



Child Development Center

1900 Graybar Lane
Nashville, TN 37215
615-690-3091

www.firststepsnashville.org

FAMILY HANDBOOK

The Family Handbook is to serve as a guide to the programs, services, policies and procedures of First Steps, Inc. All the information contained in the Handbook should be reviewed with the family during the intake session.

We appreciate that you have selected First Steps to care for your child and promote his/her development. We view this as a privilege and pledge to do all we can to provide a nurturing and stimulating environment for your child.

When you need further assistance, please call:

Child Development Center	298-5619
Administrative and Outreach Offices	690-3091

Children are enrolled in the programs of First Steps, Inc. without regard to gender, religion, race, ability or disability.

Revised 8/17

FIRST STEPS, INC.

Mission, Vision and History of First Steps, Inc.

The mission of First Steps, Inc. is to educate and care for children with special needs and medical conditions alongside their typically developing peers in inclusive environments and support their families.

The vision of First Steps is to:

- Enhance the quality of life for children and their families.
- Eliminate barriers to services for children with special needs.
- Empower families as they seek to meet the needs of their children.
- Improve the community as a whole – child by child, family by family.
- Celebrate each child's unique potential.

First Steps, Inc. was formed in 1992 through a merge of the Duncanwood School, established in 1957, and the Heads Up Center, founded in 1970. First Steps now operates a community-based Child Development Center providing early intervention programming and educational services for children with developmental delays, who are medically fragile or are typically developing; a Community Outreach Program serving children and families with disabilities whose needs are best met in the home, community child care or hospital setting; and a Therapy Program offering speech, feeding, physical occupational and aquatic therapies on an outpatient basis, as well as in our classrooms.

Specific Services

- **Developmental assessments** are administered on an ongoing basis.
- **Individualized, developmentally based curriculums** are delivered daily.
- **Child specific training** connected to daily care routines is given as it relates to feeding, medical issues, medication, etc. The training is conducted by First Steps' Pediatric Registered Nurse, a therapist or a parent.
- **Nutritionally based snacks** are offered. The Center provides a morning and an afternoon snack each day which is in compliance with USDA requirements.
- **Ongoing Coordination** with Public Schools and other community resources .

Enrollment Procedures and Checklist

Admission Procedures

The Child Development Center serves children between the ages of 6 weeks and 5 years. Please be aware that our Preschool and Pre-K classes are not a substitute for Kindergarten.

Parents who request admission are placed on a waiting list. Children whose parents or guardians have visited the Center are admitted as appropriate openings become available. Children are accepted without regard for gender, religion, ethnicity, race, ability or disability.

Before enrollment can occur, parents need to meet with the Center Director for an Intake Meeting. This meeting will take 1-2 hours. A \$75.00 non-refundable registration fee is due once a parent has accepted an opening if the registration fee was not paid when placed upon wait list.

Enrollment Checklist

At the Intake Meeting:

- Review of First Steps Family Handbook including Policies and Procedures
- Parent receives copy of Handbook and signs receipt
- Review of DHS Licensing Standards
- Parents receives Summary of DHS Standards and signs receipt
- Parent and child tour school and meet teachers
- Identification of persons who can pick child up from school
- Obtain permission to photograph child
- Obtain permission to medicate (if applicable)
- Complete Intake Packet
- Registration Fee is paid
- Tuition Payment Contract is signed and completed

Before your child is enrolled, First Steps must have a copy of your child's:

- Current health records (and annually thereafter)
- Up to date immunization records
- Emergency contact information
- DHS Child Care Certificate (if applicable)
- Note from your child's Physician about special diet, medication or health concerns, if applicable

Intake Meeting

Parents and children are invited and encouraged to tour the Center and meet with your child's teacher before making the decision to place your child at First Steps, Inc. Upon touring the Center and deciding to place your child with our program, you will be asked to schedule an Intake meeting.

At the Intake meeting, you and your child will meet with the Center Director and, if possible, your child's teacher. As part of the Intake meeting, parents and the Center Director will review and discuss the *First Steps Family Handbook*, including policies and procedures, and the *DHS Standards for Child Care Centers*. The full set of licensing rules can be found online at: <http://share.tn.gov/sos/rules/1240/1240-04/1240-04-03.20161227.pdf>

You will be asked to sign a receipt stating you have received a copy of these materials and reviewed them with First Steps' Staff, so please feel free to ask questions.

The Center Director will cover all items listed on the enrollment checklist and you may request a copy of your *Tuition Payment Contract*. This form will state the date your child will begin school, the hours he/she will attend and the details of your payment plan. Your child will be considered enrolled once all intake paperwork has been received and payment for the first month's tuition has been processed.

