



Colleen's Child Care Policy and Handbook

License # 503904282

© 2009 by Colleen M. Stephansen and Colleen's Child Care. To Reproduce this document you must receive written permission in advance from Colleen M. Stephansen at <mailto:colleenstephansen@sbcglobal.net>

Graphic from:



1. Philosophy / Mission Statement

- Colleen's Child Care believes that children should be allowed to be children.
- Colleen's Child Care believes that from birth to three years of age is a vital time for learning and molding a child to become a successful adult.
- Children need hands on experiences and the chance to explore their surroundings. Simply said children learn through play and although what a child does may or may not produce what we think is a "perfect" product they are still learning. There is no right or wrong answers in a child's play.
- It is my goal to provide age appropriate experiences through the use of various materials to both indoors and outdoors.
- Colleen's Child Care will strive to ready your child to enter Kindergarten but in a kind and gentle nature through the use of play.
- Colleen's Child Care will work on learning our shapes, colors, to recognize letters and numbers and our own names all while we socialize with our peers.
- Colleen's Child Care will also work to teach and model socially acceptable manners in play, meal times and everyday interactions with peers.

2. My Qualifications

- I have a high school degree from Santa Teresa High School in San Jose, CA. I graduated in 1989.
- I have an undergraduate degree from Modesto Junior College in Family Consumer Sciences with over 30 units in Child Development. I graduated in 2009.
- I have a Site Supervisor Child Development Permit from the California Office on Teacher Credentialing.
- I have taken classes on the following topics:
 - Child Growth and Development
 - Infant and Toddler Development
 - Planning For Play
 - The Child, Family and Community
 - Guiding The Young Child
 - Relationships and Mentoring in School Settings
 - Supervision and Administration 1 and 2
 - Overview of Family Child Care
 - and more as well as the General Education requirements outlined by Modesto Junior College for an AS Degree.
- I was accredited by the National Association for Family Child Care from October 2003 to October 2006.
- I have a clear criminal record and child abuse index check as required by the State of California.
- I have an up-to-date certification in CPR and first aid.
- I am a member and Vice President for the Stanislaus County Family Child Care Association.
- I started working as a family child care provider in 2000.
- I am a member of the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) and the California Association for Family Child Care (CAFCC).

3. My References

- References are always available by request.

4. Licensing and Liability Insurance

- I am licensed by the Department of Social Service Community Care Licensing Division and operate a family child care home in compliance with the laws of the state of California.
- A summary of the licensing requirements / family child care regulations for my business is available at <http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/ord/PG296.htm>
- You may see a copy of my license as it is always posted above the time clock near your child's cubby.
- My license capacity as specified by state regulations is no more than 14 children following the outlined age groups in Title 22 of the Family Child Regulations.
- You may contact the Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing at (559) 243-4588 with any questions you may have regarding my license to provider child care.
- I do carry business accident / liability insurance for my child care business.

5. I Am a Mandated Reporter

- I am a state-mandated reporter and am required to report any suspected cases of physical or sexual abuse or neglect.
- If I have reason to believe that your child has been abused or neglected, I will report the situation to my licensor or to the local child protection office.
- To report a suspected case of child abuse or neglect, you can call Child Protective Services at (209) 558-3665.

6. California Car Seat Laws

- The California Vehicle Code (V.C 27360) states that all children under 6 years or 60 pounds be properly restrained in a car seat or booster seat while riding in a vehicle.
- The ONLY exceptions are when children under 6 years old weigh 60 pounds or more OR when the car only has lap belts in the back seat and the child weighs more than 40 pounds.
- Colleen's Child Care has information regarding car seat laws and can even give you a list of resources to contact with questions.
- All children must be buckled in an appropriate care seat when arriving and leaving Colleen's Child Care.

