Parent Handbook

**Philosophy:**

I believe that children can experience the greatest growth when they feel safe, secure, and confident. For children to be successful they need to believe in themselves and have a healthy self-esteem. A positive self-concept develops in children when they can fulfill their goals, accomplish tasks on their own, cooperate with others and receive positive feelings from others. Each child learns in different ways, at a different pace, and at different stages of maturity. I intend to offer developmentally appropriate experiences and activities that can help enhance social, emotional, physical, and intellectual growth and foster curiosity, creativity and self-esteem by taking into account each child’s abilities and interests. Child initiated and teacher supported play is the essential component of my program. Play is the way children learn about their world, themselves, and others. Through this play we want to help them develop skills and knowledge that they will need to be successful in life. Much of our focus will be on socialization and self-help skills that they will need to be a success in other areas of development. I intend to provide a warm, caring, comfortable, and safe environment for children by establishing routines that are predictable and consistent. To maintain an atmosphere where children feel comfortable and confident, constructive guidance and positive reinforcement will be used. All children and their families will be treated with gentleness, honesty and respect and will encourage them to treat others in the same manner.

**Non-Discrimination Statement:**

Child care is provided to any family regardless of race, creed, color religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, or physical, mental, or sensory disability.

**Communication:**

Open communication with parents is very important. You ultimately play the most vital role in your child’s development. We share a common goal; to provide the best that we possibly can for our children. By working together and with good communication, we can insure that our children will be safe, healthy and happy. Feel free to contact me anytime by phone, text, or email. My first priority is the care and well-being of the children, so at times I will not be able to answer the phone. Please leave a message or text and I will make every effort to respond promptly. Lidia Barrera (425) 626-2115, or SeeSawHomecare@gmail.com
The childcare home consists of myself as the primary caregiver, and three other adults over the age of 16 years. These other individuals have current TB test results, and have all undergone a background check and FBI fingerprints. Since they may be a regular part of our day they may be occasionally called upon to help and support the primary caregiver. This help could be by assisting with the care of the pets on premises, quick clean ups, assisting with fire or emergency drills or quick bathroom breaks. Breaks will be longer no longer than 15 minutes. If and when they join our daily schedule, they will still be supervised by the primary provider and will abide by all health and safety policies.

**Pets:**

Our family includes 2 large dogs that will also be in the home. The majority of their pet needs will be addressed before and after regular childcare hours. Pets will be kept on second floor or garage space that will be made inaccessible to the children with the use of child safety gates. If children are to come in contact with the family pets, they will be closely supervised. Children and adults will wash hands after handling pets or any pet equipment. Pets will not use the same outdoor area that has been authorized for childcare purposes. If for some reason there is pet debris or waste in childcare space, it will be immediately removed from area and discarded into a proper waste receptacle away from childcare space. Area will be cleaned and disinfected. Pet files containing annual preventive wellness checks and immunizations will be updated as needed.

**Child Abuse Reporting:**

By Washington State law and licensing requirements, myself and any staff assisting are required to report immediately to the police or Child Protective Services any instance where there is reason to suspect the occurrence of physical, sexual, or emotional child abuse, child neglect, or exploitation. If there is a reporting of possible child abuse neglect, or exploitation to Child Protective Services or the police, I may not be able to notify parents, depending on the recommendations of Child Protective Services.

**Payment and Fees:**

There will be one-time, non-refundable enrollment fee of $50. This fee will also secure your space until the start date. Fees are due in advance no later than drop-off time on the first day of the week that the child is contracted for care. No exceptions will be made for absences due to illness, vacation, or other reasons without prior consent or arrangement with provider. A fee of $5 per day will be charged on late payments. You can always pay early to avoid added fees. SeeSaw’s Childcare accepts state subsidies. Please check with SeeSaw’s Childcare about other payment arrangements. The hourly childcare rate is $14. per hour. The full-day daily rate is $90. for a 9-hour slot. Contact SeeSaw’s Childcare for full-time (5-day-week) weekly rates. In the event of a returned payment, you will be responsible for all bank charges incurred. Overtime fees will be due at pick-up of the same day.
**Enrollment, Trial Period and Termination Of Service:**
There will be a one-time, non-refundable enrollment fee of $50. This will secure your start date and space.
Enrollments are based on space available. All forms must be returned to provider no later than drop-off on the first day of care. There will be a two-week trial period to better ensure that this is proper fit for the child, family, and provider. During this time either party may terminate this agreement by written notice, phone call, or in person. No refunds will be given during this time. After initial trial period, the childcare agreement may be terminated by either party by giving a two-week written notice if child is to permanently withdraw from childcare.
Two-week pay will be accepted in lieu of two-week written notice. The provider will also be responsible to give the family a two-week written notice of intent to cancel childcare agreement. Failure to follow the agreement rules may be cause for immediate termination without notice. The provider will give a minimum of two-week written notice of any increase in fees or significant changes to this agreement. Any and all changes or additions to this agreement must be initialed by both parent and provider to be valid.