Contacting the School

Phone Calls to Teachers

Teachers are very willing to discuss your child's progress or any concerns you may have. Please schedule a time for a phone call. **In the event of an emergency, please inform the staff person who answers the phone.** If you want to check on your child during the day, the staff person who answers the phone will check with the teacher and answer your questions. You may also reach your child's classroom directly through the following extensions:

- Peek-A-Boo Parrots (Infants) – 243
- Merry Monkeys (Toddlers) – 242
- Giggling Giraffes (Twos) – 241
- Laughing Lions (Preschool) – 240
- Rainforest Rascals (Pre-K) – 238

Tuition

Tuition Notes and Additional Fees

- A Tuition Payment Contract will be completed and signed at the Intake Meeting, and updated annually. Tuition is figured on a monthly basis only.
- A \$75.00 non-refundable registration fee per student is applicable and due at acceptance of opening. The maximum fee per family, per year, is \$125.00.
- Each September a \$100.00 student supply fee will be charged for each child enrolled.
- A \$25.00 returned check fee will apply to any returned checks.
- A \$25.00 declined credit card fee will apply any time a credit card is declined.
- Any changes to your agreed upon Contract must be made through the *Change of Schedule* form, available at the front desk, and a \$10.00 change of schedule fee will be applied. Withdrawal from the program requires a 30-day notice through submission of a *Change of Schedule* form.
- The facility closes at 5:30pm and all staff and children are expected to leave at that time. In consideration of this, please arrive no later than 5:25pm to pick up your child and his/her belongings.
- A \$15.00 late fee is applicable for 1-15 minutes past the time any child is scheduled to be picked up and an additional \$1.00 per minute late fee thereafter is applicable for 16-59 minutes. If a child is not picked up one hour past closing, staff will call the Davidson County Police Department and the Department of Human Services – Child Protective Services, to report an abandoned child. More than 3 late pick ups may jeopardize your child's enrollment or schedule with First Steps. Parents who are consistently late will be required to meet with the Executive Director to discuss continued services at First Steps, Inc.
- A sibling discount of 10% for one child is applicable for families when an additional child is enrolled. The discount is applied to the lower tuition. Children must be within the same family.
- Family First certificates are accepted with a monthly co-pay (see program fees).
- A \$30.00 fee will be assessed for any records requested from a closed file.
- Parents are billed for time scheduled. We cannot give credit for days your child does not attend. This includes holidays and in-service days when the Center is closed.
- Families may request special tuition consideration for emergency or major medical situations that result in extended absences for their child. In such cases requests should be made to the Center Director in writing and a doctor's note should be provided. Discounted tuition up to 50%, for up to one month can be considered.

Payments

Your childcare tuition will be discussed at the Intake Meeting and figured on an annual basis. The Tuition Payment Contract and payment options will be explained, completed and signed at the Intake Meeting. Payments are due in advance, per your Contract. Failure to follow this policy may result in dismissal from First Steps, Inc.

School Hours and Schedule

Arrival Time

First Steps classes officially start the school day at 8:30am. As classroom activities begin no later than 9:00am, please make every effort to have your child arrive at school no later than 9:00am in order for your child to begin his or her day in a consistent manner. **Children will be accepted into class until 9:00am.** Morning snack will be served between 8:30 and 9:00am. Children who have doctor's appointments or therapy during school hours may make arrangements for late arrivals on occasion. Please let your child's teacher know the day before that your child will be late for school.

Departure Time

The school day dismissed at 3:30pm. Children in our classes who are not enrolled in Extended Care should be picked up no later than 3:25pm. A late pick up fee will be charged beginning at 3:31pm. Children enrolled in Extended Care are to be picked up no later than 5:25pm. A late pick up fee will be charged beginning at 5:31pm.

School Closings

School Closings are announced under private school on local TV stations: Channel 2, Channel 4, and Channel 5.

If bad weather, lack of utilities or other unforeseen situations necessitate closing school during the school day, parents will be notified by phone. Parents will need to pick up their children as soon as possible for the safety of their children and the First Steps staff.

School Policies

Attendance

Attendance is critical for your child to receive the optimal services First Steps has to offer. Children benefit from regularly attending school per their agreed upon schedule. Children are expected to arrive no later than 9:00 each day, and may not be accepted into care past 9:00 without a doctor's note.

Sign-In and Sign-Out

Please be sure to sign your child into our care at the kiosk in the Center lobby when you drop him or her off in the morning, and at afternoon pick up. This serves as a piece of attendance documentation that is required by DHS.

Safety at First Steps

Children should remain with their parents as they go to and from class. Please help us keep children safe:

- Always close the classroom door as you enter and exit, even if children are not present.
- Don't let your child run in the hallway, climb on railing, or open and close doors and gates by themselves.
- Never enter or exit the facility from playground gates.
- Check children's belongings for small choking hazards such as coins, keys, and jewelry.
- Children should never be allowed move throughout the building without supervision for their safety.

Confidentiality

All medical and academic records, phone calls and conversations about your child and your family are confidential. Children's records are kept in a locked file cabinet in the File Room. You can see your child's records at anytime. First Steps staff shares information about a child only with the child's parents/guardians or with written permission from the child's parents/guardians.

Open Door Policy

First Steps welcomes and encourages you to visit the Center at any time. For security purposes, please know we keep the doors locked at all times. Staff has been instructed to ask anyone with an unfamiliar face to present identification.

Conscious Discipline and Positive Behavior Management

First Steps implements a program called Conscious Discipline which integrates social emotional learning, discipline, and self-regulation. This approach is transformational for the school and the family as it empowers children, teachers, and parents toward being solutions driven. All staff members are trained in this approach, and are equipped to use positive behavior management techniques. Parents are offered information throughout the year, and can also access <https://consciousdiscipline.com/> for more information about this approach.

