

Parent's Helper Nature School/Daycare Policy Handbook

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Oak Park, Illinois, 60302
(708) 383-7209
Hours of Operation
7am to 12am Midnight***

Welcome to Parent's Helper Nature School/Daycare, this handbook contains information designed to introduce you to the program and hopefully answer any questions you may have.

I'm a licensed family child care professional who has had the privilege of sharing my home, and life with families and children in several communities since 1988. Since I can remember, I have always possessed an enormous amount of love for children and decided in my youth that I would dedicate my life to teaching and caring for them.

Children are learning from the moment they are born. They are learning all the time, at greater speeds than at any other time in their lives, because of this important stage of development, I'm committed to providing high quality child care in a learning environment which fosters safety and love. I pride myself on meeting the needs of the total child: socially, emotionally, creatively, physically and intellectually. That's why returning to school to receive my B.A. in Early Childhood Education and Psychology and pursuing additional educational training and credentials is vital in my care of children. I aim to instill in each child, a feeling of competence, autonomy and a positive self-concept as I strive for excellence in the field of Early Childhood Education.

[Program Highlights](#)

Parent's Helper offers full and part time, age appropriate, play based and structured learning, child care services. We welcome all children regardless of race, ethnicity, and religion or ability level. We believe all children deserve respect and we value each child's "gift to life".

Parent's Helper offers:

- *State licensed high-quality child care serving ages 6 weeks to 12 years of age.*
- *A warm, caring, safe environment, with well trained professionals.*
- *Nature based learning environments that helps children and families explore and connect with nature.*
- *Reggio Inspired, which means I believe children learn through every form of expression. I view children as being capable learners, competent, knowledgeable, unique and having rights.*
- *An eco-friendly environment that is committed to reducing exposure to toxins and other environmental health hazards.*
- *Conscious and respectful recycle solutions to care for our planet Earth.*
- *Developmentally appropriate activities, toys and other learning materials.*
- *Daily activities that invite learning, promotes imagination, thoughtfulness and inquiry.*
- *Child led, open-ended play, with many right ways of doing things.*
- *Mixed age groups, so children can experience different family dynamics.*
- *Smaller group size for more individualized attention.*
- *Delicious, nutritious meals (many times prepared together) that teach lifelong healthy eating habits.*
- *Positive guidance and respect for human rights, that promote self-esteem while teaching socially acceptable ways of expressing needs and emotions.*

- *Family and provider collaboration to ensure the wellbeing and ongoing development of each child and their family.*

- *Field Trips*
- *Thoughtful policies to enhance the quality of care provided.*

Program Philosophy & Goal

I am committed to providing high quality child development in a learning environment where children are safe and loved. I believe children learn best and develop their fullest potential through active participation in a wide variety of planned and spontaneous activities, which are largely child led and play based. The academics that we need to take to kindergarten will fall into place when they are relevant and our brain development tells us it is time. I pride myself on meeting the needs of the total child: socially, emotionally, creatively, physically and intellectually. I aim to instill in each child, a feeling of competence, autonomy and positive self-concept.

I am committed to supporting the family unit and recognize the uniqueness of each family's lifestyle and cultural heritage. I have dedicated my life to supporting and encouraging parents and families.

Experience

I have over 30 years of experience in the field of Education as a teacher, Director and Activity Specialist.

Education

Bachelor Degree with Honors in Education and Psychology - National Louis University

Certifications

Teacher Certification (04) State of Illinois

Advance Certificate in Early Childhood Education- Malcolm X College

Nature Explore Certified, and NAFCC Accredited.

Illinois State Credentials (5)

Directors, Infant/Toddler, E.C.E. (Early Childhood Education) School-Age and Family Child care.

Memberships Affiliations

Erikson Institute – Town Square Advisory Board Member

Nature Explore Member

Action for Children Affiliate

NAEYC - National Association for Education of Young Children Member

NAFCC - National Association for Family Childcare Member

WSHDCA Inc. - West Suburban Home Daycare Association Inc. Member

Go AEYC Chicago Metro Member

NAPW – National Association of Professional Women Member

Oak Park Collaboration – Providers Round Table Member

Gateways - Marketing postcard quote mailed to 7,230

FCC professionals and CCR&R's, to encourage Credentials.

SEIU Local 880 - Union Member

Hours of Operation

Monday through Friday from 7am to 12am Midnight.

Full-time care is 10 hours or less. No child shall remain on the premises for more than 12 hours in any 24 hours period unless the client’s employment schedule requires additional hours of care. Section 406.12 DCFS Standards). Any care over 10 hours will be charged \$15.00 per hour.

Holiday’s Close

New Year’s Eve & New Year’s Day
Good Friday
Labor Day
Christmas Eve & Christmas Day

Dr. King’s Birthday
Memorial Day
Thanksgiving & Friday After

Pres. Day
July 4th

ALL HOLIDAYS & VACATION TIME-OFF ARE PAID DAYS.

