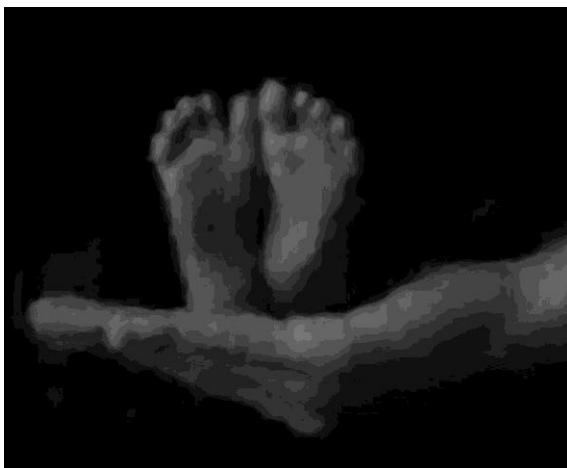


# PARENT HANDBOOK



**FIRST IMPRESSIONS CHILD CARE CENTER, LLC**

BECAUSE YOU NEVER GET A SECOND CHANCE TO MAKE A FIRST IMPRESSION IN A CHILD'S LIFE.

## WELCOME TO FIRST IMPRESSIONS CHILD CARE CENTER

Thank you for choosing First Impressions Child Care Center for your early care and education needs! By choosing First Impressions Child Care Center, you are giving your child the gift of high quality child care. It is gratifying to work with families who value quality care.

At First Impressions Child Care Center, it is our goal to treat our children with the love, care and dedication exemplified by our Lord, Jesus Christ. We strive every day to live up to His example of Lovingkindness and devotion.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

*1 Corinthians 4-7, 13*

This handbook will give you detailed information on the policies that help make us a high quality center. It also contains important dates that you will need throughout the year, so please, read through it carefully and keep it accessible. If you have any questions or concerns, please bring them to us right away. We value your opinion and hope you will share it with us so that we can better meet the needs of your family. We welcome your comments, suggestions, and feedback.

On behalf of First Impressions Child Care Center, thank you again for selecting our center. We hope you enjoy this unique journey from birth to 5!

Welcome!

Martin and Sharon Yeomans  
Owners

But Jesus said, "Let the children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these."

*Matthew 19:14 NTV*

## *Our Philosophy*

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of First Impressions Child Care Center is to help you build the character and creativity of your child through careful attention, solid support, positive reinforcement, and creative developmental growth. We strive to provide high quality care through the loving hearts and gentle hands of our caring and well-trained team of caregivers. We do this because we know that you never get a second chance to make a first impression in a child's life.

“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”

*Proverbs 22:6*

### **Statement of Philosophy**

At First Impressions Child Care Center it is our philosophy that the first impressions of life are the most important. Through the love of our Lord and Savior Jesus we work to provide a loving, nurturing and life-building foundation that gives each child the life skills that they will need in order to live up to the challenges of the modern world. We believe that each child is born with their own unique set of skills and gifts and that it is our responsibility as parents, caregivers and educators to discover these and encourage them on a daily basis.



## Administrative Information

### **Hours of Operation**

First Impressions Child Care Center's hours of operation are...

**Monday through Friday ..... 6:30am to 6:00pm**

Please note that the center does not open until 6:30 a.m. Teachers may arrive before this time to prepare their classrooms, but please wait in the parking lot until 6:30 a.m. before entering the building.

FICCC maintains a schedule that is conducive to learning. Due to the nature of disruption of the class and teachers' schedules **children must arrive at the center no later than 10:00 am**. Arrivals after 10:00 am will not be permitted. We appreciate your cooperation.

### **Full Time Enrollment:**

Children enrolled full time have care reserved for them between the hours of 6:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., Monday-Friday. You are welcome to use as much or as little of this time as you desire within the above scheduling guidelines. **Tuition is based on enrollment status, not the number of days or hours that your child is present.**

### **Part Time Enrollment:**

Part time enrollment is offered on an as-available basis. Prior to enrollment parents and the director will set up the child's daily schedule. Once your child is enrolled in a part time schedule there can be no changes made without director approval. If a child cannot attend his/her scheduled date tuition is still due. Children scheduled as part-time who attend on an unscheduled day will be billed the full-time weekly rate.