7. Employees/Substitute Caregivers

- I have permanent employees who work with the children on a daily basis. I have done a background check on this person and they meet all state licensing regulations, including first aid and CPR training, TB clearance as well as clear criminal records and child abuse index checks. My employees have the same responsibilities as I do in caring for your child including but not limited to ensuring your child's health and safety, providing age appropriate activities and setting a good role model example.

8. My Privacy Policy

- I will do all that I can to protect your family's privacy and will abide by the state privacy law. I will keep all records and information about your child and your family private and confidential, unless I have your written permission to reveal specific information. I also ask that you respect the privacy of my family by not sharing any information you learn about my family without my written permission.

- You may contact me during the hours that my business is open, Monday through Friday from 6:30AM to 5:00PM.

9. I Do Not Discriminate

- I do not discriminate based on race, color, sex, disability, national origin, sexual orientation, or public assistance status.

10. The Rules of My Home

- The child care children are not allowed to play or sleep in my son's or daughter's bedrooms, the master bedroom, or the living room. The only exception to this rule is a young infant on his or her own sleeping schedule.
- The door to the garage is locked during child care hours.

11. Open Door Policy

- You are more than welcome to show up unannounced during our day to see your child or to simply help out in the daycare if you wish to.
- I want to emphasize the need for open communication amongst us. Feel free to pick up the phone, stay a moment longer at pick - up or drop - off time, or even send me an e-mail to ask a question or make a comment. My e-mail address is colleenstephansen@sbcglobal.net
- Please be aware that depending on the time of day I may ask to call you back if you phoned me or ask that you call me at a later time so that I do not take time away from the children in my care.

12. Our Partnership Agreement

- We will need to work together to ensure that each child has the opportunity to develop his or her full potential.
- We agree to communicate regularly about the child's physical, emotional, social, and intellectual growth.
- You will keep me informed about any change in the child's schedule, routine, or home environment. I will do the same for any changes in the child care business that affect the child.
- You will notify me about any allergies or other health issues that the child is experiencing.
- You will provide any information about the child that will allow me to provide high-quality care, such as an I.E.P. (Individual Educational Plan) or other plans or assessments.
- I will provide you with age-appropriate written materials for the child.
- You agree to participate in an annual evaluation of my child care program.
- You agree to follow the policies of my child care program.

13. My Records for Your Child

- I will keep the following records for your child; you are responsible for updating these records immediately when any of this information changes:
 - your emergency contact information, including the name of a backup person in case I am unable to reach you, and the phone numbers of the child's doctor and dentist
 - a list of everyone who is authorized to drop off and pick up the child
 - a signed and completed enrollment form
 - any special care or health requirements for your child
 - a signed consent form to obtain emergency medical or dental care

- all forms required by the Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing and the child care food program sponsor.

13. Backup Child Care

- You will be responsible for finding backup child care if I must close my business or am unable to care for your child for the day. This may include, but is not limited to, the following reasons:
 - I take vacation time.
 - I take a sick day.
 - I take a personal day.
 - There is an emergency in my family (death, serious illness, accident, etc.).
 - I must close my business due to bad weather or other emergency.
 - Your child is ill.
- You must make your own arrangements for backup child care.

14. Supplies for Your Child

- I will ask you to provide the following items labeled with the child's name to keep in your child's cubby:
 - disposable or cloth diapers
 - a pacifier, blanket, or other security item for naps if needed

15. Dependent Care Plans

- I will participate in any dependent care plan that is offered by your employer. You must provide me with the required forms and instructions and keep me informed about the deadlines required by your plan.

16. Bad Weather Closings

- I will notify you as soon as possible if my program will be closed because of inclement weather - extreme heat / cold and if my air conditioning or heating system fail in my home making it unsafe for children to attend before a repair is made on the system. I may provide this notice the night before or in the middle of the day.

