



## **Policies and Procedures Handbook**

**7651 Johnson Street**

**Hollywood, FL 33024**

**School: (954) 983-3516**

[epworthpreschoolfl.com](http://epworthpreschoolfl.com)

**Facebook: Epworth United Methodist Preschool**

## **Epworth United Methodist Preschool**

7651 Johnson Street, Hollywood, FL 33024

(954) 983-3516 Preschool

### **Welcome**

Welcome to Epworth United Methodist Preschool, Where LOVE Spills Over. We are delighted that you have chosen us as your child's preschool. Our staff is dedicated to giving your child the personal attention and guidance they need to learn as they relate to the world around them. Our teachers are experienced professionals who are fully trained and knowledgeable in early childhood development and education. The policies and procedures in this handbook are strictly enforced. Please adhere to the policies and procedures to ensure your child has a wonderful experience in preschool.

### **Mission Statement**

Our mission is to provide a safe, loving, and spiritually nurturing environment for our students, parents, and staff. We believe that preschoolers should learn through fun experiences. This will help engage the children and foster a love for learning, making their transition into elementary school an easier one. We encourage the family to participate throughout the school year, helping to foster the importance of education in your child's life.

### **Our Philosophy**

We believe that each child is unique and has his/her own way of learning. We believe that each child has the right to grow into their full potential and develop their strengths and talents. We believe that providing a safe, loving, and spiritually nurturing environment, with the collaboration of family, will assist the child in becoming their very best.

Our teachers will provide your child with a variety of developmentally appropriate tasks, which will occur through play, teacher-led and child-led activities. Your child will be encouraged to problem solve, explore, create, and learn through these experiences. Our teachers will provide opportunities for your child to develop physically, cognitively, and social-emotionally. We want to build positive self-image, academic excellence, and active learning. We want to encourage collaboration between family and school in order to establish the importance of education early on and help to develop life-long learners.

### **Security and Cameras**

For the safety of our students and staff, Epworth United Methodist Preschool has an automatic lock to the front entryway gate. Epworth United Methodist Preschool has 32 cameras covering all areas of the facility with the exception of the bathrooms. These cameras are monitored in the office and are NOT linked to the internet.

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### **Our Curriculum**

Our curriculum is comprehensive, with an emphasis on hands-on learning and spiritual growth. Learning should be fun, interesting, and appropriately geared to the age and development of the child. The children are exposed to a variety of activities throughout the day, allowing them to experience information through play, books, singing, arts, direct instruction and more!

Epworth United Methodist Preschool utilizes the ABeka Christian Curriculum, developed by Pensacola Christian College. This curriculum provides an introduction to letter names and sounds, phonics and math skills, while reinforcing Christian beliefs. This exposes the children to a traditional learning style and introduces beginning writing and letter formation skills throughout the preschool years.

HighReach Learning is a project-based curriculum which engages the children with high interest themes and links their learning to their own experiences. This curriculum gets the children to share their knowledge and expand it as well. The children will be immersed in a theme, where they may be scientists or explorers on one day and artists or writers the next. The children will learn new vocabulary and begin to make connections throughout their daily experiences.

Scholastic Magazine provides the students with weekly science and social studies articles that engage the children by utilizing current themes. The articles correlate to the current month providing information such as, classroom rules in the beginning of the school year, to seasonal changes and current holidays. The children love the bright colors, engaging pictures and the fact that they take a magazine home weekly!

Along with these curriculums, the children are given playground time and free choice time daily, where they get to play, make choices and build relationships with their peers. We also have a library room, where the children get to checkout a book weekly. The children certainly look forward to all of these fun experiences. These activities and curriculums allow the children plenty of opportunities to play, learn at their own pace, and experience a variety of learning throughout their fun-filled day.

### **Visiting During School Hours**

Epworth United Methodist Preschool offers many special event activities in which you can pre-arrange to volunteer and attend. Please look for the special event calendar given during the first week of school. Look for notes and messages on the Remind App regarding these events as they occur throughout the school year. Parents are also welcome to attend Chapel on its designated day and time. All families are invited to join the congregation of Epworth United Methodist Church on Sundays at 9:30 a.m. Parents are also invited to bring in special snacks (store bought only) to share with the class to celebrate birthdays. Please arrange time spent in the classroom directly with your child's teacher.

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### **Responsibility for Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect**

Epworth United Methodist Preschool shall protect children from abuse and neglect while in the program's care and custody. All staff members are mandated reporters of any suspected incidents of child abuse and neglect. All staff members will document objectively any suspicions of abuse or neglect. Staff will report concerns to the Director. The Director and reporting staff will objectively discuss concerns relating to observable criteria. If deemed necessary, the Director will place the call to the Department of Children and Families to report any concerns or findings.

### **Incident Reporting Policy and Procedures**

Epworth United Methodist Preschool Staff must report all incidents that are listed below to the Florida Department of Children and Families/Licensing.

1. **Lost or missing child** – The Director will be notified upon immediately knowing there is a lost or missing child. A school wide check will be conducted. Attendance will be taken and all children will be counted in each classroom to verify that each child is accounted for. Local law enforcement and licensing will be contacted immediately upon the confirmation that a child is lost or missing.
2. **Suspected maltreatment of a child** - All staff members will document objectively any suspicions of abuse or neglect. Staff will report concerns to the Director. The Director and reporting staff will objectively discuss concerns relating to observable criteria. If deemed necessary, the Director will place the call to the Department of Children and Families to report any concerns or findings.
3. **Injuries or illnesses requiring hospitalization, or emergency treatment** - In the case of serious accidents, injuries, or medical emergencies requiring possible hospitalization, 911 is called immediately for the care and protection of the child. If warranted, appropriate first aid will be provided while waiting for emergency personnel to arrive. Parents/guardians are notified immediately. Licensing will be notified of the accident, injury, or medical emergency as well.
4. **Death of a child or staff member** – Contact local authorities immediately. Contact nearest staff member if children are present. Relocate those children to a nearby and supervised area within the school. Take attendance and complete a head count to make sure all children are accounted for. Wait for local authorities. Contact licensing to inform them of the death of a child or staff member.
5. **Presence of a threatening individual who attempts or succeeds in gaining entrance to the facility** – Individuals who first witness the weapon use or hostage situation will immediately call 911 and inform other staff members through cell phone/two-way radio that there is a CODE RED. That calls for an immediate LOCKDOWN. Classroom doors will be closed and locked. Children will be positioned away from doors and windows. Take attendance and count the children. Notify Director and other staff if a child is missing or if you have a child from another class with you through cell phone/two-way radio. All communications will be conducted through cell phone/two-way radio. Take cover under tables if threat is imminent. Classroom doors will not be opened until the all clear has been given. The Director will notify licensing regarding the incident.

