

Early Explorer's through Willard Community Center

Preschool Parent Handbook

A guide for families whose children are enrolled in Willard Community Center's Early Childhood Programs.

Administered by the Willard Community Center Board of Directors and staff.

Revised in 2026



Thank you to all of our supporters!



Preschool Location & Hours of Operation

(Open Monday- Friday 6:30am-6:00pm)

www.willardcommunitycenter.org

Located at 1245 S. Folsom Lincoln, Nebraska 68522

Telephone: 402-475-0805

For Preschool: Press 2

To reach reception: Press 3 for General Information

For Administration: Press 1

What the Agency Does

The Willard Community Center is a non-profit agency receiving funding from United Way, Private and Federal funding, Lincoln Littles, and Program Service Fees. Our programming emphasizes educational enrichment, school-age child care, and adult services.

Willard Community Center Offers

Neighborhood-based services include licensed childcare for 6 weeks through 8th-grade children: full time Infant and Toddler care, full and part-time Preschool for ages 3-5, before and after school care for Roper Elementary School, as well as being the lead agency for the Lakeview Community Learning Center at Lakeview Elementary, and all-day summer programming. Self-help groups, scout groups, licensed Bingo, neighborhood Assoc., volunteer opportunities, and services for adults and senior citizens bring all ages into the Center. Agency goals include continuing to demonstrate excellence in youth programming, identifying the needs of specific ethnic groups, and forming partnerships with other organizations.

Mission Statement

We help area residents grow, connect, & contribute to our community.

Program Statement

Willard Community Center's program policies are non-discriminatory regarding race, color, national origin, religion, gender, or children with disabilities or special needs. Children are served according to the Program's ability to meet their special needs. Willard Community Center is concerned with the child's strong relationship with his or her family. We encourage parents to visit our program during our hours of operation.

Programs Expectations

Willard Community Center is licensed by the State of Nebraska and committed to providing a positive experience for children. The goal for all of the programs is to provide, under the guidance of trained personnel, the opportunity for a child to develop;

- ❖ Physically, through gross motor and fine motor skills.
- ❖ Emotionally, through recognition of their feelings and those of others.
- ❖ Socially, through the encouragement of cooperative play with other children.
- ❖ Intellectually, through activities that stimulate cognitive skills.

Curriculum

Willard Community Center's head teaching staff incorporate a letter of the week and weekly themes into their lesson plans. In addition to theme planning, the teachers also reference 'The Creative Curriculum' and 'Second Step', for additional studies and learning strategies. The preschool classroom environment is set up to include interest areas such as blocks, dramatic play, art, library, science, a sensory table, music and movement, and table activities targeting fine motor, math, and writing. The daily schedule provides opportunities for children to choose areas they enjoy and spend time in each area daily. There is a balance of active and quiet play, as well as large and small group experiences. Teacher-directed learning experiences occur in small groups. The curriculum stresses an anti-bias perspective in which children of all races and religions can grow and learn in an environment that will broaden their awareness and natural acceptance of diverse cultural heritages.

Assessments

Willard Community Center will assess your child's cognitive and physical abilities using the ASQ-3 Ages and Stages assessment tool and other screenings. The ASQ questionnaire and the assessment will be completed within the first 90 days of your child's enrollment and again in the spring before transitioning into their next level of education. Data regarding children's progress will be shared with each family. If there are areas of concern, or you simply would like to be given a progress report, you can request a copy of the assessment at any point during the year. Data from the assessments are to support family engagement and are used to ensure accountability and support progress toward outcomes. To see the child's continued progress, the teaching staff may also complete informal assessments throughout the year, which you will also find in your child's portfolio.

- 1. Select the questionnaire:** Willard's lead teacher will select the questionnaire that matches the child's age.
- 2. Score the questionnaire:** Then, complete the questionnaire alongside the child while completing activities one-on-one. Compare the child's scores to the cutoff points listed on the scoring sheet.
- 3. Periodic Review:** The teaching staff will review child assessments for data collection to provide continuous program improvement.
- 4. Individual & Group Development:** If the scoring results show that a child may need additional help in certain areas or could benefit from receiving additional resources. The lead teacher will then communicate the screening results to the child's parents. If the teacher conducts the assessments and the results show that the whole group needs additional help in communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem-solving, and personal-social, the teacher will then plan additional classroom activities to help target the classroom growth and development in this area. A letter will be sent home to each parent and guardian, instructing the parents with information about everyday occurrences and activities their children can be doing at home to help with their progress. Resources may be suggested for follow-up, monitoring, or further assessment if progress is not made. All families will be provided with a copy of the questionnaire and scoring sheet in their child's portfolio at the end of the year upon graduation from the program.
- 5. Share activities with parents:** Willard's staff will encourage the child's development by sharing fun, fast learning activities to the families at home.
- 6. Sharing Assessment Scores & documents with the transitioning grade level:** At the end of the school year, Willard's Toddler teacher will share your child's assessment scores with Willard's Preschool teacher; to provide your child with the best support possible when entering into a higher level of education. If your child is graduating from Preschool and will be entering Kindergarten, you may ask Willard's teaching staff for additional copies of the scored assessments so that you can provide those copies to your child's kindergarten teacher.

Calendars/Newsletters

A monthly calendar indicating the general themes and special notes will be distributed each month. This calendar is the main communication tool to indicate items to be brought to school, special days, etc. Parent/Teacher conference days, non-school days, and holidays will also be listed on the calendar. We encourage parents/guardians to review the calendars with their children. Your children will enjoy preparing for and anticipating the preschool themes and planned activities.

Sample of Daily Schedule (Preschool schedules may vary based on weather and other demands.)

