

Early Childhood Parent Handbook



Welcome

The Willamalane Early Childhood team is dedicated to providing safe and productive educational and recreational environments. Willamalane staff members recognize that children need a balance of structured and unstructured activity during the early years of development and strive to provide that variety in programming. Our staff also believes in offering choices to children whenever possible to encourage positive decision-making skills and social interaction.

Staff members will help your child explore areas of interest and create opportunities for lifelong learning and discovery.

You will also see:

- Frequent, positive, and warm interactions among adults and children
- Learning activities appropriate to children's age and development
- Specially trained teachers
- Varied, age-appropriate materials
- A positive and safe environment for children
- Nutritious snacks that follow USDA guidelines
- Regular communication with parents
- Ongoing, systematic evaluation of programs and services

Please review the information in this handbook.

Call us at 541-736-4509 if you have any questions.

Program Goals

- To raise self-esteem, encourage independence, foster creativity and imagination and offer safe and positive social experiences.
- To create a foundation for positive recreational, social and educational opportunities for children in their early childhood years.

- To create a relaxed, trusting and fun atmosphere that promotes positive two way communication.
- To provide exciting, inclusive and engaging activity choices which meet the developmental needs of each child.
- To provide families with affordable, convenient and dependable program choices.
- To provide academic opportunities based on best practices.
- To teach by modeling appropriate problem solving and social emotional development and support.

All new patrons are encouraged to attend an orientation prior to starting a program. To schedule an individual orientation of our programs please contact the Early Childhood Supervisor at 541-736-4509 or ericah@willamalane.org.

Contact Information

**Bob Keefer Center, 250 S. 32nd St., Springfield OR 97478
541-736-4544**

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| Friendly Finches 8:15-10:45am M-TH | 541-228-7125 |
| Ready Robins 11:30am-3:15pm M-TH | 541-228-7125 |
| Jumping Jays 9-11:30am M-TH | 541-228-7130 |
| Little Learners 7am-6pm M-F | 541-228-7120 |
| Early Childhood Supervisor | 541-736-4509 |

Please note: Parents/guardians are responsible for dropping off their children at the appropriate start time of our programs. You may not drop off your child with an unauthorized Willamalane staff member or leave them unattended before the start of class. In the event that a

child is left after closing time, staff members will contact all authorized adults to pick up the child. After one hour, the Springfield Police Department will be called and the child will be placed with a police officer for safekeeping until the parent can be reached. Repeated late pickups or early arrivals will result in disciplinary action up to and including removal from the program. When a child is left after closing time, you will be charged a fee of \$1 per minute, per child.

State Certification Requirements

As a state-exempt program, our center voluntarily complies with Oregon Child Care Division regulations, as well as Willamalane's own standards and those of the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs. Copies of these rules are available from the program supervisor for your reference.

Teaching Staff

Early Childhood staff members are experienced in education, recreation and early childhood care programs. Everyone who is employed at Willamalane has undergone a criminal history check through the state Child Care Division. Each classroom is staffed to meet the State Child Care Division's requirements for ratios of children to professional staff.

Our staff receive annual training in the areas of child development, behavior management, quality environments, creative programming, and health and safety. All staff members are trained in CPR and first aid, bloodborne pathogens, and recognizing and reporting child abuse and neglect. All staff members possess Oregon Food Handlers cards.

Educational Philosophy

We provide a rich learning environment with curriculum that is play based and developmentally appropriate. Lead teachers in each class

develop a monthly curriculum appropriate to specific ages in each classroom. We believe that children are successful when they are able to actively participate in choosing, organizing and evaluating the learning activities, which are undertaken with teacher observation and guidance in a learning environment with a rich variety of materials located in various classroom learning centers. Our programs feature daily planning by the teaching staff in line with developmentally appropriate based curriculum and careful child observations. Key components of our learning curriculum are content, daily schedule, classroom arrangement and active learning opportunities. These components provide the children with a rich opportunity to develop early academic and social-emotional skills.