**ALL STAFF MEMBERS ARE MANDATED REPORTERS AND MUST REPORT ALL INCIDENTS.**

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### **Persons Appearing Intoxicated or Impaired**

If a parent or other adult enters the school to pick up a child and appears to be intoxicated, smells of alcohol or his/her actions appear to be impaired, we will refuse to release the child to them and call another contact on the emergency contact list to pick up the child. If the intoxicated individual becomes aggressive or unruly, the Director will notify the local authorities.

### **Use of Television**

Epworth United Methodist Preschool will follow licensing regulations regarding recommended screen time. However, Epworth United Methodist Preschool will utilize the television for special occasions or if inclement weather prohibits the use of scheduled playground time. In these cases, the programs or movies shown will be educational, theme related, and age appropriate.

### **Confidentiality**

Epworth United Methodist Preschool respects and maintains the confidentiality of each child and family. Epworth United Methodist Preschool respects the family's right to privacy and will not disclose confidential information. However, by law, Epworth United Methodist Preschool must provide information pursuant to a subpoena or if a child's welfare is at risk to the appropriate agencies.

In addition, signed consent is given to all Epworth United Methodist Preschool staff to have access to your child's records at any given time. (Statue for Consent 7.3D)

### **Epworth United Methodist Preschool Child Discipline/Expulsion Policy**

At Epworth United Methodist Preschool, our goal is to teach our students self-discipline. There are several ways we strive for this goal. Our daily routines include many opportunities for the students to be challenged. When a student satisfactorily attempts and/or completes a task skill or masters a skill, he/she will be praised. Positive reinforcement instills in children a sense of accomplishment and motivates them to try new things. All efforts should be acknowledged, praised, and encouraged. Students should be learning self-motivation to succeed.

Some children respond well to redirection. Teachers should monitor behavior and intervene when trouble arises. Before a conflict escalates, teachers should interject themselves into the situation and suggest an alternate activity or environment for the troubled child. When redirection fails, the teacher should suggest ways for the child to deal with the problem or ways the child can choose to behave in the current situation.

Sometimes even the most well-meaning positive guidance techniques fail to produce acceptable results. In these circumstances, a child may be sent to a "Thinking Chair" for 1 minute per year of age. After the time has ended, the child will be reminded of the infraction and encouraged to behave better in the future. Should a child's behavior turn aggressive or non-responsive to our methods, the parents will be contacted for a conference to discuss the problem. The director may declare a child ineligible to continue in the school if he/she requires specialized care beyond the capabilities of the school. If the child does not respond to continual efforts to modify or improve behavior that repeatedly threatens the health or safety of other children or staff, obstructs regular

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### **Child discipline/Expulsion Policy continued**

activities or programs, or places the child beyond the control of the staff, the school reserves the right to disenroll the child at any time at the school's discretion.

In addition, to the above information, if there are excessive late pick-ups, excessive tardiness, or lack of payment for childcare, the school reserves the right to disenroll the child at any time.

### **School Policies**

**Hours of Operation:** Epworth United Methodist Preschool is open from 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Monday – Friday. If your child is enrolled in our full day program or VPK Wrap-Around Care, you may drop off your child any time before 8:30 a.m. and pick up promptly by 6:00 p.m. If your child is enrolled in half day K2, K3, or VPK, class is from 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

We follow the Broward County School Board calendar, except for: start/closing dates which may vary. We are open on Jewish Holidays and Teacher Planning days. We are closed the two weeks of winter break and one week of spring break, you will not be charged for those weeks. Regarding weather related emergencies, we also follow the recommendations of the Broward County School Board.

**VPK Students:** Voluntary Pre-kindergarten (VPK) is a state-funded program with strict guidelines pertaining to attendance and tardiness. Your child must be in class on time daily. Class time is 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Excessive tardiness and absenteeism may result in dismissal from the program. Your child misses valuable instructional time and classroom experience when he/she misses class. VPK students are only allowed 3 absences per month. More than 3 absences a month, we require a doctor's note to return to preschool.

VPK requires a parent/guardian to print their full name and full signature (first and last name) on a "Long Form" on the first day of the entering month. This is for attendance data and will be in your child's classroom for you to sign during the appropriate days.

**Illnesses:** If my child is showing signs of illness, you will be notified at a telephone number(s) provided to us. You must have set arrangements for a quick pick-up from school. In case of an emergency, parents and paramedics will be called. You agree NOT to bring your child to school if he/she is showing any signs of illness. You agree to keep your child out of school for a minimum of 24 hours after signs of illness. Please note, this means that your child must be free of fever, vomiting, and diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school. This is for the comfort of your child and the general health of all students and staff. Please provide a doctor's note authorizing your child is free of illness, if they are absent 3 or more consecutive days. Please notify the school as soon as possible to inform us of your child's illness (954) 983-3516.

### **Head Lice – Return to School Policy**

If your child has been diagnosed with head lice or nits (lice eggs), it is important to treat your child before he/she returns to school. It is our policy to exclude your child from attendance at school until your child is free of lice and nits. Please report to the office, where office staff will check your child to verify, they are nit free and lice free.

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### **Emergency Care Plan for Medical Concerns, including Allergies**

If your child has any medical conditions, including but not limited to, chronic illnesses or allergies (such as: needing an Epi-Pen) requiring medical interventions, please be advised that **you are required to provide** Epworth United Methodist Preschool, **with a written Emergency Care Plan.**

This Emergency Care Plan can be written by the parent/legal guardian or your child's physician. It must include: diagnosis, describe symptoms/indications when medical intervention is needed, explain the proper steps to care for your child if a medical emergency should arise relating to your child's medical condition or allergies and signature of parent/legal guardian and/or physician completing the Emergency Care Plan.