6:30-8:45: Arrival

Children put away backpacks, lunches, wash hands, answer the question of the day, and write their names. The

remaining time prior to circle time is free choice.

8:50: Clean up for Circle Time

9:00-9:30: Circle Time

Days of the week, weather, Book & Discussion, Group Activity

9:30: Snack

9:30-10:30: Free Choice

10:45: Literacy Practice

11:00-11:45: Outside/ Large Motor Activities

When they come inside, the children must wash their hands.

11:50-12:00: Circle Time

(songs, story, or group game)

12:00: Lunch

12:30-3:00: Quiet Time

3:10-3:30: Circle Time

Book & Discussion, discuss PM activities

3:30: Snack

3:30-4:30: Free Play

4:30-5:30 Outside/Large Motor Cleanup/Goodbye

Other Communication

In addition to the calendar, there will be a bulletin board for posting announcements; typically, the parent communication board is available for you to view at the entrance into the classroom. It is particularly important to check this bulletin board for last-minute changes in the schedule or other information. If you drive other children in a carpool, please pass the information on to the other parents. Frequently the teaching staff will put letters to the parents in the child's cubby. In addition, if you have opted in to receive emails on your child's enrollment form, please check your inbox for updates from staff and administration.

Physical Activity, Outdoor Play & Screen Time

- Our staff often encourages children to be active and often joins children in active play.
- We do not withhold active play time (for longer than 5 minutes) for children who misbehave.
- Our staff incorporates physical activity into classroom routines, transitions, and planned activities.
- A variety of outdoor activities are incorporated into our outdoor play and learning time, such as free play, structured learning opportunities, seasonal outdoor activities, and outdoor field trips.
- We have an open area for outdoor games, activities, and events that is large enough for children to run around safely.
- Portable play equipment is always available to children during active outdoor playtime.
- We provide fixed play equipment (tunnels, climbing, and balancing equipment).
- To ensure safe sun exposure, we provide sunscreen for the children and will apply it when needed.
- When television and videos are shown to children, the programming is always educational and commercial-free.
- When screen time is offered, children are always allowed to do an alternate activity.
- Screen time is rarely used as a reward - unless it is used for a class party.
- Screen time is NOT used as a way to manage challenging behaviors.
- When screen time is offered, teachers talk to children about what they see and learn.

Menus

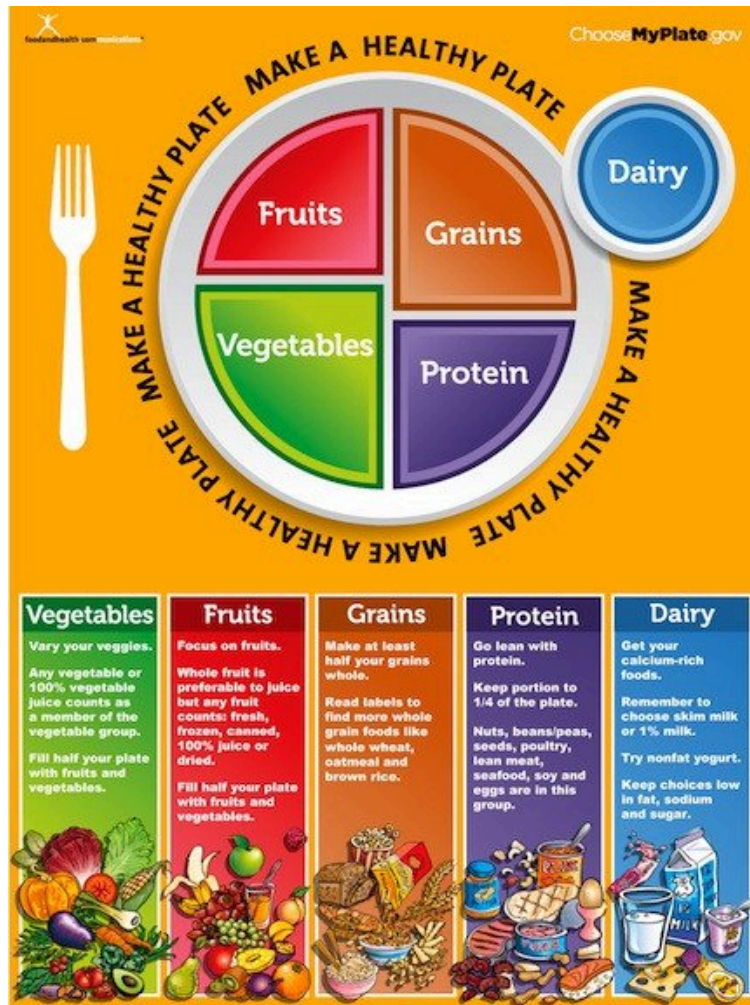
Willard Community Center requires that you provide your child's lunch each day they attend the program. We encourage our families to pack a nutritional meal to include all food groups from the My Plate chart. Please try to refrain from packing sugary treats if at all possible. There is a microwave and refrigerator available in the classrooms for your convenience. Willard Community Center will provide your child with two snacks each day; a menu will be available for your viewing on the parent board. If your child has allergies to the snacks provided on any day, we will have alternative options.

Nutrition

- We offer fruit three times per week. We offer fresh, frozen, or canned fruit. If the fruit is canned, it will be in juice or water, not syrup.
- We offer vegetables three times per week.
- We offer to skim/fat-free milk-never flavored milk.
- When outdoors, we make sure drinking water is visibly available for children to be able to serve themselves.
- We limit the amount of 100% juice served to once or less per week. We never offer sugary drinks, such as Soda, Kool-aid, Lemonade, sports drinks, etc.
- Children always choose if they want a snack and will serve most or all foods themselves.
- Teachers and staff are role models by eating healthy foods at mealtimes.
- We provide visible support for promoting healthy eating in the classrooms and common areas through posters,

pictures, books, and family handouts.

