

Mixed-Messages? How Your “Open” Door Policy Might Really Sound Closed

Open door policies are intended to communicate to families an additional sense of safety and security knowing that they are allowed to visit the program, announced or unannounced, to check on their children anytime their children are in attendance. Yet, sometimes open-door policies are written in ways that give the opposite impression and instead suggest to families that they are only allowed to stop to check on their children during specific time windows, or they are discouraged from visiting at all. Review the following policies, identifying what you like and do not like about each.

1. At It's a Big World Child Care, we have an open-door policy. We want you to feel free to come in to visit your child anytime he/she/they are at the program. However, previous unplanned visits have led to disruptions in the daily schedule. This has resulted in children getting over-excited, jealous, sad, and then having difficulty following directions once the family member leaves. Therefore, we ask that you always call before you come so that we can share with you if it is a good time or not.

2. Parents and guardians are welcome to drop-in to visit Patty Cake, Babble, and Roll Child Care anytime their child is in the program. We value family participation and encourage you to engage with your children as well as other children while you are here. Ask your child's teacher if there is anything in particular that you can help with. We love to have families join in the exciting learning we are doing!

3. Family participation is important at All Our Friends Preschool. We have an open-door policy and encourage you to visit anytime your child is here. If an extended family member (e.g., aunt, grandparents, family friend) is visiting, they must be on the pick-up list, and we ask that you tell us about the visit at least one day in advance. If the extended family member plans to stay for more than just a few minutes, we ask instead that they take the child out of the program for their visit and then bring the child back when the visit is over. If this occurs over meal or snack time, we ask that the family member provide food to the child before their return. This helps keep other children and staff from becoming distracted by family members. Please note: if taking the child out of the program for their visit before naptime, be sure the child returns before naptime to avoid distracting other children, as well as challenges getting your little one to sleep.

4. Our open-door policy states that parents of children are always welcome in the program. If there is a parent who is restricted from seeing the child because of a court order, you must provide us with that.

5. We have an open-door policy that allows you to visit at any time. However, we ask that you check your child's classroom schedule to make sure that your visit does not overlap with naptime. If you plan to stay for more than ten minutes, we ask that you notify the Director in advance.

6. We have an open-door policy that means that you are welcome to visit the program anytime your child is here. Please feel free to stop in whenever it is convenient for you. Your child's classroom daily schedule will let you know what to expect when you arrive to visit or observe your child. The schedule is in the family handbook on page 5 and may be helpful for planning your visit.

7. When your child is in attendance at the center, guardians are free to come and go at any time throughout the day. However, please keep in mind that it can prove disruptive to the other children when visitors are in the classroom. Some children have a hard time listening and following directions when their routine is off, especially when there is a surprise visitor. We respectfully ask that if you plan to stay more than 20 minutes in a classroom that you provide us with at least a day's notice to prepare the children.

8. When your child is enrolled with us, parents are always welcome to visit, observe, or stay and play. The only exception we have is if there is a court order restriction (we would need a current copy on file). While your child is enrolled in the center, please feel free to stop by any time while keeping the following in mind:

- Circle time and naptime are generally not the best times to visit.
- If any parent wants to spend extended time with their child during the day, we must receive at least a three-day notice to prepare for your visit.
- If your presence causes a disturbance in the classroom, we reserve the right to ask parents to step out. We will gladly place parents in a different part of the program, such as helping in the kitchen or answering phones.

9. We have recently implemented an “open-door” policy here at Discovery Child Care Center. Parents are encouraged to visit their children in our facility any time they wish. One thing we do recommend is for parents to become familiar with the classroom routine. This way, they can plan their visit accordingly and avoid causing confusion during classroom activities. If parents would like to include a meeting with the Director or a staff member during the visit, an appointment is required. Discovery Child Care Center encourages parent involvement and appreciates parents’ valuable input regarding how we care for their children. We value and appreciate parent comments, input, and feedback. Their comments and feedback are welcome at any time. A “Parent Suggestion” box is located by the front desk for parents to share information with us in an anonymous manner. We look forward to forming a partnership with parents and their children.

10. At We are the World Child Care program, our doors are always open to families who would like to be involved in their child’s care and education. We encourage family involvement and engagement in the classrooms whenever possible. If any family members wish to volunteer in the classroom, in the center, or on field trips, please reach out, and we will work with you to make that happen. Teachers could always use an extra set of hands and eyes with the children. We also welcome any comments or suggestions about programming or the care of your children.

11. There is an Open-Door policy in place at “Touch the Stars” Early Learning Center that encourages you to visit or observe our program during program hours. As a parent, you have unlimited access to the program and your child. Please stop by whenever you wish to see all the extraordinary things your child is doing when they are away from you.

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