

# Penobscot Nation Children's Center

9 Sarah's Spring Drive  
Indian Island, Me 04468  
Telephone 817-7461

## Parent's Handbook and Policies



"talahoyane-Let's Play"

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## About Penobscot Nation Children's Center

### Our Mission Statement

The Penobscot Nation Children's Center Provides a safe, developmentally appropriate environment for young children, which nurtures the growth of the whole child while supporting cultural and family values. We promote individualized learning based on the uniqueness of each child and recognize that the parents are the prime educators of their children. We strive to provide a stimulating early care and educational experience that promotes each child's social, emotional, physical, and intellectual development and fosters the child's desire for lifelong learning.

Penobscot Nation department of Social Services oversees the Penobscot Nation Children's Center. The Director, Michael Augustine, can be reached at (207)817-7336

### PNCC Staff:

- Family Support Specialist: Tricia Stewart
- Infant Lead Teacher: Wiphun Lewey
- Toddler Lead Teacher: Shaniah Davis
- Preschool Lead Teacher: Mackenzie Stewart
- Intermittent On-Call: Linda Foster, Shalene Cody, Victoria Hildreth, Carmella Bear, Ainsley Whalen, Juliann Preble, Sue Sapiel, Aquene Lewey, Layla Bear
- Visiting Teachers:
  - Gabe Paul- Language and Cultural Activities
  - Librarian from the Indian Island School- Storytime
  - Abbey Watkinson- Dietician from the Penobscot Nation Health Department

Ages we serve: The Children's Center currently enrolls children between the ages of 6 weeks until their 6<sup>th</sup> birthday. When they turn 6, they may be eligible to attend the Penobscot Nation Youth Program.

Hours of operation: Monday through Friday 7:30-5:00

Admission and Enrollment Process: Families are invited to schedule a facility and classroom visit with their child to determine if they would like to enroll their child. Applications are available at the center or can be sent by email upon request.

The following documents must be provided prior to admission and updated annually:

- Application (complete information about child and family, emergency contacts, persons permitted to pick up child)
- Immunization record, or note from the Dr. about medical exemption
- Permission forms (emergency medical care, medication, sunscreen, use of images, leaving facility)
- Financial information (income verification-subsidized care only, signed fee agreements)
- Signed acknowledgement that the program handbook has been received and read.
- Completed CACFP application

Staff Training: All members of our Childcare Staff are required to get between 20 and 30 hours of training per year depending on the number of hours they work each week. All staff are CPR and First Aid certified. Staff members attend trainings on Health and Safety, Mandated Reporter, emergency disaster preparedness, administration of medication, Health care plan, and other professional development training as needed. All staff are registered with Maine's Professional Development Network.

Positive Discipline/Child Guidance: The childcare staff will use positive means of guidance such as, but not limited to conflict resolution, encouraging the use of language skills, redirecting, providing choices, using praise or positive reinforcement, recognition of children's individual strengths, and allowing for individual differences. With the use of positive methods, we hope to encourage and teach the children to help problem solve on their own, encourage self-control, self-direction, to help build self-esteem and to teach cooperation. Rules, expectations, and limits shall be consistent. Staff will carry out these in a manner consistent to the child's developmental and age-appropriate levels. The PNCC will be free of mental, physical, and/or sexual abuse, neglect, and exploitation. The PNCC will not practice any harmful actions or do anything that is detrimental to the children's welfare or potentially harmful to any child.

#### Licensing:

- We are licensed by the State of Maine Childcare Licensing Unit and operate a center-based program in compliance with Tribal laws, Federal laws, and State of Maine laws.
- Licensing Rules for Childcare Manual is in the Center upon request. It can also be viewed online at [www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/provider-resources/child-care-licensing/becoming-a-child-care-provider](http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/provider-resources/child-care-licensing/becoming-a-child-care-provider).
- You may see a copy of our license, which is posted in the main lobby
- You have the right to view our licensing inspections. Copies can be given to you upon request
- Our license capacity as specified by state regulations is 26 children.
- Our licenser's name is Barbara Jones, and you may contact her at (207)446-8399
- *REPORTING LICENSING VIOLATIONS:* As childcare staff, we are also obligated to report licensing violations regarding our own facility. Likewise, if you have a concern that the staff at PNCC are not within the State of Maine licensing regulations, please call 1-800-452-1999.

