

Welcome
to
Home Away
From Home
Academy



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WELCOME TO HOME AWAY FROM HOME ACADEMY!

By choosing us for your child's early education, you are embarking on an exciting process of learning that will build on the foundation you have created for your child.

Introduction:

In order for Home Away From Home Academy to have a successful year, we will consider the health and well-being of all our families and staff as our highest priority. **We are asking that our families read all of the guidelines set forth in this document in its entirety.** The establishment of this framework and process cannot be done alone. We need all of our families help and support to bring our school back to a safe, healthy, and happy place for all of our children. This can only be achieved by our entire community working together as ONE family with complete honesty, respect, patience, and ongoing vigilance to support one another. By adhering to all the guidelines, we can achieve this goal of a positive learning experience for your child.

The purpose of this booklet is to provide an updated framework and process in two sections, "the family" and "the school".

If new additional guidelines are set forth by the Office of Licensing and/or the New Jersey Department of Health, please be advised that we will need to comply.

IMPORTANT DATES TO KNOW!

Health Forms Due: Friday, August 20, 2021

(This includes the Universal Child Health Record – proof of an annual physical exam - completed and signed by your pediatrician, in addition to the Immunization Record)

School Messenger: Login no later than Friday, August 27, 2021

(Further information will be forthcoming)

Tuition Payment: Your tuition payment will be pulled from the Smartcare auto-pay system on **September 1st**, and the 1st of each month thereafter. Please plan accordingly, and be sure banking/credit card information is always up to date.

First Day of School: Tuesday, September 7, 2021

Back to School Nights:

- Wednesday, September 8th at 7:00am: Infant through Pre-School
- Thursday, September 9th at 7:00pm: Pre-Kindergarten through First Grade

Calendar: Please note that our 2021/2022 School Year Calendar will not contain the dates of special events, as we are restricted by COVID-19 guidelines. We will update the calendar as necessary, and as we receive updated guidance. Our calendar is posted on our web site for your review at www.hafha.com. A hard copy will be sent home the first week of school in your child's folder.

BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHTS!

We will be hosting Back to School Nights with specific guidelines that we ask all parents to adhere to. Further details will be forthcoming closer to the date.

Wednesday, September 8th at 7:00pm:

- Infant, Waddler, Toddler, and Pre-School parents
- ONE parent per family
- A screening form will be required to enter
- Temperatures will be taken prior to entry

Thursday, September 9th at 7:00pm:

- Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten, and First Grade parents
- ONE parent per family
- A screening form will be required to enter
- Temperatures will be taken prior to entry

These events will take place inside your child's classroom. There will be an overview of the school year conducted by the classroom teachers. We will also provide a Parent Orientation booklet as a take-home to review school wide policies and procedures. The classrooms will be fully sanitized pre- and post-event.

Please remember that parents/guest are not permitted into our building. These events were planned after hours, with no children in the building, which allow them to be permissible.

We are truly looking forward to welcoming you!

REQUIRED
SCHOOL
VACCINATIONS



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

ALL STUDENT MEDICAL RECORDS (PROOF OF ANNUAL PHYSICAL EXAM) & IMMUNIZATION RECORDS MUST BE SUBMITTED BY AUGUST 20th, AND NO LATER THAN THE FIRST WEEK OF SCHOOL.

ALL STUDENT FLU VACCINES AND/OR EXEMPTIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED BY NOVEMBER 1ST, AND NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 31ST. PLEASE SCHEDULE ALL APPOINTMENTS ACCORDINGLY.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS!

- Please remember to complete all required forms! **Refer to our First Day Letter that you received in the mail for the forms that we will need.**
- Label **all** belongings!
- We will again accept backpacks **and** lunchboxes into school for all students; please be sure that they are sanitized and cleaned out daily.
- If you would like to order hot lunch, please complete the form; the lunch program will begin the first week of school.
- Snacks will be provided by the school for Toddlers and older.
- We do not allow goody bags to come in to the school for any reason (birthday, holiday, etc.), however, we will reinstate 'special' snacks for your child's birthday if you choose. Keep it simple, and remember we are peanut/nut free. Any outside snacks must be store-bought with an ingredient label affixed to the package.
- Send in a complete change of clothes in a Ziploc bag, weather appropriate.
- Send in a small blanket for nap time, **no pillows, sleeping bags, or sleepy toys are permitted**. Blankets will be sent home each day for washing.
- No candy is permitted in school; even at lunch or snack time.
- No toys from home are permitted.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call the school. Our staff is always available to answer your questions and we are looking forward to working with you to ensure that your child will have a most rewarding school year.

