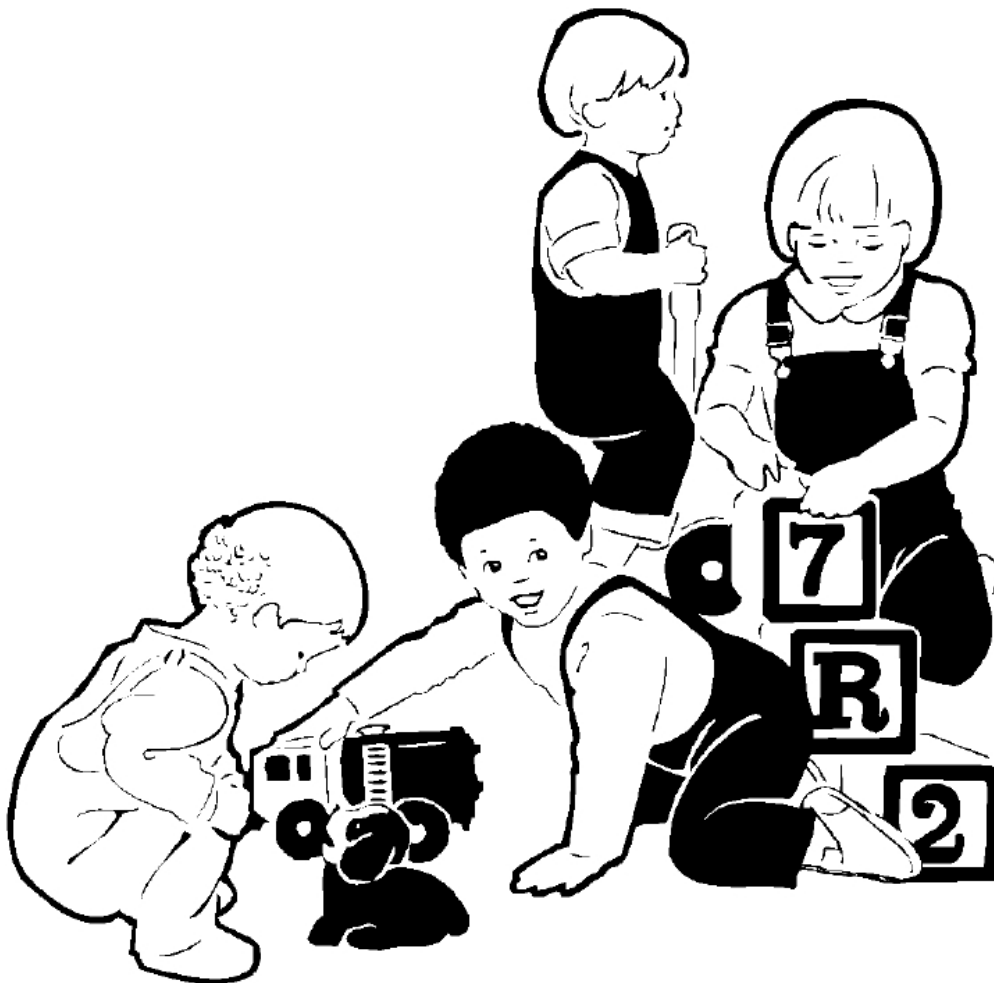


Parent's



Handbook

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INTRODUCTION:

Welcome to the Growing in Grace, LLC. (Toddler and Preschool Program) Daycare! We have created this handbook to try to eliminate any misunderstandings. It's hard to remember to tell every parent every rule and every procedure when we first meet. I have tried to cover everything I could think of from my childcare philosophies, business policies and expectations. Please read this hand book carefully, and feel free to discuss with me any questions that you may have.

OBJECTIVES:

My goal is to have all the children in my care having a fun day where they are learning and playing while making new friends. I want your child to feel like this is their second home. I want them to feel safe and comfortable here. I will provide them with lots of love and attention along with lots of fun daily activities to help them learn and grow. I hope to teach the children to respect themselves and each other. I believe all children should have a safe and happy environment. I don't allow hitting, biting, yelling, and name calling at any time. Children will be encouraged through positive reinforcement to be nice to their friends. I will encourage all children to treat their friends and my home with respect. I try to provide a daily structured program with an emphasis on education. We also work on "getting ready for school" through my morning preschool program. My program has a daily craft, songs, stories, circle time and so much more. I enjoy being outside. If weather is acceptable we will be outside at least an hour each day. I try to encourage the kids to help keep their toys picked up when they are done playing. We do a lot of fun activities each day and some of them can be messy (such as painting). So please send you child in play clothes.

