

TLC Learning Center Family Handbook 2026-2027

Address: 812 N 5th St Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814

Phone: 208-676-9112

Hours: 7:30am – 5:30pm (Monday-Friday)

Learning Center Director: Kelly Bigard (DirectorTLCLC@gmail.com)

Advisory Board Contact: Beth Whiting (ElizabethKSWhiting@gmail.com)

Church Office: Addie Hall (Office.TrinityCDA@gmail.com)

History & Philosophy

TLC Learning Center began as a dream in 1997. A group of women at Trinity Lutheran Church wanted to create an outreach that would benefit young children and families in our community. On February 1, 1999, the vision became a reality. TLC Learning Center, a non-profit facility, opened its doors offering loving, Christian care for children. The Mission remains to strengthen and support families by providing a Christ-centered learning environment for children.

TLCLC respects and celebrates all cultural, social, and economic lifestyle differences among families. We are a place of Christian nurture, where we proclaim God's word in all aspects of a child's care. We strive to provide parents the best of both worlds: fun, safe childcare and a preschool environment.

TLCLC respects children of all abilities, providing equal access to developmentally appropriate growth opportunities. We believe children learn best through hands-on activities and discovery. By experiencing the world in this manner, children become socially, emotionally, and academically prepared for grade school while also learning to make good choices, exploring new skills, and gaining confidence.

Our Classrooms

We offer four unique settings for the children in our care.

Caterpillars. This room focuses on the needs of our youngest learners, from 6-weeks old through approximately 14 months. We have a strong emphasis on discovery and exploration while helping foster social and emotional growth. Key developmental milestones in this class include walking and transitioning from two naps to one.

Waddlers. Our Waddlers class focuses on both language and physical development. These learners experience group time/story time and get to explore the outside and activity centers. Our goal is to provide simple challenges that foster developmental growth while establishing healthy routines. Key developmental milestones for these students include language acquisition and expression.

Cruisers. Our Cruisers class focuses on learning ideas and expressions. Here the learners are introduced to science, art, and dramatic play. This class fosters independent play to reinforce thinking skills, self-reliance, and confidence. A key developmental milestone in this class is mastering toilet training.

Challengers. Kindergarten readiness is the primary focus of this class. Students concentrate on learning the alphabet, writing, and early reading. We also work on identifying feelings and using words to resolve problems.

Get Involved!

As a non-profit organization, we welcome your involvement! Here are just a few ways you can be a part:

Time. Having an extra set of hands can be really helpful for teachers, especially during craft projects or field trips. If working in the classroom isn't the best fit for you, you can assist with administrative duties, like photocopying and preparing materials, or facility management, like repairs, cleaning, and groundskeeping.

Knowledge. We love providing enrichment opportunities to the kids, so let us know if you have a skill to share. If you have an interest in or experience with fundraising/grant writing, we regularly have needs in this area. It would help tremendously to have those with legal expertise or accounting insight look over our documentation and procedures to identify areas we could strengthen.

Resources. We welcome donations of snacks and other supplies. Please see the Snag-A-Tag board in the entryway for specific needs. Alternatively, you could donate gift cards to WalMart, Costco, Amazon, or Safeway. You can also select our Learning Center to receive corporate contributions through loyalty point rewards (Fred Meyer, Target) or give-back programs (Thrivent).

TLCLC Advisory Board. The Board meets at 4:30pm on the second Monday of each month to ensure the health and sustainability of the Learning Center. It consists of the Director, at least one parent/guardian, and members of Trinity Lutheran Church. This board offers recommendations to the church's council, which has the legal and governance responsibility for the Center. These meetings are open to anyone with children at the Learning Center; meeting summaries will be posted by the front door.

Day-to-Day Information

Drop off and pick up. Each family will receive an access code that will allow you to enter the main Learning Center door. For all classes except Caterpillars, drop-off hours are between 7:30-10:00am with pick up by 5:30pm. The Caterpillar room's hours are 8:00am-5:00pm. You will check in your child using the Brightwheel QR code and walk them to their classroom or gym, depending on where the children are when you arrive. Your child will have a labeled cubby where you can put their lunch and any other items they need for the day. If your child will be absent, please send a message to their teacher on the Brightwheel app. When you pick them up at the end of the day, please check their cubby for items to go home and use the Brightwheel app to indicate you've picked them up.