Section One: The Family

In this section of our plan, we report on the following guidelines for our families from the New Jersey Department of Children & Families:

Centers must exclude children, staff, parents and guardians from our school if they:

- **Are showing symptoms consistent with COVID-19, such as fever, cough or shortness of breath.**
- **Have been in contact with someone with COVID-19 in 14 days**

Health Screening at Entry / Pick- Up & Drop-Off Procedures

1. Please be advised that all screenings will take place at the classroom doors. When you arrive to our school, please proceed straight to your child's classroom door. Infant families may arrive to the office door. The teacher will take your child's temperature for entrance into school; any child with 100.4 or higher will be excluded from school. **No parents or guests will be permitted into the building.** You will also pick up your child from their classroom door.
2. Please be patient, and give yourself plenty of time when dropping off and picking up your child, as well as adhering to social distancing (for example: standing six feet apart when outside of the classroom doors) in order to allow our staff to properly admit children into school, **take temperatures each day,** and assess the child's health before admittance into the school. Please plan accordingly that if your child is not well upon arriving to school, that you may be asked to take your child home.
3. Our school uses infrared digital thermometers. If any child's temperature is recorded at 100.4 or higher, they will not be accepted into school. The same procedure will apply to teaching staff.

4. Children and Staff must wash their hands upon arrival to school, and prior to leaving for home at the end of the day. Children will also wash their hands before *and* after meal times, coming inside from outdoor play, and any time their diaper is changed/they use the restroom.

5. We will not require parents (or any person dropping off/picking up your child) to wear masks when on school property. **We will not be requiring the children to wear masks to school, but if a parent feels more comfortable having their child wear a mask, then of course do so.** Masks are not permitted for children 2 and under, and we will positively praise/encourage the children who do choose to wear a mask. Children will not wear their masks at nap time, lunch or snack time.

*Thank You
for your support*

Implementing Social Distancing Strategies/Safety Guidelines

1. We ask all parents to please comply with all social distancing signs posted outside of the school when picking up and dropping off your child to allow each family to do so safely. Again we ask that you respect this process, and be patient when dropping off and picking up.
2. Communication will mostly be electronic as we are not allowing parents into the building; you will not be able to check a parent mailbox. We will use a daily folder for school and home communication.
3. We will be eliminating large group activities; no field trips, assemblies, or performances.
4. We will cancel or modify activities where children are likely to be in close contact such as physical education, or mixing of classes for music, special shows, and/or presentations.
5. We will minimize the amount of time that children are in close contact with each other, such as circle time and standing in line. We will limit the amount of children in each play center/area, and will increase the distance between children during table work.
6. We will try to maintain distance from each other and educate ourselves, the children and our families on why social distancing is important at this time.
7. Cribs will be placed as far apart as possible. Cots will be at least 3 feet apart. We will place children head to foot instead of head to head during rest time on cots.
8. We will continue to put items that a child has mouthed into a separate area until it can be washed.
9. All children will be given an individual bin with their own art supplies to limit sharing of these items.
10. All non-essential visitors **will not be permitted** into the school.

COVID-19 HEALTH POLICIES

In continuing to monitor the evolving public health situation around COVID-19, we are presenting the following health policies for our families to be in strict compliance with effective immediately upon our return to school.

It is our intention to have a school nurse, who will be on premise each day, conducting daily health checks, not only of the students, but our teaching staff as well. Teachers will conduct these same health checks when the nurse is not on premise.

At this time, with these policies in place, we are kindly asking that all of our families remain honest, vigilant, and respectful at all times not only for the protection of your own family, but for the entire school community.

Please understand that even if one case of COVID-19 is reported, we will be required to report it to the Office of Licensing and the Department of Health. Upon their guidance, we will act accordingly.

