two or three days a week, the parent needs to determine the days the child will attend each week. For example, the parent may decide to send the child on Tuesday and Thursday. It is

the responsibility of families to comply with the enrollment plan that was agreed upon at the time of enrollment. The center will not be able to provide care for children who arrive on a day that is not part of the agreed upon enrollment plan unless prior arrangements are made with the Director. If a field trip or special event occurs on a day the child does not attend, prior arrangements can be made with the Director for the child to switch days of attendance for the week of the event only.

### **CHILD/STAFF RATIOS**

Child/staff ratios are established to ensure quality care and safety of all children. Yaamahana follows significantly lower child/staff ratios than is required by the State of Louisiana. The child/staff ratios are as follows:

| <u>Ages of Children</u> | <u>Child/Staff Ratio</u> |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Infants under 12 months | 4:1                      |
| 13-30 months            | 5:1                      |
| 31-35 months            | 6:1                      |
| 3-year-olds             | 8:1                      |
| 4-year-olds             | 10:1                     |
| 5-year-olds             | 12:1                     |

### **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICY**

Our goals are to help children learn acceptable behavior and develop inner controls. When redirecting or guiding a child's behavior, the age, intellectual development, emotional make-up and past experiences will be considered, and consistency will be maintained in setting limits for each child.

The staff will implement the following behavior management techniques:

- Give guidance as needed, but try not to interfere in a child's activity.
- Take action when necessary, if the child's activity is endangering him/her, another child or property.
- Be positive in word and attitude when you must maintain limits. Be kind, matter of fact and composed at all times. Offer choices when possible.
- Refrain from discussing a child in his or her presence.
- Refrain from visiting with adults while in the classroom.
- Avoid labeling a child (positive and negative), or shaming a child.
- Tickling or throwing children up in the air are not appropriate to our goal of child-initiated play in a safe, secure environment.

Yaamahana practices a positive method of discipline. The following methods of discipline are prohibited. Any use of the described practices shall be grounds for immediate termination of staff. All parents and staff are provided with a copy of our Behavior Management Policy.

- No child shall be subject to physical punishment, corporal punishment, verbal abuse or threats by either staff, substitutes, or parents while on center property.
- Prohibited actions include but are not limited to yelling, slapping, spanking, yanking, shaking, pinching, requiring a child to exercise, placing a child into uncomfortable positions, exposing a child to extreme temperatures and other measures producing physical pain, or putting anything in a child's mouth;

- Verbal abuse, which includes but is not limited to using offensive or profane language, telling a child to “shut up”, or making derogatory remarks about children or family members of children in the presence of children;
- Threatening a child with a prohibited action even though there is/was no intent to follow through with the threat;
- Unsupervised isolation of a child is never allowed. Time out or time alone, shall take place within sight of the Child Care Provider. The length of each time out session shall be based on the age of the child and shall not exceed one (1) minute per each year of the age of the child. Time out shall not be used for children under 2 years of age as these children are too young to cognitively understand the consequence.
- A child is never to be physically restricted by devices such as high chairs for disciplinary purposes;
- Children shall not have active play time withheld as punishment. Timeout may be used during active play time for an infraction during the playtime.
- No child or group of children shall be allowed to discipline another child.
- No child or group of children shall be allowed to bully another child.
- The withholding of food, including snacks, water, a nap or rest, or bathroom facilities shall never be used as punishment for a child. An adult should never address a child harshly, with intimidation or ridicule.
- Adults are never to discuss a child’s behavior with another adult in the presence of the child or parents. Written or verbal reports to parents regarding conflicts or disagreements between children shall not include the name of the child who hit, bit, or pushed the child.

Yaamahana staff shall maintain a safe, non-threatening environment. Yaamahana staff shall foster creativity, encourage children to explore, and allow them to make discoveries. We also set limits and encourage self-discipline since children need boundaries to develop a sense of security.

To enforce the boundaries and rules at the center, the staff will use the following techniques with the children:

- Clear statement of limit. (“Put the block down.”)
- Stating expectations positively. (“The blocks are for building.”)
- Redirection. (“Let’s go see what Eric is cooking in the kitchen.”)
- Supporting problem-solving and negotiation between the children. (“How could you use your words to tell Caitlin that you would like to have a turn with that truck?”)
- Logical consequences or choices. (“You are having trouble playing with the blocks without throwing. I need you to choose another place to play.”)
- Modeling effective ways to express feelings and emotions. (“I do not like it when you grab the books from my hands. Please tell me that you would like to see it.”)

There are times when all of the above techniques, which are appropriate to the situation, have been tried and the problem continues. It is at times like these that staff might ask a child to sit quietly by himself/herself until that child can return to play appropriately. We do not have a designated “time out” place and this alone time should not be considered a punishment. Rather, it is seen as a time to regroup. Even as adults, we sometimes need time alone to “pull ourselves together.” Children also need this, especially when they have been in a group situation most of the day.

## **BITING POLICY**

While it is important to understand that biting is an age-appropriate behavior for toddlers, it is just as important to accept that biting is not an acceptable behavior. The staff will help toddlers control their urge to bite other children by responding quickly and firmly.