### **Medication: Prescription and Non-Prescription**

No medication shall be given by Epworth United Methodist Preschool Staff without the signed permission of the parent or legal guardian. All medication must be in the original container with the child's name, name of the physician, medication name, and medication directions written on the label.

Non-prescription medication brought in by the parent or legal guardian can only be dispensed if there is a written and signed authorization form from the parent or legal guardian to do so.

Medication which has expired or is no longer being administered shall be returned to the parent or legal guardian.

The Authorization for Prescription and Non-prescription Medication Form is located in the school office. Medication must be kept in the office. Please DO NOT leave medicine in your child's lunchbox or backpack.

### **Health Records**

Upon registering my child, I understand I need to have complete Medical Records.

Medical records needed for my child are:

**\*\*Physical (statement of Good Health, free of communicable disease) Form 3040**

**\*\*Shots-current up to date shot records-form 680 with EXPIRATION DATE filled in or notification from the doctor in writing stating child is not physically able to receive shots at the present time**

I understand that my child will not be able to attend Epworth United Methodist Preschool until all medical records are completed and submitted, prior to their start date. In addition, medical records must be maintained up to date. If your child's medical records expire, your child will not be able to attend school until the medical records are updated and submitted. The office staff will notify you when your child needs updated medical forms.

Please note, Epworth United Methodist Preschool does accept children who are not fully vaccinated due to medical reasons or religious beliefs with an exemption form from the Health Department or Doctor's office.

Please notify us of any allergies in writing on the registration packet. All allergies will be posted in the classroom for all staff members to see.

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### **Accidents, Injuries, First Aid**

We work hard to ensure that your child is in a safe environment, however, accidents do happen. If your child is slightly injured during the day, such as, a scraped knee, stubbed toe, small cut, bumped head, bite, etc., our staff is equipped to provide first aid to the child. In these cases, you will receive a written and signed accident/incident report from our staff to inform you about what occurred. The original report must stay in the preschool's office.

It is at the discretion of the facility if they feel the injury is more than slight and requires notification to the parent via phone call. In the case of serious accidents or medical emergencies, 911 is dialed immediately for the care and protection of the child. Parents/guardians are notified immediately in case of an emergency. Licensing will be notified of the accident, injury, or medical emergency if hospitalization or emergency treatment is necessary.

### **Biting is Common**

“Biting is quite common among young children. It happens for different reasons with different children and under different circumstances.” Please read the article entitled, “Biting Hurts” included in this Handbook. We work quickly and efficiently with our parents to resolve biting issues.

Excessive biting will result in suspension or termination from our program.

### **Backpacks, Lunch, and Nap Items**

All students should bring a labeled FULL-SIZED backpack and water bottle to school every day. In this backpack, provide a full change of clothes, including underwear and socks in case of an accident. Please note that clothing that is soiled with stool, blood, vomit will be thrown out. Any other soiled clothing will be placed in a plastic bag. Please do not send in toys or other items from home. Please check your child's backpack daily for correspondence from teachers and administration and any items of clothing that may have been soiled.

Children who stay a FULL DAY will have a naptime. It is a licensing requirement and part of a healthy child's development to provide young children with rest or sleep period after lunch. They are not required to sleep but must lie quietly and relax. Staff will do their best to rub their backs and help them sleep.

Please label and send a crib sheet, pillow, and blanket **ALL IN A LABELED ZIPPERED/SEALED BAG**. Please bring this on the first day of the week, it will go home on Friday for you to launder. If an accident occurs, the nap items will be sent home to be washed. Also provide a lunchbox, labeled with your child's name. Please provide foods which do not require warming.

In addition to the above items, K2 students will require several changes of clothing, extra underwear, socks, diapers, diaper cream, and wipes. If your child is potty training, also provide an extra pair of Crocs. Your child's teacher will notify you, either on a daily record sheet or verbally, if your child is running low on necessary items. Please replace any items needed no later than the next business day.

Please LABEL all of your child's belongings.

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### **Clothing**

Please send your child to school in clothing that gives them freedom to move. Closed-toe and rubber-soled shoes are best, as they will have lots of activity throughout the day. This can help prevent accidents. Please be mindful of the weather and dress your child accordingly.

Epworth United Methodist Preschool has T-shirts and Sweatshirts for sale. They are to be worn on designated Chapel days.

### **Toys From Home**

Please do not bring toys from home. Epworth United Methodist Preschool is not responsible for lost, broken, or stolen items in school.

### **Student Drop Off/Pick Up**

When dropping off/picking up your child, please stay in your car and join the car line. Epworth Preschool staff will unload/load your child in your car. No children will be released to parents walking up.

Please place car line tag visibly on your dashboard. This will allow us to see what child is going in your car. This dismissal procedure was put in place to keep all students safe and to keep the car line moving.

*Early dismissals*, please park your vehicle in a designated parking spot and walk to the office. We will retrieve your child for you. We will release your child only to those you have designated on your registration form. A picture ID will be required for pick up. Please call us at (954) 983-3516 or stop by the office if you need to make changes to your registration form. Be prepared to give us the password you indicated on the registration form.

Please do not leave valuables in your vehicles. Epworth United Methodist Preschool is not held responsible for any lost, stolen items, or damages to personal property and/or vehicles. Please be aware that daycares, preschools, and schools are a target for car break-ins.

Please notify us in writing or via telephone if a person not listed on the enrollment form will be picking up your child. They will be asked for your password. A picture ID must be presented. Your child will NOT be released without your authorization and the above information.

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### **Custody**

If there is an issue with custody, we must have a notarized court order on file outlining the custody arrangements.

### **Communication**

Epworth United Methodist Preschool uses an app called “Remind.” Remind is a free text messaging app that allows us to communicate quickly and efficiently. In case of an emergency warranting evacuation, Epworth United Methodist Preschool will send information regarding the emergency and reunification procedures with your child through the Remind App. This is a great tool for emergencies and also for regular reminders and upcoming events. Please text @7b42ad to the number 81010. Then follow the instructions to download the app. Please be aware that it is your responsibility to download the Remind App. There is also a monthly calendar that provides reminders of upcoming events. It will be in your child’s backpack. There is an Information Board located by the front office containing pertinent information. Please stop by to stay informed.