Photographing Children

Teachers often take photographs of children during daily activities. Each year parents are given the opportunity to choose how we use their child's image. If given permission, you may look forward to seeing your child in a variety of photos. If you do not give permission, please know we do our best to keep your child out of photos. In the event of suspected child abuse or neglect, photographs may be taken with or without permission.

Abuse and Neglect of Children

Abuse and neglect of children who are enrolled at First Steps, Inc. will not be tolerated. State law requires that any person who suspects child abuse or neglect report his/her suspicion to the Department of Children's Services. As an early childhood education program that serves children who may or may not be abused or neglected, we will observe the following definition: Child abuse refers specifically to an act of commission by an individual which is not accidental or harms or threatens to harm a child's physical or mental health and welfare.

Suspected abuse/neglect will be reported to the Department of Children's Services. The investigator may take the child out of school without parent permission if the investigator obtains a court order or assumes emergency custody under Tennessee law. The Tennessee Child Abuse reporting hotline is 877-237-0004.

Abandoned Child

When a child is not picked up by the Center's closing time, staff will follow the procedures listed below per DHS policy:

1. Staff will call the family and all emergency contacts available in the child's file.
2. Staff will call the Center Director, the Director of Operations or the Executive Director to let them know about the situation.
3. If there is no response within one hour past closing, staff will call the Davidson County Police Department and The Department of Children's Services to report an abandoned child.
4. Staff will remain at the center with the child.
5. Staff will keep all doors locked.
6. Staff will continue to call family and emergency contacts until a social worker or police officer arrives to take the child.
7. *Staff are not allowed to release a child to any adult who is not listed on his/her emergency form.*

Terms for Dismissal

First Steps staff and administration are dedicated to developing and continuing a good relationship with families. Unfortunately, there are instances in which a child may be dismissed from the program. Such instances are as follows:

- Unwillingness to stay up to date on your child's immunizations according to the timetable set forth by the Tennessee Department of Health
- Unwillingness to follow First Steps' grievance policy
- Unwillingness to follow First Steps' attendance policy
- More than 3 late pick ups
- Nonpayment of child care fees
- Threatening behavior toward staff, other children or property.
- Any other situation in which the agency deems disenrollment necessary.

Fire and Disaster Drills

For the safety of the children and staff of First Steps, we conduct fire drills on a monthly basis. Each classroom has a posted evacuation plan and each teacher has been trained to follow specific evacuation procedures.

Emergency Evacuation

In the event an off-site evacuation of our building is required, children and staff will be moved to either the Green Hills Library on Benham Ave., or Elite/MPower on Woodmont Blvd. Parents will be called as soon as children have been safely relocated. If you would like more information regarding our emergency preparedness plan, please see the complete plan at the front desk.

Research Projects Awareness Policy

The family of any infant or toddler served has the right to refuse to be involved in research projects. If a family agrees for their child to participate, they are not asked to do more than what they agree to do. If the family chooses not to participate in a research project this will not adversely affect service delivery at anytime. Once the project is complete, the results will be made available to all participants.

Release of Children from School

1. Staff persons will release children in their care only to the parents or persons the parents have signed written permission for release of their child.
2. Teachers must request a photo ID for any person picking up a child if they are not familiar adults. Parents should inform responsible adults that this is the school's policy.
3. Teachers will not release the child to any adult suspected to be under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs. In the event that a staff person suspects intoxication or drug usage, the staff member will immediately notify the Center Director. The Director will talk with the persons in question and decide on the appropriate action to be taken. The Director may utilize the Department of Human Services to help make appropriate decisions regarding the safe release practices of young children.

Parking at First Steps

For your convenience, parents are encouraged to pull all the way forward and park under the canopy, or can also use the front parking spaces on either side of the canopy for quick drop off, and pick up. Parking is very limited during family events. Please carpool if possible. We also warn parents that leaving your child in the car unattended (even while you quickly come in) is illegal in Tennessee.

Title VI/Non-Discrimination

Title VI is a Federal law, which is part of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that protects individuals from discrimination on the basis of their race, color, or national origin in programs that receive Federal financial assistance. It is illegal for any division or contractor affiliated with DHS/CACFP to withhold or refuse benefits, services or funding based on race, color or national origin. Household income level or resources may affect participation in some DHS/CACFP benefit programs. Certain programs may also require evidence of citizenship for eligibility. If you feel you have received unsatisfactory service as a result of your claim against a DHS/CACFP employee or contractor, please contact the DHS Civil Rights Compliance Officer immediately at (615) 313-4731 or V/TTY at (800) 270-1349.

Language Assistance for Persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

The U.S. Department of Justice has published guidance on reducing language barriers for persons seeking access to federally funded benefits. As provided by this guidance, the policies, practices or procedures of any CACFP institution which have the effect of excluding or limiting the receipt of federally funded benefits by any LEP person may result in discrimination which violates Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. To ensure compliance with Title VI, all institutions must develop a written plan to ensure that eligible LEP persons have meaningful access to the CACFP. The written plan is to be maintained by all institutions and available for examination by appropriate state and federal personnel.