- There are no soda or vending machines onsite. Teachers and staff who may be drinking soda will drink through a cup that is not seen through and does not contain a drink label.
- Teachers always praise children for trying new or less preferred foods.
- Teachers never require that children sit at the table until they clean their plates.
- Teachers never use food to calm upset children or to encourage appropriate behavior.
- Teachers incorporate planned nutrition education into the classroom routines at least once per week. Teachers and staff are given resources for professional development on nutrition at least two times per year.
- Families are offered educational resources on nutrition, physical activity, and screen time at least two times per year.



Family Engagement

Star of the week

Each child will have a special week. Your child's teacher will send home an art supply bag and a poster for you and your child to decorate and fill out together over a weekend. The following Monday/business day, your child will be celebrated and given the chance to share their poster with their classmates. The poster will be hung up for the remainder of the week.

Family Photo

Willard Community Center teaching staff would appreciate you bringing a family picture to display in the classroom. This helps the children when missing home and encourages them to converse with each other about their families.

Classroom Opportunities

Throughout the year, there will be family engagement opportunities that the teacher writes home about, such as holiday programs, classroom picnics, field trips, end of the year celebration, & graduation. There will be participation opportunities regarding certain studies being taught in the classroom; the teacher may invite families into the program for participation during those unique times.

Parents are always welcome in the classroom. There are a variety of ways you can become involved in the classroom: • Read a story to children • Share family traditions • Sing a song/ play instruments/teach a traditional dance • Help with art activities • Help with walking adventures around the school • Show children how to use tools • Support your child's learning goals at home • Share family recipes • Help with cooking activities • Eat lunch or snack with your child.

Language

If you and your child do not primarily speak English, Willard Community Center and its staff will do their best to accommodate your home language. We will greet your child each morning in both English and your home language, and in addition, Willard will have language labels on classroom materials. During circle time, we will offer your home language in conjunction with English; when discussing things like days of the week, months of the year, colors, etc. Suppose you have cultural or ethnic materials to share in our classrooms, such as posters, play equipment, or learning materials. In that case, we will include those in our classroom display, so all children can learn together.

Interpreters

If you have any questions and need an interpreter, please contact Willards Community Center Administration. We will do our best to accommodate your needs.

Family Feedback

Willard community center is always looking for feedback about our programs. We love to hear about your child's progress and how you feel we are doing. Each year we will ask you to fill out an anonymous online survey to tell us about our strengths and weaknesses. We feel this is important to our program to continue to help area children succeed in their educational growth.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Willard Community Center's teaching staff are not required to hold parent-teacher conferences. However, if Willard's teaching staff feels that your child may benefit from additional resources or help regarding learning, speech, behavior or other, you may receive a request from your child's teacher to have a conference. If you feel, as the parent, that it is necessary to meet, please never hesitate to reach out to the teacher or administration.

IEP/IFSP

If your child has an IEP or IFSP within LPS or another organization, please be sure to allow communication by signing a permission slip for Willard to reach out to the other party and participate in IEP agendas and meetings. It is important to your child's development and learning curve to have all the necessary parties involved. The more Willard Community Center's teaching staff are involved, the more we can be in unison with the strategies and techniques built into your child's plan.

What is an IEP? Individualized Education Program. Documentation or agenda of services needed to meet a child's individual learning needs, provided to the family by a certified teacher.

What is IFSP? Individual Family Service Plan. If your child is found to be eligible for early intervention, you and your child's teacher will work as a team to develop a plan. As a team, you will create an agenda of early intervention services that work best for your child and family.

Field Trips

Willard Community Center will, on occasion, plan field trips during the year. Willard will send home a letter detailing what is planned and a permission slip; you must sign off on the permission slip for your child to participate. If we do not have your permission to take your child on a field trip, you must make other arrangements for your child when we are absent, as there will be no staff available during specified field trip times at Willard.

There will be a section on your child's enrollment form that you must sign at the beginning of summer authorizing the field trips. All field trips scheduled during the year or the summer are on a strict schedule.

If your child is not in attendance when we are scheduled to leave for the field trip, your child will not be able to attend. For liability purposes, you will not be able to drop your child off at the field trip location.

Willard's staff have taken the Safe Kids Transportation training. Children will be transported in Willard Community Center vans or an employee's approved vehicle. Willard will provide car seats and booster seats. If your child's car seat is preferred, you are welcome to bring it to the center.

If a parent/guardian or family member, 18 years or older, would like to volunteer their time to support and help during any field trip, please see an administrator fill out the appropriate paperwork and complete background checks.

Playground

The playground used by Willard Community Center is not located on our property but is within a short walking distance. Upon your child's first day in his/her program, the staff will ask you to sign a permission slip so your child can participate in outdoor activities at the designated playground.

Substitute Teacher

Should your child's teacher be out sick or on vacation, the teacher's assistant or one of Willard's administrators will substitute in your child's classroom. Willard Community Center's staff and administration stay current with annual training, have completed all required background checks, and are certified by DHHS and Nebraska state licensing regulations to teach your children.

Transitioning Classrooms

Willard Community Center's Early Childhood Programs operate with Lincoln Public Schools. Our first and last day of class sessions will mirror the LPS calendar. Willard Community Center is open for summer sessions. You must fill out a new enrollment form to keep your child enrolled in the summer program. Summer enrollment forms will be available to families no later than February 28. If your child is in the Toddler program, you will not transition at this time and will only move on to Willard's Preschool program when a new enrollment form is received for the next school year.

Change of Teacher

Should Willard Community Center hire a new lead teacher for either program, there will be an open house opportunity for you

and your child(ren) to 'Meet the Teacher'. The teacher hired in the lead teaching position will also have a biography available.

