

***Living Word Early Childhood Center
Kids Day Out & Preschool***

Hours of Operation

Preschool	9:15 – 12:15
Kids Day Out	9:15 – 1:15
Lunch Bunch	12:15 – 1:15

MISSION STATEMENT

At Living Word Early Childhood Center we provide a safe, Christian, developmentally appropriate environment that nurtures children’s curiosity to grow spiritually, socially, emotionally, physically, and cognitively through a play based curriculum.

HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY & CURRICULUM

Living Word Early Childhood Center was formed in 1994 with a Kids Day Out and Preschool Program.

As an outreach ministry, Living Word Early Childhood Center (ECC) is dedicated to providing social and educational opportunities for children, ages fifteen (15) months to six years of age, in a safe, nurturing, Christian environment. We believe that each child is a child of God and encourage exploration and learning through play and planned activities. We promote the development of self-esteem and peer cooperation. We strive to maintain the standards emphasized by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the Missouri Department of Education and Secondary Education (DESE).

Living Word Early Childhood Center provides children with developmentally appropriate activities to enhance cognitive, social, emotional, physical and spiritual growth. Planned activities include experiences in language arts, math, science, cognitive thinking, deductive reasoning, music and physical development. Recognizing that each child is a unique individual with particular patterns of growth, children will be assessed developmentally as they enter and progress through our program.

LIVING WORD LEADERSHIP BOARD

It is the purpose of the Living Word Leadership Board to make sure that our ECC continues in its mission to provide social and educational opportunities for the children at our facility. It is the responsibility of the Leadership Board of Living Word United Methodist Church to set policies regarding the organization, budget, personnel, and services offered by the Early Childhood Center. It is also the Board’s responsibility to ensure that all decisions made support the philosophy of the Early Childhood Center and Living Word United Methodist Church.

LIVING WORD ECC PARENT ORGANIZATION

The purpose of the ECC Parent Organization is to promote the activities and mission of the ECC through the planning and execution of special events, staff appreciations, fundraisers, and volunteer recruitment.

ECC STAFF

Our strength lies in our qualified and experienced staff – their professional competence, personal dedication and their Christian commitment. All staff members are required to attend workshops and conferences every year to increase their knowledge in the field and are certified in Child CPR and first aid.

REGISTRATION

Registration will begin in January. It is our goal that children currently enrolled in the Early Childhood program have the availability to advance to the next program level. Therefore, registration will be accepted in the following order:

1. Living Word/ECC Staff and the Early Childhood Center Parent Organization.
2. Families presently enrolled in the Early Childhood Center.
3. Living Word Members.
4. Families previously enrolled in the program.
5. Community.

***A NON-REFUNDABLE enrollment fee is due at registration.**

***All offered classes are dependent upon a sufficient enrollment to make the class successful. In the event a class must be cancelled, notification will be given no later than April 29 following the January/February registration.**

PROGRAM INFORMATION AND ELIGIBILITY

Kids Day Out:

- **Toddlers:** ages 15 – 22 months (September 1st) and **walking.**
- **Twos:** ages 23 - 30 months (September 1st).
- Children may be enrolled up to two days (the same days) each week.
- Classes offered are based on enrollment demand.

Preschool:

- Children must be at least *3 years of age by January 31st* of the program year and not yet enrolled in Kindergarten.
- Children can be enrolled two days, three days, four days or five days per week.
- Children are enrolled in classes determined by age:

- **Junior 3s** children must turn 3 years old between August 1st and January 31st of the program year enrolled.
- **Senior 3s** children must turn 3 years of age before August 1st of the program year and **potty trained.**
- **Pre-kindergarten** children must be 4 years of age before August 1st of the program year and **potty trained.**

SPECIAL NEEDS

At Living Word Early Childhood Center we welcome children of all abilities and their families. We recognize the Early Childhood Center may not have the resources to meet the needs of all children. Because our primary interest is the welfare and success of ALL children, we are limited in the number of children that we can successfully serve. We are willing to meet with individual families and the appropriate members of a multidisciplinary team to determine if we are able to provide the most appropriate environment for each child to be successful. It will ultimately be at the discretion of the Director to determine whether the Early Childhood Center can meet a child's needs.