COMMUNICATION:

I hope we can have open communication between the two of us. If you have a problem, I hope you come to me first. If we have problems I hope we can communicate to work through them. My door is always open and I welcome an opportunity to talk openly about anything. Any questions that you have for the concern of your child or my home are always welcome. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's day, please call me so we can talk or schedule a meeting for after hours.

ENROLLMENT POLICY:

The forms listed below must be filled out before your child can start. Some of these forms will be updated yearly.

- Child's Record
- Activity Form
- Health History
- Medical Emergency Statement
- Parents Information
- Pictures and Video
- Transportation Form
- Water Play/Pool Permission
- Food Program

If you need any help filling out these forms, please feel free to ask.

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TRIAL PERIOD:

Your child's happiness is important to all of us. It is, therefore, agreed that the first month (28 calendar days) of your child's enrollment in my home daycare will be considered the trial period. At the end of this trial period if everything is going fine I will assume that your child is going to continue his or her care at my home. If things are not working out for either of us then before the 28 days are up we need to discuss what is to be done next. If care continues after the trial period (first 28 days) then your child is automatically enrolled after this date. If you decide to remove your child after this date I will need to have a 2 week written notice.

FEES:

A \$25 non-refundable registration fee (per child) applies to all new children enrolling in my home daycare. The registration fee helps me cover the cost of printing out the hand books and forms that are required before your child starts and any supplies that may need to be purchased for the child.

I also require an upfront deposit that will be equal to one week's fees. This deposit will be kept until your child leaves my care. If all exit policies are followed, including a two week notice, this deposit will be refunded. If exit procedures are not followed and two week's notice is not given, this deposit will not be refunded.

Please be aware that until this deposit is received plus the \$25.00 registration fee, the spot for your child is not "Saved" and could be given to another child.

DAYCARE HOURS:

Day Care is open from 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM Monday through Friday. Please make sure that your child is picked up by 6:00 PM or a late fee will be charged. 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 would leave a message, I will call you back as soon as possible.

OPEN DOOR POLICY:

My daycare does maintain an open door policy for you to stop in and check on your child at anytime. For safety and security purposes, we do lock the outside doors during the day so please call or ring the bell if you arrive outside of a normal pickup time. Finally, if you decide to stop by please remember that we have daily nap time. This is the time of day I try to keep the house quiet and visitors may interrupt the sleeping children.

HOLIDAYS/VACATIONS:

The following is a list of the **Paid Holidays** that I will be taking each year. On these days, the daycare will be closed but you will still be responsible for payment for that day:

**Memorial Day * Independence Day * Labor Day * Thanksgiving Day *
Christmas Day * New Year's Day**

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I am open all other holidays and if your child is scheduled to attend that day and doesn't you will still be charged for the day. I will also be closed for one week's **PAID** vacation during each year. This week will be announced at least two weeks prior to the closing. Parents are responsible for securing backup care during these times.

RATE CHANGES:

If at anytime I decide to change my rates you will receive a 2 week advanced notice of all rate changes. At that time, I hope you choose to continue your enrollment in my daycare or you can give me a 2 week written withdrawal notice.

CHANGING YOUR CHILD'S SCHEDULE:

If your child is attending part time and you would like to add a day and there is space available that's fine. If your child is attending part time or full time and you want to cut down on the amount of days your child is attending then I need a 2 week written notice and you will be required to pay for the spots your child has reserved. If your child doesn't attend all the days you have reserved for him/her for the remaining 2 weeks, you will still need to pay for the contracted days.

LATE PAYMENT:

Payment is expected each Monday, or the first day your child attends that week. If payment is more than 2 days late there will be a \$25.00 late fee for the week and your child will not be able to return until paid in full, along with the late fees. If Payment is not received within 10 days, I may terminate services, without notice.

