



# DAYCARE HANDBOOK

Please read this handbook thoroughly, as it covers very important policies and procedures that not only governs our childcare contract agreement, but also pertains to the care of your child. There may seem to be a lot of information, if you have any questions regarding our policies, please do not hesitate to ask. This copy is for your reference. All families are required to sign a new contract each year. I reserve the right to make changes to the policies and procedures, as I deem necessary. You will be notified, of any changes that may occur.

## Agreement on Terms or Arrangements.

You should fully understand the terms of the contract and the policies and procedures that you as the parent are agreeing to.

DEAR PARENTS,

As your child's provider I expect from you, the parent:

### Open Communication

Please explain clearly and carefully your wishes and expectations about how your child will be cared for. Providing updates on issues and progress that your child is making is very helpful for us. It guides us. Good communication helps us work together in the best interest of your child.

### Honesty and Trust

This includes being honest about how you believe the arrangement is working. We understand parent's desire to safeguard their children. Please trust me as your childcare provider to do the best for your child while they are in our care. Show your trust by asking questions rather than jumping to conclusions when apparent problems develop. With this as our basis we can overcome any difficulties.

### Timely Pickup

As your provider, I strongly suggest that parents arrive on time in accordance with the contract that both parents and provider have mutually agreed on. Allowances will be made on infrequent late pickups however, if the issue reoccurs consistently that would become an issue.

### Respect

**This is one of the most important qualities that should be expressed continually between parents and provider. Being respectful will enhance the parent to provider relationship and help improve the communication for the benefit of your child.**

### **Philosophy**

**We believe a child's early experiences enrich and stimulate future growth. Children deserve to be treated and respected as individuals in an environment that welcomes reason, exploration, question, and imagination. We respect each child's need for love, security, acceptance, warmth, and stimulation.**

### **Goals**

**Our goal is for each child to grow in healthiness and happiness in our care. We value parents' insight and suggestions. Our goal is to care for your child with love and patience, as if they were with their own family.**

### **ABOUT ME AND MY FAMILY**

**My name is Ana Vasquez and I have lived in Arlington for more than 20 years. I am from La Paz, Bolivia, which is one of the highest cities in the world. During these years, my husband and I have raised our children in our home and are very thankful for the opportunity to share our family with all the children under my care. My kids love the little ones and are very respectful and careful with the kids. We are a big family and enjoy all kids. Together we share our time and recognize how important love is. Although, it always breaks our hearts when it is time to say goodbye.**

### **License capacity**

**Our license capacity is for 9 children in Arlington County. We are also licensed within the State of Virginia. We have worked in Arlington County for the past decade. To obtain these licenses we present exhaustive requirements. This means that we are constantly taking training courses and updating personal information such as physical exams and background checks. Throughout the year, we take a variety of training classes in childhood development, early reading initiatives, and child education practices. Currently, I am finalizing my Child Development Associate degree.**

### **Hours of Operation**

**My Little Shine Home Daycare is open from 8:00 AM until 5:30 PM Monday through Friday. Hours of care will be contracted from child to child. No childcare will be provided on Saturday and Sundays.**

**We will be taking two weeks of vacations per year with full pay and we will make sure to let you know with one month in advance.**

### **Payment Procedures:**

**Prices and payments will be stipulated in the contract.**

### **Definitions:**

**Full Time:** Childcare contracted on a set scheduled time slot 4 hours or more per day, 4 - 5 days per week.

**Part Time:** Unfortunately, we do not accept part-time.

**No Show:** If your child will not be attending My Little Shine Home Daycare, a one-hour notice of absence is required.

**Open Door:**

You are invited and welcome to visit My Little Shine Home Daycare anytime your children are present. You are asked to avoid visiting during Rest Time as much as possible. Please call first. Parents are also free to call the Daycare at any time. If I do not answer the phone, please leave a message, and we will call you back as soon as we are available.

**Deposit fee:** a non-refundable deposit fee for clients to reserve their spot and start the enrollment process. I do this since I have a waiting list of potential clients. This charge is due for every month of reservation.

**Trial Month:** A four-week trial period in case either party feels the childcare arrangement is not working to the fullest expectation.

**Matters of Payment:**

All payments are due by 5:30 PM on Monday prior to childcare services being provided. After 5:30 PM, the late fee will be assessed. If payment is not made within 3 days at drop off, your child will not be accepted into care until payment, including all late fees, is made. If a period of 1 week passes without payment received, the contract will be terminated, the position filled, and the collection process begun. You will be responsible for any costs related to collection of the childcare fees. These costs will include late fees, day of loss wages, cost fees and childcare fees. Cash or Check is accepted and a receipt will be given upon request. A year-end statement of all childcare fees paid will be provided within the first month of the New Year. A fee of \$20.00, plus any additional costs I incur, along with my late fee will be charged to you for a returned check. All future payments will then be made by cash. Childcare fees are due regardless of whether or not your child attends. You are paying for a position, as well as a service. No refunds are given for late arrivals or early departures. All childcare services will be contracted. The contract is a legal document obligating me to provide a service for you and obligating you to pay me for that service.