**Hours of Operation:**
Normal hours of operation are 0600-1800 Monday through Friday. Allowing for flexibility, contracted hours will be discussed and individualized if needed for each family upon signing contract. Please adhere to YOUR contracted hours, and promptly communicate if changes are needed. I will occasionally be available for overtime, overnight, or weekend care. Any and all non-contracted care will be by prior arrangement only and will be a separate charge/fee. Please be sure to pick-up at your contracted time. Overtime fees will be charged at $3 for every 15 minutes past the contracted time. The provider’s entire day is structured around caring for your children (activities, outings, meal preparation.) Your child’s absence can change many factors affecting the daily schedule. When possible please share in advance any absences, late drop-off, early pick-up, or changes in your child’s routine (pick-up/drop-off for doctor’s appointment).

**Schedules:**
Play is the way children learn about their world, themselves, and others. Through this play we want to help them develop skills and knowledge that they will need to be successful in life. Much of our focus will be on socialization and self-help skills that they will need to be a success in other areas of development. The schedule will allow us to enjoy indoor and outdoor activities. There will be time for both group and individual play as well as meal times and rest times. Age appropriate, weekly activities are planned while allowing for flexibility in order to respond to the needs of each individual child. Actual times may vary depending on the weather, attendance, age and temperament of the children.
Daily Schedule:

0600-0700   free play
0700-0725   clean-up/wash hands
0730-0815   breakfast
0815-0845   clean-up/potty/diapers
0845-0915   circle time
0915-0945   adult lead activity/projects/ individual play
0945-1000   clean-up/potty/diapers/wash hands
1000-1030   snack
1030-1115   outdoor activities
1115-1130   clean-up/wash hands/potty
1130-1200   free play/individual or group activities
1200-1230   lunch
1230-1245   clean-up/brush teeth/potty/diapers
1245-1445   nap/rest/quiet individual activity
1445-1515   wake-up/potty/diapers/wash hands
1515-1545   snack
1545-1645   outside/group activities
1645-1700   clean-up
1700-1800   group/individual play/potty/diapers/goodbyes

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Closures/Holidays/Vacation:

Childcare will be closed with pay on the following holidays:
Christmas Day
Thanksgiving Day
New Year’s Day
Memorial Day
Labor Day
Veteran’s Day
Childcare will take two weeks unpaid vacation per year. Occasionally there are unforeseen circumstances, such as illness or family emergency, that will also cause the childcare to be closed. Parents are responsible to have back-up care for both planned and unplanned closures.
It is always a good idea to have alternate care for your child for those times when they may be ill or not well enough to attend and participate in the childcare daily routine.
Each family that is enrolled as full-time is given a 2-week vacation period or sick time where payment will not be required. One week is 5 consecutive days. 2-weeks can be taken consecutively or 1-week at a time. A five-day week may not be broken up to meet the 2-week, 10-day period. A minimum two weeks advance notification in writing is required for this time.

**Health and Illness:**

For the health and safety of all children attending the home care, please do not bring your child to childcare sick. We can only care for children with mild cold like symptoms, such as clear runny nose, or slight cough, but are otherwise feeling and acting well and can participate in the daily routine and activities.