LATE PICK UP:

Overtime begins at 6 PM. A late fee of \$1.00 will be assessed for every 5 minutes past 6 PM that your child is in care, unless prior after hour arrangements have been made. If pick up becomes a problem, immediate termination of services may result, without notice. Finally, please keep in mind that late arrival does not justify late departure.

BOUNCED CHECK CHARGE:

A \$30.00 fee will be charged if a check is returned for insufficient funds. In the event of a second returned check, I will need to be paid in cash or money order, for the next six months. If this cannot be arranged, or if the fee for a returned check is not made within 10 days, your daycare services may be terminated without notice.

LATE/ABSENT:

Parents are asked to call the day care at 816-694-3807 if their child is going to be dropped off later than their normal morning drop off time, or if their child will be absent for the day. You are still responsible for payment even if the child does not attend or attends late. If your child is not feeling well and you are unsure of whether he or she should attend, please refer to the illness policy or call the day care.

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ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE:

Your child is going to miss you while you can't be with them. This is a very normal reaction, and all children respond differently. Some are simply hesitant while others will cry. It is normal for your child to cry on arrival, especially for the first few weeks. Try not to get upset over their crying. It will stop within a few minutes after you leave. If your child does a significant amount of crying at drop-off time, please try to make your stay brief. It is harder on the child when you prolong your stay. If you are worried at all, please give me a call and check on your child to make sure that they are happy and content. However, please also note that if any child cries for more than 15 continuous minutes, I will call you! You may choose to pick up your child or to leave them for a bit longer. If I can not console your child after an hour you will be called to come and pick up your child.

Children tend to act up a bit at departure times. This is normal since they are excited to see parents, and upset about leaving their friends. Please try to make sure your child is behaving during drop off and pick up times.

Children of all ages adjust to the transition of going home differently. Most do not like to be too rushed. Feel free to take time for a quick look at what they have been doing all day. Often this will make departure a lot easier for the child. On the other hand, some do not like to wait too long once they are ready to depart.

You should hold your child's hand upon entering and leaving my house. Please do not let your child run wild in my driveway or front yard. In the mornings, you must let a member of the staff know that your child has arrived and sign them in before leaving for the day. Although this may seem time consuming if you are running a bit late, it is a necessary part of the morning and can not be missed. No exceptions.

When picking your child up, please know that you or an authorized person must come and sign your child out. We will not send the child to the car or let any person not authorized to pick up your child leave with your child. If an unauthorized person arrives and is unable to pick up your child, you will be responsible for paying any late charges that may be incurred until an authorized person arrives to pick up the child.

Please do not let your child run out to the car when you are leaving. There could be a car coming into the drive way and they may not be able to see your child.

If you ever have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call and discuss it with the staff. The best time to call would be during nap time (usually about 1 pm) or after daycare hours, before 8 PM. We need to have open communication for us both to feel happy and relaxed with the daycare.

CUSTODY:

Unless the day care is given court papers stating that you have been granted temporary or permanent custody, I have no legal authority to tell either parent that he/she can't pick up their child. I will need a photo copy of the court order with the court's signature. Please make sure I have these papers in your child's file. Finally, if circumstances change, please make sure to update who is authorized to pick up your child!

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LEAVE OF ABSENCE:

If you need to take your child out for illness, vacation time, maternity leave, etc, you will need to let me know if it is going to be more than 4 weeks. If your child will not be attending for more than 4 weeks you will be required to pay ½ his/her normal weekly rate to hold his/her spot. If I do not receive his/her payment on each Friday and I have not heard from you, I will give his/her spot away to another child.

DRESS CODE:

Please send your child in a dry diaper and dressed ready for play each morning. Do not send your child in their pajama's or soaking wet diapers. Please send your child in play clothes. We will be working with some messy materials and playing outdoors throughout the day. Children need to have sneakers to be able to climb and run with the other children. If your child wants to arrive with sandals or other shoes on, please make sure they have some sneakers and socks to change into. Clothing should be comfortable for outdoor play. In the cold weather seasons, please make sure to include hats, mittens, boots and coats appropriate for the temperature. Each child must also have a change of clothing in case of an accident. All clothing articles should be labeled with your child's name.