Registration

Advance registration is required online at willamalane.org. Families receiving financial assistance will need to register at the Bob Keefer Center, 250 S. 32nd St., Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. **Please allow 24 hours for registration confirmation. New patrons are encouraged to attend a parent orientation and tour prior to beginning the program.**

1. Complete a customer account at willamalane.org.
2. Add your child as a family member to your account.
3. Register your child for the activity or program you have chosen by adding the activity to your cart, completing the custom questions and setting up an automatic payment schedule.
4. Pay the \$30 registration fee and confirm automatic payment option.
5. Receive and print your registration receipt.
6. Bring immunization records and custody documents to Bob Keefer Center.
7. Attend program orientation or schedule an individualized orientation.
8. Read the parent handbook (attachment provided online).

Waiting Lists

There may be times when the program you are interested in is full. Sign up for the waitlist by contacting us at the Bob Keefer Center or adding your name to the list using your online account. You will be contacted when an opening occurs. You will then have two business days to register. If you have not registered within that two day period, your name will be taken off the waiting list. Please note that wait lists do not guarantee you a spot in the program.

Withdrawal/Refunds

Programs that are on a monthly registration cycle, require a two week notice when dropping from the program. Daily program registrants must give 48 hour notice once your day is secured to make changes. Mentioning it to site staff is not sufficient notification. Please contact a front desk representative at 541-736-4544, or the program supervisor at 541-736-4509.

Please note: No refunds, credits or reallocation of funds will be given for missed days or extended absences. If your account has not been paid by the first day of the month, or if your child does not attend for 30 days, the child will be considered dropped from the program and you will need to re-register and pay the \$30 registration fee. Refunds are subject to a \$5 administrative fee.

Program Fees

A \$30 registration fee per child is required at the time of registration. Fees for June are prorated for some programs. Current program fees are listed in the recreation guide and at willamalane.org.

Additional Fees

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| Early drop-off and late pickup fee | \$1 per minute per child |
| Collections fee | Total due including collection charges |
| Registration fee (for new participants as well as any time a child drops the program then re-enrolls at a later date) | \$30 |
| No-lunch fee | \$5/day (refrigerators/microwaves not available) |
| Declined electronic payment fee | \$25 |
| Repeated declined credit card fee | \$25 |
| Repeated late payment fee | \$10 |
| Refund fee | \$5 |

Billing and Financial Agreement

You may pay online, by phone, or in person to:

Bob Keefer Center
Billing Department
250 S. 32nd St.
Springfield, OR 97478

Payments will not be accepted in the classrooms. Staff members do not have information regarding your account. Call 541-736-4550 for any information regarding billing. Payments are due by the 1st of the month. Fees must be paid in full to participate. If you have an outstanding account balance with Willamalane, you will not be eligible for Willamalane programs until your account has been paid in full. By registering your child for a Willamalane program, you agree that you are responsible for the payment of all program fees and costs. If your account is assigned to a collection agency, you agree to

pay all collection costs, including fees to the collection agency. If your account is placed in the hands of an attorney for collection, you agree to pay the reasonable attorney fees and collection costs, regardless of whether an action is filed, and if an action is filed you agree to pay Willamalane's reasonable attorney fees at trial and on any appeal. In situations where cost of care is shared, payment must be made by both parties by the 1st of each month. If payment is not received in full, the party that registered the child will be responsible for the remaining balance.

Child Care Assistance

If all or part of your fees will be paid through Department of Human Services (DHS), or any other assistance program, families must turn in an AFS 7494E form to the billing office before your child may take part in the program. It is the family's responsibility to make necessary co-payments and fees beyond child care assistance payments, and accounts will be subject to the same additional fees as described previously. Co-payments are due to the Bob Keefer Center by the 1st of the month, or your child will be unable to attend the program. DHS vouchers will be available for parent signature at your child's site at the beginning of each month. Vouchers must be signed by the appropriate person and given to the lead teacher no later than the 10th of each month. Questions may be addressed to the billing department at 541-736-4550.

Scholarships

Willamalane has a scholarship program for those who meet established guidelines. If you qualify, you will still be responsible for a portion of your fees and you will be subject to all financial policies. You may obtain an application from the Bob Keefer Center. Only certain programs qualify.

