

## Program Mission and Philosophy

### Program Mission

St. Luke's Early Childhood Programs is a non-profit program located at St. Luke's United Methodist Church, 100 West 86<sup>th</sup> Street, Indianapolis, Indiana 46260. Designed as a community service it provides developmentally appropriate early childhood programming in a loving Christian environment for young children. The program welcomes children of all religions, races, and diversities that we are qualified and equipped to serve.

### Program Philosophy

This program believes that maturation plus experience influences a child's growth and knowledge. We further believe that early childhood education should help provide enriching educational experiences in the developmental areas of the child's life. Growth in emotional maturity, social competence, physical skill development, creativity, language, cognition and perception are the areas that this program shall strive to promote.

St. Luke's is unique to other Indianapolis area programs. We provide an opportunity for disabled and non-disabled children to relate socially to each other, learn from each other, and play together. In addition to skill development, our philosophy is that the tolerance and acceptance of people with differences begins at an early age, if we encourage it. This is a special opportunity to develop the foundation for Christian attitudes towards individual differences throughout the child's life. The following programs run from September through May.

The **Parents' Day Out (PDO)** program was established to provide a nurturing play experience for young children while the parents have time for themselves on a regular basis. PDO serves children 10 months (by September 1 of the current school year) to 3 years old.

**St. Luke's Community Preschool** was established to serve children 3 (by September 1 of the current school year) to 5 years old.

## General School Policies

### Days and Hours of Operation

<b>Parents' Day Out:</b>	10 months- 3 yrs. Old	M, TH, and/or F	9:00am-1:00pm
<b>Preschool</b>	3 years old	TTH or WF	9:00am-1:00pm
	3/ 4 years old	MWF or MTTH	9:00am-1:00pm
	4 years old	MWF or MTTH	9:00am-1:00pm
	4/ 5 years old	MTWTH	9:00am-1:00pm

## **Class Size Policy**

<b>Parents' Day Out:</b>	Beginners	7 children	2 caregivers
	Toddler's-Two's	10 children	2 caregivers
	Two's-Three's	13 children	2 caregivers

<b>Preschool:</b>	Three's	14 children	2 teachers
	Three/Four's	14 children	2 teachers
	Four's	14 children	2 teachers
	Four/Five's	18 children	2 teachers and aide

## **Communication**

It is expected and encouraged that parents, teachers, and caregivers communicate directly, honestly, and as often as desired. Teachers and caregivers will be happy to set aside a time to meet (other than class time) with parents on matters of concern. If the matter needs further attention, the Director must be informed and a special conference will be arranged. Matters about school policies should be communicated to a Weekday Early Childhood Programs Council Representative. A list of representatives is provided in the October Newsletter.

We encourage parents to be a part of their child's early childhood programs experience in a number of ways. Parents are welcome to visit their child's classroom but must notify and be accompanied to the classroom by the Director or Assistant Director. Visitors must check in at the Early Childhood Programs Office and sign in and out. Visitors are limited to two at a time per classroom.

## **Divorce and Child Custody**

St. Lukes' Early Childhood Programs does not take sides in divorce proceedings, either officially or unofficially. The school recognizes both natural parents as having custody of a child unless an official court order is on file giving one of the parents' exclusive custody. In such cases, the school follows the dictates of the court. In the absence of a court order, either parent may pick up the child from school.

## **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Preschool parent/teacher conferences are held in the fall and spring. Parents will have the opportunity to confer with teachers at these times. Teachers will schedule conferences by posting a sign-up sheet outside the classroom. Your child will **not** have school on the day of his/her conference. Parents or teachers may request additional conferences when necessary.

## **Dress Code**

Children should wear sturdy rubber soled shoes suitable for climbing and running. **No sandals or crocs please.** Play clothes should be comfortable and easy for the child to fasten and maneuver in the restrooms. Your child will work with paint, sand, clay, glue, water and other messy materials. Outer garments should include sweaters, coats, hats, mittens and boots as the weather changes. **Please label all of these items.** Bring a change of clothing to be left at school in case of accidents. Place them in a plastic Ziploc bag with the child's name on the outside.

## **Toys**

Unless requested, all toys should be left at home or in the car. If you have questions, please confer with the teacher or caregiver.

## Financial Policies and Related Matters

### Registration

Registration for the following school year will be held in January. Returning church families shall have first priority for placement followed by returning community families. Returning families have one week from the date of posting of the class lists to withdraw without forfeiting tuition and registration payment. Previously non-enrolled church families shall have the next priority. Following church family registration, the registration process shall be open to the community.