Notifying Willard Staff of Changes

It is important to notify the teachers of any changes that may affect your child's temperament or emotional state, such as a move to a new home, a new baby, divorce, marriage, or death in the family. Also, please notify the teachers of any changes in the child's records, such as a change of address, phone number, immunizations, etc.

Parent Responsibilities

Communication between home and center must be ongoing to allow us to provide the best care possible. Notes, phone calls, and daily contacts are encouraged to keep all of us attuned to what is going on in our child's life. Please take time to read any notes that we may send home with your child.

If a misunderstanding should occur, please talk first with the staff member involved, who will do his/her part to resolve any problems. If your concern remains unresolved, please contact the child care director. Conferences will be scheduled as needed, as every effort will be made to resolve your difficulty.

Discipline Philosophy

To the Willard Community Center Staff, the word discipline means teaching appropriate behaviors. We work to help each child become self-disciplined by teaching how his/her behavior affects others. There are consistent limits based on common-sense rules appropriate to the child's age.

Children learn to feel good about themselves and others in a secure and manageable environment. They learn to resolve problems by using words. While it is okay to feel angry and frustrated, hitting and breaking things is not ok. Children are never humiliated, spanked, or punished harshly, but are given sincere, positive comments on their behavior. If necessary, a child is given time away from the group to gain control of behavior. We treat children as we expect them to treat others with dignity and respect.

Behavior

If a child's behavior cannot be addressed in the context of his/her classroom environment, we will help you with the resources to seek out experts, including mental health consultants and Special Education Service Providers, to help him/her be successful. We intend to meet the needs of every child through individualization and full inclusion in a program. Suppose behaviors do not improve or become a liability to other enrolled children and staff in our program. In that case, the administration has the right to refuse care to your child and terminate their enrollment.

Harmful Behavior policy

Children may receive up to three occurrences before being removed from the program for harmful or violent behavior towards another child or staff member. Removal may be deemed immediate, depending on the severity. Safety comes first for all involved in the program.

Willard's administration and staff will work with the family to find ways to be proactive and reduce harmful behavior after the first and second occurrence.

1st Occurrence: Call the parent/guardian and be sent home for the remainder of the day and the following day.

2nd Occurrence: Call the parent/guardian and be sent home for the remainder of the day and the following day.

*If there is more than one occurrence in the same week, on the 2nd occurrence, the child will be required to be kept home for

the remainder of the week. Tuition will still be due regardless of the number of days attended in that week.

3rd Occurrence: Call the parent/guardian. The child must be picked up along with their belongings. The child will not be able to return to the program. * See Exclusion policy

Harmful behavior to themselves, peers, or Willard Staff may include but is not limited to:

- Biting
- Kicking
- Hitting/Punching
- Scratching
- Pulling hair
- Throwing chairs
- Using objects to harm others
- Running out of room/building or away from the playground

Finding a Solution

We cannot be one-on-one with children because of the number of children we serve. Our goal is to guide children into becoming happy, responsible, cooperative participants in this program through positive, non-threatening techniques. We strive to increase respect for themselves by guiding them to become responsible for their actions and to help them grow in their respect for the rights and feelings of other people. Our main objective is to promote the safety and welfare of all children in our program.

Policy for Child to Rejoin a Program After Expulsion Due to Inappropriate Behaviors: (Approved by Willard Board of Directors March 2021)

1. If a child is removed from a program due to egregious sexual offenses or physical violence, they will not be eligible to participate in any Willard Community Center programs indefinitely.
2. If a child is removed from a program due to other disciplinary issues, the child will not be allowed to apply to be a part of any Willard Community Center programs for at least 1 year after expulsion.
3. If the family/child meets all expectations and is authorized to join a program, the child will be on a 6 month probation period.
4. In order for consideration of reinstatement, the parent will supply the Program Director or designee with the following: a letter asking for reinstatement, a written statement from a professional stating the child's progress toward rehabilitation (i.e., Psychologist, Psychiatrist, School Principal) and any information pertaining to an IEP for the child.
5. If, during the 6-month probationary period, the child exhibits behaviors that warrant expulsion, the child will be removed from the program and will not be allowed to reapply again.
6. In order for the child to continue to be part of the Willard program, all fees associated with the child's attendance must be paid on time. If payments are not received by the due date, the probationary period will end, and the child will not be able to attend. (This also includes keeping up-to-date subsidy authorizations for families who qualify for state assistance.)

Policy on Violent Child Behavior & Police Involvement

Purpose:

This policy establishes procedures for addressing instances of violent behavior by a child that pose a risk to themselves, staff, peers, or property. The goal is to ensure the safety of all individuals while providing clear guidelines on when law enforcement and parents/guardians will be contacted.

Scope:

This policy applies to all students enrolled at Willard to align with the safety protocols.

Procedures:

