



Policy Handbook

Welcome to my daycare. Since this will be your child's home away from home, I try to provide a safe, caring, homelike atmosphere for your children while at the same time providing for their physical, intellectual, emotional, and social development. Please read the policies of my daycare carefully.

Each Parent must sign for receipt of this handbook, as part of the childcare agreement. Any changes to these policies will be given to you two weeks prior to the new policies going into effect.

Enrollment

A child will be considered enrolled in Little Tikes Daycare when the following have been received:

- First week's tuition
- Signed contract/financial agreement
- Medical consent
- Completed child information card
- Copy of child's immunization record
- Transportation agreement

Care cannot be provided if any of the above is missing. It is the parents' responsibility to update forms as necessary, i.e. new round of vaccinations, change of phone number or employer, etc. I will update my files annually.

A deposit equal to one week's tuition is due upon enrollment. This deposit holds your child's spot for up to 2 weeks and is applied to your first week's tuition. If you decide not to bring your child to Little Tikes Daycare after enrollment, the deposit will be forfeited. The deposit is non-refundable. If you choose to hold a spot for your child for more than 2 weeks you will be charged 1/2 of the weekly rate during that time. All children will enter the day care on a trial basis (2 weeks), to insure proper adjustment.

Nondiscrimination and Inclusion Policy

All children are welcome in the program, regardless of disability, abilities, and race. Our program supports the full inclusion of children who require additional support because of a physical, cognitive, social, or motional need. Indoor and outdoor areas are arranged so all children can move freely and make choices based on their abilities, interest and needs. We make changes to our daily program to meet the needs of each child. If a child had a particular need, please let us know, so we can accommodate them the best we can.

I will not discriminate in relation to admissions of any child based on race, sex, religion, national origin, color, or disability.

House Rules

The children will be taught by example here, to have respect for themselves and each other. They will also be taught to respect my home, property, and possessions.

Any negative behavior will not be allowed. This includes but is not limited to hitting, punching, kicking, biting, standing, or jumping on furniture, throwing anything in the house, bad language, etc.

Guidance Policy

Our philosophy on guidance is to use positive guidance to teach a child. I achieve this through love, consistency, and firmness. I stress two main patterns of behavior: respect for other people and respect property. The children are explained the rules of the childcare home frequently, so they are familiar with the guidelines. The following methods of positive guidance will be used:

- Encourage children to solve problems themselves
- Intervention and discussion
- Re-direction to another play area
- Loss of privileges
- Positive reinforcement

I will strive to offer praise for good behavior. Should negative behavior happen, I will deal with it in one of three ways.

- **Redirection: Instead of saying no running, say “use your walking feet”.**
- Talking: Once a child reaches the age of two, they can be talked to. They will be told in easy-to-understand terms why the behavior should not continue. Typically, this is highly effective.
- If I feel there is a chronic behavioral issue that needs attention, I will let you know so that you and I are handling it in the same way and your child has continuity in discipline between our homes.

Behavior Guidance/Discipline Policies and Procedures

We encourage children to:

- Employ problem solving skills such as negotiation and active listening, and to come up with as many creative solutions to a problem as possible.
- Use language to express needs and emotions, and to use words to solve differences. Adults help provide key phrases and words for children when the child is unable to do so.
- Care for the people and equipment in their environment and enjoy freedom with responsibility.
- Safe, reasonable, and age-appropriate limits, together with opportunities for children to practice new social skills, are the cornerstones for gaining self-control and responsibility.

Discipline procedures such as physical punishment will never be used at Little Tikes Daycare.

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(initials)

Child Abuse and Neglect

Childcare workers are in a unique position to recognize victimized children. Because of this, we are legally mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect. Annually, all staff members review the guidelines for recognizing child abuse.

To prevent child abuse and neglect, this program:

- Trains staff to avoid one-staff-one-child situations if possible. If scheduling requires one adult be alone with one child, the parent is always informed at pick-up or drop off.
- Design our classrooms to avoid hidden and secluded areas.
- Makes sure interactions between children and staff can be observed and interrupted.
- Never forces children to give affections
- Tell children that if they have questions about someone's behaviors, the best thing they can do is ask about it.
- Explain secrets can be harmful.

