

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES HANDBOOK

Stephanie Nutter's Kinder Beginnings

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The purpose of this handbook is to outline the policies and procedures under which I operate. I give the children in my care opportunities to learn and grow in a family-like setting where they can feel safe and loved, and can begin to build a positive self image. That positive self image is fostered, along with their developmental growth in the areas of intellectual, social, physical and emotional skills, through a variety of group activities, individual play and quiet periods. Your child will receive quality, personal and individualized care in a warm and loving home.

Your questions and comments are important so we can achieve the very best experience for your child. Parent visits, suggestions and comments are always welcome.

Applications for enrollment are accepted without regard to race, religion, gender, family dynamic or national origin. Children with disabilities are accepted into care so long as the child does not pose a direct threat to our health and safety or require a fundamental change in the program.

Hours of operation:

7:00 am to 6:00 pm Monday through Friday.

*The actual hours of care provided for your child will be listed in your contract.

*Non-traditional hours are provided on occasion and are subject to an hourly fee. Special arrangements must be made with me in advance, in case I have prior commitments.

Enrollment Procedures:

Prior to placement, a conference and the following forms must be completed:

1. Registration form, signed by parent/guardian(s).
2. Questionnaire and consent forms, signed by parent/guardian(s).
3. Contract, signed by parent/guardian(s) and provider.

Trial period and Termination:

*A two-week trial period (14 calendar days) is given for adjustment. During this time period either the parent/guardian(s) or provider may decide to terminate care without prior notice. If services are terminated in the trial period, a refund will be pro-rated per day.

*A Parent/Guardian is permitted up to 1 hour of observation prior to or during the first week of the trial period; this sit-in period is paid and does not alter the weekly tuition fee.

*After the trial period, care can be terminated by either party with two weeks written notice. Payment for those two weeks will be accepted in lieu of notice.

*In cases of non-payment, legal actions will be taken and the parent/guardian(s) listed on the contract will be responsible for any and all fees incurred.

*I will also give two weeks notice if the child is to be terminated from care. Any abuse or violation of the policies of the contract or handbook may be just cause for termination. Disrespect of me, others in my home, my property or policies is grounds for termination.

*Immediate termination can occur for situations deemed unsafe for myself or the other children in my care. In the case of immediate termination, any deposit will be forfeited.

Vacation and absences:

- *The facility will be closed 2 weeks per year for my vacation, and up to 3 paid professional training days per year.
- *My vacation weeks are unpaid; you will not be charged tuition for those two weeks.
- *Notification of at least two weeks will be given prior to any closed days, with the exception of emergencies or sudden severe illness.
- *Parent/Guardian(s) are responsible for finding back-up care for any provider unavailability.
- *Tuition will be based upon the opening held for your child, not on your child's attendance. No refunds are given for late arrivals, early departures or exclusion due to illness. Should your child be absent during a scheduled day, the weekly tuition cost will remain unchanged.
- *Parent/Guardian(s) are granted up to two weeks of personal vacation per calendar year at half of the regular tuition. Notification is required in writing at least two weeks in advance. These two half-rate weeks cannot be applied to the notice period required for termination.
- *If I am unable to provide care due to family emergency, funeral, injury or sudden severe illness, I will credit your next week of care for each day closed. I strongly suggest that you have a family member, friend or substitute provider lined up in case of emergency closure.

Holidays:

The childcare facility will be closed for the following holidays with pay:

New Year's Day - Memorial Day - Independence Day - Labor Day
Thanksgiving - Day after Thanksgiving - Christmas Eve - Christmas Day

- *When a holiday falls on Saturday closure will occur the Friday before. When a holiday falls on Sunday closure will occur on the Monday after.
- *The day after Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve are considered "Payment Optional" dates. Payment is expected for these two days, but will be waived in the event that a backup provider must be paid for the care of your child on that day.

Rates:

- Tuition rates are based upon arranged hours of care. Individual weekly fees are outlined in our contract agreement. Each year, all rates are reviewed and may be increased effective on January 1st; a 30-day notice is given before rate increases take effect.
- *For full-time/part-time schedules, tuition fees are due on Fridays for the following week. For hourly/drop-in care, payment is due on the date of service. Late fees of \$10 per calendar day will apply. Services will not be provided until all fees are paid in full.
 - *Payment is accepted in the form of cash, personal check, money order or credit card (via electronic payment only). Electronic payments are processed through childcarepay.com (bank account and/or recurring payments) or paypal.com (credit card payments).