The staff will take the following actions to lessen the likelihood of children being bitten:

- **First, the biting child should be stopped and told, “STOP, Billy! Biting hurts Joey!”** The adult’s tone of voice must be cool, and firm, but should not be louder than normal.
- **At the same time that the adult speaks, the adult should act.** If two adults are in the room, one adult will step in to comfort the injured child while the other adult stops the biting child. When there is only one adult, the biting child should usually be dealt with first. This is because discipline for toddlers is most effective when it occurs immediately after the unacceptable action. The biting child should be removed from the situation. Depending upon the age of the biter, the separation may be in the form of redirection, “time-out,” or simply meeting the biter’s need.
- **Adults will carefully observe what is happening in the classroom.** When a child is exhibiting low tolerance for frustration, or when a child has a history of biting, adults must pay especially close attention to the potential biting child.
- **Shadow severe, consistent “biters.”** Assign one adult in the classroom to be within two feet of the biter at all times until biting has ceased.
- **Child Care Providers shall talk to parents about what is happening.** Parents deserve to know that your classroom is having a biting problem. They will want to know what steps you are taking to solve the problem.
- **Parents shall talk to the child care provider about what is happening.** If your child is biting at home, letting the staff know will help prevent biting in the child care setting. If your toddler is dealing with stressors that may affect his or her behavior, this information is also helpful to the child care provider.

## **ACTION PLAN FOR BITING AND OTHER AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIORS**

When biting and other aggressive behaviors change from a rare and unusual occurrence to a frequent and repeated occurrence, the Director and Child Care Providers shall create and implement an individualized Action Plan to address the child’s behaviors. A meeting shall be set up with the parents to discuss the plan and encourage their cooperation in implementing the plan for a specified period of time. At the end of the time period, the Director shall meet again with the parents to discuss the outcome/results of the Action Plan. If the child’s behavior continues to be unsafe and jeopardizes the well-being of the other children after completing the Action Plan, the matter shall be taken to the Board of Education for possible termination of enrollment.

## **STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND SCREENINGS**

The first 5 years of a child’s life set the stage for success in school and later life. It is important to make sure that each child is developing without problems in the early years. Developmental and social/emotional screenings will be conducted on each child. Developmental screenings will be conducted two times per year in the months of August/September and April/May. Social/emotional screenings will be conducted one time per year in the months of August/September. At re-enrollment or when a child enters the program, parents will be asked to conduct the social/ emotional screening on their child. If there are concerns regarding a child’s developmental or social/emotional screening, the parent will be contacted in a

timely manner to discuss the findings. Otherwise, the results of the screening and informal assessments will be shared at Parent- Provider Conferences.

The Child Care Providers observe children daily and record their progress and development as part of an authentic, ongoing assessment called Teaching Strategies Gold. This valid and reliable assessment is fully aligned with the State of Louisiana's Birth to Five Early Learning and Development Standards.

### **ELECTRONIC DEVICES POLICY**

Electronic device activities for children under 2 years of age, including but not limited to television, movies, games, videos, computers, DVDs, hand held electronic devices, etc., shall be prohibited. Time allowed for electronic device activities for children ages 2 and above shall not exceed 2 hours per day with Director's approval. Videos/DVDs will be used solely for viewing G rated children's movies.

### **COMPUTER PRACTICES POLICY**

Computers or hand held electronic devices that allow internet access used by children shall be equipped with monitoring or filtering software that prevents children's access to inappropriate web sites, e-mail, and instant messaging.

### **PROGRAMS, MOVIES, VIDEO GAMES POLICY**

Television programs and *E10+*, *T* and *M* rated video games are prohibited for all children attending Yaamahana. All movies/video games/ DVD with violent or adult content shall not be permitted in the presence of children. All movies/video games/DVD shall be suitable for the youngest child present for the movie or with access to the game. Movies/DVDs will be used solely for viewing G rated children's programs.

### **TOY POLICY**

The center will provide numerous age-appropriate toys for the children; therefore, we request that children leave toys at home. Children have trouble sharing their personal toys and Yaamahana does not want the responsibility for a personal toy getting lost or broken. We ask parents to enforce the toy policy by not allowing children to take personal toys into the center upon arrival. It is not the Child Care Provider's responsibility to take personal toys away from children.

### **DIAPERS & WIPES**

Quality diapers and wipes are provided for all diapered children at Yaamahana for a low cost through the Cuties Care School Supply Program. This convenient service allows families an opportunity to have one less thing to worry about.

### **CLOTHING**

Washable play clothes are the most suitable. Your child may get dirty during the course of the day. Items such as sweaters, coats, hats, and diaper bags must be marked with the child's name. Please dress your child appropriately for the weather. Since infants also spend time outdoors each day, send clothing appropriate for the weather such as jackets and hats for the winter months. Children being toilet trained need MANY pairs of underwear.

Children need to wear shoes with ties, Velcro, buckles, or an elasticized back strap. Slip-on shoes and beach shoes are not acceptable attire for the center. Infants need to have shoes and socks on their feet or in their diaper bags.

ALL children need to bring and maintain at least two changes of clothes (appropriate to the season), including underwear and socks. Each item shall be marked with the child's name. After stored clothing is used, please send a replacement. Additional seasonal clothing is needed for the classroom emergency suitcase in case the center needs to evacuate from the facility.

Each child is required to bring a mat cover and small blanket for nap time. The mat cover and blanket need to be labeled with the child's name. The center will wash the mat covers and blankets weekly or as needed. Please do not send pillows.

If the child soils his/her clothing or blanket with bodily fluids such as urine, stool, blood or vomit, the clothing or blanket will be sent home to be laundered in a plastic bag with a secure tie. We cannot wash items soiled with bodily fluids because of the possibility of contaminating other laundry items.

“THE ONLY PERSON  
WHO LIKES CHANGE  
IS A WET BABY”

Anonymous

### **PRIMARY CARE & CONTINUITY OF CARE**

As your child grows and develops, he/she will change classrooms. At Yaamahana, we practice *primary care and continuity of care* to the greatest extent possible.

What is primary care?