#### Mandated Reporters/ Child Abuse and Neglect:

- All staff are Penobscot Tribal and State of Maine Mandated Reporters and are required to immediately report any suspected cases of abuse and/or neglect. Staff has been fully trained in their responsibilities as a Mandated Reporter.
- Any observation/incident that results in the suspicion of abuse or neglect will be immediately reported to the Family Support Specialist.
- The Mandated Reporter Worksheet will be filled out and then the report will be made through a phone call to the appropriate Child Protection office.
- Staff Members will not be discharged or disciplined solely because they have made a child abuse or neglect report.
- More information is available at [www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/provider-resources/reporting-suspected-child-abuse-and-neglect/mandated-reporter-information](http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/provider-resources/reporting-suspected-child-abuse-and-neglect/mandated-reporter-information).
- To report suspected abuse or neglect, you can call the Penobscot Nation Department of Social Services at (207)817-7495, or the State of Maine Protective Intake 1-800-452-1999.
- Concerns may include, but are not limited to physical, sexual, verbal, mental, or emotional abuse, as well as not meeting basic needs for health, safety, or welfare of a child's well-being
- PNCC will complete incident reports, including: the details of the allegation or suspicion, the date Child Protective Intake was called, which Staff Members and/or interns were notified the report was filed, and whether or not the Parent/Legal Guardian were notified of the allegation.
- PNCC will make the determination of how and what information will be shared with a Parent/Legal Guardian when Child Protective Intake has been contacted regarding the child's care outside of the program.

If an allegation of Child Abuse or Neglect is made against the Provider or any Staff Member, the following policy will be enforced:

- The Family Support Specialist and Director of PNDSS will determine/or consult the Department of Health and Human Services regarding the appropriateness of person alleged of abuse or neglect to be alone with children during the investigation.
  - The outcome of the investigation will determine the appropriateness of continued employment and may result in termination.
- The childcare will cooperate with the Department of Health and Human Services investigation, review all recommendations and take appropriate actions to ensure the safety of the children.
  - Proactive steps that are taken to protect from the potential of allegations of abuse are staff are trained, our program has cameras throughout the building, and outside, we also try to never have anyone completely alone, for example at the beginning of the day and end of the day there are typically 2 people and throughout the classrooms we try to keep at least 2 people when we can.
- As mandated reporters, staff members will report any suspected abuse or neglect within their own program, or from any setting by which they become aware of it, as well.

- Parental notification will be made in accordance with Department of Health and Human Services policy and is required when an allegation is made toward a provider or staff member and documentation of an incident report signed and dated by the parent/guardian (within 48 hours) will be maintained.

#### Rights of children and Parents:

10-148 CMR Ch. 32, Child Care Facility Licensing Rule Child Care Centers, Nursery Schools, Small Facilities

- A. Rights of children. Children receiving Childcare from Childcare facilities have the following rights.
  1. Children must be free from emotional, physical and/or sexual abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
  2. Each Child has the right to freedom from harmful actions or practices that are detrimental to the Child's welfare, and to practices that are potentially harmful to the child.
  3. Each Child has a right to an environment that meets the health and safety standards in this rule.
  4. Each Child must be provided Childcare services without discrimination to race, age, national origin, religion, disability, sex or family composition.
  5. Children must be treated with dignity, consideration, and respect in full recognition of their individuality. This includes the use of developmentally appropriate practices by the childcare facility.
  6. Each child has the right to the implementation of any plan of service that has been developed for that child in conjunction with community or state agencies by the childcare facility
  7. Each child has the right to Developmentally Appropriate activities, materials, and equipment.
  8. Children with disabilities have the right to reasonable modifications to childcare facility policies.
- B. Right of Parent or Legal Guardian of children receiving childcare from childcare facilities.
  1. A Child's parent or Legal Guardian must be fully informed of items or services which are included in the rate they pay for childcare.
  2. A child's parent or legal guardian has the right to be fully informed of findings of the most recent inspection conducted by the department. The Childcare facility must inform children's parents or legal guardians that the licensing inspection results are public information and inspection results must be posted in a prominent place on premises.
  3. Parents or Legal Guardians must be notified by the childcare facility within two business days of any actions taken against the childcare facility by the department, including but not limited to, decisions to issue conditional licenses refusal to renew a license, or to impose fines or sanctions.

Parent Communication: When you enroll your child, you will be asked your email so that we may communicate with you through the Tadpoles App regarding daily goings on in the center, closures, if your child needs anything, or if they are sick. It is also your way of communicating with staff in your child's classroom as well. It is currently new to us, so it is a work in progress.

Parent Involvement: PNCC has an open-door policy that encourages families to visit the program at any time. We welcome family comments and suggestions about our program. Parent-Teacher conferences will be arranged as needed, on request of parent/legal guardian or lead teacher.

English Language Learners: At PNCC we accept learners from all backgrounds. The primary language we communicate in is English. If you communicate more comfortably in another language, please let us know. We will make every effort to make our materials and communications accessible for you in your home language.