1. Emergency Response:
 - If a child exhibits violent behavior that endangers themselves, staff, or peers, or causes significant property destruction, staff will take immediate action to ensure safety.
 - This may include evacuating the classroom or designated area to prevent harm.
2. Parent/Guardian Notification, Immediate Pick-Up, and Police Involvement:
 - Parents/guardians will be contacted immediately when their child's behavior necessitates classroom evacuation, results in the destruction of Willard or LPS property, or poses a threat to themselves or others.
 - Parents/guardians or an authorized escort must promptly pick up their child and advise Willard Community Center of the timeframe on when the escort will arrive.
 - If the authorized escort does not pick up during the timeframe, we will call a second time to confirm that an authorized escort is on their way.
 - If the authorized escort does not answer their phone or the time commitment given is not followed, we may reach out to authorities.
 - A parent will be notified before police involvement occurs.
3. Police Involvement:
 - Law enforcement will be called when:
 - A child's behavior presents an immediate and serious safety threat to themselves or others.
 - Efforts to de-escalate the situation have been unsuccessful, and additional intervention is necessary.
 - There is significant destruction of property, creating a hazardous environment.
 - The authorized escort does not arrive during the time commitment if the behavior is ongoing.
 - Police involvement will be documented, and parents/guardians will be informed of any legal implications.
4. Follow-Up Procedures & Notifications
 - Upon pick-up, parents/guardians may be required to attend a meeting with the administration to discuss support strategies and a re-entry plan.
 - If repeated violent incidents occur, the child may be expelled from the program.
 - Depending on the severity of the incident, expulsion may occur immediately.
 - Per the expulsion policy, a child may not reenter the program for at least a year after expulsion. Documentation from two professionals regarding the child's behavior improvement is required for a child to be readmitted.
 - Willard's Board of Directors and DHHS will be notified immediately following any incident.

Review & Compliance:

- This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure alignment with best practices and legal requirements.
- Staff will receive training on crisis intervention and de-escalation techniques to manage situations effectively.
- As a governance policy, any changes made will need to be board-approved.

By adhering to this policy, Willard prioritizes the safety and well-being of all students and staff while maintaining a structured and supportive learning environment.

Inclement Weather

- ❖ In inclement weather/natural disasters, listen to the radio or watch TV for school closing news. **WE CLOSE WHEN LINCOLN PUBLIC SCHOOLS CLOSE.** If a weather day occurs during a school break, Willard will close if parochial, Universities, or other public offices close.

Fire/Tornado

An emergency plan is in place, and practice drills are conducted following licensing standards. Parents are encouraged to review that information with center staff. If the children are in their safe place during a tornado warning, Parents/caregivers need to call the site’s phone number. Children may be released to parents or an authorized person, or parents can wait in our safe area until the immediate threat is gone.

Child Care Weather Watch

Children’s time outdoors is important to their learning. All children will engage in outdoor play when the weather permits. In cold weather, please bring your children with a warm coat, hat, & gloves.

On snowy days, the children will play in the snow; please bring snow boots and snow pants. During the summer months, in hot weather, please send a water bottle, so the kids have access to drinks when playing; please also provide Willard with your child’s swimsuit and a towel for water play.

GREEN: All children will be outside. **YELLOW:** All children will be outside; staff will pay close attention to children becoming too hot/cold and adjust time outdoors if necessary. **RED:** All children may go outdoors for a very short time period.

Understand the Weather

Wind-Chill 

- 30° is *chilly* and generally uncomfortable
- 15° to 30° is *cold*
- 0° to 15° is *very cold*
- -20° to 0° is *bitter cold* with significant risk of *frostbite*
- -20° to -60° is *extreme cold* and *frostbite* is likely
- -60° is *frigid* and exposed *skin will freeze* in 1 minute

Heat Index 

- 80° or below is considered *comfortable*
- 90° beginning to feel *uncomfortable*
- 100° *uncomfortable* and may be *hazardous*
- 110° considered *dangerous*

All temperatures are in degrees Fahrenheit

Child Care Weather Watch

Wind-Chill Factor Chart (in Fahrenheit)

		Wind Speed in mph								
		Calm	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40
Air Temperature	40	40	36	34	32	30	29	28	28	27
	30	30	25	21	19	17	16	15	14	13
	20	20	13	9	6	4	3	1	0	-1
	10	10	1	-4	-7	-9	-11	-12	-14	-15
	0	0	-11	-16	-19	-22	-24	-26	-27	-29
	-10	-10	-22	-28	-32	-35	-37	-39	-41	-43

 Comfortable for out door play  Caution  Danger

Heat Index Chart (in Fahrenheit %)

		Relative Humidity (Percent)												
		40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100
Air Temperature (F)	80	80	80	81	81	82	82	83	84	84	85	86	86	87
	84	83	84	85	86	88	89	90	92	94	96	98	100	103
	90	91	93	95	97	100	103	105	109	113	117	122	127	132
	94	97	100	103	106	110	114	119	124	129	135			
	100	109	114	118	124	129	130							
	104	119	124	131	137									

Air Quality

Suppose the Lincoln Weather Service has issued an air quality warning. Willard Community Center will remain open, but children will not engage in outdoor activities until the warning has cleared.

Sunscreen & Bug Spray

Willard Community Center will provide sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher. You must indicate on the enrollment form if you

want your child to use Willard's sunscreen. You may bring in another brand with a specific SPF if you choose. Willard Community Center does not provide any bug sprays. If you choose to provide bug spray, we will make sure to label it with your child's name and keep it locked up when it is not being used.

Health & Safety Practices

Handwashing

Willard Community Center does its best to eliminate contagious diseases. Although illness cannot be avoided entirely, it can be minimized. Handwashing is extremely important in our daily routines. To prevent the spreading of illness, Willard's Administrators and staff require that your children wash their hands when they are dropped off in their classroom; before any other activity is performed.

Emotional Health

A child's emotional needs must be met before he/she can have any positive learning experience. Therefore, we ask that all parents say goodbye positively and reassuringly. Even if the child is crying, it is better to say goodbye and walk away than to be discreet.

Quiet Time

Willard Community Center is required by state licensing guidelines to provide a designated quiet time each day. Willard Community Center requires all children in the early childhood programs to rest from 1:00 PM-3:00 PM with the uninterrupted time that is designated to help your child succeed.

Immunizations

Health and Human Services have determined that up-to-date proof of immunization is required for all children attending Willard's early childhood programs. Immunization records must be on file within the first 30 days of each new school year.

Toilet Training

Children attending Willard's Preschool Program must be toilet trained before the first day of attendance.