FEES/TUITION SCHEDULE

The ECC is a not-for-profit ministry to the community. Fees/Tuition are charged in order to cover the costs of the program. Any additional monies, after expenses are paid, are reinvested in the ECC.

A supply fee and non-refundable registration fee is required of all children. The supply fee will be prorated for late enrollees. This is for anyone registering after December 1st.

May Prepay: May prepay is due May 1st for the following school year. Your May prepay amount is the tuition for the next year. This allows us to purchase supplies and pay staff at the beginning of each school year. Once your child is in Pre-K you will not need to pay a May Prepay.

Tuition: Tuition is due the first of each month. Parents will have access to an online portal where they can view statements. **A ten (10) day grace period will be granted after which a \$15.00 late fee will be assessed.** If other arrangements need to be made, please contact the Director. Any student with tuition payments more than 90 days past due will not be permitted to participate in any Living Word ECC activities, including attending his or her class, unless other arrangements are made at the discretion of the Director with the approval of the Living Word Leadership Board. The 1st payment is due May 1st with additional monthly payments due September through April which will include lunch bunch fee. Tuition is averaged over the entire program year. Tuition will be consistent regardless of absences, vacations, holidays or unforeseen closures. Tuition may be paid in full each semester.

Living Word staff members' children will receive a 20% discount on tuition, supply fee and registration.

Days missed for inclement weather, vacation or illness will not be made up.

Payment Options: There are two ways to pay your monthly tuition:

1. Automatic Bank Draft= No fees/No Hassle
2. Online payment= convenience fee
You will log on each month and pay online

Full Semester Payments: Tuition may be paid by the semester. Lunch bunch will continue to be billed monthly. Semester payments made in full will be discounted 3%. Online payments will incur a fee.

Insufficient Funds Policy: Any debit dishonored by the bank for insufficient funds or due to a closed account will incur a fee of \$10.00.

WITHDRAWAL

A 30-day notice is required for withdrawal. Tuition for the month of withdrawal is required to be paid in full.

The May pre-payment will be refunded for withdrawal when one of the following conditions is met:

1. A 30-day written notice of withdrawal is received and another child fills the vacancy.
2. Withdrawal is due to an illness or relocating out of the Metro area.
3. Withdrawal is due to the child's educational needs being met by Rockwood or Parkway school districts' special education departments. Written proof of testing is required.

LUNCH BUNCH

Lunch Bunch is an optional extended day program offered Monday through Friday from 12:15 – 1:15 for \$10.00 per session. Children bring a lunch and drink from home, and enjoy an afternoon with school friends.

A signed Lunch Bunch Agreement is required to begin consistent placement.

If you choose to cancel or make a change in your yearly commitment from lunch bunch there will be a one-time withdrawal fee of \$10.00 for each day he/she no longer attends. *(For example: If your child is signed up to stay for Lunch Bunch on Monday and Wednesday and you decide to cancel the Wednesday commitment you will pay a onetime fee of \$10.00 to make that change.)*

Using Lunch Bunch on an occasional basis:

Parents who do not have a permanent reservation in the Lunch Bunch Program, but who would like to use it occasionally, **must call the ECC office by 8:15 a.m. for a reservation.** Requests will be honored on a space available basis. The charge for Lunch Bunch will be on your monthly statement. All "occasional basis" lunch bunches will appear on the next month's statement.

Lunch Bunch Credits

If you have contracted for Lunch Bunch from September-May, you can receive one credit per contracted lunch bunch day. Credit will only be given if notification is received **before 8:30 a.m.** the morning of the child's absence. Credits are given through the month of April and will be on the May tuition statement. *(For example: If your child is contracted to attend two lunch bunch days per week you can receive credit equal to two days of lunch bunch.)*

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

****January-May 2021- Please refer to the most recent reopening plans due to Covid-19 restrictions/policy changes.**** <https://livingwordumc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/ECC-Reopening-Plan-2021.pdf>

Arrival

School sessions start at 9:15. If your child will be absent on his/her scheduled day please contact the center as early as possible.