Epworth United Methodist Preschool also has a Facebook page and website, [epworthpreschoolfl.com](http://epworthpreschoolfl.com), where you can see information about events and view pictures of all the fun and learning your children are having while in our care.

K2 classes will provide a daily record sheet providing you with an overview of your child’s day. This will include daily activities and diapering/bathroom use throughout the day. Please look for this sheet daily, as it will let you know how your child’s day went and may also inform you of any items that are needed.

In addition, feel free to talk with or send a note in to the teachers and share any praises or concerns. If there is a need for any issues to be discussed in depth, please schedule a conference with your child’s teacher and/or the Director at any time.

Please check your child’s backpack daily for correspondence from teachers and administration.

### **Classroom Assignment**

Placement of a child in a classroom is determined by age, developmental level, and availability. While we do accept input from parents about room assignments, it is at the Director’s discretion to make the final classroom assignment.

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### **Fees and Payments**

#### **Tuition Payments K2 & K3 Half Day**

K2 and K3 Classes Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Your child's monthly tuition of \$350.00 is due the FIRST OF EACH MONTH. There will be no reduction, refunds, or credits made on the weekly tuition for absences, illnesses, vacations, emergencies/weather related emergencies, holiday closings or dismissal from school. All balances must be paid in full before withdrawing your child. There is a \$10.00 late fee for payments NOT received by the 5th of the Month.

The total tuition for the school year is \$3,500.00 payable in ten monthly installments of \$350.00. Payments begin in August and end after the payment for May. You understand and accept responsibility for the total yearly tuition of \$3,500.00 for your child.

A student with two months tuition in the arrears will not be accepted in school until the tuition is current.

#### **Weekly Tuition Payments Full Day**

K2 and K3 Classes Monday – Friday, care available 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Your child's weekly tuition of \$175.00 is due on MONDAYS OF EACH WEEK. There will be no reduction, refunds, or credits made on the weekly tuition for absences, illnesses, vacations, emergencies/weather related emergencies, holiday closings or dismissal from school. All balances must be paid in full before withdrawing your child. There is a \$10.00 late fee for payments NOT received by Wednesdays.

The total tuition for the school year is \$6,650.00 payable in 38 weekly installments of \$175.00. Payments begin in August and end in June. You understand and accept responsibility for the yearly tuition of \$6,650.00 for your child.

A student with two weeks tuition in the arrears will not be accepted in school until the tuition is current.

#### **VPK Weekly Wrap-Around Care Tuition**

Your child's VPK hours are 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. There is a weekly tuition of \$125.00 for the additional hours of 7:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. Your child's VPK weekly wrap-around care tuition of \$125.00 is due on MONDAYS OF EACH WEEK. There will be no reduction, refunds, or credits made on the weekly tuition for absences, illnesses, vacations, emergencies/weather related emergencies, holiday closings or dismissal from school. All balances must be paid in full before withdrawing your child. There is a \$10.00 late fee for payments NOT received by Wednesdays.

The total tuition for the school year is \$4,750.00 payable in 38 weekly installments of \$125.00. Payments begin in August and end in June. You understand and accept responsibility for the yearly tuition of \$4,750.00 for your child.

A student with two weeks tuition in the arrears will not be accepted in school until the tuition is current.

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### Summer Camp

Summer camp is available beginning the Monday after the last day of the academic school year until the week before school starts. Please check with the office for exact dates as these may vary. There is a \$50.00 registration fee for both FULL DAY or HALF DAY summer camp. FULL DAY summer camp hours are 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. for a tuition fee of \$175.00 a week. HALF DAY summer camp hours are 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. for a tuition fee of \$85.00 a week. Tuition is due on MONDAYS OF EACH WEEK. You are only responsible to pay tuition for the weeks that your child attends. There are NO DAILY RATES.

### Other Fees

\*Registration Fee for K2 and K3 only: \$150.00

This registration fee is nonrefundable. Application forms will not be processed until this fee has been paid.

\*Activity Fee for All Students: \$100.00

This fee shall be paid upon registration. This covers all activities and on-site field trips for the school year. *This fee is optional for VPK students, if you would like them to participate in all activities and on-site field trips throughout the school year, please pay the \$100.00 activity fee.*

\*Late Pick-Up Fee Full Day: Our center closes promptly at 6:00 p.m. There is a fee of \$1.00 per minute if you pick your child up after 6:00 p.m. Please note that excessive late pick-ups may result in expulsion from our center.

\*Late Pick-Up Fee Half Day: There will be a fee of \$1.00 per minute if you pick up your child after 12:10 p.m. Please note that excessive late pick-ups may result in expulsion from our center.

\* Non-Sufficient Fund Fee: \$25.00, if funds are not available, the tuition fee and non-sufficient fund fee must be paid in cash for the total amount due at that time. Please note that failure to promptly provide tuition may result in expulsion from our center.

*All payments are accepted in cash, check, or money order. Please use the payment envelope provided to you and place payments in your child's backpack. Receipts will be returned in the envelope as well. Payments may also be given directly to staff.*

### Nutrition Policy

In accordance with the Broward County Child Care Ordinance, parents and the child care facility are urged to work cooperatively to assure that children are provided with nutritious snacks and meals where lunches are not provided by the facility.

|                              | <b>Breakfast</b> | <b>Mid-Morning<br/>Snack</b> | <b>Lunch</b> | <b>Mid-Afternoon<br/>Snack</b> |
|------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Epworth<br/>Preschool</b> |                  | <b>X</b>                     |              | <b>X</b>                       |
| <b>Parent/Guardian</b>       | <b>X</b>         |                              | <b>X</b>     |                                |

*X indicates who provides the snacks/meals.*

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Please note the following:

1. Epworth United Methodist staff cannot warm up food.
2. We are a peanut free school. No peanuts or peanut products please.
3. All items for classroom events must be store bought.
4. I agree if my child has a food allergy, I will provide a snack/meal replacement for my child.

Please notify us of any allergies in writing on the registration packet. All allergies will be posted in the classroom for all staff members to see.