Government assisted clients are required to pay all days not covered by State funding.

Vacation Time-Off & Personal Days

Studies have shown that lack of benefits contributes to burn-out and a high rate of turnover in the Early Childhood Education Field. In order to ensure that continual quality care to you and your child, I will take (4) weeks paid vacation annually, plus (6) paid personal days as needed. All parents will be charged a (4) week vacation fee, whether private, State funded, full-time or part-time. Vacation payments are due the Friday before a scheduled vacation begins. Advance notice will be given prior to vacation time-off so parents can make other child care arrangements.

Child Care Fees

Full Day Tuition Rates (4 or 5 days) Reflect 10 Hrs. or less of Child care

6 weeks to 30 months \$300.00 weekly
31 months to 5yrs. \$250.00 weekly

Part Time Tuition Rates (4 or 5 days) 4 ½ hrs. or less of Child Care

6 weeks to 30 months \$150.00 weekly
31 months to 5yrs. \$125.00 weekly

Part-time Tuition Rates (3 days or less)

6 months to 30 months \$70.00 daily (10 hrs. or less)
31 months to 5 yrs. \$60.00 daily (10 hrs. or less)

Before and/or After School Care (4 hrs. or less) \$10.00 per hour.
(Transportation isn’t included)

Child care payments are due Monday morning at drop-off. If your child doesn't attend daycare on that day, please make arrangements to make sure your payment is paid to avoid being charged a late fee.

Tuition is paid weekly or bi-weekly or Mondays or monthly on the 1st. Payments can be made by cash, debit or card cards. Also, the "Cash app "is another option of payment. Receipts will be provided for all payments made.

Child Care Enrollment Fee

In order to reserve a child care space and to cover the cost of Enrollments forms, Parent Handbook and 1st months Curriculum cost (if applicable, ages 2yrs. to 5yrs.), a non-refundable enrollment fee of \$35.00 is due at the time of enrollment. Additional sibling enrollment is half (\$17.50) of original enrollment. For three or more family members enrolled, the enrollment fee will be waived however, curriculum charges will apply if applicable. Child care spaces will NOT be reserved without an enrollment fee.

Non-Sufficient Funds (NSF)

My program needs to maintain an adequate cash flow in order to continue to operate, therefore at \$50.00 return check fee will be charged for any check returned due to NSF. A cash only payment will need to be made in replace of the returned check. If (3) separate checks are returned due to NSF, all future tuition payments must be paid in cash, debit, credit card or cash app. Any fees incurred due to NSF checks will be the responsibility of the parent(s).

Child Care Holding Fee

When we agree to reserve a child care space, I agree to not fill that space with another client for this reason a non-refundable holding fee is required to hold a space opening if the child(s) starting date is more than (2) weeks after enrollment. The fee will be half of the regular child care weekly fee and will be due on Monday morning of each week that the opening space is held. If payment isn't received on Monday, the opening will no longer be held and any fee or payments made will be forfeited.

Child Care Legal Fees

If for any legal action taken, the client(s) involved will be responsible for ALL cost and expenses, including attorney fees. Client(s) will be responsible for ALL cost and expenses, including attorney fees, incurred in the collection of any fees due from their account and/or defending any lawsuits brought by the client(s) in which I prevail. Such cost and expenses will also include but are not limited to: court cost, bank charges and substitute charges, (charges that result from time off to attend court or other matters relating to client provider legal actions/situations). If I'm subpoenaed by any client(s) or family members to act on their behalf, the client(s)/family member is responsible for any fees that I might incur as a result of needing a substitute caregiver or fees I may lose from other client(s) in the event I need to close.

Child Care Damages Fees

Materials, supplies and equipment are always selected with durability and safety in mind. Misuse may cause permanent damage. Client(s) are responsible for damage beyond normal wear and tear of materials.

Child Care Withdrawal Fees

A two-week (14 day) notification period is required for withdrawals. This notice must be given verbally and in writing. If less than (14) days are given, client(s) are liable for full payment of the remaining (2) weeks, which will cover the (2) week notification period. Failure to make payment will result in legal action.

Overtime Child Care Fee

It is vital that you adhere to your contracted time for child care. This timely pick-up or drop-off maintains legal staff-to-child ratios as well as ensures that safe, quality care is maintained. All early drop-offs or late pick-ups will be charged at a rate of \$3.00 per minute, due upon arrival or the following morning at the drop-off of the child. If care extends to an hour or more overtime, rates will be charged at \$15.00 per hour. No, exceptions to this policy. My personal and family time is important and must be respected.

Waiting List

A waiting list is maintained and used to fill vacancies. Client(s) wishing to be placed on the waiting list need to provide information necessary for the list. When a space/opening becomes available client(s) will be notified in the order they were placed on the waiting list, with priority given to siblings of enrolled children or client(s) enrolled who might be expecting a new baby.