Inclusion: PNCC does not discriminate based on disability in admissions to, access to, or operation of its childcare program. PNCC is committed to serving persons with disabilities. To ensure that you do not encounter any barriers, please communicate with us so that every effort can be made to provide you with any reasonable accommodations you or your child may require. We do not discriminate against any participant on the base of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program or protected genetic information in employment or in any program of activity. All families in the Children's Center will be treated with dignity, consideration and respect recognizing fully each as an individual.

**Developmental screenings:** Our program works with CDS to initiate or schedule developmental screenings. If childcare staff has any concerns, they will ask to meet with the parent or legal guardian to go over these concerns. Once a referral has been started, CDS will contact the parent or legal guardian, to go over details. You can also call or contact them online if you would like to on your own.

**Prevention of Suspension or Expulsion:** Penobscot Nation Children's Center is committed to creating a positive Learning environment that focuses on fostering social-emotional development. We will respond to challenging behavior by incorporating positive behavior interventions before ever considering suspension, expulsion, or other exclusionary measures. Should challenges arise a team meeting will be held with parents to establish goals and provide specific supports to best care for your child. This may include working together with Child Development Services, behavioral consultants, and other community supports as appropriate. Should there be a determination made by the team made up of professionals may decide, that continuing care for your child at our center is not in the best interest of your child or the center, then we will assist in seeking alternate placement, as best we can. If after all the resources have been exhausted, the behavior has not improved we will then look at suspension or expulsion.

A child will first be suspended for a time frame that depends on the severity of the behavior. Expulsion will only occur if once a child is back from a suspension that said behavior is increasing or not improving. These team decisions would include some following people to discuss and decide what is in the best interest of the child, and the other children of the center: Director of Social Services, along with the Family Support Specialist, the Lead Teacher in the classroom, others deemed necessary and the parents.

**Biting Policy:** Biting is a common behavior among young children, especially those under 3 years of age, as they explore their environment and develop communication skills. While developmentally typical, biting can pose a risk to others and will be addressed promptly and thoughtfully.

#### **Goals**

- Ensure the safety of all children and staff
- Support the child who bit in learning appropriate behavior
- Communicate effectively with families
- Minimize future biting incidents

**Understanding Biting** Children may bite due to:

- Teething discomfort
- Frustration, anger, or lack of verbal skills
- A need for sensory input
- Overstimulation or feeling overwhelmed

Our approach is centered around education, redirection, and emotional support.

#### **Response to Biting Incidents**

##### **1. Immediate Action**

- Separate the children calmly and safely.
- Attend to the bitten child with first aid and comfort.
- Use age-appropriate language to explain that biting hurts and is not acceptable.

##### **2. Documentation**

- Complete an incident report, detailing the event and the response.
- Parents of both children will be notified, while maintaining confidentiality.

##### **3. Ongoing Support**

- Observe and identify patterns or triggers for the behavior.
- Implement strategies (e.g., redirection, increased supervision, teething support).
- Collaborate with parents to create a consistent approach at home and in care.

#### 4. If Biting Persists

- Develop an individual behavior plan in consultation with parents and, if needed, specialists.
- Provide regular updates and adjust the plan as needed.
- If a child bites another child and breaks the skin, we will need to send the child home.
- If the child aggressively bites twice in one day they may need to be sent home.

#### **Confidentiality**

Information about the children involved in biting incidents will be kept confidential. Families will only be informed about their own child's involvement.

#### **When Further Action is Needed**

If biting becomes frequent or severe and poses ongoing risk, temporary removal or reduced attendance may be considered in collaboration with the family, and with the goal of returning the child to full participation.

#### Confidentiality:

Child and family records are kept on file, in locking filing cabinets at all times. Parents are welcome to review their child's record. Personal information will not be released without written consent from parent/legal guardian

Parties allowed access without consent of the parent/legal guardian:

- Department of Health and Human Services, Licensing Department
- Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention
- Department of Education, Child and Adult Care Food Program
- Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Childcare, and Childcare Development Fund Administration will review for compliance of stated grants
- In the event of a disaster, health or safety emergency, or a serious health or safety risk such as a food allergy, facility staff may disclose Personally Identifiable Information without consent if it determined that disclosure of such information is necessary to protect the health and/or safety of children or other persons.

#### **RECORDS MANAGEMENT**

- All records pertaining to this childcare program are confidential and will be kept for three years. Parents and staff have the right to request to view their files at any time.