Medications

The health and safety of your child are our first concerns. To maintain the highest health and safety standard, we ask that you assist us by observing the following guidelines concerning the dispensation of medication to your child. For our staff to administer medication to a child, it is necessary to have a doctor's authorization and the parent's permission for dispensation.

- ❖ Medication should be given at home if possible.
- ❖ No medication will be administered to a child unless the medication has a current prescription label, which includes the date, child's name, physician's name, and directions for administration.
- ❖ Non-prescription medication (i.e., Tylenol, cough medications, etc.) will be given only with parental permission.

Emergency Medicine

If your child has a life-threatening illness, such as but not limited to Asthma, Epilepsy, severe allergies & COPD, it is required that your child has their medication on them at all times. If your child is dropped off and does not have emergency medication

available, a parent/guardian will be contacted immediately to bring in the medication. If no medication is available for your child during a time of need, Willard Community Center is not liable for health risks or damages. Willard Community Center does not have access to your healthcare professional to get medication. It is the responsibility of the parent/caregiver to provide any medication that is needed for Willard Community Center to administer. If a child runs out of medication, we will not provide care until the additional medication is provided. If the medication has expired, we will not administer the medication or provide care until the new medication is provided.

Illness

Your child should be kept at home and not attend Preschool when he/she has a sore throat, diarrhea, fever, skin rash, eye drainage, or any other contagious disease which may be accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness such as unusually tired, irritability, uncontrolled coughing, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, wheezing, seizures, and or severe stomach pain. We must protect all our enrolled children from unnecessary exposure to illness. Any child who is determined by the staff to be ill or has a fever of 100 degrees will need to be taken home, and he/she will need to be kept home for 24 hours; longer if the fever remains without the use of fever-reducing medication. Any time a child exhibits any of the above symptoms during operating hours, that child must be taken home for the remainder of the day or excluded until a medical exam indicates the child may return. For exclusion policies, see chart below:

Disease/Illness	Signs/symptoms	Exclusion (how long)
Chicken pox/shingles	-Rash that turns into itchy, fluid-filled blisters -Fatigue, fever, loss of appetite, headache, sore throat, swollen lymph nodes	Yes - At least 5 days after rash begins, or until all blisters have dried
Conjunctivitis (pink eye)	-Pink or red color in the white of the eye(s) -Swelling around the eye -Increased tear production -Itching, irritation, and/or burning	Yes - Must have doctors note and completion of 24 hours of antibiotics
Coronavirus (COVID-19)	-Sore throat, runny nose, blocked nose, sneezing, dry cough, headache, body aches altered sense of smell	Yes- Must exclude for at least 5 days
Croup	-Loud barking cough that's made worse by crying or coughing -Fever noisy or labored breathing/hoarse voice	Exclude if having trouble breathing while resting or with activity, and must be fever free for 24 hours
Diarrhea	-Frequent loose, watery stools -Abdominal cramps/pain -lethargic	Must exclude if more than 2 abnormal watery stools in one day are present and stay excluded until no watery stools for 24 hours
Fifth Disease	-Facial rash looks as if the cheeks were slapped -Fever, fatigue, coughing, headache, itching, nausea, runny nose, or sore throat	Must exclude if fever is present. However, once rash appears, the illness is no longer contagious so exclusion is no longer necessary
Hand, Foot, and Mouth	-Fever, sore throat, body aches, loss of appetite -Sores on the mouth, hands, feet	Yes- Must exclude until fever free for 24 hours and blisters have healed or scabbed over
Head lice	-Itching, visible lice on scalp and lice eggs (nits) on the hair shafts	Yes- Must be nit-free and live bug-free before returning

Hep A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Yellowing skin or eyes -Loss of appetite/nausea/vomiting/stomach pain -Fever/fatigue -Diarrhea/dark colored urine 	Yes- Must exclude for at least one week after onset of illness or jaundice.
Herpes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Tiny, fluid-filled lesions or cold sores around the affected site 	Exclude if child touches sores often or drools excessively
Impetigo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Itchy, red sores around nose and mouth that scab over and appear yellow/brown 	Yes- Must exclude until at least 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has begun and there is no discharge
Influenza A/B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Fever/body aches/chills -Cough/sore throat -Fatigue/headache -Runny or stuffy nose 	Yes- Must be fever free for 24 hours
Measles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Cough/sore throat -Runny nose -Inflamed eyes -Fever -Red, blotchy skin rash 	Yes- Must exclude for at least 4 days after onset of rash
Mumps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Swollen, painful salivary glands that cause puffy cheeks and a tender, swollen jaw -Fever/headache/fatigue/loss of appetite 	Yes- Must exclude for 5 days after onset of parotitis (swelling of the salivary glands located between the ear and the jaw)
Norovirus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Vomiting/stomach cramping/diarrhea 	Yes- Must exclude for a minimum of 48 hours after symptoms resolve
Pertussis (Whooping cough)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Runny/stuffy nose -Low-grade fever -Mild, occasional coughing -Apnea and cyanosis 	Yes- Must have taken antibiotics for 5 days or have a doctors note saying child can return
Ringworm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Itchy skin -Ring-shaped rash 	Yes- Must exclude until treatment with a prescription oral antifungal medication has begun or doctors note states child can return
Roseola	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Fever followed by rash on trunk and neck 	Yes- Must exclude until fever free for 24 hours, even if rash has appeared
Rubella	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Fever/headache -Sore throat -Rash that begins on face and spread to the rest of the body -Pink eye 	Yes- Must exclude for four days after rash appears
Scabies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Intense itching -Pimple-like rash that may affect much of the 	Yes- Must exclude but can return the day after treatment begins

	body or be limited to common sites	
Strep Throat	-Throat pain that comes on quickly -Painful swallowing -Red and swollen tonsils -Tiny red spots on the roof of the mouth -Fever/headache/rash	Yes- Must exclude until fever free for 24 hours and have taken antibiotics for at least 24 hours
Unexplained rash	Any form of rash on the skin	Yes- Must exclude until seen by a doctor
Yeast infections	-Rash, white discharge, and itching on infected site	No- The spread of yeast infections is rare but a topical or oral anti-fungal medication may be needed

Disinfecting Protocol

If 50% of the children enrolled are absent due to a contagious disease, Willard Community Center will be closed for the next business day (24 hours) to disinfect and sanitize all toys, surfaces, appliances, restrooms, and laundry. Willard Community Center staff and administration will attempt to advise all families no later than 7 pm the evening before closing.

