



Preschool &  
Early Childhood Education Centers  
**Handbook**

Updated November 2021

Please review this entire handbook and pay particular attention to the items in the starred sections\* of the Table of Contents below. ~Please be aware that the information in this handbook is subject to change~

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#### OUR VISION

We envision a world where all people know they belong.

#### OUR MISSION

We support people with disabilities and their families to lead fulfilling lives by providing opportunities to learn and be connected with others.



Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Welcome to Racker Preschool and Early Childhood Education Centers (ECEC)! We are thrilled to have you and your child join us. Preschool is such an important and exciting time for children. The experiences that children have early in their lives affect their development physically, cognitively, emotionally and socially. The best investment to ensure the future success of our children is to be involved in the early years of their lives and their educational experiences.

As we embrace Racker's mission, vision, and Circle of Courage, our goal is to provide an enriching experience for your child through high quality, collaborative programming. Our partnership with you involves differing roles and responsibilities and this handbook is intended to provide you with a general overview of these, as well as our goals and guiding principles. We invite you to please review the handbook in its entirety as a means of developing a transparent and collaborative partnership.

We value and appreciate working with you in the development and growth of your child's early years. We look forward to watching the incredible transformations your children will demonstrate throughout their time at Racker Preschool and ECEC. Welcome again to Racker!

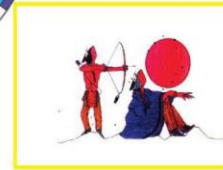
Warmly,

Patrick Schloupt - Tompkins and Tioga Preschool Director  
Sonia Ferro, Cortland Preschool Director

### CIRCLE OF COURAGE

**GENEROSITY** is compassion, empathy, and altruism, the truest form of caring for others.

**BELONGING** encompasses our relationships and human interdependence.



**INDEPENDENCE** is the power to make decisions, to problem solve, to be responsible, and to grow.

**MASTERY** is success, achievement, and motivation.

*Artwork by Lakota artist, George Blue Bird. For more information on the Circle of Courage, visit [www.reclaiming.com](http://www.reclaiming.com).*

## RACKER PRESCHOOL & EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CENTERS

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**TOMPKINS COUNTY**  
**Tompkins Preschool and Early  
Childhood Education Center**

Address:  
3226 Wilkins Road  
Ithaca, NY 14850

Phone Number:  
(607) 272-5891

Toll-Free Number:  
(800) 336-1660

**CORTLAND COUNTY**  
**Cortland Preschool and Early  
Childhood Education Center**

Address:  
882 Rte. 13  
Cortland, NY 13045

Phone Number:  
(607) 753-9375

Toll-Free Number:  
(866) 408-9263

**TIOGA COUNTY**  
**Washington-Gladden  
Administrative Offices**

Address:  
1277 Taylor Rd, Suite 33, East Wing  
Owego, NY 13827

Phone Number:  
(607) 272-5891

Toll-Free Number:  
(866) 336-1660

**The listing of hours and community classroom information is included in your enrollment packet.  
Please contact us if you'd like another copy or if you have any questions.**

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**Tompkins/Tioga Program Director, Patrick Schloupt**  
607-272-5891  
PatrickS@racker.org

**Cortland Program Director, Sonia Ferro**  
607-753-9375  
SoniaFCP@racker.org

**Clinic Director, Anne Schneider**  
(607) 277-8020, ext. 505  
annes1@racker.org

**Associate Executive Director, Cristine Donovan**  
(607) 272-5891, ext. 277  
cris@racker.org

**Executive Director, Daniel R. Brown**  
(607)272-5891

### WEBSITE

This handbook, documents, a link to the Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS) regulations ([http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/daycare\\_regulations.asp](http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/daycare_regulations.asp)), and other useful information about Racker is available on our website at [www.racker.org](http://www.racker.org).

*In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call (866) 632-9992 (voice) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*



Racker is a voluntary not-for-profit dedicated to creating a world where all people know they belong. Throughout the organization's history, our goal has always been to be responsive to the needs of individuals not only to provide services, but also to offer each person, family, and community opportunities for growth and learning. The founding of our organization in 1948 was based on valuing diversity and on appreciating the many things all people have in common. Our mission, vision and the Circle of Courage, universally apply to all people, including those we support and employ.

Racker currently serves nearly 3,000 individuals and their families. Our main service areas include Early Childhood, Clinical, Mental Health, Community Support, Residential and our Learning Initiative. We have over 35 sites in Tompkins, Cortland, and Tioga Counties and employ more than 900 people, making Racker one of the largest employers in our area. Licensed by five state agencies, Racker offers a range of services including preschool special education, clinical therapies, mental health treatment programs, residential opportunities, and community support services. These are designed to promote the specific goals of participants and their families in environments that are inclusive, strength-based, and person-centered.

### **DESCRIPTION OF OUR PRESCHOOL AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CENTERS**



Racker's Special Education Preschool and Early Childhood Education Centers are dedicated to providing a high-quality experience in a safe, caring, and nurturing environment. We provide a developmentally appropriate setting and program for children ages 18 months through 5 years old. We employ master's level teachers and teacher to child ratios that are enhanced to support an environment where children are viewed as sources of information, where we value children being listened to rather than passively listening, where we engage in conversations driven by the child's natural curiosity to explore, question and learn.

Additionally, our increased levels of staffing support our model environment where movement, exploration, motion, dance, arts, books, and hands on learning is recognized and developed. Experience is not the only teacher, it is the best teacher and we believe in the power of supporting the development of children's natural desire to explore, experience, problem-solve and grow.

Layered into our underlying early childhood philosophy, we incorporate a developmentally appropriate curriculum that is specific and modified to each child's development and learning styles and goals. Our curriculum is aligned with New York State Education Department's Learning Standards and also targets the importance of social emotional health and resilience in conjunction with cognitive, language, play, literacy and physical development.

We know the first five years of life are critically important for the physical, social-emotional, and cognitive development of a child. Our programs for 18 months to 5 year olds use a thematic and multi-sensory approach to learning and we provide an integrated atmosphere where children play and learn side by side with others of various and diverse abilities.

Children are offered a wide variety of learning opportunities. These include arts and crafts, music, and both large and small group instruction. We stress all areas of gross and fine



motor skills, socialization, independence, personal care, and school readiness. Our goal is to provide as much of an individualized program as possible, integrating our Child Care and Special Education Preschool programs together, allowing children to learn to appreciate each other's strengths and challenges. The inclusive nature of our programs provide opportunities for children of all abilities to learn and grow together. The relationships and sense of belonging, which occurs between all of the children, sets the stage for children to celebrate the diversity that they will experience in their homes, communities, and lives as adults.

Our programs are licensed and regulated by the New York State Office of Children's and Family Services (OCFS) and the State Education Department (SED) and subject to all applicable laws and regulations pertaining to child care and special education preschool programs.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION PRESCHOOL PROGRAM**

The Special Education Preschool Program are comprised of inclusive classrooms in Tompkins, Tioga, and Cortland Counties for children who have been identified, referred, and authorized through their local school district. Our classrooms are integrated, either in partnerships with our Child Care programs or provided in community classrooms. Teamwork is integral to special education at Racker. We use a trans-disciplinary approach, where therapists work together with the classroom professionals to support each child's needs and development. Therapeutic skills and goals are carried over into the classroom setting and supported by all staff.



Social workers are a part of each classroom team and attend weekly meetings to address individual, family, and classroom concerns. Social work provides a consistent resource for families to glean information regarding diagnosis, evaluations, behavior strategies, equipment, medical assistance, special education, and more. Our therapy staff includes professionals with many years of experience and many specialized areas of expertise including, but not limited to: autism, challenging behaviors, feeding disorders, sensory processing, multiple disabilities, and neurological disorders. Many children in the Special Education Preschool Program may be eligible for additional supports and services including OPWDD (Office for People with Developmental Disabilities) services and Children's Health Home Care Management.

### **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CENTERS (ECEC OR CHILD CARE)**

Our Early Childhood Education Centers offer numerous Child Care programs, also referred to as daycare services. These include child care for toddlers (18 months to 3 years), child care for preschool aged children (3 years to 5 years), and preschool wrap-around child care. These programs, which are open to the community, offer services to both typically developing children and children with special needs. We operate at two sites, in Cortland County and Tompkins County (see page 4 for site locations).



We employ a cooperative approach that promotes learning by both children and staff through exploring each other's strengths and differences. During the core hours of each day, the Child Care programs integrate with the Special Education Preschool Program, where all children are exposed to and participate in our curriculum driven activities and lessons.

**Please note** – The toddler child care program is available only in Tompkins County and the wrap-around child care is only available to children enrolled in our special education preschool program at the Racker sites.

### AN EXAMPLE OF A DAILY ROUTINE

The following is an outline of a typical day in Racker's Preschool and Early Childhood Education Centers. Times and activities will vary depending on the program and the classroom. If you have any questions about your child's routine, please ask your child's teacher.

**Arrival-9:00 AM:** Free choice (children may choose from a wide variety of activities and play)

**9:00-9:30 AM:** Breakfast, handwashing before and after meal

**9:30-10:00 AM:** Group activities (stories, learning games, show and tell, group discussions, etc.)

**10:00-10:30 AM:** Projects/Arts and Crafts

**10:30-11:00AM:** Tabletop activities (puzzles, thematic art activities, pegboards, any fine motor activity)

**11:00-11:30 AM:** Gross motor time outside or in the gym (during inclement weather), handwashing after coming in from outside

**11:30 AM-12:00 PM:** Lunch, handwashing before and after meal

**12:00-1:30 PM:** Various activities depending on the classroom (small group and center time, free choice time, quiet reading, music or work bins, gross motor time)



**1:30PM:** Buses arrive for Preschool children not enrolled in Child Care services

**1:30-3:00 PM:** Nap time and/or quiet activities

**3:00-3:30 PM:** Snack, handwashing before and after snack

**3:30-4:30 PM:** Quiet choice time (children may choose from a wide variety of activities and play. Art, story time, and other enrichment activities are offered.)

**4:30-5:30 PM:** Gross motor time outside or in the gym (during inclement weather), handwashing after coming in from outside

**\*Good hygiene practices are encouraged throughout the day.** Handwashing occurs after bathroom breaks, before and after any meals, and after coming in from outside play.



## OUR AMAZING STAFF

Our staff are the heart and soul of our program. We are fortunate to have staff with a wide variety of education, experiences, skills, and talents. All staff, including teachers, assistants, and therapists, complete ongoing professional development and are carefully screened to ensure safety.

Here are a few specifics about the staff we employ in our Preschool and Child Care programs:

- All staff are screened, fingerprinted, and cleared through the NYS child abuse central registry.
- A minimum of one staff person per classroom is certified in CPR and First Aid.
- All staff receive ongoing training in child development
- We offer a low staff: child ratio.



**Substitutes:** In the event a staff member is absent, we use substitute staff in the classroom. All substitute staff receive the same screens and training as regular classroom staff. They are supervised by and have access to site and program directors, as well as are paired with permanent classroom staff to ensure consistency and routine in programming.

## ENROLLMENT

Applications for enrollment are accepted on a first come/first served basis. A child's initial and continued enrollment is provisional on our ability to meet that child's needs. We offer tours of the sites and community classrooms to families prior to or after enrollment. We determine which classroom and professionals will meet your child's needs. Unfortunately, we cannot take special requests for classroom or staff placements.

Enrollment procedures and policies are different for each program. Please continue reading for more details.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION PRESCHOOL CLASSROOMS

Only full time enrollment is available for the Special Education Preschool program. Referrals for Special Education Preschool Services comes to us via the child's school district. If you are interested in this program, please contact your home school district and ask for the Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) Chairperson.



