



"Parent Handbook"

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Welcome

Small Beginnings Family Child Care provides a home-like, loving, safe, and play-based environment for children to explore the world around them. Services at our home child care are provided for children between the ages of 2 months - 5 years of age.

Funshine Curriculum

| Infants (2 months- 12 months) | Toddlers (Ages 12 months-2 years) | Preschool (Ages 3- 5 years) |
|--|--|--|
|--|--|--|

Infants learn and develop faster now than at any point in their lives, it is imperative to provide them with tools that they need to succeed! Developing trust through nurturing interactions and daily routines are extremely important. Infants will engage in music time, story times, unique sensory activities, and will learn how to communicate using simple sign language.

Between the ages of 1-3, toddlers are gaining a sense of independence and autonomy. These “little scientists” learn by experimenting and exploring the world around them. During this time, toddlers are learning how to do things themselves and are developing the confidence to do so! In the Toddler Program, children will engage in many hands-on learning activities and once they master the beginner sign language words, they will be introduced to more descriptive words! Our Potty Training program will also be offered to children in this age bracket. Once your child starts exhibiting behaviors that show that they are ready to start potty training, a meeting will be arranged to develop a plan that is both consistent with home and child care.

The Preschool Program is a transitional program to get 3-5 year olds ready for Kindergarten! In this program, we will focus on educational activities based on California’s Learning Standards. Since children learn best through play, we provide children with a developmentally appropriate play-based environment. Daily, your child will engage in activities that will strengthen language, math, art, science, and social skills. They will also be engaging in physical and nutrition based activities, daily.

Ratios

According to California Licensing Standards for Family Child Care Homes, these are the ratio requirements:

For Small Family Child Care Homes (1 lead teacher)

4 infants

OR

6 children (*no more than 3 of whom may be infants*)

OR

Up to 8 children (*when 1 child is at least 6 years old and 1 child is enrolled in and attending kindergarten or elementary school*)

For Large Family Child Care Home (1 lead teacher & 1 assistant)
12 children (*no more than 4 of whom may be infants*)

OR

Up to 14 children (*when 1 child is at least 6 years of age and 1 child is enrolled in and attending kindergarten or elementary school*) **AND** no more than 3 infants

Here at Small Beginnings Family Child Care, we will never exceed the ratio requirements for licensing however, we will adjust our ratios depending on the group of children that we have. To provide the best care, we do have multiple assistants, on call, that may be able to assist when needed!

Hours of Operation

Families are allotted up to **10 hours of child care** between the hours of **6:30 am- 5:30 pm**. This is considered to be your reserved time slot. You can drop off and pick up your child anywhere within your reserved time slot. Please remember that if you choose to drop off late or pick up early, your reserved time slot remains the same. You may temporarily change your time slot by giving me at least a 2 weeks notice. Your temporary schedule change still must remain within the 6:30 am- 5:30 pm time frame. You may request to temporarily change your reserved time slot without a 2 weeks notice but it is solely up to my discretion. The more notice you give, the more likely I will be able to accept it. If you need to permanently change your reserved time slot, you will be required to update your contract, indicating that your times have changed.

For families whose work schedules vary, you will be required to submit a weekly schedule, no later than 6:00 pm, on Tuesdays. If I do not receive the schedule by 6:00 pm on Tuesdays, I may not be available during the hours that you request.

Trial Period

Each child will be given a **2 week trial period** where we will determine whether my home is the best fit for you and your family. During this 2 week trial period, you will have the right to terminate services without a 2 weeks notice. I do require **written notification**, at least the day of, notifying me that you will be terminating services. Please note that the “Enrollment Fee” is non-refundable. Any day child care is not provided, will be refunded. I will also have the right to terminate services, without 2 weeks notice, if I feel like my home is not the right fit for you and your family. In the event that this occurs, I will provide written notification and you will be refunded for days that care is not provided.