- Each child is assigned to one “special” Child Care Provider and every parent has a primary contact. Primary caregiving is based on building relationships with each child and the child's family.

What is continuity of care?

- The same primary child care provider will be caring for your child over an extended period of time.

Why is primary care and continuity of care important?

- A consistent primary Child Care Provider reduces a child's fear and stress and enables the child to explore and learn with confidence.
- Attachment to a primary Child Care Provider is very important in the first three years of a child's life.
- It promotes an atmosphere of familiarity and trust.
- Children and families are able to form long-term relationships with the child care provider.



# Transitions

- Entering Yaamahana for the first time
- Moving from one classroom to another classroom
- Moving from Yaamahana to pre-kindergarten

| Home → Yaamahana   | Classroom → Classroom   | Yaamahana → PreKindergarten   |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents are encouraged to make at least 2 visits to the classroom with their child</li> <li>• Why? You will help your child feel more secure.</li> <li>• Some parents may need to be present in their child’s classroom for a while each day – then gradually decrease this time as their child is more comfortable. This is OK – you can plan this with your child’s provider.</li> <li>• When you leave, <u>always</u> say goodbye to your child. You will violate your child’s trust if you leave without saying goodbye.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before your child moves to a new classroom:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The director will communicate this information to you and the child care providers at least 2 weeks before the move</li> <li>○ The child care providers will meet to share information and plan for a smooth transition</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Your child will be helped so he/she can adjust to the new classroom.</li> <li>• Children transitioning from one classroom to another will visit for short periods at first then longer visits just prior to the final move.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3-year-old staff and pre-k staff have a plan to assure that your child’s transition to school is smooth.</li> <li>• Yaamahana and Chitimacha Tribal School will coordinate learning activities, field trips, and special events.</li> <li>• 3-year-old children have regular visits to the school to participate in activities – this helps with their transition.</li> <li>• 3-year-old staff and pre-k staff will develop a plan to assist every child in their move to pre-k. The plan will include strengths, ideas, concerns, and your input. You will be asked to help develop this plan.</li> </ul> |

## **DISMISSAL**

The center will do everything it reasonably can to maintain a safe and effective educational environment. We expect family members to cooperate with us in this effort. On rare occasions, if a child's behavior becomes too disruptive or unsafe, and if efforts in coordination with the family have not succeeded in curtailing that behavior, the Board of Education reserves the right to terminate the enrollment of the disruptive child. If The Board of Education also reserves the right to terminate enrollment should any of the following occur.

1. The child threatens the safety, health and/or well-being of others.
2. Tuition is late. When tuition is 10 business days behind schedule, the child will not be allowed to attend the center on the eleventh day.
3. Failure to honor obligations, rules, or regulations set forth by the Chitimacha Board of Education as listed in this handbook.
4. Parents/Guardians who ignore center guidelines, and/or cause undue stress to center staff or operations.
5. Parents/Guardians who threaten the safety of the children and/or staff.
6. Lack of cooperation from parents/guardians with the center's efforts to resolve differences and/or to meet the child's needs through meetings or conferences.
7. Enrollment/immunization records are incomplete and/or not updated.
8. Enrollment was under fraudulent circumstances.

If the Board of Education terminates the enrollment of a child, and the family wants to re-enroll the child, then the family shall make a formal request to the Board of Education.

## **SECTION III** **CHILD HEALTH, SAFETY, AND NUTRITION POLICIES**

### **INCIDENTS/ACCIDENT/ILLNESS/BEHAVIOR REPORT**

Staff shall report any injury of a child to the Director, no matter how insignificant it may seem. The Director will determine if the parent needs to be immediately notified and if first aid should be administered. All full-time staff and most part-time staff are trained in Infant/Child/Adult CPR and Pediatric First Aid. At least 50 percent of the staff on the premises at any one time shall be trained. First aid kits are in each classroom.

Parents shall be notified if a child suffers an accident or is involved in any unsafe or dangerous incident while at the center. All head and neck injuries shall be reported to the parent immediately as well as human bites that break the skin, any animal bite or insect bite, blood not contained in an adhesive strip, broken or dislodged teeth, an impaled object, eye injury, and any injury requiring professional attention.

Staff shall report any signs of illness or unusual behavior exhibited by a child while at the center. All allergic reactions must be reported to the parent immediately as well as skin changes such as rashes, spots, and swelling, unusual breathing, dehydration, any temperature reading 101° (in mouth or ear)/100° (under arm) and any illness requiring professional attention.

All incidents, accidents, illnesses, and behaviors shall be recorded on a written report to be given to the parent at the end of the day. A copy of the report shall be maintained in the Director's office.

### **DAILY HEALTH OBSERVATION**

The staff on duty are charged with the responsibility of performing a health check each day as the children arrive at the center. The staff shall check for possible signs of illness, infections, bruises, changes in behavior, and signs of injury. Parents are requested to examine their child daily, before coming to the center, to detect any symptoms of contagious illness or disease, behavioral changes, or bumps, scratches, bruises, unusual scars and injuries on face, arms, and legs. The staff are required to ask the parents to explain any changes in the child.

To maintain a healthy environment for the center, we will accept only well children. We are depending on you to help us maintain this policy. A child with a fever of 101° (in mouth or ear)/100° (under arm) or higher within the previous 24-hour period must be kept home. If your child becomes ill during the day, an adult family member will be notified and the child will be isolated (with adult supervision) from other children until the child is picked up. Therefore, we ask parents to make every effort to pick up the ill child within **30 minutes** of notification. The child may return when in good health (see Exclusion Criteria). Parents must inform the Director immediately after a contagious illness or disease is detected. This will enable the center to determine if the illness or disease has been contracted by any other children and may help in preventing the illness or disease from spreading to other children.