Days and Hours

Little Tikes Daycare is open Monday through Friday 6:30am to 6:30pm. Full-time and part-time slots are available. I also offer before and after school care. Drop-in care is also available; parents must call 24 hours in advance to schedule a drop-in. Drop-ins will be accepted provided there is a slot open on the day requested. Payment for drop-ins is to be made on the same day. Your specific hours will be outlined in your contract. Children may be allowed to arrive earlier or stay later than scheduled if prior arrangements and payments have been made. Any children dropped off prior to my opening at 6:30 a.m. will be charged \$1.00 per minute and any children picked up after 6:30 p.m. will be charged \$1.00 per minute late fee (per child). If you bring your child earlier or pick up your child later than your contracted hours, there will be an additional charge as stated in the Contract/Financial Agreement. Habitual tardiness/earliness may

result in contract termination. Please be on time to pick up your child!

Drop Off/Pick Up

Each day upon arriving, the parent is required to sign their child in, noting the time arrived, and initial. A tablet is located by the front door for you to sign in/out. This is to be followed by signing the child out at departure. This will give me a written record of who brought the child and who picked up the child; it also serves as an attendance record with the actual hours your child is in daycare. It is the parents' responsibility to deposit and retrieve their child's belongings to and from the daycare each day.

It is normal for some children to have difficulty separating from parents or cry when being dropped off. Please be brief during drop-off times. The longer you prolong the departure, the harder it is for the child. A smile, cheerful goodbye kiss, and a reassuring statement that you will be back are all that is needed. Children are usually quick to get involved in play or activities as soon as parents are gone.

Please be very brief at departure times also. When two authority figures are in the same room together, children will naturally test the boundaries. Please help show your child that you respect my rules and me by reminding him that the rules still apply whether his parents are here or not.

I prefer that there are no drop-offs or pick-ups during the daily naptime (12:00-2:00pm), but if this is necessary, please be as quiet and brief as possible. Children who arrive during naptime will be expected to remain quiet until naptime is over so that others will not be disrupted from their naps.

All children must be brought to Little Tikes Daycare by an adult and will only be released to an adult. No child will ever be allowed to leave with any person not authorized by the parent. A driver's license is required prior to any child being allowed to leave Little Tikes Daycare with anyone I am unfamiliar with.

Payment Procedure

Your specific hours/rates will be outlined in your childcare contract/financial agreement. I require a two-week written notice if you need to change your enrollment and/or hours. I reserve the right not to accept your new hours if the hours conflict with my scheduling. Tuition is to be paid weekly on the last day your child is in care for the current week. Tuition may be paid in cash, Venmo or by check, made payable to me. You will receive a receipt every week. If tuition is not paid at that time, a late fee of \$5/day will be charged in addition to your weekly fee. Late payments can be made on the weekends if prior arrangements have been made. All accounts must be current to continue care for the following week. The provider reserves the right to change tuition rates with 2 weeks' written notice. Habitual late payments may result in termination.

There is a \$32 fee for returned checks plus a late fee of \$5 per day until paid in cash and no more checks will be accepted. Should Little Tikes Daycare have to resort to legal action to collect any fees, all legal/court costs incurred on my part will be the parent or legal guardian's responsibility to pay and will be billed accordingly.

Payment is due and expected for all days that Little Tikes Daycare is open and that you have contracted for. Fees are expected to be paid whether your child attends daycare or not. This holds your child's spot.

Vacation/Holidays

I am closed on the following holidays, and you will be required to pay for them, providing the holiday falls on a regular day of care (according to your contract). Each family will be allowed 10 vacation days a year. Payment for these days will not be collected. Please give at least 2 weeks' notice, so I can make sure

I add it to your invoice

New Year's Eve Day, New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and the day after, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and the day after.

Exact dates will be posted on the monthly calendar and in the newsletter. There will be some days that I will close early either for holidays or personal reasons. I will notify you in advance.

I take one-two weeks of vacation every year. There is no charge while I am on vacation. You will be given at least two-week notice. Should your family go on vacation, I expect ½ your regular rate to be paid. You get ten paid vacation days a year. Your year begins on the date your childcare contract is signed.

Emergencies/Back-up

If, for any reason, I need to leave for an emergency, I have an adult who can come in for a short period of time until you arrive. The event that I am ill or on vacation, and cannot provide care, you will need to have your own back up arrangements available. I will notify you as soon as possible when I am unable to provide care.