Sick Days and Other Absences

Tuition payments establishes the child's space/hold in my home. I'm licensed to care for a certain number of children daily, and I budget accordingly. My operating cost remain fixed even when your child doesn't attend. Parents should notify me in advance if their child will be absent. If notification isn't received with the week, the child(s) space may be given to an applicant on the waiting list. When your child is sick, or will be absent, please call each day to notify me.

There are no tuition refunds for absent days. Services are contracted at enrollment for a weekly, full-time or part-time rate. **Not a per day fee!**

Back-up Child Care

I will close annually for vacation and personal/professional days off. It's each parent's responsibility to have a back-up child care plan for these occasions. If I'm closed for any reason other than holiday, provider vacations, or provider professional/personal days off, a fee adjustment will be made.

Termination of Child care – The provider may cancel the childcare contract at will or at their discretion if services aren't beneficial to the family or program setting.

Accident and Emergency Procedures

The safety of every child is of primary importance to me. Being prepared for emergencies helps everyone feel less frightened. I have paid special attention to safety in the design and arrangement of my environment as a preventative measure for accidents. This includes the use of outlet covers, safety latches, doorknob covers, child gates, safe storage of hazardous materials (Standard 406.8 DCFS Standards). Accessible and operable smoke detector and carbon monoxide detectors are equipped on each level of my home (Section 406.8 DCFS Standards). Nevertheless, there are certain risk and hazards that may arise in the course of your child's activities.

I am certified in infant, child and Adult CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation) and First Aid. I renew my certification regularly to keep current with any up-dated lifesaving procedures. Substitutes and additional caregivers must maintain the same certifications (Section 406.8 DCFS Standards).

In the event of minor accidents, a first aid kit is available on the premises and in any vehicle, use for transportation of children (Section 406.8 DCFS Standards). In case of serious injury or illness requiring emergency room treatment, I will make phone calls in the following order: first to 911, Rescue Squad and child's parents/guardian.

Accident reports will be completed when any accidents occur. It will be signed by the parent, caregiver and staff if applicable. And a copy placed in the child's file and a copy given to the parent or guardian.

In the event of emergency evacuations, I will assist all children to one of three doorway exits posted or through window ground level exits if door exits are not accessible. Children will be gathered in a safe place and attendance taken. An EP Kit (Emergency Preparedness Kit) will be taken with us which includes but is not limited to: Parent emergency phone numbers, a cell phone, first aid kit etc. All families will be contacted with current details and location information.

*Fire and Tornado drills are practiced monthly and all reports and outs are placed in the daily sign in and out board for client/parents review upon request. (Section 406.8 DCFS Standards). **There are no firearms allowed on the premises.** All sharp objects (i.e. kitchen knives etc.) are kept out of reach of children (Section 406.8 DCFS Standards).*

Child Care injuries: *Active children will incur bumps, bruises, scrapes and scratches through active play. Minor injuries will be treated with soap and water, a Band-Aid, ice if needed, and lots of TLC. All injuries are documented on an injury report and signed by the parent and caregiver and placed in the child's file and a copy is provided to the parent/client. Licensing rules requires that each child be observed for signs of injury or other concerns upon arrival. Injuries or concerns will be addressed with the client/parent and documented. (Section 406.14 DCFS Standards).*

In order to keep all children safe, no child will ever be left alone, and children are accounted for throughout the day. If a child would ever become lost, I will quickly check all areas of the property. If the child cannot be found, the police will be contacted immediately, and the parent(s) or emergency person(s) will be notified.

In the event of a tornado or severe thunderstorm, I will assist the children to the basement. The Emergency Medical Kit is stored in the basement containing all disaster required materials, and a Risk Management Book.

Immediate treatment is available to any child who is bitten or scratched (Section 406.8 DCFS Standard).

Household Pets:

Our family Vet has certified that all family and program pets: Marley (Yorkshire Terrier) Nibbles, (Guinea pig), Blanquita and Clyde (Cockatiels), and fish are free of diseases and certifications are kept on file. Careful supervision of children is practiced when children are in contact with pets.

Closure Policy in Case of Power Outage

In the event there is no electricity due to storms or city outages, the daycare will close. Please keep in mind that temperatures shall be measured at least 3 feet above the floor and portable space heaters cannot be used in a day care home during the hours that child care is provided (Section 406.8 DCFS Standards).

Shaken Baby Syndrome Prevention Policy

I have attended several DCFS online, in person trainings, and read many publications relating to Shaken Baby and Safe Sleep topics. I intentionally incorporate the following trainings into my educational trainings: stress and stress management, discipline and guidance. As well as ages and stages of child development. Awareness of triggers what triggers crying and fussiness helps to minimize the stress level of the infant, child, and caregiver. Some examples are: tired, hungry, soiled, wet diaper, and needing extra attention. In the event I need assistance, I would call the Child Help Hotline at (800) 422-4453.

