

CHILD'S PLAY

of St. Cloud Inc.



CHILD CARE CENTER

Parent Handbook

Child's Play of St. Cloud, Inc.

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Parents/Guardians are responsible for:

- paying the \$50.00 non-refundable registration fee.
- completing all registration and immunization forms.
- submitting the Health Care Summary Form to Health Care Source and returning it to Child's Play within 30 days from start date.
(This form is renewed each time child changes age category.)
- informing the center when there is a change in authorization for a person to pick up a child.
- updating data for all information on the Child's Play registration form in a timely manner.
- calling the center when the child will not be attending.
- being familiar with and adhering to all policies described herein.

Orientation: Orientation is available for all families who enroll their child at Child's Play. Orientation includes the following: an enrollment packet with explanation of forms; a health care summary and immunization forms; a briefing on policies and procedures; an overview of payments and the drop-off location. Parents will also be introduced to the staff member(s) who will care for their child, receive an orientation on the daily routine their child will experience in the classroom, and be given time to ask questions.

Philosophy: While no one can take the place of a child's parents when it comes to love and attention, *Child's Play* child care center is the next best thing! We believe in an intricate connection between nurturing and educational development. Our compassionate staff is committed to providing the best of both worlds for your child. We are dedicated to maintaining a safe and secure educational nurturing environment and guidance through a parent-teacher approach that ensures the needs of every child are met. You can trust that at *Child's Play*, your children will experience an excellent early childhood education in a fun, healthy, and safe environment that will guide them to grow and transition into responsible considerate individuals.

Mission Statement: Our mission is to prepare and inspire all children with the confidence to interact successfully in a social setting, the awareness to respect themselves, others, and the environment and the foundation to reach their fullest potential.

Hours of Operation: The center is open Monday through Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Staffing is scheduled according to the number of children in the center. Please pick your children up promptly so scheduling does not become a problem. ** Remember: ***Please call the center whenever your child will not be attending.***

License Capacity: The center serves children from six weeks through twelve years. The facility operates from five existing rooms. The license capacity for five rooms is 80 children: **21 infants** (1:4 adult to infant ratio) 6 weeks through 15 months; **19 toddlers** (1:7 adult to toddler ratio) 16 months to 31/36 months; **40 preschoolers** (1:10 adult to preschool ratio) 31 months through 5 years; and **20 school age children** – kindergarten through 12 years. The maximum combined number of preschool and school age children never exceeds the capacity of 40 children and maintains the 1:10 adult ratio for school age children.

Environment: Child's Play is a smoke free environment.

Confidentiality: As your family becomes familiar with other children at the center, you may enjoy sharing stories. When talking about your child's activities from the center remember to maintain confidentiality in the identity of other children, families, and the place of care.

Meals: At Child's Play we serve the following daily: a nutritional breakfast, morning water or juice break, lunch and afternoon snack. Please do not bring food from home, unless arrangements have been made with your child's teacher ahead of time. The center is presently on the Child and Adult Care Food Program as offered through the State of Minnesota Department of Education and the U.S.D.A. The infant program provides "Parents Choice" formula. Solid foods that are introduced to young infants are processed through a food grinder. Parents that choose to supply breast milk must label the milk with the child's first name, last name and the date it is sealed. Breast milk is considered to be a body fluid and staff is required to have minimal contact with this milk. Please bring breast milk in a bottle ready to use or frozen in a single plastic bottle liner bag. Empty bottles will be sent home daily and will not be rinsed. The center's policy is to feed infants on demand. Children with special dietary needs must have a Special Dietary Request Form completed by their physician. See the director for this information. Our child care center is a peanut free environment.

Lost and Found: Please put your child's first and last name on all items brought to the center. If your child loses an item, check with the child's teacher or the director.

Clothing: A complete change of clothing labeled with your child's first and last name must be provided by the parents each day. If your child is toilet training additional sets of clothing are required. Children learn through play, please dress your child appropriately. Keep in mind that the children will do an art activity and play outdoors each day. Recommended clothing includes the following: sturdy shoes, clothes that can be easily removed for toilet use, and appropriate clothing for outdoor play. Make sure that adequate clothing comes to the center on cold days: a warm coat or jacket, snow pants or snowsuits, mittens (2), hats, and boots for snow. In the summer, children should have cool tops, shorts, shoes and sunscreen. Children that attend field trips during the summer months will be asked not to wear flip flop style sandals. Swim suits are required for water sprinkler play.