We encourage parents to take an active role in the development and learning of their children. To that end, parents with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) are identified during the intake process prior to enrolling their child. If identified as a need, First Steps will take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to communication between teaching staff and families.

Grievance Policy

Parents have the right to voice complaints about the program and/or operation of First Steps, Inc. If a parent is dissatisfied he or she should follow the following procedures. There will be no repercussions for families who choose to complete any or all steps.

1. If a parent is not satisfied with First Steps, the parent may request a meeting with the Program Director. (If the complaint is about the Program Director, the parent should ask for a meeting with the Director of Operations.) The Program Director will meet with you and respond in writing within 5 working days of the request for a meeting.
2. If the parent is not satisfied with the response from the Program Director, the parent may request a meeting with the Executive Director or Director of Operations. He/She will meet with you and respond in writing within 5 working days of the request for a meeting.
3. If the parent is not satisfied with the response from the Executive Director/Director of Operations, the parent may contact the Board President to request a meeting with the Human Resources Committee of the Board of First Steps, Inc. The HR Committee will meet with you within 30 working days of the request for a meeting and will respond in writing no more than 10 days after the meeting.
4. If the parent is not satisfied with the response from the HR Committee, the parent may request a meeting with the Board of Directors of First Steps, Inc. by contacting the Board President. The Board will meet with you within 30 working days of the request for a meeting. The President, Executive Committee, and a representative from the Department of Human Services, Office of Community Service will attend. The representative will act as consultant for both parties. The President of the Board will respond in writing no more than 10 days after the meeting. The decision of this group will be final.

Record Review by United Way

United Way may review your child's file during a scheduled visit. Information in your child's record will be kept confidential by United Way. The records will only be reviewed for the purpose of monitoring the compliance of our grant requirements through United Way. United Way will not release any information without written permission from the parent or guardian.

Record Review by the Department of Human Services and the Department of Health

Your child's file may be reviewed during monitoring visits that occur throughout the year. Children's records will be used only for the purpose of monitoring the compliance of the child care center with regards to requirements and regulations of the State of Tennessee and the Federal Government. No information will be released by these departments without written permission from the parent.

Educational Programs

Assessments

Each child's growth and development is assessed regularly. Teachers maintain progress logs on all children. Teachers may use the Teaching Strategies Gold assessment portfolio or any other developmentally appropriate assessment tool the center may select. The selection of the assessment will depend on your child's developmental needs. Assessments will not be conducted without written permission from the parent/guardian upon intake. Please note that data is taken weekly on each child and you will see teachers using ipads to capture moments for this purpose throughout the day.

Daily Reports to Parents

Teachers write and send a child report to parents each day. Please see enclosed My Teaching Strategies information for instructions on how to sign up to receive these. This report may share information about the day's educational experiences, the amount of liquids your child drank, diaper changes or toileting incidents for the day, naptime experience, and your child's general disposition during the day.

Field Trips

First Steps does not participate in field trips but throughout the year, guests are invited to come to the Center to share their talents, crafts, etc. with the children.

Parent Conferences

Teachers will offer to meet with families to discuss updated assessments twice per year. During these consultations teachers and parents will discuss your child's progress toward goals at school and at home, share activities done at school and activities that you can do with your child at home, and update medical and therapy information.

IFSP and IEP (for children with special needs)

First Steps requests current copies of any IFSP or IEP in place for your child. First Steps teachers gladly attend IFSP and IEP meetings as part of your child's team. Parents should invite teachers once a meeting has been scheduled.

Curriculum

The Rainforest Rascals, Laughing Lions, and Giggling Giraffes will implement the Frog Street Curriculum. The Peek a Boo Parrots and Merry Monkey classrooms will implement theme based curriculum centered around developmentally appropriate goals. All classrooms are language and literacy rich environments for young children.

Classroom Placement

Children may transition to the next level classroom throughout the year as space is available. The largest promotion takes place in August. Parents and current teachers are given the opportunity to provide feedback prior to a promotion. We build in visits and supports for the child during each transition. The placement process can be complex and can be based on many factors including availability, age, peers, and individual needs.

Instructional Coach

First Steps employs a full-time Instructional Coach. The primary responsibilities of the Instructional Coach include: coaching and mentoring teaching staff; ongoing research of early literacy best practices; and assessing children, teacher and classroom outcomes using standardized assessments.

Parent Meetings

Each year at least four parent education workshops will be held. This is a great time for parents to learn the latest approaches in early child development while getting to know one another and developing a support network.

Outdoor Play

Fresh air and exercise are very important to a child's development and health. Outdoor play will be provided for all children who are in First Steps care for more than three consecutive hours during a day. All children are required to be outside at least 30 minutes, twice everyday unless the wind chill falls below 32 degrees or the heat index rises above 95 degrees. Please be sure your child has appropriate clothing for all seasons.

First Steps has an indoor gym that allows for gross motor play, exercise and release of energy in inclement weather when the children are not able to go outside.