Safe Sleeping Policy

The peak of SIDS usually occurs between the ages of 2-4 months. 95% of SIDS deaths occur before 6 months of age. It is good practice to use a pacifier between the ages of 1 month to 1 year. The following precautions are taken to aid a sleeping baby:

- *No soft bedding, including pillows, quilts, comforters, bumper pads, sheep skins and no stuff toys are placed in baby crib or sleeping area.*
- *No couch, car seat, or swing will be used for sleeping baby.*
- *No sleep products (such as wedges, bolsters, etc.) will be used.*
- *No drop side cribs will be used.*
- *No smoking is allowed in the child care facility.*
- *Temperatures in the home shall remain between 68-72 degrees.*
- *The child will be placed on their back only for sleeping. A doctor's written permission note with instructions included if an alternate sleep position is requested. This note must detail the sleep position and why. It must be signed by the Physician and dated.*
- *Tummy time will occur daily throughout the day for all infants.*

Swimming

In the event we visit the neighborhood pool or other facilities with a swimming pool, all swimming activities are supervised for safety and are directly supervised at all times when children are wading or swimming. (Section 406.19 DCFS Standards). I use a sprinkler and kid size pool for water play.

Risk Management Plan

A written risk management plan book is maintained on the premises. It includes universal precautions, routines for sterilizing toys and materials, natural disaster plans, fire and tornado drill procedures and monthly walk through checks and annual maintenance. The Risk Management Book is available for clients/parent's review.

Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

The State of Illinois requires that all license child care providers be aware and report any and all cases of child abuse or neglect. I am therefore, obligated as a Mandated Reporter to report any suspicious concerns. Should I suspect possible child abuse or neglect of any child, observations and dates will be documented. I will then notify the Illinois Dept. of Children and Family Services (DCFS) immediately. A signed statement is on file acknowledging my status as a mandated reporter (Standard 406.24 DCFS Standards).

Arrival and Departure

For safety reasons, a child must never leave without an adult. Children will be released only to those person(s) authorized by the legal guardian. Children must be signed in and out daily, and an authorized release card will be kept on file for each child. Please note, no child will be released to any person or persons under the influence of any drug or alcoholic beverage or substance. It is the parent(s) responsibility to ensure proper car seat restraints. No child will be released to any last minute authorized person (s) without a written letter or official I.D. If no written notice is possible, (due to a last-minute situations) an official I.D. is required (photo copied) and a phone number of the person (s) picking-up the child is required. The parent will be notified before release.

Discipline & Guidance

If a child requires correction, the child will be redirected to a different activity or play area to resolve the concerned situation. If this action doesn't work, the child (age appropriate) will be given time to sit in order to calm down and REFOCUS. Ex. A three-year-old will have 3 minutes to calm down. No, child will remain in calm down time longer than 5 minutes. Calm down (sitting down time) is not my first choice of correction, but loving, positive words to encourage self-correction and redirection of the child behavior is my primary goal.

Dealing with Separation Anxiety

When dropping-off your child, I ask that you not "sneak" away without saying goodbye. I ask that you tell them you love them, and you will pick them up later, and then leave. A goodbye at

the window shows that you are thinking about them. There may be times during their development when your child cries at separation. Please be assured this is only temporary and normal. **Lingering for re-assurance often makes the pain of separation worse.**

Communication with Parents

Quality care is promoted through open communication between client and provider. Feel free to contact me to see what type of day your child had, or to share any other information that will assist me in providing continual quality care for you family. Please look for ongoing communication such as: My Days (daily information on child's day), hand-outs and daily arrival or departure chats relating to your child's day.

Conferences

I am always eager to speak with families about their child's daily experiences, growth and development, or any other topic you may wish to discuss. I will offer formally scheduled conferences twice a year in January and June. January conference will include ASQ SE and ASQ 3 developmental screening results. August developmental screening will be a mini review. Information about your child's growth and development will be shared continually throughout their stay in the program. If you have special concerns I will be happy to arrange a convenient time to discuss any issues via phone or in person. Most often this time will be during naptime or evening hours after 6pm. Feel free to schedule an appointment as needed.

Confidentiality: All information about children and families will be kept strictly confidential. If a communicable illness occurs, each family will be informed regarding possible exposure, but not the name of the sick child/family. Please do not ask any questions of me or my staff that would cause a breach of confidentiality. (Section 406.25 DCFS Standards).

I have a resource area with lots of articles and information (helpful parenting tips) that are available for the taking. Also, I will periodically send home materials to assist, inform, affirm or encourage you in your parenting role. I hope you enjoy these materials and find them informative and helpful. Please feel free to share them with your friends, family members or other new or seasoned parents.

