



The Graceful Place To Grow
19 South 97th Street
Belleville, IL 62223
(618) 539-2071

Hours of Operation 6:30 am-5 pm

Parent Handbook Policies and Procedures

WELCOME and MISSION STATEMENT

Welcome The Graceful Place To Grow Family. To facilitate greater understanding between us, I have created this handbook. It covers childcare philosophies, business policies, and expectations. To make our relationship as enjoyable as possible, the following pages contain mutually beneficial requirements, which are necessary to ensure that there are no misunderstandings between either party. Please read this handbook carefully, and feel free to discuss with me any questions that you may have.

Our mission is to be there when your child needs care and to be the best that we can be while your child is in our care. It is the goal of The Graceful Place To Grow to help each individual child reach their highest potential in life. This may include a variety of different activities that will help keep children interested in learning about the world around them. We also include playing, singing, laughing, reading, and, most importantly, having fun.

ABOUT US

The Graceful Place to Grow, provides care to children ages 6 weeks to 5 years old. Our goal is to provide excellence in our academic program, a safe environment, and enjoyable activities every day. We believe our program will help your child develop academically, emotionally, and socially. We are equally committed to the safety and well-being of each child here at our home daycare.

AGES SERVED

The ages of the children we serve are 6 weeks to 5yrs of age. We occasionally are available for after-school or no-school days for older children. Arrangements must be made in advance. Please keep in mind that The Graceful Place To Grow does not provide transportation to and from school at this time.

PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

The Graceful Place To Grow is proud to offer a preschool program. This program targets children ages 2 to 5 years. Activities include circle time, calendar time, weather chart, group activities, discussion, and 1-2 crafts per day. We also incorporate morning and afternoon outside play when the weather allows. There are many learning toys and equipment in our daycare playroom. There is a housekeeping area, blocks and trucks, puzzles, books, and much more!

COMMUNICATION

Communication is very important to us. When we accept a new family into The Graceful Place To Grow, we like to be sure that we can openly share any concerns or questions that may arise. It is important that there is a similar childcare philosophy between us. We welcome questions, feedback, or discussions of any kind that are oriented toward a positive outcome for the child(ren). If you call during the day, please be aware that we may be busy with the children and may not be able to talk to you right away. If you would like to leave a message, go ahead and we will call you back as soon as possible.

ENROLLMENT POLICY

There are several forms that we must have completed and, in our possession, before we can assume the responsibility of caring for your child. The types of forms that are needed are listed below. This is to ensure that your child will get the very best care possible from The Graceful Place To Grow.

The Forms are as follows:

- The Graceful Place To Grow Contract Agreement
- Application/Record of child information
- Consents to Day Care Form
- Emergency Medical Authorization (including immunization record)
- Pickup Authorization Form
- Media Use Permission
- Copy of Certified Birth Certificate/Policy
- Late Policy
- COVID Policy

You are required to keep us informed of any change in address, telephone numbers, and other pertinent information listed on any/all the above forms. If you have any questions regarding the completion of these forms, please feel free to ask.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Normal hours of operation are 6:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday-Friday. We DO NOT offer weekend care. Your specific hours will be outlined in your Contract and Fee Agreement. You are still responsible for paying all fees for your contracted days regardless of whether you come or not. If the child will not be in on a day of operation, please call to inform us. This will help us plan our day and is especially helpful in planning meals. If you at times require an earlier drop-off, you must call in advance to have it authorized. An extra fee will be charged. Late fees will also be charged for pick-ups past your agreed-upon times.

PAYMENT PROCEDURES

The daycare fee is due weekly on Mondays by 6:00 a.m. We accept payments through PROCARE, cash or Venmo. If the fees are not paid by the fee schedule that you have listed on your fee agreement, a late payment fee of \$20.00 a day will be assessed. If payments are late, this will result in an immediate suspension until all fees and late fees have been paid. Continuing to pay late fees will result in the immediate termination of your contract and you will lose your position at The Graceful Place To Grow. No deposits will be reimbursed.

Late pick-up fees are as follows: \$20.00 per half hour unless you have discussed with me prior that you will be late or if there is an emergency. Please notify me by phone. All late fees must be paid before your child may resume attending daycare. If attempts to reach parents are unsuccessful, we will attempt to reach your emergency contacts. If parents or emergency contacts cannot be reached up to 2 hours past our closing time, DCFS requires that we contact the proper authorities.

Childcare rates: Your weekly childcare rates are outlined in your service agreement. You will be required to pay a registration fee of \$100. If the parent decides not to enroll his or her child at The Graceful Place To Grow, any deposit paid will not be reimbursed. Please note tuition is due a week in advance of care. If care is to begin the following week after the parent interview, the first payment due will be for 2 weeks. We do not hold spots. Once enrolled, the weekly tuition rate is due regardless of the start date.