**Individualized Education Plan (IEP)** – The therapies and special instruction we provide in this program are based on your child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). This plan, written with the help of your school district's Committee on Preschool Special Education, will list the recommended services to be provided, how often, and how long the services may take place. Based on the committee recommendations and subsequently approved IEP, our Medical Director will provide the prescriptions for therapies. Both the IEP and prescriptions for therapies are needed prior to beginning the recommended therapies.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CENTERS (CHILD CARE)

If you are interested in enrolling your child in one of our child care programs, please contact the program site you are interested in to start the process. Full time and part time enrollment are available; however, priority will be given to full time enrollment.

Children who are enrolled part time can only attend on the days they are scheduled. We cannot substitute another day during the week on a week-to-week basis because of scheduling requirements. Please see the "Schedule" section on pages 13-14 for more details.

## DETAILS AND GUIDELINES

**Anti-Discrimination Policy:** No child will be discriminated against on the basis of their race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), or abilities.

**Enrollment Fee:** An enrollment fee is due at the time your child begins the child care program. Special Education Services are provided at no cost to families. Please reference the Fee Schedule included in your enrollment packet and on our website.

## DISCHARGE NOTIFICATION AND PROCESS

Discharge determination and notification depends upon the program the child is enrolled. The following explains how and when decisions are made for discharge, as well as the process for discharge.

### SPECIAL EDUCATION PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

**Discharge Determination:** Your school district's Committee on Pre-School Special Education (CPSE), not Racker, determines your child's discharge from services.

#### **Discharge Process:**

- Upon CPSE's determination of discharge, the school district will notify you and Racker. At this point, Racker will end services.
- If you move from one school district to another, *enrollment* from one school district's preschool special education program will transfer to another school district, if the new school district CPSE determines continued enrollment to be appropriate.
- Please note: Racker provides pre-school special education services through several school districts. If the new school district is within any of those districts and they have determined continued enrollment, your child's services *may* continue with Racker.
- If, for whatever reason, the school district determines to discharge your child from services:
  - Anything connected to your child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) such as Standard notes; progress reports; evaluations; etc., will be available and may be obtained through the school district.
  - If your child has left any personal possessions at the Racker pre-school site, please contact Racker so you may schedule a time to collect them.

### EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CENTERS (CHILD CARE)

#### **Discharge Process:**

- If you decide to have your child discharged (withdrawn) from Racker ECEC:
  - You are required to provide Racker written notification.
  - Racker requests a two-week notice prior to discharge.
  - **Full tuition fee for two weeks will be charged to you if adequate prior notice to withdraw is not received.**
- Your child may be discharged due to a breach of contract which may include a delinquent status in your tuition balance, if a resolution is not achieved. If you are discharged due to Racker action:
  - Racker will provide you written notification that will include a reason and an end date of services. After the end date, your child will not be enrolled or able to participate in Racker ECEC programs.

## CHILD CARE TUITION, FEES, AND PAYMENTS

Tuition is required for the Child Care programs in our ECEC, including Wrap-Around care.

## **TUITION NOTIFICATION AND AGREEMENT**

Enrollment contracts become effective the first day your child enters the program. You will receive a letter stating the total tuition you paid for the calendar year in January. Child care programs institute a minimum of 3% increase for tuition every January. Direct any questions or concerns regarding your contract, tuition, billing, and payments to your program site.

## **PAYMENT FEE SCHEDULE**

Please note the following items in reference to paying your child's tuition:

- Payments for services must be made on a regular basis.
- Your balance should be \$0 at the end of December.
- A new contract is required every January. We will provide you with the new contract every year.
- Fees are due whether or not your child attends on scheduled days per your tuition agreement. Full fees will be due for individual days when you choose to keep your child out of school for any reason, if your child is sick, or on family vacations.
- Racker reserves the right to raise tuition with two weeks written notice.
- An income-based sliding scale and subsidies are available to those who qualify. Please see "Tuition Assistance and Discounts" for more details.
- **Fees are subject to a minimum 3% increase every January.**
- Please note that an **enrollment fee** is required when your child begins the program.

Please see our website or contact your program's staff for the most up-to-date tuition rates and fees.

**Failure to Pay:** Failure to pay is considered a violation of your contract with us and could result in the loss of your child care space. If you are experiencing financial difficulties, please consult your program's staff as soon as possible. We are available to help with financial problems that may arise and temporary adjustments and fee schedules may be instituted in an emergency. Emergency short-term aid for child care costs is sometimes available through the Child Care Council.

**Please be aware that failure to keep your account current or make arrangements during financial hardships will result in termination of services. All accounts that are 2 weeks overdue are delinquent.**

**Returned checks:** Checks returned for insufficient funds are subject to a \$15.00 fee. We understand that an oversight may happen on occasion. Our policy is that if more than one check is returned for insufficient funds, we will only accept money orders or cash for future payments.

## **TUITION ASSISTANCE AND DISCOUNTS**

There are numerous tuition assistance programs available including an income-based sliding scale and subsidy agreements. Please contact your program's site for information in applying to these programs.

**Subsidy Agreements:** Low-income working parents/caregivers may be eligible for assistance through the Department of Social Services (DSS) Childcare Unit. If approved, you have the responsibility to pay the stated contribution, which is not determined by Racker. Payments not made may result in termination of care and the contract and notification of suspended/terminate services will be made to the subsidizing agency, which may result in the loss of the child care subsidy. It is critical that you work closely with DSS to maintain this support. Please contact us if you need assistance and notify Racker of any changes in your child care subsidy as soon as it occurs.

**Sibling Discount:** Families with more than one child enrolled will receive a 10% discount on the tuition of the oldest child.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

### COMMUNICATION

At Racker, we value ongoing and consistent contact between parents/caregivers and staff. To foster a partnership that will benefit your child, we request that you inform us of any changes as soon as possible that will impact your child's care. Below is a list, not all-inclusive, of some of the things that are helpful and essential for us to know:

- If your child will not be attending or will be late on a regularly scheduled day.
- If your child's schedule is going to change.
- Before and when you move.
- If custody or home dynamics have changed. We need any court orders as soon as possible.
- Anytime contact information, especially for emergencies, has changed.
- If you need to update or remove anyone from the list of individuals authorized to pick up your child.
- Overall, if any information provided in your enrollment packet has changed. This includes: medical information, nap information, contact information, and more.



Staff will always be willing to talk with you about your child or the program when you have questions, comments, or concerns. When appropriate, conversations will be conducted in private to maintain confidentiality.

If you need to talk to us by phone, please call our offices during program hours. You may also leave a message with the main office and a staff member will get back to you.

**Classroom Communication:** Each child has a designated cubby. Please check this area daily as well as your child's bag for reports, projects, fliers, and/or letters being sent home. For children who take the bus home, this communication will be sent home in back packs.

In some cases, teachers and therapists will have a notebook that can be shared back and forth. It is a great way to ask questions and to comment on progress made during a therapy session, at school, or home. If you would like to start a notebook, please let your teacher and/or therapist know.

**Therapy and Sessions:** There are many ways to stay informed and involved in your child's therapy sessions. Besides having free-flowing communication between you and your child's teacher and therapist, as mentioned above, you can occasionally ask to schedule a session with your child's therapist at a pick up or drop off time so you can observe a session. This is a great way to be a part of a session and share information. It also provides opportunities for carrying over activities and/or modeling. Please contact your therapist to ask if you can schedule a session.

**Electronic Communication:** Increasingly, communication is happening in an electronic format (email, texting, zoom, etc.), and using this type of communication does hold some risks. With this in mind, we will request that

you fill out a form titled Permission for Electronic Communication. This document is to give us permission to correspond with you via various forms of electronic communication that you will select. These include: fax, e-mail, cell phone, texting, and video chat. The permission may be cancelled at any time by you, but cannot be retroactive.

**SchoolMessenger:** Racker now utilizes SchoolMessenger Communicate, a notification system to provide site or classroom communication to you in the methods you select in your enrollment packet. This can be via text message, email, and/or auto-dialing. We will use this system to inform you of emergency information, such as evacuations, snow days, and other general information specific to your child's site or classroom. Please see your enrollment packet for more information.

## **BILL OF RIGHTS**

Please refer to the "Bill of Rights" included in the appendix (page 25) for a list of your child's rights as participants in our program.

## **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE**

**Arrival and Departure:** Arrival and departure time is dependent on the program your child is enrolled in and the agreements made during enrollment. Please be prompt in dropping off and picking up your child and inform us if there are any issues.

***Transportation*** – Children enrolled in the Special Education Preschool Programs have the option to be picked up by the bus in the morning and dropped off at the end of the school day, if not enrolled in Wrap-Around child care. The county provides these buses and you will be able to arrange for pick-up during enrollment. Please contact the county for their transportation plan and if you have any questions.



**Signing in and out:** A daily sign-in and sign-out sheet will be posted in each classroom for those children whose family provides transportation to/from program. Children have to be signed in each morning and out each afternoon by the adult dropping them off and picking them up. Please see "Authorization to pick up your child" below for details regarding who is allowed to pick up your child.

**Absences:** Children are able to learn best with consistency and routine. If your child is unable to attend on a particular day, please contact the coordinator of your child's program. For children in the Special Education Programs, excessive absences may limit the number of therapy sessions your child receives. If there is an illness or circumstance that is impacting your child's ability to attend regularly, please contact us as soon as possible.

**Late Pick-ups:** Your child worries and is upset if you are late; teachers must also leave on time to get to their own homes and families. If a child is not picked up at the end of the program day, the staff will begin calling parents or primary caregivers and all other emergency numbers that you have listed in your child's enrollment paperwork. If no one can be contacted after all available numbers have been called, it may be reported as possible abandonment.

***Late Fee*** – A late fee of \$5.00 for the first 15 minutes and \$1.00 for every minute thereafter will be applied to your next tuition bill for failure to pick up your child on time. Habitual lateness may result in termination of services.

**Authorization to pick up your child:** If someone other than a parent/caregiver will be picking up a child from school, please give advanced notice. You will create a list of responsible persons on your Child Information

Form included in your enrollment packet. We cannot release a child to someone who is not on the list or does not have written permission. If a court order exists, we must have a copy on file.

In an emergency, you may contact the program staff to arrange someone else to pick up your child. For the safety of the child, the staff will ask for valid identification before releasing them.

***Changing authorization to pick up your child*** – You may update the list of adults authorized to pick up your child at any time. You will be required to resubmit the form before the changes go into effect. Please contact program staff for more details.

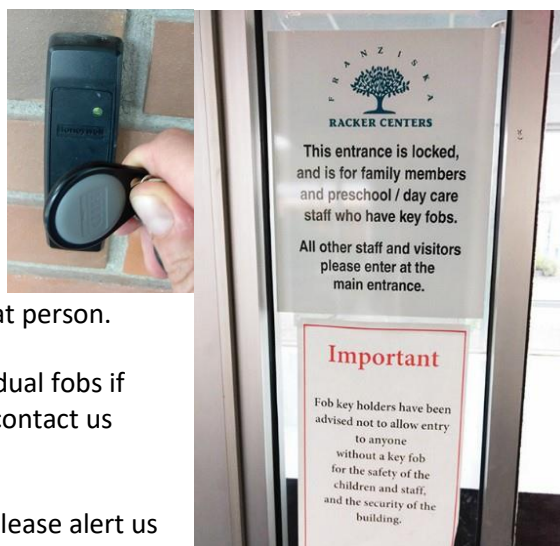
## **BUILDING ACCESS**

Safety is of critical importance to us. Racker's buildings are secured by a fob system and our partner locations have security within their buildings.