Clothing. We encourage children to explore the world around them with all their senses. Learning this way is fun, but it can also get messy. Please keep this in mind as you dress your child in the morning. For their safety and comfort, we ask that children wear washable play clothes and fully enclosed, soft-soled shoes (ie, tennis shoes) each day. No sandals. Additionally, dress your child in clothes and shoes that allow for self-help.

Please provide a complete change of clothes to keep in your child's cubby should the need arise. Periodically confirm that their spare outfit still fits, as growth spurts are common with children.

We will spend time outside most days. Ensure that your child has weather-appropriate gear at the Center: boots, gloves, hat, coat, and snowpants in the winter; a rain jacket and towel for wet weather and water-play; and sunscreen.

Mark everything your child brings to school with either their name or initials.

Diapering & Toilet Training. Families are expected to provide the necessary diapering supplies for their children, including wipes, diapers, pull-ups, and ointment/cream. Routine potty training takes place in our Cruisers Classroom; children in this room will need extra changes of clothes during this process. You will receive advance notice when your child's stockpile is running low. A fee of \$2/diaper and \$2/day for wipes will be applied to your invoice if TLCLC supplies need to be used.

Illnesses. TLCLC is a Well Center; therefore, we can only accept children who are not ill. Daily observations are made to ensure that all children are healthy when brought to the Center. If your child is exhibiting any of the following symptoms, please keep them home:

- fever of 100.4 degrees or higher
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- draining rash
- eye discharge or pink eye
- lice or nits
- thick, colored discharge from nose
- severe or chronic cough
- ear discharge / earache
- sore throat
- too tired, sick, or unable to be outside to participate in activities

Children who begin exhibiting these symptoms while at school will need to be picked up promptly. They may return when they have been symptom-free for 24 hours without the aid of fever-reducing medication.

The wellbeing of all the children and staff depends on keeping a healthy environment. Please keep your child home if s/he shows any signs of illness or behavior that is noticeably out of the ordinary. Additionally, please notify the Center immediately if your child has been diagnosed with any contagious diseases/conditions so other parents can be alerted. Thank you.

Medications. All medications, including vitamins, must be given directly to a staff member by the child's parent/guardian. They will be kept in a secured location for the safety of all children. They are not to be left in children's lunchboxes or backpacks. Over-the-counter medications and prescriptions will only be given with written approval of the parent/guardian.

Meals. Please provide lunch and a water bottle for your child every day. Teachers are unable to re-heat or refrigerate food or drinks. Many parents find that an insulated lunch bag with an "icy" works well to keep cold items cool in the summer, while heating food before coming to school keeps it warm enough in the winter.

To encourage healthy eating, we ask that you limit treats. If you would like to make something for your child's classroom to celebrate a special event, please consult with your child's teacher.

We will provide a healthy snack once a day, including a grain, fruit, and a drink.

Please notify the Director if your child has any food allergies so we can take the appropriate precautions for their health.

Nap Time. For Waddlers and Cruisers, daily nap time begins at noon in the gym. Each child has their own designated cot to lie on. Staff members sit with the children while soft music plays in the background. Children who do not fall asleep are asked to lie on their mats quietly. Books will be provided to children if needed. The children remain in the gym until 2:15pm. Once they are awake, teachers clean up the beds and children head back to class.

Please provide a blanket for your child to rest with; label everything! Blankets and sheets are washed at least once per week at the Center.

Nap time is optional for children in the Challengers classroom, depending on their development and needs. Please refer to the Infant Safe Sleep Policy if your child is in the Caterpillar class.

Additional Information

Emergency Procedures. As we all know, emergencies happen without warning. TLC Learning Center has a preparedness plan in place for the best interest of your child. In the event of an emergency, we will:

- Keep your child at the Center unless an evacuation is necessary for safety. Parents will be notified if we evacuate. Our relocation site is Yates Funeral Home, 744 N 4th Street.
- Provide CPR/First Aid, if needed
- Call 911, if needed
- Lock down our facility, if needed. This includes refusing to allow anyone except authorized personnel in the building. Children will only be released to individuals on their authorized pick-up list – no exceptions.

All staff are certified in First Aid/CPR/AED and will take the appropriate steps to attend to any minor injuries. For critical injuries, staff will administer first aid while another staff member calls 911. If your child requires emergency services, we will phone you as soon as possible; if we cannot speak with you directly, we will reach out to your child's Emergency Contacts.

If you have any questions about our total facility plan for addressing emergencies, please speak with our director.