TAXES

The Graceful Place To Grow will supply you with a year-end summary of all daycare fees paid during the year for tax purposes. This will be given to you in January each year or when services are terminated.

NSF CHECKS

If a check is returned to us for insufficient funds, a \$25.00 fee will be charged. You will be required to pay all fees that The Graceful Place To Grow incurs due to the returned check. Childcare services will be immediately halted until full payment of tuition and NSF charges has been made, in CASH. In addition, we will only accept cash payments from you from that point forward. No post-dated checks will be accepted for tuition, this is considered a late payment so please comply with any late payment fees. Repeated late payments may be grounds for termination. If we must go to court, you are responsible for ALL court costs.

DAILY SCHEDULE

A schedule helps the day to flow smoothly; it allows the children to anticipate coming events and aids in achieving a variety of goals. There will be times when I must adjust the schedule.

ABSENCES

There will be no refunds or adjustments made to your childcare fee for your time missed due to illness, holidays, or days off. A place has been reserved for each child that cannot be filled on a short-term basis.

HOLIDAYS, VACATIONS, AND CLOSING

Parents, please respect the holiday schedule. Please make sure you mark your calendars for each day I have scheduled. You are still responsible for payments for the week of a holiday that I am closed. No credit will be given. The Graceful Place To Grow will be closed for all major holidays: New Year's Day, MLK Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth Day, 4th of July, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving, and the day after, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day. The Graceful Place to Grow Daycare will also close for 3 weeks (15 days) for paid vacation. These days may be taken all at once or split up and will most likely be taken during the summer months and/or holiday months. You will be given a minimum of a 1-month notice before any closure when possible so you can have time to arrange alternative care for that period. Also, because we are working with exposure to many families and especially children, we the staff may likely become ill on occasion. If the provider becomes ill and does not have adequate staff to cover, we reserve the right to close for up to (5) paid sick/personal days per calendar year. Tuition will still be required. Also note, we follow the local school district calendar as well. If the schools are closed for a holiday, weather, spring break etc. we will follow suit unless otherwise stated.

***Note: When a holiday falls on Saturday or Sunday days taken off may sometimes fall on the Friday before and/or the Monday after the holiday. ***

*** The Graceful Place To Grow will stay open during a pandemic crisis in accordance with CDC guidelines and Illinois state laws as long as we have parents who are essential workers-- --full payment is still required. Parents will be notified of any changes.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

No toys should be brought from home. Little ones have a difficult time sharing with others, and it is even harder with their special toys. Exceptions will be Show and Tell and other special activity days. We are not responsible for any loss or breakage of your child's personal items. All personal items must be marked with the child's name.

SUPPLIES

The Graceful Place To Grow will provide cots, sheets, and blankets. You are responsible for supplying 3 full changes of clothing (including socks and underwear) appropriate for the weather. Good clothing is not recommended. Soiled clothing will be sent home and a clean change of clothes should be brought back the next day. If there is a special occasion that calls for special clothing (a trip to the photographer, a party, etc.), please send the special clothing with your child

and we will help them clean up and get dressed before your arrival. We will request certain items for certain times of the year such as boots or snowsuits. All items need to be labeled with your child's initials.

SIGNING IN & OUT

The Graceful Place To Grow is required to have all parents sign in and out for pick-ups and drop-offs each day. The ProCare app for sign-ins and outs will be available. This gives us a written record of the child's attendance, hours, and the person who brought /picked up the child each day. Children will be released to the person that is listed on the pick-up list. A written notice is required from the parent if the child is to be released to anyone other than the individuals listed. Before releasing your child to anyone, I will require a valid driver's license and the child must be signed out. Daily temperature checks and health screenings will be performed on all staff and children upon arrival and throughout the day.

Please do not enter the facility if you or your child is waiting for test results or has any of the following symptoms:

Fever above 100.4

Cough

Runny nose

Shortness of breath

Difficulty breathing

Respiratory symptoms

Chills

Repeated Shaking with Chills

Muscle Pain

Headache

Sore Throat

Anyone including all visitors, staff, and children that has a fever above 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or exhibits respiratory symptoms, including cough or shortness of breath will not be allowed to enter and/or stay.

BIRTHDAYS & PARTIES

Each child's birthday is his/her "Special Day." If you feel you must purchase a personal gift for the birthday child, we ask that you give this outside of the childcare home. Parents are allowed to provide cupcakes or treats, and The Graceful Place To Grow will provide decorations and a meal as well.