Naptime

Children have the opportunity to nap each day after lunch. Children do not have to sleep. Each child's sleep schedule is respected and children are allowed to nap at other times if they are tired. First Steps provides each child with his or her own cot or crib with a clean sheet and blanket. Children may bring their own blankets, pillows or stuffed animals to school for naptime. Please label your personal items with your child's name as First Steps is not responsible for lost items. Teachers will wash all items once each week. Please note we do not accept children for arrival during naptime to avoid disrupting the class.

Toilet Training

Teachers work with parents to begin toilet training when children are developmentally and physically ready to use the toilet. Teachers will keep parents informed of progress and will work with parents to be sure the child is using the same words, gestures and procedures for toileting at school as they are at home. If your child is toilet training, please provide the teacher with plenty of complete changes of clothes.

iPad and Computer Usage

First Steps utilizes a variety of tools, methods and options for learning, including the use of interactive media. Please be aware that your child will have exposure to interactive media in the form of an iPad or computer while at school/in therapy when developing your own family's media plan. First Steps utilizes only interactive applications. Passive screen time (watching) is not allowed. Computers are only utilized for children over the age of two years. iPads are used for children of all ages, but usage for children under the age of two is limited and is only used as an engagement tool according to the recommendations issued by the American Academy of Pediatrics. If you have any questions related to your child's use of interactive media, please ask your child's teacher/therapist or Program Director.

Movies and Television Programs

Movies and television programs are not shown at First Steps, Inc.

Birthday Celebrations

When your child has a birthday, we welcome you to share this event with his or her classmates. Please talk with your child's teacher to be aware of classroom allergies and to plan the best day and time.

School Portraits

First Steps offers an opportunity for school pictures at least once per year. This generally takes place in the Fall and/or in the Spring. There is no obligation for parents to purchase the photos.

Available Services

Educational Program

First Steps offers an individualized, developmentally based, early childhood education program for each child enrolled. The program provides structured time in which teachers are working with your child to help him or her accomplish their individual goals in the areas of cognition, social/emotional skills, fine and gross motor skills, speech and language skills and self-help skills. First Steps is a licensed preschool program, and children are assessed on appropriate development through age 6.

Extended Care

The Center opens at 7:30am and closes at 5:30pm, Monday through Friday, for full time classes. Children are supervised by qualified teachers and are provided a structured time of developmentally appropriate activities. Parents may request that children participate in Extended Care (please refer to fee schedule). Space is limited and children are enrolled on a first come, first served basis. Parents are reminded to arrive at 5:25pm to gather your child and his/her belongings as the facility closes promptly at 5:30pm. Adding extended care must be requested in writing on a *Change of Schedule* form. You will be notified once your request has been approved. Also on occasion parents may need to request one-time use of extended care that their child is not scheduled for. These requests should be made in advance when possible, and will be granted based on availability.

Pediatric Nurse

First Steps provides the Center with a Pediatric Registered Nurse (PRN). The PRN serves as a Health Consultant to ensure quality health care is established and maintained in our school.

The objectives are:

- Coordinate child-specific medical training to teachers and families to ensure competent, consistent care during school hours.
- Increase knowledge and accuracy of teachers' and families' ability to administer medications and perform necessary medical procedures.
- Ensure timely enrollment of children with chronic medical conditions.

Parental permission is required for child participation in this project.

Child's School Needs

Clothing

Each child needs at least one change of clothes in his or her cubby every day. School clothes should be comfortable and appropriate for busy, active play including glue, paint, and more. Please consider ease of dressing for diaper changes and using the restroom. Soiled clothing will be sent home for washing.

Children play outside all year round, in all kinds of weather. In the Fall and Spring, your child should have a sweater or jacket at school. In Winter, children need a warm coat, hat, gloves and boots or heavy shoes. For your child's safety, closed toe shoes are best, and children should never be sent to school in flip flops.

Diapers

Parents supply their child's diapers, diaper wipes, ointments, etc. First Steps accepts disposable diapers. Teachers will label each child's belongings if the parent has not already done so. Teachers will send home a note when your child needs more supplies. If a child is without diapers and wipes on a continual basis, he or she will not be allowed to return to school until diapers and wipes have been sent in.

Toys and Personal Belongings

We discourage children from bringing toys from home because of the potential risk of loss or breakage. Occasionally classes may have a "Show and Tell" time which offers your child an opportunity to share a special toy with his or her teacher and peers. Your child's teacher will inform you when this occurs.

Please label all items brought from home, including lunch. If your child should lose something, please check with your child's teacher or the Center Director immediately. First Steps is not responsible for lost or damaged items.

Meals, Snacks and Other Supplements

Meals and Snacks

Children are served Morning Snack between 8:30 and 9:00 each morning in our full time classrooms. Children are served a nutritious Lunch sent from home between 11:00 and 12:00 each day. Children are served an Afternoon snack between 1:30 and 2:30.