Families and caregivers who pick up and/or drop off their children at Racker's buildings will be given a fob for access to the building. The fob allows families to enter the otherwise locked building with a simple swipe on the pad. This system is designed to promote the safety and security of the children and staff in the building.

There are a few things to note:

- Fobs are given to caregivers for use when their child is in our program. The fob needs to be returned when it is no longer needed, or when your child is no longer in our care.
- Fobs are assigned to specific people and they are not to be shared. If your circumstances change and a different person will be picking up or dropping off your child, please contact us to arrange for a fob for that person.
- We are able to turn off access to the building for individual fobs if they are lost or otherwise need to be disabled. Please contact us if/when this occurs.
- If your child's custody or pick-up permission changes, please alert us as soon as possible, so we can evaluate what changes to building access via the fobs need to happen.
- Please do not hold the door open for others. It is hard not to, but it is important to limit access to the building for everyone's safety.



## **SCHEDULE**

**Schedule Changes in our ECEC:** If your child care schedule needs to be changed, please contact us with a minimum of two weeks' notice. We will accommodate the changes as our scheduling and availability allows. A new contract and approval is required before changes may take effect. Any changes that are made can only be on a permanent basis. We cannot accommodate week-to-week changes or changes multiple times a year due to scheduling and staffing requirements.

**Program Hours:** Program hours of operation are contingent on location. Community special education preschool classroom hours are dependent on the school district they are in and can change year to year.



**Program Calendars:** Our ECEC and Preschool will be open year round with the exception of predetermined calendar holidays, staff development days, program breaks, and locally determined emergency closure days (i.e. Snow days). Please see Racker’s published calendars for exact holidays and scheduled closes, as they vary from year-to-year, and plan accordingly. The calendar for your program will be provided in your enrollment packet and are also available on our website. In the event of any changes, families are given ample notification.

**Closings, Delayed Openings, and Early Dismissal due to Weather:** We will make every effort to remain open during bad weather, but parents/caregivers should check our website and Facebook page for school closings and delays in the event of extreme weather conditions. We will also utilize a communication system to inform you of these instances and provide details to the Cayuga Radio Group (<http://cyradiogroup.com/>). For community-based special education preschool classrooms, closings will be dependent on the school district.



On occasion, Racker will have early dismissals due to bad road conditions, but the Early Childhood Education Centers (child care programs) will remain open until all of the children have been picked up. If it appears necessary to close before the end of a program day, we will either contact you via our notification system or a staff member will contact you by phone.

***Early Childhood Education Centers*** – Our child care programs close only on very rare occasions, even when our Special Education Preschools are closed. Please pay particular attention to any weather-related announcements. If there is a change to the standard hours of our ECEC, it will clearly state that on our website and Facebook page and through our communication system to families.

**Fieldtrips:** Classrooms can take fieldtrips periodically throughout the year. If your program participates in these off-campus trips, you will be required to fill out an “Activities Permission Form” and the “Transportation Consent Form.” These forms are effective throughout your child’s enrollment but can be revoked in writing (Note: revocation cannot be retroactive). Your child’s teacher will inform you of the specific activity dates in advance. Please submit in writing if you do not wish your child to attend services prior to the day of the field trip. Parents and caregivers are more than welcome to join us on these fun and educational trips. Please notify your child’s teacher ahead of time if you wish to attend.



***Transportation for Fieldtrips*** – We contract buses for fieldtrips as needed and will notify parents of any changes of vendor. During initial enrollment, if your program will have fieldtrips requiring transportation, parents/caregivers will be notified of our Transportation Plan (also included in the Appendix, page 26) and must sign the “Transportation Consent Form” in order for their child to participate.

***Swimming Statement*** – Some programs participate in swim programs. You give permission to participate in these programs through the “Activities Permission Form.” During the swim programs, there will be a certified lifeguard present and a person certified in CPR and first-aid.

## CLOTHING AND ITEMS

Your child will need the following items with them on the first day of their program and maintain them throughout the program as needed:

- **A complete change of weather-appropriate clothing** including socks, underwear, pants, shirt, etc. Sometimes accidents and spills happen. These items can remain at school in the classroom or their cubby. As the weather changes, please be sure to update the items as needed.
- **A pillow, blanket, or naptime snuggle toy** (if this will help them feel more secure). These items will only be available to your child during naptime. If any of these items need to be sent home daily for bedtime, please check your child's cubby and book bag at the end of day. If the item is particularly well loved or special, please leave the item at home. We will encourage children to be responsible, but we cannot be responsible for broken or misplaced toys.
- **A backpack** for your child to carry items to and from school.
- **Diapers and related items** (wipes, diaper cream, etc.) if your child is not yet potty-trained. It is your responsibility to provide these items where necessary.
- **Necessary over-the-counter (OTC) topical items** in their original container (including diaper cream). You will have to sign and return the "Authorization for Use of Over-the-Counter Topical Products" form before we are allowed to administer them. Please see the "Over-the-Counter (OTC) Topical Products" section on page 18 for more information.
  - **Sunscreen.** Please do not supply aerosol spray sunscreen. If you are unable to supply sunscreen, Racker will provide and utilize a topical sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher.
- **Any prescription medications** indicated in your Medical Information Form during enrollment, labeled with your child's first and last name with instructions for use. Please review the "Protocol for Medication Administration" on page 17 before dropping off medications.



**Toys:** Toys from home are not allowed in the classroom, except in the cases of "show and tell" or for naptime (stuffed animals or snuggle toys). In these cases, the toys will be put away until it is time to use them. If your child needs a toy or object to help acclimate to the program, please discuss finding a transitional object in the classroom with your child's teacher. If a toy is brought in from home, it will need to stay in your child's cubby for the day and will be sent home at the end of the day. Each classroom's rules can vary, so please speak to your child's teacher with questions.



**Show and Tell:** Your child's teacher will inform you if there will be a "share" or "show and tell" day when toys can be brought to school and what the policies for those days will be. Please discourage your child from bringing electronic, expensive, or well-loved, special toys as well as any small items with many parts. Although we will attempt to keep track of things and encourage children to be responsible, we cannot be responsible for broken toys.

**Clothing:** Please have your child wear comfortable play clothes and sneakers, or sturdy shoes, no sandals please. We play hard, and tend to get messy at times. Children will be spending time outside daily, weather permitting; their clothing should be appropriate to weather conditions. For example, during the winter months please send hats, mittens/gloves, and a snowsuit or snow pants. You are responsible for making sure your child is comfortable daily.



***Change of Clothes*** – Please know that we sometimes get involved in messy activities.

*Parents/caregivers must provide a full change of clothes that can remain at the program. Label clothes and change them seasonally. Reminders will be sent home to update clothing as the seasons change.*

**Other Details:**

- Please do not allow your child to bring money, candy, or gum.
- Toy guns or weapons are not allowed under any circumstances.
- Books and tapes that can be easily labeled and saved for a special time of the day are always welcome.

**FOOD SERVICE AND MEALS**

Meals and snacks are provided daily at no cost to you. Varying based on your child's program, they may receive breakfast, lunch, and one snack. Only children enrolled in our child care programs, including wrap-around care, will receive an afternoon snack. Please ask your child's teacher if you have any questions.

At the Racker sites, we provide homemade meals from our kitchen. If your child is in a community-based classroom, the school district or the facility provides the food. Contact your program for more information.

Racker menus are available upon request and uploaded on our website. Menus for the community-based classrooms in school districts are available on the school district's website. Contact your program for menus for other community-based classrooms.



**Food Programs:** Racker is pleased to provide healthy food for all children in our programs! We are committed to serving your child healthy and wholesome meals at no cost to you, regardless of your income. How we are able to do so varies by program location and is described below.

At our Racker sites, we participate in the **Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)**. This reputable program makes sure every meal is nutritious and supports our programs by offsetting some of our food costs each year.

For community classrooms, the schools participate in a similar program called **Free/Reduced Meals Program**. The regulations and standards promote the same ideals as CACFP.

***Income Eligibility Form*** – In order for us to qualify for reimbursement and discounts, we request that you fill out an *Income Eligibility Form*, regardless of eligibility. The form is provided in your enrollment packet. This form is extremely important in our role of providing your child with healthy meals and snacks. All the information provided on the form is completely confidential and is used for internal billing purposes only. It needs to be updated annually.

*Please do not hesitate to contact us with questions or concerns regarding the food programs or the Income Eligibility Form.*

**Dietary Limitations:** If your child has any special dietary needs or limitations, please discuss this with your child's teacher. You will be able to indicate these on your Medical Information Form provided in your enrollment packet to indicate these.

***CACFP Medical Statement*** – If your child cannot eat the food provided by the program due to medical reasons, we will need a medical statement filled out by your child's health care provider so we can still meet the requirements of the CACFP program. Please contact your program with questions or concerns.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

**Physical and Immunization Requirements:** A current physical and up to date immunizations are required for your child to be enrolled in our programs. Medical exemptions, from a physician, are the only allowable exemptions to the immunization requirements.

Please be sure your child's physician also includes the following information for our records:

- Child's name
- Date of exam
- OCFS Required Statement that your child is free from contagious and communicable diseases and is able to participate in child care
- Indication of any special needs



**Contact Information:** The Child Information Form will be included in your enrollment packet. This form gives us important contact information for you and your family as well as emergency contacts. You will also indicate who has permission to pick up your child. This form can be updated anytime.

**Medical Information:** We require you to fill out the Medical Information Form so you can provide us with important medical details about your child including, but not limited to, your child's health care provider, food and medication allergies, skin conditions, and any prescribed medications your child may be taking. You will also be able to indicate cultural, religious, and other preferences for food. Your signature on this form also gives Racker permission to arrange for emergency health care. Parents will be notified immediately in the event of an emergency involving their child.

**Protocol for Medication Administration:** Racker is authorized to administer regular medications at our Cortland and Tompkins County Programs only. In all counties, if your child has specific medical orders for emergency medications (inhalers/epipen or equivalent only) for a diagnosed condition, please let us know so that an individual medication plan can be developed. If a child needs to receive medication, both prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) nonprescription, while attending program, the following guidelines must be followed:

1. The program **must** have a written order from the child's health care provider in order to give medication. This includes both prescription and OTC medications. The health care provider must indicate the frequency and dosage of the prescribed medicine.
2. Medication orders must be renewed every six months and whenever there is a change in medication or dosage.
3. The program must have written permission from the parent/caregiver in order to give medication.
4. The medication must be brought to the program and given directly to a staff member in a properly labeled original container. If the parent/caregiver is unable to bring in the medication, please contact your child's classroom teacher.
5. Prescription medication must have a pharmacy label on it displaying the child's name, the name of health care provider, the name of the medication, the required dosage, and the directions for administration. You can ask the pharmacist for two labeled prescription containers, one to remain at home and one for the program.
6. Over-the-counter medications must be in the original manufacturer's container or package, with the child's name on it.
7. Only the Medication Administration Trained (MAT) staff, parent/caregiver, or nurse will administer medication to your child.
8. Parents/caregivers should report any change in treatment or medication to your child's teacher

9. Medications will not be given at the program if the above guidelines are not met.

**Over-the-Counter (OTC) Topical Products:** OTC topical products can be dispensed from the original packaging, according to manufacturer's instructions, only if the "Authorization for Use of Over-the-Counter Topical Products" form is on file. This form is included in your enrollment packet and needs to be updated every year.



Parents and the child's health care provider will be consulted as needed. When bringing over-the-counter products to the program, they must be labeled with the child's first and last name with instructions for use.