HANDWASHING, HEALTH & SAFETY

All staff will wear masks. Parents with children ages 3 years and up are required to bring a mask in a Ziploc bag labeled with their child's name on it. The mask will be kept in their cubby when not in use. The children will be asked to put on their masks during circle time, center time, and any other time they are in close contact with one another. This will get them comfortable and help them develop a routine of wearing a mask when in close contact with others. The children will not be

forced to wear a mask but rather encouraged. All children under the age of 3 years should **not** wear a mask.

Hand hygiene stations will be set up at the entrance of the facility so that staff and children can clean their hands before they enter.

All adults and children will follow proper hand hygiene guidance, washing hands frequently with soap and water. Hand washing will be performed as follows:

- * upon arrival in the classroom in the morning
- * before and after eating meals and snacks
- * after blowing noses, coughing, or sneezing or when in contact with body fluids
- * after toileting or changing diapers
- * after returning from outside play

All efforts will be made to reduce the number of children in each classroom and playground.

All efforts will be made to keep the same groups of children together for the entire day and not mix the children.

There will be no outside toys and stuffed animals allowed. Parents should only bring necessary items from home such as extra clothes, diapers, pull-ups, prepared bottles, and a blanket for nap.

Children and parents do not wear shoes when inside the home. They must take them off and keep them in the entry with their coats. This helps to keep carpets clean and the floors more sanitary for crawling infants and children.

CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

All surfaces and objects that are frequently touched such as tables, doorknobs, counters, desks, phones, keyboards, faucets, toilets, sinks, and light switches, will be routinely cleaned, sanitized, and disinfected.

All toys and surfaces will be cleaned and sanitized throughout the day. All toys that are put in a child's mouth will be put into a bucket until cleaned and sanitized.

POTTY TRAINING

Here at The Graceful Place To Grow all children considered potty trained must be verbally able to tell the caregiver he/she needs to go to the restroom. We encourage parents to work with us for children that are not potty trained to ensure a successful transition for the child, parent, and us. During this time of potty training, please dress them so they may easily remove clothing. Any child in transition with potty training must still be able to recognize when he/she may need to.

ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES

Children are to arrive clean and fed (unless arriving just before mealtime). It is normal for some children to have difficulty separating from their parents, or to cry when being dropped off. Please be very brief (no more than 2 minutes is enough) during drop-off times; the longer you prolong the departure the harder it gets. A smile, a cheerful goodbye kiss, and a reassuring word that you

will be back are all that is needed. In my experience, children are nearly always quick to get involved in play or activities as soon as their parents are gone. Please be very brief at pick-up times also.

This is a time of testing when two different authority figures are present (the parent and the provider), and all the children will test to see if the rules still apply. If you'd like to stay and visit, please arrange this with me beforehand. But typically, pick-up time needs to be kept brief.

Do not allow your child to run out to your car while you are still inside!! The safety rule is "NO one goes outside without their parents with them." Drop-off and pick-up times are not good times to discuss problems. Little ears and minds hear and understand everything. We are not comfortable with discussing children in the presence of anyone except their parents. Topics that concern day-to-day events or light-hearted discussions are fine. The Graceful Place To Grow's normal procedure is to release the child only to his/her parents or someone else the parents designate.

If someone other than the parent is to pick up the child, that person must be an authorized pick-up person. Please inform emergency contacts, or people designated to pick up your child, that if we do not know them, we would need to ask for photo identification. We do not mean to offend them. This is simply a measure taken for your child's protection. We will not let a child leave without a parent's verbal permission even if that person is listed as one of your designated pick-up people.

MEALS

The Graceful Place To Grow participates in the Food Program. Foods are based on Illinois food guides. Nutritious meals will be served to children who are enrolled in this program at no extra cost to you. Children are fed nutritionally daily- breakfast, lunch, and snacks as required through enrollment with the family. Menus will be posted on the bulletin board weekly.

MEALS are only during the times of
Breakfast: 8:00 a.m.-9:00 a.m.
Lunch: 12:30 p.m.-1:00 p.m.
Snacks: 10:30 a.m. & 3:30 p.m.

Children will help prepare the tables and meals when possible. We practice manners by using please, thank you, and you're welcome. All children join at the table to say grace, eat, and also learn proper seating and table manners. We believe mealtime should be a pleasant time; therefore, children are always offered food but are not forced to eat it. We do encourage each child to try one or two bites of everything. Sometimes they are surprised by what they like! If a child refuses to eat their meal, there will be no food served until the next designated meal/snack time. If your child has any allergies, please let me know immediately. At no time should your child bring food from home unless enough food is brought for all. If your child wishes to bring an occasional treat, please call me to verify the quantity and approved foods. All treats must arrive in sealed packages. Please allow your child time to finish all uneaten food before arriving inside The Graceful Place To Grow. For children that have a special diet or food allergy, parents will need to provide food, NO EXCEPTIONS! Liquids and Foods hotter than 110 degrees are kept out of reach of children.