17. Activities/Curriculum

- I will conduct the following activities with the children:
 - literacy and language development activities
 - expressive or sensory art activities
 - health, safety, or nutrition projects
 - puzzles, games, or manipulatives
 - outdoor play
 - large-muscle activities
 - free play
 - construction and blocks
 - educational computer time if age appropriate
 - music
 - selected videos or television shows (PBS, Noggin, non-violent education DVD's)
 - individual quiet activities

- dramatic play
- My program provides age-appropriate activities for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.
- I will conduct activities that are within the abilities of each child.
- I will conduct activities that challenge each child's creative talent and imagination.
- I will conduct activities that include teachable moments.
- The activities in my program are provided in both a structured and an informal format.
- Itty Bitty Bookworm and Kid Crafters curriculum programs are used to guide activities.

18. Birthday and Holiday Celebrations

My program follows these guidelines for celebrating birthdays and holidays:

- Children's birthdays are celebrated on the birthday or a day close to it.
- You may pass out home birthday party invitations at my program.
- I will celebrate the following holidays with the children: Valentine's Day, Easter, Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.
- I will celebrate the changing of the seasons with the children.

19. Clothing

- You must leave an extra set of clothing for your child at my home that is appropriate for the season, including a shirt, pants, underwear, and socks.
- You are required to bring a clean change of clothing for your child each day.
- If a child is being toilet-trained, you will need to provide several sets of clothing each day.
- During the winter, you will bring clothes for outdoor play including a jacket.,
- During the summer, you will bring a swimsuit, a towel, and sunscreen.
- All clothing left at my program must be labeled with your child's name.
- If your child requires a change of clothes and you have not left any clothing, I will call you to bring clothing for your child.

20. Food and Nutrition

- I participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; you must sign a form to participate and must cooperate with any requests for information from my Food Program sponsor.
- My program includes the following meal schedule:
 - breakfast: 7:45 AM to 8:30AM
 - morning snack: 10:00 AM to approximately 10:15AM
 - lunch: 11:45AM to approximately 12:30PM
 - afternoon snack: 3:00PM to 3:15PM
- At mealtimes, I will offer the food to the children but will not require them to eat it. I will inform you if I notice any change in your child's eating habits.
- Special dietary requests will be considered on a case by case situation as to whether or not I can accommodate the request. The food program has rules and regulations for some situations and a doctor's note may be required.
- If your child has an allergy to any food or beverage, you must notify me in writing and in some cases a doctor's note may be required.

- Children are not allowed to bring any food or treats from home unless it is your child's birthday or a holiday we are celebrating.
- I will post copies of my menus on my bulletin board and web site.

21. Naps and Quiet Time

- All the children will lie down to take a nap or rest each day.
- There is a daily nap or rest period, between 12:30PM and 2:30PM.
- At naptime, each child will have clean and separate bedding.
- You may bring a special blanket or other security item for naptime.
- Special blankets are only allowed] during naptime.
- Pacifiers are only allowed during naptime.
- Infants under the age of 12 month will be laid down to sleep on their backs, to reduce the chance of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

22. Learning to Use the Toilet

- I will help a child learn to use the toilet once you and I agree that the child is physically ready according to Colleen's Child Care Toilet Training Policy and guidelines. It is important to follow a consistent routine both at home and in my program.
- I will use the following methods to help your child learn to use the toilet:
 - giving the child incentives (stickers, etc.)
 - bringing the child to the toilet instead of asking if the child has to go
 - reading books and watching videos about learning to use the toilet
- You will supply me with extra clothing and training pants while I am helping your child to use the toilet.

23. Toys

- Children may not bring toys from home.
- I do not allow any toy weapons in my program.
- The children may bring books or an occasional non-violent video from home for us all to enjoy.
- I will teach the children to pick up their toys.

24. Behavior Guidance

- I will use behavior guidance that is fair, reasonable, and suited to the age of the child.
- I will not use any corporal punishment (spanking) in my program.
- I will impose a "time-out" only if it is age-appropriate for the child, using a guideline of one minute per year of age.
- I will remove a child from the play group in order to redirect his or her behavior.
- I will use natural and logical consequences for misbehavior if appropriate.
- I will use distraction and redirection to guide the behavior of toddlers.
- I will identify the behavior that I wish to reward, rather than reinforcing negative behavior.
- If a child persists in problem behavior (hitting, biting, breaking toys, etc.), I will ask you to come and pick up the child from my program.
- If I have to call you three times within 3 months to pick up your child because of behavior problems, I

may terminate our contract.

