

DROPOFF LEARNING LAB!

PARENT HANDBOOK

COWABUNGA'S LEARNING LAB

Cowabunga's Learning Lab was established in September 2020 in response to the nationwide pandemic and a way to support working families in educating their children while schools were closed. Cowabunga's Learning Lab is a school aged child care that complies with all child care licensing standards as required New Hampshire Childcare and Licensing.

PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

Cowabunga's Learning Lab provides a safe, affordable place for children to go when parents are working or otherwise unavailable. The program creates a unique opportunity for children to complete their remote learning assignments as assigned by their schools in a nurturing atmosphere. A variety of developmentally appropriate activities are provided to include a balance of structured and unstructured time as well as staff-directed and child-initiated experiences.

A range of activity options includes outdoor play, sports, arts and crafts, games, help with homework, cooking, films (G and PG rated, pre-screened PG-13 for middle school aged children with a signed waiver), and free-time. Cowabunga's Learning Lab is committed to providing quality care for the children during the pandemic.

CONTACT INFORMATION

725 Huse Road

Manchester, NH 03103

603 625 8008

www.mycowabungas.com

learninglab@mycowabungas.com

HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday through Friday

7:30 am to 2:30 pm

After care available from 2:30 pm to 5 pm

The program will operate during early release days and teacher workshop days.

The program will NOT operate on the following holidays:

New Years Eve

New Year's Day

February Vacation (no charge)

Columbus Day

April Vacation (no charge)

MLK Jr. Day

Fourth of July

Veteran's Day

Thanksgiving Day

The Day After Thanksgiving

Memorial Day

Christmas Day, Christmas Eve

Christmas Vacation Week (no charge)

Labor Day

Revisions to this schedule will be announced one (1) month prior to change. If less than 10 children are enrolled for a full day, the program will not operate.

Closing and Delays:

If school is closed due to inclement weather or other emergencies, the program will NOT operate.

When the opening of school is delayed, the opening of the program will be delayed by the same amount of time that the opening of school is delayed (example: if school is delayed 2 hours, instead of opening at 7:30 am, we will open at 9:30 am).

In the event of a delayed opening no child is allowed in the program until the delayed opening time, as stated above. If school is released early due to inclement weather or other emergencies, the program will NOT operate.

If school is NOT in session (e.g. teacher workshops, school vacation week) and it becomes necessary to close the program due to inclement weather or other emergencies, announcements will be made via parent email and on WMUR-TV (channel 9).

If it becomes necessary to close the program after the program is already in session due to inclement weather or other emergencies, parents will be notified individually by members of the staff. Tuition for these days will not be prorated. Please make provisions for your children during these closure times.

REGISTRATION

To sign up & reserve your spot for the program parents will need to pay for one week of tuition to be used for the first week of care.

The Learning Lab at Cowabungas must have a complete folder on each child before he/she can start the program. The folder shall include:

- Child Registration & Emergency Information Form
- Contract for Services
- Alternative Transportation Arrangements Form
- Health Information Form
- Parent Handbook Acknowledgement
- Permission and Releases Form
- Cowabunga's Playground Release Form
- Assumption of COVID-19 Risk Form
- All About Me Questionnaire
- Authorization to Administer Medication (prescription or non-prescription)
- Physical Form with immunization information (completed within the past year)

Failure to comply annually with the above criteria may result in dismissal from the program. Please notify us immediately of any changes.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND SECURITY OF FILES

Confidential information is restricted and private. It is potentially sensitive information about families that is available to Cowabunga's Learning Lab either through written records or daily interactions with children. All personal information about families' financial circumstances, family problems, health problems and/or actions of a parent or child is confidential.

Cowabunga's Learning Lab will maintain the confidentiality of all children's records. Written informed consent from the parent must be received prior to releasing any information in which a child may be identified, except for information requested by authorized state and federal agencies or by Court Order.

REQUEST FOR RECORDS

Should a parent or guardian request a copy of attendance records, a \$10.00 fee will be charged for each 6 month period requested. Fees will need to be paid in advance.

ENROLLMENT

The Learning Lab is open to school aged children 1st grade through 8th grade. Children must be of elementary or middle school age.

You can choose full time or part time enrollment in our program. Your child must come the same day(s) each week.

HOURS & COST:

The Learning Lab at Cowabungas is open Monday through Friday from 7:30 am to 2:30 pm, except on the holidays listed above. We also offer extended care from 2:30 pm to 5 pm for an extra charge.

We charge \$225.00 a week for regular full time care or \$250 a week that includes care until 5 pm. Full time hours are considered four or five days a week during Learning Lab hours.

Part-time Care (Daily, Limited Availability) is when a child comes to the program between one and three days a week. The cost for part time care at The Learning Lab care is \$60.00 per day for regular hours or \$65 per day for extended care hours until 5 pm.