Please let us know at the Intake Meeting if your child has any dietary restrictions or food allergies. The USDA recommends the following food groups be served for meals. First steps requests that families adhere closely to the recommended nutritional guidelines when packing lunches:

Meals

Breakfast	Lunch or Supper	Snacks (2 of the 4 groups)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milk • Fruit or Vegetable • Grains or Bread 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milk • Meat or meat alternate • 2 different servings of Fruits or Vegetables • Grains or Bread 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milk • Meat or meat alternate • Fruit or Vegetable • Grains or Bread

Infant Formula and Baby Food

Infants are given bottles and baby food according to each child’s feeding schedule. It is important that parents keep staff informed about your child’s feeding schedule. Parents should bring labeled bottles to school with breast milk or formula every day. Regardless of being full or empty, bottles are to return home every day. Infant formula is not provided by First Steps. Infant formula, baby bottles and baby food for children under one year old are to be provided by parents in an unopened jar, or pre-prepared bottles labeled with the child’s name. Licensing requires that baby food always be provided by the parent. The agency cannot under any circumstance provide baby food or prepare formula. When babies are developmentally ready, they may be fed pureed foods or finger foods, with parent permission.

Pediasure and Other Supplements

Pediasure and other supplemental foods recommended by a child’s doctor will be accepted by First Steps. Parents must bring instructions for feeding to the child’s teacher each week along with a doctor’s order specifying the need and use of the Pediasure or other supplement.

Supporting First Steps, Inc.

Family Involvement

Parent involvement is welcomed and encouraged. We work to keep you informed through daily reports, newsletters, bulletin boards and flyers; and encourage you to participate in classroom lessons or activities. Parents are welcome to visit their children. Please plan the visit with your child’s teacher at least one day before the visit.

We value this relationship and hope that it will serve as a support and resource to you and your family. Please do not hesitate to ask questions, share ideas, or offer suggestions.

First Steps believes in partnering with families to enrich the quality of services provided. First Steps makes efforts to ensure there is active parent representation each year on our Board of Directors. If you are interested in serving in this capacity, please call the Executive Director at 690-3091.

Volunteering

Parents and friends are encouraged to volunteer. Extra hands are always welcome. Please consider giving some of your time to work in your child’s classroom, help out on clean up days and join fundraising activities.

Volunteers are asked to complete a Volunteer Application form, be healthy, and mature enough to follow teacher directions and handle children safety. First Steps does not accept volunteers under the age of 16 years.

Volunteers are to sign in and out of the Volunteer Log each day that they volunteer at First Steps. Volunteers are to wash their hands before entering a classroom, before and after feeding a child and before they leave the school. Volunteers are supervised by staff at all times. Volunteers may not supervise children alone.

Fundraising

First Steps is a non-profit organization that operates on funds from State and Federal agencies, the Protestant Orphanage Foundation, grants and the generosity of the community. At least one major fundraiser is held each year. From time to time we also put together smaller fundraising activities. We would love to have your involvement at any level.

Sick or Injured Child

Accidents and Injuries

Teachers and staff make every effort to ensure children are safe at all times, but accidents do happen. The teacher will complete an Accident Report and send it home with your child and may call you to tell you about the injury.

If your child has a minor injury the teacher will administer First Aid. Teachers may apply ice packs, cold compresses, and band-aids for minor cuts, scratches, bumps, bug bites and stings. Teachers *cannot* administer Tylenol, Benadryl or other over-the-counter medications without written permission from the parent and physician.

If your child has a serious injury the teacher will administer First Aid and call for additional medical assistance as needed. Emergency personnel will be called if the child appears to have broken a bone, suffer a head injury, has a seizure for a longer time than is usual for the child, or has any other medical condition which is beyond the teacher's ability to treat. The teacher will complete an Accident Report and give a copy to emergency personnel and parents. Staff will call the parent or emergency contact person immediately.

Medications

We realize there are times when your child may need medication during the school day. With your child's safety in mind, First Steps staff will administer only dated, labeled, and prescribed medication or physician approved "over the counter" medications. Prescription and non-prescription medications can only be administered with written permission from the parent or legal guardian. All over the counter medications must have prior permission from a physician.

All medications sent to school *must be in the original container, within the expiration date and labeled with the child's name and specific instructions* from the doctor or pharmacy.

The child's reaction to medication is noted and charted every time medication is administered. All medications are kept in a locked box and are out of the reach of all children.

Teachers and staff cannot administer any medication without prior written permission from the parent or guardian. Permission to medicate cannot be accepted over the phone.

Sick Children

When children become ill at school, the parent or guardian will be called. For the health and safety of your child and others, *please arrange for your child to be picked up within one hour of receiving notice that your child is sick. If your child's illness is a medical emergency, you will be called immediately and the doctor and hospital identified on your Emergency Contact form will be called. If a child was picked up the previous day due to illness, they will need to remain home the following day. Children who begin antibiotics should not attend for at least 24 hours after beginning and antibiotic. Children should be able to comfortably participate in classroom activities before they return.*

Parents will be notified immediately if children are exposed to Hepatitis A, food poisoning, head lice, salmonella, shigella, measles, mumps, rubella, pertussis, polio, influenza, meningitis or any other communicable disease.