### Daily Routines

### Daily Schedule

|             |                                                        |
|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| 7:30-8:00   | Arrival                                                |
| 8:00-8:30   | Breakfast                                              |
| 8:30-8:45   | Activity                                               |
| 8:45-9:00   | Clean up                                               |
| 9:00-9:15   | Group-time: calendar/songs/weather                     |
| 9:15-9:45   | Language, drumming, dancing                            |
| 9:45-10:15  | Free play/outside/activity                             |
| 10:15-11:00 | Outside play                                           |
| 11:00-11:15 | Wash hands for lunch                                   |
| 11:15-11:45 | Lunch                                                  |
| 11:45-12:00 | Bathrooms/teeth brushing/quiet book time               |
| 12:00-12:15 | Story time                                             |
| 12:00-2:00  | Naptime/quiet time (Friday Noon dismissal from school) |
| 1:30        | Pre-k dismissal Monday – Thursday                      |
| 2:45-3:00   | Clean up/ wash hands/ Kindergarten arrives @ 3         |
| 3:00-3:15   | Snack                                                  |
| 3:15-4:00   | Outside/free play inside                               |
| 4:00-5:00   | Free play inside                                       |

\*\*This is an example of our preschool schedule. We have daily schedules for each classroom  
Our schedules can be made flexible to the needs of the children on any given day.

### Drop off and pick up:

- Please check in with a staff person upon arrival.
- Please make sure that your child is dressed and ready to start the day.
- If you plan on dropping your child off later than their scheduled time, please notify staff by 9 so that we can plan accordingly for your child's late arrival.
- Please notify us if there will be a change in the pick-up person.
- If the person is not on the approved pick-up list, you must notify us in Tadpoles, email, or text so that it is in writing. ID will be required if the childcare staff is not familiar with the person that you have authorized to pick up.
- The times and days that you have chosen to enroll your child will be when they can be in attendance
- If they are scheduled from 8:00-4:30 Tuesday and Thursday that is the only time they can be here.
- If you would like to change your child's schedule, please speak with the Family Support Specialist.

### Naptime:

- Maine Childcare licensing states "Children in attendance for more than 4 hours shall have an opportunity for rest or relaxation of one hour or longer according to the age of the child."
- Children 18 months and older are provided with individual blankets and mats for rest time.
- You can bring in a small blanket from home to use. Your child's blanket should be labeled with your child's first and last name. Quiet activities, such as books or toys are provided for children who choose not to sleep, once the other children that do nap have fallen asleep.
- State of Maine Childcare Licensing states: "Each infant/toddler shall be allowed to follow his/her own sleep/rest or relaxation pattern." Infants under 18 months of age are provided individual cribs.
- We follow the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the consumer Product Safety Commission for the safe sleep environments to reduce the risk of sudden Unexplained Infant Death Syndrome (SUIDS).
  - SUIDS is the sudden death of an infant under the age of 1 year, which cannot be explained, even after a thorough investigation.

#### **Our policy for sleeping in cribs-Safe Sleep:**

- All infants under 1 year of age will be placed on their backs in safety approved cribs unless an alternate sleep position is needed for medical reasons and a written note from the infant's health professional is provided.
- 
- Soft materials such as pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, and stuffed toys will not be placed in the infant's sleep environment.
- Appropriately fitted wearable blankets are permitted. (Sleep sacks)
- A fitted sheet will be used in the cribs; but no other sheets or loose-fitting bedding will be used in cribs.

#### **Outdoor Play:**

Infants are required to go out at least once per day, weather permitting.

Children ages 12 months and older, and in attendance for more than 4 hours a day, will have a minimum of one hour of outdoor play, weather permitting.

PNCC follows Childcare Weather Watch and the Air Quality Index to determine when it is appropriate to bring children outdoors and for how long. Should it not be advisable to play outdoors, indoor substitute gross motor activities will be provided.

**Playground Policy:** All playgrounds must be inspected for safety prior to allowing children to access it.

Staff will need to always maintain clear site lines for all children and be able to quickly intervene, should need arise, to maintain safe outdoor play.

Children ages 6 weeks to 23 months may occupy the same playground space, as long as staff-child ratios of 1:4 are maintained, and the maximum size is 8 children.

Children from ages 2 through 5 may occupy the same playground space, if the staff-child ratios are maintained according to the youngest child on the playground.

Current Ratio requirements:

- If there is a 2-year-old in the group, the staff-child ratio is 1:4 with a maximum of group size of 12, or 1:5 with a maximum group size of 10 children.
- If there is 2 ½ year old in the group, the staff-child ratio is 1:7 with a maximum group size of 21 children
- If there is a 3-year-old in the group, the staff-child ratio is 1:8 with a maximum group size of 24 children, or 1:10 with a size of 20.

**Snow Days:** During the winter season if there is a delay to our opening, if we have an early closure or if we will not be opening, we will notify you in the Tadpoles App as soon as we are notified. If the Tribe has a delayed opening, we will open 30 minutes before the tribe.

**Meals and Snacks:** We provide breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack, which is at no cost to our clients regardless of income. All meals provided are nutritious and meet the guidelines set by the Child and Adult Care Food Program. If you like to bring in a special snack for your child to share, please let a staff member know what you would like to bring and when. Monthly menus for meals and snacks are posted for parents to see. At times, we may need to make changes. Staff will post in Tadpoles for each meal.