~~Please help us make arrivals safe and efficient by using the following carpool procedures. At arrival PLEASE STAY IN THE CARPOOL LINE IN YOUR CAR, a teacher will get your child out of the car.~~

~~Your child must remain buckled in his/her car seat while in line, or use of the carpool line will be suspended; first offense 1 week, second offense 1 month, third offense revoked for the remainder of the year. **Children will be exiting from the RIGHT SIDE (passenger side) of the car only.** After arrival time the doors will be closed and locked. If you arrive late, you will have to use the buzzer at the door to gain entrance to the building and a staff member will then escort your child directly to their classroom.~~

~~Parents are always welcomed at Living Word ECC. If you choose, you may park your car in the upper church parking lot and come into the facility to walk your preschooler to his/her classroom.~~

Dismissal

~~All children are dismissed to parents at their classroom at the end of each class session. If a person other than those authorized on the enrollment form will be picking up your child (ren), please inform the person that picture identification will be required.~~

~~After receiving two warnings, parents arriving for dismissal later than five minutes after the program session is over will be charged \$1.00 per minute for each minute tardy. Abuse of this policy will be reviewed by the Director and the Living Word Leadership Board, and may result in expulsion from the program.~~

SECURITY

Living Word United Methodist Church is a locked facility. The building is equipped with a security system similar to that of the Rockwood School District. It is a front line tool which securely monitors the main entry points to the building using a video intercom system. Anyone wishing to gain access to the building is required to press a button at the entrance where a receptionist will be able to speak with them to verify their identity before unlocking the door.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Weather

ECC follows the Rockwood School District school closure policy for inclement weather. The Director may decide to close the center in situations where safety of the children is concerned. All ECC classes will participate in outside activities as long as the weather permits. If it is raining or the temperature is below 10 degrees the children will stay inside.

Calendar

The ECC follows Rockwood School District as far as calendar holidays and may include additional days off for early childhood continuing education for our staff and Christmas break. The ECC academic calendar includes 4 built in snow days. Should more than 4 snow days occur, the ECC will make up 1 day for every 2 additional snow days. Additional days will be made up for the 1 week past the last day on the original calendar. Make up days will be a preschool day (9:15am-12:15pm) and KDO day (9:15am-1:15pm). Credits for missed Lunch Bunch days due to inclement weather will be credited as they occur, however, no Lunch Bunch days will be added to the school year.

Illness

If 25% of our daily enrollment is out with an illness, the director may choose to close the preschool.

MEDICAL & HEALTH POLICIES

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Physical Exams & Immunizations

All children new to the program must have a physical examination by a licensed physician that is signed and dated within 30 days of the first day of school. All children must meet Missouri's immunization requirements prior to entering school. You may at any time request notice of whether there are children currently enrolled or attending the preschool for which an immunization exemption has been filed.

Emergency information and whom to call in case of emergency is also required. Please inform us of any changes to medical or emergency information as well as updates to immunization records.

Illness & Absenteeism

Colds, viruses, flu and strep throat are easily spread. We hope you will take precautions to protect your child and other children from excess exposure.

1. Please call if your child is sick and unable to come to school. Children who have vomited the night before or in the morning should stay home that day.

2. If your child becomes sick at school you will be notified immediately. If the teacher and director feel that your child is not well enough to remain at school, you will be called to come pick him/her up. The Missouri Department of Health requires us to contact you and have you pick your child up for the following symptoms:
 - More than one (1) abnormally loose stool.
 - Red or blue in the face or makes a high-pitched croupy or whooping sound after coughing.
 - Difficult or rapid breathing.
 - Yellowish skin or eyes.
 - Tears, redness or eyelid lining or irritation, followed by swelling or discharge of pus.
 - Unusual spots or rashes.
 - Sore throat or swallowing difficulty.
 - An infected skin patch-crusty, bright yellow, dry or gummy, areas of the skin.
 - Unusually dark, tea-colored urine.
 - Gray or white stool.
 - ~~Fever over one hundred one degrees Fahrenheit (101F) by mouth or one hundred degrees Fahrenheit (100F) under the arm.~~
 - Headache and stiff neck.
 - Vomiting more than once.
 - Severe itching of the body or scalp or scratching of the scalp, which may be symptoms of lice or scabies. (Please note the “No-Nit” Policy)