1. Your household must remain out of our school for 14 days if any member of your household has (or has been in close contact with anyone who has):
 - a. A suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19 (for example close contact at your work, religious service, social gathering, siblings in other schools/camps); or
2. When it applies to families, caregivers, children, and their respective household members; everyone must conduct a daily health check before coming to school. Should you or anyone in the household have any of the following symptoms, we should be notified, and your child will not be permitted in school.
 - a. Fever of 100.4 or higher, now or in the preceding 72 hours.
 - b. Cough/Difficulty breathing
 - c. Sore throat
 - d. Muscle aches

**If you have had, or plan to have a COVID-19 test, your child will not be permitted in school. Please do not bring your child to school, and then proceed to be tested for COVID-19. All members of the household shall remain home under any testing or symptomatic circumstances. The only exception to this rule is routine testing.

Consistent with our COVID-19 policy, those household members will be required to remain out of the center for 14 days unless **written medical clearance is provided by a physician** indicating that the presenting symptoms are associated with a known non-COVID-19 illness.

****Household Members: include individuals who may not live in the household, but may be staying there, or otherwise present in the household on a regular basis. (i.e. nannies, caregivers, home health workers, contractors, babysitters, cleaning services, and includes anyone with pickup or drop off privileges to our school.)**

3. There is no longer a travel advisory at this time, but please communicate any travel plans with the office, so we may proceed accordingly, if necessary. We will continue to keep you informed of any and all changes or updates with regard to travel restrictions.
4. **We will be requiring you to obtain medical clearance after any and all illness before we permit your child to return to school.**
5. If your child develops symptoms of COVID-19 while at the school (e.g. fever of 100.4 or higher, cough, or shortness of breath) your child will immediately be separated from the population until he or she is picked up. **If the diagnosis is confirmed you must inform our school immediately, as we will be required to report it to the Office of Licensing and the Department of Health.** If there is no confirmation of COVID-19, your child can only return to school after 72 hours fever free and symptom free without the use of fever reducing medication. We will also require a doctor's note clearing your child back to school. If your child receives an official diagnosis (i.e. ear infection), they may return after 24 hours fever/symptom free.
6. If your child becomes ill during the school day (fever and/or symptomatic of cough, congestion, difficulty breathing, fatigue) exclusion from the center, until your child is symptom free, may be necessary to reduce the transmission of illness.
7. For your child's comfort, and to reduce the risk of contagion, we ask that children be picked up within 45 minutes of notification that your child is ill. Until then, your child will be kept comfortable, and observed for symptoms separated from the general population.
8. All staff members are still required to wear masks as per the Office of Licensing and NJ State Department of Health. The only exception for a teacher to remove her mask is if she is outside, and it is 80 degrees or warmer. A mask shall remain on her person in the event a child needs care.

**** Please be advised that any and all aforementioned health policies will also apply to our staff members and their households.**

Section Two: The School

In this section of our plan, we report on important information to help you begin a new school year with Home Away From Home Academy.

Office /Tuition Payment Information

1. **Our Smartcare auto-pay system will now be in effect.** Your first payment will be pulled on September 1st, and on the 1st of every month thereafter. Please plan accordingly, and be sure banking/credit card information is always up to date. The office will be contacting you if you are not already registered for the auto-pay system.
2. **** Please be advised that no tuition credits will be given for any COVID related absence including, but not limited to: personal travel, contact with a positive person, self-isolation, etc.**
3. A lockbox will be placed outside the school office for any documentation needed for office use.
4. Office visits will be limited; we suggest using alternate ways to communicate unless it is imperative that you need to speak with someone in person. We are asking parents to continue communicating with us electronically as much as possible. If it is necessary to come into the office for any reason, only one person at a time will be permitted into the office with a mask.

