Dear Family,

**WELCOME** to the OTC Early Childhood Education Center (ECEC). Thank you for choosing our program for your child’s early learning experience!

Our center has a secured entry that allows our families to enter the center at any time while also helping us maintain a high level of security. When entering the center, there is a pad located next to the secured door that leads to the preschool classrooms. Place your key fob on or near the pad and the door will unlock to allow you access to preschool hallway. If you have not already received your key fobs, please see me on your child’s first day or schedule an appointment to pick them up prior to your child’s first day. Each family is allowed two key fobs. Additional key fobs may be purchased for an extra fee.

We have a secure check in system using our computer monitors in our lobby. Please allow a few extra minutes the first time you drop off and/or pick up your child to register in the system.  Each parent and authorized pick up person will need to register in the system the first time they are dropping off or picking up.  This will involve getting a registration code from me, and choosing two 4 to 8 digit passcodes. **It is extremely important that children are checked in and out each time they attend.  This system is how we know how many children and which children are in each classroom and in the center at any given time.  In an emergency this information is vital.** In the preschool classrooms hallway, you will find a mailbox for your family. Invoices, notes, reminders, newsletters, etc. will be placed in your mailbox, instead of your child's cubby.

**To help keep everyone healthy, all children and families must wash their hands upon entering any classroom. Please stop at the sink in your child’s classroom with your child to wash hands when you arrive each day.**

**Parent participation** at our center does a great deal to enhance the quality of the center and contributes much to its program. Possible volunteer opportunities include checking out library books, classroom volunteer and classroom lunch helper. If you are interested in becoming a parent volunteer, please let me know.

Communication is essential to a positive childcare experience. Please be aware of the methods we use in addition to person to person contact. Information about happenings at our center and in the community are posted on our bulletin board in the lobby hallway. The daily menu is posted on the bulletin board outside of the kitchen. Please take time to read these regularly. Our brochure information rack is located in the lobby. On it you will find various brochures that will provide you with up to date information concerning a wide range of topics. Feel free to choose brochures that are of interest to you throughout the semester. Our website at [www.otc.edu/earlychildhoodcenter](http://www.otc.edu/earlychildhoodcenter) contains a variety of information about our program, our online payment portal, and resources for families so please take some time to explore the site.

Teachers will also post notices of field trips, special events, and illnesses on their classroom doors/bulletin boards (located next to the classroom doors). Weekly lesson plans are posted here, too. Please take the time to review these on a daily basis. A monthly parent newsletter will be in your

child’s mailbox at the beginning of each month. Parent/Teacher conferences are held twice a year during the fall and spring semesters. You may schedule a conference at any time with your child’s teacher if questions or concerns arise before the scheduled conference.

Because we are concerned for the safety of your children, we would like to remind you of the rules we enforce while your children are under the supervision of the OTC ECEC staff. We ask that you please enforce these rules as you arrive or leave the center's premises so that the children have consistent expectations for their behavior.

1. Children must always walk inside the building.
2. Children must be taken to their classroom by the parent or other adult who is dropping them off. Please make contact with your child’s classroom teacher to make sure they are aware that your child has arrived for the day.
3. Please make contact with your child’s classroom teacher when picking your child up to make sure they are aware that your child is leaving for the day.
4. Children must be accompanied by an adult when going outside to the parking area.
5. Children must not be left unattended in a vehicle for any period of time while on the OTC premises.
6. Physical discipline (spanking or hitting) is not allowed on our center’s premises by staff or parents.

Your assistance in seeing that your child and your family complies with these rules will help ensure the safety of all children in the program. Thank you in advance for your help.

When dropping off and picking up your child at our facility, you may park in the circle drive. If you are planning on being in the building longer than 15 minutes, please consider parking in the parking lot to allow ease of access to the circle drive for other families who are dropping off and picking up their children.

As you may be aware, our program is a laboratory school and there will be several practicum students who are part of the Early Childhood Development program at OTC working with the teachers in your child’s classroom. This not only provides an excellent learning experience for our college students, but it also provides the added benefit of having lower adult/child ratios in our classrooms. Background screenings are conducted on all practicum students.

If at any time it becomes necessary for you to withdraw your child from our program, please keep in mind that we do require a two week written notice. I am always available to talk with parents about any questions, concerns, or suggestions that you may have. I can be reached at the center at 417-447-8130 or by e-mail at preschool@otc.edu. We are looking forward to working with you and your child!

Your Partner in Educating Your Child,

Jennifer Crouch

Center Manager

OTC Early Childhood Education Center