Top Food Allergies

- Milk
- Eggs
- Peanuts
- Tree Nuts
- Fish
- Shellfish
- Soy
- Wheat

If you are introducing a new food item to your baby, keep an eye out for these symptoms:

- Hives or welts
- Flushed skin or rash
- Face, tongue, or lip swelling
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Coughing and wheezing
- Difficulty in breathing
- Loss of consciousness

QUIET TIME

All children are required to lie down for a rest period in the afternoon from 12:30 p.m. -2:30 p.m. All children must nap, rest or sit quietly during the period. Quiet Time gives everyone a much-needed break during the day. Without quiet time, some children are argumentative in the afternoon, short-tempered with others, and not happy when they go home in the evening. Quiet Time allows the staff to take a break, clean up after lunch, do paperwork, fill out daily notes, and do activity planning. We would ask that you please avoid picking up or dropping off your child during nap time, unless you absolutely must, as you know it disturbs the other children's rest period.

ACTIVITIES & CURRICULUM

My goal for children's learning is for them to become independent, self-confident, and enthusiastic learners for life, develop strong self-esteem, have fun, improve social skills, and a positive attitude towards exploration and learning so they're not afraid to try out new ideas or make mistakes. We will utilize a variety of activities to accomplish the goal. Free play, reading, arts and crafts, music/singing, dancing, dramatic play/pretend, puzzles, and educational TV/videos are just some of the activities we will be doing. Some of the activities include arts & crafts; music, math, science, stories, and games, as well as letter, shape, color, and number recognition. Some of the projects will be taken home to share with the family and others will be ones that you can ask about. The goal of The Graceful Place To Grow is to have fun and provide extra learning stimulation for your child. Music helps to develop young brains and will play a strong role in day-to-day activities. We may have special music activities and may also play music during other activities, for example, during arts and crafts or mealtimes. The activities planned to help the children to do the following:

- Figure out how things work
- Test new thoughts and ideas
- Develop small muscle control
- Use their imagination
- Develop problem-solving skills
- Practice cooperating with others
- Strengthen verbal and negotiating skills

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

There will be times and ways you can get involved in your child’s childcare experience. You are welcome and encouraged to participate in any or all of these. Some examples of ways to be involved include

- Lending objects for units of study
- Helping your child at home with the concepts we are studying
- Helping your child prepare for “Show and Tell”
- Helping to provide treats or other items for our parties

Parental involvement is important to me. You may email me at thegracefulplacetogrow@gmail.com

DAYCARE RULES

The respect that you show The Graceful Place To Grow, including furnishings, equipment, and other children will communicate itself to your child and will make for a better working relationship. There are certain rules that all children will be taught and expected to follow. The following rules are enforced for the safety and well-being of everyone. There will be no hitting, pushing, biting, grabbing, kicking, spitting, or pinching of other children/infants/adults will NOT be allowed. No standing or climbing on chairs, tables, or furniture. There will be no use of obscene, derogatory, or disrespectful language. Children are not permitted to lift and /or carry other children while in the classroom or on the property. Respectful treatment of other people and all property, toys, and furniture is expected. Willful destruction of property will be charged to the parent at the cost to replace the item. Toys are meant to be played with, and if they break, it is most likely from wear and tear. Unless a child deliberately takes a toy and breaks it, you or your child will not be held accountable. Please support me in the enforcement of these rules, in order to create a better environment for all. NO SMOKING OR GUN ARE PERMITTED ON THE PREMISES.

CHILD NEGLECT AND ABUSE

As Childcare providers, we have a responsibility by law to recognize and report any evidence of child abuse— physical or emotional, or neglect. This is strictly for the benefit of your child. Child abuse and neglect are against the law in Illinois, and so is failure to report it. I am required to make a report within 48 hours of the time I suspect the child has been or may be abused or neglected. All suspicions of child abuse and neglect will be reported.

SAFETY

The Graceful Place To Grow takes great pride in having a warm, loving, and safe environment in which your child can explore, learn, and experience many different things. Some features that help ensure your child's safety are Inside

- ✓ Adequate Ventilation throughout the home.
- ✓ No guns or firearms on our premises.
- ✓ Gates are used on stairways when infants under 18 months are present.
- ✓ Fire extinguishers are maintained properly.
- ✓ Electrical outlets are covered.
- ✓ Pens, pencils, and office supplies are out of reach.
- ✓ Knives and scissors are kept out of reach.
- ✓ Cleaners and chemicals are out of reach.
- ✓ The hot water heater is regulated at 120 degrees.
- ✓ Medications are out of reach of children.
- ✓ A well-stocked first-aid kit is near and expiration dates are observed.
- ✓ The provider is CPR and First Aid certified.
- ✓ Safe grassy areas to play in.
- ✓ The playground is free of splinters and harmful objects.
- ✓ The yard is routinely treated to prevent insects.
- ✓ The entire backyard is not fenced or gated but supervision is provided.
- ✓ Children do not play outside unsupervised.