**Sunscreen** – *We ask that you provide sunscreen lotion for your child. Please do not supply aerosol spray sunscreen. If you are unable to supply sunscreen, Racker will provide and utilize a topical sunscreen of at least SPF15. Please contact your program for ingredients/brand of the sunscreen if needed. Permission is needed to administer sunscreen and is included on the "Authorization for Use of Over-the-Counter Topical Products" form.*

**Protocol for Tick presence:** In the event your child comes to school and a Tick is discovered to be attached to your child, Racker will contact the parent(s)/guardian immediately with clear communication about the need to have the tick removed immediately. You will be requested to pick up your child so that the tick can safely be removed.

**Authorization for Racker to Exchange Information:** As needed, we may have you sign the Authorization for Racker to Exchange Information form. Upon signing this document, you authorize Racker to exchange necessary information regarding your child with an institution or health care provider for one year from date signed. This information can include medical records such as birth and hospitalization records, pediatric records, audiology reports, and more, depending on the selection. You must also acknowledge that you understand the following points:

- Information via electronic transmission (e-mail/fax) may not be secure.
- Others may review your child's records in order to comply with municipal and agency compliance reviews.
- Further, you acknowledge there is the potential for this information to be re-disclosed because of this authorization.
- The agency will follow privacy laws at all times.

You may cancel my authorization at any time (but it cannot be retroactive).

**Illnesses and Exclusion Criteria:** If your child becomes ill during the school day, you will be notified. If your child falls under the exclusion criteria, you will need to come pick up your child. Please review the exclusion criteria list in the Appendix on page 44. This page can be cut out and placed on your fridge for easy access.

**Please note** – *Beyond this criteria, Racker staff has the discretion to exclude a child who is too ill to participate comfortably in activities or requires more care than we can provide. We have the right to override a health care provider's note. **Parents/caregivers will be notified if your child is exposed to a communicable disease. Health alerts will be sent home with all children enrolled.***

**Nap Information:** Depending on your child's program, we have a nap space available if your child needs to nap or should take a nap, after 1:30pm. We provide a classroom and cot or mat, for the children, indicated on your Child Care Nap Agreement. Staff, maintaining a 7:1 ratio or a 5:1 ratio when appropriate, supervise the nap room. Quiet activities are available in a separate space to children who do not nap. You must inform

use of your child's napping preferences in the Child Care Nap Agreement provided to you in your enrollment packet. This is not required if

your child is only enrolled in the

*Cot:*



*Mat:*



Special Education Preschool without afternoon child care, but we do ask for it to be completed in case circumstances change. Please note that after 10-20 minutes, if your child cannot nap, they may be moved to the awake room. A new nap agreement may be requested if staff notice your child is consistently not able to rest during nap time.

**Lead Facts:** Although lead testing is not required, we have provided information from the Department of Health about the dangers of lead exposure in the Appendix on pages 31-32, titled “Get Ahead of Lead Factsheet.”

**Head Lice Information:** If you believe your child has head lice, please contact your child’s teacher or social worker. Once head lice is confirmed, use the treatment of choice at home. The child may return to school after treatment is complete. If you have difficulty obtaining treatment supplies for head lice, please contact us for assistance.

**Childhood Obesity:** Racker is committed to the prevention of childhood obesity. We are participants in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and the schools housing our community classrooms participate in the similar Free/Reduced Meals program. The brochure “Together We Can Raise Healthy Children,” provided in Appendix on pages 33-34, gives great information on how families and programs can teach children healthy eating practices.

**Incidents and Injuries:** In the event of an incident or injury, our staff will use professional and reasonable judgement and follow our response and reporting procedure. We track accidents to improve the environment, enhance training, and increase safety at your child’s program. If a child is injured and the staff have determined through their evaluation that additional medical attention beyond typical first aid is recommended, parents/caregivers will be contacted, using the information provided on the Child Information Form during enrollment, and asked to check the injury and determine if further medical treatment is necessary (i.e. a cut possibly needing stitches). If a child has suffered a serious injury, emergency services will be called immediately. For more information about our procedures on incidents and injuries, please contact your program.

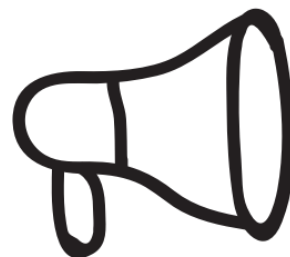
**Suspicion of Child Abuse and Maltreatment:** Please see the Appendix (pages 27-30) for information on how to prevent child abuse and maltreatment as well as some of the warning signs. Also included is information on how to protect your child while in someone else’s care. If you suspect a child is being abused or maltreated in New York State, call the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment at 1-800-342-3720.

We are mandated reporters of child abuse and will report if we have any suspicions of abuse or maltreatment. Please notify your child’s therapist or teacher if your child has any injuries so that they are aware of the situation. It may also impact the therapies or special instruction that can be conducted.

**Evacuation Drills and Plan:** We conduct evacuation drills every month in each Racker location. A report of the drill, including total elapsed time and problem areas is written and kept on file.

We have the following evacuation plan in place in the event of a fire or other emergency:

- **ALARM:** In the event of an emergency, the alarm system should be activated by using a pull station located at any exit. The point person for the building should telephone the fire emergency service. The appropriate phone number shall be posted on all telephones 911.
- **RESCUE:** Efforts should be made to remove any person/persons from imminent physical danger. Fire extinguishers are in strategic areas throughout the building any may be used for rescue efforts.
- **CONFINE:** At the sounding of the alarm, staff should make efforts to confine flames/smoke from spreading by closing all windows and doors after the room has been evacuated without putting themselves in danger.
- **EVACUATE:** Immediately after the alarm is sounded, staff should evacuate all children and others, utilizing the evacuation routes posted in each area of the building. Volunteers and office staff will help program staff with children who need assistance. All children and staff should meet at the predetermined location after exiting the building. Teachers are responsible to carry out the attendance sheet with emergency numbers on a clipboard and that all children in attendance are accounted for and to give the report to the program director or fire chief. The point person is responsible for making sure that the Sign-in/Sign-out sheets are brought out to account for staff, visitors, volunteers, etc. and to give the report to the program director or fire chief.
- **\*\*DO NOT UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES RE-ENTER THE BUILDING\*\***
- Notify the fire department of any concerns and let them handle the situation.



***Primary and Secondary Relocation Sites*** – For our Racker sites, we have designated primary relocation sites in cases of emergency. Please reference the addresses below.

Tompkins Primary Relocation Site: Cayuga Medical Center, 101 Dates Dr., Ithaca, NY 14850 Tompkins Secondary Relocation Site: Museum of the Earth, 1259 Trumansburg Rd, Ithaca, NY 14850

Cortland Primary Relocation Site: Lowe's Home Improvement, 872 NY-13, Cortland, NY 13045

Cortland Secondary Relocation Site: Cort-Lanes, 928 NY-13, Cortland, NY 13045

*In cases where a secondary or tertiary relocation site is warranted, we will defer to guidance by the respective County Emergency Departments.*

***The community classrooms will defer to their school district's or facility's evacuation plans and relocation sites. Please contact them for more details.***

**Safety Drills:** We conduct safety drills revolving around a variety of situations four times a year at each site. Thoughtful preparations are made around the implementation of the drills so they can be as smooth and un-intrusive as possible to the children's daily routines while still effective at gathering the children quickly and quietly to a safe area.

After a drill is completed, you will be informed that the drill has occurred so that you have an opportunity to discuss it with your child.

**Health Information Privacy Practices:** The privacy of you and your child's information is very important to us. Please review the "Notice of Health Information Privacy Practices" in the Appendix on pages 35-39.



**Records:** All information in your child's records is accessible for municipal and agency compliance reviews. When it comes time to dispose of records, Racker may use a record disposal company to shred confidential materials. The record disposal company is bound by confidentiality laws. For children with an IEP and/or that receive therapies and/or special instruction, records are maintained until your child turns 28. For those only in the child care program and that do not have an IEP, records are kept for at least 7 years after your child leaves our program.

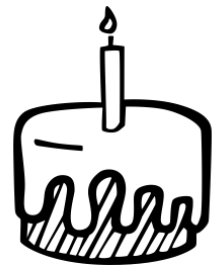
### **PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOTAPING PERMISSION**

As a participant in our programs, a photographer may document your child's activity. In addition to sharing pictures and videos with you about what your child is doing and learning, these photos and videos may be used in agency publications, for training and educational purposes, website or other print or online media to promote the program they are enrolled in, or the agency overall. Photos/videotape images may be used in published agency ads or stories. We do not use photos or videos of your child without your permission and will supply a "Photo/Videotape Permission" form in your enrollment packet.

If permission is given, the items may or may not include first name identification and statements referring to your child in conjunction with the photos or videos. The time frame for permission is unrestricted and all claims for any compensation related to the use of the images are waived. Any permission may be cancelled at any time in writing, but cannot be retroactive.

### **BIRTHDAYS AND HOLIDAYS**

Over the years, Racker has attempted to move away from the traditional celebrations of holidays and birthdays to reflect the diverse population we serve. With this in mind, a more multi-cultural and/or non-sectarian approach has evolved over time. We will be having a "Harvest Festival" in the fall and a "Winter Party" in December. During the months of December through February, many classes will be learning about different cultures and how they celebrate their holidays. The themes of these holidays (family, love, giving, sharing, etc...) will be stressed, rather than particular beliefs. We hope all of our activities will be fun, educational, and promote understanding and respect toward others.



Please consult your child's teacher regarding holiday and birthday celebrations. Each classroom has their own ways and times in which to incorporate parties into the school day.

### **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT**

Racker is dedicated to providing a safe and happy environment where children can learn and progress in their own ways and at their own pace. Part of learning and growing is developing an awareness of ourselves and others as individuals and as part of a group. It is important for children to have a healthy sense of independence, responsibility, respect, and self-worth.

We use a Tiered Positive Behavior Intervention Strategy (PBIS) system. This is an implementation framework that supports the selection and use of evidence-based prevention and intervention practices along a tiered continuum as well as strengthens the academic, social, emotional, and behavioral development of all children.

With this in mind, our main goal is to help the children develop the social and emotional skills necessary for appropriate interactions, cooperation, problem solving, and mutual respect.

The expectations we expect all children to understand and demonstrate are:

1. Keep yourself safe.
2. Keep others safe.
3. Help take care of your own things and things in the room.

4. Stay with the group.
5. Listen to others.

We have found that these basic expectations counter actions which create unsafe situations or unhappiness in others and ourselves.

We are fortunate to employ highly skilled and experienced staff who have a variety of strategies for promoting self-esteem, cooperation, problem solving, understanding and other social skills necessary to be successful within a group, the classroom and the larger world ahead.

Staff will use verbal reminders, positive reinforcement, ignoring, physical prompting, distracting, redirection, etc. **STAFF WILL NEVER EMPLOY ANY FORM OF BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT THAT MAY JEOPARDIZE YOUR CHILD'S MENTAL OR PHYSICAL HEALTH.**

During times when a child is unable to remain with the group due to creating a disruptive or unsafe situation, and other techniques have proven ineffective, staff may ask that child to sit for a few minutes away from the group and think about the classroom rules. Staff will remain in close proximity and in view of the child. Staff will review what happened, why it was unsafe/disruptive, and then encourage the child to problem solve what can be done differently should the situation occur again. The staff member will then help the child rejoin the group.

If a child is an immediate danger to himself or others, a staff member will intervene to establish safety. If a child appears unable to follow classroom rules on a continual basis, behavior is particularly unsafe/disruptive, or appears to be interfering with their ability to learn and/or participate in activities, the staff will ask to meet with the parents/caregivers to discuss ways to remedy the situation and how to best meet the child's needs.