### **Annual Registration Fee:**

There is an annual, non-refundable registration fee (\$50 per child/\$75 per family) which must be paid upon enrollment and at each child's yearly anniversary. If your child drops out or is disenrolled for any reason, the registration fee must be paid again upon reentry.

### **Tuition**

First Impressions Child Care Center offers two choices for payment. Parents may pay tuition payments either weekly or monthly. Those paying monthly will receive a 5% discount. Families with two or more children enrolled at the same time will receive a 5% sibling discount on their overall tuition. Discounts do not apply to registration fees or other incidental expenses.

**Weekly Tuition:** Weekly tuition is due by the end of the day each Monday. Payments are considered over due if not paid by the end of business **Wednesday** (if paying weekly). A late fee of \$20 may be assessed on all overdue tuition payments.

**Monthly Tuition:** Monthly tuition is due by Monday of the first full week of that month. Monthly tuition is calculated by the number of Mondays in the month. Over due monthly tuition will not qualify for the 5% discount. Please note that monthly tuition is calculated by multiplying the number of MONDAYS in the month by the weekly rate and then applying the 5% discount.

A late fee of \$20 may be assessed on overdue tuition payments for each week that the tuition is overdue. There will be a \$35 fee for checks returned for any reason. After two returned checks, payment in cash may be required.

### **Rates Effective 10/1/2011**

<b>Rates for Infants:</b>	\$175 per week
<b>Rates for Toddlers (12-23 months)</b>	\$155 per week
<b>Rates for 2's &amp; 3's (not potty trained)</b>	\$145 per week
<b>Rates for Pre-K (3's and older, potty trained)</b>	\$140 per week

First Impressions Child Care Center reviews tuition rates periodically to determine if any rate adjustments are necessary. Parents will be notified at least 30 days in advance if there are to be any changes to tuition rates.

**Accounts in default:** In addition to the late fees detailed above, over due accounts may be assessed a penalty of 1.5% interest per month overdue until paid in full. Additionally, parents are liable for all collection and/or attorneys fees on overdue accounts. Accounts that remain unpaid after 30 days may be referred to professional collection and reported to the three major credit reporting agencies.

### **Change of Address/Phone Numbers**

If, at any time, your address or any phone numbers change, **please inform the administration and your child's teachers immediately.** It is extremely important for both teachers and the office to have your current information to be able to reach you at all times.

### **Dropping from Enrollment**

Parents are required to provide a **minimum of 14 days written notice** to the Director prior to removing their child from enrollment. **If you fail to provide the required 14 day notice, you will still be responsible for tuition for the final two weeks plus any unpaid balance due.** Unpaid balances may be assessed penalties and interest as described above.

### **Tuition Refunds**

There are no tuition refunds. However, a pro-rated rebate may be given to parents who provide at least two weeks notice before removing their child from enrollment and will be leaving before the end of a pre-paid month.

### **Meals and Nutrition**

Food is a priority at First Impressions Child Care Center, as good nutrition is vital to a child's development. Active children need good food! The center provides a hot lunch and an afternoon snack, all included in tuition. The menu will be posted for the week on the parent bulletin board. Please note the following...

- Lunch and a nutritious snack is included in your child's tuition.
- We may not be able to accommodate all food preferences. You are welcome to provide alternative meals for your child if you desire.
- Breakfast is not provided. You are welcome to bring your child's breakfast up to 8 am.
- Please let us know of any allergies.

## Closures

First Impressions Child Care Center recognizes the holidays listed below. Parents who have chosen our program understand that they are responsible for providing care for their children during these times. **Full tuition will be charged for weeks in which these holidays occur.**

### Scheduled Closures

New Year's Day Holiday	Good Friday
Memorial Day	Independence Day Holiday
Labor Day	Thanksgiving Holiday (Th & Fr.)
Christmas Holiday (2 Days)	

### Vacations/Breaks

After 6 months of continued paid enrollment, full time students will be granted one week of unpaid vacation time each year. The vacation time can be taken at any time with two weeks written notice. If vacation days are not taken within the calendar year earned they will not roll over. These days must be 5 consecutive days.