If your child exhibits any of the following symptoms they will not be permitted to attend:

Fever of at least 100°F under arm and with one or more of the following:

- diarrhea or vomiting
- earache
- headache
- irritability or confusion
- sore throat
- rash
- fatigue that limits participation.
- Diarrhea: 3 or more watery stool
- Vomiting: on 2 or more occasions
- Rash with fever or itching
- Eye discharge or conjunctivitis
- Lice or nits
--Colored nasal drainage
- Severe coughing (congested, phlegm, gagging, throwing up, high pitched wheezing, croup sounds)
- Open or oozing sores
- Any contagious diseases such as: chicken pox, measles, mumps, impetigo, ringworm, scabies, rosella, mouth sores, and unexplained rashes.

If a child becomes ill during childcare hours, their parents will be notified, and may be asked to make arrangements for pick-up. If parents are not available, the emergency contact person will be contacted. If a child is believed to have a communicable disease, the child will be isolated from the other children and made comfortable until they are picked up. All other parents must be notified in writing when their children have been exposed to an infectious disease, communicable disease, or a parasite.

All licensed childcare is required to report communicable disease to the local health department. If a child is sent home due to illness, they may not return until symptoms mentioned above are no longer present and/or accompanied by a doctor’s note.
**Medication:**

Only doctor prescribed medication will be administered. There must be a start and stop date for each medication, not “as needed”. Medication will be given for the duration of the illness and then the remainder will be returned to the parent. Medication must be in their original containers, with child’s name, with visible prescription labels, and visible expiration date and only after the first 24 hours on the medication.

Before any medication will be administered parent must fill out all proper forms.

All non-refrigerated medications will be kept in a locked cabinet out of the children’s reach.

Medications requiring refrigeration will be put into a closed container before being refrigerated, and kept out of reach.

A medication log will be kept for each individual child to ensure proper dosage and times. The logs will be available to review at any time.

A written individual health plan will be needed for all long term or chronic condition medications such as asthma and/or allergies.

Consent form for use and application of sunscreen, diaper ointments or lotions will also need to be signed and dated before use.

**Immunizations:**

To protect all children and staff and to meet state health requirements I will only accept children fully immunized for their age. I will review immunization records upon enrollment, and review and update immunization records quarterly.

**Transport of Children:**

Parents will be notified of planned transport by vehicle no less than two-weeks in advance. A parent consent form will need to be signed and dated for each child. To ensure safety for all children and staff, the provider will be responsible for: Keeping the vehicle’s insurance, license and registration current, and the vehicle in good repair and safe to operate. The vehicle will be equipped with a first aid kit, and will meet child restraint requirements. Provider will ensure that the driver maintains appropriate insurance, valid Washington state driver’s license, and current CPR and first aid training. The number of passengers will not exceed the seating capacity of the vehicle and that the health history and emergency information for each passenger is kept with provider. Children will not be left unattended in a motor vehicle at any time.
Field Trips and Off-site activities:

At this time, all off-site activities will be limited to walking distance from the childcare home within the neighborhood. There are two available playgrounds/parks in close distance from the home. For safety and age appropriate play, these outings will be limited and dependent on ages of the children for that day. By signing the contract/enrollment forms, you are giving permission for your child to participate in the neighborhood walks and visits to neighborhood parks/playgrounds. Children age 2 years and younger will ride in a stroller or wagon. Each child will be seated, and safety belts will be properly secured on each child. A note will be left at the home site indicating estimated return time, approximate route of walk, and the available cell phone number. Sign in sheets, emergency cards, and first aid packs will be brought along. Teacher/child ratios will be kept at all times. While walking, all pedestrian rules will be followed, such as using cross walks and looking both ways. These will be communicated to the children so they can participate and become familiar in using these rules. Children will be included in discussions about what we see, hear, smell etc. as we take our walk. Children ages 2-5 years will walk together holding hands when appropriate at this time, all off-site activities will be limited to walking distance from the childcare home within the neighborhood. There are two available playgrounds/parks in close distance from the home. For safety and age appropriate play, these outings will be limited and dependent on ages of the children for that day. By signing the contract/enrollment forms, you are giving permission for your child to participate in the neighborhood walks and visits to neighborhood parks/playgrounds. There will be no transporting of children by vehicle.