With this and every aspect of a child's well-being, we ask that parents/caregivers stay in close contact with staff. If questions or concerns arise, or you would like further information and/or clarification, please contact us immediately.

#### **PARENT AND CAREGIVER RESPONSIBILITIES**

Throughout the time your child is in our program, we will each have specific responsibilities. Please review the handbook in its entirety for an overview of what these responsibilities are, as well as the goals and policies of our programs. The items starred in the table of contents (pages 1-2) are particularly important to your role as parent and caregiver.

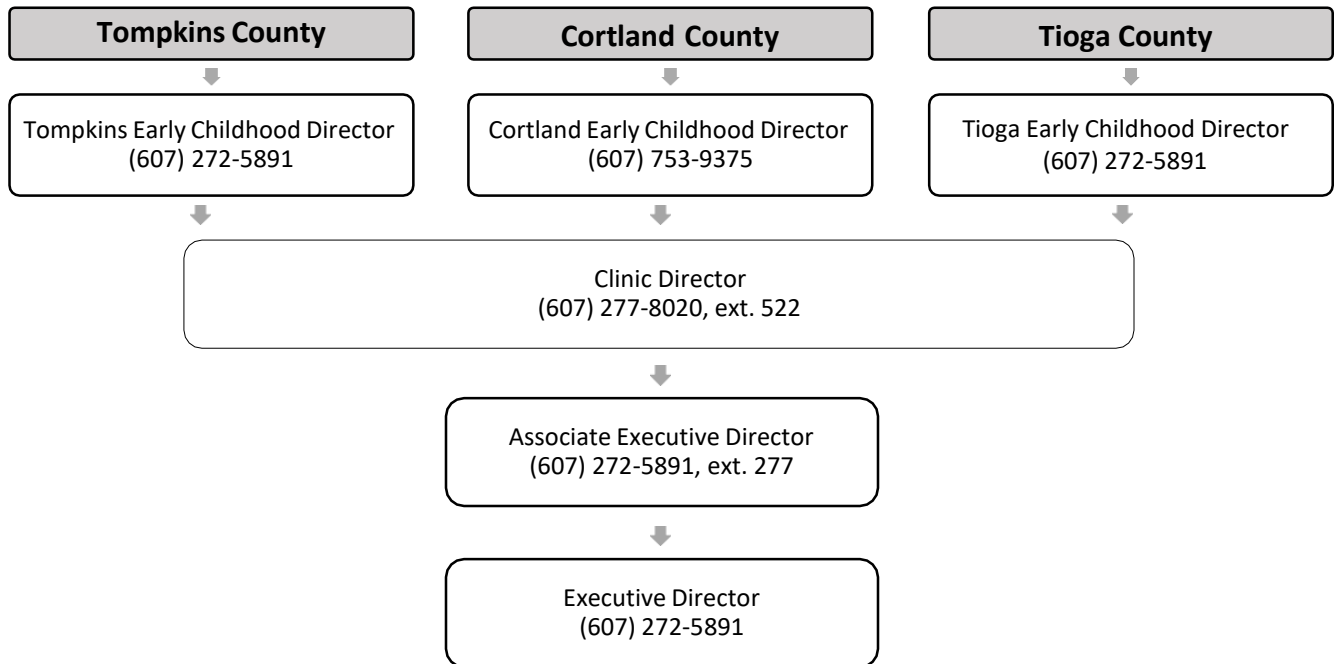
Please contact us for any questions and concerns regarding this. There will be opportunities for parent and caregiver education throughout the year to strengthen understanding and the relationship between Racker and parents/caregivers. It is important that we work together as a team to create the most wonderful experience for you and your child.



## GRIEVANCES, HELPLINE, AND OCFS CHILD CARE COMPLAINT LINE

### GRIEVANCES

If you have any grievances, comments, or concerns with your program, please contact us **in the order listed below**.



### HELPLINE

If you are unable to make contact with your program or if you wish to state an anonymous or confidential concern, you may call the Racker's **Helpline** at (607) 272-5891 or (800) 336-1660, ext. 343.

### OCFS CHILD CARE COMPLAINT LINE

Anyone with a concern or complaint about a child care program in New York State may call the child care complaint line, (800) 732-5207. This line is managed by the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS).



### REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION REVIEW

*The following documents will be included in your enrollment packet and must be returned to us. This list is subject to change.*

#### Items required only during initial enrollment:

1. **Handbook Acknowledgement**: Signing this form shows your acknowledgement that you received this handbook and have thoroughly reviewed and understand the information within.
2. **Physical and Immunization Requirements**: This is a list of the items we require to be sent to us by your child's physician in order for them to be enrolled. Please see page 17 for more details.
3. **Permission for Electronic Communication**: Filling out this document allows for electronic communication depending on your preferences. These can include: fax, e-mail, cell phone, texting, and video chat. This form also serves as acknowledgement that the transmission of electronic information may not be secure. You may update this form at any time. Please see pages 11-12 for more details.

4. **Photo/Videotape Permission:** This form allows you to permit or deny use of your child's photograph/videotape images. You may update this form at any time, but it cannot be retroactive. Please see pages 20-21 for more details.
5. **Authorization for Use of Over-the-Counter (OTC) Topical Products:** This form indicates OTC topical products you will allow the staff of Racker to administer to your child during our programs. It also covers the use of Sunscreen Lotion. Please see page 18 for more details.
6. **SchoolMessenger Communicate Form:** This form gives us permission to use our mass notification system via the methods you select. See page 12 for more details.
7. **Activities Permission Form:** *\*Not required for all programs\** This document gives permission for field trips and activities outside of your program location. Please see page 14 for more details.
8. **Transportation Consent Form:** *\*Not required for all programs\** This form is relevant only if your child may take field trips that require transportation. It shows that you have been informed of our transportation plan and consent to have us use the transportation we have arranged for, also included in the Appendix on page 26. Please see page 14 for more details.

**Items required during initial enrollment and to be updated annually:**

1. **All About Me:** This document allows us to learn about your child and their preferences.
2. **Child Care Nap Agreement:** *\*Not required for all programs\** You will indicate your preferences for your child napping on this form. You will also acknowledge that you understand our napping information. This form should be updated whenever napping preferences change. See page 18 for more details.
3. **Child Information Form:** This provides us with contact information for you and your family as well as emergency contacts. You will also indicate who has permission to pick up your child. This form can be updated anytime. See page 17 for more details.
4. **Medical Information Form:** We require this form to be filled out annually with medical information including allergies, prescribed medications, items pertaining to food, and your child's health care providers. Please see page 17 for more details.
5. **Income Eligibility Form:** We request you fill out this form so we can qualify for reimbursement in the Child and Adult Care Food Program or the Free/Reduced Meal Program. These help us and the schools provide healthy foods to your child daily at no cost to you. Please see page 16 for more details.
6. **Child Care/Wrap-Around Care Tuition and Payment Contract:** *\*Required for child care programs in our Early Childhood Education Centers only\** The contract shows your agreement to pay the tuition subject to our policies and that you understand the payment rules in order to have your child enrolled. Please see pages 9-11 for details on Child Care Tuition, Fees, and Payments. This will include DSS information for families with subsidies if applicable.
7. **Authorization for Racker to Exchange Information:** *\*Only required as needed.\** The form authorizes Racker to release and/or receive information regarding your child from other agencies. It is valid for one year. Please see page 18 for more information.

**For further reference, we ask that you please keep a copy of this handbook.**

## **APPENDIX**

The following documents on pages 26-44 are to be reviewed before signing the Handbook Acknowledgement form:

- Bill of Rights
- Transportation Plan for Fieldtrips
- “Help Prevent Child Abuse” and “Protecting your Child from Abuse While in Someone Else’s Care” Fact Sheets
- “Get Ahead of Lead” Fact Sheet
- “Together We Can Raise Healthy Children” brochure
- Notice of Health Information Privacy Practices
- Notice of Student Record Privacy Practices
- Illness and Exclusion Guidelines



## **BILL OF RIGHTS**

### **All participants have the right to:**

1. Receive services without regard to age, race, color, sexual orientation, religion, marital status, sex, national origin, or sponsor.
2. Be treated with consideration, respect and dignity, including privacy in treatment.
3. Be informed of the services available at Racker.
4. Be informed of the provisions for off-hour emergency coverage.
5. Be informed of the charges for services, eligibility for third party reimbursements, and when applicable, the availability of free or reduced cost care.
6. Receive an itemized copy of his/her account statement, upon request.
7. Obtain from his/her health practitioner, or health practitioner's delegate, complete and current information concerning his/her diagnosis, treatment and prognosis in terms the participant can reasonably be expected to understand.
8. Receive from his/her physician, information necessary to give informed consent prior to the start of any non-emergency procedure or treatment or both. An informed consent shall include as a minimum, the provision of information concerning the specific procedure or treatment or both, the reasonable foreseeable risks involved, and alternatives for care or treatment, if any, as a reasonable medical practitioner under similar circumstances would disclose in a manner permitting the service recipient to make a knowledgeable decision.
9. Refuse treatment to the extent permitted by the law and to be fully informed of the medical consequences of his/her action.
10. Refuse treatment to participate in experimental research.
11. Voice grievances and recommend changes in policies and services to Racker's staff, the operator and the New York State Department of Health without fear of reprisal.
12. Express complaints about the care and services provided and have Racker investigate such complaints. Racker is responsible for providing the service recipient or his/her designee with a written response within thirty (30) days, if requested by the participant, indicating the findings of the investigation. Racker is also responsible for notifying the service recipient or his/her designee that if the service recipient is not satisfied by Racker's response, the service recipient may submit a complaint to the New York State Department of Health's Office of Health Systems Management.

13. Privacy and confidentiality of all information and records pertaining to his/her treatment.
14. Approve or refuse the release or disclosure of the contents of his/her medical record to any health care practitioner and/or health care facility, except as required by law or third party agreement.
15. Access his/her medical record pursuant to the provision of Public Health Law.

NEW YORK STATE  
OFFICE OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES  
**TRANSPORTATION PLAN**  
Child Day Care Programs

Provider Name: Franziska Racker Centers (DBA Racker)

Program Name: Preschool and Early Childhood Education Centers - Field Trips only.

Effective Date of Transportation Plan: 07 / 01 / 2017

This form may be used to document the program's Transportation Plan. The plan is designed to promote the safety of children and inform families of regulatory requirements regarding transportation. The parent will be asked to sign a separate Transportation Consent Form (OCFS 6013).

1. The Program will obtain written consent from the parent(s) for any transportation of their child provided for, or arranged by a caregiver, and will keep the transportation policy and the written parental consent on file at the program, and parents can be given a copy.
2. A child will never be left unattended in any motor vehicle or other form of transportation.
3. Every child will board or leave a vehicle from the curb side of the street.
4. Each child will be secured in safety seats or safety belts as required by law. Safety seats will be supplied by: (who)  
Transportation provider: Birnie Bus Services, Inc for Wilkins Rd and Serafini Transportation Services/Trp's Enterprises for Tioga County.
5. Drivers will be 18 years of age or older and hold a current valid license to drive the class of vehicle they are operating. All vehicles used to transport children must have a current registration and inspection sticker.
6. The parent(s) will be provided a copy of this plan at enrollment. If the plan changes, the parent(s) will be provided a copy of the amended transportation plan, prior to its start date. The use of cell phones or any other electronic device during transport, including hand-free devices, is prohibited. Necessary calls will be made once the vehicle is parked in a legally permitted position off the road.
7. The Program will display daily transportation schedules at the following locations: (where)  
N/A. This transportation applies only for field trips or off-campus activities that require transportation.  
Parents/caregivers will be notified prior to any trip,
8. During the transport of children, the program will adhere to the required ratio of caregivers to children at all times as determined by regulations.
9. When a child is released from the program, the program will verify that the individual approved by the parent(s) to receive the child is present at the designated drop off location. If the approved person is not present as planned the parent(s) will be contacted immediately by the Program.
10. The parent will be able to check the posted daily transportation schedule regarding transportation arrangements for each day a child is in care. Other Comments:  
N/A. This transportation applies only for field trips or off-campus activities that require transportation.  
Parents/caregivers will be notified prior to any trip,





# HELP PREVENT CHILD ABUSE...

## What Is Child Abuse and Maltreatment?

**Child abuse and maltreatment** is when a parent or other person legally responsible for a child's care causes harm or creates a risk of harm to a child. The child must be under the age of 18. Child abuse involves serious physical harm or sexual abuse. Maltreatment (neglect) involves physical, mental or emotional harm.

