

A Child's Place Parent Handbook

Dear Families

Welcome to A Child's Place. My name is Pam and my goal is to provide nurturing care and guidance for your child. I want your child to feel comfortable in a setting where he/she can grow physically, socially, emotionally, and intellectually. A Child's Place offers a safe, warm environment with developmentally stimulating activities.

We have two locations in north west Ann Arbor. Both are in quiet, family neighborhoods. I am licensed by the state of Michigan to care for 14 children at our Patricia location and 29 children at our Morningside location.

I invite you to read further and learn more about A Child's Place.

I first discovered how much I enjoy spending time with children as a teenager babysitting for neighborhood children. When it was time for me to choose a major in college, I chose to study early childhood education. I graduated from St. Mary of the Woods College with an early childhood degree and Montessori certification. Since then I have been the lead teacher in both Montessori and traditional classrooms, been a co-op mom at my children's cooperative nursery school, chaperoned many elementary school field trips and week-long youth mission trips, taught Sunday School for 25 years, saw 300 children in two hours as the noon hour coordinator at Abbot Elementary School, been a substitute teacher at University of Michigan's Towsley Children's House, and a nanny for a family with five children.

My husband David and I have been married for 39 years and have shared the journey of raising three children together. Our children (now 37, 33 and 23) are adopted and we are a multiracial family. It has been a wonderful adventure. Your children take you places you've never been before.

We have had the joy of welcoming four grandchildren into our lives. At this writing our grandchildren are 9, 6 and 4 years old. Our fourth grandchild was born just a month ago. What fun! We are thoroughly enjoying the time we have with him.

I believe that children learn best by playing in a rich environment ready for them to explore. I do not shy away from messy activities since they often become valuable learning experiences. My goal is to provide your child a wide variety of experiences in an enriching environment.

In addition to spending time with children, I enjoy traveling and dancing. I have been leading an aerobic dance class for more than twenty years. As well as traveling in the United States and Canada, I have had wonderful experiences in France, Sweden, Costa Rica, Mexico and Kenya.

A Child's Place Parent Handbook

I am confident that you will find A Child's Place to be a warm and nurturing place for your child and your family. Once again, welcome.

Hours of Operation

Care for your child is available from 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Each family is expected to establish regular predictable hours. You will be asked to complete a *Care Agreement* so we can reserve a space for your child and be sure to have adequate staffing when you need it.

Philosophy

I believe in nurturing the whole child in a positive atmosphere of fun, warmth and caring. Through my awareness of child development, my goal is to meet the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual needs that are unique to each child. I believe that young children learn best through their daily experiences and through play. I thoroughly enjoy watching children make new discoveries, express themselves creatively, and grow friendships. It is a delight to see the world through the eyes of a child. At A Child's Place, children are exposed to manipulative activities, art experiences, creative opportunities, tactile experiences, and much time spent reading and looking at books. Your child will have the opportunity to play with children of both similar and different ages and also spend time in the great outdoors.

Typical Daily Schedule

7:00 AM	A Child's Place opens. Greeting children as they arrive.
8:00	Breakfast
9:00 to 11:00	Children are in developmentally appropriate groups for reading, manipulatives, art projects, etc.
11:00 to Noon	Outside time
Noon	Lunch
1:00 to 3:00	Nap time / quiet time
3:00	Outside time
4:00	Afternoon Snack
5:00 to 6:00	Indoor activities as children are picked up.
6:00	A Child's Place closes.

A Child's Place Parent Handbook

Outdoor time

We plan to spend time outdoors on a daily basis. We typically play outside twice each day unless it is actively raining or bitterly cold (RealFeel of 20 degrees or lower). On hot, sunny days, we will want to apply sunscreen to your child. Please bring a supply of sunscreen labeled with your child's name. You will also need to sign a medication form for us to use it.

In addition to the backyard, outdoor time may include walks in the neighborhood. At our Patricia location, we also have the opportunity to visit the neighborhood park right next door.

Meal Time

Sharing meals together is a way for children to experience a sense of community. A Child's Place provides three meals for your child during the day.

PLEASE LET US KNOW ABOUT ANY FOOD ALLERGIES OR SENSITIVITY

We are able to offer alternatives to the planned meal.

A lean protein, a carbohydrate, a fruit or vegetable and milk is offered at each meal.

A typical breakfast might be bagels and cream cheese, pancakes and peanut butter, oatmeal, scrambled eggs or cheerios.