### Severe Weather / Closure Policy

If severe weather conditions arise, such as snow, ice on the road, local flooding or other acts of nature, the center may choose to close or reduce the hours of operation. **If the Memphis City Schools are closed or changing their schedule due to weather, FICCC will likely do the same.** In the event of a closure parents will be immediately notified to pick up their children. Additionally, closures and schedule changes will be updated via Twitter ([www.Twitter.com/FICCCPreschool](http://www.Twitter.com/FICCCPreschool)) and on the school website ([www.FICCC.com](http://www.FICCC.com)). When in doubt a phone call to the center to check on the status of operation is a good idea. There are no tuition credits or refunds for closures due to weather. Late fees will apply for children who have not been picked up within one hour of the closing time.

### Daily Sign-in, Sign-out

It is imperative that parents sign-in and sign-out your child each day. This is for your protection and for our record keeping. If your child is sick and will not be attending, please contact the center. No child will be released to a minor.

### Late pick up/ No pick up/Alternate Pick up

Please arrive early enough to pick up your child and exit the school and surrounding grounds by 6:00 p.m. If it is unavoidable to be late, please call the center (901-758-3141) to let them know when to expect you. If a child has not been picked up by 6:30 and the parent/guardian has not contacted the center, FICCC staff may contact the Memphis Police Department and/or DCS (the Department of Children's Services) so that the child can be placed in their care.

**LATE FEES:** If a parent arrives after 6:00 p.m., a late fee of \$1 per minute per child will be charged and must be paid in cash, in full at the time of pickup. **Repeated instances of late pick ups may be the grounds for disenrollment.**

## **Release of a Child**

Parents must list, in writing, the individuals who are authorized to pick up their child/ren with the office. Authorized pick-up individuals must be prepared to show proof of identity with a **photo ID**. School personnel may not release a child to anyone without **prior written** parent authorization and **proper ID**.

If someone is listed in your child's file as "Unauthorized to Pick-Up" and attempts to do so, staff members will use the following guidelines (not necessarily in this order):

- 1.) Ask person to speak with administrator on duty.
- 2.) Call parent(s).
- 3.) Call 911.
- 4.) Take child as far away from person attempting to pick up as possible.

If a person **threatens FICCC staff**, we are required to release the child and call 911. **If the person attempting pick-up is a legal parent or guardian, we are required to release the child unless we have a copy of a court order stating otherwise.**

## **Drugs and Alcohol**

The safety of your child is our highest priority. We respect the rights of parents to access their own child. However, if First Impressions Child Care Center staff feel a parent is in an unsafe condition to drive or otherwise leave with their child (such as under the influence of drugs or alcohol), the staff may suggest that the parent or the staff call another person on the approved list, a friend or relative, or a cab. The staff may also call 911 for assistance and to report the incident.

## **Behavior**

The policy for behavior at First Impressions Child Care Center is based upon developmentally appropriate practice and the core values of **caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility**. **"Do for others what you would like them to do for you. This is a summary of all that is taught in the law and the prophets. " *Matthew 7:12 (New Living Translation)*** These values shall be consistently encouraged. When children act out, assistance is given immediately in the form of loving redirection. Messages given are positive. Our staff is trained to handle acting out firmly but with compassion. Setting limits is an essential part of showing children that the world is a safe place.

Occasionally, we have a child who experiments with aggressive behavior (such as biting, scratching, hair pulling, etc.) or disruptive behavior (yelling, throwing things, failure to follow instruction) that we take very seriously. The ways in which we handle aggressive or disruptive behavior vary, as each child's reason for the behaviors may be very different. To help solve aggression issues, we work closely with the child at school and ask parents to work with the child at home.

Luckily, we rarely have to take drastic measures and usually aggressive/disruptive behavior situations are resolved through strong teacher/parent teamwork. If, however, a behavior fails to resolve, the child may be sent home immediately and, if the behavior is serious enough, could be subject to disenrollment.