Illness Signs and Symptoms and Actions Taken by Staff

If any of the following symptoms are seen, staff will separate the child from other children & monitor the child's well-being:

<p style="text-align: center;">Diarrhea</p> <p>Two (2) incidents of loose stool or blood in the stool.</p>	<p>Parent will be contacted & asked to take the child home immediately. Must be diarrhea free for 24 hours before returning to school.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Severe Coughing</p> <p>The child turns red or blue in the face and makes a high pitched "croupy" or "whooping" sound after coughing.</p>	<p>Parent will be contacted & asked to take the child home immediately. May return to school with note from physician.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Respiratory Difficulties</p> <p>Difficulty breathing or rapid breathing.</p>	<p>Parent will be contacted & asked to take the child home immediately. May return to school the next day if breathing is normal.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Jaundice</p> <p>Yellowish tint to the skin and eyes.</p>	<p>Parent will be contacted & asked to take the child home immediately. May return to school with note from physician.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Conjunctivitis</p> <p>"Pink eye", tearing, irritation, and redness of eyelid lining.</p>	<p>Parent will be contacted & asked to take the child home immediately. May return with note from physician & after medicated for 24 hours.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Fever:</p> <p>Axillary temperature of 100 F or more/ oral temperature of 101 F or more.</p>	<p>Parent will be contacted & asked to take the child home immediately. Must be fever free (w/o medication) for 24 hours before returning to school.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Vomiting</p> <p>One (1) incident of vomiting in a day or blood in the vomit.</p>	<p>Parent will be contacted & asked to take the child home immediately. Must be free of vomiting for 24 hours before returning to school.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Unexplained Rashes</p> <p>Unusual spots, rashes, welts, burns, or open sores.</p>	<p>Parent will be contacted & asked to take the child home immediately. May return to school with note from physician.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Severe Change in Appearance or Behavior</p> <p>Fatigue, lack of appetite, confusion, lack of responsiveness, changes in color of skin, eyes, stool or urine.</p>	<p>Parent will be contacted & asked to take the child home immediately. May return to school when symptoms observed have returned to normal.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Obvious and Severe Pain</p> <p>Pain in any part of the child's body.</p>	<p>Parent will be contacted & asked to take the child home immediately. May return to school when child is observed by parent to be out of pain.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Strep Throat</p> <p>Difficulty in swallowing, sore throat, or white spots in throat.</p>	<p>Parent will be contacted & asked to take the child home immediately. May return with note from physician that child is no longer contagious & fever free (w/o medication) for 24 hours.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Highly Contagious Skin Condition</p> <p>Including scabies, herpes and impetigo.</p>	<p>Parent will be contacted & asked to take the child home immediately. May return to school with note from physician.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Head Lice</p>	<p>Parent will be contacted & asked to take the child home immediately. Proof of treatment & lice/nit check by staff are required before re-admission.</p>

Community Resources for Children with Special Needs

Ables Recreation Association – 220-9161 (www.ablesinc.org)

Recreation, sports and field trips for ages 4-24 with special needs

The ARC of Tennessee – 248-5878 (www.thearctn.org)

The ARC of Davidson County – 321-5699 (www.arcdc.org)

Family-based network of members and chapters supporting and empowering individuals and families to improve support and service systems, increase public awareness, inspire inclusive communities and influence public policy

Autism Society of Middle Tennessee – 385-2077 (www.autismmidtenn.org)

Promotes lifelong access and opportunities for all autistic individuals and their families through advocacy, public awareness, education and research

Bill Rice Ranch – 800-253-RICE – Murfreesboro (www.billriceranch.org)

Provides weekend retreats and camp sessions for deaf persons of all ages, as well as community education and sign language classes

Bridges to Care – 760-2799 (<http://btc.nashville.gov>)

Provides access to health care, dental care, mental health care, and abuse of drugs or alcohol

Centerstone Community Mental Health Centers – 460-4100 (www.centerstone.org)

Offers services to preschoolers through adults with mental health challenges

Child Development Center at Vanderbilt – 936-0249 (www.vanderbiltchildrens.org)

Offers diagnostic services for ages newborn-21 years with developmental, learning or behavioral problems, including ADHD and autism

Cystic Fibrosis Foundation – 255-1167 (www.cff.org)

Provides information and referral, a support group, community education and public awareness

Dede Wallace Therapeutic Preschool – 460-4200

Serves ages 3-5 with aggressive/antisocial behaviors and survivors of physical, emotional or sexual abuse

Down Syndrome Association of Middle Tennessee – 386-9002 (www.dsamt.org)

Offers information, referrals, speakers, new parent packets and a summer learning academy as well as being a support group for families

Epilepsy Foundation of Middle Tennessee – 269-7091 (www.epilepsytn.org)

Information, referral, support and community education are central to the Epilepsy Foundation, which provides services to all ages

Junior League Family Resource Center – 936-2558 (www.vanderbiltchildrens.org)

Provides free information on health, illness, disability or injury

Mental Health Association of Middle Tennessee – 269-5355 (www.ichope.com)

Provides information, referral and counseling for women and young adults

Metro Social Services – 862-6413/862-6457 (www.nashville.gov/sservices)

Direct services provided to the elderly, disabled and homeless

Muscular Dystrophy Association – 800-572-1717 (www.mda.org/disease)

Provides genetic counseling, medical equipment, summer camps, referrals and social activities for people with neuromuscular diseases

NAMI – 385-0938 (www.nami.org)

Improves the quality of life for people with biological brain disorders and their families

Oasis Center (www.oasiscenter.org)

Provides intervention services to teens and families

Parents Encouraging Parents – 741-0361 (www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/PEP.asp)