SUPPLIES:

Toddlers & Preschoolers: Diapers, pull-ups, wipes and complete change of clothes (as they get soiled I will leave them in a plastic bag in your child's box to be taken home and cleaned). Again, please write your child's name on all belongings. Please be aware that if your child brings in toys or other non required items from home and they get lost or broken I am not going to replace them or look for them. I recommend that children not bring toys to daycare.

DONATIONS:

If you have any of the items listed below and would like to donate them to us for projects or activities it would be greatly appreciated.

- Magazines, coloring, or reading books for children.
- Paper of any kind, brown, white, colored, waxed, foil, etc.
- Crayons, markers, play dough, or any misc. art supplies, such as fabric scraps, glitter, pipe cleaners, paper plates, etc.
- Unused Diapers or pull ups your child has out grown
- Old shirts, pants, snow pants, mittens, coats, hats, socks, etc.

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DAILY SCHEDULE:

Our day care tries very hard to plan a daily schedule. It lets the children know what to expect from day to day. However, it is not always possible to follow a strict schedule. For example, if the weather is nice and the children are having a really good time outside, outdoor play time may be extended and craft time may be skipped. For normal daily purposes, the following schedule will be followed:

Daily Schedule	
7:00 - 8:00	Free Play/Table Toys
8:00 - 8:15	Potty Break/Hand Washing
8:15 - 9:00	Morning Snack/Breakfast Time
9:00 - 9:45	Circle Reading/Homework Time
9:45 - 10:00	Potty Break/Hand Washing
10:00 - 11:00	Learning Time/Games
11:00 - 12:00	Outside Play
12:00 - 12:15	Potty Break/Hand Washing
12:15 - 1:00	Lunch Time
1:00 - 2:15	Nap/Quiet Time
2:15 - 3:00	Potty Break/Hand Washing
3:00 - 4:00	Craft Time
4:00 - 4:15	Potty Break/Hand Washing
4:15 - 4:45	Afternoon Snack Time
4:45 - 5:30	Clean Up/Free Play
5:30 - 5:45	Potty Break/Hand Washing
5:45 - 6:00	Pickup Prep

TOYS:

It is preferred that children NOT bring toys from home as this usually causes fights over the toy. Most children who bring toys in from home will not share their toys with the other children and the other children want to play with the (new to them) toy. Unless it is something that can be shared with the entire group (i.e. books, videos, etc.). Little ones have a difficult time sometimes sharing the toys here with others, and it is even harder with their own special toys. If toys are brought, please be aware that they may be put away, if they are the cause of disagreements among the children. Toy weapons (guns, knives, swords, squirt guns, etc.) and not permitted and will be turned away at the door.

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If your child has a favorite nap time toy, please bring it and it can be given to the child at nap time. Please make sure that these toys or any other items brought be labeled with your child's name.

POTTY TRAINING:

Let the day care know when you have begun training your child. After your child has been training at home for a week, training will begin here as well. I will only potty train your child at my house as long as you are following through with potty training your child at home. I will only use pull-ups supplied by the parent. Please keep in mind that the activity level here can distract your child which means that they will forget to use the potty. At your home the distraction level is down and they will do a much better job. It can take quite awhile for a child to get potty trained in daycare. Send your child ONLY in easy to remove clothing while they are potty training. If you child comes in overalls and other hard to remove clothes, they will not potty train that day.

During potty training time I ask that you provide your child with at least 3 sets of clothing including socks. As your child starts getting the hang of potty training you will want to remove the pull ups and start using training pants. I will need to have plastic pants to go over these so urine doesn't get on the rugs and furniture. Wet and dirty clothes will not be laundered but will be placed into a plastic bag at the end of the day to be sent home.

MEALS:

Please refrain from bringing your child in the morning eating pop tarts, donuts, candy, drinking soda, etc. If your child is eating food not received from my home they must remain in your car until the food is gone. This keeps other children from getting upset or fighting over food. I prefer that children do not bring food, drinks, etc. from home unless requested. Children tend to think the "grass is greener . . ." when they see someone eating something different from them. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES IS CANDY OR GUM ALLOWED!!