The Daily

Drop-offs and pick-ups can be both overwhelming and hectic so here are some policies that will help to create smooth transitions:

- During the times that I am caring for children, **quick questions/concerns would be best**. After hours would be the best scenario to speak with me, in person, regarding any complex questions or concerns you may have. Also, feel free to text me or message me through the Brightwheel App about any questions/ concerns you may have throughout the day. I will answer them as soon as possible.
- Please be sure to **sign your child in and out**. It is a requirement for me to have a record of all children who are in my care.
- Although children are sometimes resistant during drop-offs, it is extremely important that you make sure you **say goodbye to your child**. Although it may seem easy for you to slip out when your child is busy playing, it only causes mistrust and anxiety. This may lead to even more stressful drop-offs so PLEASE say good-bye to your children.
- Drop offs/ pickups during our nap time hours (1:00 pm- 3:00 pm) are highly discouraged! Please try to drop off or pick up your child before or after nap time. Children who get dropped off before nap/rest time need to be **ready to participate** in nap/rest time.
- Children will **only be released to authorized persons** listed on the *Child Care Emergency Contact Form (located in your Welcome Folder)*. I will NOT, under any circumstances, release children to anyone whom I believe is under the influence of drugs or alcohol. In the event that this happens, I will contact someone else who is authorized to pick up.
 - **Please Note:** Late fees will still apply if the child is in my care after hours.
- *Due to the pandemic, to maintain the safety of your children, drop offs and pick ups will occur at the front door.*

Daily Routine

Infants will be on their own individualized schedules indicated in their Infant Personal Care Plan (located in the Welcome Folder). Here is an outline on what a typical day would look like at the Small Beginnings Family Child Care for toddlers and preschoolers. This schedule is subject to change to better fit the needs of the children.

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| 6:30 am | Daycare Opens |
| | Table- top Activities/ Floor Time Activities |
| 8:15 am- 8:45 am | Breakfast |
| 9:00 am- 9:30 am | Outside Play (weather permitting)/ Morning Exercise |
| 9:45 am- 10:15 am | Circle Time |
| 10:14 am- 10:30 pm | Curriculum Based Activity |
| 10:30 am- 11:30 am | Free Play in the Playroom |
| 11:30 am-12:00 pm | Lunch |
| 12:30 pm- 3:30 pm | Nap/ Rest Time (<i>Quiet Activity</i>) |
| 3:30 pm | PM Snack |
| 4:00 pm- 5:00 pm | Outside Play/ Table Top Activities/ Floor Time Activities |
| 5:00 pm | "Your Choice" Activity |
| 5:30 pm | Daycare Closes |

Open Door Policy

Please feel free to visit your child throughout the day! Small Beginnings Family Child Care supports breastfeeding mothers! If you plan to breastfeed your infant during child care hours, please be sure to communicate this with me so accommodations may be arranged.

Please Note: *Visits during rest time will be highly discouraged due to the importance of children getting the proper amount of rest*

House Rules

- Smoking is not permitted on the premises.
- When you are on the premises, your child is your responsibility.

- Please use shoe covers when entering my home.
- Please respect my home and the items in it.
- Please do not pick up any children, who are not your own.
- Please do not film any children, who are not your own.
- Please respect me and my time.
- Please respect and follow my policies.
- Please communicate with me if you have any questions or concerns.

Communication

Every policy in this handbook is created for a reason. It is important to remember that in order for me to provide the best childcare environment for your children, policies have to be enforced. If at any time families continuously choose not to respect and follow our policies, families will be recommended to find alternative child care. Clear and honest communication is extremely important to me. Please do not hesitate to meet with me or message me if any problems arise while your child is attending our daycare.

Personal Care Plans

Children's schedules are constantly evolving so it is imperative that you fill out a *Personal Care Plan* so both you and I are on the same page. *Personal Care Plans* for infants need to be updated every 3 months. Please be as detailed as possible. Meetings may be arranged over the phone or in person (*after hours*) if needed.

