



2 Pleasant Ave.
Clifton, NJ 07013

March 31, 2020

COVID-19 COMMUNICATION

Dear Parents/ Guardians,

On behalf of my staff members and myself, we would like to thank our clients who took the time to answer the survey used to determine my final decision regarding the closure of The Learning Studio, LLC. Also, thank you to those who took the time to text, email or call to check on us and to offer their support during these unprecedented times. We truly appreciate it!

Based on the compiled information from the survey, only a handful of clients are willing to bring their children to the center. This decision did not surprise me based on current critical circumstances. As you will understand, at this point, **it is not feasible and it is un-safe to reopen the center** and risk the exposure of COVID-19 to children, staff, and clients given the severity of the virus.

I'd like to remind each of you that the childcare community (which is highly regulated), as well as other businesses, are operating under business continuity plans, which we had never imagined implementing. While this continuity plan may not be part of a binding legal agreement, COVID-19 presents an extenuating circumstance that supersedes the previous business conditions. The conditions for operating a business have been in extreme flux at this time, as I'm sure you are aware. Information is coming to us from the Federal Government, State of NJ, local authorities, and industry organizations multiple times a day. These governing bodies are working as quickly as possible to respond to the needs of your children and childcare providers.

In fact, as many of you have shared, the federal government has released funds to help small business, like ours, and I am fully aware of this. This stimulus package was not signed until Friday, March 27th. However, there are still ambiguities in regards to the dispersal of those funds. Business owners and financial institutions are all awaiting instructions on how to obtain these emergency funds.

I am willing to continue to work as hard as always to save our center. My commitment has remained steadfast since I began as Director of The Learning Studio in 2009. We remain as committed to our mission as always; "high quality child care and learning services in a safe and welcoming home-away-from-home environment." Rest assured, I am working constantly to make sure the doors of TLS reopen and we can continue to be a special place in the lives of your children. As a private, non-government-funded childcare center, I am actively looking for additional opportunities, both local and federal, so that TLS can continue to play a formative role in your children's intellectual, physical, and emotional development.

Some of you expressed your disappointment in the way The Learning Studio handled payment for the first two weeks the center was closed (3/16 - 3/27). Prior to making my final decision, I consulted with many of you and we verbally agreed on that these terms were fair because no one was aware of the circumstances that COVID-19 would present to each of us. To clarify, my amendment to the policy (sent out on 3/26/2020) was to go in effect after these two weeks and continue the 50% payment policy that began on 3/23/2020 until we reopen.

This decision to close the center and enact this payment policy amendment has been a difficult one. I apologize if you felt misinformed, but I had to make very quick decisions for the safety of your children and for the future of TLS. My only purpose in the communication from 3/16/2020 was to sustain the payroll of the staff who care for and educate your children, as well as maintain the safe and positive environment where your children spend most of their day.

Many of you recognize us as a unique place where, over the past 10 years, the development of your children has been our top priority. On a personal level, it hurts to see the manner in which some of you believe that I do not have the best intention at heart. Everyone is feeling the effects of COVID-19; we are all in this together.

In any case, electronic invoices for this week (3/30- 4/3) were emailed out yesterday; however, you will not be responsible for payment if you have clearly expressed that you are not able or willing to pay. Therefore, this week will be the last time that you will receive an invoice. Please be advised, that if you choose to discontinue payment, TLS will not be able to guarantee your child(ren)'s spot. Upon return, you will be required to re-register under new client tuition fees and children will be accepted on a first-come-first serve basis. On the other hand, if you wish to hold a spot for your child(ren), please continue payments for 50% of your tuition. Your invoices will continue to be communicated via email. Please advise and confirm your final decisions to me via email by Thursday 4/2/2020.

For our clients/ families who receive childcare subsidy from the government, adjustments will be made once COVID-19 measures are lifted, since we do not know how long this is going to last.

Finally, I would like to thank you for trusting The Learning Studio with the care of your children. Please let them know that we are thinking about them and that we miss them. We hope to see them soon!

I conclude with the words of Governor Murphy, "we're doing all we can to ensure the safety of our New Jersey family. We're doing all we can to make sure that we don't just get through this, but that we come out of this strong."

Stay safe and healthy.

Regards,

Priscila Alvarez
Director