Meals will consist of morning snack, lunch and afternoon snack. Children who arrive after meal times should be fed before they arrive.

If your child has allergies, and/or requires a special diet, then you will need to provide what your child is going to eat.

MEAL TIMES:

Breakfast 8:15 A.M.
Lunch 12:15 P.M.
Snack 4:15 P.M.

CLEANLINESS/HYGIENE:

I do my best to maintain a clean house and clean children. I have the children wash their hands after they go potty, after outdoor activities, and before meals and snacks.

All children are placed on mats when there is nap or quiet time. Each child has a separate mat that is cleaned daily after each use.

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FIELD TRIPS:

Throughout the year we may take field trips. Parents are welcome to join us anytime, but are not required to. Parents will be responsible for any admission charges and other expenses involved with the field trip. Parents are required to fill out all necessary paperwork and field trip release forms 24 hours prior to the day of the field trip. Late or incomplete paperwork will not be accepted.

QUIET / NAP TIME:

All children will have a rest period from 1:00 p.m.– 2:15 p.m. everyday. No child is forced to sleep, however they must remain quiet. The television may be turned on quietly at this time, but only educational, G rated, and mild PG rated movies will be shown. If your child has a favorite video they can always bring it in to share at quiet time with the other children. The children can look at books, do puzzles, play with quiet toys at their mat, etc. As long as they are being quiet and do not disturb the others. They must remain on their mats during the entire quiet time. Those who wake early will participate in a quiet activity until the time is over. Please try not to schedule pick-ups or visits during this time.

TELEVISION:

Monday through Friday the TV is only on during naptime and towards the end of the day. I only allow educational, G rated and mild PG rated movies for the children to watch. If you have any special concerns about the content of what your child will be watching, please do not hesitate to express these concerns.

OUTDOOR PLAY:

Part of every day will be spent outside except in really bad weather. We will play outside in the fenced in play area. The children should be dressed appropriately to stay warm and enjoy being outside. If your child isn't feeling well enough to play with the other kids or go outside then your child is too sick to be in daycare that day. If your child is brought and they are not able to participate you will be called to come and get them. Children not feeling well will be much happier to be at home in familiar surroundings.

ILLNESS:

Sick children will not be accepted into the daycare. If a child was sent home because they were ill then they will not be able to return for 48 hours. Please do not bring your child back before this 48 hour period. Under no circumstances will parents be allowed to leave a sick child. Sick children need additional care that can't be provided.

The following illness policies will be strictly enforced, for the health, well being and safety of all concerned.

Examples of associated symptoms include, but are not limited to:

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1. Fever (100 F. higher)-Child needs to be fever free for 24 hours.
2. Nausea or vomiting for any reason.
3. Diarrhea: runny or watery stools, or 2 or looser stools within last 4 hours.
4. Sore throat, loss of voice, hacking or continuous coughing, runny nose with colored discharge.
5. Runny and/or Crusty Eyes: Watery, matted, and/or red/pink eyes.
6. Unexplained Rash, hives, or skin irritations.
7. Excessive Crankiness: Child is irritable, excessive whining or crying, wants constantly held, or requires more attention than can be provided.
8. Lice (may not return child to care until no more nits are spotted)
9. Communicable diseases (chicken pox, roseola, conjunctivitis, mumps, measles, influenza, etc.)

This benefits your child and the other children. Your help at keeping your sick child home is appreciated.

Parents of a child with a diagnosed contagious condition (measles, head lice, pink eye, mumps, chicken pox, etc.) are asked to notify me as soon as possible so that I may alert parents to watch for symptoms in their own children.

MEDICATION:

If your child is on medication and it needs to be taken while he/she is at daycare, the medicine must be in the original container and labeled with the child's name, doctor's name, name of medication, dosage, and when to be taken. If medication is to be taken only twice a day, i.e. (morning & night) then it will need to be done at home. A medication form will need to be filled out that morning so please make sure you have a few extra minutes. I will not administer medication until it has been given by the parent/guardian at least for 48 hours. If a child is going to have an allergic reaction to the medication it should happen in those first 24 to 48 hours. If your child refuses to take medication from me I will not force them to take it.