**Food Restrictions and Allergies:** If your child has food allergies, or special food requirements, please let us know. Please include specific information from the child's physician, detailing what foods are to be restricted or provided, how to respond to exposure, and any other pertinent information. We will do our best to accommodate the individual needs of the children.

**Breast Milk/Infant Formula/Milk:** You are welcome to provide expressed breast milk for use while your child is attending our program. Bottles or bags of expressed milk must be clearly labeled with your child's name and date and time of expression. We also have a space in the center where you can nurse your child while they are in our care if you choose to do so. The decision regarding if and which infant formula to feed your baby is one for you and your child's doctor to make together. You are welcome to provide a formula of your choice in premixed bottles (labeled with your child's name and the date) or unopened containers of formula with child's name and date on it. We do supply Members Mark iron fortified formula, At approximately 1 year of age, we will transition your child from formula to whole milk. The staff will communicate with you about this as their first birthday gets close. Please let us know if you choose to provide expressed breast milk instead of us offering your child cow's milk after one year of age. At this time, we will start to transition from bottle to a cup as soon as it is developmentally appropriate.

Currently, we serve whole milk and whole Lactaid for children under 1. We also, serve 1% and 1% Lactaid to children over 2. If your child needs an alternative milk, we will need a Dr's note.

**Personal items:** The center will provide blankets for rest time unless you prefer to bring in your own.

If your child has something that they like to sleep with such as a small stuffed animal feel free to bring that in.

Please **do not** bring in items from home, unless your child's class is having a special event and requests something be brought in.

If you do, we will have your child place them in their cubbies, however, **we are not responsible for lost, broken, or stolen toys.**

**Clothing:** Children need to arrive dressed for the day and dressed comfortably. Please if your child is in a dress or skirt, please have them wear leggings or shorts underneath. They need to be able to move freely and participate in a variety of activities throughout the day. Although, the teaching staff does their best to protect your child's clothing, the center does not guarantee the condition of clothing and accessories after an active day of play.

Sneakers or other fully enclosed shoes with skid resistant soles are the preferred regular footwear for all seasons. This gives children the best foot protection and balance stability for most active play.

Please keep a warm sweater in your child's cubby as both inside and outside weather can vary unexpectedly.

- **Boots, snowsuits, hats, mittens etc., are required** from November through April.
- Your child may get wet, dirty, have something spilled on them, toilet training accidents, or may just be uncomfortable in their clothing for a variety of reasons.
- It is required that everyday there is at least one- two complete change of clothing, including socks, underwear, shirt, shorts/pants.
- If your child does not have extra clothing in his/her cubby you may get a call to that you may need to bring some in.
- **\*WATER PLAY:** We may use sprinklers for summertime water play.

Diapers, please make sure that the center has diapers for your child. If they are running low, staff may remind you in Tadpoles, text or email, to bring some in. We supply wipes, the brand we use is Huggies natural care, sensitive & fragrance free. If you would like a different brand, feel free to bring it in, make sure you write your child's name on them.

## **Health and Safety**

### **Immunizations Policy:**

All children enrolled in care will need to follow the State of Maine's Daycare Immunization Standards available at <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/infectious-disease/immunization/documents/daycare-immunization-standards-revised.pdf> a copy can also be provided to you at the center, upon request.

If immunizations are not medically advisable, the child's medical provider must provide documentation to the center for their file. Additionally, if there is an outbreak, and the child is not immunized, they will need to be excluded from care in accordance with CDC Guidelines.

**Injuries and Medical Emergencies:** In the event of an injury or medical emergency at PNCC, the staff will refer to this policy for guidance.

### **Injury:**

1. Child will be assessed for severity of injury.
2. First aid will be administered.
  - a. If child is not breathing or pulse cannot be detected, CPR will be initiated before any first aid measures.
3. If first aid is being administered and the injury is not considered superficial another staff will contact either the Penobscot Nation Health Department or 911. Deciding who to contact will be determined by the severity of the injury.
4. If CPR is being administered another staff member will first contact 911, and then the Penobscot Nation Health Department for back up.
5. After medical personnel has been contacted, staff at PNCC will then contact parents/guardians of the injured child.
6. If the child needs to be transported to the emergency room and the parent/guardian has not arrived, a staff member will accompany the child on the ambulance and remain with the child until the person has arrived.

