



Colleen's Child Care

Policy and Handbook

License # 503904282

(209) 402-0253

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 using various materials to both indoors and outdoors.
- 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, mealtimes 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
 - 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.

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- 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 was Vice President for the Stanislaus County Family Child Care Association from 2005 to 2010.
- I started working as a family childcare provider in 2000.
- I am a member of the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC).

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 childcare 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 1-844-LET-US-NO (1-844-538-8766) with any questions you may have regarding my license to provider childcare.
- I do carry business accident / liability insurance for my childcare 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.
- I participate in Mandated Reporter Training every 2 years as required by licensing.

6. California Car Seat Laws

- The California Vehicle Code (V.C 27360) states that all children under 8 years or 4 feet 9 inches in height be properly restrained in a car seat or booster seat while riding in a vehicle.
- 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.
- Colleen's Child Care does not offer transportation to and from school nor for field trips.

7. 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 7:00 AM to 5PM.

8. I Do Not Discriminate

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

9. The Rules of My Home

- The childcare children are not allowed to play or sleep in my son's or daughter's bedrooms, the master bedroom, or the living room.
- The door to the garage is locked during childcare hours.
- Please respect my family's living space by not allowing your child to freely explore my home or run through the house at pick up or drop off times.

10. Open Door Policy

- You are more than welcome to show up unannounced during our day to see your child.
- 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@comcast.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 later so that I do not take time away from the children in my care.

11. Our Partnership Agreement

- Colleen's Child Care will strive to ready your child to enter formal Preschool setting using play.
- It is encouraged that children ages 3 ½ to age 4 enter a formal preschool setting.
- 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 childcare 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 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 follow the policies of my childcare program.

12. 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 childcare food program sponsor.
 - Up to date immunization records

13. Backup Child Care

- You will be responsible for finding backup childcare 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.).
 - Bad weather closings or problems with plumbing, heating or cooling of my home.

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 diapers - typically a child who is full time goes through roughly 4-5 diapers day.
 - At two complete changes of weather appropriate clothing.

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
 - music
 - individual quiet activities
 - dramatic play
- My program provides age-appropriate activities for infants, toddlers, and young 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.

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.
- If you wish to bring a special treat to celebrate a birthday or holiday, please speak to Colleen prior due to food program regulations.
- Please no cupcakes for celebrations – cookies or brownie bites are preferred. The USDA Food Program seriously limits the number of sugary items we are allowed to serve so please consult with Colleen before bringing a treat to childcare.

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.

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- 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.
- Play shoes with covered toes and heels are highly encouraged. No Crocs or flip flops allowed for safety reasons. Velcro shoes are greatly appreciated.

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: 8 AM to 8:30AM
 - lunch: 11:30AM to 12 noon
 - 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 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 may not come to childcare eating food from home. Please encourage your child to finish it in the car or at home.
- I will post copies of my menus near the sign in sheets.
- The Child and Adult Care Food Program requires the following;
 - Unflavored milk to be served at breakfast and lunch (whole milk to those under 24 months of age and 1% / skim milk to be served to those age 24 months and older)
 - A fruit and a vegetable to be served at lunch.
 - At least one whole grain item to be served once per day
 - If juice is served, it can only be 100% non-diluted juice and may only be served one time per day per child.
 - Cereals must contain less than 6 grams of sugar per serving and yogurt 23 grams or less of sugar per 6 ounce serving
 - No dessert items are allowed to be served – cupcakes, donuts, poptarts, granola bars etc.
 - If you wish to bring an item to celebrate a birthday or holiday, please speak to Colleen prior so I can be sure it will meet the regulations.

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 12:15 / 12:30PM and 2:30PM.
- At naptime, each child will have clean and separate bedding.
- 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).
- Colleen is not allowed to wake children from a nap. Children will be allowed to sleep for as long as they wish to.

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.
- I will use the following methods to help your child learn to use the toilet:

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- giving the child incentives (stickers, etc.)
- bringing the child to the toilet instead of asking if the child needs to go
- You will supply me with extra clothing and training pants while I am helping your child to use the toilet.
- Children are encouraged to be self sufficient in pushing down and pulling up his or her pants, must be able to physically get on and off the toilet with little assistance and they will be encouraged to wipe themselves before I will assist.

23. Toys

- Children may not bring toys from home.
- I do not allow any toy weapons in my program.
- The children may bring books 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 must 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

- The Illness / Pandemic (Covid-19) Policies will be followed when determining whether a child can or cannot attend childcare or will be sent home.
- Whenever a child enters a new childcare 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 a child is contagious before the onset of symptoms.
- 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 because 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.
- Your child may return to childcare 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 childcare, please call me so we can discuss the symptoms and decide on the phone.
- Do not mask your child’s symptoms with over-the-counter medications – doing so and bringing your child to childcare will result in the immediate termination of care for your child.

26. Administering Medication

- Please read the Incidental Medical Policy for further details regarding medications.
- No medications can or will be given to a child without a doctor’s notes on file and permission slip filled out.

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27. Immunizations

- You are required to keep your child current with all immunizations. 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.
- A current immunization record is required BEFORE your child can be enrolled.
- A child who becomes behind in his or her immunizations will be suspended from care until they are up to date.
- Colleen's Child Care is NOT allowed to enroll a child who is not immunized or behind on immunizations per state law.

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 childcare 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

- My family does have pets – currently three cats.
- The children are taught to respect the animal's space and treat them kindly.
- The cats are up to date on all the required annual immunizations as well as the Rabies vaccine.

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 and property are a smoke-free environment. No one is permitted to smoke in my home or on my property, either during or after childcare hours.
- I do not drink alcohol.

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.

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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 can pick up a child from care.
- ONLY people on your emergency contact form are allowed to drop off or pick up your child.

35. Pickup and Drop-off Policy

- All children must be signed in / out daily.
- 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.

36. Business and Operating Hours

- Colleen's Child Care is open Monday through Thursday from 7am – 5:30pm and Fridays 7am – 5pm.
- Please respect the non-business hours so that Colleen can care for her family's needs and spend time with her own family.
- Phone calls and text messages will not be responded to after business hours, on weekends or during any time off.
- The childcare is located in my home BUT it is only a place of business during the days and times the child care is open.