### Tuition

Tuition is based on the actual costs of operating the school divided by the number of students enrolled. Your payments are divided into nine equal payments, which are not based on the number of days child attends each month. Fees for the coming year, based on a non-profit budget, are as follows:

<b>Parents' Day Out:</b>	1 day/week	\$ 711 yr./ \$79.00 month
	2 days/week	\$1422 yr./\$158.00 month
	3 days/week	\$2133 yr./\$237.00 month
<b>Preschool:</b>	2 days/week	\$1422 yr./\$158.00 month
	3 days/ week	\$2160 yr./\$240.00 month
	4/5's Class	\$2772 yr./\$308.00 month

### Tuition Payment Schedule

**Parents' Day Out and Preschool** tuition is due the first day of the month.

Tuition checks may be placed in the tuition pocket located on the wall just outside the Early Childhood Programs Office. Please place checks in the tuition pocket **without** an envelope. Do not put cash in the tuition pocket. Semester tuition payment may be made if desired. Please be patient if you experience a delay in the deposit of your payment. Please let Kathy Hockett, our treasurer, know if you are experiencing a financial hardship and payment arrangements can be made.

**Parents' Day Out Tuition** will be doubled or tripled if your child attends more than one day per week. Monday, Thursday and Friday children will be scheduled an *equal* number of sessions during the school year.

### Overdue Tuition Payments

Monthly tuition is due the first day of each month. On the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month, any unpaid account will be considered delinquent, and charged a **\$10.00 late fee**. The following school year's registration/tuition deposits and registration for siblings are not accepted for children whose accounts are not current.

### Fees

**Registration Fee:** \$50.00 (non-refundable) per **PDO** family; \$50.00 (non-refundable) per **Preschool** family.

**Building/Maintenance/Equipment Fee:** \$100.00 (non-refundable) per family due by **June 15**.

**Late Pick-up Fee:** A \$10.00 late fee will be charged for children who are picked up later than 10 minutes (without parent notification) after their class dismissal time.

**Returned Checks:** Checks returned twice with Non-Sufficient Funds must be paid with cash or money-order for the remainder of the school year. Also, a \$10 fee will be due on any returned check for Non-Sufficient Funds.

### **Checks Payable**

Checks should be made payable to **St. Luke's Early Childhood Programs(St. Luke's ECP)**. Please make note for Treasurer if child's name differs from name on check.

### **Withdrawals from School**

Each child is enrolled for the entire school year or the balance of the school year. Two weeks prior notice, or two weeks tuition, is payable upon child's withdrawal from the program before March 31. No refund of tuition can be made after April 1. Any child in school as of that date will be charged tuition through the close of school in May.

### **Financial Questions**

Please call Kathy Hockett (Treasurer) at 257-9004 in regards to financial questions or email at [shockett1@att.net](mailto:shockett1@att.net).

### **Auto Safety**

A carpool and a field trip are different from a family group, and we ask each driver to follow carefully the rules listed below. **The school cannot assume any legal responsibility for the transportation of the children.**

1. All cars used to transport children shall be adequately covered by public liability and property damage insurance.
2. The car should be in good operating condition.
3. The **driver** should close and lock all doors.
4. Each child must be buckled in his/her own car seat. Heads, hands, arms and legs should be kept in the car at all times.
5. Order should be kept in the car at all times. If there is a problem, stop the car and deal with the situation before going ahead.
6. An adult should open the doors and help the children unload.
7. Children should not enter the car without an adult.
8. If you must leave the car, turn the car off, secure the brake, and take the keys.
9. When driving a carpool to take children home, be sure an adult greets the child before you drive away from their home or day care.

### **Auto Insurance**

The driver's personal automobile liability and medical insurance should cover medical expenses to drivers and passengers.

### **Liability Insurance**

The school is covered by a Bodily Injury/Property Damage liability insurance policy for protection against liability damage suits for injury to others, caused by accidents occurring in connection with any of our various activities, on the school premises and elsewhere.

## Logistics and Transportation

### Carpools and Authorized Drivers Information

Each child shall have a completed Emergency/Authorization form on file by the first day of school. No child will be released to a person not authorized by a parent to pick up the child. We must have written authorization for changes in this respect.

### Drop-off and Pick-up Procedures

1. Park in the northeast parking lot. Use entrance #16. Entrance #17 will be closed for security. You may also use Entrance #1(southwest parking lot/main entrance). Children are **NOT** allowed to play in the columbarium(burial) area.
2. **Arrival**-Bring your child into the building and wait with your child until the teachers open the classroom door. **Dismissal**-Come to your child's classroom and wait in the hall until the teachers open the door for dismissal.
3. Initial the clip board next to your child's name at both arrival and dismissal to indicate he/she has been dropped off and picked up. Also sign in and out any child you bring in your carpool.

### School Closing for Weather

If **Washington Township or Carmel Clay Schools** are closed due to inclement weather, we will be closed for the day. If **Washington Township or Carmel Clay Schools** are delayed due to inclement weather an alternate schedule will be implemented for our programs as follows:

#### Alternate Schedule

**Parents' Day Out** will meet 10:30am-1:00pm

**Preschool classes** will meet 10:30am-1:00pm

An announcement will be on the St. Luke's Early Childhood Programs voice mail by 7:30am if school is **closed or delayed**. Please call **844-3399**. If your child's class misses more than five days due to unscheduled closings, a tuition adjustment will be made before the end of the school year.