### **EXCLUSION CRITERIA**

A child shall be excluded from the child care facility if any of the following conditions exist:

- A. **Temperature:** Temperature 100 degrees F or greater taken under the armpit, 101 degrees F or greater taken in the mouth or ear, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness. The child should be evaluated by a licensed health care professional (physician, advanced practice registered nurse, dentist).
- B. **Visual evidence or verbal complaints of possible severe illness** such as uncontrolled coughing, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, wheezing or other unusual signs.
- C. **Uncontrolled diarrhea** or frequent loose or watery stools compared to child's normal pattern. Stool is not contained in the diaper or diarrhea is causing "accidents" for toilet-trained children. Blood and/or mucus are found in the stool. Plans for exclusion should begin after second episode of diarrhea. A child shall remain excluded until diarrhea free for 24 hours.
- D. **Two or more episodes of vomiting** in the previous 24 hours. Plans for exclusion should begin after second episode of vomiting. A child shall remain excluded until vomit free for 24 hours.
- E. **Mouth sores** with drooling.
- F. **Rash** with fever or behavior change.
- G. **Untreated conjunctivitis (pink eye)** with purulent (white or yellow) drainage from eyes. A child shall be excluded until 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment.

- H. ***Untreated infestations***: scabies, head lice, or other infestation. A child shall be excluded until 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever.
- I. ***Tuberculosis***: A child is excluded until a health care provider states that the child can attend child care.
- J. ***Impetigo***: A child is excluded until 24 hours after medical treatment is initiated.
- K. ***Strep throat or other streptococcal infection***: A child is excluded 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever.
- L. ***Chicken pox***: A child is excluded until six days after onset of rash and all sores have dried and crusted.
- M. ***Pertussis***: A child is excluded until five days of appropriate antibiotic treatment have been completed and with sufficient documentation from the child's physician.
- N. ***Mumps***: A child is excluded until nine days after onset of parotid gland swelling or as directed by a physician.
- O. ***Hepatitis A Virus***: A child is excluded until one week after onset of illness or as directed by a physician and health department when treatment has been administered.
- P. ***Measles***: A child is excluded until six days after onset of rash or as directed by a physician.
- Q. ***Rubella***: The child is excluded until six days after onset of rash or as directed by a physician.
- R. ***Unspecified respiratory illness, shingles or other conditions***: Children shall be excluded until sufficient documentation is received from the child's physician.
- S. ***Abdominal pain*** intermittent or persistent. Children shall be excluded until sufficient documentation is received from the child's physician.
- T. Children experiencing any of the above mentioned conditions or evidence of illness and cannot participate in the regular activities of the day shall be excluded from the child care facility and should have documentation from the child's physician.

**Yaamahana reserves the right to exclude a child if visual and verbal complaints indicate the possibility of illness regardless of physician note. A return visit to the physician may be deemed necessary. Our goal is to reduce the chance of illness and keep children as healthy and safe as possible.**

#### **IMMUNIZATION RECORD**

Each child at the time of registration or entry shall present or have on file satisfactory evidence of immunity according to a schedule approved by the Office of Public Health, Department of Health and Hospitals, or shall present evidence of an immunization program in progress.

## **CHILD ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT POLICY**

As mandated reporters, the Director, staff and substitutes of Yaamahana are required legally and ethically to report any suspected abuse or neglect of a child

The Louisiana Department of Education defines a mandated reporter as follows:

- **Mandated Reporter** – professionals who may work with children in the course of their professional duties and who consequently are required to report all suspected cases of child abuse and neglect. This includes any person who provides training and supervision of a child, such as a public or private school teacher, teacher’s aide, instructional aide, school principal, school staff member, social worker, probation officer, foster home parent, group home or other child care institution staff member, personnel of residential home facilities, a licensed or unlicensed day care provider, any individual who provides such services to a child, or any other person made a mandatory reporter under Article 603 of the Children’s Code or other applicable law.

The Director, Child Care Provider, substitute, or support staff will not delay reporting suspected abuse and/or neglect to the Chitimacha Human Services Department and/or the Louisiana Child Protection Statewide Hotline in an attempt to conduct an internal investigation to verify the abuse/neglect allegations. The staff including substitutes, are not required to report the suspected abuse/neglect to the Director and/or administrators prior to reporting to the Chitimacha Human Services and/or the Louisiana Child Protection Statewide Hotline. The staff will report any suspected abuse and/or neglect of a tribal child living on the reservation to the Chitimacha Human Services Department.

The staff will report any suspected abuse and/or neglect of a non-tribal child, or a tribal child living off the reservation to the Louisiana Child Protection Statewide Hotline.

If the suspected abuse and/or neglect of a child occurs at Yaamahana and involves an employee, the Director or staff will contact the Louisiana Child Protection Statewide Hotline.

The telephone numbers for the agencies are as follows:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Chitimacha Human Services<br>(337) 923-7000 | Louisiana Child Protection Statewide<br>Hotline<br>1-855-4LA-KIDS (855-452-5437) |
|---|--|

## **MEDICATION POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

If any medication is to be given to a child during the day (prescription and non-prescription), PARENTS MUST COMPLETE AND SIGN THE MEDICATION AUTHORIZATION FORM DAILY. Only staff trained in Medication Administration will administer medications or medical treatments. The staff shall appropriately document giving the medication, sign the Medication Authorization Form, and observe the child for 45 minutes after giving the medication for possible side effects. When a parent administers medication or medical treatments to his/her child at the center, the parent shall appropriately document giving the medication, sign the Medication Authorization Form, and remain to observe the child for 45 minutes for possible side effects. Medications will not be administered without written instructions.