INDOOR & OUTDOOR PLAY

Indoor play: We provide a variety of age-appropriate toys for indoor play. Toys may be rotated or placed temporarily out of use so that the children do not become bored. Younger children have less-developed organizational skills and can get easily frustrated or upset when there are too many toys to choose from. It is also more difficult for them to help with cleaning up, when there are toys everywhere because it is so overwhelming to them.

Outdoor play: We will be playing outdoors every day that weather permits. Please make sure that your child is always appropriately dressed for outdoor play. Our activities will include taking walks, a backyard playground, water play, bike/toy riding, and more. During spring and fall, our outdoor play will probably range from 20 – 45 minutes, and during the summer it may be a little longer.

HANDWASHING

Children's hands are washed before eating, after diapering or using the toilet, coming in from outside play, coming in contact with a sick child and/or runny nose, and after completing messy crafts or projects.

Provider's hands are washed before preparing food, before and after giving medications, after assisting a child using the toilet, after touching bodily secretions, and after personal restroom use. Hands are always dried with single-use paper towels.

DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE POLICY

The Graceful Place To Grow philosophy is that you use discipline to teach a child when they are wrong. We achieve this through love, consistency, and redirection. The Graceful Place To Grow stresses two main patterns of behavior: respect for other people and respect for property. Please keep in mind that there WILL be disagreements between children. Young children, who are not adept at communication, have a hard time expressing their feelings, sometimes they hit or throw toys, etc. Although teaching children appropriate behavior is what we will be doing, remember that this behavior is normal in most cases. This will ensure that each child is following the center's rules and guidelines. Any form of corporal punishment is prohibited.

The following methods of discipline will be used:

- I will go over the class rules
- The child will be given a book to read to calm them down
- Intervention and discussion
- Redirection to another play area
- Encourage children to solve problems themselves
- Quiet Time/Moment of Peace
- Give positive expression that shows self-control, self-direction, and self-esteem.

Parent Involvement will be needed if the above actions do not work. If we feel there is a chronic behavioral issue that needs attention, we will let you know so that we are handling it in the same way and your child has continuity in discipline between home and childcare. These types of behaviors might include such things as biting, use of bad words, chronic hitting, etc. Together, we will try to find a solution. You may be called to remove your child if his/her behavior prevents me from being able to properly care for the other children. If the problem continues, other arrangements for the care of the child will have to be made, for the safety and well-being of all. Under NO CIRCUMSTANCES will there be any spanking, physical abuse, verbal abuse, name-calling, or isolation used.

Neither food nor sleep will ever be withheld from children as a means of punishment. *If for any reason I feel the behavior has not changed he/she will be withdrawn from care. I reserve the right to withdraw your child/ren at any time without a refund.

TRAIL PERIOD AND WITHDRAWAL

A two-week trial period will be given— upon enrollment, to determine the suitability of the arrangements. If, at any time during the two weeks, you feel the arrangement has not proven workable, then you will be required to give a two-week notice in writing. I will also have the right to terminate, with the same notice. If I feel that it is not working out. If there is a problem where I feel that it is affecting the safety and welfare of the other children that I care for, I have the right to immediate dismissal. If, however, you are happy with the care that your child is receiving and your child is settling in, then we will enter into a permanent contract.

TERMINATION POLICY

We reserve the right to terminate for the following reasons (but not limited to):

- Failure to pay
- Failure to complete the required forms
- Lack of parental cooperation
- Failure of the child to adjust to the childcare after a reasonable amount of time
- Physical or verbal abuse of any person or property
- Lack of compliance with handbook regulations
- Serious Illness of child
- False information was given by the parent either verbally or in writing

We appreciate as much advance notice as possible when terminating and will give the same courtesy in return. You are required to give 2 weeks' notice when deciding to terminate childcare. The 2 weeks will be paid in full, regardless of whether your child is in attendance. We will give 2 weeks' written notice of termination for which full tuition is due, whether your child is in attendance. We reserve the right to give written notice of immediate termination where there are extreme circumstances that affect the well-being of staff or other children in attendance. In this situation, the 2 weeks' payment of tuition is still required. Termination notice will not be accepted while the provider or parents are on vacation.

SCREENING POLICY

The Graceful Place To Grow recognizes that early intervention for special needs is essential. Therefore, all children, from 6 weeks to age 6, enrolled at The Graceful Place To Grow are screened annually using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire to identify special needs. Caregivers will be provided with results and resources and will be referred to outside support through Caregiver Connections or their school district as needed.