Nutrition

Small Beginnings Family Child Care participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) which ensures that children receive nutritious meals throughout the day. *For more information regarding CACFP please refer to your Welcome Folder.* If families do not want their child to participate in the child care food program, bringing food from home is permitted. If your child is not using our house formula/ infant meals, all meals and bottles from home must be prepared and labeled. Bottles with breast milk must have a label and will be marked with red tape. All labels must have the child's first name, last name, and description of the contents. ***Please Note:*** *Labels and red vinyl tape will be provided.*

Parents are required to try new foods with their child at home, for at least 3 separate meal times, and update their child's Personal Care Plan, before the food can be offered at childcare.

Rest Period

I am required by the state to give children at least 2 hours of rest time a day. However, there are times when the children may sleep longer than the allotted 2 hours. Any child over the age of 1 year, will have their own individual mats during rest time. Parents are required to bring 2 sheets and a blanket, on their child's first day of attendance. Children will be highly encouraged to sleep during the rest period however, they will never be forced.

Although infants are on their individual schedules, I will try to slowly transition infants to have at least one nap during this rest period. Infants will have their own cribs and sheets. Parents are required to bring 2 sheets on the first day the infant attends child care. I am required to place an infant on their backs to sleep. Under no circumstances will blankets or any objects be allowed in the crib while an infant is sleeping. Infants may not be swaddled but they may have a sleep sack, provided by the parent. *Please refer to the “Sleeping Policy” located in your Welcome Folder for more information!*

Activities

Since many of the activities throughout the day will be play-based, be sure to dress your child appropriately. Your child will most likely engage in a messy activity throughout the day. I will try my best to keep them as clean as possible but it is not a guarantee.

Shoe Policy

No shoes will be permitted in my home. Shoe Covers will be provided for parents. For children, please provide non-slip socks for them to wear while they are indoors. I will have extra non-slip socks for a fee of \$1 a pair. It is recommended that you provide a couple of pairs of non-slip socks to leave in your child's cubby. Mobile children will need shoes for outside activities. Shoes or sandals, with backs, are required for outdoor activities.

Media Allowance

Children are exposed to different forms of media throughout the day. During snack time, children are given the opportunity to watch an educational video that generally supports the curriculum. After lunch time, the children are allowed to decide on a movie that they would like to watch, prior to nap time. Although the children are exposed to media throughout the day, it's during very specific times. During most of the day, the children are engaging in hands-on learning activities.

Guidance Policy

Since the children I care for are young, **redirection** will be the primary way I deal with undesired behaviors. In addition to redirection, for older children, I may enforce time out from activities and/or items. In the event that a child is engaging in countless undesired behaviors, a meeting will be arranged to discuss a Behavior Plan for the child. If the child is a constant danger to themselves and/or other children, this may lead to discontinuation of services. ***Under no circumstances, will any corporal punishment be used to discipline children.***

Mandated Reporter

As a child care provider, I am a mandated reporter. I am required by law to report any suspicions of any physical abuse, sexual abuse, and/or neglect.

Payment Procedure

You can pay tuition with:

Cash

Venmo

Brightwheel

I do not accept personal checks

Tuition is to be collected prior to care being provided and will be collected every **Friday by 5:00 pm**. If you have arranged for tuition to be collected monthly, tuition will still need to be paid by 5:00 pm on the agreed upon date. After 5:00 pm you will automatically be charged \$10.00 and an additional \$10.00 for every day your payment is late; this includes the weekends. Children will not be able to attend childcare with a delinquent account unless a “Payment Plan” has been created. After 1 week of Late Payment Fees families will be terminated and a court date may be set to collect the rest of the payment (*upon the provider’s discretion*).

“Payment Plans” may only be created for families who communicate with me at least 24 hours before the payment is due. A percentage of the balance will be due on that Friday by 5:00 pm and the rest of the balance will need to be paid on the agreed upon date. If the contract is breached in any way, you will be required to pay the full balance due, pay all late fees, services will be suspended until you pay the balance, and it may be grounds for termination (*upon the provider's discretion*). Families who have delinquent accounts for more than a week will be terminated and if the balance is not paid upon termination, a court date will be set for collection.