## **Dismissal Policy**

**FICCC reserves the right to disenroll any child at any time when we believe that disenrollment is in the best interest of the child and/or the program.** Our first priority is to provide quality care and early education for all children enrolled in our program but on rare occasions there may be a need to remove a child from enrollment. Some of the reasons for involuntary dismissal might include:

- Failure to adapt - Most children adapt to a new program within a few weeks. If a child fails to adapt to our program, even though an effort has been made by parents and the staff to integrate him/her into the program, the child may be disenrolled so that his or her parents can find alternate care for their child.
- Aggressive/disruptive behavior - If a child is aggressive, or hurtful to others or if a child's behavior is disruptive to the good order of the classroom FICCC will make every attempt to teach and train the child to respect others and to behave appropriately. If these behaviors continue the child may be disenrolled at the discretion of the center.
- Failure to pay tuition – FICCC reserves the right to immediately remove any child from enrollment whose tuition is not paid per facility policies.
- Abusive/disruptive behavior by parents - FICCC reserves the right to disenroll any child whose parent behaves in a manner that is destructive, disruptive, abusive, or malicious through their statements or actions toward the staff, their own child or other parents/children in the center.
- Irreconcilable differences – Every parent has expectations regarding the care and education of their child. If it occurs that FICCC is unable to meet a parent's expectations FICCC reserves the right to disenroll the child in order to allow the parents to find an environment that better meets their needs.

## **Curriculum**

At First Impressions Child Care Center we believe that children will follow their own inclinations and rhythms throughout the day when provided with a gently structured schedule. Meals, naps, and circle time will happen at the same time every day but the rest is up to your child and his/her teacher. Together they will choose from a wide range of activities such as music, art, free play, math, science and the natural world, outdoor play, drama, and games that support fine and gross motor skills as well as social communication and speech and language skills. While loving care is a constant throughout all children's development at First Impressions Child Care Center, as they grow children are offered more formal challenges in their education. Literacy and problem solving are particularly emphasized.

We believe that learning is best accomplished in an environment that encourages hands-on experience through activity and play. Your child's teacher will provide developmentally appropriate challenges and support your child in exploring the world. The curriculum enhances each child's inherent as well as learned strengths. Healthy self-esteem and self-knowledge are a large part of what our staff teaches.

Kindergarten readiness is a goal for each child in our pre-school age program. One of the benefits of small class sizes, low ratios, and primary care giving is that teachers can continually monitor each child's development, support his/her strengths and identify his/her challenging areas. Primary care giving is an essential part of assessing and ensuring every child's readiness for Kindergarten. With each child receiving this kind of individual attention we are preparing them for successful life-long learning.

In addition to traditional curriculum First Impressions offers a variety of unique, age-appropriate education opportunities offered by outside parties. These may include...

- Special Music education
- Early Computer education
- Second Language education

These services may be included in your tuition or offered at additional cost. See the director for details.

## **Health and Safety Information**

### **Health**

Your child's health is of utmost importance to us. Upon enrollment, you must complete a health form and have it signed by your pediatrician. Please obtain a medical form from the office before your child's doctor appointment and return the completed form, signed by your child's doctor. Parents are required to notify the school of any changes to a child's health that may affect them or others.

### **Immunization Records**

For each child enrolled, we are required by the State to maintain accurate, up to date, immunization records. Immunization records are required prior to your child's first day of enrollment (unless the child is less than 8 weeks old) and need to be updated whenever your child receives a new immunization.

### **Illness Policy**

Each day, upon arrival, an informal health check of your child will be done. It is very important to us that each child be healthy and happy at school. We cannot admit or retain in care, any child whom:

- A. Is diagnosed as having a contagious disease only upon written instructions of a licensed physician or certified health care provider and the health department.
- B. Has one of the following symptoms, or combination of symptoms of illness within the past 24 hours:
  - Fever over 101.0 Fahrenheit
  - Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool per day)
  - Vomiting in the past 24 hours
  - Nausea or severe stomach cramps
  - Severe cough
  - Unusual yellow color to skin or eyes
  - Draining eye (pinkeye or sinus infection)
  - Skin or eye lesions or rashes that are severe, weeping or puss filled
  - Difficulty breathing or wheezing
  - Complaints of severe pain
  - If a child is notably tired and / or irritable and needing one on one care
  - Non-clear discharge coming from the nose.

If your child has exhibited any of the symptoms above you **must** keep your child at home for a minimum of 24 hours, **even if your pediatrician has given authorization for your child to return**. If your child exhibits these symptoms at the center we will contact you immediately. **You must pick your child up within one hour of notification**. This helps us keep all of the children healthier.