- ~~3. If you have a sick child and a healthy sibling attends school, please do not walk in with your sick child to pick up. We will dismiss the siblings through the outside classroom door.~~

Fever

~~Students who have been absent from school because of an elevated temperature should be kept home until their temperature has been 99.6 or less for twenty four (24) hours without fever reducing medication (acetaminophen, ibuprofen) before returning to school.~~

Communicable Diseases

Please notify the ECC office immediately if your child contracts a communicable disease or illness. This would include **strep throat, chicken pox, head lice, ringworm, conjunctivitis, etc.** We will notify parents of any communicable illness to which your child has been exposed. The state requires reporting of all communicable diseases to the Department of Health and Senior Services.

No Nit Policy

ECC has a No Nit Policy. If a child is found to have head lice and/or nits, parents will be contacted to come pick up him/her from school. Prior to reentry of school, the child will be checked by administration to ensure that he/she is nit and/or head lice free.

Medications

Administration of over the counter medicine to children by teachers is **not** allowed at Living Word Early Childhood Center. If your child is in need of over the counter medicine, please administer the medicine to your child prior to the beginning of the school day.

NO medication may be kept in child's backpack. If your child requires an inhaler or Epi-pen for allergies/asthma, these must be kept in director's office during the school year. Medication shall have child's name & instructions for use.

NOTE: Please note Living Word Early Childhood Center's goal is to ensure the safety of all children. We do have children enrolled with severe peanut/tree nut allergies. Because we want to ensure that all children are safe, we require that no peanut/tree nut, peanut/ tree nut products, and/or foods that have been processed with peanuts or tree nuts be sent to Living Word Early Childhood Center.

POTTY TRAINING

Kids Day Out & Jr. 3s

Throughout the year many children in our Kid's Day Out and Jr. 3's classes will be mastering the use of the bathroom. We, the staff at Living Word Early Childhood Center, completely support the parent's efforts in this process and we have many resources available to you.

A group setting, however, can provide an additional challenge in this process. In order to lessen the stress on the child, the staff and the whole classroom dynamics, we require that parents send the child in pull-ups once they have **initiated** the process at home. If the child is not yet going on the potty, pull-ups create some difficulty when changing the child. However in potty training, the pull-ups will allow the child to use the restroom when needed and will reduce the level of embarrassment and stress if there is an accident. If your child insists on wearing underpants and he/she is not yet ready, please consider placing the underpants over the pull-up, for easier clean up. Once the teacher feels your child has mastered the skill in a group setting you will be notified and the child can begin wearing training pants. If, however, there is a severe regression in this skill, parents may be asked to provide pull-ups again.

Sr. 3s & Pre-K

Children enrolled in Sr. 3s and Pre-Kindergarten classes are required to be potty trained before attending preschool. We do not have the facilities or supplies required to change children in these classrooms. We feel that children of these ages deserve privacy. We realize that “accidents” will happen. “Accidents” by definition are unusual incidents and should only happen infrequently.

Potty trained preschool children:

- No longer wear diapers (disposable or cloth) or pull-ups
- Can tell the teacher when they need to go to the bathroom, and can attend to his/her own hygiene. A teacher will assist when needed. This is an issue that protects all concerned.

If your child is not completely potty trained as described above when preschool starts, contact the Director to discuss your child’s progress and your options. We realize all children develop at various rates and will work with you to design a plan that best meets the needs of our your child and our program.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Accidents/Emergencies

All Living Word Early Childhood Center staff is required to have been certified in Infant/Child CPR. We update our certification every two years.

For minor accidents, first aid treatment will be administered. This treatment will consist of cleansing wounds with soap and water; band-aids; and application of cold packs. An incident report will be completed. Parents will be notified by phone or in writing, depending upon the nature of the child’s condition.