Shut Down

Willard Community Center will also close if Lincoln Public Schools shut down due to a pandemic. After that, the administration and the Board of Directors will collaborate on a plan to reopen as soon as possible. Willard Community Center reserves the right to close at any time if state regulations cannot be met due to illness or Board of Director discretion on all other matters.

Accident Reports

Accidents or injuries that a child receives during care are reported on the accident/incident form, and every effort is made to make the parent aware of the nature and extent of the injury. Reports will be signed by a Director and filed. If a child hits their head, regardless of the severity, a parent will be notified via a phone call.

Teachers and Administration can make care-related decisions based on:

- Fever
- Open Sores
- Excessive Drooling
- Discomfort/Abnormal behavior
- Two or more loose stools

Parents/Guardians may be required to have their child looked at by a physician before returning to care at Willard Community Center.

Emergencies

We must have a number to reach you AT ALL TIMES. In an emergency, we will contact you immediately. If we cannot contact you, we will call the emergency numbers given on the child's registration form. If we cannot contact either parent or the

emergency numbers and immediate medical attention is necessary, 911 will be called.

Fire/Tornado

An emergency plan is in place, and licensing standards conduct practice drills. Parents are encouraged to review that information with center staff.

Child Neglect/Abuse

We are required by state regulations to report any and all suspected cases of abuse or neglect to the proper authorities. A child will not be released to any person suspected of being under the influence of drugs and alcohol, and proper authorities will be notified.

Fees and Payment Procedures

Payments must be paid in full before receiving childcare. Failure to pay will result in childcare being denied unless special arrangements are made with the Early Childhood Director. Unpaid accounts, plus any interest accrued, will be turned over to a collection agency.

- ❖ Checks or money orders for payment need to be made out to “Willard Community Center”.
- ❖ Online payments can be accepted through Venmo or PayPal through the website. www.willardcommunitycenter.com
- ❖ Childcare weekly/monthly fees may increase annually by a percentage approved by the Board of Directors.

Late Payment Policy

The formal policy for Willard Community Center regarding the payment for childcare services will continue to require advance payment due on the first of each month before services are performed. Delinquent accounts will be provided notice of deficiency. Accounts remaining delinquent in excess of four weeks without Executive Director (or Board approval) will be turned over to collections at the Board of Director discretion.

In recognition of our organization's mission, the Board of Directors has authorized the Executive Director or her appointee to approve individualized payment plans for families in rare instances of financial distress or emergencies. Any family may request a temporary exception to the policy in writing, which should detail the reason(s) for the exception and the proposed payment plan. The Executive Director and her appointee may only approve deviations up to an aggregate \$500.00 carrying balance per family.

The Executive Director and or her representative will report directly to the Board of Directors each month regarding all carrying balances, the payment plan, and circumstances requiring the deviation from the policy. Any deviation from the advance payment policy exceeding \$500.00 will require the Board of Directors' written approval. Accounts appearing uncollectable may be turned over to collections, resulting in additional legal and financial consequences.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AUTHORIZES THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO REFUSE SERVICES TO ANY CHILD DUE TO DELINQUENCY OF THE ACCOUNT THAT IS NOT IN COMPLIANCE WITH THIS POLICY.

Late Pick Up Policy

Willard Community Center charges parents who are late in picking up their children. As a reminder, Early Childhood programs at Willard close at 6:00 PM (6:30 AM- 6:00 PM), the Roper Before and After school program at Willard closes at 6:00 PM (6:30 AM-6:00 PM), and the Lakeview CLC at Lakeview Elementary closes at 6:00 PM (7:00 AM-6:00 PM). These times are set in place due to licensing requirements and are not negotiable. During the summer, the hours of operation for families who enroll their children in the Early Childhood or School-Age Summer Programming are 6:30 AM -6:00 PM.

If you are late picking up your child(ren), there is an **initial fee of \$50.00**. Late pick-up begins at 6:01 PM. **You will also be charged \$5.00 per minute for every minute after that you are late to pick up your child(ren).** If you are running late, a phone call must be made to Willard's staff to let them know; however, this phone call will not waive the fee previously listed. If you receive any subsidy, you must still pay the fee. **Paying this fee in advance will not be accepted.**

These fees are **PER CHILD** and will be paid directly to the staff **via CASH or VENMO**. Pay this late fee at pick-up time to ensure care for the following business day. If not paid before the next business day, care will be denied until paid in full either by cash/Venmo. This fee is separate from your monthly bill and is not billed on Brightwheel. This money goes directly to the staff members waiting for your arrival. If you are running late, call the program to inform the staff of the late pick-up and that you are on your way. (This phone call will not waive the fee previously listed.) ***Paypal and check payments will not be accepted.**

If there are more than three late pick-up occurrences, you must meet with a director before your child can return. After meeting with a director and there is one more occurrence, your childcare privileges in any of Willard Community Centers programs will be terminated. The child will not be allowed back into a Willard Program for at least one year after termination. For the child to return, all fees for previous enrollment must be paid, and a letter must be written to the program director or designee asking for reinstatement.