Additional fees:

**Overtime: any time over 10 hours per day or over 50 hours per week, as well as any time outside of our contracted schedule. A grace period of 15 minutes is permitted for unforeseeable events, so long as it is used infrequently. If the grace period is being abused, you will be notified in writing that it is no longer in effect and overtime charges will begin the following day. I am under no obligation to provide an extension of time. Late arrival does not justify late departure.*

\$10.00 per hour for pre-arranged overtime (with at least 24-hour notice).

\$10.00 per half-hour when time was not pre-arranged.

*Returned Check Fees: \$35.00 inconvenience fee plus any additional costs that I incur due to the returned check. Due within 3 days of notice to you, subject to late payment fees of \$10 per calendar day. Cash payment for tuition fees is required after two NSF checks.

*Clients are liable for all costs I incur through collections (court costs, agency fees, etc).

Taxes

A year-end summary of all daycare fees paid during the year will be provided to you for tax purposes, either in January each year or when services are terminated. You may request a statement at any time.

Arrival and departure:

*Please send your child clean, dressed for the day and fed (if they are arriving after our scheduled breakfast time of 8am).

*Please make your goodbye brief (no more than a few minutes), the longer you prolong departure the harder it gets. Never "sneak out" or leave without telling your child goodbye.

*All children must be signed in and out for recordkeeping purposes. The attendance sheet, a pen and clock are located near the door for your convenience.

*No one other than the parent/guardian(s) or pre-authorized persons (those listed in the child's file) will be allowed to pick up your child without prior arrangement. I must have written notice in advance, including the person's name and relationship to the child. For your child's protection, photo ID must be presented before child is released.

*If there is a court order keeping one parent away from the child, I must have a copy of the document in my files. Otherwise, I cannot prevent the non-custodial parent from picking up the child.

Communication:

*You are permitted to phone during the day to speak with your child. Please keep in mind our goal for quiet during Rest Time and avoid calling during that time.

*Want to get an unexpected peek of your little one having fun while you work? If you have signed the permission slip that allows me to photograph your child while in my care, I will periodically email photos and videos of your little one to an email address you provide.

*While an advance phone call is appreciated, parents/guardians ARE permitted to make surprise visits during care hours. Please knock before entering.

*Phone calls/visits must not be excessive to the point of causing program disruption.

A Typical Day:

The schedule is flexible and may vary depending on the needs of the children.

7:00-8:00	Arrival, Quiet Time, Educational TV
8:00-8:30	Wash Up, Breakfast
8:30-8:45	Change Diapers & Potty, Wash Up, Brush Teeth
8:45-9:30	Free Play, Outside Play (weather permitting)
9:30-10:00	Planned Program: Activities, Stories, Circle Time, Music, Yoga ⁺⁺
10:00-10:15	Wash Up, Morning Snack
10:15-10:30	Change Diapers & Potty
10:30-11:15	Free Play, Outside Play (weather permitting) ⁺⁺
11:15-11:30	Clean Up
11:30-12:00	Wash Up, Lunch
12:00-12:15	Change Diapers & Potty, Wash Up, Brush Teeth
12:15-wake	Rest Time (after 30min, quiet activities like reading or Children's TV)
Upon waking	Change Diapers & Potty
2:15-2:30	Wash Up, Afternoon Snack
2:30-3:30	Planned Program: Activities, Stories, Circle Time, Music, and Craft Time
3:30-departure	Free Play, Outside Play (weather permitting)

⁺⁺*On Wednesdays, these activities will be replaced by story time provided by the Logan Hocking Library. During the summer, story time is held on Thursdays at Kachelmacher Park; we will eat a packed lunch and spend outside play time at the park that day.*

Activities:

Age appropriate activities are scheduled with flexibility, which allows for responding to the needs of each individual child. The activities include daily circle time with letter, shape, color and number recognition, singing and story reading. We will have crafts and projects at least a few times a week. Daily active play is encouraged to help the children develop their muscles and to make appropriate use of their energy, and children are invited to participate in our daily yoga session. Scheduled time for free play gives the children the freedom to choose their own activities, to make independent choices and to build essential social skills.

Children's Videos:

I allow limited TV viewing consisting primarily of educational programs. All programs are in DVD format, so children will never be subjected to commercials. After one hour of resting, awake children are allowed to choose a child-appropriate video to watch until Rest Time is over. Children are never required to sit and watch TV, and TV is not offered in place of free play or learning activities.