25. Sick Child Policy

- Whenever a child enters a new child care program there is an increased risk of colds or other minor illnesses until the child's immune system adjusts to the new environment.
- Colds, flu and viruses are expected illnesses of childhood and are to be expected. Often times a child is contagious before the onset of symptoms.
- Children are allowed to attend child care as long as they are physically up the activities of the day and no more than 3 of the symptoms listed in section "c" are present. If a child presents with a runny green nose that is persistent, a wet sounding cough, sore throat and acts like he or she is sick or just does not look well; I will ask that child to go home until he or she is feeling better.
- Please know that myself and my staff do not like sending a child home or asking you to keep a child home as we are aware that you need to attend work or school and we would much rather have our full group in attendance.
- Allergies are also an expected part of childhood. Allergies will be defined as itchy watery eyes, stuffy nose with clear drainage and sneezing and even a slight irritation of the throat as a result of drainage down the throat. Other symptoms other than those will more than likely be caused by a virus or cold rather than allergies and will be treated as such.
- Below are guidelines that will be followed and enforced in order to keep as many children healthy as possible as well as the staff of Colleen's Child Care:
 - a.) Any illness that prevents a child from participating comfortably in activities
 - b.) The illness results in a greater need of care than the providers can provide without compromising the health, safety and supervision of the other children in care
 - c.) A child that has a cold, flu or virus with 3 or more of the below listed symptoms will be asked to go home or remain home:
 - Severe cough that is loose and wet sounding, persistent where it bothers the child or prevents a child from napping or a seal like bark
 - Green or Yellow persistent runny nose
 - Green or Yellow mucous from the eyes
 - Severe Sore Throat or blisters in the throat
 - No voice where the child is unable to vocalize
 - Persistent crying, being cranky, fussy or just has that "sick" look
 - Body achiness or chills
 - d.) The child will automatically be asked to remain home or be sent home if the following are present:
 - Fever of 100 degrees or higher within the last 24 hours
 - Any blood in stools not explained by diet changes, medications, or hard stools
 - Vomiting at child care or at home within 24 hours of last onset
 - Difficulty breathing or wheezing
 - Mouth sores unless doctor determines that the child is not contagious with a doctor's note.
 - Unexplained rash other than diaper rash
 - Any conjunctivitis defined as the yellow or green discharge from the eyes accompanied with red or pink colored whites of the eyes or eye irritations which would be considered "Pink Eye"
 - Head Lice – Child must remain home until treated and completely nit free.
 - Any ear drainage – Child may come back when the ear is checked by a doctor and the drainage is being treated.
 - Diarrhea not associated with changes in diet that are not contained in a diaper or where the child is unable to make it to the bathroom or 2 or more incidents where the bowel movement is soaked into the diaper completely. Stool must return to normal before coming back to child care without the aid of medications.

- Your child may return to daycare 24 hours after the symptoms of the illness have ended and no over the counter medications are necessary or the child has been on antibiotics (if deemed necessary by a doctor) for a full 24 hours and is no longer contagious.
- The provider reserves the right to determine when a child should be sent home.
- If you are unsure whether your child is well enough to attend daycare please call me so we can discuss the symptoms and make a decision on the phone.
- Do not mask you child's symptoms with over the counter medications – doing so and bringing your child to child care will result in the immediate termination of care for your child.

26. Administering Medication

- I require a signed release from a doctor before I will dispense prescription as well as nonprescription medicine, such as Tylenol, cough syrup, etc. medication to the children.
- I will accept a child who is still taking prescribed medication with a doctor's written confirmation that the child is no longer contagious.