Outdoor Play: A play ground is available for outdoor play. The children will not play outside on wet rainy days, when winter wind chill temperatures reach 0°F, and/or when the air temperature is 0°F. If a child is healthy enough to attend child care, then the child is healthy enough to go outdoors.

Diapers:

Cloth diapers are available for infants and toddlers at no additional charge. If a child is not using cloth diapers, their parents must provide disposable diapers from home. The cloth diapers are cared for at the center and endure two wash cycles. The Ecolab Company monitors the cleaning products to ensure a clean and safe diaper for your child. Children using cloth diapers will leave the center in a disposable diaper brought from home. Preschool children that are still in diapers are asked to bring pull-up diapers. The center will provide baby wipes unless your child is sensitive to the wipes used by the center. Parents are asked to supply the center with the baby ointments and/or creams they prefer to use for their child's diapering. Please remember to label all products with your child's first and last name. **To minimize contact with body fluids clothing that has been soiled with urine or a bowel movement will be placed in a plastic bag and sent home without being rinsed.**

Toilet Training: The center believes that children will toilet train when physiologically ready. The teacher works with the parents of children who are making a transition from diaper to toilet. Children will be encouraged and toileting will be made available to children that are at this developmental stage. This is a positive time and children will not be shamed for accidents. **To minimize contact with body fluids clothing that has been soiled with urine or a bowel movement will be place in a plastic bag and sent home without being rinsed.**

Child Care Policies

Attendance: If your child will not be attending child care, call the center by 8:30 a.m. Messages may be left on the center's answering machine. ** Remember: *Please call the center whenever your child will not be attending.*

Arrivals and Departures: It is the parent's responsibility to inform the center of any changes in the names of persons authorized to pick up the child. The center will release children to authorized persons only. Siblings who pick up a child must be at least 13 years of age and listed as an authorized pick-up person. We expect that parents will be picking up the child, unless otherwise indicated. If another person is to pick up the child, the parent must inform the teacher with written or verbal notice. If it is a person who the staff does not know, a driver's license or picture ID will be requested for identification purposes. The person picking up the child must make contact with the teacher before taking the child from the room. All children must be accompanied by an adult into and out of the center at all times. Parents or authorized persons are required to sign in and out every day. The sign in sheet is located in the main entrance area.

School Age Busing: Children attending Lincoln Elementary, St. Elizabeth, St. Cloud Christian and Stride Academy Schools may be bused to and from Child's Play. Arrangements for busing must be made by the parent with the attending school's transportation department. Children are supervised at all times, and escorted by staff to and from the bus stop. Head Start buses will pick-up and drop-off at our center.

Field Trips: Parents of preschool and school age children will be notified of any planned field trips. A permission slips must be signed by parents prior to any field trips. Parents will be informed of the date, time, and purpose of the field trip.

Impromptu Walks: Children may experience an impromptu walk in the surrounding neighborhood. These walks may occur because the playground is wet from the weather. Infants and toddlers can enjoy the outdoors by taking a stroll in a bye bye buggy, stroller or wagon. Preschool age children will walk with the assistance of a walking rope with rings that the children can hold onto. Each room will post a note for parents to see that the classroom is on a walk. All families are asked to sign a Permission Release Form found in the application packet given to parents during orientation.

Conferences: Conferences are scheduled twice during the year; once in the fall and once in the spring. This is an opportunity to share our observations regarding your child's intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development. The parent's input is an important ingredient in developing the relationship between the teacher and your child. Parents are encouraged to schedule a conference when they feel it is appropriate. Parents of infants and toddlers will receive daily written documentation of child's food intake, elimination, sleeping patterns, and general behavior.

Research Permission: Permission slips must be signed by parents prior to research, experimental procedures, or public relations activities involving the children while in the center.

Home Toys: Please communicate with the classroom teacher about bringing special toys from home. Often toys from home are difficult to share with other children. They may get broken or pieces may get lost. Toys that resemble weapons and/or violent toys are not allowed at the child care center.

Pets: Administrative permission is required to bring a pet onto the grounds of Child's Play. Presently our center homes a Cockatiel and Parakeets. Occasionally a classroom may care for fish or hermit crabs.

Visiting: Parents of enrolled children are welcome and encouraged to visit the center at any time during normal hours of operation.