Nap/Rest:

All children are required to participate in Rest Time. No child is forced to sleep; however they must remain quiet to facilitate a calm environment. Please avoid scheduling to drop off or pick up a child during this time, to prevent disrupting the rest period for the other children. If you must pick up or drop off during this time, be quiet and brief. If you have to make an appointment for your child, please make it before 12:00 or after 2:30 whenever possible. Please also refrain from calling during this time unless it is an emergency.

Behavior Management:

I see "discipline" as another opportunity to teach a child. The rules are all in place in order to keep everyone safe and comfortable; it is vital to prepare children for adulthood by showing them they are responsible for their actions. First and most importantly, the children are explained our rules and reminded of them until they know the guidelines. I encourage empathy and logical consequences; children will clean up their own messes to the best of their ability and are guided in using words to work out any issues with their friends. If a child understands the rules and intentionally disobeys them, harms others or property, the following developmentally appropriate guidance techniques will be used.

These techniques are as follows:

1. Positive Reinforcement: The child will receive encouragement when he/she demonstrates appropriate behavior.
2. Redirection: The child is redirected to another activity and given an opportunity to try again at another time.
3. Reflection (for children age 2 or older): The child is separated from the group for a regulated period of time (one minute for each year of age) in order to regain self-control. This technique is used when a child is exhibiting tantrum type behavior or hurting self, others, or equipment. When the child shows that he/she is ready to demonstrate acceptable behavior, they are encouraged to join the rest of the group and try again.
4. Last resort: When a child's behavior is continually upsetting or dangerous to their self, others or me, a conference will be called with the parents. If the problems can't be resolved, arrangements will have to be made for the child to go elsewhere for care.

**Sometimes when both a parent and a provider are both in the same area (during drop-off, pick-up, parties, etc.) a child may forget the rules or test the boundaries. Please help show your child that you respect me, the rules of my house and my property by reminding them that the rules still apply when you are around.*

Meals:

Breakfast (for children arriving before 8:00), lunch and snacks will be served. The children are offered the food, not forced to eat. Children who choose not to eat will not be served additional meals until the next scheduled meal or snack. Please do not send food (half-eaten breakfasts, etc.) candy or treats with the children unless previous arrangements have been made. Parent/Guardian of an infant must provide their formula/breast milk, cereal and baby food until age one when table food is started.

Special Diets:

If a child has special dietary needs substantiated by medical evaluation, I must be informed and given a doctor's note. Substitute food is then permitted to be brought from home.

Potty-Training:

I will be more than happy to help with potty training, provided that it is not done before the child is ready. Parents are asked to initiate the training at home (during vacation or a weekend) before starting it at daycare. Once training is initiated, parents are to supply 5 ply-training pants with plastic pants or pull-ups. **Ask me for the potty-training handout!**

Diapering:

Diapers are checked and changed every 2 hours (or more frequently if required, such as during cases of diaper rash). Soiled diapers are changed immediately. Diapers are also changed before and after Rest Time. Hand washing is performed after each change.

Supplies:

- *All supplies must be labeled with your child's name.
- *All belongings are to be taken home upon termination of contract. Parent/Guardian will be notified of any items left behind, and those items will be considered forfeited as a donation to our program if they are not retrieved within 30 days.
- *Soiled clothing will be placed in a plastic bag and sent home with your child. A clean replacement should be brought from home the next day of care.
- *Bottles: You may choose to either bring a clean supply each day, or leave enough onsite to be washed/sterilized as necessary. Sippy cups and regular drinking cups will be provided.
- *Should you choose to use cloth diapers, you will be required to provide either a diaper pail or wet bag and take away soiled diapers regularly.
- *You will be notified when your supply of diapers is low. If a child is not sufficiently supplied with diapers and runs out, diapers will be purchased and parent/guardian(s) will be responsible for reimbursement of the cost.

Parents are responsible for supplying the following items:

- *Diapers or Training Pants (wipes are provided)
- *One complete weather-appropriate change of clothes (2 for infants & potty-training kids)
- *One spare pair of socks (2 for infants & potty-training kids)
- *Weather-appropriate outerwear (jacket, coat, gloves, hat, rain gear, etc.) for outside play
- *Insect repellent and sunscreen (Spring-Autumn), if a specific brand is required
- *Fever, cold or other essential medications (including diaper rash ointment, etc.)
- *Age-appropriate car seat (for outings and emergencies, can go home with child each day)
- *Age-appropriate toothbrush (drop in or casual care only, provided for FT/PT clients)

If you prefer not to leave these items onsite, you may send them daily in a diaper bag. The option of leaving these items here is for your convenience and is not required; however, all of the above items are required for me to care for your child, so they must be brought daily.