OVERTIME CHARGES

The Learning Lab at Cowabungas ends at 2:30 pm Monday through Friday, if a parent/Guardian or caregiver for that child is late picking up there is a late charge of \$1.00 per minute late.

The Learning Lab at Cowabunga's offers extended care that ends at 5:00 pm Monday through Friday. If a parent/Guardian or caregiver for that child is late picking up there is a late same late charge as above is applied.

Overtime fees are to be paid on the same day that the late pick up occurs or no later than the next day that your child attends the program. Cash will not be accepted. Three (3) or more violations within a calendar year may result in termination from the program.

Any inappropriate behavior by a parent upon receipt of a late slip will not be tolerated and shall result in the immediate termination of the children from the program.

WITHDRAWAL

The Learning Lab requests two (2) week written notification prior to withdrawal from the program. In the event that The Learning Lab is shut down due to a pandemic, weather related closing, fire, state of emergency, or any other natural catastrophe tuition for two weeks will still be due if you choose to terminate your relationship with The Learning Tree.

CHANGE OF SCHEDULE

Families may change their child's schedule if needed during the school year. To do so, written notification must be given to the site director. Two (2) full weeks advance notice are required before the requested change can be made and can only be honored if there is space available.

PAYMENT

Tuition is due the Friday before the week of care. Payment is late if not received by the close of the program on Monday of that week. A late charge of \$10.00 daily will be applied to your account until the missed payment is received. If payment has not been received for two (2) weeks, your child will be withdrawn from the program. The child's spot in the program will then be given to a child on the waiting list. Re-admission is subject to space availability within the program. If space is not available at that time, your name will be added to the waitlist. If a family decides to re-enroll the child in the program, then all tuition, late charges and applicable fees must be paid in full before the child can re-enter the program. Every effort is made to keep fees affordable. A current rate sheet will be provided at time of enrollment.

Parents may pick up their child at any time prior to the close of the program. The fee, however, remains the same.

Payment must be made by check or money order. NO CASH. Check or money order must be made out to Cowabunga's. Please write in the memo space:

- Your child's name
- The period for which payment is being made (example: Sue 8/1-8/5)

There will be a \$25.00 charge for all checks returned from the bank. If we receive more than one (1) returned check, it will then become mandatory for you to make your payments by automatic withdrawal, money order or certified check only. There will be no exceptions.

COLLECTION OF DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS

The Program Director will make several attempts to collect any and all past due balances. Failure to submit payment in full will result in your account being reported to the local police department OR turned over to an outside agency or /attorney for collection. If a delinquent account is sent to an outside agency or attorney your family will be unable to utilize the programs services in the future. In addition to collecting the overdue balance, all costs of The Learning Lab which are incurred during the collection process will be the responsibility of the delinquent party such costs include but are not limited to: collection agency fees, attorney fees, court costs, sheriff's fees. Finally, any claim that goes to collection shall be subject to interest charges of 18% per annum from the date the delinquency commenced and until payment in full plus all costs is received.

ABSENCE

In the event of illness or other absence, please notify the program by phone at (603) 935-9659 or by email at learninglabnh@mycowabungas.com. If the answering machine is on, please leave a message including the child's name as well as the date of absence. If your child is absent, you are still required to pay tuition for days missed as your fees pay for the direct operating cost of The Learning Lab whether your child attends or not.

SICK CHILD

Each child will be observed by staff each day upon arrival of the program and throughout his stay for symptoms of illness which impair or prohibit the child's participation in the regular child care program. This includes, but is not limited to: one episode of vomiting, and oral temperature of 100 degrees or higher, diarrhea, sore throat, severe cough, ear ache. When such symptoms are present, child care personnel shall contact the child's parents or emergency contact and inform them of the need to remove the child from the program. Child care personnel shall ensure that an ill child is provided the opportunity to rest or do a quiet activity until he/she is picked up.

DROP OFF

During this time we ask all parents to pull up to the front of the building and let their child out. Please do not sit in the front of the building once the child has been picked up or dropped off. The Learning Lab staff will be waiting outside of the building during both

drop off and pick up to make sure the child makes it into both the facility and/or the car safely upon arrival and departure.

The Learning Lab will also be checking the childrens temperature on arrival before letting them go inside the building.

PICK UP

Parents or designated persons picking up a child should have a photo ID with them in the event that the staff does not recognize them.

If a parent is called or needs to pick up the child earlier then the scheduled time, please call and let a staff member know ahead of time so that we can make sure the child is ready and outside. Please do not leave your vehicle. Please do not leave younger siblings in vehicles. Parking is available in the parking lot if you feel more comfortable parking and walking to pick up your child and guide them to your vehicle.