In accidents of a more **serious** nature, first aid will be administered, parents immediately contacted, and an incident report completed. Staff will make recommendations regarding the possibility for further medical attention (parents may be called to the preschool to make a personal assessment of the situation.)

In a medical emergency which is life threatening, a 911 call will be dispatched, CPR/First Aid will be administered, and immediate efforts to contact parents will be made. If parents do not arrive to accompany emergency personnel to a medical facility, a staff member will go along if necessary.

Weather/Disaster Emergencies

The emergency procedures for tornado/severe weather conditions and the fire evacuation route are posted in each classroom, the ECC office, and in the kitchen. In the event of an actual emergency, you will be contacted by telephone and given further instructions on necessary

actions. Please make sure that the ECC office has a current telephone number on file for you and your family at ALL times.

Drills are done regularly with the children and they are instructed what will take place in case of a weather emergency.

GENERAL POLICIES

Clothing

All children should be dressed in washable play clothes appropriate for the weather, art activities, and physical play. Sturdy shoes, preferably tennis shoes, must be worn at all times. WARM clothing (including hat and mittens) is recommended for outdoor play in cold weather.

Please permanently mark all clothing with both first and last name. This includes hats, gloves, jackets, security blankets, etc.

Kid's Day Out Children: will need to bring a change of clothing and extra diapers or training pants each day – **please LABEL.**

Preschool Children: the ECC has a supply of generic clothing for times of spills and emergencies. We ask that these clothes be washed and returned as soon as possible.

Personal Items

Living Word ECC does not assume responsibility for loss or damage of personal items. Therefore, we ask that you do not allow your child to wear or bring items of value to the center. The preschool supplies an adequate amount of appropriate toys for each classroom. We strongly discourage children from bringing personal items/toys from home, as they can be easily lost, broken, or create dissension among playmates.

Communication

For most of us today, communication via email is a main way of staying connected. You can find additional information regarding upcoming events, etc. on Living Word ECC's web address, which is <https://livingwordumc.org/ecc/> We will also communicate information to you via ECC Parent Orientation, Parent-Child Open House, monthly newsletters, Kids Day Out daily notes, preschool teacher notes and newsletters, telephone calls and Parent/Teacher conferences. We encourage parents to keep us advised of special circumstances so we may give support and understanding during these times.

Parents should feel free to contact a teacher or the Director **any time** a question or concern arises. The ECC number is 636-821-2861

Solicitations

Birthday invitations are **NOT** to be distributed at school unless the entire class has been invited. Please send follow up thank you notes via U.S. postal service.

Snacks

A peanut/tree nut free mid-morning snack is provided each day by the school.

Food for children in Toddlers Kids Day Out Class

Parents are required to provide **prepared bottles** (milk, formula), and **baby foods/cereals** for their toddlers who do not yet consume table foods. **Bottles and/or sippy cups**, must be plastic, not glass. **Bottles, lids, plastic food containers, and jars of food must be clearly labeled with child's name.**

Popcorn, whole grapes and hot dog slices are considered choking hazards and therefore we are asking that they not be sent in your child's lunch. Grapes may be cut in half and hot dogs quartered if you would like to send them in your child's lunch. Due to the challenging aspects of helping multiple children, **we strongly discourage Gogurts**. If you would like your child to drink a juice pouch/box please transfer the drink to a sippy cup prior to the school day.

NOTE: Please note Living Word Early Childhood Center's goal is to ensure the safety of all children. We do have children enrolled with severe peanut/ tree nut allergies, because we want to ensure that all children are safe, we require that no peanut/ tree nut products, and/or food that has been processed with peanuts/ tree nuts be sent to Living Word Early Childhood Center.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips may be taken by preschool age children in compliance with the Missouri law requiring individual safety car seats for children under the age of 8. Each parent is responsible for ensuring that his/her child's car seat is securely fastened in the "driver's" vehicle. Parents will need to act as drivers and riders on these trips. **Permission slips must be signed by a parent and returned prior to the field trip.** If your child is scheduled for Lunch Bunch on a field trip day, you have the option of bringing your child back to school for Lunch Bunch or receiving a credit for that day.