### **Emergency Preparedness Plan and Procedures**

#### **Fire Drills**

Fire drills are mandatory by law and conducted monthly to prepare the children should an emergency situation arise. Our school has a fire alarm system and fire extinguishers. Each classroom has two fire exit routes posted. Each class will be escorted by the staff through the appropriate exits onto the playground or designated area. Staff will take their attendance records with them and count the children. Attendance will be taken again once they are in their designated area to make sure all children are accounted for. No one can enter the building until a final sweep and clearance has been completed. Then entrance to the building will be allowed.

#### **In Case of Severe Weather/Hurricane Emergency Closings**

Epworth United Methodist Preschool follows the Broward County School Board recommendations for severe weather/hurricane emergency closings. For example, if Broward County Public Schools are closed due to impending severe weather, we will also be closed. Please stay informed via news outlets regarding school closures and the Remind App.

#### **Lockdowns**

In case of a threat to Epworth United Methodist Preschool or a nearby facility, the local law enforcement will be contacted and a lock-down will occur. During a lockdown, all exterior doors will remain locked. Attendance will be taken and a head count will occur to verify that each child is accounted for. No one can enter or exit the building until the appropriate authorities have stated that it is safe to do so.

#### **Evacuations**

Should an evacuation be needed, due to an emergency warranting staff and children to be relocated to an off-campus site, each classroom will follow the evacuation route to Fletcher Park (7900 Johnson St., Pembroke Pines, FL 33024, Please see map at the end of the handbook). Emergency personnel will be contacted immediately. Staff will take the designated route to Fletcher Park (posted in the classroom). Staff will take their attendance records with them and count the children. Attendance will again be taken once they are in their designated area to make sure all children are accounted for. You will be notified through the Remind App with information regarding reuniting with your child. Re-entry to the facility will be cleared by the appropriate emergency personnel. Please download the Remind App by texting @7b42ad to the number 81010. It is your responsibility to have the Remind App.

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**Rivla Wilson Act**

Pursuant to s. 39.604, Florida Statutes, a child from birth to the age of school entry, who is under court-ordered protective supervision or in out-of-home care and is enrolled in an early education or child care program must attend the program 5 days a week unless the court grants an exemption. A child enrolled in an early education or child care program who meets the requirements of this act may not be withdrawn from the program without prior written approval of the Department or community-based care lead agency. If a child covered by this act is absent, the program shall report any unexcused absence or seven excused absences to the Department or the community-based care lead agency by the end of the business day following the unexcused absence or seventh consecutive excused absence.

Please read the **Rilya Wilson Act** Flyer that is attached in this Epworth United Methodist Preschool Handbook.

**Distracted Adult**

HB 1079 amended s.402.305(9), F.S. requiring operators of child care facilities and homes to provide parents/guardians with information pertaining to the dangers of leaving a child in a vehicle, including tips for prevention.

Please read the **Distracted Adult Flyer** that is attached in this Epworth United Methodist Preschool Handbook.

**Epworth United Methodist Preschool**

7651 Johnson Street, Hollywood, FL 33024

(954) 983-3516 Preschool

**Epworth United Methodist Preschool Handbook Acknowledgement**

I have read, understand, and agree to the policies that Epworth United Methodist Preschool has put in place in the Parent Handbook. I agree to follow these rules, policies, and procedures. I understand that failure to abide by Epworth United Methodist Preschool's policies and procedures may result in my child's enrollment termination. Disregard of the policies can include, but are not limited to: ignoring state licensing rules and regulations; not keeping your account current; not following our sick child policy, etc.

Above all, Epworth United Methodist Preschool reserves the right to maintain a safe, loving, and nurturing environment for the children. Our goal is to build a relationship between home and school, in order to foster the importance of family involvement throughout your child's educational journey.

*Please sign the Handbook Acknowledgment page which is included in the Registration Packet.*

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A change in daily routine,  
lack of sleep, stress,  
fatigue, cell phone use, and  
simple distractions are some  
things parents experience and  
can be contributing factors as  
to why children have been left  
unknowingly in vehicles...



For additional information, please visit  
[www.myflfamilies.com/childcare](http://www.myflfamilies.com/childcare) or contact  
your local licensing office.

This brochure was created by the  
Department of Children and Families in  
consultation with the Department of Health.

**WHEN LIFE  
HAPPENS...  
DON'T BE A  
DISTRACTED  
ADULT**



## Epworth United Methodist Preschool

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### Distraction Prevention Tips:

- **Never** leave your child alone in a car and **call 911** if you see any child locked in a car!
- **Make a habit** of checking the front and back seat of the car before you walk away.
- **Be especially mindful** during hectic or busy times, schedule or route changes, and periods of emotional stress or chaos.
- **Create reminders** by putting something in the back seat that you will need at work, school or home such as a briefcase, purse, cell phone or your left shoe.
- **Keep a stuffed animal** in the baby's car seat and place it on the front seat as a reminder when the baby is in the back seat.
- **Set a calendar reminder** on your electronic device to make sure you dropped your child off at child care.
- **Make it a routine** to always notify your child's child care provider in advance if your child is going to be late or absent; ask them to contact you if your child hasn't arrived as scheduled.

*During the 2018 legislative session, a new law was passed that requires child care facilities, family day care homes and large family child care homes to provide parents, during the months of April and September each year, with information regarding the potential for distracted adults to fail to drop off a child at the facility/home and instead leave them in the adult's vehicle upon arrival at the adult's destination.*



### Facts About Heatstroke:

- ⚠ It only takes a car **10 minutes** to heat up 20 degrees and become deadly.
- ⚠ Even with a window cracked, the **temperature inside a vehicle** can cause heatstroke.
- ⚠ The body temperature of a child increases **3 to 5 times faster** than an adult's body.



## Rilya Wilson Act

Pursuant to s. 39.604, Florida Statutes, a child from birth to the age of school entry, who is under court-ordered protective supervision or in out-of-home care and is enrolled in an early education or child care program must attend the program 5 days a week unless the court grants an exemption. A child enrolled in an early education or child care program who meets the requirements of this act may not be withdrawn from the program without prior written approval of the Department or community-based care lead agency. If a child covered by this act is absent, the program shall report any unexcused absence or seven excused absences to the Department or the community-based care lead agency by the end of the business day following the unexcused absence or seventh consecutive excused absence.