Daily Check-in/Checkout

Each child must be signed in and out properly before Willamalane can assume or release responsibility for that child. Make sure you leave your child with a teacher or staff member, and make contact with staff before leaving. We appreciate when any changes to your child's schedule is communicated ahead of time (doctor appointments, early pickup, etc.) it allows the teachers to be aware and to give you any details about the schedule ahead of time.

Only those persons listed on the registration form as having your permission will be allowed to remove your child from Early Childhood programs. Identification will be requested when staff members are not familiar with an individual picking up a child. For the safety of your child, we strongly enforce this rule. Please be prepared with identification at all times. You are responsible for advising anyone picking up your child of the sign-in/sign-out procedure.

Emergency Closures

During snow or other inclement weather, or in the event of other unforeseen circumstances, please listen to KPNW 1120 AM, or KUGN 590 AM for delay and closure updates, or check the Willamalane website at willamalane.org. We will follow the Springfield Public Schools closure/delay schedule. Springfield School District and Willamalane closures will also be publicized by FlashAlert. **In the event of extended closures, refunds may be issued at the discretion of the district.** If Springfield Public Schools are closed for inclement weather, Early Childhood Programs are closed. If Springfield Public Schools have a 2-hour delayed start, Friendly Finches and Jumping Jays will not be in session. Ready Robins will begin at their scheduled time of 11:30a.m. Little Learners will open at 9a.m.

Closure Dates

All Early Childhood Programs will be closed on the following days:

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|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Wednesday, Aug. 28-Sept. 3 | Staff Training |
| Monday, Nov. 11 | Veterans Day |
| Thursday-Friday, Nov. 28-29 | Thanksgiving holiday |
| Wednesday, Dec. 25 | Christmas Day |
| Wednesday, Jan. 2 | New Year's Day |
| Monday, Jan. 20 | Martin Luther King Jr. Day |
| Monday, Feb. 17 | Presidents Day |
| Monday, May 25 | Memorial Day |

In addition to holiday closures, various programs will be closed according to the Springfield Public Schools schedule, or the EC Cares Service Schedule (Jumping Jays). Please refer to your program's calendar for specific closure dates. Program calendars can be found on our website as well as at your program site.

Changes in Vital Information

Please update your customer account or family details and notify your child's teacher whenever you have a change of address, phone number, job, authorized guardians, emergency contacts or pertinent medical information. Emergencies may arise with your child and it is critical that staff members have updated, accurate information to work with.

Visitors and Parent Participation

There are limited opportunities available for parent volunteers, including material prep. These opportunities also require the completion of a volunteer application and background check. This process can take up to three weeks. Please speak to your teacher for specific volunteer opportunities.

We recognize that parents often need current information about their child's sleeping, eating, and toileting routines. These communications must often be brief at drop off or pick up time due to the need for our attention to be with the children. Teacher-parent meetings are encouraged for extended conversations regarding your child.

Calendars

We will post our activities outside each classroom. If you would like more detailed information, please sign up for our digital communications on the Remind App. Each classroom teacher will have the information on how to sign up.

Toilet Training

All preschool participants must be potty trained prior to beginning school. Here are some ways to tell if your child is ready:

1. Can they tell an adult they have to go potty before they have to go?
2. Can they pull down their undergarments and clothing and get them back up without assistance?
3. Can they wipe themselves after using the restroom?
4. Can they get on and off the potty by themselves?
5. Can they wash and dry hands independently?

We understand that children at this age do have occasional/infrequent accidents. In this case, we will have your child change his/her own clothing. If the child is unable to change their own clothing and appropriately clean themselves, we will contact the parents to come help. Please note, our facility and staff are not equipped for diaper (including pull-ups) changing.

What to bring to Preschool

Children will be assigned a cubby in which to put their belongings. Any items from home should be clearly labeled with your child's name. Below is a sample of items that are appropriate for school:

1. An extra set of clothing, labeled with your name in a gallon sized zip loc baggie.
2. A backpack to take things to and from school in.
3. A jacket appropriate for the season.
4. Footwear appropriate for running, jumping and playing!
5. Clothing that is ok to get a little messy. We like to keep our activities new, adventurous and exciting. Occasionally, this could result in a messy, goopy or sticky finished product. We make every effort to keep the ingredients and supplies safe, non-toxic and washable. As these items make their way home they may still react with certain fabrics and surfaces. Please use care when supervising your child with projects they may bring home.
6. We will provide the rest! If you don't see an item on this list please check in with your classroom teacher before sending it to school.