CONFERENCES

Conferences will be scheduled two times during the school year for preschool classes. **Conferences will not be held for KDO**, but daily notes will communicate timely information to parents. Teachers and the Director are available to answer questions you may have.

S.H.A.R.E.

Living Word Early Childhood Center has instituted the **SHARE** Program, a tuition assistance fund for families in need. Please consider adding a tax-deductible contribution to your monthly tuition payment. Please talk with the Director for further information regarding donations or applications to this program.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

We anticipate that your involvement with the preschool will be a positive experience for you and your child. However, there may be an occasion when you have a concern about the center's services. If this occurs, contact your child's teacher and / or the Director, and a conference will be scheduled at your convenience for negotiation and conflict resolution.

LIVING WORD BUILDING POLICIES

Non-Smoking Policy

Living Word is a non-smoking campus.

Substance Abuse

Living Word United Methodist Church and Living Word Early Childhood Center maintains a drug and alcohol free environment. Living Word mandates that controlled substances and/or alcohol use is not permitted on the premises.

LIVING WORD EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICY

As parents, you want God's best for your children. We share that desire at Living Word Early Childhood Center. It is our goal to teach children self-discipline and how to act in socially acceptable, respectful ways.

Living Word ECC has four school-wide behavior expectations.

- We take care of ourselves.

- We take care of each other.
- We take care of our school.
- We take care of our world.

Behavior management strategies are used that focus on preventing misbehavior and teaching children their actions have consequences.

Behavior Management Strategies Used by Living Word ECC Staff

- Modeling appropriate behavior
- Planning an environment that is engaging, encouraging and caring
- Providing clear and simple limits
- Redirecting with consideration of age-appropriate behavior
- Providing natural and logical consequences for children's actions
- Removing children from the situation

Consequences of Misbehavior

1. Warning from ECC Staff
2. Guided techniques (redirection, expression of feelings, time- out)
3. Send to office with a call to parent
4. Director/Parent/Teacher team meeting to create plan of action
5. Dismissal from program at the discretion of the ECC Director

Playground Consequences

1. Warning (This can be inside the classroom for older children or may be a verbal warning when behavior occurs outside)
2. Redirection in conjunction with warning
3. 1st time- out
4. 2nd time- out- longer possibly, consider the behavior
5. Time in the office until recess is over

Biting

Please be aware that biting is a common behavior in young children. Understanding why it happens will help, but will not prevent its occurrence. Young children use their mouths to receive information about the world around them and take pleasure in mouthing objects. Therefore, children bite for many reasons: relief from the pain and discomfort of teething; frustration compounded by undeveloped language skills; immature social skills, lack of impulse control and reasoning abilities for handling conflict; and personal space issues (children need space). The majority of biting occurs in the toddler age group. When a child bites we:

1. Avoid a dramatic negative reaction.

2. Let child know that biting is unacceptable by voice and facial expression, and calmly communicate and suggest alternatives.
3. Focus attention on the victim by comforting and sympathizing with the child. Allow the biter to console the victim.
4. Encourage the victim to express feelings about being bitten.

The appropriate first aid treatment is administered and parents of biter and victim are notified of the incident by phone or on the written daily report. For reasons of confidentiality, staff cannot divulge the names of the children involved.

Living Word Early Childhood Center

POLICY AGREEMENT

(Please, complete and return to Living Word Early Childhood Center office by end of second week of school).

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Please read the Living Word Early Childhood Parent Handbook before signing this form. We at Living Word Early Childhood Center need the area to be a safe, happy place for all children to learn and grow. It is important that you understand the policies that govern our childhood center.

We appreciate your cooperation and look forward to working with you and your children. If you have any comments or concerns, please contact the Early Childhood Director at 636-230-0089

Thank You.

I have received, read and understand the policies outlined in the Parent Handbook. I accept and agree to follow these policies. I further understand that failure to follow these policies may result in the termination of services.

I understand it is my responsibility to continue to read and stay apprised of all changes to the 2021 Reopening Plan (which is available to me via the ECC website as well as emailed each time an update is made). The changes in procedures and policy supersede those in this handbook for January-May of 2021.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date