References

Parent references are available upon request.

Open Door Policy

All parents are welcome to observe, visit or stay and play during daycare hours. (Section 406.12 DCFS Standards). As a common courtesy to the children, it's naptime, please remember to talk quietly, as not to disturb or wake the children that are sleeping.

Parent Newsletter & Bulletin Board

The Entry-way is an important source of parent information. The bulletins board contains Menus, monthly Curriculum and other helpful information. A parent community Resource Directory is handed-out at all parent interviews. Also, Parent tip sheets and other resource

materials are available for the taking. Please help yourself. If you don't see a particular resource please ask.

Child Care Nutrition

I will meet the child(s) nutritional needs for the hours the child is in my care. I will provide well balanced nutritional meals throughout the day. I am a member of the Illinois Child care Bureau which monitors and reviews meals served daily. I provide breakfast, am/pm snack, and dinner, if children are still present. Meal hours are as follows: 7am, 10am, 12pm, 2:45pm, 5pm and 7pm if enrolled in evening care.

Child care Registration Forms must be completed and signed by the client upon enrollment and on August 1st of every year enrolled. Any time any information changes for the child, address, hours of care etc. it's the client(s) responsibility to inform me and a new registration form must be submitted (Standard D.8 CACFP Guidelines).

Field Trip Procedures

I plan regular field trips for education purposes and for fun. I provide a sufficient amount of time so that parents can join us, on a day of fun and learning. Transportation is provided by the following: Bus Rental Services, (CTA, RTA, walks).

In the event of a field trip, each parent must complete a field trip authorization form prior to the trip. No authorization form is required for community walks other than the initial community walks release signed at enrollment. If you decide not to allow your child to participate in a field trip, it's the parent's responsibility to find alternative child care during the field trip.

Rest Periods

Naptime or rest periods are 1pm to 3pm daily. Infants and toddlers are as needed. Children who do not nap, will be allowed to engage in quiet activities during naptime hours.

Daily Activities

Objectives of Daily Learning Activities: Daily learning activities include a balance of child-led exploration and caregiver-initiated activities. Ample time to explore the materials, and space is allowed for children to actively explore the world around them while scheduled activities are planned with specific objectives for each individual child; according to age and level of development. Daily activities from infancy through school-age are designed to:

- *Foster positive self-esteem*
- *Encourage the development of communication and social skills*
- *Strengthen small and large muscle skills*
- *Develop safe and healthy life long habits*
- *Stimulate imagination and creative expression*
- *Promote tolerance and anti-bias attitudes*
- *Consider the individual needs of each child.*

Please see morning and evening daily schedules in the back of the handbook.

- Please see, **What I am learning** parent sheet, provided during your interview. This sheet informs parents/clients on what their child learns through different forms of play.

Toys and Candy

A favorite stuff toy/or blanket and pillow for nap time are welcome, but no other toys or candy. I will furnish toys for the children's enjoyment. Occasionally we ask the children to bring in items to share with their play mates for, Show-n- Tell. Advance notice will be given to parents/clients and children regarding this important time of sharing.

Birthdays and Special Occasions

I celebrate and decorate my home for most of the American traditional holidays. If you have special holidays I might not be aware of, please inform me so that I can include those days into our program for celebration. Parents are welcome to send treats to share with the other children on birthdays or special days, but please remember some children cannot eat sweets or may have certain allergies, so please plan treats that all can enjoy. A suggested snack list can be provided for your use.

In the event I have children and their families enrolled that don't celebrate holidays, I will work closely with the parents to reach a proper decision to help respect each family's cultural beliefs. **Please check the bulletin board daily for any postings that might be of interest to your family!**

Toilet Training

I believe it's the parent(s) responsibility to start their child's journey towards toilet training. I will not start "potty" training until a child is around how to: 2 ½ years of age, or can walk up to me and say, "I have to "potty" etc." If at that time your child shows the general signs of readiness such as, he/she is aware of the need to go by telling me, "potty", then I will start "potty" training procedures. I cannot begin toilet **training** if your child shows no interest, has no understanding, or doesn't show the muscular control to succeed at this new challenge. I will not permit children to wear cloth training panties in my care, until they're fully "potty" trained. This is due to health and sanitation standards. Pull-ups are great during this transition period.

Please keep in mind during toilet training children learn how to:

- Listen to their bodies so they know when they need to use the toilet.
- Communicate to others their need to use the toilet.
- Manage their own clothes so they can use the toilet.

A Toilet Training hand-out and tips will be provided upon parent request

Health

My goal is to keep all children as healthy as possible. Energy should be used for proper growth, development and learning, instead of fighting germs. I strive to maintain a healthy environment by following the DCFS /State, Healthy Hand washing Standards.