Door Access Monitoring System

The Door Access Monitoring System provides additional security to the staff and children in our programs at the Bob Keefer Center. The monitoring system controls access to the Early Childhood wing, allowing entry by key code. Each family is responsible for maintaining their code, granting permission only to authorized parties.

Guidance and Discipline

The basis of our guidance and discipline procedures are to encourage positive behavior and to facilitate empathic social learning. Strategies such as redirecting children and setting clear limits are the basis for

facilitating self-management when difficulties arise as well as developing self-control and problem solving in children. All children are encouraged to “use words” to express what they want, what they need, and how they feel. Appropriate behavior is acknowledged through the use of positive consequences such as verbal praise, positive recognition and special incentive programs and rewards. Corrective consequences for not following expectations will be implemented and may include verbal reminders of appropriate behavior, re-teaching the desired behavior, redirection to the desired behavior and loss of privileges. As a final measure, children may be directed to spend time away from activities to provide them an opportunity to regain control.

In the event that the above strategies are not working, staff, parents, and the child will work together to maximize the potential for the child’s success in preschool. Parents are expected to be active participants in the behavior management of their child. In some behavior situations, such as running from the group, posing a physical threat to him/herself or others, or other actions which place themselves or other children in danger, we may call the parent(s) to pick up the child. The parent(s) will be expected to arrange for immediate pick up of the child.

Note: We reserve the right to suspend or dismiss a child from the program if staff determines that the program cannot meet the needs of the child, if the child is a physical threat to him/herself or others or if the child’s behavior consistently impedes the normal daily functions of the group. Children may also be dismissed from the program if their parents/guardians demonstrate inappropriate behavior or fail to cooperate with staff. Parents cannot be involved in disciplining any child other than their own. Failure to comply with this policy may result in dismissal from the program.

Commitment to Nonviolence

Corporal punishment will not be used or tolerated in Willamalane programs. Staff members will not hit, spank, humiliate or unnecessarily restrain any child. We want to ensure all children understand that they will not be hurt physically or emotionally while in our programs. For this reason, families will not be permitted to hit or spank children while here. We encourage you to discuss with staff ways positive discipline can be used at home.

Please help us provide a nurturing environment by ensuring your child does not come to our programs in clothing that reinforces violent characters or actions, promotes illegal substances, drugs, gang membership or any illegal behavior. And of course, children may not bring a weapon (toy or real) to preschool.

Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse

All Early Childhood program staff members are considered mandatory reporters by the state of Oregon and are required to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Human Services.

Willamalane will work with DHS and families, as appropriate, to ensure the health and safety of children in the program. When a report is made, Willamalane will continue to work with and support the child and family. The report will be treated with confidentiality.

Health, Illness & Allergies

Parents/Guardians and staff share a responsibility for reducing exposure to and stopping the spread of communicable diseases. Children must be free and clear of illness and symptoms of illness for 24 hours before returning to the program. This includes, but is not limited to:

Fever over 100.5 degrees Fahrenheit

Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool per day)

Vomiting

Lice

Nausea

Severe cough

Skin or eye lesions or rashes that are severe, weeping or pus-filled

Stiff neck and headache with one or more of the symptoms listed above

Difficulty breathing or wheezing

Complaints of severe pain

If your child shows any of the above signs, he/she will be isolated and you will be notified. It is your responsibility to pick up your child immediately or to make arrangements for someone else to do so. These precautions protect the health of your child and the other children in our programs. Children with head lice may not return to the program until the scalp is free from all traces of lice and nits. If your child has a communicable disease, please notify us so that we may inform staff and other parents to watch for symptoms.

If your child has any medical conditions that limit the consumption or exposure to specific foods, please contact your classroom teacher. Our program provides only nut-free snacks.