### **Medical Emergency:**

1. Situation will be assessed for severity.
2. Emergency medication will be administered (epi-pen, inhaler, other, in accordance with medication administration policy)
3.
  - a. If a child is not breathing or a pulse cannot be detected, CPR will be initiated before any medication administration.
4. If an emergency medication has been administered, another staff member will either call Penobscot Nation Health Department or 911. either the Penobscot Nation Health Department or 911. Deciding who to contact will be determined by the severity of the emergency.
5. If CPR is being administered, another staff member will first contact 911, and then the Penobscot Nation Health Department for back up.
6. After medical personnel has been contacted, staff at PNCC will then contact the Parents/Guardians of the affected child.
7. If the child needs to be transported to the emergency room and the parent/guardian has not arrived a staff member will accompany the child on the ambulance and remain with the child until the aforementioned person arrives.

### **Documentation:**

After an injury or medical emergency has occurred, the event will be documented in an accident/incident report and the parent will be immediately notified. This report will be signed and dated by the person filling out the report as well as the parent/guardian who receives the report within 2 business days. This report will be kept in the child's record, but a copy can be obtained by contacting the Family Support Specialist.

Additionally, if the injury or illness required medical treatment from a physician or any other medical personnel, or resulted in death, a Serious Injury/Illness Report must be completed and submitted to DHHS Childcare Licensing Specialist within 24 hours of the occurrence.

**Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases:** Healthy hygiene routines are the first line of defense in illness prevention. These are practiced by staff and all children in our program daily. The basic activities in which your child will be participating are:

- Hand washing with soap and water: Upon arrival at the center, before and after snacks and meals, before and after handling food, after toileting, before administering medication, and as needed through the day.
- Coughing/sneezing: The use of disposable tissues is encouraged in covering coughs and sneezes. Covered waste baskets are readily available for immediate disposal of used tissues. Hands and other surfaces impacted will be washed.
- Diapering/Toileting: Children of all ages are actively engaged as partners in the activities of diapering and toilet learning. Children and staff discuss what is taking place during diapering. Children are encouraged
- to use the toilet when they become developmentally ready and when the family initiates the process at home. Staff will work closely to work with you to create consistent routines for your child during this process.

We understand that illnesses are unavoidable in the childcare setting. We will always do our best to work with our families to keep all our children healthy and in attendance. To prevent the spread of disease, please keep your child home if they have a contagious illness.

If your child shows any of the following, he/she may not be admitted to the program, or they may be sent home:

- Indicators of vomiting or diarrhea 24 hours prior to arrival. (If sent home for vomiting/diarrhea 24 hours until they can return.)
- Fever of 100 degrees or more (cannot return until 24 hours fever free without fever reducing meds)
- Unfamiliar rash or seeping skin sores
- Unusual redness or eye discharge
- Evidence of nits or head lice
- Contagious illness or condition not being treated by health professional
- Unable to stay awake and alert for scheduled activities
- Uncharacteristic and/or inconsolable crying
- Is unable to participate in activities due to symptoms of the acute illness
- We reserve the right to request that any child enrolled in the program be seen by a medical professional if contagious illness is suspected.

For any acute illnesses your child shows symptoms for, please refer to our Medical Conditions table for further guidance. As always, our Family Support Specialist is available for any questions.

If your child needs to be picked up, you will be notified in Tadpoles, or by text and expected to pick your child up within the hour. If the primary caretaker cannot be reached, then other emergency contacts will be notified. We will make every effort to keep your child comfortable and reduce exposure to other children until they can be picked up.

Certain illnesses require notification to the State of Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention. An updated copy of the notifiable diseases can be found at <https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/infectious-disease/epi/disease-reporting/index.shtml> or can be made available upon request.

#### **Medication Administration:**

For Prescription or non-prescription medication to given at the program:

- The parent/guardian must sign the medication consent form.
- Staff must have adequate training in the type of medicine, ways to give it, and be aware of any possible side effects and reactions.
- All medications must be kept in original container and must have the child's name on the container.
- Director of PNDSS approval must be obtained for non-oral medicines, and any controlled medications such as Ritalin.

We can administer prescribed medications to your child if the following criteria are met:

- The medication has been administered at home for a full 24 hours and the child has been observed for any medication reaction by the parent/guardian or other adult. This is necessary because allergic reactions may occur with repeated exposure to medications regardless of how many times a medication is prescribed.
- The medication is provided in its original container
- The medication is labeled by the pharmacy with
  - Child's name
  - The prescribing provider
  - Name and dosage of medication
  - Instructions on when/how to administer the medication
- The medication is not expired
- You have filled out and signed our "Medication Consent Form"

We can administer non-prescription medication to your child if the following criteria is met:

- The medication is indicated for a minor abrasion, cut, burn, or insect bite.
  - Other indications will be assessed on a case-by-case basis by the PNCC staff.
- The medication is in the original packaging and labeled with your child's full name.
  - Non-prescription medication will not be administered for contagious illnesses. If your child has a contagious illness, please refer to our illness chart for further instruction.

Non-prescription creams/ointments/lotions (dry skin, diaper rash etc.) can be administered by staff if a medication consent form is filled out and signed.