In the event that a Court Date has to be set for collection, the Parent/Guardian will be responsible for any and all fees associated. This is to include but not limited to all late fees, loss of wages, and any court costs.

Government Assistance Programs

Families who participate in government assistance programs are welcome! If you are participating in a government assisted program, you will be required to submit all paperwork before your child can attend my facility. You will also be required to keep an Attendance Log and submit this log on the 1st of every month. If you are required to pay a copay, a payment schedule will be arranged.

Summer Program

This program is provided primarily for families who have a different schedule over the summer. Families who have the same schedule year around can attend the summer program at no extra costs. However, families who need to change their child’s schedule for the summer, may choose one of these 3 options:

- ***Option 1:*** Full-Time families may choose to **reduce their hours** to Part-Time/ Half Day. Part-Time families may reduce the amount of days their child attends childcare.

- **Option 2:** Families may choose to place a hold on their child's enrollment. In order to place a hold on your child's enrollment, families will be required to **pay 25% of their tuition.**
- **Option 3:** Families may choose to **disenroll** their children for the summer. It is important to remember that if this option is chosen, **spots will no longer be guaranteed.** If there are still spots available after the summer, families will be required to **fill out all enrollment forms and pay the enrollment fee.**

Child Absences/ Unforeseen Circumstances

It is important to remember that you are paying for a slot and not hourly. Therefore, there will be no refunds for days your child cannot attend child care. Families who give at least a 2 weeks notice regarding their child's absence will be given a 50% discount for that day. *Families who do not give at least a 2 week notice will not be eligible for any discounts.*

In the event that daycare has to close due to unforeseen circumstances, including a public health emergency, families will be required to pay 50% of tuition. Families may also suspend enrollment during this time, however families will still be required to follow the termination policy. If families do decide to suspend services during the closure of an unforeseen circumstance or public health emergency, they forfeit their spot at Small Beginnings. Families may choose to re-enroll however, a spot will not be guaranteed.

Provider's Absence/ Vacation

In the event that I am sick or absent, I will have a few substitutes on call. *All substitutes will be qualified and trained.* I will be available for the substitute to communicate with me if they have any questions and/or concerns. In the event that a substitute is not available, daycare will be closed and the following week's invoice will be prorated. It is highly recommended that you have back up care for these days.

I will give you at least 2 weeks notice before I take a vacation. I am allotted **2 weeks (14 days) of vacation/ personal time off days per calendar year.** These vacation/ personal time off days do not have to be consecutive. During these days, daycare will be closed and you will **not** be required to pay tuition. However, it will be your responsibility to find alternative care.

Daycare Closure

Daycare will be closed on the following dates, listed below. The 7 holidays that are starred and highlighted are **paid** holidays meaning you will still be expected to pay your full tuition rate. However, payment will not be required for the days that are not highlighted. *(Schedule for January 2021- December 2021)*

| | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| *Friday, January 1st | New Years Day |
| Monday, January 18th | Martin Luther King Jr. Day |
| Monday, February 15th | Presidents Day |
| *Monday, May 31st | Memorial Day |
| *Monday, September 6th | Labor Day |
| Monday, October 11th | Columbus Day |
| Monday - Friday, November 1st- 5th | Daycare Provider Yearly Vacation |
| *Thursday, November 11th | Veterans Day |
| *Thursday, November 25th | Thanksgiving |
| Friday, November 26th | Day after Thanksgiving |
| *Friday, December 24th | Christmas Eve |
| *Friday, December 31st | New Years Eve |

Illness and Sick Policy

I understand that it is difficult for you as a parent/guardian to leave or miss work. Therefore, I suggest that alternative arrangements be made for occasions when your child should remain at home or need to be picked up due to illness. Exclusion from child care is sometimes necessary to reduce the transmission of illness or because child care is not able to adequately meet the needs of the child. Mild illness is common among children. Since, with many conditions, children spread infectious agents before showing any symptoms, exclusion serves no purpose as long as we can keep a child comfortable throughout the day. These children do not represent any harm to other children. Children should be excluded from the child care setting for the reasons outlined below. **Please Note:** *The following list covers most common illnesses, but is not inclusive of all reasons for exclusion:*