For the protection of all children, your child should be kept home. I cannot accept him/her at the daycare if they show any of the following symptoms: a temperature, diarrhea/vomiting, a rash/ringworm, and discharging eyes, nose, or ears etc. If your child is exposed to a contagious

disease, he/she should remain at home. Please report the following condition to me ASAP! Strep throat, pin worms, viral infections, ear infections, swollen glands, measles, mumps, chicken pox, scarlet fever etc. There are only a few conditions categorized as highly contagious". A doctor's clearance letter of contagious disease must accompany your child's return to program.

Medication Procedure

In order to ensure the safety of your child, and avoid any errors, I'm able to administer medicine under the following guidelines:

- A medicine log with a parent's/Client's signature stating I have permission to administer medication to the child. This permission letter must be kept on file. Records are kept of dates, times, and dosage medicine(s) are given.
- OTC (Over the Counter) medications will be administered for only (3) days without physician's written consent. Non-prescription medicine may be administered upon written parent/Client permission that specifies the duration and frequency of medication. It shall be administered in accordance with package instructions and shall be labeled with child's name and dated.
- Prescription medicine must be in the original container with the original label, and have your child's name, the physician's name, the name of the pharmacy or drug store, prescription number, date of prescription and directions for administering.
- All medications are stored in a locked cabinet out of reach of children.

Preventative Child Care Health

Routine immunizations help protect us from life-threatening diseases. Your child's immunizations must be kept up-to-date and his/her Immunization Record kept up-to-date and on file at the daycare. All new enrollments must have an up-to-date physical on file within (30) days. And all immunizations must remain up-to-date as child develops. Failure to stay current with immunizations will result in exclusion from the program until shots are up-dated to a current status.

Hand Washing Procedures

Healthy hand washing procedures will be implemented on a daily basis. Hand washing will be conducted by the provider, children and staff or any other person(s) entering the program.

Vaccination Policy for Adult Caregivers

All person(s) working with children on site must have a current physical (up-dated every 3 years). And employees must show proof of the immunizations: Tdap and MMR and T.B., (unless physician exclusion letters are provided).

Application of Sunscreen and Insect Repellent

The children are outside as weather permits. If for any reason you do not want sunscreen and /or insect repellent applied (all natural) to your child, then I ask that you provide me with a written notice with your signature and the reason you would not like sunscreen or insect repellent applied. These items are available but you are welcome to supply your own.

Enrollment, Withdrawal & Discharge

Upon enrollment, a file for each child will be established (Section 406.12 DCFS Standards). It will include the following:

- Current Physical Exam, with lead, TB risk assessment
- Personal Information Form
- Emergency Forms
- Child Pick-up Authorization Form
- Medical Procedure Form
- Family Intake Form
- Photograph Permission Form
- Current Photo
- Receipt of DCFS licensing booklet
- CACFP Registration Form (HEIA form if needed)
- Certified Copy of child's Birth Certificate (a copy can be made for you).
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The child's records are only made available to me and authorized employees of the Dept. of Children and Family Services, or the child's parent or legal guardian (Section 406.25 DCFS Standards).

Parents may choose to withdraw their child from my program by giving a two-week notice (14 days). If less than two full weeks are given, parents will be responsible for full weeks payment, (See contract). If concerns develop regarding enrollment of child, I will meet with the client/parent(s) to discuss the situation and jointly determine an appropriate plan to address the concerns. The plan will be followed according to a timeline.

The timeline will be monitored and evaluated regularly. At the end of the timeline I will make a final determination with respect to continuing enrollment. The following situations may result in termination of enrollment.

- The individual needs of the child cannot be met by the provider
- The behavior of the child endangers the safety and well-being of the child or the other children staff.
- The parents/clients are in violation of the policies and procedures of the program, such as non-payment fees, failure to submit the required information or materials, or failure to comply with the rules and practices of the daycare.

Clothing

Because of the range of activities at my daycare, it's recommended that all children be dressed in washable, comfortable clothing. Water activities, sand play, and occasional bathroom accidents necessitate that extra clothing are kept at my home at all times. (Section 406.14 DCFS Standards). Please mark your child's clothing with a permanent marker, first and last name of child. And remember to update children's outfits as the weather changes and as your child grows. All soiled clothing will be sent home. Please return a clean change of clothing the following day.

Nature Explorer Certified Outdoor Classroom

Parent's Helper is a certified Outdoor Classroom. We spend many of our days outdoors with our friends, as we learn about nature and treating the earth and people in kindly and gently. That means we get up-close (messy) and personal with Nature as we venture outside and fill our lungs with invigorating air and move our bodies about to promote physical fitness. I always say, "There's no bad weather, just bad clothing". During these times, I request proper clothing based on the weather. Warms days, sunscreen and insect repellent are available (all natural) or you may bring your own. Colder days, Hat, mittens/gloves, snow pants, boots and warm coats. For warmer summer weather: swimwear and towels. And Spring/Fall, jackets or sweaters. Please ensure extra clothing is on site just in case clothing gets wet or soiled.