I do recommend that every parent have a back-up person they can call upon in the event I am closed, for various reasons. Having your child in my home daycare setting will require you to have a backup. If you do not have a backup currently, I urge you to get one. This will save hectic situations between the provider and the parent. If you need a referral, please feel free to ask me.

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(initials)

Safety

I have taken classes in Infant/Child CPR and First Aid, Child car restraints safety, SIDS prevention, and a class to help reduce the risk of Shaken Baby Syndrome.

Clothing

Children should come to Little Tikes Daycare, well rested and dressed in durable play clothes. This program is designed to keep children active. I take reasonable precautions to keep the children as clean as possible and to keep their clothing from becoming damaged. Please bring a weather-appropriate, labeled change of clothing. Children play outside everyday (weather permitting) and must always have shoes.

Quiet Time

Every day between 12:00-2:00, we have quiet time. All younger children will lay down to rest. Older children will be given quiet time activities (coloring supplies, puzzles, or books). I ask that you keep visits and phone calls during this time to a minimum.

Safe Sleeping

Approved cribs and other approved sleep equipment are used. Only approved mattresses designed for the specific bassinet, portable crib or play yard that fit tightly and without gaps are used. Cribs are completely free of toys, blankets, quilts, soft bedding, pillows, bumper pads, sheep skins and other additional equipment attached to or placed above the crib.

- Bottles or sippy cups are never used unless an infant or toddler is held or sitting upright at a table or in a highchair.
- Pacifiers may be used when breastfeeding is well-established with parental permission and with bottle-feeding infants until the infant falls asleep. Once the infant is asleep, remove the pacifier and wash for future use.
- One-pieced blanket sleepers may be used for warmth. Swaddling is not recommended.

Healthy Sleeping

For healthy sleeping, every child sleeps on cots, sleeping bags, mats, or pads.

- Individual children's bedding is stored separately – without contact with the floor or bedding of others.
- Sleeping equipment is stored separately.
- Bedding is washed at least weekly and as needed.
- Three feet of spacing is maintained between cots, mats, and cribs.

Items from Home:

Your child may bring a special blanket or stuffed animal for quiet time. Please do not allow your child to bring anything else into the daycare setting. No toys, candy or snacks, money, etc. **I do not** allow guns, swords, or other violent toys in my daycare. Parents must provide the following items: diapers, wipes, and an extra change of clothing. Parents can either leave these items in a small diaper bag each day or bring a weekly supply to be left at daycare. Please be sure your child has enough diapers, wipes, and a change of clothing. I will not supply them for your child, and you will be called to bring them if your child runs out. Blankets, and pillows used for naptime will be sent home every week for laundering.

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(Initials)

Meals and Snacks:

Little Tikes Daycare will supply each child with meals and snacks that meet the food guidelines for his/her age. Parents must supply their infant with his/her formula. Breakfast is served between 6:45 a.m. and 7:30 a.m. **Please** - if your child will be arriving after those times, be sure they are fed. Parents who want their children to eat special foods must provide these foods.

Supporting Breastfeeding

We welcome mothers and fathers with a positive environment that helps parents and staff feel they have are welcome to breastfeed, pump, or bottle feed breastmilk to infants and toddlers.

Transportation/Field Trips:

Children will participate in field trips at various times throughout the year. Parent volunteers are welcome and appreciated. Notice of the field trips will be given in the monthly newsletter. Occasionally, there may be fees related to the trips to cover entry fees, etc. I will take all possible precautions when transporting the children. The parent may be responsible for providing a car seat.

If you do not wish for your child to attend a field trip, you will need to find alternate childcare for the day of the field trip and payment will still be expected.

Sick/Illness Policy:

Please notify me prior to the usual arrival time in the event your child will stay home sick (but please no earlier than 5am).

If your child is displaying, or has displayed within 24 hours:

fever over 100 degrees

diarrhea

vomiting

symptoms of any communicable disease (rash, sore throat with swollen glands, severe coughing, eye discharge, yellowish skin or eyes, green or yellow yucky nose)

or if the child is irritable, continuously crying or requires more attention than I can provide without endangering the health and safety of other children in my care, s/he cannot be brought to my childcare home.

Children may attend with minor cold symptoms (clear, watery runny nose, happy and playful, no fever), but if the symptoms persist for more than the usual 7-10 days or are worsening (runny nose becomes thick, green or yellow, child is irritable, fever >100), you will be asked to remove your child and seek medical attention to be sure a secondary infection has not set in.