Educational stability and transition are key components of this act to minimize disruptions, secure attachments and maintain stable relationships with supportive caregivers of children from birth to school age. Successful partnerships are imperative to ensure that these attachments are not disrupted due to placement in out-of-home care or subsequent changes in out-of-home placement. A child must be allowed to remain in the child care or early education setting that he/she attended before entry into out-of-home care, unless the program is not in the best interest of the child. If a child from birth to school-age leaves a child care or early education program, a transition plan needs to be developed that involves cooperation and sharing of information among all persons involved, respects the child's developmental stage and associated psychological needs, and allows for a gradual transition from one setting to another.

This law provides priority for child care services for specified children who are at risk of abuse, neglect, or abandonment. *These children are also known as Protective Services children.*

### **Rilya Wilson Act Requirements:**

- ✓ Protective services children **MUST** be enrolled to participate 5 days per week.
- ✓ Protective services children **MAY NOT** be withdrawn without prior written approval from the Department of Children and Families (DCF) or Community Based Care (CBC).
- ✓ If a Protective Services child has 7 consecutive excused or any unexcused absence, the child care provider **MUST** notify the appropriate community based care staff.
- ✓ The Department and child care providers **MUST** follow local protocols set up by the CBC to ensure continuity.
- ✓ If it is not in the best interest of the child to remain at the child care or early education program, the caregiver **MUST** work with the Case Manager, Guardian Ad Litem, child care and educational staff, and educational surrogate, if one has been appointed, to determine the best setting for the child.

Community-Based Care Lead Agencies Contact Information:

<https://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/community-based-care/docs/leadagencycontacts.pdf>

**\*\* If you have concerns regarding any child that you may care for, please contact the Florida Abuse Hotline at 1-800-96-ABUSE\*\***

STRATEGIES FOR FAMILIES

# Ouch!

## Biting Hurts

*Biting by infants, toddlers, and two-year olds is a typical behavior. As children gain language, self-control, and problem-solving skills, they usually outgrow it. Yet, biting is often upsetting to families; understanding the whys and how to support your child is the first step in responding appropriately.*



### Why do young children bite?

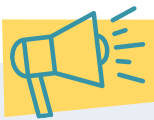
- Relieve teething pain
- Explore cause and effect
- Experience the biting sensation
- Satisfy oral-motor stimulation
- Develop self-control and problem solving skills
- Lack of verbal language skills
- Communicate or express needs or difficult feelings and emotions
- Feel strong and in control
- Imitate other children and adults
- Act in self-defense
- Get attention

### How do I prevent biting?

- **Understand your toddler's development.** Have age-appropriate expectations for your child's behavior based on his or her current skills and abilities.
- **Be consistent.** Keep your child's schedule, routines, and transitions predictable and consistent, especially at meal and bedtime.
- **Provide multi-sensory play experiences.** Offer activities and materials that allow your child to relax and release tension (e.g. yoga, deep breathing, playdough, foam balls, bubbles, soft music).
- **Provide items to mouth or bite,** such as teething rings or access to their pacifier. This helps children learn what they can bite safely, without hurting anyone else.
- **Talk about biting.** Read books together about biting, like "*No Biting*" by Karen Katz and "*Teeth Are Not for Biting*" by Elizabeth Verdick, watch shows, like Daniel Tiger, and sing songs that support alternative behaviors.
- **Support language development.** Model language with your child, giving him/her the words they need in the moment, like "Say 'I want a banana'" or "Tell him 'I don't like that.'"
- **Offer gentle guidance.** Use and encourage language to help your child develop self-control. Offer gentle reminders, phrased in a way that tells them what behaviors you expect.
- **Validate their feelings and emotions.** Being a toddler is hard! Use emotional language, like "You are so mad that you cannot have a cookie" and "I see that you do not want to be buckled. You are upset. Being buckled keeps you safe." Validate your child's feelings--responding with love, reassurance, and acceptance.

# Supporting Your Child's Biting Behaviors

*Biting by infants, toddlers, and two-year olds is a typical behavior. As children gain language, self-control, and problem-solving skills, they usually outgrow it. Yet, biting is often upsetting to families; understanding the "whys" and how to support your child is the first step in responding appropriately.*



## Why do young children bite?

- Relieve teething pain
- Explore cause and effect
- Experience the biting sensation
- Satisfy oral-motor stimulation
- Develop self-control and problem solving skills
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- Communicate or express needs or difficult feelings and emotions
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## Biting & Development

Biting happens for different reasons and at different ages. Understanding your child's development and having age-appropriate expectations for your child's behavior based on their current skills and abilities helps parents provide the matching response when biting occurs.



**Infants** explore the world around them with their hands, eyes, and mouths; but babies often need help to learn what they should and shouldn't bite through calm and clear messages, like "No bite" and/or redirection.



**Toddlers** have many strong emotions they are just learning to manage. They may bite to express anger or frustration; they often lack language skills to express their feelings. With toddlers, the focus is on providing consistent limits while supporting the development of the missing skills, like language.

## How should I respond when my child bites?

1. Move quickly to the scene and get down to children's level.
2. Respond to the child who did the biting. In a serious, firm tone make a strong statement. Help the child follow through on the choice if necessary.
3. Respond to the bitten child; Offer words or actions showing comfort. Perform first aid if needed. The child who bit can help comfort the bitten child, if both agree. Help the bitten child find something to do.
4. Follow up with the child who did the biting. Maintain eye contact. Use simple words in a calm, firm tone of voice. Find out what led to the incident. Restate the rule and model "feelings" words. Discuss how he can respond in the future.

No biting. Biting hurts. I can't let you hurt Ava. You can help make Ava feel better, or you can sit quietly until I can talk with you.

I'm sorry you're hurt. Let's get ice.

Child Care Resource and Referral Network  
Powered by CHILD CARE ANSWERS

**HOURS**  
Monday - Friday  
8:00 am - 5:00 pm

**CONTACT**  
317.636.5727  
childcareanswers.org

Jo took your ball, and you felt angry. You bit Jo. I can't let you hurt Jo. No biting. Next time, tell Jo "That's mine!"