Rest: All children under school age will be allowed an opportunity to nap. The amount of nap time scheduled is compatible with your child's developmental needs. After a 30 minute rest the children that are awake will not be required to remain on cots or in cribs and will be offered a quiet activity for the duration of the rest time. Preschoolers and toddlers may bring a special blanket, small pillow, or a small stuffed animal for their nap. Infants from 6 weeks through 15 months will not be permitted to use heavy or over-sized blankets, fluffy fleece, heavy quilted comforters, or blankets with an animal head in the corner. Pillows, bumper pads, wedges, and stuffed animals are not allowed in the infants sleeping area. This includes all soft products used in the crib. Infants are placed on their backs to sleep and are never placed on a water bed, bean bag cushion, or sheepskin pad. Infants that are capable of moving from front to back are allowed to choose a comfortable sleeping position.

Transition Between Rooms: When a child moves to the next oldest room parents and teacher will communicate about the transition. The child will begin the transition by increasing the amount of time spent in the next room. Once the child's age or development requires placement to the next room the transition will be complete. The child's file will be reviewed with the parents and any questions will be answered about the new routine, expectations, and responsibilities.

Behavior Guidance: To aid the children in development of self-discipline and the mutual respect of a democratic environment, the following concepts will be incorporated and encouraged daily: Respect for self, respect for others, and respect for the materials/environment. The center encourages these concepts by providing an atmosphere which:

- accepts each child as a unique and special individual.
- sets realistic expectations.
- provides an environment based on fairness.
- provides children with opportunities to succeed.
- provides security, limits, and boundaries.
- provides opportunities for positive encouragement.
- encourages decision making.
- provides friendship.
- provides an environment that a child can depend on.

When the rules are not followed the child's behavior will be redirected. The staff will provide a positive role model. Behavior guidance will be tailored to the developmental level of the child. The center's goal is to provide immediate and directly related consequences for a child's unacceptable behavior. Staff may use brief time out periods. You will be notified if your child has more than three time outs in one day. If an unacceptable behavior persists, parents will be asked to meet with the teacher and/or the director to find a solution to the problem behavior. The center does not tolerate swearing, biased language, threatening behavior, or violence. If a child displays this type of behavior the parents will be asked to pick up their child immediately.

Weather Alerts: Each room has a weather radio and weather alerts are broad-casted by the NOAA. In the event that a tornado is spotted, all children and staff will proceed to the tornado shelter. In the event of a snow storm and St. Cloud ISD #742 is closed by 6:00 a.m. our child care center will be on alert. Tune into local radio stations for further information; if the center is closed it will be announced. If St. Cloud ISD #742 is two hours late the center will be open as scheduled.

Drills: The center documents and practices fire drills monthly and tornado drills from April through September. In case of a real fire we will evacuate to the American Red Cross building just across 14th Avenue North.

Withdrawal or Termination: Parents are required to give a two week written notice and are responsible for making payments during the two week period.

Vacation: After a child has attended the center for 1 year, parents may use up to ten days for vacation. Vacation may be used when your child is absent from the center during a time they are normally scheduled. Vacation day requests must be in writing and given to the director. There is no charge for vacation days.

Drop- In Care: For families needing occasional non-scheduled child care, a drop-in program is available. Please call for availability and rates.

Tuition Payments: Each week payments are due on the Monday or the first day of the week your child is in child care. Payments reserve your child care position; a missed payment will forfeit your child care reservation. Families receiving child care assistance through the county are responsible for co-payments.

- A \$20.00 service charge will be assessed on returned checks.
- If payment is more than two days late, the child care position will be revoked.
- No child shall exceed more than 10 hours of child care a day without prior arrangements.
- If a child exceeds a 10 hour day, an additional hourly charge will occur.

Days the Center is Closed: The center is closed only if the following holidays fall between Monday through Friday. Full payment is due during weeks that include holidays. Payments are due the first day your child is in care. This holds true for families reserving a full or part time weekly child care position.

New Years Day (New Years Eve close at 4:00 p.m.)
Memorial Day
Independence Day
Labor Day
Thanksgiving Day (open the Friday after Thanksgiving Day)
Christmas Day (Christmas Eve close at 4:00 p.m.)