27. Immunizations

- You are required to keep your child current with all immunizations unless you have signed a waiver citing medical or religious beliefs for not immunizing your child. Each time your child is immunized, you are required to promptly give me an updated copy of your child's immunization record or notify me so that I can update my record of your child's immunizations in my files.

28. Emergency Policy

- To reduce the risk of fire, I follow the fire safety rules and state laws regarding smoke detectors and fire extinguishers.
- In case the power goes out, I keep a first aid kit, flashlights, and extra blankets.
- I teach the children about household safety and about personal safety.
- I keep near my phone a list of emergency numbers (police, hospital, and ambulance) and the emergency contact numbers for all my clients.
- You must keep me informed at all times of how you can be reached in an emergency, and then check your pager, voice mail, and cell phone often. If you leave work early, go to another location for the day, or vary your normal routine, you must let me know how I can contact you that day.
- If your child is involved in a serious or life-threatening emergency, I will call 911 and get immediate medical care, and then I will call you as soon as possible.
- If your child is involved in an emergency that is not serious or life-threatening, I will call you as soon as possible.
- My emergency plan includes:
 - a fire escape plan
 - an emergency meeting place away from the home
 - fire drills as required by state law
 - a general emergency plan to respond to accidents
- I am required to report any child care accident that requires treatment by a physician to the Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing Division as well as my accident / liability insurance carrier.

29. Pets

- I have the following pets:

- Indoor: a cat named Oreo, a Chihuahua named Romeo, and 3 guinea pigs.
 - Outdoor: 2 dogs - a beagle named Cooper and a German Sheppard named Cayla.
- My dogs Cooper and Cayla are confined during child care hours in a dog run outside. Romeo is confined to a room, crate, or outside as needed during drop off or pick up times. Oreo, the cat, is not confined during the day but he does tend to stay in my daughter's room most of day when the children are here.
 - I allow and encourage the children to interact with and care for my pets as a part of the child care program. This interaction is always supervised and is intended to teach children the proper way to treat animals.
 - The dogs and cat are up to date on all the required annual immunizations as well as the Rabies vaccine.
 - My dogs are licensed through Stanislaus County Animal Control.

30. Water Hazards

- There is no swimming pool, lake, river, or body of water on or adjacent to my home.

31. Smoking, Drinking, and Drugs

- My home is a smoke-free environment. No one is permitted to smoke in my home, either during or after child care hours.
- I do not drink alcohol.
- My employees are forbidden to use alcohol or drugs during working hours.

32. Transporting Children by Car

- I will not transport children by car.

33. Field Trips / Walks

- I do not offer field trips and will not transport your child.
- We may walk to the local park or around the block from time to time weather permitting.
- On every walk, I will carry a first aid kit and the emergency contact numbers for the parents of all the children as well as my cell phone.

34. Persons Authorized to Pick Up and Drop Off Your Child

- You will notify me immediately of any changes in the name, address, or phone numbers of the people who are authorized to remove a child from my care.
- Any authorized person who arrives at my program to drop off or pick up a child must bring a picture ID.
- If there is a court order (such as a divorce settlement or restraining order) that limits the rights of one of the child's biological parents, you must give me a copy of that court order.
- No one under the age of 18 years of age is allowed to pick up a child from care.

35. Pickup and Drop-off Policy

- All children must be clocked in / out at the Time Clock Computer daily using your PIN Number assigned to you unless it is an authorized person picking up in which case one of the staff will clock your child out for the day.
- My first responsibility is protecting the health and safety of the children in my care. When you drop off and pick up your child I need to make sure that the child is being transported safely. Transporting a child

under the influence of alcohol or drugs or failing to use an appropriate car seat creates an unsafe situation.

- When you transport your child to and from my program, you must comply with state law regarding appropriate car seats and infant carriers.
- If you drop off a child at my program and have not transported the child in an appropriate car seat or carrier or are driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, I may immediately terminate our contract.