I, _____, give my child _____ permission to be screened by The Graceful Place To Grow using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire to identify special needs. I have read and understood the above screening policy.

TRAINING POLICY

As the field of Early Childhood Education develops, it is essential to continue developing as a professional. Alma Grinston, the owner of The Graceful Place To Grow, will attain, at a minimum, 20 hours of professional development per year. Any employees of The Graceful Place To Grow will attain, at minimum, 15 hours of professional development per year.

ILLNESS POLICY

Under no circumstances will parents be allowed to bring a sick child to childcare. Sick children expose other children, as well as me, to the spread of illness and require additional care and attention that we are unable to give. Moreover, sick children want care from their parents in the comfort of their own homes. If other children become ill due to exposure to your sick child, either because he/she was returned to childcare before full recovery or because he/she was not picked up promptly upon notice of becoming ill, other parents will be unnecessarily

inconvenienced. If I become ill due to exposure to a sick child, all the children may need to arrange alternate care. Because this is disruptive to other children, and their families, your cooperation on this issue is extremely important.

The following illness policies will be strictly enforced, for the health, well-being, and safety of all concerned. In accordance with the state of Illinois licensing policy, your child cannot be admitted to daycare with symptoms of illness as specified below; unless written documentation from a licensed physician stating the child has been diagnosed and poses no serious health risk to the child or to other children. Should your child have signs or symptoms requiring exclusion from the family childcare home he/she will be isolated and the parent/guardian or other authorized people by the parent will be notified immediately to pick up your child. There can be no exceptions since illness spreads quickly among children.

Please parents do not bring your child to the daycare if he/she has had a fever/temp over 100 degrees, diarrhea or vomiting over the weekend or anytime during the week. These symptoms are considered to be contagious illnesses. For the safety of everyone in my care, if your child becomes ill at the daycare home, you are responsible for picking the child up within the hour and NO refund will be given on tuition. Your child cannot return to the daycare home until he/she is free from illness for at least 24 hours.

Please make other arrangements if your child is sick and respect my decision if I feel your child is too sick to be in childcare. I am sympathetic to the difficulties of taking time off, so discretion will be used. The symptoms of illness for possible exclusion shall include, but are not limited to any of the following:

- A). If the illness prevents your child from participating comfortably in the daycare environment,
- B). If the illness results in a greater care need than I can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children in my care, or
- C). If your child has any of the following conditions:
 - Chickenpox, until at least 6 days after onset of rash or until all sores have dried and crusted; unless a healthcare provider or health official determines the condition is non-infectious.
 - Fever; a normal temperature is about 98.6°F (37°C) when taken orally (in your child's mouth) and 99.6°F (37.5°C) when taken rectally (in your child's bottom). Many doctors define a fever as an oral temperature above 99.5°F (37.5°C) or a rectal temperature above 100.4°F (38°C). So, until medical evaluation allows inclusion.
 - Hepatitis virus, until 1 week after onset of illness or as directed by the health department when passive immune prophylaxis has been administered to appropriate children and staff and a licensed physician states in writing the child may return to childcare.
 - Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness (such as unusual lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, wheezing, or other unusual signs) until medical evaluation allows inclusion.
 - Measles, until 6 days after onset of rash, and a licensed physician states in writing the child may return to childcare.
 - Mumps, until 9 days after onset of parotid gland swelling, and the licensed physician states in writing the child may return to childcare.
 - Mouth sores with drooling, unless a healthcare provider or health official determines the condition is non-infectious.
 - Nose Bleeds, if for any reason your child begins to have a nosebleed, I will tilt the head

back and Keep pressure on the nose for at least 10 minutes and the parent will be called and will have to pick up a child from childcare until a health care provider evaluation determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease is present and the child can return to childcare;

- Pertussis, until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment to prevent infection have been completed and a licensed physician states in writing the child may return to childcare.
- Purulent conjunctivitis (defined as pink or red eye conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge), until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.
- Rash with fever or behavior change, until a health care provider determines these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease.
- Rubella, until 6 days after the onset of rash and the licensed physician states in writing the child may return to childcare.
- Scabies, Head lice, Impetigo, or other infestation, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.
- Strep throat or other streptococcal infection, until 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever.
- Scalp or Head ringworms and fungal spores can be transmitted through contact with an infected person, fallen infected hairs, or fomites, which are contaminated objects. These may include objects such as barbershop instruments, hats, movie theater seats, hairbrushes, bedding, and clothing. Until a health care provider or health official states that the child can attend childcare.
- Tuberculosis, until a health care provider or health official states that the child can attend childcare.
- Uncontrolled Diarrhea is considered as having more loose or liquid stools per day. Until medical evaluation allows inclusion.