WEBSITE & PHOTOS

The Learning Lab staff will take photos of the children to post on our private Facebook site, public social media and our public website for parents to enjoy. If you are uncomfortable with this, please let us know and we will not share pictures of your child. This is a great way for parents to see what we do throughout the day. Please do not post photos of children that attend the center on personal social media pages

ITEMS AT SCHOOL

Children are not allowed to bring personal play or toy items from home except for remote learning essentials and lunch boxes and winter wear. If children bring any other items that are not being used for remote learning the staff will ask them to put it away, and we will give it to the parent at pick up. We don't want personal items to be lost or broken in our space.

BEHAVIOR

When a child is unable to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner and follow program rules, regulations and/or policies, the following steps will be taken, although not necessarily in this order.

Step 1 Supervisor/Staff Intervention

- Redirection of negative behavior
- Time away from the situation and/or

- Loss of privilege(s) including, but not limited to, use of the gym, participating in group activities, including field trips.

If the behavior continues then we will move forward in the next step.

Step 2 Director/Supervisor/Parent Conference

- A plan of action for correcting misbehavior will be agreed upon. The plan of action should include responsibilities of all parties involved and a timetable for improvement. The child will be brought in at the end of the conference to review the agreed upon plan. If an agreement cannot be reached the child will be required to leave the program. If attempts to redirect behavior in Step 2 fail then we will proceed to Step 3.

Step 3 Suspension

- Serious or continuous misbehavior, and/or incidents in which the child is a danger to himself or others will warrant a suspension of 1-5 days. Examples: Hurting other children (physically or verbally), destruction of program and/or school property (see page 12 for Property Damage policy), disrespect toward staff, continual use of inappropriate language and/or inappropriate gestures and/or continual noncompliance with program rules.
- A Director/Site Supervisor/Parent conference, including an agreed upon plan of action, must take place before the child returns to the program.
- Parents will be responsible for paying, in full, for the day(s) that the child is on suspension. 11 Step 4 Termination • If the child returns to the program and cannot function appropriately the child will be terminated from the program.
- An instance of serious or negligent misbehavior will result in immediate termination.

WEAPONS

Bringing any weapon of any form is cause for immediate suspension from The Learning Lab. Weapons include but are not limited to, knives, guns, explosives (etc. snaps, fireworks, bottle caps, shock device). If there is a second occurrence from the same child, the result shall be termination from the program.

DISMISSAL POLICY

Any child's enrollment may be terminated from the program if:

- The Learning Lab cannot meet the physical, mental, or emotional needs of a child
- The child threatens the safety, health and/or well-being of others
- A formal parent conference is not attended upon the second request (one requested by the site director or owner)
- A formal plan of action cannot be agreed upon
- Enrollment is under fraudulent circumstances
- Parents ignore The Learning Lab guidelines, rules and/or policies, and/or cause undue stress to center staff or operations
- More than 3 occurrences of a late pick up
- Inappropriate behavior (child or parent) towards a staff member
- Parent repeatedly not signing their child in or out
- Parent or child threatening the safety of the children or staff
- Failure to replace or repair damaged property
- Failure to provide program with current medications or medical supplies necessary to the safety and well being of a child
- Paperwork in child's file is not up to date; all information must remain current
Example: Physical Emergency Information Child Care Registration Form

ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY

The Learning Lab of Cowabungas will not tolerate abuse and or harassment of any form. Including, but not limited to:

- child to parent
- child to child
- child to staff
- parent to parent
- parent to child
- parent to staff

Zero Tolerance shall be defined as and require the immediate expulsion from the program based on a decision by the site director. This decision will be reviewed by the owners at the next scheduled meeting. Expulsion from the program shall be in writing from the director of the program to the affected party and exercised in a timely manner.

All prepaid tuition amounts will be reimbursed by the program on or about the time of expulsion. Should there be strong indications that a parent, guardian or alternate pick up designee is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or is otherwise impaired; staff will take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of the enrolled child. Including but not limited to: discouraging the parent, guardian or alternate pick up designee from picking

up the child, contacting the other parent, guardian or alternate pick up designee. Should the person attempting to pick up the child become uncooperative, disruptive or combative, The Learning Lab staff will contact the appropriate authorities.

PROPERTY DAMAGE

Parents are liable for damages to school or program property caused by a child who has disregarded the guidelines, rules, regulations and/or policies of the programs and will be required to repair or replace the damaged item. Failure to make payment or replace an item shall result in termination from the program.

SPECIAL SNACKS & TREATS

From time to time, The Learning Lab at Cowabunga's will prepare special snacks or treats for the children. If your child has any special instructions or allergies please notify the Director.