If a child develops a rash and needs creams/ointments/lotions, the staff may contact the parent for permission of administration. In this instance, Medication consent form may be filled out at pick up.

When any medication is administered, parents must fill out a medication consent form, giving the child's name, the medication dose information, reason for giving the medication, and the length of treatment (1 week, 10 days etc.). One fully, trained staff person will administer medication in the presence of another supervising staff member, adhering to the physician's label, and at the time indicated by caregiver on the signed medication form. Both staff members will sign the back of the medication form, including amount, date, and time of administration. All medications are kept out of the reach of children in a locked container. These records are available for parents/guardians to review at any time.

**Emergency Medications:** If your child has a prescription for emergency medication (glucagon, epinephrine, inhalers etc.) the Penobscot Nation's Children's Center Staff will carry the medication with them when leaving the center. This includes, but is not limited to, surrounding playgrounds, the pavilion, the youth program, and any other place the children might attend.

**Medication Disposal:** Unwanted, unused, or expired medications will be given back to caregivers for disposal. In the event that the caregiver is unavailable, the medication will be delivered to a local safe medication disposal site by the Family Support Specialist.

**Special Needs and Chronic Health Conditions/Allergies:** Children who have chronic health conditions or special developmental needs may need additional assistance. Families are asked to provide us with written medical instructions from their health care provider for handling of conditions such as asthma, orthopedic or sensory issues, seizures, serious allergies, or specialized feeding or sleeping needs. We will make every effort to accommodate all children and will meet and discuss each case individually to ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Staff will be fully trained by health consultant prior to allowing the child to attend.

**Sunscreen & Insect Repellent:** Sunscreen and insect repellent may be applied as necessary during outside play. Sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15 for children over 6 months of age in accordance with the directions on the label. Sunscreen is not used on children under 6 months of age. Insect Repellent is not used on children under 2 months of age. The program will provide both products for use. If you have a personal preference for your child for a specific sunscreen or insect repellent, please indicate on the permission slip and send it in with your child's name on the container.

**Emergency Response and Evacuation:**

- Monthly fire drills are conducted, with the simulated fire in different places throughout the building, to ensure all staff and children have practiced different modes of safely exiting the building.
- In an emergency situation, like a fire or gas leak and we are asked to relocate to a nearby location we have permission to move the children the Boys and Girls Club of Penobscot Nation 16 Wabanaki Way.
- If the emergency makes it unsafe to wait nearby at the above location we will move the children to 4 tops Lane in Milford. In the event of imminent danger, this may require staff to transport children in private vehicles.
- A large part of our families, reside or work nearby the center so they may be asked to pick up their child immediately at the Boys and Girls Club of Penobscot Nation before we even transport any others to another location.
- Should children need to be evacuated from Indian Island, they will be as safely transport as possible to 4 Tops Lane where contact with parents will be made and children can be picked up.
- Should the bridge be out for any reason, we will remain at PNCC and follow instructions of Penobscot Nation Emergency Personnel. Again, in this situation any parents or families who are on the island may pick up their child/ren
- If we are calling from one of these locations, we need you to come and get your child upon receiving the call.
- We will remain present with the children until all have been picked up.
- It is our hope that we do not ever need to use these emergency plans; however, it is our responsibility to ensure the safety of everyone here. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask. Thank you.

**CRISIS PLAN**

If an emergency occurs and only one staff member or adult is available at the program, the following will occur to obtain additional help with the children as quickly as possible: Tricia Stewart or Michael Augustine or the Boys and Girls Club of Penobscot Nation.

**TRANSPORTATION POLICY:** We do not transport children. Parents will be informed in the event of any change in this policy and all Child Care Licensing rule requirements will be followed. In the event of *an unexpected catastrophic* emergency, it may become necessary to transport children to maintain their safety.

### Financial Policies:

Types of Care: The Penobscot Nation Children's Center has the following types of care.

- Private pay clients
- Tribal subsidy through CCDF for those eligible
- State Subsidy

### Terms of Payment:

Childcare rates are based on the State of Maine Market Rate for Penobscot County

1. Private Rate cost:
  - The regular rate will be \$275.00 per week for full-time care for children under 1
    - Part-time (0-29) hours 206.00
  - The regular rate will be \$250.00 per week for full-time care for children 1-3
    - Part-time (0-29) hours \$187.00
  - The regular rate will be \$244.00 per week for preschool children
    - Part-time (0-29) hours 183.00
  - The regular rate will be \$200.00 per week for full-time school age (K) care
    - Part-time (0-29) hours \$150.00
  - The After School rate for both Pre-K and K is \$120 per week.
2. **Drop-in Rate:** We do not provide drop-in care, no exceptions.
3. **Discounts:**
  - There is a discount for 2 or more children in from the same family
    - 1<sup>st</sup> child is full price
    - 2<sup>nd</sup> child is 50%
    - 3<sup>rd</sup> child is 25%
  - There is a 25% discount for Tribal Employees enrolled in a private childcare slot.

