

Parent Handbook for Sherk Family Daycare Home

Philosophy and Background

I respect and appreciate the trust you have placed in me to care for your child. As a parent, you are the most important person in your child's world and I will make every effort to support you as a family. I will try to provide a safe, caring homelike atmosphere for your child while at the same time providing for their physical, intellectual, emotional and social development. You can help me by keeping me informed regarding any health concerns, favorite foods, fears, or special interests. I will share information about your child's growth and activities during the time spent in my home. I believe that self-esteem is a critical component to optimal growth in young children. I focus on developing the socialization and self-help skills needed to have a positive self-image. The children are given the opportunity to explore, experiment and create in a safe and nurturing environment. I do not discriminate on the basis of race, national origin, color, religion, sex or disability. The children will be taught by example here, to have respect for themselves as well as for others.

Behavior and Discipline Policy

I will strive to offer praise for good behavior. I try to create an environment that is supportive and respectful of each child's needs. Should negative behavior happen, it will be dealt with in one of three ways depending on the situation. Children will not be subjected to discipline that is severe, humiliating or frightening. Discipline will not be associated with food, rest or toileting. Spanking or any other type of corporal punishment is prohibited. My goal is to help each child develop a strong sense of self-discipline and self-esteem. Discipline techniques that may be used include redirection, positive reinforcement, or time-out (one minute per year of age). Should a behavior continue after a few time-out sessions, I will talk to the parent. A workable solution can almost always be found.

Adjustment Period

It will take time for your child to learn to love and trust me; we are building a new relationship. Short-term behavior changes and separation anxiety are normal. Feel free to linger during this adjustment period, for your comfort or for your child's. When you do leave, get down on their level, hug and kiss them, and say good-bye and assure them you will return (but never sneak out). Even if they are crying when you leave, know that they will usually be fine soon after you leave. Feel free to call me when you get to work, to check in on how your child is doing. There may be times when your child experiences separation anxiety again after they've been here awhile. It may just be the developmental stage they are passing through. Please feel free to discuss any concerns with me. There is a two week trial period, during which either party may terminate this agreement at any time for any reason. At the end of the two week period, the contract will be in full effect.

Mandated Reporting

As a child care provider, I am a mandated reporter. All providers must report suspected abuse of any kind or neglect of a child to the agency or police as required by Florida Statutes. This is simply listed to make you aware. In the event you have concerns about my care, you may contact the Department of Children and Families. I have taken classes on the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

Safety

Your child's safety is paramount. All lower cabinets that could pose a problem (kitchen and bathrooms) are safety locked or completely blocked off. All electrical outlets have child proof safety covers. I have smoke detectors in every room of the house and a fire extinguisher in the pantry. Emergency numbers are posted next to each phone. I also have two first aid kits in the playroom and bathroom, several lanterns/flashlights, and a portable battery operated radio. Tornado/storm and fire drills will be performed monthly and logged. I have taken classes in Infant/Child CPR and First Aid, Fire Safety and Emergency Preparedness. In the event of a disaster you will be notified immediately.

Tuition Payments

Tuition is due weekly. Fees are due on Friday for the following week or there is a \$25.00 late fee. Please make arrangements if you need to pay biweekly/monthly. It is your option to pay in advance for the two or four weeks, or pay me weekly. I do accept checks. Should I receive an NSF (non-sufficient funds) returned to me, you will be charged a fee of \$25.00 plus tuition cost which will need to be paid immediately in cash. You will also be responsible for any cost my bank charges me. A second NSF will result in all future payments be made in cash.

My hours will be Monday thru Friday 6:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Please notify me if you are going to be early/late. There will be a charge of \$5.00 for every 15 minutes your child is here. These fees will need to be made in cash upon arrival/departure. Fees are expected to be paid whether or not your child is going to be present.

Vacations/Holidays

I am closed on the following holidays and you will be required to pay for them, providing the holiday falls on a weekday. New Year's Day, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the Day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. I will be taking ten personal days every year. You will be given at least a two week notice when these will take place. Payments will still be due. Parents who might have objections to recognition of religious or other holidays should indicate such objection to me so that proper arrangements can be made to respect your wishes. For your notice there will be holiday parties and birthday celebrations. You are also welcome to prepare special birthday or holiday treats with advance notification.