All medication shall be in the original container, shall not have an expired date, and shall be clearly labeled with the child's name to ensure that medication is for individual use only. Prescription medication shall be in the original pharmacy container with the complete pharmacy label.

Non-prescription medicine including non-prescription topical ointments/ sprays/creams, shall be in the original bottle packaging for the medicine or a printed document from the manufacturer's website which shall include the drug name and strength and clear directions for use.

Non-prescription and "as needed" medicines shall not be administered without a written authorization from a licensed health care provider which shall be updated as changes occur or at least every 6 months. Authorization from a licensed health care provider shall include circumstances for administering "as needed" medication and any applicable instructions.

All aerosol medications shall be delivered to the child care facility in pre-measured dosages. During the administration of this medication, staff shall ensure that the child is not disturbed by other children.

Topical ointments including insect spray, preventive diaper rash cream, and sunscreen shall not be applied without a written authorization signed and dated by the parent. If changes occur, the parent shall update the authorization with a signature and date.

Children shall not administer their own medications.

When administering a new medication, the parent shall give the first dose to the child at home and observe the child for any adverse reactions.

Children who require emergency medication, such as an Epipen or Benadryl, shall have a written plan of action that shall be updated as changes occur or at least every 6 months. The plan of action shall include method of administration, symptoms that would indicate the need for the medication, actions to take once symptoms occur, and a description of how to use the medication, and signature of parent and date of signature.

Medicine and dosing device shall be stored in zippered plastic bag on the bottom shelf of the kitchen refrigerator, or in a locked cabinet away from food. The storage area should be labeled.

To ensure medicine is given in accurate dosages, parents shall provide an appropriate medicine dropper or measuring spoon.

For the safety of all children, medications shall never be left in diaper bags, backpacks, or on counter tops.

Medication that needs to be given 3 or more times a day will be given TWICE a day at the center unless special situations arise and the director or director designee approves additional administration. The staff will try to accommodate your child's medication needs, but due to the many demands at the center, the staff may not always be able to fulfill all requests for administering medication to children.

### **SAFE SLEEP POLICY FOR INFANTS**

Only one infant shall be placed in each crib. All infants shall be placed on their backs for sleeping. “Back to sleep” signs shall be posted above or on each crib.

Written authorization from the child’s physician is required for any other sleeping position. Written notice of the specifically authorized sleeping position shall be posted on or near the baby’s crib and shall specify the alternate sleep position. The written authorization shall be updated as changes occur.

Written authorization from a physician is required for a child to sleep in a car seat or other similar device and shall include the amount of time that the child is allowed to remain in said device. Otherwise, if an infant falls asleep in any place other than a safety-approved crib, the infant shall be moved immediately to his/her crib.

Infants shall not be covered with any blanket or swaddled, unless the center has written authorization from a physician to use a blanket or swaddle.

Infants shall not be placed in positioning devices for sleeping, unless the center has written authorization from a physician to use a positioning device.

Infants who use pacifiers will be offered their pacifier when they are placed to sleep, and it shall not be placed back in the mouth once the child is asleep. Bibs, necklaces, and garments with ties or hoods shall not be worn by any child while asleep. Nothing shall be placed over the head or face of an infant.

Each infant shall be placed in a safety-approved crib with a firm mattress of no more than six inches and with well-fitting sheets.

1. Cribs shall not have more than 2 and 3/8 inches between slats and between the side and end panels.
2. Decorative cutout areas in crib end panels or decorative knobs on the corner posts, which can entrap a child’s head or catch his or her clothing, are prohibited.
3. All latching devices on cribs shall hold securely, be maintained in proper working condition, and shall not be accessible by the child in the crib.
4. Full size cribs shall be in compliance with ASTM F 116910 as of December 28, 2012.
5. Cribs shall be free of toys, and other soft bedding, including blankets, quilts, comforters, bumper pads, pillows, soft toys, and wedges when the child is in the crib.
6. Nothing shall be placed over the head or face of the infant.
7. The staff shall directly observe sleeping infants and be in-sight and sound, of the infant, at all times.

The Director shall talk to the parents of a new baby coming into the program about Yaamahana’s safe sleep policy at the required pre-enrollment meeting.

### **OUTDOOR PLAY POLICY**

Weather permitting, all children, including infants, will spend at least one hour per day in daily outdoor play. The Director/Director Designee/Staff-In-Charge will determine if the temperature is appropriate for outdoor play based on the “Child Care Weather Watch” posted in all classrooms. Accommodations cannot be made for children to remain indoors if they are feeling “under the weather.”

### **TRANSPORTATION/OFF-SITE ACTIVITIES POLICY**

Yaamahana does not transport children from home to center, or center to home. We will take official field trips approved by parents. An approved tribal vehicle will be used for field trips. A signed parental authorization is required for each field trip. All children shall be required to use federally-approved and properly installed child passenger restraint systems (harnesses or car seats). Walking field trips, stroller rides, and wagon rides may be taken on the reservation within a safe, reasonable walking distance. The family will be asked to sign a blanket permission slip during the enrollment process to cover reservation based walks and stroller/wagon rides. Offsite activities will include at least one staff member in attendance who is accessible to children at all times and has documented current certification in infant/child/adult CPR and pediatric first aid. Children shall be under the direct supervision of staff at all times during the offsite activity.

### **WATER PLAY AND WATER ACTIVITIES POLICY**

Children two years of age and above can participate in water play activities in which there is no standing water, and includes but is not limited to the use of fountains, sprinklers, and water tables.