### **Administering Medication**

All prescription and non-prescription medication given to children at school require a written authorization from your health care provider, and/or parent written consent. This is a child care licensing requirement. Medication authorization forms are available in the director's office.

The instructions from your health care provider must include information regarding the medication, reason for the medication, and the specific time of administration. Medications must be kept in the original bottle or container. Prescription medications must contain the original pharmacy label that lists; the child's name, the prescribing practitioner's name, the pharmacy name and telephone number, the date the prescription was filled, expiration date of the medication, dosage, how often to give the medication, and the length of time the medication is to be given.

Over the counter medication must be kept in the originally labeled container and be labeled with the child's first and last name.

### **Fire and Emergency Drills**

We have a periodic fire evacuation drill that involves each child and staff member at the center. We also periodically practice procedures for other natural disasters.

### **Emergency Medical Care**

In case of accidental injury, we will make every attempt to contact a parent or guardian. In the event that we cannot reach a responsible party, your child's doctor will be called. If necessary, we will also call an ambulance or EMT. Until arrival of a parent or trained medical personnel, the director or designated director will make all decisions concerning your child. You are responsible for any and all medical expenses that may be incurred. First Impressions Child Care Center, LLC cannot enroll any child whose parents do not sign a written consent form agreeing to this.

### **Injuries**

Due to the nature of young children, injuries occur within the blink of an eye. Even though every effort is made to avoid injuries, sometimes they still happen. In case of an injury, your child will be given immediate attention by one of his/her teachers including first aid if necessary. If an injury is significant, a note will be made on the child's daily sheet and FICCC staff may contact parents.

### **Miscellaneous**

#### **Visitors**

We love visitors! Parents are always welcome to visit the school. All visitors must check in with the administration. We encourage parents to visit their children at school and to bring relatives and friends when possible.

#### **Clothing and Footwear Policy**

We ask that parents provide appropriate play clothing and good support shoes on their children daily. Clothing should be comfortable, sturdy and appropriately fitted. As a child plays, learns to feed themselves, etc., it is natural that their clothing might be damaged or become stained with food, paint, ink, grass, etc. We cannot assure that your child's clothes will not be stained or otherwise damaged. Please choose your child's clothing accordingly.

Children are running, jumping and developing their walking skills so it is very important that they have proper support and protection. We recommend lace-up or Velcro tennis or other athletic-style shoes. Sandals and crocs are not appropriate footwear for this environment. We have seen that when children fail to have appropriate footwear, this can hinder gait development and/or cause undue injuries (falls, stumped toes, etc). **Please refrain from putting on crocs or other types of sandals.** Your cooperation in this is greatly appreciated.

### **Parking**

**Ample parking is available. Please do not park in the handicapped parking spaces at the front door of the facility.** Please turn off your car and lock your car when picking up/dropping off your child. Please do not leave small children unattended in your vehicle when picking up/dropping off your child. We ask that you please take your child by the hand when in the parking lot and please avoid using cell phones while driving in the parking lot. Thank you for being safe.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

First Impressions Child Care Center does not discriminate against personnel, clients, potential clients, volunteers, or any person or group on any basis, including race, creed, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, socioeconomic status, marital status, gender or mental or physical disability. We celebrate the diversity that makes our community unique.

### **Quality Assurance and Evaluation**

First Impressions Child Care Center uses a variety of measurement tools to evaluate our program on a regular basis. First Impressions Child Care Center is licensed by the State of Tennessee Department of Human Services and undergoes license renewal inspection to ensure continual compliance with all regulations. An annual Parent Questionnaire is used to measure the level of satisfaction of our customers. We have a licensed nurse on staff who works hard to improve the quality of care, safety, and general wellness of the children and staff.

### **Children with Special Needs**

First Impressions Child Care Center is inclusive and makes every attempt to reasonably accommodate any child based on whatever their special need may be. Whenever possible First Impressions Child Care Center will help create and implement an individual education plan for any child who needs extra support and attention for developmental growth. Teachers will work closely with parents, and, at the parent's request, with any other professionals who may be involved with the child to recognize and address any special needs that exist or may become evident. Our goal is to work together to create thoughtful approaches that are in the best interest of the child.