Liability Insurance

As a professional business I maintain a State License through DCFS and a Business License to operate a Home Childcare program, through the Village of Oak Park. I also, maintain general liability insurance for the premises, pets, and my vehicles.

Developmental Screening

Parent's Helper, recommends all children from birth to 5 years of age access community services for developmental screening. We use the ASQ 3, and the ASQ SE, Developmental Screening Tool twice annually, in January and July. Developmental screenings help to meet each child's individual emergent needs. A "developmental screening" is a brief check that provides a picture of your child's communication, motor, cognitive, self-help, and social-emotional skills. This screening can be conducted by a child care professional, a doctor, or other trained professionals. A screening can determine whether your child's development is appropriate for his or her age. If your child's development is on track, a developmental screening can help you to identify your child's areas of strength. I believe, when you know what comes next, you can support your child's healthy development and behavior, and celebrate their strengths, while being aware of any challenges.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: Watch and Help Me Grow, collab4kids.org, PBS Parents, Child Development Tracker, pbs.org/parents/child-development

Child Development Assessment/Reports

While a developmental screening is a "snapshot" of a given day, a developmental assessment is a more in-depth record throughout the year. Knowing a child's current development level will help me choose activities in the curriculum that supports the child in mastering the next developmental goal. I use the Carol's Affordable Curriculum Assessment Report and Hayes School Publishing Progress Reports. These assessments/reports will be shared with the parents/clients during conferences in January and June annually. This will help the parents/clients to see growth and development while in my care. Each child will be viewed as the unique individual they are. I will only use the developmental reports/assessments as an instrument to gage where the child is and should typically be. And if developmental delays are apparent, I will schedule appointments with the parent(s)/clients and discuss ways to assist them in finding help for their child. I will also continue to encourage parents/clients to complete the ASQ 3 and ASQ Se Developmental Screening Assessment in January and August annually.

Child Care Curriculum

My program uses Fun Steps Early Learning Curriculum which supports the Early Learning Standards. The lessons and activities are created for 2 years old (Twosteps) to 5 years of age, (Fun steps). Each child's individual need will be taken into consideration.

Children work through a variety of learning experiences that are apart of each month's Fun step program. Monthly lessons will be posted on parent/client board and monthly newsletters will be made available for viewing developmental goals being addressed.

Curriculum charges are collected every three months, to keep cost down. Fun steps Curriculum average monthly cost for 2017 school year is \$10.00. Cost may vary annually based on annual curriculum cost, shipping & handling, and lessons ordered per child. Information about Fun Steps Preschool Learning Program can be researched at: www.funsteps.com

Included in the back of your Handbook is a basic schedule of our day. And a hand-out explaining what your child learns through different forms of play. Please remember, I believe the child is the curriculum, and I allow natural child lead activities to be our guide. Quite often I will share photos of activities, trips, events and memorable milestones of your child, via cell phone, emails etc.

Government Assistance Programs

Government assistance payments are welcomed in my program. If you receive IDHS assistance you are responsible for co-payments on the 1st of the month and any other payments not covered by IDHS. Please see me regarding arrangements that will help off-set your child care cost difference.

Medical Emergency Care

In the event of a medical emergency or accident, I will contact the parent (s) and doctor of the child. If it's impossible to reach either, and should emergency treatment be required, the child will be taken to the nearest medical center and authorization for the center to contact your family physician, and to take whatever emergency medical measures are deemed necessary as part of this agreement.

Illnesses

Upon arrival each child will receive a daily pre-admission screening (Section 406.14 DCFS Standards) for the protection of all children, your child should be kept home, and I cannot accept him/her at the daycare if he/she shows any of the following symptoms:

A temperature, diarrhea/vomiting, a rash/ringworm, and discharging eyes, ears, nose etc.

If your child is exposed to a contagious disease, he/she should remain at home. Please report this condition to me. (Strep throat, pin worms, viral infection, infected ears, and or glands, measles, mumps, chicken pox, and scarlet fever etc.) These are only a few conditions categorized as "highly contagious". Please note, a doctor's return to daycare letter/note must accompany returning child.

Withdrawals

Parents may withdraw a child from my home at any time, however a (3) week notice is required. This is to avoid being charged for non-notification time of withdrawal. If a parent has to leave my daycare due to personal conflict or other unresolved issues, they may be referred to another

childcare provider only if leaving in satisfactory standing. Also, Ms. Robinson may terminate any client at will, if necessary.

Child Release/Pick-up

Children will be released only to those person(s) authorized by the legal guardian. The child must be signed in and out daily, and an authorized release card will be kept on file for each child. Please note, no child will be released to any person or persons under the influence of any drug or alcoholic beverage or substance.

No child will be released without proper car seat restraints.

