

## A GUIDE TO HOME DAYCARE FOR PARENTS

Welcome! You have done your investigation, checked references, and made your decision. Your child is now in home daycare.

Here are a few tips to make the daycare experience more comfortable and enjoyable for everyone involved.

When you and your child arrive at your chosen home daycare each morning, make your visit brief. Tell your child good-bye and tell him/her that you will be picking him/her up that afternoon. Then leave. Don't make it an unpleasant experience. Don't keep telling your child good bye with hugs and kisses until you have him/her upset. If your child cries, it won't last long once you leave.

Don't sneak out while your child is not looking. This teaches your child that he/she cannot trust you. Be brief. Be firm. Be gone.

Dress your child appropriately. Listen to weather reports. If the temperature is going to drop during the day, send an adequate jacket. If the temperature is going to rise during the day, dress your child for the warmest temperature and cover with sweatpants and a jacket. A child cannot play comfortably if he/she is too hot or too cold.

Dress your child in clothes that will allow for easy diaper changing. If a child is toilet training or already toilet trained, he/she should wear clothes that he/she can take off and put on by himself. The following items are not appropriate for daycare dress: one piece suits that must be totally removed for toileting, outfits with snaps in the legs except on the leg band, overly long shirts that get in the way of toileting, ill fitting clothes (too loose, too tight) pants with belts, boots, and high top sneakers that are hard to get on and off. Pants with elastic in the waist are the most convenient.

If your child is toilet training, discuss the procedures with your provider that she will follow. Furnish an adequate amount of supplies she will require. Regular underwear is not appropriate nor is it a substitute for training pants.

Leave a change of clothes for your child with your daycare provider. Even though your child is toilet trained, accidents and spills do happen.

Do not allow your child to bring balloons, blankets, books, candy, coins, cups of milk or juice, food, jewelry, marbles, money, pillows, stuffed animals, or toys to the daycare. Not only do personal items cause disputes among the children, they create safety hazards. Do not wait until you enter the daycare to remove offending items from your child. This only causes more disruption. Leave personal items at home or in the car. The daycare has adequate toys for all the children.

Keeping up with your cups and bowls is not the responsibility of the daycare provider. If you must bring food for your child, bring enough for all the children in care. Small children do not understand having Cheerios while your child is having McDonald's or donuts.

Your childcare provider runs on a schedule. Find out the times for meals, snacks, and naptime. Don't arrive 30 minutes after mealtime and expect your child to be fed. If possible, please do not telephone during naptime. Your provider will appreciate your thoughtfulness.

When you bring over-the-counter medicine for your child, be sure to write his/her name, dosage, and times to be given on the medicine bottle. Do not bring a sick child to daycare. It is not fair to the child or your provider. Your child must be free of fever, vomiting, or diarrhea for a full 24 hours before returning to daycare.

Lastly, but not of least importance, is being timely in picking up your child and paying your provider. Your provider has responsibilities after work just like you do. Understand her business hours and honor them. Pay your provider on time. She is running a business. You would not like having to ask for your paycheck each week and neither does she.

Feel free to discuss any concerns with your provider. Having open communications and using the above tips should help your daycare experience be a more enjoyable one.