

## Parent Handbook Outline

Your parent handbook outlines your program's policies and procedures. It includes information that is important for your parents to know. Encourage families to read the parent handbook and to ask questions.

Parent handbooks often include the following topics (**\* indicates policies or practices required by licensing, please refer to licensing rules for additional policies**):

Welcome or 'About Us' -

- Include your program's mission and philosophy
- **\*Age range of children served**
- **\*Services offered (full day, part time, afterschool only, music, yoga, etc.)**
- **\*Holidays/Vacation- Do you get paid for holidays that fall on week days? Will you have a planned vacation when you are closed? Will parents be required to pay for that week?**
- **\*Contract or placement agreement, including any fees (i.e. late pick up, snow days for school age children, etc.)**
- **\*Hours of operation and daily schedule**
- License/certifications/quality rating step

Admission and enrollment-

- **Required forms (registration, emergency contact, permission for field trips, physicals, immunizations, medication administration)**
- Process for introducing children to facility
- Open door policy-parents being welcome to visit at anytime
- Confidentiality
- Inclusion

Staff/Helpers-

- Who do you have for staff/helpers?
- What are their qualifications?
- What trainings do you provide for staff/helpers? How many hours/what trainings are required?
- Do they have CPR certification?
- Do you require staff to enroll in Quality for Me?
- What experience/education do you have, if you are a family child care provider?

Curriculum-

- Do you use a particular curriculum?

Emergencies-

- How will parents be notified in the event of an emergency or emergency closing?
- Family Child Care providers: you may want to advise families to have back up plan of care in the event you are ill or there is an emergency.
- Program closings and emergency preparedness plans: What is your emergency plan for evacuations, lock down, safe shelter? Can parents view your entire plan?

Communication with parents-

- How it is best to communicate with you?
- State any information you require to come to you in writing.

- Do you have a newsletter? If so, how often is it issued?

**\*Discipline and guidance-**

- How are children's positive behaviors recognized?
- What is your definition of discipline?
- What methods do you use, e. g. redirection, distraction, time away, etc.?
- Do you use rewards, and if so, when?

**Health-**

- Immunizations - Do you have a policy for unimmunized children?
- **\*Illness-**
  - What circumstances will require a child to be excluded or dismissed from care?
  - When will a child be able to come back to care?
  - Do you require a doctor's note?
  - Communicable Diseases- What steps will you take when an enrolled child or an employee of the center has a (suspected) reportable disease?
- Allergies-
  - What is your policy on allergies?
  - How will you have parents notify you of the allergy?
  - Will you provide food for a child with a food allergy, or will the parents be responsible for this?
  - How will you train/notify staff of the allergy?
- Medication administration-
  - What is your policy on administering over the counter and prescription medication?
  - Who will administer it?
  - How will it be recorded?

**Drop off and pick up-**

- Times- are there specific times that should be avoided?
- Sign in/out- where do parents sign their child in and out?
- Are there parking policies due to busses, for example?
- Authorization to pick up- are other people authorized to pick up your child from the program? How will you verify the person picking up? This person should be in the child's record. If not what is the procedure?
- Do you have a policy for handling situations of parental/caregivers being under the influence when they arrive to pick up the child?

**Food and nutrition-**

- Do you participate in the Child and Adult Care food program? Discuss what this means for you and families.
- If not, what types of food do you offer?
- Do you have a policy on food from home? What is/is not allowed to be brought? How is it stored?
- Do you celebrate birthdays/special occasions? Are parents able to bring in treats?
- What does mealtime look like?
- What is your policy and procedure for preparing infant food, i.e. bottles, breastmilk, solid food? Toddler food? Are toddlers encouraged to self-feed?
- Are any foods not allowed (popcorn, nuts, other choking hazards?)

#### Rest Time-

- When and where do children rest/nap?
- If appropriate state what licensing rules are regarding nap time.
- Infant sleep- What is your policy on infant sleep? It is strongly recommended to clearly state that you practice safe sleep procedures, and include what these are (infants on back, nothing in crib, no sleeping in swings, car seats or bouncer seats).

#### Supplies-

- What are parents required to bring? Do items need to be labeled? Do you have a policy on bringing in toys from home?
- Do you supply any items?

#### Parent involvement-

- Do you have family events?
- Do you hold parents/teacher conferences?
- Are there any activities parents can help with?
- What is your policy on parent volunteers?

#### \*Mandated reporting-

- Explain you are a mandated reporter of suspected child abuse and neglect.

#### \*Licensing-

- Make parents aware you have a copy of the licensing rules for them to look at, also provide them with the website to view licensing rules and contact information for your licensing worker. Parents should also be informed that they have the right to view your most recent licensing inspection.

#### Transportation -

- What is your policy on transporting children?
- **Do you have training in car seat safety or installation?**
- Write where and how children will be transported. Explain signed permission will be needed.
- Do you provide car seats?

#### Toilet training-

- **How will you work with child and family?**
- Do you prefer children come in clothing that is easy for them to undress?
- Do you offer rewards/incentives?

#### Field Trips-

- What are your policies around this? Centers need to have car seat safety training.

#### Pets-

- If you have pets let families know, and state you are required to have up to date shots.

#### Termination Policy-

- Do you require two weeks' notice?
- Will you give families two week notice if you have to terminate?

#### ADA law-

- You are required to follow ADA law and should share this in your handbook.

Toys and objects from home-

- State your policy on this topic.

Child custody-

- Daycares do not have a legal right to refuse pick up unless there is a court order.

**\*Swimming or water play-**

- Explain training needed, guidelines you follow from the State, signed permission must be obtained from each parent every year, pool rules, pool evacuations

Photos and videos –

- Will you use photos/videos in your program? If so, how?
- What is your policy regarding Facebook/social media sites?

HAVE PARENTS SIGN A STATEMENT THAT THEY READ THE HAND BOOK and agree to follow policies and procedures.