If your child becomes ill while in care, you will be called to come pick him/her up immediately. S/he will be kept in an isolated place until you arrive. You will have one-hour to pick up your child before I begin calling the emergency contacts in your child's file. **The child may return to my childcare home when s/he is free of symptoms for 24 hours or has been on an antibiotic for 24 hours and is no longer contagious.** Parents who *consistently* bring their child to my home while ill will be subject to contract termination. Although it may seem inconvenient when your child is sent home, you will appreciate knowing your child's exposure is minimized when other children become ill.

Provider Illness

Caring for small children leaves me and my family at great risk for becoming ill. I will occasionally have to close due to an illness in the family. I understand you will have to pay someone else to care for your child; therefore, payment is not required when I must close due to illness. It is the parents' responsibility to find other childcare arrangements. Please have a back-up plan ready.

Medication:

When medication is to be given by the provider, the medication must be in its original container, clearly labeled and given directly to the provider. *Please do not leave medication of any kind in a diaper bag.* A medication permission form is required by the state for all medications, including prescription, non-prescription, diaper rash cream, bug spray and sunscreen. Please be prepared to fill out this form at drop-off. I cannot give any medication of any kind without one.

Immunizations:

All children in my daycare must have the appropriate immunizations for their age or written notarized documentation on the immunization form opposing immunizations.

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(Initials)

Communication and Confidentiality Policy

Communication between parents and the provider is essential if your child is to receive consistent, nurturing care. I welcome questions, feedback, or discussions of any kind that affect a positive outcome for the child. I am willing to work with you regarding any special needs or situations with your child. Please feel free to call me to discuss problems or concerns. If you call during the day, please be aware that I may be busy with the children and may not be able to answer the phone. If you will leave a message, I will call you back as soon as possible.

Monthly newsletters are sent home with each child. Parents are welcome to drop in or call anytime during their child's day, except naptime.

For confidentiality, Little Tikes Daycare will not share or discuss any information about your child outside of our staff without your written consent. Your child's information is kept in their locked confidential file and is available for your review upon request. If you do wish to share your child's information with other professionals, you will be required to sign a release of information. Also, to protect your child's confidentiality, teachers are required to sign a confidentiality of records Agreement.

Authorized Persons:

Occasionally Your child may need to be picked up from care by someone other than a parent/guardian. Unless the names are listed on your emergency forms, your child will not be released. In case of an emergency, please provide a reliable list of people to reach.

Parents in Daycare:

You have the right to stop in anytime during your child's regular daycare hours. You do not need a reason. You are welcome to pop in at any time.

Termination

Parent or provider may choose to terminate childcare services. Parents must give a two-week written notice (14 calendar days) when terminating childcare services. If a two-week written notice is not given, you are still responsible for 2 week's pay. The provider reserves the right to terminate care when deemed

necessary. The provider will give as much written notice as possible when terminating childcare services. The childcare contract is subject to termination without prior notification in the event of any breach of the agreement by parents or guardians or if the child becomes disruptive or ungovernable in the opinion of the provider.

Damages

If your child intentionally damages my property through destruction or roughness, parents will be liable for the damages.

Injuries

I make every effort to ensure the safety of your child while in my care. Unfortunately, accidents may occur. Parents are responsible for medical bills, which may arise, from an illness or injury. I will notify you of any injury that requires first aid treatment. In case of serious injury, I will make every attempt to contact you immediately. If I cannot reach either parent, I will call the emergency contact listed on your child's information card to make the medical decisions for your child. If I feel the injury is life threatening, I will call 911 and have your child taken to the hospital that is listed on your child's information card.

Birthdays/Parties

Each child's birthday is his/her "special day". Parents are invited to provide a cake, cupcakes or treats to celebrate their child's special day. I will give the child a birthday gift and card. I will also have holiday parties throughout the year. At Christmas time we will normally have a gift exchange and your child will also receive a small gift from me. Please let me know if your family does not celebrate holidays or birthdays.

_____/_____
(Initials)

Daycare Forms

All forms must be completed prior to the first day of care. All weekly fees must be paid prior to the start of care in any given week. If forms are not completed or fees are not paid, no care will be provided.

The undersigned have read and agree to abide with the daycare policies.

(parent signature)

(date)

(parent signature)

(date)

(provider signature)

(date)