There are other requirements in the contract. I urge you to thoroughly read the contract/handbook and realize that it is legal and you will be held liable for each item of the contract. By signing it, you are accepting it in all its terms.

**Drop Off/Pick Up:**

I assume responsibility for your child only while he/she is on my property. No child will be allowed to leave with anyone excluding parents, unless indicated on the alternate pickup list, without written permission from the parent. Telephone permission will not do! Anyone unfamiliar to me will be required to show proof of identification. Please make the alternate pick-up person aware of the requirements. If the person picking up the child appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, another authorized person will be called to pick-up both the child and the adult. Court Order: If there is a court order keeping one parent or guardian away from the child, I must have a written note from the custodial parent or guardian in my file to that effect. Otherwise, I cannot prevent the non- custodial parent from picking up the child

It is normal for your child to cry on arrival, especially for the first few weeks, as we get to know each other. Please make your goodbye brief and tell your child exactly when you will be returning. Never leave without telling your child goodbye as it upsets them very much.

Please be in control of your child during drop off and pick up times. This is a time of testing when two different authority figures are present (parent and provider) and this situation will be tested at one time or another to see if the rules still apply. I will remind your child if inappropriate behaviors are being displayed. Children of all ages adjust to transitions from one activity to another differently. Most do not like to be too rushed and most do not like to wait too long once they are ready to depart.

#### **Sick/Vacation Days:**

In the event that your child is ill and needs to miss a day, please call 1 hour before arrival time. If NO notice is given, you will be charged the No Show Fee in addition to the normal daily rate. Parent agrees to provide 2 weeks' notice prior to any vacation time. Parent agrees to pay childcare fees to hold child's position during any vacation time or extended leave due to illness etc., up to 2 weeks per year. Full payment must be received whether or not child attends.

#### **Television:**

I allow limited TV viewing consisting of PBS Kids only. On occasion I let the children pick a child appropriate video to watch. Children are NEVER required to sit and watch TV, and TV is not offered in place of Free Play or Learning Activities.

#### **Guidance**

Some parents use discipline. I prefer to use guidance. No child will ever be hit, spanked, belittled, or otherwise intimidated at My Little Shine Home Daycare-even with parental permission. No corporal punishment will be used. Children will be treated with courtesy, respect, and patience. Guidance will be according to age and understanding level. Younger children, babies and toddlers, will be redirected to another activity. Older children will be given time outs depending on the situation (almost always 1 minute per year of age). If a child exhibits a persistent behavior problem, I will address it with the parents, and we will try to resolve it together. **AT NO TIME WILL A CHILD BE SUBJECTED TO PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT, SHAMING, FRIGHTENING OR HUMILIATING METHODS, OR ANY TYPE OF VERBAL ABUSE,**

**THREATS, DEROGATORY REMARKS OR DEPRIVATION OF A MEAL. NO CHILD WILL EVER BE PUNISHED FOR TOILET ACCIDENTS.**

#### **Meals:**

I am not a participant in the food program. I ask that you provide nutritionally balanced meals and snacks for your child. Please see Daily Activities for a list of meal times; if your child arrives after a meal or snack has been served, he/she may need to wait until the next meal/snack time to eat. Meals and snacks are served family style. Children are encouraged to use this time to share their experiences with each other. Manners are taught, and practiced during this time as well. Please list on the medical report of any food allergies child may have. If your child needs a special diet, the parent must provide these foods.

#### **Experiences**

Age-appropriate experiences are scheduled with flexibility allowed to respond to the needs of the individual child and day. I will offer times for outside play, crafts, stories, instruction, and naps appropriate to the child's ages, interests, and abilities. I will provide your child with tender loving care, understanding, patience and guidance in a happy family setting. I provide preschool curriculum developing large and small motor skills. We do many arts and crafts where the focus is on the process, not the product. Free play is an important part of a child's early years. It is here that they learn social skills that will be needed the rest of their lives.