Holidays: Some national and non-secular holidays will be celebrated during the year. Child's Play sees this as a positive learning experience for all children. The following is a list of holidays we celebrate at the center, this list is subject to change: April Fools Day, Birthdays, Cinco de Mayo, Christmas, Columbus Day, Earth Day, Easter, Father's Day, Groundhog Day, Halloween, Independence Day, Labor Day, May Day, Memorial Day, Mother's Day, New Years, Presidents Day, St. Patrick's Day, Thanksgiving and Valentine's Day.

Birthdays: The center encourages the parents to pick a date on or near their child's birthday to celebrate at the center. This is a special day for the children. Please make arrangements with the teacher for the celebration. If a snack or treat is brought to the center it must be store bought.

Supervision: Children are supervised at all times during the hours of operation.

Health Policy

Medical Records: Current medical records will be maintained on each child. Each parent must have the medical record forms completed by their child's physician. This form requires a current immunization record which will be updated on a yearly basis. Parents will also be asked to complete a health history form about the child and fill out an emergency information card.

Medication: Medication must be appropriately labeled with written instructions by a physician. Written permission from the parent is required for all over the counter and prescription medications. Medicine must have the child's name on it, legible instructions on the label, and it must be in the original container. Medication may not be given after the expiration date on the label. The label must not be defaced. Any unused portion must be taken home or destroyed. The medication will be given only to the child whose name is on the label and according to the label directions unless otherwise prescribed by a physician.

Illness: When a child is ill, the well being of the ill child and the other children in the center are our first consideration. Parents should not bring a child to the center if any of the following symptoms are evident:

- a temperature above 100° F axially or oral, or 101° F rectal (*without use of medication*)
- nasal and chest congestion
- intestinal disturbance accompanied by diarrhea or vomiting
- the contagious stage of any communicable disease
- sore or discharge from eyes or ears
- thick yellow or dark green nasal discharge
- behavior indicating pain or distress
- lice, ringworm, scabies or impetigo that is untreated and contagious
- undiagnosed rash or rash attributable to a contagious illness
- unexplained lethargy
- has not completed 24 hours of antimicrobial therapy with bacterial infection

If a child is clearly ill when brought to the center the parent will be asked to take the child home. If a child becomes ill during the day, the child will be isolated from other children; parents will be notified and asked to pick the child up. Children may return to the center when they are free of symptoms, when their temperature remains normal for a 24 hour period, or when the parents are so advised by a physician.

In the event that your child is exposed to a contagious disease a sign will be posted in the child's room or entrance of the center. Parents must inform the center within 24 hours (not including weekends) when the child is diagnosed medically as having a contagious reportable disease.

Full payment is due for families reserving a full or part time weekly child care position. No refund is available for sick days. Vacation time may be used for sick days, if the family has a child who has been attending the center for a minimum of 1 year.

Medical Emergency: All staff members are certified in First Aid and CPR and are qualified to administer if needed. In the event that your child requires medical attention the center will make every effort to contact the parents prior to making medical arrangements. The person in charge at the time will evaluate the injury to decide if medical attention is necessary. The center will use the following sources for emergency care: St. Cloud Fire Department, Gold Cross Ambulance, St. Cloud Hospital and/or your child's designated physician.

Children with Special Needs: Child's Play does enroll children with special needs. A statement from the child's physician or professional agency must be submitted to the center with guidelines on how to meet your child's specific needs. Currently enrolled children who develop signs of special needs will be recommended for assessment. We will provide resources to assist the parents in acquiring a diagnosis for their child's condition. A meeting between the parents and the director will determine if the center is the appropriate placement for your child.

Suspected Child Abuse: The staff at Child's Play is required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect.

Tax Information: All families that are attending the center on the first of each year will receive payment information for the previous year. Child's Play Federal Tax I.D. number is 41-1758222.

Liability Insurance: Child's Play carries a 1 million dollar limit of liability insurance for the center.

Grievance / Termination: A child and parent(s) may be excluded from the center in the event if any of the following may occur.

- Non-payment of fees
- Abuse of policies set by the center
- Abuse of staff and/or child at the center
- Parent is hostile toward staff or families at the center
- Profane language is used in front of children and families
- Verbal or physical abuse is used towards others

Complaints or concerns should first be addressed with the teacher or staff involved in the situation. Conflicts that remain unresolved should be discussed with the center director.

Please call anytime if you have question, or if a problem arises.

Virginia Leach Guggenberger - Owner/Director 320-259-4540
Anita Sindt – Assistant Director 320-259-4540
Minnesota Department of Human Services Licensing Division .. 651-296-3971

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