- An illness that prevents the child from participating comfortably in program activities
- An illness that results in a greater need for care than the provider can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children. *(Example: diarrhea that can not be contained in a diaper/ underwear or toilet)*
- An infant less than four months with a fever of **100 degrees or a child with a fever of 101 degrees and greater** will be excluded and should receive medical attention as soon as possible.

- Diarrhea — stools with blood or mucus, and/or uncontrolled, unformed stools that cannot be contained in a diaper/underwear or toilet.
 - **2 or more instances of diarrhea** within the time of care will result in exclusion as well.
- Vomiting — green or bloody, and/or two or more times during the previous **24 hours**
- Mouth sores associated with drooling
- Rash with fever or behavioral changes, unless a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease
- Purulent conjunctivitis (*defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge*) until the child has been on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has begun.
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment has begun
- Scabies, until 24 hours after treatment has begun.
- Chickenpox, until all lesions have dried and crusted (usually six days).
- Pertussis (whooping cough), until five days of treatment with appropriate antibiotics.
- Hepatitis A virus, until one week after onset of illness, after immune globulin has been administered.

Required Conditions for a child to return to child care are:

- A child who has been excluded due to illness from child care may return when he or she is free of fever, vomiting, and diarrhea for a full 24 hours
- When he or she has been treated with an antibiotic for a full 24 hours (unless otherwise specified)
- When he or she is able to participate comfortably in usual program activities, including outdoor time
- The child should be free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling (not related to teething) unless a health care provider signs a note stating that the child's condition is not contagious
 - the involved areas can be covered by a bandage without seepage of drainage through the bandage
 - If a child is excluded because of a reportable communicable disease, I may require a doctor's note stating that the child is no longer contagious

For children's comfort and to reduce the risk of contagion, your child will be isolated from the other children and you will be required to pick your child up **within 90 minutes of notification**. A Late Pickup Fee will be charged for any child remaining in child care after 90 minutes. **Please note:** children must remain home for 24 hours without symptoms before returning to child care (*this includes over the weekend*). For example, if your child has been vomiting on Sunday, please do not bring your child to daycare until they have been symptom free for at least 24 hours. In the case of a (suspected) contagious illness or continuing symptoms, a doctor's note may be required before returning.

Special needs required by one child restricts the activities of all the children. Prolonged requests for special treatment may result in a request to keep the child home until they are able to participate in normal activities. Should your child require a modified diet due to recovery from an illness or injury, please inform me. You may be requested to supply the necessary foods required.

Medications

Medication can be administered at child care under the following stipulations:

- All medication needs to be in its original container.
- Medication needs to be accompanied by the original measuring utensil.
- Medication cannot be used beyond the date of expiration.
- Medication can only be given for the purposes identified in the label/prescription.
- *Parent Consent Administration of Medication and Medication Chart* form needs to be filled out and returned to the child care provider.
- *Medical Order Form* needs to be filled out by a doctor and returned to the child care provider.

Emergency/ Evacuation Policy

In the event of an EMERGENCY, I will administer the necessary first aid. The Apple Valley Police Department or Paramedic Unit will be called and your child will be transported to the hospital. You will be notified immediately! If I cannot get in contact with you, I will call the designated emergency contact person on their *Child Care Emergency Contact* form. If an ambulance is called to transport your child, you will be responsible to cover the costs.

Fire Drills and Earthquake Drills will be performed once a month. *For more information on the emergency plan, important relocation sites, and contact numbers; please refer to your Welcome Folder.*

Transportation and Outings

*At the moment, we **do not** offer transportation services.*

Termination of Services

A minimum of 2 weeks written notice is required for termination of child care services. Even if your child does not attend during that two week period, payment is still required. In the event that I need to terminate child care services, I will give a 2 week notice **unless:**

- Your child is a danger to themselves and/or other children
- You fail to pay for child care services
- You threaten, attempt to harm, or continually disrespect me, my staff, my family, and/or my childcare policies.