## More Information on Child Abuse and Maltreatment

**Physical abuse** is when a parent/caretaker hurts or lets someone else hurt a child physically, or creates a substantial risk that a child will be hurt. There must be a serious injury or a risk of serious injury such as a severe burn, a broken bone, the loss of a body part, an internal injury or death. The injury or risk of injury must not be due to an accident.

**Sexual abuse** is when a parent or caretaker commits a sexual offense against a child or allows someone else to do this. Sexual abuse includes both touching and non-touching sexual offenses.

■ Examples of *touching* offenses include: fondling, intercourse, and sodomy (oral or anal sex acts).

■ Examples of *non-touching* offenses include: using a child in a pornographic or sexually explicit video or picture, distributing such a video or picture, or using a child as a prostitute.

**Maltreatment (neglect)** is when a parent or caretaker does not provide for a child's basic needs, where the parent or caretaker has the means or is offered a reasonable way to do so. It also includes a parent or caretaker failing to properly supervise a child or hitting a child too hard. Examples of maltreatment may include: not getting, or waiting too long to get, health care for a child; not giving a child adequate food, shelter, or clothing; not properly looking after a child; beating a child; or not sending a child to school when the child is able to attend school. The parent or caretaker's actions must cause physical, mental or emotional harm, or a risk that the child will soon be harmed.

## What Are Some Signs of Child Abuse or Maltreatment?

You may see some signs of child abuse or maltreatment in the way a child looks or in the way a child acts.

**Physical signs can include:** a child whose hair, clothing or body is often very dirty; a child whose clothing is too hot or too cold for the season; a child who is not being watched properly; a child who is ill or hurt but is not seeing a doctor; or a child with bruises, burns, cuts, vaginal or rectal bleeding, or with soreness or itching in the genital area.



**Behavioral signs** can include: a child who is afraid to go home; a child who does not think well of him or herself, avoids people, or is very sad; a child who misuses drugs or alcohol, has an eating disorder or hurts him or herself; a child whose mood or behavior changes a lot without a reason; a child who acts in a sexual manner that is unusual for the child's age; or a child who often misses school without a good reason.

## **Whom Do I Call If I Think a Child May Be Abused or Maltreated?**

If a child is in immediate danger, call 911 or your local police department.

If you suspect a child is being abused or maltreated in New York State, call the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment at 1-800-342-3720. This Child Abuse Hotline is open 24 hours a day, every day of the year. You do not need proof of child abuse or maltreatment to make a report; you only need to think that it has happened or that a child is at risk of being abused or maltreated.

Your call to the Child Abuse Hotline is confidential. This means that only certain persons may learn about the information you report. The family you reported will not be told you made the report unless you say it is okay for them to know.

## **What Happens When I Call the Child Abuse Hotline?**

A hotline employee will answer your call and ask you for information about why you called. Based on the information you provide, the hotline employee will decide whether to take a report of child abuse or maltreatment. It is helpful if you can give information about who the child is and where he or she can be found; the person who you think abused or maltreated the child; and the child's parent, guardian or other person legally responsible for the child.

If a report is not taken, the hotline employee will tell you why it could not be taken. If you disagree, you can ask to speak with a supervisor.

If a report is taken, it will be sent right away to the local Child Protective Service (CPS), which is part of the county Department of Social Services. In New York City, the report will be sent to the Administration for Children's Services. A local CPS caseworker will start an investigation within 24 hours.

The CPS caseworker must work with the family on any issues that make the child unsafe. If the family does not want to make the changes needed for a child to be safe, CPS may go to court to ask a judge to require the family to make the changes or to remove the child from the home. However, in most cases, CPS can work with the family to protect the child in his or her home. This is done by making a plan with the child's parent or caretaker to change any unsafe actions, or to get services so that the child will be safe.



**Remember...**

**You have the power to help prevent child abuse.**

**Your call may save the life of a child.**

**1-800-342-3720**



## Protecting Your Child from Abuse While in Someone Else's Care



There are many things you should consider before choosing a child care provider. The following guidelines can help you determine if a program will provide quality care for your children. Don't be shy about asking questions. The best caregivers have nothing to hide and expect you to ask about their services.

**Before hiring a baby-sitter or enrolling your children in nursery school, day care, pre-K, or camp:**

- ☐ **Check the reputation of the caregiver, even if it is someone you know.**
- ☐ **Be sure that parents are welcome to visit at any time.** If not, choose another provider. If so, drop in every few days, unannounced.
- ☐ **If there is more than one staff member,** ask the director of the program about the hiring process. What are the requirements? Are backgrounds checked?
- ☐ **Get at least two references from the caregiver.** Check all references you get. Talk to parents of the kids already enrolled in the program.
- ☐ **Visit the caregiver with your child.** Ask about the program. Discuss the caregiver's methods for disciplining children.
- ☐ **Observe how the caregiver interacts with your child and other children.** Does the caregiver maintain control of the children and if so, how? The caregiver should be a warm and energetic person who easily connects with children.
- ☐ **Find out what activities are available for your child throughout the day.** There may be a schedule. Check out the toys, play equipment, books and materials that are there to keep the children busy. Are play areas clean and clear of hazards?

(over)



33 Elk Street, Suite 201 | Albany, NY 12207  
P: 518-445-1273 | F: 518-436-5889  
[www.preventchildabuse.org](http://www.preventchildabuse.org)  
[info@preventchildabuse.org](mailto:info@preventchildabuse.org)

## Protecting Your Child from Abuse While in Someone Else's Care

(continued from front)

- ☐ **Tour the building, inside and out.** If you are not allowed in some sections or rooms, choose another facility. The facility should be clean and well organized.
- ☐ **Check to see if the facility has a parents' advisory board.** If so, call the board and find out what recommendations they have made in the past. Has the provider followed through with them? If they don't have an advisory board, why not start one?

**Once you have chosen a child care provider:**

- ☐ **Make it clear that your child is not to leave the center, home or school without your written permission.** Never sign a blank permission slip.
- ☐ **Insist that your child never leave at the end of the day with anyone but you.** Tell the caregiver that you will provide written notice if someone else is to pick up your child.
- ☐ **When you pick up your child,** ask about his or her day. Does your child seem excited and content about how things went?
- ☐ **If your child is upset about being left with the caregiver,** ask why. Never assume your child is just being difficult.
- ☐ **Communicate with other parents.** Talk with them about their experiences with the child care provider. Discuss any problems that may arise.

**Special note on baby-sitters:** The best way to check on a teenager or adult that is coming into your home to watch your children is to talk with other parents who have used the sitter. Ask your kids which sitters they like and why.

Adapted by Prevent Child Abuse New York from materials provided by the Commissioner's Task Force on Child Abuse. Chairman: Robert J. Stone. Onondaga County Department of Social Services



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[info@preventchildabuseny.org](mailto:info@preventchildabuseny.org)

## **Get Ahead of Lead Factsheet**

### **New York State Department of Health**

### **Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program**

## **Lead poisons people. It is especially bad for children.**

### **If lead gets into a child's body, it could cause:**

- a lower IQ
- behavior problems
- growth problems
- anemia
- kidney damage
- hearing loss

Lead can be found in old paint, dust, soil and water. Some Asian and Hispanic folk medicines for stomach upset also have lead. Lead can also be found in cosmetics imported from the Middle East.

### **How is lead tested?**

- A small amount of blood is taken from a finger prick or vein and tested for lead. Blood can be drawn at a doctor's office, hospital, clinic or lab. If you don't know where to bring your child for testing, call your local health department.

### **What causes lead poisoning in children?**

- The most common cause is dust from old lead-based paint. If floors have dust from old painted walls, or paint chips, a baby could suck on lead-dusted hands or toys or breathe in lead dust. Some toddlers eat paint chips, soil, or chew on lead-painted window sills and stair rails.

### **There are steps parents can take to prevent children from lead poisoning.**

- Keep children away from peeling paint and broken plaster.
- Wash their hands often, to rinse off any lead dust or dirt.
- Wash your child's toys often, especially teething toys.
- Use cold water - not hot - for infant formula or cooking. Let the cold water tap run for at least a minute before using to flush lead picked up from pipes.
- Store food from open cans in glass or plastic containers.
- Use lead-free dishes. Some dishes may have lead in their glazes. Don't use chipped or cracked dishes to store or serve food.
- Be careful with hobbies. Some crafts call for use of paints, glazes and solder. Many of these may contain lead.
- Don't bring lead home with you from work. People who work at construction, plumbing, painting, auto repair and certain other jobs can be exposed to lead.
- Wash work clothes separately.
- Keep children away from remodeling and renovation sites. Old paint can have lead in it.
- Avoid having children play in soil especially around the foundations of older buildings and near roadways. Use a sandbox instead.
- When windows are open in warm weather, wash the sills and window wells any time you see dust, but at least once a month.
- Call your local health department for information about professionals who handle lead-based paint problems.

### **Feed your family foods that get ahead of lead.**

- Foods high in iron and calcium can help prevent lead poisoning.  
**For Iron** - dried beans/peas, lean beef/pork, chicken/turkey, spinach, whole grain/fortified breads, eggs, tuna and collard greens  
**For Calcium** - cheese, milk, yogurt, cottage cheese, ice cream, milkshakes, pudding, cream soups, pizza, lasagna, macaroni and cheese
- Feed children healthy snacks: a child with an empty stomach will absorb more lead.



At well-child visits at ages 1 and 2, your health care provider should collect a blood specimen to check for screening for elevated blood lead levels, regardless of your answers to the risk assessment questions. Children between 9 and 36 months of age are at increased risk of the effects of lead.

At each routine well-child visit, your health care provider should assess children 6 months to 72 months of age for risk of high dose lead exposure. A blood specimen should be collected from those children found to be at high risk.

## Risk Assessment Questions

**1. Does your child live in or regularly visit a house/building built before 1978 with peeling or chipping paint, or with recent, ongoing or planned renovation or remodeling?**

Note: This could include a day care center, preschool, and the home of a babysitter or a relative.

Yes      No      Unknown

**2. Has your family/child ever lived outside the United States or recently arrived from a foreign country?**

Yes      No      Unknown

**3. Does your child have a brother, sister, housemate or playmate being followed or treated for lead poisoning?**

Yes      No      Unknown

**4. Does your child frequently put things in his/her mouth such as toys, jewelry, or keys? Does your child eat non-food items (pica)?**

Note: This may include toys or jewelry products that have been specifically recalled by the Consumer Products Safety Commission (CPSC) due to identification of unsafe levels of lead.

Yes      No      Unknown

**5. Does your child frequently come in contact with an adult whose job or hobby involves exposure to lead?**

Note: Jobs such as house painting, renovations, construction, welding or pottery making. Hobby examples are making stained glass or pottery, fishing, making firearms and collecting lead figurines.