Please do not bring non-prescription medicine without written instructions and the child's name on it. Please label all medicines. Do not leave medicine in the child's bags. Please make sure all medicine is handed to day care staff for safe storage.

INJURIES:

No matter how much we watch and how careful we are accidents are going to happen occasionally. Minor cuts and bruises suffered while at daycare will receive proper care -- they will be washed with soap and warm water and properly bandaged.

If a serious accident should occur you will be contacted for instructions; unless this would endanger your child's life. In that case I will take necessary steps and (call the hospital, doctor, poison control, etc.). All injuries need to be documented. You will be asked to sign an injury report.

FIRE:

In the event of a fire, we would evacuate the house immediately and gather together outside in the fence. This will be practiced at least once a month (usually more) so the children are familiar with what to do. You will be contacted immediately and asked to pick up your child.

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TERMINATION OF SERVICES:

I may immediately terminate care if the terms of the daycare contract and the daycare policies in this hand book are not followed or if there is continued behavioral problems that are not being addressed. If your child's care is immediately terminated, your deposit will not be returned.

Some are examples below (but not limited to):

- *Registration fee not paid.
- *Forms not filled out.
- *Constantly late (more than 20 minutes)
- *Child not adjusting to daycare (crying a lot, biting, hitting).
- *Weekly Childcare not paid on time

WITHDRAWAL:

After the trial period, if for some reason you decide to stop bringing your child a two-week written notice is required. This will allow me time to advertise to find a child to fill your child's spot. Payment is due for the two-week notice period whether or not the child is brought to day care.

GUIDANCE:

I like to see happy and active children in my home. Occasionally I do run into problems. When problems with discipline start I will try to guide your child in the right direction, through positive reinforcement. Children wouldn't be normal if they didn't have their ups and downs. Examples of discipline are shown below:

Child is running inside. - Staff would say "Please Walk" "Thank you"
 Child is standing on a chair - Staff would say "Can you please sit on the chair" "Thank you"
 We try to point out what they should be doing. Please walk; please use your indoor voice, etc.

Redirection - Sometimes it will be necessary to try and redirect one child away from another child; such as they both want the same puzzle. Staff might locate a second puzzle or suggest a different activity that both children could share.

Time Out: If the redirection doesn't work than the child may move on to a time out. They will be removed from the group and asked to sit down and color or look at a book for several minutes or until they can return. I want to try to teach them to think about what they are doing and what they could have done instead.

Removal of Privilege: If children are throwing items or using toys to hurt or threaten another child, staff will immediately remove the toy or item from the child. The child will not have the privilege to use that item for the rest of the day.

If your child is chronically misbehaving, you will be notified. Examples of behavior may include but are not limited to biting, use of bad words, chronic hitting, repeatedly throwing toys or food. etc. If the problems continue without improvement then I will have no other choice but to terminate care, for the safety and well being of all.

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There will not be any spanking, physical abuse, verbal abuse, or name-calling used. Neither food nor sleep will ever be withheld from children as a means of punishment.

SUSPECTED CHID ABUSE

The State of Missouri requires that all members of a daycare staff be on the lookout for, and report to the State, any and all cases of abuse to a child. I am therefore obligated to report to the State any suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect.

RECORDS AND FORMS:

I need to have all forms signed on or before the first day of care. Please give me a photo copy of your child(ren) immunization records. Forms will need to be updated yearly. If your child doesn't have the required paperwork/forms or if the forms expire, your child will not be able to enter daycare until their file is updated and complete. You will still be charged for days that your child(ren) are absent due to missing or incomplete files.

DROP OFFS:

For children who need occasional care, I do take drop offs if I have space available. The rate is by the hour for children being dropped off. Drop Offs only pay for the time that they are at the day care. I will keep track of the hours your child attends and payment will be due at pickup. I do not accept out of state checks. Payment must be cash or traveler's checks if you are not a Missouri resident. I usually don't have cash on hand to make change so please call ahead to ask me the amount.

BACK UP CARE:

It is not the responsibility of the day care provider to locate and secure backup care for your child. During days when the day care is closed (due to holidays, vacations, illness, emergencies, etc.) it will be the full duty of the parent to find alternate care if it is required for their child.

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