If a Court Date has to be set for collection, the Parent/Guardian will be responsible for any and all fees associated. This is to include but not limited to late fees, loss of wages, and any court costs.

Child Care Terminology

- **Full Time:** Child care that is provided **4-5 days per week**, between **5- 10 hours a day**. 3 formula bottles and/or 3 meals are provided. Parents will be required to supply any additional meals or formula bottles.
- **Part Time:** Child care provided **3 days per week**, between **5-10 hours a day**. 3 formula bottles and 3 meals are provided. Parents will be required to supply any additional meals or formula bottles.
- **Half Day:** Child care provided **4-5 days per week**, between **1-5 hours a day**. Up to 2 bottles and 2 meals are provided. Parents will be required to supply any additional meals or formula bottles.
- **Transition Period:** A transition period is for families who want to slowly introduce their child to the new daycare environment. During this transition period, the family may choose to start by bringing their child to daycare for only a few hours and then slowly increase those hours throughout the week. This is a great idea for children who may be a bit more apprehensive about starting daycare.
- **Diaper Program:** Diaper, wipes, and pullups are provided for an additional \$5.00 per week.
- **Summer Program:** This program is provided primarily for families who have a different schedule over the summer. Families who have the same schedule year around can attend the summer program at no extra costs. However, families who need to change their child's schedule for the summer, may choose one of these 3 options:
 - **Option 1:** Full-Time families may choose to **reduce their hours** to Part-Time/ Half Day. Part-Time families may reduce the amount of days their child attends childcare.
 - **Option 2:** Families may choose to place a hold on their child's enrollment. In order to place a hold on your child's enrollment, families will be required to **pay 25% of their tuition**.
 - **Option 3:** Families may choose to **disenroll** their children for the summer. It is important to remember that if this option is chosen, **spots will no longer be guaranteed**. If there are still spots available after the summer, families will be required to **fill out all enrollment forms and pay the enrollment fee**.
- **Enrollment Fee:** \$50.00 due at the time of enrollment

- **Holding Fee:** If a child's first day of childcare is not within two weeks of their enrollment date, the child care provider will set up a payment plan where **50% of tuition** will be paid weekly until the child attends daycare. During the summer, families will be required to pay **25% to hold a spot.**
- **Early Drop Off/ Late Pickup Fees:** Child care provided outside of your reserved time slot listed in your contract.
 - You will be given a 5 minute grace period
 - Any time that exceeds the 5 minute grace period, you will be charged **\$5.00** and an additional **\$1.00 for every minute** you are late.
 - After 3 Late Fees, in one calendar year, child care services will be terminated.
- **Late Payment Fee:** Neglecting to pay for services
 - Payment will be collected 1 week prior to services being provided.
 - Any balances not received by **5:00 pm** on your agreed upon payment date will result in an automatic **\$10.00 fee and an additional fee of \$10.00 will be charged for every day the payment is late.** *(starting Friday after 5:00 pm and including weekends)*

All late fees must be paid **before additional childcare services are provided.*

- **Sibling Discount:**
 - 1st child: Regular rate
 - 2nd child: **15% discount**
 - 3rd child & up: **20% discount** per additional child
- **Referral Discount:** For families who have been referred by families who are currently enrolled at Small Beginnings Family Child Care.
 - **\$50.00 credit**
 - The family must notify me during the interview that you referred them.
 - The referred family must stay enrolled for at least **3 months**
- **Military Discount:** For families who have immediate family members who are active members of the military, veterans , or are in the reserves. *(Must show proof of service)*
 - 5% off of tuition
- **Monthly Discount:** Special monthly discounts posted on the Small Beginning website.

**Discounts can not be combined with other discounts.*