



## LAKEVIEW CHILD CENTER

### Using Sign Language with Infants and Toddlers

At Lakeview Child Center we use sign language to assist infants and toddlers with communicating their wants and needs. The benefits are tremendous not only for the children, but also for caregivers and family members.

The benefits for the children include:

- Improved communication and memory
- Higher IQ when measured at age 8
- Increased gross and fine motor skills
- Lower noise levels in the classroom
- Improved self-esteem and self-confidence
- Increased emotional development, including empathy
- Decreased aggressive behavior through problem solving and conflict resolution

The benefits for caregivers and families include:

- Increased respect for the child's learning processes and abilities
- More focus on the individual child
- Improved interactions with children
- Less need to discuss aggressive or other negative behaviors
- More positive interactions between caregivers and families
- More teamwork

We will support the use of sign language in the following ways:

- Training staff in common signs used in the program and the benefits of signing with young children
- Providing articles to families to answer questions and address the benefits of signing with young children
- Providing families with written and pictographic directions for creating the signs we use
- Displaying the signs in the classroom
- Introducing new groups of signs each month
- Observing staff and providing feedback to help them take advantage of every opportunity to use signs
- Watching for signs that a child might make up and using it on a regular basis

Sign language reduces tears, tantrums and frustration!!