No child will be released to any last minute authorized person without a written letter or official I.D. If no notice is possible at the time, an official I.D. is required (photo copied) and a phone number of person(s) picking up the child and the parent will be notified before release.

Program Resource & Referral Directory

Parents are a child's first and most important teacher, with that in mind. I have provided several parent resources and community services in our lower play area. Please check out our Resource wall, and stand for the Early Childhood Resource Directory, as well as the Watch Me Grow booklet, and many other resources to assist you in healthy, happy, informative parenting tips.

Child Care Assistance and Tax Credit Information

Action for Children (actionforchildren.org) (312) 823-1100. State assistance program for low-income working families seeking long-term child care. And IRS website, publication 972, regarding Child care tax credit facts and information.

Discipline

If a child needs correction, the child will be redirected to a different activity or play area to resolve the concerned situation. If this action doesn't work, the child (age appropriate) will be given time to sit in order to calm down and refocus. Ex. a three-year-old will have 3 minutes to calm down etc. No child will remain in calm down time any longer than 5 minutes. Calm down (sitting down time) is not my first choice of correction, but self-correction and redirection of the child is our main goal.

Mandated Reporter

The State of Illinois requires that all members of daycare services be on the look-out for and report to the State, any and all cases of abuse of a child. I'm therefore, obligated to report any suspicious cases of possible child abuse or neglect. A signed statement is on file acknowledging my status as a mandated reporter (Standard 406.24 DCFS Standards). This number is available to anyone who suspects a child is being abuse.

Dept. Children & Family Services (DCFS) Abuse Hotline (800 232-3798)

State Licensed

I'm licensed as a Group Home Daycare through the Dept. of Children and Family Services. Annually home inspections are performed to insure incompliance with the State Standards.

Staff Training

Our Staff are trained in First Aid/ CPR (adults, child and infants) and areas of Early Childhood Development, Food Handler's Certificate and Food Preparations Management, through the Illinois Food Program. We offer staff and parent workshops in a continual effort to stay informed on child development related topics.

Absences

*The tuition payment establishes the child's position in my home. I'm licensed to care for a certain number of children daily, and I budget accordingly. Parents should notify me in advance if your child will be absent. If this notification isn't received within the week, the child's space may be given to an applicant on my waiting list. When your child is sick, or will be absent, please call each day to notify me. There are **no tuition refunds for absent days.** Parents are charged upon enrollment a full-time or part-time fee. **Not a per day fee!***

*This agreement for services rendered to my child/children _____
I have read and do hereby agree to abide by the terms, conditions, and procedures of this
handbook contract agreement between myself and Parent's Helper Nature School Daycare.*

(Parent or Legal Guardian)

(Street Address)

(City, State, and Zip Code)

(Home Phone, and Cell, Include area code)

(Work Phone, Include area code)

(Emergency Phone, Include area code)

(Name and Relationship to child)

Licensee, Parent's Helper Nature School Daycare

Parent Signature _____ **initials** _____ **Date** _____

Parent Signature _____ **initials** _____ **Date** _____

Provider Signature _____ **initials** _____ **Date** _____

Daily Child Care Schedule

7:00 am	Quiet Activities
7:30 - 8:45am	Breakfast
8:50am	Clean-up & Bathroom Time, Free Choice Activities
9:30 am	Circle Time/Movement Activities
10:00 am	Morning Snack & Story Time
10:20 am	Activity of the day (Weather permitting, Safe Outdoor Exposure) Children will explore our Nature Outdoor Classroom.
11:55am	Wash for Lunch/Bathroom Time
12:00 Noon	Lunch
12:35pm	Brush Teeth, Bathroom Time, Story Time
1:00pm	Quiet Music/Nap Time
3:00pm	Bathroom Time, Afternoon Snack, Story Time
4:00pm	B/A School Homework Helper, Free Choice Activities and Computer Time etc.
5:00pm	Clean-up Time, Dinner
6:00pm	1st Shift Departure Time

**Circle Time consists of but is not limited to the following activities:
Greeting songs, singing, finger plays, puppet activities,
Alphabets, Counting, Shapes, Weather, Calendar Songs,
Games, Movement Activities, Reading, and Book Exploration etc.**

***Children are encouraged to engage in our Nature-Based Outdoor Learning Environment.**

***Please note: Most indoor activities can and maybe conducted outside if weather permits.**

Evening Childcare Schedule

<i>6:00pm</i>	<i>2nd Shift Arrivals/Bathroom Time & Dinner (if required)</i>
<i>6:35pm</i>	<i>Free Choice Activities</i>
<i>7:00pm</i>	<i>1st Shift Evening Snack</i>
<i>7:45pm</i>	<i>2nd Shift Snack, Prep for Bedtime (Wash/Bathe, Brush Teeth etc.) Story/Quiet Reading</i>
<i>12:00 Midnight</i>	<i>Final Departure</i>

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