Children three years of age and above, completely toilet trained, can also participate in water activities in wading or swimming pools. Children under three years of age shall not engage in water activities in wading or swimming pools due to the risk of fecal-oral contamination and disease. When children participate in water activities in pools or other bodies of water with a depth of more than two feet, a certified lifeguard holding a current certificate shall be on duty supervising the children participating in swimming or wading activities at all times. The center shall have written procedures describing the method staff shall use to account for children and ensure their safety while engaged in water activities. At least two staff members responsible for supervising children in swimming or wading pools or other water activities shall be certified in infant, child, and adult CPR and pediatric first aid. Each child will be required to have a signed permission slip to participate in any of the above mentioned water activities.

### **PHOTOGRAPHING CHILDREN POLICY**

Yaamahana has video cameras and video equipment that records the daily activities throughout the facility. These video recordings are conducted for the protection of the children and staff. If an incident occurs at the facility and the parent/guardian wishes to view the surveillance recording of the incident, the parent/guardian shall complete a ***Request to View Recorded Surveillance Form*** to schedule a date and time for viewing. Once the request is received, the Program Administrator and the Director shall first view the surveillance recording to determine if the incident occurred within range of the cameras and can be viewed. They will also make certain the footage does not compromise the privacy of another child. Since there is no audio recording, the Program Administrator and the Director will meet with the Child Care Provider(s) on duty at the time of the incident to explain what occurred and answer questions about the incident. The Director will then contact the parent/guardian and set up a meeting to discuss the surveillance recording and, if appropriate, allow the parent/guardian to view the footage. If the parent/guardian has questions the Program Administrator and the Director are unable to answer, a second meeting shall be set up with the Program Administrator, the Director, the parent/guardian and Child Care Provider(s) on duty at the time of the incident. If a parent/guardian would like to observe his/her child via live surveillance in the Director's office, the parent/guardian shall complete a ***Request to View Live Surveillance Form*** to schedule a date and time for viewing. The Director, Director Designee, or Administrative Secretary must be in the office when a parent/guardian is viewing the live surveillance system.



At various times throughout the year, the staff of Yaamahana will be taking digital images, photographs, videotapes, and/or audiotapes of the children for educational purposes (e.g. presentations to Yaamahana staff), and decoration purposes (e.g., posting pictures on bulletin boards, in cubbies, etc.). There may also be occasions when the children and staff are photographed or videoed for use in materials, to include, but may not be limited to, printed materials such as brochures and newsletters, videos, and digital images such as those on the Chitimacha Tribal website and the Franklin Banner Tribune. Please be aware that parents are also allowed to come into the center and observe, photograph, videotape, and/or audiotape children. The family shall be asked to sign a release form during the enrollment process either granting or denying permission to take digital images, photographs, videotapes, and or audiotapes of their child. No child will be observed, videotaped, recorded, or photographed without the supervision of a child care provider and the authorization of Yaamahana's Director or Director Designee.

### **EMERGENCY CONTACT & RELEASE PROCEDURE**

The child shall only be released to the custodial parent and designated individuals 17 years of age or older listed by the parent/guardian on the child's Emergency Contact & Release Information Form. A child shall never be released to anyone unless authorized in writing by the parents. Staff are instructed to contact the Director if an individual not on the form comes to pick up a child. The staff shall verify the identity of the authorized person prior to releasing the child. Any additions or deletions made to the list of authorized persons on the form shall be signed (full name) and dated by the parent.

Individuals listed on the Emergency Contact & Release Form can pick up a child in an emergency situation if the parent/guardian cannot be reached. It is the responsibility of the family to inform the center of any changes of information on this form.

The center will not release a child at any time to a parent or designated individual who is obviously impaired due to alcohol consumption or substance abuse (either prescribed or illegal). In the event that a parent or designated adult is impaired, the Director will telephone individuals from the Emergency Contact & Release Information Form to arrange for an alternative adult to pick up the child. If a parent or designated adult is impaired and insists that the child be released in his or her custody, the Director will immediately notify the Chitimacha Police.

### **NUTRITION AND FOOD GUIDELINES**

- Well-balanced and nourishing meals and snacks shall be provided as specified under the Child and Adult Care Food Program of the United States Department of Agriculture.
- Weekly menus shall be posted with any substitutions or additions posted on or near the menu.
- Additional servings of nutritious food over and above the required daily minimum shall be made available to children as needed if not contraindicated by special diets.
- Meals and snacks shall be not more than 3 hours apart.
- Food shall never be used as punishment or reward.
- Each child shall be encouraged, without coercing or negative consequences to eat a well-balanced diet. Sufficient time shall be allowed for each child to eat. Children shall not be forced to finish all their food.
- Food shall not be sold to children. Soft drink, vending machines and other food dispensers for personnel use shall be located outside of the children's play areas and inaccessible to children.
- The staff shall monitor children closely to be sure that food is not being shared.