A peer support and information network for families whose children have a disability or chronic illness

Regional Intervention Program (RIP) – 963-1177 (www.ripnetwork.org)

Provides training and support in positive behavior management skills, strategies and techniques for toddlers and preschoolers who exhibit behavior problems and aggression

Saddle Up! – 794-1150 – Franklin (www.saddleupnashville.org)

Therapeutic horseback riding program for children ages 4-18 with mental or physical disabilities

SPAN-TN – 321-5699 (www.span-tn.org)

Initiates, supports and coordinates proactive special education advocacy activities

Tennessee Disability Pathfinder – 1-800-640-4636

(<http://kc.vanderbilt.edu/tennesseepathfinder/default.aspx>)

Maintains an established Internet community for families seeking disability resources

Tennessee’s Early Intervention System (TEIS) – 936-1849 (www.state.tn.us/education/teis/index.shtml)

Helps coordinate and implement early intervention services for children with special needs ages birth – 3 years

Tennessee Respite Network – 269-7855

Links families of children with disabilities ages birth – 18 years to respite caregivers in the local community and provides subsidized care for those with diagnosed mental illness

Tennessee Traumatic Brain Injury Program – 741-1230 (<http://health.state.th.us/TBI/index.htm>)

Offers support, information, referral, community education and a summer camp for anyone who has suffered a traumatic brain injury and their families

Tennessee Voices for Children – 269-7751 (www.tnvoices.org)

Provides services for ages birth-19 years with mental illness, as well as information and referral, community education, public awareness, mental health services, early intervention consultation and family support groups

United Cerebral Palsy of Middle Tennessee – 242-4091 (www.ucpnashville.org)

Serves individuals with disabilities, specializing in services for those with physical disabilities – recreational activities, financial assistance for adaptive equipment, building wheel chair ramps, support and advocacy

United Way 211 – 211 (www.unitedwaytwincities.org/communityinfo/211.cfm)

Free, confidential and available 24/7 to connect you to over 40,000 community resources

Vanderbilt Kennedy Center for Research on Human Development – 322-8240

(<http://kc.vanderbilt.edu/site/default.aspx>)

A national center for research on mental retardation and other disabilities




Annual Tuition Contract

First Steps, Inc. insures fiscal accountability by establishing a sound reimbursement plan for services provided to all families that we serve. First Steps' families are responsible for providing correct financial information for payment on all account balances in a timely manner. Notification of changes must be made no later than three (3) business days before the draft dates of the chosen payment plan.

Enrollment Contract

Tuition Agreement for _____ (child's name). Please initial beside your selected schedule:

<u>2017-2018 Rates Per Month</u>				
	School day	Add before care	Add after care	Full Schedule
		\$50.00	\$160.00	
	<u>8:30-3:30</u>	<u>7:30-3:30</u>	<u>8:30-5:30</u>	<u>7:30-5:30</u>
6 wks-3 yrs.	\$1055 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$1105 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$1215 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$1265 <input type="checkbox"/>
3yrs.-5yrs.	\$880 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$930 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$1040 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$1090 <input type="checkbox"/>
*10 % sibling discount on lowest fee				

Method of Payment

- Annual (5% discount applicable)
- Monthly auto drafted on the 5th of each month (complete credit form)
- Bi - Monthly auto drafted on the 5th and 20th of each month (completed credit form)
- Bi-Monthly by check or cash (additional \$10 per week) Due in advance and considered late if not paid in full on the 5th and 20th.

Other Fees

- Late payment fee of \$25 will apply to any tuition not paid as agreed and will be added to the next scheduled payment.
- A \$25 fee will apply to returned checks and declined credit/debit cards.
- Late pick up fees will be due and billed at the time of pick up.
- An annual supply fee of \$100 will be charged September 5th each year.
- Any change of schedule as to days and hours of attendance will require a \$10 fee, drafted when the form is submitted. Tuition is calculated on a monthly basis only.
- A 10% discount will be offered to one sibling of existing students based on the lower rate. Please see Tuition Notes in the Family Handbook as to restrictions.
- We require a 30 day notice for withdrawal of your child from our program. A change of schedule form should be submitted to the Center Director. Please provide an active e-mail to best contact you about confirmation of changes and tuition issues.

Active e-mail: _____

Parent's Printed Name: _____ Date: _____

Parent's Signature: _____



AUTHORIZATION AGREEMENT FOR AUTOMATIC CREDIT CARD PAYMENT FOR CHILDCARE

Child's Name _____

I hereby authorize First Steps, Inc. to charge my credit card for childcare charges as agreed upon in the First Steps, Inc. Tuition Payment Contract

Name on card _____

Billing Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Card Number _____

3 Digit Authorization Code on back of card _____

Type of Card _____

Expiration Date _____

Amount Debited _____ Start Date _____

I also authorize the non-refundable \$75 registration to be drafted with my first transaction. _____

I also authorize the yearly \$100 supply fee to be drafted. _____

This pre-authorization is to remain in full force and effect until First Steps, Inc. has received written notification from me of its termination in such time and in such manner as to afford First Steps, Inc. a reasonable opportunity to act on it.

Date _____ Signature _____