APPROPRIATE CLOTHING/SHOES

All children will participate in indoor play. Please be sure your child is properly dressed for indoor activities and is prepared for traveling outside for field trips. It is highly recommended that you label clothing. In the colder months, on days when a winter jacket is required children must have one in order to go. Please make sure your child is prepared for these times. Please make sure your child has socks and sneakers.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

Children are not permitted to bring medication (prescribed or non-prescribed) to the program to self-administer. Parents are encouraged to arrange for medication to be administered prior to or after program hours whenever possible. If the child's doctor is asked, prescriptions can often be written to accommodate this. When it is absolutely essential that medication be given during program hours, a "Request for Administering Medication" form must be completed by both the parents and the child's physician and submitted to the site director.

All necessary forms must be completed and returned to the program before any medication can be administered. All medication brought into the program for distribution to a child must be in the original container. The bottle must be prescribed to the individual receiving the medication, and state the correct dosage amount, as we can

only administer the dosage indicated on the label. The Learning Lab cannot distribute outdated medication or medication in an old prescription bottle. Please carefully review the guidelines included with the “Request for Administering of Medication” form.

ABUSE

The ultimate reason that all employees work at The Learning Lab is for the care and development of our communities’ children. Part of this care is the assurance that the children are not subject to abuse.

Under New Hampshire law, “any person having reason to suspect” abuse and/or neglect of a child is required to report it to the State. Employees of The Learning Lab must comply with these requirements.

The New Hampshire Child Care Licensing guidelines require that all employees must complete “Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect” training within 90 days of hire.

The Learning Lab prohibits private, one-on-one interaction between an employee and child. At least two employees are always present when there is a child in their care. Employees will be present in all areas where children are present. All Learning Lab. Staff have a responsibility to prevent child abuse and neglect of any children involved in our program.

Child abuse is defined as anyone eighteen years of age or younger, who has been:

- Sexually abused; or
- Intentionally physically injured; or
- Psychologically injured so that said child exhibits symptoms of emotional problems generally recognized to result from consistent mistreatment or neglect; or
- Physically injured by other than accidental means; or
- Subjected, by any person, to human trafficking as defined in RSA 633:7; or
- Subjected to an act prohibited by RSA 632-A:10-d. Child neglect is defined as a child: •
- Who has been abandoned by his or her parents, guardian, or custodian; or
- Who is without proper parental care or control, subsistence, education as required by law, or other care or control necessary for the child's physical, mental, or emotional health, when it is established that the child's health has suffered or is likely to suffer serious impairment; and the deprivation is not due

primarily to the lack of financial means of the parents, guardian, or custodian; or
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- Whose parents, guardian or custodian are unable to discharge their responsibilities to and for the child because of incarceration, hospitalization or other physical or mental incapacity; Provided, that no child who is, in good faith, under treatment solely by spiritual means through prayer in accordance with the tenets and practices of a recognized church or religious denomination by a duly accredited practitioner thereof shall, for that reason alone, be considered to be a neglected child under the Child Protection Act. Prevention of abuse and neglect at The Learning Lab..

It is also the responsibility of the Learning Lab . to prevent any abuse or neglect that could happen at our program. In order to prevent abuse and neglect at our program the following are done:

- Review the approved and prohibited disciplinary techniques on a yearly basis;
- Brainstorm to help staff figure out ways to deal with disruptive behaviors;
- Review the indicators of abuse and neglect on a yearly basis;
- Conduct a thorough check of the references of new staff; • Orient new staff using the above policy;
- Supervise new staff on a close and consistent basis;
- Do a background check on all staff;
- Volunteers from organized high school programs are directly supervised by the Staff.

The Learning Lab does not utilize other adult volunteers.

SERVICES OUTSIDE OF PROGRAM HOURS

The Learning Lab is not responsible for, nor shall it incur any liability with respect to any private arrangements made between staff and families for services outside of the program and its hours of operation. Any private arrangements, employment, contracts and/or agreements between parent/legal guardian and staff of this center (e.g. babysitting, home child care, private transportation arrangements, etc.) outside of the program is considered an individual endeavor and private matter, not approved, endorsed by, nor connected with The Learning Lab at Cowabunga's. Parents/legal guardians and staff agree to hold the Learning Lab harmless in conjunction with any such private arrangements.

PARENT GRIEVANCE

In the event that a parent has a complaint concerning a child's care, this should be discussed with the site director who will attempt to resolve the situation. If the complaint remains unresolved, the issue should be addressed in writing to the owner who will make every attempt to resolve the situation, and provide a resolution.

COMMUNICATIONS

It is the parent's responsibility to check their emails each day for important notices and memos. Please feel free to ask questions or share concerns that you have regarding your child or the program. Appointments to speak privately with the site director as needed may also be arranged. The site direct can be reached by telephone at (603) 935-9659. The answering machine or a staff member may answer when you call. Please leave a message and your call will be returned as soon as possible.