Holidays. TLCLC is closed on the following holidays: New Year's Day, MLK Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day & the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day. If the holiday lands on a Saturday, the Center will be closed the Friday before; if the holiday lands on a Sunday, the Center will be closed the Monday following. These closure days are factored into tuition.

Weather Closures. In the case of inclement weather, the Center will follow what the Coeur d'Alene School District decides in terms of closure or delayed opening. The Director will reach out on Brightwheel to communicate this information as well. Tuition credit will not be given for weather-related closures.

TLCLC Policies

Discipline Policy. We believe that all children have the potential to make good choices, and that all of us at times make choices that affect ourselves or others in a negative way. If a child engages in unacceptable behavior, we will explain to them in an age-appropriate way why their actions are unacceptable. Then together, the teacher and child will plan some ways for changing the problem behavior. This may mean that the child is redirected to a different area on the playground or in the classroom. It may mean that the child is not allowed to continue playing with a toy or piece of equipment that they used inappropriately.

We always encourage children to make good behavioral choices and will do our best to help your child learn appropriate behavior in the group setting. We will also encourage your child to develop healthy coping skills to work through frustration and help them name their emotions.

Persistent behavior problems will be reported to the child's parent/guardian. Documentation will be made of persistent issues. If the problem continues, the teacher and/or director will meet with the parent/guardian to make an action plan for desired behavior change. A child who continually places themselves or others in danger will most likely be asked to leave the Center.

The following steps will be taken before a child is removed from the program. First, the parent/guardian will be notified of persistent behavior problems. Second, the parent/guardian will meet with the teacher and/or director to discuss the problem situation. An action plan, which may include counseling, will be implemented to alleviate the problem behavior. If, after two

weeks, or a time specified by the teacher and director, the child shows no improvement, they will be removed from the program.

Non-Aggression Policy. If a child is overly aggressive toward classmates or staff, the child may be asked to leave for the day. Chronic, excessive use of aggression by a child may be determined to be grounds for discontinuation of childcare services. Some examples of aggression include:

- Biting (for children three years old or older)
- Hitting, punching, scratching, and throwing others to the floor
- Out-of-control behavior where redirection is not working
- Using foul language, including cursing
- Belligerent talking back

Safe Sleep Policy. To ensure the health and wellbeing of infants, we practice the following:

- All staff who work with infants will take a continuing education class required by the state licensing board explaining Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and safe sleep environments.
- Each infant will have their own crib with their name located on it. There will be only one child to a crib at a time.
- All cribs will meet health code requirements, including a firm mattress covered with a properly fitted sheet. They will be located away from windows, blinders, and drapery.
- Infants 6 weeks old – 12 months will be placed on their backs for all sleeping times.
- Sleeping spaces will be free of blankets, pillows, or any object that can increase the risk of entrapment. Toys and stuffed animals will be removed from the crib when the infant is sleeping. Pacifiers cannot have cords or attaching mechanisms.
- Sitting devices such as car safety seats, swings, strollers, infant carriers, or infant slings will not be used as a substitute for a crib. If a child falls asleep outside their crib, staff will place that child in their crib as soon as it is noticed.
- Infants can be placed in one-piece sleepers to help maintain body temperature. Staff will do their best to keep the temperature in the room consistent from day to day.
- Infants will always be observed by sight and sound. Home monitors or commercial devices marketed to reduce the risk of SIDS will not be used in place of direct supervision when children are sleeping.
- The lighting in the room will allow the teacher to see each infant's face, assess their sleep position, and check on their breathing.
- Infants will be held for all bottle feedings. Bottles will never be placed in the crib with the child.

If your child requires exceptions from this policy, you must provide a written note signed by the child's healthcare provider stating what accommodations need to be made.

Breastfeeding Policy. Breastfeeding provides many health benefits to both infants and mothers. TLCLC subscribes to the following policy:

- Breastfeeding mothers will be provided a private and sanitary place to nurse or express their milk, including a comfortable chair, electrical outlet, table or stand, and nearby access to running water.
- A refrigerator will be made available for storage of expressed breastmilk. All containers should be clearly labeled with the child's name and the date. This Center will follow guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics and Center for Disease Control and Prevention to ensure that breastmilk is properly treated to avoid waste.
- Sensitivity will be shown to breastfeeding mothers and their babies. TLCLC is committed to providing ongoing support to nursing mothers, including holding off on giving a bottle if a mother provides notice that she is en route and wishes to breastfeed.
- Formula and solid foods will not be provided unless the parent/guardian has requested them.
- Babies will be held closely when feeding; bottles will never be propped.
- TLCLC feeds infants on demand and will communicate with families about feeding preferences.
- Staff will be trained in handling human milk. All childcare staff will be trained every three years in the proper storage and handling of human milk as well as ways to support breastfeeding mothers.
- Universal precautions are not required in handling human milk.
- Breastfeeding promotion information will be displayed at TLCLC, including the names of area resources should questions or problems arise. Formula will not be advertised in the Center.