If baby takes an experimental bite on mom's breast or dad's shoulder, stay calm and use clear signals to communicate it's not okay for one person to bite another. A firm "no" or "no biting" is appropriate. Remove baby from the breast or briefly put baby down.

## Helping your child overcome biting

Young children bite--simply because of stage of development that they are in. Some infants and toddlers causally explore biting while others learn quickly that biting "works" for them.

**Observe** your child to see the situations where biting occurs most frequently. When we know when and where biting might occur, we can begin preventing it from happening.

**Pay attention to signals.** Stay close and step in if your child seems ready to bite.

**Provide language supports.** Help your child communicate wants and needs, giving them the words to use in the given situation ("no," "stop," or "that's mine").

Have **age-appropriate behavioral expectations.** Is your child's behavior typical for their age group?

**Reinforce positive behaviors** by acknowledging your child's appropriate words and actions. Provide opportunities for your child to practice skills like turn taking and gentle touches, making choices, and doing things independently.

Offer a **sensory-rich environment**, including texture-diverse foods, hands-on play materials, and items to chew and mouth. Consider delaying the removal of a pacifier until your child has the verbal and social skills problem solve without biting (closer to age 3).

## Prevention. Creating environments that prevent biting behaviors before they begin.

**Understand your toddler's development.** Have age-appropriate expectations for your child's behavior based on his or her current skills and abilities.

**Be consistent.** Keep your child's schedule, routines, and transitions predictable and consistent, especially at meal and bedtime.

**Provide multi-sensory play experiences.** Offer activities and materials that allow your child to relax and release tension (e.g. yoga, deep breathing, playdough, foam balls, bubbles, soft music).

**Provide items to mouth or bite,** such as teething rings or access to their pacifier. This helps children learn what they can bite safely, without hurting anyone else.

**Talk about biting.** Read books together about biting, like "No Biting" by Karen Katz and "Teeth Are Not for Biting" by Elizabeth Verdick, watch shows, like Daniel Tiger, and sing songs that support alternative behaviors.

**Support language development.** Model language with your child, giving him/her the words they need in the moment, like "Say 'I want a banana'" or "Tell him 'I don't like that.'"

**Offer gentle guidance.** Use and encourage language to help your child develop self-control. Offer gentle reminders, phrased in a way that tells them what behaviors you expect.

**Validate their feelings and emotions.** Being a toddler is hard! Use emotional language, like "You are so mad that you cannot have a cookie" and "I see that you do not want to be buckled. You are upset. Being buckled keeps you safe." Validate your child's feelings--responding with love, reassurance, and acceptance.

### What should I NOT do?

- Label a child as a "biter"
- Bite back
- Get angry, yell, or shame
- Give too much attention after a child bites
- Force a child who bit to say sorry
- Punish a child who bites

Adapted from the National Association for the Education of Young Children



### Next Steps

- Track developmental milestones for your child's age
- Record when your child tries to bite
- Consult with your pediatrician or our Family Support Specialist by scanning the QR code.

**CHILD CARE ANSWERS**

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### What is the influenza (flu) virus?

Influenza ("the flu") is caused by a virus which infects the nose, throat, and lungs. According to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the flu is more dangerous than the common cold for children. Unlike the common cold, the flu can cause severe illness and life threatening complications in many people. Children under 5 who have the flu commonly need medical care.

Severe flu complications are most common in children younger than 2 years old. Flu season can begin as early as October and last as late as May.

### How can I tell if my child has a cold, or the flu?

Most people with the flu feel tired and have fever, headache, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, and sore muscles. Some people, especially children, may also have stomach problems and diarrhea. Because the flu and colds have similar symptoms, it can be difficult to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone. In general, the flu is worse than the common cold, and symptoms such as fever, body aches, extreme tiredness, and dry cough are more common and intense. People with colds are more likely to have a runny or stuffy nose. Colds generally do not result in serious health problems, such as pneumonia, bacterial infections, or hospitalizations.



For additional information, please visit [www.myflfamilies.com/childcare](http://www.myflfamilies.com/childcare) or contact your local licensing office.

This brochure was created by the Department of Children and Families in consultation with the Department of Health.

## THE FLU

### A Guide for Parents



# Epworth United Methodist Preschool

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## What should I do if my child gets sick?

Consult your doctor and make sure your child gets plenty of rest and drinks a lot of fluids. Never give aspirin or medicine that has aspirin in it to children or teenagers who may have the flu.

### Call or take your child to a doctor right away if your child:

- Has a high fever or fever that lasts a long time
- Has trouble breathing or breathes fast
- Has skin that looks blue
- Is not drinking enough
- Seems confused, will not wake up, does not want to be held, or has seizures (uncontrolled shaking)
- Gets better but then worse again
- Has other conditions (like heart or lung disease, diabetes) that get worse

## How can I protect my child from the flu?



A flu vaccine is the best way to protect against the flu. Because the flu virus changes year to year, annual vaccination against the flu is recommended. The CDC recommends that all children from the ages of 6 months up to their 19th birthday receive a flu vaccine every fall or winter (children receiving a vaccine for the first time require two doses). You also can protect your child by receiving a flu vaccine yourself.



## What can I do to prevent the spread of germs?

The main way that the flu spreads is in respiratory droplets from coughing and sneezing. This can happen when droplets from a cough or sneeze of an infected person are propelled through the air and infect someone nearby. Though much less frequent, the flu may also spread through indirect contact with contaminated hands and articles soiled with nose and throat secretions.

### To prevent the spread of germs:

- Wash hands often with soap and water.
- Cover mouth/nose during coughs and sneezes. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands.
- Limit contact with people who show signs of illness.
- Keep hands away from the face. Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.



## When should my child stay home from child care?

A person may be contagious and able to spread the virus from 1 day before showing symptoms to up to 5 days after getting sick. The time frame could be longer in children and in people who don't fight disease well (people with weakened immune systems). When sick, your child should stay at home to rest and to avoid giving the flu to other children and should not return to child care or other group settings until his or her temperature has been normal and has been sign and symptom free for a period of 24 hours.