Abuse:

Please be aware that I am required by law to report to the local Social Services Office any suspected neglect or physical, emotional or sexual abuse.

Property:

*For the health of both my family and any children in my care, the use of tobacco products is not permitted on the premises.

*To protect all children present, sex offenders are not permitted on the premises during operating hours and are not allowed to pick up children. *Please note: I regularly check the Hocking County database to stay informed of any locally registered offenders.* Failure to inform me of any known abuse charges against a parent, guardian or emergency contact may be interpreted as willful endangerment of the children and may result in immediate termination of our contract.

*No toys should be brought from home, with the exception of Show-and-Tell or other special activity days. If your child needs a special toy or item for sleeping, it will be allowed but it will be put up when they arrive and used only at Rest Time. I take no responsibility for lost or damaged toys brought from home.

*Should a child deliberately destroy my toys or property through misuse or willfulness, the parent/guardian(s) will be required to replace it.

Outings:

*We will go on scheduled outings such as field trips to local places in the Hocking Hills area. All trips are planned and you will be notified in advance.

*It is not mandatory that your children attend these trips, but you will be required to provide back-up childcare for your child if he/she child cannot attend. In accordance with state requirements, all children will be restrained with seat belts and in approved car seats.

Health:

Part of my job is to ensure that an ill child does not share his/her sickness with the other children. Please do not bring your child if he/she is sick; I can only care for children with mild cold-like symptoms (clear runny nose, slight cough, and no fever). Sick children need extra attention and nurturing; if they are unable to participate in our activities or if the other children are being shortchanged, then the ill child should be at home.

*Children will not be permitted to attend if they exhibit any of the following symptoms:

- *Unexplained Rash
- *Fever (100^F or higher)
- *Extreme cold and/or cough
- *Vomiting
- *Diarrhea
- *Parasites, Lice or nits
- *Discharge from eyes or ears
- *Unusual drowsiness / lethargy
- *Communicable diseases (chicken pox, roseola, conjunctivitis, mumps, measles, flu)

*Children can return when they are symptom-free for 24 hours without using medication.

*If a child becomes ill at daycare, parents will be contacted immediately and should attempt to retrieve their child as soon as possible. Pickup must occur within 1 hour of notification. If parent/guardian(s) are not available, emergency contact person(s) will then be notified.

*Note: This illness policy applies to me and my family as well. If I am unavailable due to illness, you will be notified as soon as possible and payment for that day is not required.

Medication:

I can administer medication if needed, but only if the Medication Consent Form has been signed. All medicine must be in the original container with the child's name clearly written on it. Written instructions with the child's name, dosage and schedule must accompany the medication.

Medical Emergencies:

I have been trained and certified in Infant & Child CPR and First Aid.

*In case of a serious accident or sudden illness requiring medical attention, the following procedures are followed:

1. A phone call is made to 911.
2. Child's parent/guardian(s) or emergency contact(s) are called.
3. Child and medical information form are taken to emergency services at Hocking Valley Community Hospital.
- 4) An incident report is completed and a copy is given to parents.

*It is extremely important, especially in case of illness or emergency that the emergency contact information is up to date and all information is correct. Please report any changes immediately to keep emergency contact information current.

*Parents are responsible for all costs involved in emergency medical treatment, including emergency transportation if required.

I retain the right to enforce these policies at will. Lack of enforcement of a certain policy at any given time does not indicate that the particular policy is no longer in effect, and does not invalidate any other provision or term.

All policies are reviewed as needed and changes are put into effect following a two-week notice to Parent/Guardian(s).

A final note:

To provide the best possible care, please feel free to communicate any concerns regarding your child. It is only through parent-provider interaction that a goal of quality, nurturing care can be achieved.

I will strive to keep you informed through daily reports, my monthly newsletter and our yearly Parent Conference (to be scheduled each September). I am always open to suggestions and feel that communication is a very important part of this business. If there are any problems or concerns, I encourage you to talk to me about it. If a lengthy conference is needed, a time that is convenient for both of us will be scheduled, as the other children still need my attention during business hours.

I am thankful for the opportunity to work with your family, and I look forward to helping shape your child's future.