#### **House Rules**

- 1. No hitting, biting, pinching, throwing, pushing, hair pulling, or otherwise hurting ourselves or others.**
- 2. No intentionally breaking anything**
- 3. No running, jumping, wrestling, climbing, etc. in the house or on the furniture.**
- 4. No picking up babies or toddlers.**
- 5. No leaving the house or yard without permission (no one is allowed outside without adult supervision, even when parents are here).**
- 6. No name-calling, yelling, foul language or teasing; everyone deserves to be treated with respect.**
- 7. All food and drink will remain in the dining room/kitchen area.**

#### **Pets**

My Little Shine Home Daycare has no pets. However, in the residence, the family owns two parakeets and two cockatiels. **THE CHILDREN DO NOT COME IN CONTACT WITH THE PETS IN ANY WAY.**

#### **Dress Code:**

**Please dress your child appropriately. The activities may be messy. Do not send your child in clothing that you do not want stained. Weather permitting; we will spend a lot of time outdoors. You also need to supply a complete change of clothing in case of an accident; I do not supply clothing. If the child has no spare clothing, the parent will be called in to bring some.**

**Water Play: I have a sprinkler for summer water play. I require a permission slip signed before the child is allowed to play in the water if I use a small wading pool. A swimsuit will be requested for these days.**

#### **Toys:**

**Please do NOT send any toys from home with your child. If your child needs a special toy or item for sleeping, it will be allowed, but will remain put away until Rest Time. My Little Shine Home Daycare assumes NO responsibility for lost, stolen, or broken toys from home. Should the child deliberately destroy daycare toys or other property through misuse or willfulness, the parent will be required to replace it.**

#### **Rest Period:**

**All children under the age of 5 will have a rest period. No child is forced to sleep. however, they are encouraged to remain quiet. Older children, and those who wake early, will participate in a quiet activity until Rest Time is over. Please try not to schedule pickups or visits during this time to lessen disturbance to the resting children. All children rest on personal mats with individual linens.**

#### **Toilet Training:**

**I will assist you in toilet training your child with the understanding that it will be successful only if we work together. I will use cotton underwear or pull-ups supplied by the parent. Send your child ONLY in easy-on-easy off clothing until they are able to completely undress and dress themselves. I require at least 5 complete changes of clothing during Toilet Learning. I do not launder soiled items and will send them home in a separate bag. Please replace any clothing sent home the next day.**

#### **Transportation:**

**Unfortunately, I do not offer transportation for the little ones, under any circumstances.**

#### **Holidays/Birthdays:**

**We honor major holidays and all children's birthdays. If you would like to bring a special treat for the children, please arrange this with the provider. You are more than welcome to participate in ANY activities we have planned.**

#### **House Cleaning:**

**I clean high traffic surfaces in the daycare at end of the day every day. We have a major cleaning of the entire daycare every weekend with appropriate surfactants.**

#### **Confidentiality:**

The information you supply to My Little Shine Home Daycare will be kept confidential. We strive, at all times, respect your privacy. Before any information is released to outside parties, the parents must sign a release form.

#### **Changes to Policies:**

Changes may be made to these policies as needed with 2 weeks' notice. The policies, contracts, consents, and forms will be reviewed and updated, if needed, yearly in January.

Please give written notice of any changes that may occur, especially of name or address, or of updated immunizations.

#### **Emergencies**

**Fire:** There is one fire extinguisher located in the daycare. It is located in the lower right hand kitchen cabinet. If there is a fire that cannot be extinguished quickly, the children will be evacuated immediately before calling 911. We will practice fire drills monthly so the children will be prepared in the event of a fire. The fire evacuation plan is located on the hallway and you are free to view it at any time.

**Tornado:** In the event of a tornado warning, the children will gather in the basement. We will remain in the basement until the inclement weather has passed. Tornado drills will also be practiced monthly. The tornado plan is located on file and you are free to view it at any time.

**Power outage:** There are hand powered flashlights located in the kitchen. If the power remains out for some time, there are non-perishables located in the kitchen that will be used. If the weather is inclement and the house is getting too cold for the children, you will be called to pick up your child.

#### **Enrollment Requirements:**

Before enrolling your child in My Little Shine Daycare there are several things you must do:

1. Read through and become familiar with the Policies. You will be required to sign a form that indicates you have read, understand, and agree to ALL the Policies as outlined.
2. An acquaintance visit must be made. I require one, and preferably two, visits to My Little Shine Home Daycare to become familiar with me and the service provided.
3. All appropriate forms must be filled out, signed, and on file PRIOR to admission. All necessary forms/consents will be given to you in your admission package
4. All required supplies must be brought on your child's first day.

#### **Termination of Care:**

Care can only be terminated with 4 weeks' notice by the parent. I reserve the right to immediately end care for non-payment, failure to respect me, my home, my family, behavior of the child, which is harmful to the physical or emotional wellbeing of the other children, or failure to abide by my policies.