Medications

All medication is required to be logged with a classroom teacher. If your child is required to take any prescribed medications, a staff member will assist your child in administration. The medication must be given to staff in the original properly labeled container. The label must include: the date the prescription was filled, child's name, physician's name, drug name and dosage, and instructions on when and how to give the medication. In addition, a medication release form must be on file before any medication can be administered. Without prescriptions stating otherwise, medication will only be dispensed up to labeled limits.

Sun Protection

Willamalane Early Childhood Programs use Rocky Mountain Sunscreen SPF 30 Kids Broad Spectrum that has ingredients and formulas that are approved by the FDA and have been tested by independent agencies. If you would like to inspect the product and active ingredients, please talk to your teacher.

Emergency Procedures

Evacuation procedures for each program have been established in the event of a major emergency that would necessitate removing children from the site. In the event of evacuation or other emergencies, individual families will be contacted by site staff based on the information provided upon registration. If an individual child is injured in the program we will take the necessary emergency steps and contact the parent/guardian as soon as possible. In general, program procedures for anything more than a bump or minor scrape is to call Mobile Health and/or 9-1-1. Mobile Health is the contracted first-aid service provider for Willamalane Park and Recreation District. Mobile Health services are provided at no cost to families.

Accident Reports

An accident report is taken any time a child is injured in the program. The report documents the date, time, nature of the accident and treatment provided. Every effort will be made to inform you if your child has an accident on a particular day and you are encouraged to speak to the classroom teachers about it. You are responsible for keeping emergency information updated.

Snacks and Lunches

Snacks will be provided for the full-day programs in the morning and afternoon.

Children in Little Learners and Ready Robins must bring a sack lunch and a water bottle each day. Failure to provide a lunch for your child will result in a \$5 fee for the program to provide one. All lunches should be nonperishable and not require heating.

Rest Time

We provide an afternoon quiet/rest time for children attending our full-time Little Learners program. Please send a small blanket, pillow and stuffy with your child on Mondays. We will store nap/rest items for the week and send them home to be washed each Friday or as needed. If your child is absent on Friday we will provide laundry service for you.

We understand that not all children continue to nap at this age; however, we do require that all children have a rest period before engaging in an alternate activity.

Birthdays

If you are interested in bringing in a special snack or treat (birthday celebration, etc.) for your child's program, please contact the teacher one week in advance to make arrangements. All food brought in must be commercially prepared and packaged due to health regulations. We encourage healthy treat alternatives. Please speak to you teacher about options.

ADA Accommodations and Inclusion

Willamalane Park and Recreation District Inclusion Services goal is to provide persons with and without disabilities opportunities to recreate together in environments that are appropriate, non-restrictive and beneficial for all. All individuals are welcome to attend

Willamalane Park and Recreation District programs regardless of ability, need, background, culture, religion, gender or economic circumstances. Through inclusive practice we aim to reflect our wider community and promote positive attitudes to both the similarities and differences in each other. In adherence to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) we strive to offer reasonable accommodations to enable individuals with disabilities to become fully included in our programs. Sign language interpreters, accessible van transportation, modified equipment, trained program leaders, adapted devices and equipment are a few of the program accommodations that may be provided by inclusion services.

To request program accommodations please visit willamalane.org or contact the following:

Ryan Taxara

541-736-4508

ryant@willamalane.org

Confidentiality

Information about the health or abilities of any child or a family's status will be considered confidential. Such information will be shared with staff only as necessary to meet the needs of the child.

Occasionally, family information may also be shared with regulatory agencies.

Photo Policy

Registrants and participants permit Willamalane to take photos and videos of themselves for publication in the recreation guide, website, and additional uses as Willamalane deems necessary unless the registrant or participant expressly files with Willamalane written objections to photos or videos of themselves and/or their children.

Addressing Your Concerns

General program concerns over classroom administrative procedures may be presented to the Early Childhood supervisor at 541-736-4509, or e-mail ericah@willamalane.org. Billing concerns should be addressed to the billing department at 541-736-4550. Problems unique to the classroom are best directed initially to the lead teacher of your classroom.

Child Care Tax Credit and Requests for Information

Tax information is available through your personal online registration account. If you need to request records from Willamalane, you will be assessed staff time and copying charges beginning with a minimum charge of \$25 per hour.