Visitor & Volunteer Policy. To ensure the safety, transparency, and comfort of all families, TLCLC has established the following requirements for volunteers, visitors, and family members on the premise beyond the typical drop off and pick up times.

Adults present at the Center for 12 hours or more per week must:

- complete a comprehensive background check
- be supervised by a TLCLC staff member at all times
- never be left alone with a child or children unless they are a Learning Center employee.
- sign in and out of the Visitor's Log
- wear a visitor badge displaying their name for the entirety of their stay.

While adults with background clearance may legally supervise children alone, TLC Learning Center policy does not allow any non-employee adult to be left alone with children under any circumstance.

Adults present for fewer than 12 hours per week must:

- be supervised by a TLCLC staff member at all times
- never be left alone with any child that is not their own for any reason
- sign in and out of the Visitor's Log
- wear a visitor badge displaying their name for the entirety of their stay

Youth who wish to complete volunteer, service project, or internship hours that will have them on site 12 or more hours per week will be required to complete an application at least one month prior to their desired service dates. Those who are 13 years of age or older will be required to complete a background check and will be subject to the same policies listed for adults.

Applications will be reviewed by the TLCLC Board and are subject to approval by the TLC Council.

Youth who are younger than 13 or who wish to volunteer fewer than 12 hours per week will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Teens and children without prior approval may not be onsite unless they are accompanying a parent or authorized adult to drop off or pick up a TLC child.

Financial Policies. Tuition is billed monthly, with invoices posted on Brightwheel seven days before the due date. All tuition is due in full by the first day of the month. If the first lands on the weekend or a holiday, cash or check payments must be received by the last school day before the weekend or holiday. A \$25.00 late fee will be added to any past-due balances.

If tuition has not been paid by the 5th of the month, you will receive written notification that your child's tuition is late. If tuition is not paid in full by the end of the month, your child(ren) will be disenrolled from the Center. Communication makes a difference! If there is a problem affecting your payment, we want to work with you any way we can.

Families who are applying for ICCP are responsible for tuition until ICCP is in place. We must have written confirmation from the State to switch from full- to co-payment. Co-pays are due according to the tuition payment policy listed above.

A \$150 per child registration fee is due upon enrollment and annually by September 1 for continuing students. This fee is non-refundable. Students who enroll March 1 or later will have their initial September registration fee waived.

Families will receive a 10% tuition discount for having multiple children enrolled at TLCLC.

If your child attends full-time and misses three or more consecutive days due to illness or vacation, you may request a tuition credit in writing for these absences. Credit will be applied to your next invoice.

Space allowing, registered TLCLC students can add extra days at the following rate: \$40/day for Challengers, \$50/day for Cruisers, \$60/day for Waddlers, and \$70/day for Caterpillars. Please

contact the Director at least 48 hours in advance to check on availability. The charge for extra days will appear on your next monthly invoice.

The Center closes at 5:30pm, with the Caterpillar classroom closing at 5pm. All children must be checked out and depart the Center prior to these times. The late pick-up fee is \$5.00/minute per child, no exceptions. You will be invoiced immediately for these late fees.

There is a \$35.00 processing fee for all returned checks.

You must provide two weeks' written notice to terminate care. Tuition will continue to be charged in the absence of two weeks' written notice. Please see the "Discipline Policies" section of the Parent Handbook for circumstances in which TLCLC might terminate enrollment.

Discontinuation of Services and Right to Refuse Admittance. The following are grounds for discontinuation of childcare services:

- Failure to pay monthly tuition as agreed
- Repeated delinquencies to pay monthly tuition as agreed
- Repeated late child pick-ups.
- Lack of cooperation with childcare programs and policies
- Inappropriate conduct by adults toward staff and/or children
- Inappropriate conduct by child toward other children and/or staff

The right to refuse admittance shall be within the authority of the director, with oversight of the TLC Advisory Board. This shall apply to a child already enrolled as well as to a child applying for enrollment.