Lunch and afternoon snack might be hummus and pretzels, pasta and cottage cheese, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, grilled cheese sandwiches, chicken quesadillas, spaghetti and meatballs, turkey roll ups, macaroni and cheese or refried beans.

Fruits offered include apples, applesauce, grapes, clementines, strawberries, blueberries, bananas, watermelon and cantaloupe.

Vegetables offered include green beans, carrots, cucumber, green pepper and broccoli.

Drinking water is encouraged and each child is assigned his/her own water cup.

Breast Milk and Formula

If your child is eating breast milk or formula, please provide it for him/her.

- Breast milk should be frozen and labeled with your child's name and the date. We will keep it in the freezer and warm it before serving.

A Child's Place Parent Handbook

- Formula should be provided in individual bottles as dry powder. Label each bottle with your child's name, the date, and the amount of water to add. We will add water just before serving it.
- Used bottles will be sent home each night to be washed.

Nap Time

All children under the age of six attending child care for a full day are required by state licensing to nap or rest. Your child will have his/her own crib or cot and an assigned blanket. Sheets and blankets are provided and laundered regularly.

Infants less than a year old are not allowed to have a blanket or any soft object in the crib with them.

Discipline

A Child's Place practices positive discipline. If a child is behaving in a way that is unsafe or inappropriate, he/she will be redirected in a positive way. Some typical phrases might be:

- "It's time to _____ now"
- "Let's try this instead."
- "There's a place for you right here."
- "Where do you need to be?" / "What do you need to be doing right now?"
- "Here is something that you can play with."
- "Food stays on the table." / "Sand stays on the ground."

If a child is behaving aggressively toward another child, the children will be separated and told "People are not for hitting/kicking". Often aggressive behavior is the result of frustration. Every attempt will be made to address the underlying frustration.

If a child is being disruptive to the group, the caregiver may choose to move them to a separate location to give them time to calm down.

Saying Goodbye

The four B's

I have found this formula to be helpful ...

Be aware of your own feelings. Try not to pass your anxieties on to your child. A positive and reassuring attitude from Mom and Dad goes a long way in easing the transition from home to child care.

Be firm. Say "Good Bye. I love you. Have a great day." rather than "Can I leave now?"

Be specific. Young children have a hazy sense of time. "I'll see you right after lunch/nap" is better than "I'll see you later."

A Child's Place Parent Handbook

Be there. If you are going to be late or someone else will be picking your child up be sure to let your child know.

Enrollment and Financial Information

If you are interested in finding out more about A Child's Place, please call or text Pam at 313-550-6588 to arrange a time for you and your child to visit. I'd be glad to meet with you and share all that A Child's Place has to offer. When you are ready to enroll your child, there are forms that the state requires you to complete. When your child has attended A Child's Place for two weeks, we will meet to make sure that this is a good fit for your child and your family.

Prices

At A Child's Place, I strive to offer quality care for your child at competitive rates. Our current price schedule is published on our website:

<http://www.achildsplacea2.com/prices.html>

There is a \$150 per child registration fee to enroll your child. The registration fee reserves a spot for your child.

If you would like to use A Child's Place for part time child care, I may be able to accommodate you. Part time availability will depend on how many other children are scheduled. You will be asked to set and keep a schedule and sign a Care Agreement.

Payment Policies

Payment is due for all agreed upon hours. Invoices are prepared every 2 weeks and will be sent to your email address. Invoices can be paid electronically (preferred), by credit card, check, or cash. Invoice payment is due on receipt unless alternative arrangements are made in advance.

Electronic payments can use any of these platforms. Our handle is given for each one.

Venmo:

@David-Gee-27

Zelle:

dpall_gee@yahoo.com

PayPal:

dpall_gee@yahoo.com

CashApp:

\$dgee755

At the end of each year, we will give you a statement showing every invoice and every payment for each child that was in care during that year. If you need statements at other times, just ask.

A Child's Place Parent Handbook

If you choose to withdraw enrollment for your child, a two week notice is expected.

A Child's Place will be closed on regular federal holidays, including the Friday after Thanksgiving. We will also close for a week over the winter holidays - typically the week between Christmas and New Year's Day.

Late pick up policy

Please be on time to pick up your child. In the rare event that you are not able to be here on time, please call as soon as you can. If I have not heard from you, I will attempt to call you. If I am not able to reach you, I will start calling the people on your emergency contact list. The first time you are late, there is no extra charge. Subsequent times, there will be a charge of \$5.00 for every 15 minutes after the agreed pickup time.