All Programs:

- 6:01 PM: The initial fee is \$50.00 per child.
- Beginning at 6:02 PM, there is an additional fee of \$5 per minute per child.
- 6:30- The Police and Child Protective Services will be notified.
- Three occurrences = Meeting with a director
- Fourth occurrence= Child care termination.

(Phone calls will be placed to authorized pick-ups and emergency contacts if the parent/guardian is inaccessible.)

REMINDER: If parents do not call and fail to pick up their child within one hour, the police will be notified.

Child Care Subsidy (Title XX) accepted:

Provider ID Number @ Folsom location for Early Childhood - 33669472

- ❖ If you are approved to receive state assistance through DHHS, Willard Community Center must receive the authorization before your child's first day of care in Willard's programs.
- ❖ The Registration fee will not be covered by state subsidy. Each family registration fee is required to be paid by the parent/caregiver upon enrollment.
- ❖ DHHS may approve your Title XX with a monthly family fee. The family fee must be paid in full to Willard every

month. Failure to pay will result in childcare being denied unless special arrangements are made with the Early Childhood Director. Unpaid accounts, plus any fees accrued, will be turned over to a collection agency.

- ❖ If you are paying your Title XX family fee to another provider, you will need to have that childcare center's director provide a letter to Willard Community Center. The letter must state the total amount collected each month and be signed and dated by the director. If there are any changes regarding your family fee payment arrangement, you will need to keep Willard Community Center updated for billing purposes.
- ❖ If your authorization dates have expired, YOU must contact your DHHS caseworker for reauthorization to cover your child's attendance, or you will be billed privately.

Lincoln Littles Funding

Suppose you need financial assistance and are denied state subsidy or have a family crisis that affects your ability to pay for child care. In that case, we can offer Lincoln Little's scholarship assistance. Please contact Willard's Administration for more information on how to qualify for this scholarship.

Arrival / Departure / Visiting Policies (Parent)

When dropping off or picking up your child, your child will be checked in/out on our weekly attendance sheets. You must be present in the classroom for the child's safety, so Willard Community Center staff are allowed to communicate important information.

If your child is going to be absent for any reason, please report your child's absence no later than 9:00 am on that same school day. If your child is normally scheduled to attend later than 9:00 am, or your child's schedule varies, please keep the staff updated on those variations. The teachers plan their day according to your child's attendance; it is important to the program's operation and for consistency in your child's schedule. If your child doesn't arrive by 9:00 am, the teaching staff cannot work one-on-one to update your child on that morning's lessons.

Your child will only be released to a parent/guardian or individuals you have designated on your child's enrollment sheet. Please advise non-custodial caregivers from your enrollment sheet to pick up or drop off your children to check in at the receptionist's desk and classroom. Non-custodial caregivers will have their identification verified by Willard Community Center Staff. Your child will not be released to a non-custodial caregiver until appropriate photo identification is provided.

Willard will not release a child to anyone who cannot safely care for the child. This includes an abusive/aggressive person or anyone suspected of being under the influence of drugs/alcohol. Willard staff reserves the right to notify the Lincoln Police Department for assistance if it deems the person attempting to pick up a child cannot safely care for the child.

If a child is left after hours, Willard has not received notification of an authorized adult coming to pick up the child, and a parent/guardian cannot be reached after 1 hour, Willard will contact the Lincoln Police Department for assistance.

Emergency Information Policy

For the safety and wellbeing of your child, Willard must be able to reach you or an authorized person in the case of an emergency or if your child becomes ill.

- Willard requests emergency contact numbers in addition to the Parent/Guardian's phone number.
- You will be asked to provide names and phone numbers for individuals who can pick up and drop off your child, along with emergency contact names and numbers. Listing an individual as an emergency contact does not permit us to release that individual; they must also be listed on the drop-off/pick-up consent form.

- Please let your emergency contacts know that you have placed them on your emergency contact list. They must also show a photo ID.
- Please notify Willard immediately of any changes to the phone numbers and address or your emergency contacts person's numbers.

Closure Dates

- ❖ Willard is closed on the following holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the following day, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, and Martin Luther King Day. If the holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the Center will be closed on Friday or the following Monday. *Willard's Board of Directors may choose to close additional days surrounding a holiday based on projected attendance or staff training.
- ❖ All closure dates will be provided in the enrollment packet. *Parents will be notified of any modifications as soon as possible.

Emergency Closings/Disaster Preparedness

- ❖ In emergencies that could affect safety, health, or access to the Willard Community Center, such as, but not limited to: (loss of water, power, gas leaks, or natural disasters) the program administrator will have the final authority to decide to close. If the decision to close is made, the administration will attempt to get hold of families in the timeliest manner possible. Suppose a Willard program needs to evacuate due to an emergency. In that case, we will follow the Emergency Closing procedure and relocate the staff and children in our care to the following locations until the children are picked up.

Willard Community Center: Ray's Lawn and Homecare; 503 West J street

Confidentiality

Children's records are open only to authorized employees of Willard Community Center, for DHHS license inspection, for Step Up to Quality Reviews, and to the child's parents or legal guardians.

Thank you for including Willard Community Center in your child's Early Childhood Education experience!!!

Executive Program Director, Sarah Reinke

sahr@willardcommunitycenter.org

Early Childhood Director, Kaylee Ohmart

kayleeo@willardcommunitycenter.org

School-Age Director, Caitlin Sharkey

caitlins@willardcommunitycenter.org

Administrative Assistant, Tarrah Oliverius

tarraho@willardcommunitycenter.org

Lead Preschool Teacher, Cindy Anchor

misscindy@willardcommunitycenter.org