***Injuries: I will supervise your child closely to prevent injuries, but accidents resulting in injury do occur. I have been trained in first aid and CPR and will follow my training. If the injury is minor (requiring only a band-aid or ice) I will tell you about it when you pick up your child. If it is serious, I will call you and may even suggest that you take your child to the doctor or emergency room. If an injury is very severe, I will call 911 for assistance before I call you. If I cannot reach you, I will call the emergency contacts listed.

Exclusion of Sick Children (Revised for COVID-19)

The following guidelines were implemented by our state licensing department and will be followed until further notice.

Children with excessive coughing, nausea, vomiting, sore throat, diarrhea, or any other contagious symptom will be sent home and restricted from returning until 72 hours after symptoms have subsided. Children can only return when feeling complete well; able to play, sleep, eat, and drink as normal.

Children with a fever above 100.4 will be allowed to return 72 hours after the fever has subsided without the use of fever-reducing medication and with no other symptoms. A doctor's note may be required based on the discretion of the administration.

No fever-reducing medication (Tylenol, Ibuprofen, Motrin, etc.) shall be given 8 hours before care or while at the center. We will not administer fever reducers throughout the day to keep a child's fever down.

Staff or any other persons being supervised by the staff shall not be allowed in the daycare that knowingly has or presents symptoms of fever, diarrhea, sore throat, vomiting, or any other contagious symptom.

Children who develop signs/symptoms of COVID-19 or any other contagious illness while at daycare will be separated from others and supervised by a staff member. Parents will be called immediately to come to pick them up.

COVID-19 CASES

Any parent, child, or staff member who has tested positive for COVID-19 or has encountered someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 will be required to notify us immediately. The family and/or staff member that tested positive and/or was exposed to someone who has tested positive will not be allowed at the daycare for 2 weeks. The length can be extended by the administration if necessary.

Any family or staff member who knowingly has COVID-19 symptoms and hides or masks the information will be subject to termination.

In the event of a positive case of COVID-19, all staff and parents will be notified immediately. We will be closed for a minimum of 2 days and up to 2 weeks for cleaning and disinfecting. All children and/or staff exposed will not be allowed to return for 2 weeks. Payment of half-tuition will be required to hold all spots while we are closed, or your child is absent.

Remember to use extra precautions. Attending large gatherings and traveling increases the risks of contracting and/or spreading the disease. Please know that our number one priority is the safety of our children, staff, and parents. We have the right to ask anyone we choose to stay home for 14 days if we feel it is necessary.

Although we will take all the necessary precautions to keep everyone healthy and safe, there is always a chance that any child, staff, or family member could contract COVID-19 or any other illness. This is a chance we are all taking by leaving our homes. Please know that although we greatly care for every child, staff member, and family, we cannot be held responsible if you or your child become ill.

MEDICATIONS

Parents are required to fill out the proper forms and to supply all medications in their original containers. All written instructions shall be valid for six months unless a shorter time period is designated by the physician, dentist, or parent. These must be labeled with the child's name. NO EXCEPTIONS

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

In case of an EMERGENCY, we will administer the necessary first aid. The Police Department or

Paramedic Unit will be called, and your child will be transported to the hospital designated on your Emergency Transportation Authorization form. YOU WILL BE NOTIFIED IMMEDIATELY. If an ambulance is called to transport your child, the cost of the ambulance, emergency room care, and co-pays to your insurance company will be your responsibility.

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENT

***All parents are required to keep all children current and up to date with their required immunizations. Parents will be reminded in advance of the status of their immunizations so they may call and make appointments with the doctor or clinic. Parents will have to provide current immunizations from the doctor's office. ***If your child had an immunization update, please remember to provide me with a record of the immunization so that it can be attached to your child's health appraisal.

***If for any reason I feel I am being deceived I reserve the right to withdraw your child/ren at any time without refund and notice.

All students are required to MEET TUBERCULIN REQUIREMENTS

FIRE SAFETY

We have a written fire evacuation plan and practice a fire drill and tornado drill with the children at least once each month. The Graceful Place To Grow has fire detectors and two fire extinguishers, one located in the kitchen and the other in the basement.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN; LOCKDOWN

In case of emergency, my first responsibility will be to gather all children together and shelter in place. All children will be placed together in the largest room without windows if possible and until further notice. This room will be known to all household members, caregivers, and/or volunteers. All children in attendance at the time of the emergency will be accounted for before and after they arrive at the designated safe area or alternate shelter by headcount and calling roll. This will be known to all household members, caregivers, and/or volunteers.

EVACUATION AND RELOCATION PLAN

In the event that the facility must be evacuated and it is unsafe to return, the relocation site is: 1170 Redhawk Rdige Lane O'Fallon, IL and telephone number 618-539-2071 until further notice. All parents will be called and informed. We will bring our shelter kit which will include snacks, water, toys, and blankets.