In the event of dangerous road conditions during a winter storm, please exercise caution. We want you to get here safely.

Absences

Please text both Pam (313-550-6588) and Erica (734-249-0165) when your child will not be attending on a regularly scheduled day. It is helpful when we know who to expect.

Please also let us know if your child has a doctor, dentist, or some other kind of appointment and will be gone for part of their regular day.

Illness

Children who spend time together often share more than toys. Every attempt will be made to keep hands washed and surfaces disinfected. However, if your child does become ill, please keep them comfortable at home.

I will call and ask you to pick your child up if your child

- has a fever
- has vomited
- has recurrent episodes of diarrhea
- is lethargic and withdrawn

Please have an alternative care plan for when your child is ill.

A Child's Place Parent Handbook

Medications

In the event that you need the staff at A Child's Place to assist you with the administration of medications for your child while they are in care, you will need to give us specific permission and detailed instructions. You do this by using form BCAL-1243:

https://www.michigan.gov/-/media/Project/Websites/lara/CCLB/Forms/BCAL-1243_8_15_fillable_2.pdf

Prescription medications must be in their pharmacy packaging. Over the counter medications must be in their original packaging. All medications must be labeled with your child's name and the date when you brought them.

Also, please be careful not to allow medications to come to us by accident. There have been instances of medicine being forgotten in diaper bags and other kids discovering it.

What to bring

If your child is wearing diapers, please provide a package of diapers and preferred diaper cream, labeled with your child's name. We'll let you know when your diaper supply is getting low.

You are also asked to keep at least one complete change of clothing for your child with us. Life happens and in addition to toileting accidents, we're not afraid of messy projects or wet play.

While your child is learning to use the toilet, please send more than one change of clothing. If there are dirty clothes at the end of the day, they will be in your child's cubby in a colorful "wet bag". Please take the entire bag home with you and return it the next day.

During the summer months, please provide a bathing suit and water shoes for water play with sprinklers, spray bottles, buckets, and other water toys. We don't want to send your child home with a sunburn. Please send sunscreen labeled with your child's name.

Once a year, we will ask each family for permission to apply sunscreen and/or diaper cream as appropriate.

Clothing

I want your child to be comfortable and be able to move freely. Please dress him/her in "play clothes" - something that you won't mind if it's not perfectly clean at the end of the day.

If your child is learning to use the toilet, please dress him/her in something that is easy to pull down and back up again. Zippers, buttons, and snaps can be frustrating if a child is in a hurry and I want your son/daughter to experience success and a sense of accomplishment and independence.

A Child's Place Parent Handbook

I would like boots and shoes to remain at the door, particularly in the winter. You may want your child to have a pair of soft indoor shoes or slippers that aren't too slippery that can stay at A Child's Place.

Your child will spend time outdoors each day unless it is actively raining or bitterly cold. It is often challenging to predict what the weather will be in Michigan. As best you can, please try to prepare your child for the weather. In the summer, send bathing suits. In the winter, send snow pants, hats, and gloves. It's wonderful to observe and experience the changing seasons in Michigan and we want your child to be comfortable. Parents often leave winter gear for their child with us.

Family communication

We have respect for each family's privacy. However, family situations can affect your child's behavior. Understanding what's happening at home can be very helpful. It allows us to give your child more sleep when needed or help celebrate a happy family event. No details are necessary. A simple 'Our family is going through a difficult time right now.' is all that is needed for us to be sure to provide a little extra TLC.

Inclement Weather/Closures

This is Michigan. Heavy snowfall can be expected a few times every season. However, our staff are Michganders and are accustomed to navigating the weather. We will make every attempt to remain open during our regular hours regardless of the weather.

If there is a snow event that is serious enough to require opening later than usual, parents will be notified by text message as soon as possible. Conversely, if the weather happens during the day, we will help however we can with early pick-up or staying later than usual. It's most important that you drive safely as you are coming to get your kids.

Licensing Notebook

In accordance with LARA rules, we are required to inform you that a record of all licensing activity for at least the past three years is available at www.michigan.gov/MChildcare. We have internet service at both locations that you can use if it would be helpful.

Questions

If there is anything that you need to know that I have not covered, please ask. It is vitally important that parents and caregivers communicate with each other frequently and openly.

A Child's Place Parent Handbook

Texting is usually the preferred method for short messages. For longer conversations, let's talk in person whenever possible.

Pam: 313-550-6588

Erica: 734-249-0165

David: 734-417-5008