If you terminate care without giving appropriate notice, you will be responsible for payment of the final 2 weeks of care whether or not your child attends. Please be advised that you will be charged the No Show Fee in addition to your scheduled daily rate until you notify me that your child will not be returning. \*Provider has the right to terminate a contract without notice in the case of harm to other children or a dangerous situation due to that child has caused intentionally or other wise outlined here.

#### **Child Abuse/Neglect:**

I am required by law to report any suspected signs of child abuse and/or neglect.

This includes any form of physical punishment by the parents in my presence. Any request to use physical punishments by the parents will be noted in the child's file along with a written refusal from My Little Shine Home Daycare, signed by the parent and provider.

#### **Supplies:**

All supplies must be labeled with your child's name. You will need to provide the following things to be left here

1. 1 complete change of clothing (more if we are toilet training) to be left here.

This includes shirt, pants, socks, and underwear.

2. One or more soft and sheet (optional) for nap.
3. One set of plates, a cup and eating utensils.
4. Bibs.
5. Towel for drying hands
6. Any other item your child may need.

**FOR CHILDREN YOUNGER THAN 18 MONTHS (and those not yet potty trained and/or weaned from the bottle)**

1. Diapers or Pull-ups, 1 full package and diaper rash cream just in case. They will be stored in your child's cubby and I will notify you when the supply is low.
2. 1- box of baby wipes.
3. Bottles, 1 pacifier and pacifier fastener to be left here.
4. 2 changes of clothing (T-shirt, pants, socks; pajamas are optional). We may ask for a new set of clothes if the child has outgrown current spare clothing.
5. Burp cloths, receiving/muslin blankets and sleeping sack for naptime.
6. And most importantly, milk. (breast milk or formula)



**Note: Please label the date you bring in all the supplies. If you prefer not to supply these items to be left here, you may send them daily in a diaper bag. The option of leaving these items here is for your convenience and is not required. However, all of the above items are required for me to care for your child, so they will need to be brought daily.**

## **Health Matters**

### **Illness:**

**Under no circumstance is a sick child able to attend My Little Shine Home Daycare. The children need to fully recover from any illness in the comfort of their own home. The other children in daycare run the risk of exposure to any disease due to close contact. If you are unable to remain home with your child, it is your responsibility to make substitute childcare arrangements. Obviously, it is not possible to prevent the spread of all illness. However, minimizing exposure and providing good hygienic practices in the daycare home are means by which we can limit the problem and the resulting inconvenience. Accordingly, for the benefit of all involved, the following policies will be strictly enforced:**

**Children who have exhibited ANY symptoms of infectious illness within the proceeding 24-hour period are likely to be contagious and should remain at home.**

**Examples of associated symptoms include, but are not limited to. fever of 100F measured orally or 101F measured rectally, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea. sore throat, loss of voice, hacking or continuous coughing. yellow or green runny nose, draining eyes or ears, rash, or head lice. I reserve the right to determine whether a child should remain in the home where illness is a consideration. Parents of children who become ill during the day will be promptly notified and are expected to arrange to pick up their child immediately. The sick child will, if possible, be isolated from the other daycare children to minimize exposure. If the parent cannot be reached, the person designated as the emergency contact will be notified.**

## **Medications**

**No child will be given any medication, prescription or over the counter. Written permission is required in order to use diapering products, sunscreen lotion and insect repellents.**

**EXCEPTION: As your childcare provider, I will administer Syrup of Ipecac if instructed to do so by poison control or emergency medical services.**

## **Medical Emergencies**

**Although supervision is constantly given, I cannot be by the child's side at all times to prevent falls, tripping, bumps, blows from other children, etc. If the child. is injured in a non life-threatening way, I will assess the child and provide home first aid. If the injury is more serious, the parent will be notified so**

the child can be transported to the hospital or doctor's office. (1., needs stitches, broken arm, or dislocation, etc.) All costs associated with injuries to the child will be the responsibility of the parent, unless I have been found to be negligent. In case of a medical emergency, I will attempt to contact you immediately. If I am unable to reach you, I will start calling the people designated as your emergency contacts.

If I am unable to reach you or your emergency contacts, I will transport your child to his/her doctor or to the hospital, if necessary. If immediate intervention is required, I am certified in infant, child, and adult CPR and First Aid and will take appropriate action including calling 911 and having your child transported to Arlington Hospital or Inova Alexandria Hospital. You or your family's insurance is/are responsible for the cost of medical help or treatment due to accidents or illness while in childcare.

**Non-Discrimination:** As a licensed provider, I shall not discriminate in relation to admissions on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, religion or sex.

**Parent Signature**

**Provider Signature**