- The staff shall not allow children to eat when walking, running, playing, lying down, or riding in vehicles.
- Drinking water shall be readily available indoors and outdoors to children at all times. Drinking water shall be offered at least once between meals and snacks, and upon returning from outdoors, to all children. Water shall be given to infants 6 months of age and older, only with written instructions from parents.
- Information regarding children's food allergies/special diets shall be posted in the food prep area with special care taken to ensure that the individual children's names are not in public view. The child's name and allergy information can only be posted in public view if the parent grants such permission in a signed and dated statement.
- Infants shall be fed on demand unless the parent provides written instructions otherwise.
- Infants shall be held while being bottle fed in an upright position to provide a nurturing experience. The staff shall not prop bottles or allow children to carry bottles around with them. An infant/toddler who can hold a bottle shall not be placed in a crib, on a mat, cot, etc., with the bottle.
- Breastfeeding mothers are welcome to do so within the center setting. The program shall support breast-feeding mothers by providing a comfortable, quiet place for mother and baby to sit and nurse. The provider shall support the practice by willingly accepting bottles/bags of breast milk.
- Milk is provided at meals for those children who are able to have it. When a child is allergic to milk, the parent shall provide a written statement from a healthcare provider. Yaamahana shall provide a protein rich substitute that is nutritionally equivalent to cow's milk. Water or juice shall not be substituted for milk.
- The center shall not serve any cow's milk or juice to infants from birth to 12 months of age.
- Microwave ovens shall not be used for warming infant bottles or infant food.
- Parents are required to provide a sufficient amount of cleaned and sanitized bottles to meet the infant's feeding needs each day. The center will not clean or sanitize bottles. After an infant's feeding, bottles and nipples will be rinsed under clean, running water before being placed in the infant's diaper bag.
- Bottles and caps/covers to be used for formula shall be labeled with the child's name or initials. Bottles/containers of human milk shall be properly labeled with the infant's full name and the date the milk was expressed.
- Containers of formula and baby food shall be in the original unopened container and labeled with the child's name or initials. If baby food is fed directly from the jar, the jar shall be used for only one feeding.
- Baby food or cereal shall be added to an infant's formula only with written instructions from the child's physician.
- When a child requires a modified diet for food allergies/intolerances, a written statement from a medical authority shall be on file.
- When a child requires a modified diet for religious or philosophical reasons, a written statement to that effect from the child's parent shall be on file.
- Parents/children are allowed to bring the following foods into the center: dry or canned formula, human milk, infant-food, special dietary items related to medical, religious, or philosophical reasons, and refreshments for special occasions. Refreshments must be commercially purchased and in a sealed container.
- Parents of all children in a class with a child that has allergies shall be advised to avoid any known allergies in class treats or food brought into the center.

### **Foods to Avoid**

Children under 4 years of age shall not have foods that are implicated in choking incidents. Examples of these foods include but are not limited to hot dogs (whole or sliced into rounds), raw carrot rounds, whole grapes, hard candy, rice cakes, nuts, seeds, raw peas, dried fruit, hard pretzels, chips, peanuts, popcorn, marshmallows, a spoonful of peanut butter, and chunks of meat larger than can be swallowed whole.

### **ANIMALS POLICY**

Any pet or animal visiting the center, indoors or outdoors, shall be in good health, show no evidence of carrying a disease, be fully immunized, and be maintained on a flea, tick, and worm control program. A current (time-specified) certificate from a veterinarian shall be required as evidence, stating that the pet meets these conditions. All contact between animals and children shall be supervised by a child care provider who is close enough to remove the child immediately if the animal shows signs of distress or the child shows signs of treating the animal inappropriately.

The following animals are prohibited from visiting the center, indoors or outdoors: Ferrets, turtles, iguanas, lizards or other reptiles, birds of the parrot family, or any wild or dangerous animals.

### **LEAD PAINT AND ASBESTOS FREE ENVIRONMENT**

Lead paint and asbestos materials were not used in the construction of the child care center. The facility is lead paint and asbestos free.

## **SECTION IV** **FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY**

Parents shall be offered a variety of opportunities for involvement each year including the following:

- a pre-enrollment orientation meeting with the Director
- at least 2 parent education sessions
- at least 2 parent/provider conferences
- a variety of other parent involvement activities including holiday parties, and other special events

Parents will be informed of these opportunities through posted notices, a monthly calendar of events, and Yaamahana's Facebook group.

### **COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS**

Effective communication with families strengthens the quality of the program. Child Care Providers are encouraged to warmly greet parents when they drop off their child and when they arrive to pick up their child. Child Care Providers shall communicate with parents through a variety of means including informal telephone or face-to-face conversations, email, notes, or newsletters. Keeping an open line of communication between the center and families ensures that the best interests of the children are served, both at home and at the center. All parents are encouraged to visit, telephone, and send notes whenever they deem necessary. If a parent needs to discuss a problem or needs to have a more detailed conversation regarding their child, we ask that a conference time be set up with the Child Care Provider. We discourage

Child Care Providers and parents from having long conversations when the Child Care Provider is responsible for caring for the children. Children should have the Child Care Provider's undivided attention at all times.

### **PARENTAL ACCESS POLICY**

Families are appreciated and have an open invitation to visit the center anytime during regular hours of operation and when children are present. We encourage parents to drop by just to say "hi" during their break, or to join their child for lunch, or perhaps to come by and kiss a scraped knee. We encourage families to visit on their day off to "see" what their child does throughout the day. Please make sure to sign in on the Visitor's Log in the front office whenever staying for a visit.

If a parent needs to discuss a problem or needs to have a more detailed conversation with the child's provider, we ask that a conference time be set up with the child's Provider or the Director.

### **CONFERENCES**

In the Fall and Spring, each provider will conduct a conference to share the child's progress with the family. The Lead Child Care Provider will share the results of the developmental and/or social/emotional screening and information about informal assessments conducted on your child. The conference will also give the provider and the family an opportunity to discuss any needs, difficulties, or concerns. The conference will be held at the most convenient time for both the provider and family; a sign-up list will be sent out prior to the conference. The conference notice will have a place for families to list what they would like to discuss, thus allowing families input into the conference and giving providers the opportunity to be prepared. Additional conferences may be scheduled when either parent or provider feels a meeting is necessary.