During the 2009 legislative session, a new law was passed that requires child care facilities, family day care homes and large family child care homes provide parents with information detailing the causes, symptoms, and transmission of the influenza virus (the flu) every year during August and September.

For additional helpful information about the dangers of the flu and how to protect your child, visit: [www.cdc.gov/flu/](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/) or [www.immunizeflorida.org/](http://www.immunizeflorida.org/)

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## Parent's Role

### A parent's role in quality child care is vital:

- Inquire about the qualifications and experience of child care staff, as well as staff turnover.
- Know the facility's policies and procedures.
- Communicate directly with caregivers.
- Visit and observe the facility.
- Participate in special activities, meetings, and conferences.
- Talk to your child about their daily experiences in child care.
- Arrange alternate care for your child when they are sick.
- Familiarize yourself with the child care standards used to license the child care facility.

## Quality Child Care

Quality child care offers healthy, social, and educational experiences under qualified supervision in a safe, nurturing, and stimulating environment. Children in these settings participate in daily, age-appropriate activities that help develop essential skills, build independence and instill self-respect. When evaluating the quality of a child care setting, you should consider the facility's quality indicators related to activities, caregivers, and environment.

### Quality Activities

- Activities are children initiated and teacher facilitated.
- Activities include social exchanges with all children.

### Quality Caregivers

- Caregivers are friendly and eager to care for children.
- Caregivers accept family cultural and ethnic differences.

### Quality Environments

- Environments are clean, safe, inviting, comfortable, and child-friendly.
- Environments provide easy access to age-appropriate toys.

[www.myflfamilies.com/childcare](http://www.myflfamilies.com/childcare)



For additional information, please visit  
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# KNOW YOUR CHILD CARE FACILITY

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**Know Your Child Care Facility - General Requirements**

Every licensed child care facility must meet the minimum state child care licensing standards pursuant to s. 402.305, F.S., and ch. 65C-22, F.A.C., which include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Valid license posted for parents to see.
- All staff appropriately screened.
- Maintain appropriate transportation practices (if transportation is provided).
- Provide parents with written disciplinary and expulsion practices used by the facility.
- Provide access to the facility during normal hours of operation.
- Maintain minimum staff-to-child ratios.

**Health Related Requirements**

**Emergency procedures that include:**

- Posting Florida Abuse Hotline number along with other emergency numbers.
- Staff trained in first aid and pediatric cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) on the premises at all times.
- Fully stocked first aid kit.
- A working fire extinguisher and documented monthly fire drills with children and staff.
- Medication and hazardous materials are inaccessible and out of children's reach.

| <b>Ratios</b>       |                             |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Age of Child</b> | <b>Child: Teacher Ratio</b> |
| Infant              | 4:1                         |
| 1 year old          | 6:1                         |
| 2 year old          | 11:1                        |
| 3 year old          | 15:1                        |
| 4 year old          | 20:1                        |
| 5 year old and up   | 25:1                        |

**Training Requirements**

- 40-hour introductory child care training.
- 10-hour in-service training annually.
- 0.5 continuing education unit of approved training or 5 clock hours of training in early literacy and language development.
- Director Credential for all facility directors.

**Food and Nutrition**

Post a meal and snack menu that provides daily nutritional needs of the children (if meals are provided).

**Record Keeping**

**Maintain accurate records that include:**

- Children's health exam/immunization record.
- Medication records.
- Enrollment information.
- Personnel records.
- Daily attendance.
- Accidents and incidents.
- Parental permission for field trips and administration of medications.

**Physical Environment**

- Maintain sufficient usable indoor floor space for playing, working, and napping.
- Provide space that is clean and free of litter and other hazards.
- Provide sufficient outdoor play area.
- Maintain sufficient lighting and inside temperatures.
- Equipped with age and developmentally appropriate toys.
- Provide appropriate bathroom facilities and other furnishings.
- Provide isolation area for children who become ill.
- Practice proper hand washing, toileting, and diapering activities.



## Epworth United Methodist Preschool

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### Part Two

#### Parent/Guardian Information

### Drowning is the #1 Cause of Death Among Children Ages 1 to 4



#### Facts You Need to Know About Drowning

- The main cause of drowning can be directly traced to an action or inaction by a parent or adult. Good people can make small mistakes that have tragic consequences.
- Most parents of a drowning victim say, "I can't believe this happened to my child." They never realized how quickly a drowning incident could become their reality.
- Most children pulled from the water during a drowning incident are wearing regular clothes - not a swim suit.

### Simple Steps Save Lives

#### Supervision

- Supervising your children means eyes on them, and giving your full attention.
- Do not rely on responsible behavior from an older child or other adults.

#### Extra Layers of Protection *if Supervision Fails*

- Install door alarms to alert the household should a child possibly leave the home unsupervised.
- Use an "isolation" fence to separate pool area from the house and rest of the backyard.
- Use self-closing gates that self-latch.
- Clear the area around the fence for objects children could use to climb over.
- Learn to swim: parents and child.

#### Be Aware of All Water Hazards

- These include bathtubs, garden ponds, swimming pools, buckets/containers of water, canals, lakes, and beaches.

#### Know How to Respond to an Emergency

- Learn CPR.
- Remove the child from the water immediately.
- Call 9-1-1, begin CPR.

#### Talk to Your Child

- "Don't go near a pool or other water without an adult."
- "If you see someone in trouble in the water, don't jump in to help! Run, get an adult."
- "If you fall into a pool, turn in the water, find the wall, and climb out or yell for help." Practice this technique in the pool.

#### Take Action Now and Think, "I know this could happen to my child, and I will do whatever it takes to prevent it."

- Enroll your child (and yourself) in swim lessons.
- Learn CPR with rescue breaths.

To learn about available coupons for swim lessons, location of swim classes and CPR training, visit: [Water SMART Broward](#)



**EVACUATION ROUTE to FLETCHER PARK**

**Administration will stop traffic between  
intersection and crosswalk.**

**EPWORTH PRESCHOOL  
7651 Johnson St.  
Hollywood, FL 33024**

**77<sup>th</sup> Way**

**Johnson Street**

**Johnson Street**

**FLETCHER PARK  
7900 Johnson St.  
Pembroke Pines, FL 33024**