Yes      No      Unknown

**6. Does your child live near an active lead smelter, battery recycling plant, or another industry likely to release lead or does your child live near a heavily traveled major highway where soil and dust may be contaminated with lead?**

Note: May need to alert parent/caregiver if such an industry is local. Ask any additional questions that may be specific to situations in a particular community.

Yes      No      Unknown

Your health care provider may ask additional questions that may be specific to situations which exist in your particular community. If your family and/or child has recently arrived from a foreign country or visited developing or underdeveloped countries for substantial periods of time, you should tell your health care provider.

If the answer to any of the above questions is **YES**, then the child is considered to be at risk of high dose lead exposure and should be screened with a blood lead test. If you are unsure about any of these questions, discuss them further with your health care provider.

If you have any questions about the information presented here, discuss them with your health care provider, or you may call your local childhood lead poisoning prevention program at your local health department.

Updated July, 2008

## Together We Can Raise Healthy Children

### Childhood Nutrition and Wellness

The foods children eat and lifestyle habits they learn have a lasting effect on their health. There are ways your child care provider is promoting healthy habits while your children are in care.

These are:

- Serving nutritious meals,
- Encouraging children to be active, and
- Limiting TV and other screen time.

Quality child care providers take steps to keep the children healthy! You can help your child by doing the same at home.

### Partner With Your Provider

Together, you and your child care provider share an important role in setting good nutrition and physical activity habits for your children! Want to know how? Read on for more information.



### Plan Healthy Meals

Look at your child care provider's menu.

- If you see fruit or vegetables that are new to you, think about serving them at home. Sometimes new foods take time. Offer new fruits and vegetables many times.
- Ask if your provider has a policy on healthy celebrations. Instead of cake and sweets for parties, you can bring yogurt and fruit to make yummy parfaits.
- Share your child's favorite healthy recipes with your provider to serve at child care.

### Children Can Help, Too

Your provider may let the children help prepare and serve meals. Children can do simple and safe tasks at home too. They can wash vegetables, toss a salad, and set the table.

Children love to eat the foods they help make!

Here are more ways they can help at home:

- Plan meals together using new foods they tried at child care.
- Pour and mix ingredients, away from the stove.
- Chart how many different fruits and vegetables the family eats each week using stickers or drawings.

### Eat Together!

Children see adults as role models, even at mealtimes. Your child care provider serves meals family style, which means adults sit with the children and:

- Eat the same foods,
  - Teach children to serve themselves, and
  - Talk about the healthy food they are eating.
- Serving meals family style at home and child care allows children to learn how much to eat and be willing to try new foods.

### Play... Play... Play!

Physical activity helps children's bones and muscles grow strong and lowers the risk of weight gain. Your child care provider's daily schedule includes:

- indoor and outdoor active play, and
- limits TV and other screen time.

Send your child dressed and ready for active play indoors and outdoors. Include coats, hat, mittens and boots to play outside in any weather.

Staying active at home is good for everyone in the family! Going for walks together or playing in a local park are great ways to enjoy activity with your children. Less screen time equals more quality family time together.





## For More Information

about healthy eating and exercise, visit:

### CACFP

[www.health.ny.gov/CACFP](http://www.health.ny.gov/CACFP)

### Let's Move! Child Care

[www.healthykidshealthyfuture.org](http://www.healthykidshealthyfuture.org)

### Eat Well Play Hard in Child Care Settings

[www.health.ny.gov/prevention/nutrition/cacfp/ewphccs.htm](http://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/nutrition/cacfp/ewphccs.htm)

### QUALITYstarsNY: A winning beginning for all our children

[qualitystarsny.org/index.php](http://qualitystarsny.org/index.php)

### Choose My Plate

[www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov)

### Eat Smart New York

[www.otda.ny.gov/programs/nutrition/](http://www.otda.ny.gov/programs/nutrition/)

### Core Nutrition Messages for Healthier Food Choices

[www.fns.usda.gov/fns/core-nutrition/messages/default.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/core-nutrition/messages/default.htm)

### Physical Activity Guidelines for Children

[nrckids.org/default/index.cfm/parentsguardians/](http://nrckids.org/default/index.cfm/parentsguardians/)

### Child care regulations

[ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/daycare\\_reg.asp](http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/daycare_reg.asp)



When a child care provider joins the free Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), they can be reimbursed for serving healthy meals and snacks to children. CACFP staff can help child care providers learn about CACFP and plan healthy meals. Ask your child care provider to contact CACFP at:

Center-based programs, call  
**1-800-942-3858**

Family and Group Day Care, call the  
Growing Up Healthy Hotline  
**1-800-522-5006**

E-mail: [cacfp@health.state.ny.us](mailto:cacfp@health.state.ny.us)

To order more brochures, contact:

NYS DOH Distribution Center  
21 Simmons Lane  
Menands, NY 12204  
Fax: 518-465-0432  
[b0019w@health.state.ny.us](mailto:b0019w@health.state.ny.us)

NYS Department of Health  
Division of Nutrition  
[health.ny.gov](http://health.ny.gov)

NYS Office of Children & Family Services  
Division of Child Care Services  
[ocfs.ny.gov](http://ocfs.ny.gov)



# Together We Can Raise Healthy Children



## **RACKER**

### **Notice of Health Information Privacy Practices**

#### **THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW IDENTIFIABLE HEALTH (MEDICAL) INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION. PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY**

This notice is effective as of September 23, 2013. If you have any questions about this notice, please contact Susan C. Budney, Racker's Director of Quality Enhancement & Standards at (607) 272-5891 ext. 249 or 1-800-336-1660 ext. 249.

#### **Our Privacy Commitment to You**

At Racker, we understand that information about you and your family is personal. We are committed to protecting your privacy and sharing information only with those who need to know and are allowed to see the information to assure quality services to you.

1. Who will follow this notice:

- All people who work for Racker will follow this notice. This includes employees, persons Racker contracts with (contractors) who are authorized to enter information in your clinical record or need to review your record to provide services to you, business associates who may come into contact with your clinical record and their subcontractors, if any, and volunteers that Racker allows to assist you.

2. What information is protected:

- All information we create or keep that relates to your health or care and treatment, including your name, address, birth date, social security number, your medical information, your service plan, and other information about your care in our programs.

#### **Your Health/Clinical Information Rights**

You have the following rights concerning your health/clinical information. When we use the word "you" in this notice we also mean your personal representative. Depending on your circumstances and in accordance with state law, this may be your guardian, involved parent, spouse, or adult child, or your advocate.

- ❖ You have the right to review your health/clinical information and obtain a copy, including information stored electronically. This does not include access to psychotherapy notes or information compiled for use in court or administration proceedings. Records regarding incident reports and investigations may be made available to you depending on the services you receive and the applicable laws governing required disclosure. Your request to review your information should be put in writing. We will respond to your request within 30 days or as required by law, whichever is sooner. Upon approval of your request, a copy of your records will be provided either free of charge or according to a cost-based fee schedule. In the case of electronic records, you may request that they be provided electronically in a common file format (e.g.: .pdf, .csv, .xls) or printed. If you are provided with a copy of your records, Racker cannot be held responsible for disclosures of PHI emanating from the copy provided.
- ❖ If we deny your request to see your health/clinical information, you have the right to request a review of that denial. A professional chosen by Racker, who was not involved in denying your request, will review the record and decide if you may have access to the record. Denials will be explained in writing.
- ❖ You have the right to ask Racker to change or amend your health/clinical information that you believe is incorrect or incomplete. We may deny your request in some cases, for example, if

the record was not created by Racker or if after reviewing your request, we believe that the record is accurate and complete. If we approve the request for amendment, we will change the health information and inform you of that action and tell others that need to know about the change in the protected health information (PHI).

- ❖ You have the right to request a list of the disclosures Racker has made of your health/clinical information. We will not, however, keep or provide you with a list of certain disclosures, for example, disclosures made for treatment, payment and health care operations, or disclosures made to you or made to others with your permission. The list of disclosures will also not include disclosures made for national security or intelligence purposes, to law enforcement officials or correctional institutions, or disclosures made before April 2003. We will respond to your written request for such an accounting within 60 days of receiving it.
- ❖ You have the right to ask that we limit how we disclose or use your PHI. We will consider your request, but are not legally bound to agree to the restriction, however we must agree to limit disclosures to your health plan(s) upon your request if the related services are already paid for in full. To the extent that we do agree to any restrictions on our use/disclosure of your PHI, we will put the agreement in writing and abide by it except in emergency situations.
  - We cannot agree to limit uses/disclosures that are required by law.
- ❖ You have the right to request that Racker communicates with you in a way that will help keep your information confidential.
- ❖ You have the right to receive a paper copy of this notice. You may ask Racker's staff to give you another copy or you may obtain one from our privacy officer - Susan C. Budney, Racker's Director of Quality Enhancement & Standards, at (607)272-5891 ext. 249 or 1-800-336-1660 ext. 249.

To request access to your health/clinical information or to request any of the rights listed here, you may contact the director of the program in which you participate, at (607) 272-5891 or 1-800-336-1660.

### Racker's Responsibilities For Your Health Information

Racker is required by law to:

- ❖ Maintain the privacy of your information
- ❖ Give you this notice of our legal duties and practices concerning the health information we have about you.
- ❖ Follow the rules in this notice. Racker will use or share information about you only with your permission except for the reasons explained in this notice. We will inform you if we make changes to our privacy practices in the future. If significant changes are made, Racker will give you a new notice.
- ❖ Notify you of any breaches of unsecured protected health information that may affect you.

### How Racker Uses and Discloses Health Care Information

Racker may use and disclose health/clinical information without your permission for the purposes described below. For each of the categories of uses and disclosures, we explain what we mean and offer an example. Not every use or disclosure is described, but all the ways we will use or disclose information will fall within these categories.

- ❖ **Treatment** Racker will use your health/clinical information to provide you with treatment and services. We may disclose health/clinical information to doctors, nurses, psychologists, social workers, qualified intellectual disabilities professionals (QIDP's), direct support staff and other Racker's personnel, volunteers or interns who are involved in providing you care. For example, involved staff may discuss your health/clinical information to develop and carry out your service plan. Other Racker's staff may share your medical tests, respite care,



transportation, etc. We may also need to disclose your health/clinical information to other providers outside of Racker who are responsible for providing you with the services identified in your service plan or to obtain new services for you.

**Appointment Reminders:** We may use and disclose medical information to contact you as a reminder that you have an appointment for treatment or services at one of our programs.

- ❖ **Payment** Racker will use your health/clinical information so that we can bill and collect payment from you, a third party, an insurance company, Medicare or Medicaid or other government agencies. For example, we may need to provide the NYS Department of Health (Medicaid) with information about the services you received in our facility or through one of our HCBS waiver programs so they will pay us for the services. In addition, we may disclose your health/clinical information to receive prior approval for payment of services you may need. Also, we may disclose your health/clinical information to the US Social Security Administration, or the Department of Health to determine your eligibility for coverage or your ability to pay for services.
- ❖ **Health Care Operations** Racker will use health/clinical information for administrative operations. These uses and disclosures are necessary to operate Racker's programs and residences and to make sure all individuals receive appropriate, quality care. For example, we may use health/clinical information for quality improvement to review our treatment and services and to evaluate the performance of our staff in caring for you. We may also disclose information to clinicians and other personnel for on the job training. We will share your health/clinical information with other Racker's staff for the purposes of obtaining legal services through Racker's Counsel's office, conducting fiscal audits, and for fraud and abuse detection and compliance through our Division of Quality Development and Support. We will also share your health/clinical information with Racker's staff to resolve complaints or objections to your services. We may also disclose health/clinical information to our business associates who need access to the information to perform administrative or professional services on our behalf.
- ❖ **Public Relations/Fund Raising/Grants** Racker may use health/clinical information in summary format to describe the scope of agency services for public relations, fund raising and/or grant applications. For example, a grant application may ask for the organization to describe the nature of individuals served by a specific Racker's program. Such information would describe the general population served and not disclose individual information of a person. Any need to disclose individualized information for public relation funding or grant purposes would not be disclosed unless specific authorization from the person is obtained.