### **FAMILY ADVISORY BOARD**

What is a Family Advisory Board (FAB)?

FAB is a small group (10 people) composed of Yaamahana parents, grandparents, or guardians who meet several times a year in order to provide ideas, input and advice to the Yaamahana director, staff, and Board of Education. The term for serving on the Family Advisory Board will be one year. At the start of the new school year, families will receive an interest survey. Based on the interest surveys, the Director will select 10 people representing different classrooms at Yaamahana.

Purpose:

- Enhance quality of services and activities
- Provide ideas and feedback
- Identify issues and concerns, needs which reflect a family view/perspective
- Increase public awareness and advocate for the center
  
- Review materials, policies and procedures and provide input
- Identify training topics

What a Family Advisory Board **is not**:

- A policy-making group
- A personnel committee
- A grievance committee
- A fund raising organization
- A social group
- A school management committee
- A political organization

### **FAMILY EVALUATION OF YAAMAHANA**

Families will be asked to fill out a written evaluation of the Yaamahana program,. This shall be done annually in order to help center staff evaluate the quality of services being provided and to ensure that Yaamahana is meeting the needs of the community.

### **COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES POLICY**

The following procedures have been developed in order to clarify the steps that must be followed when a parent/legal guardian has a complaint or grievance.

Constructive criticism is welcome, but complaints and grievance procedures must follow lines of authority. Whenever a complaint is made directly to the Board as a whole or to a Board member as an individual, it will be referred to the Director for study and possible solution. The following adopted policies and procedures of the Chitimacha Board of Education shall provide guidelines for the rights of due process that are applicable to parents/legal guardians:

1. A parent/legal guardian may request a conference with the Lead Child Care Provider and/or Director of the child care center regarding a problem that relates to the child's welfare.
2. If, as a result of the informal discussion, the matter is not resolved, the individual may request a meeting with the Program Administrator. The individual must submit full details of the complaint/grievance in writing or personally appear before the Program Administrator to fully explain the details of the complaint/grievance. The Program Administrator shall notify the individual verbally or in writing of the action taken.
3. If the matter is still not resolved, the individual may request a meeting with the Chief Administrative Officer. The individual must submit full details of the complaint/grievance in writing or personally appear before the Chief Administrative Officer to fully explain the details of the complaint/grievance. The Program Administrator shall notify the individual verbally or in writing of the action taken.

It shall be the responsibility of the director, Program Administrator and/or Chief Administrative Officer to document any and all meetings of this nature, and these documents must be made available to the Board of Education members.

4. If the complaint/grievance is still not resolved through the above mentioned procedures, the individual may request a conference with the Chitimacha Board of Education. The Board will make a final decision on the issue and notify the complainant verbally or in writing.

5. The state of Louisiana Department of Education Child Care Licensing Section serves as Yaamahana's licensing authority. If parents have significant, unresolved licensing complaints, they are advised to call or write:

LDE Licensing  
P.O. Box 4249, Baton Rouge, LA 70821  
Telephone (225) 342-9905 Fax (225) 342-2498

Regulations and information on licensed child care centers are available online at the Louisiana Department of Education website [www.louisianabelieves.com](http://www.louisianabelieves.com).

**SECTION V**  
**APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX A**

**COMMUNITY RESOURCE LIST**

**Chitimacha Human Services**

*Services include: Counseling, Parent Education, Anger Management, Substance Abuse and Treatment*

3287 Chitimacha Trail

Charenton, LA 70523

(337)-923-7000

Contact Person: Lisa Hammond

**Chitimacha Housing Authority**

3221 Chitimacha Trail

Charenton, La. 70523

(337) 923-9125

Contact Person: Marilyn Burgess

Housing Director

**Child Care Development Fund Program**

*Tuition assistance for Tribal children*

3287 Chitimacha Trail

Charenton, LA 70523

(337) 923-7000

Contact Person: Ida Borel

**Child Care Assistance**

*Tuition assistance for all children*

Toll Free: 1-877-453-2721

<http://www.louisianabelieves.com>

**Early Steps**

*Early Intervention System (Birth-Three)*

Phone: (985) 447-6550

Fax: (985) 447—6513

Toll Free: 1-866-897-9044

[earlysteps.dhh.louisiana.gov](http://earlysteps.dhh.louisiana.gov)

**Families Helping Families**

*Assists Adults and Children With Disabilities and Special Needs, Their Families, & the Professionals Who Serve Them*

Toll Free: 1-855-984-3458

<http://www.fhfacadiana.org>

**Shots for Tots**

*Louisiana's Infant Immunization Initiative*

Toll Free: 1-800-251-BABY

[info@shotsfortots.com](mailto:info@shotsfortots.com)

**WIC**

*Special Supplemental Nutritional Program for Women, Infants & Children*

Toll Free: 1-800-251-BABY

**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**

[www.dcf.la.gov](http://www.dcf.la.gov)

**LaCHIP**

*Louisiana Children's Health Insurance Program*

Toll Free: 1-877-252-2447

[www.LaChip.org](http://www.LaChip.org)

**La.Medicaid**

Toll Free: 1-877-455-9955

[new.dhh.louisiana.gov](http://new.dhh.louisiana.gov)

**LaMoms**

*No-Cost Health Insurance for Pregnant Women*

Toll Free: 1-877-455-9955

[new.dhh.louisiana.gov](http://new.dhh.louisiana.gov)

**Chez Hope**

*Family Violence Crisis Center*  
600 5<sup>th</sup> Street

Franklin, LA 70538

Telephone: (337) 828-4200

24 Hour Crisis Line 1-800-331-5303

<http://chezhope.org>