Parent Provided Items:

Each child will need to have at least 2 complete changes of clothes at childcare in case of spills, falls, or body fluid getting on clothing. An extra pair of shoes if available. A jacket, coat, or sweater for unpredictable weather. Head covering in case of cold weather or for shielding from the sun. A toothbrush, a blanket and cuddle item for rest time. All items must be labeled with your child’s name or initials. Please DO NOT bring toys from home unless specified by the caregiver for show and tell or other special activity. These be very distracting and lead to arguments and hurt feelings.

Diaper Policy:

Diaper, wipes, and ointments are to be supplied by the parents. Both disposable and/or cloth diapers will be accepted. Diapers will be changed every two hours, or sooner if needed. For health and sanitation purposes, soiled clothing or diapers cannot be washed or rinsed by the child care. Soiled clothing and diapers will be bagged and sent home at the end of each day.
Toilet Training:

Before initiating any toilet training, there will be a consultation between parent and caregiver. Toilet training can be initiated when: child can verbally communicate their need or desire to use the toilet, Child can participate in pulling clothing up and down. Parents will supply training pants. Parents will supply plenty of extra clothes in case of accidents. During toilet training it is very much appreciated if there will be no wearing of onesies, overalls, belts, or suspenders.

Rest Time:

Children 29 months of age or younger will follow their own individual sleep patterns. Infants will be put down to sleep on their backs. Cribs will not contain bumper pads, pillows, soft toys, or cushions. Infants will not be left to sleep in car seats, swings, or infant seats. Each child will be provided a separate, firm, and waterproof cot, mat, or mattress. Each child will be provided with a clean sheet and small blanket provided by parents or by child care. Sleep linens will be laundered weekly or more often if necessary and between uses by different children. Children will not be physically forced to sleep or made to lie on their mat/cot during rest periods. Often children do not realize how tired they are until they slow down. If a child has not fallen asleep within the first half hour to forty-five minutes they will be allowed to get up and/or do a quiet activity while the other children nap.

Overnight Care:

On the occasion of evening or overnight care, the provider will remain on the same level of the home as the children in care. Children will sleep in the licensed child care space only. The staff to child ratio will be maintained and the caregiver must remain awake until all children in care are asleep. Children will each be provided an individual sleep cot or mat with clean linens provided from home or by the child care home. Caregiver will make every attempt to closely resemble children’s home night time routine.

Supervision:

Injuries and accidents can happen at any time or anywhere. Supervision and prevention is of utmost importance. With proper planning, preparation, and being properly trained, risk of serious injuries can be reduced. The provider will make every effort to supervise all areas by sight or hearing, furniture arrangement, and/or by placing mirrors in the areas that are accessible to the children. In the event that there is an injury, an injury report will be written up for the injured child. Depending on the nature of the injury, parents may be contacted as a courtesy. The injury report will be made available at pick-up.
Infant Feeding and Bottle Labeling:

All bottles or breast milk must be labeled with your child’s full name, and date prepared. The family will provide sufficient number of bottles to meet daily needs of the infant. All bottle nipples should be covered at all times to reduce risk of contamination and exposure. Bottles/milk will be refrigerated immediately upon arrival unless being fed to an infant immediately. Bottles that babies have been fed from will not be placed back in the refrigerator or be re-warmed. (Bacteria from baby’s mouth is introduced into milk and begin to multiply once bottles are taken from refrigerator and warmed.) Bottles/milk will be stored in the coldest part of the refrigerator, in appropriate labeled trays. Before handling or preparing bottles or food, preparation surfaces will be cleaned, rinsed and sanitized, and hands will be washed. Bottles will be placed in bottle warmer or placed under warm running water. Bottles and food will be discarded after one hour if not consumed to prevent bacterial growth. All unused formula or non-frozen breast milk will be returned to parent at pick-up. Infants will be held while being fed a bottle. Infants will not be given a bottle while lying down or in a crib. Children will not be allowed to walk around with food, bottles, or cups. Bottles will only contain formula or breast milk. Foods other than formula or breast milk will not be given to infants younger than 4 months of age. Juice will only be given in a cup.

Menu, Meals, and Foods From Home:

Meals will be provided at no additional charge. There are set meal times on the daily schedule including breakfast, lunch and two snacks. Parents are responsible for feeding your child if arriving after a mealtime. All meals provided will be nutritious and contribute to the wellness, healthy growth, and development of young children. Weekly menus will be posted and provided upon request. If your child requires a modified or special diet, a physician’s notice or/and instructions will need to be kept on file. Due to food allergies, sensitivities, or risk of choking, please do not bring food from home without first discussing with the provider. Every accommodation will be considered. Infants will be fed according to their own need. Infants are always fed on demand. Please do not allow your child to bring candy, or gum to child care.