## Health and Accident Procedures

### Come to School Healthy

Teachers and caregivers will observe each child before the session begins. A child will be sent home when any of the following symptoms are present or were present the night before:

chills	severe headache	unusual cough	inflamed/swollen eyes
diarrhea	earache	dizziness	open sores/skin rash
flushed face	fever 99.2+	nausea/vomiting	sore throat

When returning to school the child must be fever, vomit, and diarrhea free for at least **twenty-four hours**. He/she should feel well enough to be in a group and play outdoors when weather permits. If the child is due to become contagious within a 24-hour period, he/she should stay home. The Director should be notified if a child has a communicable disease.

### Medications

No prescription or non-prescription medications are dispensed at school. Severe allergy medications or Epi Pens must be authorized by the Director and kept in the office.

## **Health Records**

Each child must have a completed Health Record form on file by his/her first day of school.

## **Lunches**

We encourage parents to send a healthy lunch each day. Please include fresh fruits and vegetables. We discourage **Go-Gurts**(very messy) and **Lunchables**(low nutritional value.)

## **Absences**

It is not necessary for Parents' Day Out and Preschool absences to be reported unless the child will be absent for more than 2 days. Please call **844-3399**.

## **Treatment of Injuries and Illness**

In compliance with Standing Order No: 4 D 2000 from the Bureau of Community Health Nursing, the St. Luke's Early Childhood Programs shall follow the procedures listed below:

In case of accident or illness, the responsibility of the adult who is with the sick or injured person is to administer first-aid and care for the sick/injured person.

1. The Director (or designated person in her absence) shall:

Notify the parent or responsible person listed on the Emergency/Authorization form, or if unable to reach them, call the doctor or hospital designated by the parent. As a last resort, or in case of a serious emergency call 911 to attend to the child as needed. This includes: shock, severe burns, severe bleeding, unconsciousness and/or foreign body in the throat or windpipe.

2. The Teacher's responsibilities shall be:

Notify the Director (or designated person in her absence) when an accident or illness needs emergency procedures. Maintain written documentation of significant emergency conditions and measures taken. Assist as needed. Record on school's accident form and submit copies to parent and Director. Follow-up the outcome and be aware of possible restrictions when he/she returns to school.

## **Potty Training**

Not every child is ready to be potty trained at the same age. Most children by the age of 3 are showing interest in using the bathroom. All of our classrooms are equipped with bathrooms and low toilets. Teachers will help encourage your child during this process. Children are required to be potty trained for our 4 year old classes.

## **Biting Policy**

It is upsetting when children are bitten or when they bite. Sometimes it's logical and sometimes it's not. The first step is to try to understand what is causing it and work toward learning different and more appropriate behaviors.

Our policy is:

1. Provide first aid if needed and document incident.
2. Inform parents.
3. If child bites two times in one day, parents will be called to take the child home. We will put the children's safety first.

## Parent Participation

### Parent Involvement

1. Special Needs & Maintenance: Sewing, repairing, woodworking as needed.
2. Weekday Early Childhood Programs Council: Policy and advisory board for our programs. (meets the months of Sept., Oct., Nov., Feb., Mar., April)
3. Room Parent: Assist teachers for special classroom events.
4. Hospitality: Arrange refreshments for parent meetings and special events.
5. Speech/Hearing/Language Screening: Assist audiologist during screening. (no training necessary)

### Field Trips

1. You will be notified in advance of all field trips and admission fees.
2. There must be two adults in each car.
3. Parents are used as drivers. If you find you cannot drive on a trip you signed up for, please find another parent driver.
4. **Each child must be in a car seat for the entire trip.**
5. All parents are welcome on trips; however, siblings may not accompany the class.
6. Emergency/Authorization forms will be taken on all trips. Please keep the school informed of any changes.
7. The driver will be given directions before leaving the school. He/she should relate safety rules to the passengers.
8. Extra parents in the car should help supervise the children. Driving laws should be followed at all times.
9. When crossing streets, children should hold hands.
10. Adults should help children investigate and enjoy the experience.
11. The adults should walk the children from the car to the classroom.
12. In case of an accident, first attend to any injured. Notify police and obtain a complete police report. Call another parent to come and take the children from any car that is immobile.

### Snacks and Treats

**Parents' Day Out** parents are asked to donate two boxes of crackers. Children enrolled in a **Friday** session will bring crackers in September. Children enrolled in a **Monday** session will bring crackers in December and children enrolled a **Thursday** session will bring crackers in March.

**Preschool** parents may be asked to donate food items throughout the year. Your child's teacher will make assignments for the class.

\*Each child in Preschool and Parents' Day Out will be expected to **bring a re-usable water bottle** to school each day.

If your child wishes to share a **birthday treat** with the class, please notify the teachers the week before and inquire about food allergies. In accordance with the Marion County Health Department, all treats must be purchased at a store or bakery and brought in their original containers (**we cannot accept homemade treats**).

**The policy for birthday celebrations is as follows:**

You may send in cookies and birthday napkins and the teachers will make your child's celebration special. Due to allergies and our desire to treat our children equally, **no lunches, pizzas, or treat bags can be brought in to school.** We want all children to feel special and a simple store-purchased treat is acceptable.