### **Therapy**

At times students may be scheduled to Behavioral, Physical, Occupational or Speech Therapy. First Impressions Child Care Center will make every effort to accommodate therapists and to make time and space available for treatments. If your child receives therapy, please have the therapist contact the center prior to treatment so that we can schedule treatment times that are most appropriate for the student as well as their classmates. Please be aware that First Impressions is not responsible for incidents, accidents, injuries or other problems that may occur during or as a result of therapy treatment.

### **Toys from Home/ Food in the Classroom**

Please do not allow your child to bring toys (other than transitional and nap toys) or other valuables into the classroom. FICCC is not responsible for toys or other articles that are brought to the center.

### **Birthdays**

We enjoy celebrating the children's birthdays and welcome you to come join the party! Please talk to your child's teachers at least a week in advance if you would like to provide favors or treats for the children. **We sometimes have children enrolled who have serious food allergies. Please consult your child's teacher when making food choices.**

### **Toilet Training**

To avoid the trauma of having multiple "accidents" at school, we ask parents to begin potty training at home when their children begin to show readiness. **Once consistent success is experienced at home, we will begin working with the children at school.** We will, of course, encourage children who are showing interest to try using the potty at school. Our goal is to meet the specific needs of each child, helping create a non-pressured transition into potty training.

### **Child Abuse Mandatory Reporting**

Each person who is employed at a State Certified Child Care Center, such as ours, is considered a mandatory child abuse reporter. This means that if we have reason to suspect abuse or mistreatment or are told by a child that they have been abused in any way, we are required by law to call and report this to DHS. We, as a staff, have training in what steps/measures should be taken in such a situation.

Parents should understand that filing a report is considered a request for an assessment of the concern. A report does not establish fact, but rather is the beginning of a helping process for children and families. If you have any questions about this policy, please contact the center director or the local Department of Human Resources.

## **Child Care: What to Expect**

### **Adjusting to Child Care**

Starting at a new center can be a stressful experience for both parents and children. New faces, routines, expectations, activities, and foods are just a few adjustments that present themselves. We want to work closely with each family to make the transition to the center a smooth, happy one.

### **Transitional Period**

Whenever possible, we ask each family to participate in a transitional period, which is helpful in adjusting to the new center. A week to two weeks before your child's start date we ask that you schedule a visit to your child's classroom with your child. This brief visit allows your child to explore the classroom and to get a sense of the daily routine. It also allows you to start to get to know the teachers by asking them questions about the classroom and giving them important information about your child.

### **Other Helpful Suggestions**

You can help your child become familiar with the center by talking with him/her about the teachers and activities in a positive way. If he/she senses that you have confidence in the staff it will help him/her feel more comfortable with this new situation. Sometimes, even when the best preparations have been made, young children will cry when they experience a separation from their parents. Our staff always comforts a child until they are ready to join in. Remember you are welcome to call the teachers any time during the school day to check on your child.

### **The First Day**

#### **What to Bring:**

When you come to School on your child's first day, please bring the following:

- 1.) **All of the paperwork given to you at the pre-enrollment meeting.** Please stop by the office to drop off your completed paperwork. The State requires that we have a complete file on each child *as soon as they start*.
- 2.) **Clothing.** Your child will sometimes be participating in activities that get messy! Please make sure your child is dressed in clothes that can survive activities such as finger-painting. Your child's class will enjoy the outdoors. Please make sure your child has seasonably appropriate clothing. Also, please provide your child with extra clothing, including shirts, pants, underwear, and socks and label them with your child's name. (Two sets for infants)
- 3.) **Personal Items.** Please mark all belongings and do not send valuables or toys from home with your child. To ease the transition it is helpful to bring a blanket or soft nap lovey from home that your child can keep in his/her cubbie and also use at naptime
- 4.) **Infant/toddler supplies.** Parents are required to supply the necessary formula, diapers and baby wipes for their child/ren. For children (infants) on jar baby food, an ample amount supply needs to be brought and labeled with the child's name. Please do not leave any item with the label "keep out of reach of children" in your child's cubby or diaper bag.