The children will be transported by Alma Grinston. Copies of the children's files will accompany them. This will be known to all household members, caregivers, and/or volunteers. All children under 24 months who have limited mobility, or who otherwise may need assistance in an emergency, such as children who have mental, visual, or hearing impairments will be evacuated by wagon and evacuation cribs to the safe designated area.

An emergency evacuation plan is posted and available for viewing to all by the front door on the information board next to the license. All children in attendance at the time of the emergency will be accounted for before and after they arrive at the designated safe area or alternate shelter. This will be known to all household members, caregivers, and volunteers.

I will communicate with local authorities (such as fire, law enforcement, emergency medical

services, health department, parents, and licensing by cell phones). Parents and/or emergency contacts will be contacted for each child in care for immediate pickup. All files including authorization for emergency care for each child in care and the attendance record information for children in care at the time of the emergency will be relocated to the designated area. This will be known to all household members, caregivers, and volunteers.

I will continue to care for the children by allowing the children to play with the designated games, books, or toys from the shelter kit and continue to give snacks as normal until each child has been released to their parents.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

Our staff understands that our decision to open, close, or delay daycare opening during inclement weather often disrupts family schedules. We also understand that our children are better served – academically, emotionally, and socially – by being in school or daycare. But, as always, our top priority is the safety of our children and staff, so the decision to close or delay opening is not an easy one. The process is complex and involves many people.

HOW DO WE MAKE OUR DECISION?

Please understand that we decide to open or close the center in bad weather based on a careful analysis of all relevant factors, including

- Information on road conditions from transportation staff and local law enforcement and road crews
- Amount of snow and/or ice accumulated
- Whether precipitation will continue throughout the day
- Temperature and wind chill
- Weather predictions (including those from a weather alert service)
- Storm timing, trajectory, and projection
- Building conditions (such as whether our building's electricity and/or heat service is disrupted)
- Parking conditions

*Generally, The Graceful Place To Grow will be closed or delayed for inclement weather when local school districts and the government are both closed or delayed. Still, our center has its own exclusive circumstances.

WHO MAKES THE DECISION?

- Ultimately, The Graceful Place To Grow's director is responsible for the final decision based on the above factors and recommendations from our plow service that are out on the road observing transportation conditions. Often our director consults with other area center

directors who are similarly affected by inclement weather/school closures.

WHEN IS THE DECISION MADE?

We strive to make decisions on delays and closings as many hours in advance as possible, in consideration of families who require time to make arrangements. The decision will be made the night before, or in uncertain conditions, not later than 4:30 a.m. on the morning of the closing. Please remember that communications will be sent as quickly as possible following a decision via email, text, and our website. Please make sure your contact information is up to date in MyProcare. It is quite possible that building issues could arise and not be discovered until after 6:00 a.m. In those cases, decisions on center closure may be made later in the day.

WILL WE CLOSE IF CONDITIONS WORSEN?

Even if the weather conditions worsen, we cannot reverse our decision in the morning without endangering the children and staff. If conditions worsen throughout the day, we may need to have an early dismissal, but we will give as much notice as possible through the previously mentioned methods of communication. However, it is very important for parents to have plans in place in case the decision needs to be made later. We encourage you to consider driving conditions. Always allow yourself plenty of time in the afternoon to pick up your child when the center closes early.

Although we do our absolute best in this process, we know that often no perfect decision exists. If you do not feel that it is safe for your child to attend, use your best judgment on whether or not he or she should attend. We prefer to exercise flexibility in these situations as opposed to an inflexible policy.

A Few Final Thoughts:

As a parent, please....

- Take an interest in your child's activities and development at the daycare and share your child's habits, fears, and concerns with me.
- Read all correspondence given to you, and those posted. Promptly sign and return those forms needing to be signed.
- Remember that you are responsible for your child while you are on my premises so, please remain in complete contact with your child during that time.
- Call me! Your concerns and feedback are important to me.

REVISIONS TO THE HANDBOOK AND CONTRACT

There will be a yearly revision to this handbook and the accompanying contract. All families will sign a new contract each year. The Graceful Place To Grow reserves the right to make changes in rates and policies as we deem necessary. You will be notified, in writing, of any changes that may occur. Every attempt will be made to give at least 2 weeks' notice of changes. All policies shall remain in effect as stated herein unless the provider gives notice of change of any said policy in writing. Provider retains the right to enforce these policies at will. A lack of enforcement or a certain policy at any time does not indicate that the particular policy is no longer in effect.

SIGNATURE OF PARENTS/ DATE

SIGNATURE OF KIDDOS CARE DIRECTOR/DATE