### Other Uses and Disclosures that Do Not Require Permission

In addition to treatment, payment and health care operations, Racker will use your health/clinical information without your permission for the following reasons:

#### **When we are required to do so by federal or state law:**

- ❖ **For public health reasons**, including prevention and control of disease, injury or disability, child abuse or neglect, reactions to medication or problems with products, and to notify people who may have been exposed to a disease or are at risk of spreading the disease;
- ❖ To report **domestic violence and adult abuse or neglect** to government authorities if you agree or if you agree or if necessary to prevent serious harm;
- ❖ For **health oversight activities**, including audits, investigations, surveys and inspections and licensure. These activities are necessary for government to monitor the health care system, government programs, and compliance with civil rights laws.
- ❖ For **judicial and administrative proceedings**, including hearings and disputes. If you are involved in a court or administrative proceeding we will disclose health/clinical information if the judge or presiding officer orders us to share the information.

- ❖ For **law enforcement purposes**, in response to a subpoena, or other legal process, to identify a suspect or witness or missing person, regarding a victim of a crime, a death, criminal conduct at the facility, and in emergency circumstances to report a crime;
- ❖ Upon your death, to **coroners or medical examiners** for identification purposes or to determine cause of death, and to **funeral directors** to allow them to carry out their duties;
- ❖ To organ procurement organizations to accomplish cadaver, eye, tissue or **organ donations** in compliance with state law;
- ❖ **For workers compensation**, to the extent authorized by and to the extent necessary to comply with laws relating to workers' compensation or other similar programs established by law.
- ❖ For **research** purposes when you have agreed to participate in the research and an Institutional Review Board or Privacy Committee has approved the use of the health/clinical information for the research purposes;
- ❖ To **prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat** to your health and safety or someone else's;
- ❖ To authorized federal officials for intelligence and other national security activities authorized by law or to provide **protective services to the President** and other officials.
- ❖ To **correctional institutions or law enforcement officials** if you are an inmate and the information is necessary to provide you with health care, protect your health and safety or that of others, or for the safety of the correctional institution.
- ❖ To **governmental agencies that administer public benefits** if necessary to coordinate the covered functions of the programs.

### Uses and Disclosures that Require Your Agreement or Authorization

Racker may disclose health/clinical information to the following persons if we tell you we are going to use or disclose it and you agree or do not object:

- ❖ To **family members and personal representatives** who are involved in your care if the information is relevant to their involvement and to notify them of your condition and location; or
- ❖ To **disaster relief organizations** that need to notify your family about your condition and location should a disaster occur.

### Authorization Required for All Other Uses and Disclosures

- ❖ For all other types of uses and disclosures not described in this Notice, Racker will use or disclose health/clinical information only with a written authorization signed by you or an authorized personal representative that states who may receive the information, what information is to be shared, the purpose of the use or disclosure and an expiration for the authorization. Written authorizations are always required for use and disclosure of psychotherapy notes and for marketing and fundraising purposes.
  - You will be provided the opportunity to opt out of receiving communications for fund raising purposes.

**Note:** If you cannot give permission due to an emergency, Racker may release health/clinical information in your best interest. We must tell you as soon as possible after releasing the information. This notification will be made in writing.

You may revoke your authorization at any time. If you revoke your authorization in writing we will no longer use or disclose your health/ clinical information for the reasons stated in your authorization. We cannot, however take back disclosures we made before you revoked and we must retain health/clinical information that indicates the service we have provided to you.

## Changes to this Notice

**We reserve the right to change this notice.** We reserve the right to make changes to terms described in this notice and to make the new notice terms effective to all health/clinical information that Racker maintains. We will have copies of the notice available at our sites, and post the new notice in our facilities and on Racker's website. In addition, we will provide a copy to you upon request.

## Complaints

If you believe your privacy rights have been violated:

- ❖ You may file a complaint with Racker's Privacy Officer at [3226 Wilkins Rd., Ithaca, NY 14850, (607)272-5891 ext. 249 or 1-800-336-1660].
- ❖ You may also file a complaint with the Federal Dept. of Health and Human Services' Office for Civil Rights. These complaints must be in writing, either on paper or electronically and should be directed to [OCRComplaint@hhs.gov](mailto:OCRComplaint@hhs.gov) or your OCR regional office at the following address:

Regional Manager, Office for Civil Rights  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Jacob Javits Federal Building  
26 Federal Plaza - Suite 3312  
New York, NY 10278

**You will not be retaliated against or penalized for filing a complaint.**

~ Racker ~  
Notice of Student Record Privacy Practices

Please Note: The word “you” in this notice refers to the parents/guardians of Racker students or Racker students over the age of 18.

Our Privacy Commitment to You

Racker is committed to protecting each student’s personal information and privacy. Information will only be shared with those who ‘need to know’ so they may provide quality services.

1. Who will follow this notice:
  - All Racker staff who work in the educational programs and the administrative staff who handle any of the students’ information. This includes employees and contractors who are authorized to enter information into a student’s education record or need to review the record to provide services, business associates who may come into contact with the education record and volunteers that Racker allows to assist our students.
2. What information is protected:
  - All information Racker creates or maintains that relates to the student’s education and any personally identifiable information (PII), including the student’s name, address, birth date, social security number, medical information, biometric record, and other information about the student’s care in our programs, including Early Intervention records (EI).

Student Record/Personally Identifiable Information (PII)

In addition to Racker’s Confidentiality Policy, Notice of Health Information Privacy Practices, and Data Security and Privacy and Parents’ Bill of Rights Plan, you have the following rights concerning student education records, including EI records, and PII:

- You have the right to review the student’s education record and obtain a copy, including information stored electronically. Your request to review the student’s information should be put in writing. Racker will respond to your request within 45 days or as required by law, whichever is sooner. Upon approval of your request, a copy of your records will be provided either free of charge or according to a cost-based fee schedule. In the case of electronic records, you may request that they be provided electronically in a common file format (e.g.: .pdf, .csv, .xlsx) or printed. If you are provided with a copy of your records, Racker cannot be held responsible for disclosures of PII emanating from the copy provided.
- You have the right to ask Racker to change or amend the student’s education record that you believe is incorrect, incomplete, misleading or violates the student’s rights of privacy. Racker may deny your request in some cases, for example, if Racker did not create the record or if after reviewing your request, Racker believes that the record is accurate and complete. In these cases, you may request a due process hearing. If Racker approves the request for amendment, the information will be revised and you will be informed of that action. Racker will also notify others who would need to know about the change(s). You have the right to ask that Racker communicates with you in a way that will help keep your information confidential.
- You have the right to provide written consent before Racker discloses PII, except to the extent that FERPA and IDEA authorizes disclosure without consent. The written consent will include who may receive the information, what information is to be shared, and the purpose of the use or disclosure. You may revoke your authorization at any time. If you revoke your authorization, that revocation is not retroactive.
- Racker may disclose PII without obtaining prior written consent in following instances:
  - Disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests, which includes: Racker employees & contractors who are authorized to enter information in students’ education record or need to review the record to provide services, volunteers that Racker allows to assist our students, administrators in need of student information for the furtherance of the students’ education, and business associates and their subcontractors who may come into contact with the education record.

### Complaints

- Disclosure to officials of another school or school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.
- Disclosure when required by federal or state law.

If you believe your or the student's privacy rights has been violated, you may:

- File a complaint with Racker's Privacy Officer at [3226 Wilkins Rd., Ithaca, NY 14850 or (607) 272-5891 ext. 249].
- File a written complaint with the U.S. Department of Education:

Student Privacy Policy Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

## **You will not be retaliated against or penalized for filing a complaint.**

Racker complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) confidentiality provisions.

FERPA is a federal law that specifically protects the privacy of student educational records.

IDEA is also a federal special education law that includes provisions to protect the privacy of student records.

This notice is based on:

Racker Best Practices

FERPA statute and regulations, 20 USC §1232g and 34 CFR Part 99

FERPA Model Notification of Rights for Elementary & Secondary Schools, dated April 2020 IDEA statute and regulations, 20 USC §1400 and 34 CFR Parts 300 and 303

5/8/2021

# RACKER

## ILLNESS AND EXCLUSION GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS AND STAFF

### \*\* NON-COVID\*\*

**PLEASE NOTE:** Beyond the guidelines below, Racker staff has the discretion to exclude a child who is too ill to participate comfortably in activities or requires more care than we can provide. Racker has the right to override a health care provider's note.

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS	WHAT TO DO	WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE
<b>**Emergency room visit, surgical/medical hospital, or dental procedure, including in or out patient, or an injury requiring more than first aid sustained at school or home</b>	Keep child home. Child may return to program <u>after</u> note or discharge received from health care provider	A note/discharge from the health care provider that includes diagnosis and any restrictions must be explained for the child to return to program. Need documentation and clarification of ANY restrictions to activities while at school.
<b>EARS</b>		
*Ear Ache	Observe	Watch for fever and other symptoms.
*Ear ache with fever	Keep child home	Call health care provider. May return when symptom free and temperature has been normal for 24 hours without fever reducing medication.
*Runny ears (no tubes)	Keep child home	Call health care provider.
<b>DIARRHEA</b>		
*One or two episodes of loose BM	Observe	Watch for fever, watery BM, and stomach pain.
*More than 2 loose BMs with or without fever	Keep child home	May return 24 hours after last loose BM and a normal temperature without fever reducing medication.
<b>EYES</b>		
*Watery, red/pink eyes	Observe	
*Itching-crusty drainage, yellow-green discharge	Keep child home	Call health care provider.
<b>FEVER</b>		
*98-100.3	Observe	Watch for symptoms
*100.4° F or greater.	Keep child home	May return when temperature has been normal for 24 hours without fever reducing medication.
<b>HEAD LICE</b>		
	Contact child's teacher or social worker.	Once head lice is confirmed, use treatment of choice. Child may return to school after treatment is complete.
<b>RESPIRATORY</b>		
*Runny nose	Observe	Watch for fever and other symptoms.
*Cough	Observe	Watch for frequency and other symptoms.
*Difficulty breathing	Keep child home	Call health care provider immediately.
<b>SKIN</b>		
*Rash	Observe	Watch for other symptoms.
*Rash with fever, sore throat, itching or that increases in severity	Keep child home	May return when temperature has been normal for 24 hours without fever reducing medication. Consult health care provider.
*Diaper rash	Observe	Keep area dry. Use ointment of choice.
*Dry skin sores	Observe	Watch for discharge. Cover sores.
*Skin sores with discharge	Keep child home	Cover sores. Call health care provider. May return when sores are dry or with health care provider's permission.
<b>THROAT</b>		
*Sore throat only	Observe	Watch for fever and other symptoms.
*Sore throat with fever, rash or difficulty swallowing or breathing.	Keep child home	Call health care provider. May return when temperature has been normal for 24 hours without fever reducing medication.
<b>VOMITING</b>		
*One time only	Observe	Watch for fever and other symptoms.
*More than once in 24 hours with or without fever	Keep child home	May return 24 hours after last episode of vomiting and temperature is normal without fever reducing medication.