### Payment Due Date:

- The first payment must be made on or before your child's first day and every Friday after that
- Payments can be made the following ways:
  - Directly to PNCC- cash or check
  - Through Shannon Smith at finance-Cash, Check, or card
  - Tribal employees may set up a payroll deduction.
  - The fee for checks returned for insufficient funds is \$15.00, plus the amount of any bank charges.

### Failure to Pay

- If payments are not made on time, you may not be able to drop your child off until payment is made and if this occurs often then you may lose your childcare slot.
- Any balances that occur, for parents who are Penobscot Tribal Members your per capita may be taken to cover any balance that you have, as stated on your fee agreement that you signed.

### Early Drop off and Late Pick up:

- Early Drop off is on a case-by-case basis if asking to do so and not before 7:30. This means before the time they are scheduled to be in, if this becomes an issue than we may need to change the scheduled in time which could mean an increase in cost. This can be an issue because we base our staff numbers on what parents schedule their children.

### **Late Pick-Up Policy**

- We understand that emergencies and delays can happen. However, to ensure fairness to staff and maintain smooth operations, we have established the following Late Pick-Up Policy:
- Children must be picked up no later than the time you have signed your child to be picked up each day.

**Grace Period:**

- A **5-minute grace period** is allowed.
- 
- Repeated late pick-ups, 3 or more in a 30-day period will result in a meeting with the Family Support Specialist and possible termination of childcare services if this continues.

**Emergency Situations:**

- If you are running late due to an emergency, please let us know as soon as possible. This allows staff to prepare your child and ease anxiety.
- We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in respecting our staff's time and center policies.

**Holidays:**

The childcare program will be closed the following days each year:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- President's Day
- Patriot's Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Indian Day
- Labor Day
- Indigenous People's Day
- Veteran's Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- The day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Day
- We will be closed when the Tribe closes for Holidays
- Up to 4x per year closing for staff Training
- Clients still pay their normal rate when we close for holidays.

**Client Vacation:**

- The client vacation days must be taken on blocks of time such as 1 week (Monday-Friday)
- The client is allowed 2 weeks per calendar year of vacation where they will not be charged.
- The client must give the provider 1-week advanced notice of the dates of vacation, no exceptions.

**Termination Policy:**

We strive to create a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment for all children, families, and staff. However, there may be circumstances where termination of childcare services becomes necessary. This policy outlines the conditions under which termination may occur and the process we follow.

**Reasons for Termination:**

Childcare services may be terminated for any of the following reasons:

1. **Non-Payment or Repeated Late Payments**  
Failure to pay tuition and/or fees on time, after appropriate notices and attempts to resolve the issue, may result in termination.
2. **Chronic Late Pick-Ups**  
Repeated failure to pick up your child by closing time may lead to termination, after prior written warnings.
3. **Behavioral Concerns**  
If a child's behavior poses a risk to themselves, other children, or staff, and all interventions have been exhausted, termination may be necessary.

4. **Parental Behavior**

Disrespectful, threatening, or inappropriate behavior by parents or guardians toward staff, children, or other families will not be tolerated and may result in immediate termination.

5. **Failure to Follow Policies**

Repeated failure to follow center policies and procedures, including those regarding illness, communication, or safety, may lead to termination.

6. **Lack of Child Readiness or Fit**

If it is determined that our program is not the best fit for a child's developmental or emotional needs, we will discuss alternative care options with the family and may terminate services in the child's best interest.

### **Termination Process**

- In most cases, families will receive **written notice** of concerns and a **two-week period** to correct the issue before termination.
- Whether the child attends care during the two period or is not in attendance the parents are still responsible for payment for the two weeks
- In cases of serious behavioral or safety concerns, **immediate termination** may occur without advance notice.

### Custody Issues:

Parents cannot request childcare staff to withhold a child from a parent, unless you have a court order stating so.

### **Federal Non-Discrimination Statement**

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible State or local Agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, *USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form* which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

**(1) mail:**

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

**(2) fax:**

(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

**(3) email:**

[program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

(Federal statement updated 5/18/2022)

This handbook is yours to keep for your records. Please sign and turn in the next page signed.

Parent Policies Signature Page

1. By signing this contract, clients indicate that they have read, understand, and agree to follow the Penobscot Nation Children's Center Policies.
2. The Provider reserves the right to make changes to their policies and will give the client a copy of the revised policies 1 week before they go into effect.
3. A failure to enforce one or more terms of this contract does not waive the provider's right to enforce any other terms of this contract.
4. These Policies will be re-signed annually.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Second Parent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Provider

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date