Sign in/ Sign out, and pick-up:

It is very important that your child is signed in every morning or at drop off, and signed out every day at pick up. A signature, and contact number should be provided every day. Each child will only be released to their parents or authorized contact person. If there will be someone else picking up your child please discuss this with care giver prior to the pick-up. New pick-up will be asked to show identification. If there was no prior discussion or arrangement with the child care, child will not be released.
Behavior and Discipline:

I try very hard to be fair and to keep expectations age appropriate. Rules are made for the safety and wellbeing of everyone in the home, not just because an activity is too loud or too messy. Discipline will only be done respectfully. Only positive language and statements will be used during redirection and guidance. There will be eye contact at the child’s level while speaking in a calm tone and manner. We will strive for consistency, and to do things in the same manner each time so children will know what to expect. There will be advance notice of desired behavior as well as consequences, such as redirection to a new area, activity, or toy. Children will be encouraged to make good, better, or safer choices. Children will be reminded of rules often in a clear and pleasant manner and given reasons behind the rules. Adults should lead by example, modeling and demonstrating kind, gentle, communications and actions. We will do our best to notice and acknowledge positive behavior. If a child is continuously unable to follow the house rules, is unable to demonstrate self-control, or requires more individual attention than can be given, parents will be contacted. Repeated un-safe or uncontrollable behavior can lead to discontinuation of child care services.

Parent /guardian access to their child:

I believe families should feel at comfortable with their childcare choice, and confident that their child is being cared for in a kind and loving home, so I welcome you to visit them, or drop in for a story time, meal time, or during outdoor play. We will do our best to keep to the daily schedule as best we can so parents know the location of your child at all time. As nice as these special surprises can be, please keep in mind how your children may react to these unexpected visits. Some children do very well and others may have a very difficult time having to say good-byes a second time. Sometimes a sad and unhappy child can change the dynamic for the entire group. Any field trips or off premises outing will be posted with location, address, directions, and contact information. I have made my contact information available and can be reached by cell phone when out of the home. For safety reasons the front door will remain locked from the outside during business hours, so a little prior notice may be needed if you plan to visit during our time to in the backyard.

Drugs and Alcohol:

The childcare provider, volunteers, or household members will not have or use illegal drugs on the premises. Childcare provider, volunteers or household members will not be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or misused prescription drugs when working or in the presence of children in care. The childcare provider, volunteers, or any household members will not consume or be under the influence of alcohol during child care operation hours. All alcohol, including closed and open containers, will be kept inaccessible to children.
No Smoking:
This is a non-smoking home, and smoking is prohibited to anyone during operating hours. Smoking is prohibited in the indoor and any outdoor licensed space. Smoking is prohibited within twenty-five feet from any entrance, exit, window, or ventilation intake of the home. Smoking is prohibited in motor vehicles while transporting children. The provider will keep tobacco products, cigarettes, and containers holding cigarette butts, cigar butts, or ashes inaccessible to the children.

Guns and Other Weapons:
Any and all weapons and ammunition will be kept inaccessible to children in a locked safe or locked room and out of the licensed space used by the children.

Confidentiality:
Due to the confidential information about staff, children, and families handled and kept by the childcare provider, I maintain confidentiality on a “need to know” basis. Information will only be shared when it is necessary and will only be shared in a concise informative manner with the people who need to be informed. This is important especially when there are health and safety concerns. I will not discuss children or their families with other child care families, and all sensitive information will be kept safe. It is unprofessional and inappropriate to gossip about a child or their family.

Records:
Each child that is enrolled in the childcare and counted in capacity will have a record on file kept by the childcare provider. Hand written, paper records will be kept in a file box, in a locked cabinet for confidentiality. Only approved persons will have access to these documents. Approved persons are the primary care provider, and parent or guardian of the child. Parent or guardian will be allowed access to all records for their child and ONLY their child. The childcare provider will update records at minimum every six months unless there are changes in the child’s or family’s information.