Cleaning & Hygiene Practices

1. Our school has been completely cleaned and disinfected. All of our rugs have been steam cleaned, deodorized, and all of our hard floor areas have been washed and waxed.
2. Our heating and air conditioning system filters and our Beyond Air systems have been replaced and all duct work and venting has been cleaned.
3. We work with a professional cleaning service that will continue to maintain the cleanliness of the school.
4. During the course of the day, our staff will continue to practice our state health requirements of cleaning, bleaching, and disinfecting all surfaces, toys, restroom areas, etc. In addition we will be cleaning all high touch items such as iPads, learning games, puzzles, etc. after each use.
5. We will be increasing the frequency in which our classroom items are cleaned and disinfected. We will be cleaning doorknobs, light switches, countertops, water coolers, faucet handles, computers, phones, etc.
6. We will concentrate on safe and effective ways to clean vomit, body spills, etc. using gloves, and first cleaning thoroughly before using a disinfectant.
7. If an item cannot be cleaned effectively, it will be removed from learning and/or play areas.
8. We will be limiting the sharing of items, such as crayons and markers. Each child will have their own set of art supplies. We will be eliminating the use of sand tables and other play areas that cannot be cleaned or sanitized daily. We will be eliminating plush toys, and dress up clothes, etc.

9. Playground equipment would be considered a high touch area, and as such will be cleaned on a routine basis after each use.
10. We will continue to reinforce frequent and effective hand washing skills, having the children sing Happy Birthday twice which is the acceptable 20 seconds.
11. We will continue to remind the children not to touch their eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands, as well as all other good hygiene practices. Children will continue to wash hands before and after meals/snack, and after coming inside from outdoor playtime. Children will wash hands after sneezing or coughing, as well as at arrival and dismissal times.
12. We will continue to clean and disinfectant our tables before and after each use by a group.
13. Our staff will continue to wear gloves when serving the children snacks and lunch, while washing hands before and after.
14. Teachers who work with infants, waddlers, and toddlers are required to wear a smock. Staff shall wash their neck, hands, and anywhere touched by a child's secretions. Staff shall change the child's clothes if secretions are on the child's clothes. Infant, waddler, and toddler teachers must have multiple changes of clothes on hand.

SCHOOL MESSENGER ALERT SYSTEM

Please be advised that Honeywell Instant Alert has ceased operation effective from August. Therefore, the NEW School Messenger System applies to ALL families. Information on registering in the new system will be forthcoming.

We have contracted with Intrado, provider of SchoolMessenger Solutions such as Communicate for parental outreach, emergency broadcasts, and other communications for education.

Our school implements this communication system in order to reach families quickly and effectively. Within minutes, the school can send a single, clear message to parents by telephone, cell phone, email, text or pager. We utilize this system in the event of a weather closing or school wide emergency.

Keeping parents informed and involved helps to assure student safety. The responsibility to maintain your School Messenger profile lies solely on each family. All contact information should be kept accurately; if you do not comply with this request, you may not receive important notifications. If you need assistance with your profile, please feel free to contact Ms. Jennifer in the office at 732-290-0033 or hafha@aol.com.

Intrado is the trusted provider of SchoolMessenger solutions. Thousands of schools and other educational institutions in all 50 states and Canada depend on SchoolMessenger products and services. From notifications and websites to custom mobile apps and social media, school leaders have relied on the SchoolMessenger platform since 1999 to engage with their communities in multiple languages and on any device.



*Connecting educators with
millions of parents, students and staff everyday*
www.schoolmessenger.com

Peanut/Nut Free Policy

Dear Parents,

Please be advised that Home Away From Home Academy is a Peanut/Nut Free school.

In order to ensure the safety of those students who have peanut/nut allergies, we ask that you please keep in mind the following VERY IMPORTANT POINTS when sending in food items for your child's lunch:



- Please do not send in sandwiches made with Nutella or almond butter as they are not safe alternatives to peanut butter; these products do contain nuts.
- Variations of peanut butter (i.e. "Wow" or "Sun" Butter) are safe. However, if your child is under the impression that they are eating 'peanut butter', the teachers have no way of knowing the food item is indeed a safe and acceptable alternative unless it is labeled. Therefore, in order to avoid a phone call to your office at lunch time, we ask that you please label this item as such each and every time. You can be creative; we have been told that there are even stickers available online from one of the manufacturers specifically for this purpose.
- Please check all labels for ingredients. If a label says "may contain traces of nuts, tree nuts..." unfortunately that item cannot be served to your child in school. Even certain granola bars are labeled as such, so what you may assume to be a safe (peanut/nut free) food item, may not be. So we ask you to be diligent in this regard.

We thank you very much for your cooperation with all of the above. As always, the safety of the children is our main concern.