Termination of Services

A written notice of termination is required by either party in this agreement. This notice must be received two weeks prior to last date of service. Fees will be due for the two week period. If no written notice is given and services are canceled your account will become delinquent. In the event that the responsible party fails to pay for child care services that party will be turned over to a collection agency. If the responsible party is turned over to collections due to non-payment for services, late payment fees will continue to accrue at the daily rate until the balance is paid in full. The responsible party will also be liable for any costs related to the collection of fees, including but not limited to attorney's fees and court cost.

Arrival/Departure

Please arrive on time. If you will be late for drop off/pick up, let me know as soon as possible, so I may adjust my schedule if need be. If someone other than a parent will be picking up/dropping off a child, make sure they are on the list and have proper identification. For your safety and mine, if they are not on the list they will not be allowed to pick up your child without verbal verification. Parents please insure that all children over the age of 12 months are expected to arrive fully dressed and ready for the day. Do not send your child in their pajamas.

At the moment you walk in to pick up, you are in charge of your child(ren). Sometimes children will "test" to see who is really in charge. A child who has been well behaved all day will suddenly bounce all over the house when a parent arrives. The respect that you show me, my home, and my possessions will speak volumes to your child.

Daily Activities

Play activities:

Children learn a great deal from our daily play activities. Play with Play dough, finger painting, drawing, singing, reading, and building with blocks are all typical activities. As some of the activities can be messy, I encourage you to dress your child in comfortable, washable play clothes every day.

Supplies needed for your child's cubby are as follows:

Change of clothing, nap time bedding (pillow, fitted crib sheet, blanket, and stuffed animal is needed), light sweater or jacket, diapers and wipes if needed (each child will have his/hers own bed/crib), formula, food required if your child is on a special diet, and all medications

Diapers/toilet training:

Diaper changing will be done every two hours or as needed in between with the exception of nap time. In that case the diaper will be changed as soon as the child wakes up. Disposable diapers only please. I will work with parents in potty training when the child shows they are ready. Usually this does not happen until the age of two and frequently closer to the age of three depending on the child. Children typically will potty train at home or at school, rarely both places at the same time. So parents be patient while your little one will get the hang of it. Cleanliness and hand-washing will be emphasized during the training process.

Meals/snacks:

Since food and nutrition are important components of a child's development all foods will be served from each basic food group. Meals and/or snacks are provided for children over 12 months of age, and are included in the weekly rate. Breakfast, lunch, and two snacks will be provided. Parents are more than welcome to supply your own food if you would prefer. Breakfast is served at 8:00a.m, lunch at 12:00 noon and snack 4:00p.m. No supper will be served. Please be sure that your child is here, if they are going to be late please provide them with food before arriving. If any food or bottles (i.e. sippy cups) are brought from home please be sure to put your child's name on it. It is also important to let me know if your child has any allergies. If your child is on formula you will need to bring enough for the day, it will not be supplied. Special meals will not be supplied. You must bring them for home.

Sick Policy

Children will be visually screened upon arrival. If a child exhibits signs of illness, it will be determined if the symptoms indicate the need for exclusion until remedied. In the event a child becomes ill and needs to be picked up, the child will be separated from the rest of the children until a parent or other authorized person arrives.

Symptoms are:

Fever of 101* or higher, vomiting on two or more occasions during the past 24 hours, diarrhea on three or more occasions during the past 24 hours, eye discharge or pink eye, lice or nits, and communicable disease. If your child needs to be picked up for one of the listed reasons he/she isn't allowed to return for 24 hours or until all symptoms are gone or directed otherwise by physician. In that case a doctor's note must be provided. Head lice must be treated and a receipt brought to confirm treatment. A recheck will occur before re-admittance.

Medications:

Written consent is required to administer ANY medication. All prescription medications must be in its original container and properly labeled with the child's name. Your pharmacist may be able to provide you with a separate, properly labeled container of medicine that can be left with me. Medication forms are available upon request.

Immunization Records:

All children in my home must have the appropriate immunizations for their age or written notarized documentation on the immunization form opposing immunizations and a current physical. These are also known as the blue and yellow forms available from your physician or local health department.

Summary

All children enrolled are treated with love and respect and provided with the opportunity to engage in a wide variety of activities. My most fundamental objective is to provide your child with a safe, clean and loving environment, in which he/she will feel loved and valued. Parents remember I have an open door policy. Please call or drop in whenever you would like.

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