

# Stepping Stones Home Childcare

## Policy Handbook

Welcome to our daycare! I am so excited for this to be your child's home away from home. The following are a list of policies that are meant to provide a safe, caring, and homelike atmosphere.

The goal of my childcare is to create a home like Christian environment where the children in our care can grow and learn.

My licensed family home daycare is located in Lowell, Michigan. My home is organized, clean, and designed to make your child feel right at home, as well as encourage play. I have a living room filled with children's books that we read several times a day and a fun playroom with activities for children from infants to 5 years old. We also love to spend time outdoors. We have art supplies, many types of building blocks, a large play kitchen, dress up, animals, cars, puppets, infant toys, and much, much more! My home is set up for all ages of young children.

My daily schedule is consistent and nurturing while being engaging and fun. I allow the kids a lot of time for free play; this chance to just be a kid and have fun is crucial for healthy development! Every day the kids will also have a circle time and an activity that will help them learn about science, art, math, literacy, and God. We love doing art projects and have a lot of hands on play and learning activities.

### **Discipline**

I believe that using praise and positive reinforcement is the best way to teach children. When children receive kind and empathetic interactions from adults they feel safe to learn and grow, and they will learn appropriate ways to react in different situations. When there is a need for discipline, I always seek to understand the child's thinking so we can help them work through the problem. I lead by example, talking to children in a calm manner at their level. I also redirect children to a different activity if a problem persists.

Once a child is 3 years old or older, time out will be used as a break so the child can calm their emotions. Once they are calm and ready to talk, we will talk about their behavior and help them work through the problem to find a solution. Children 3 years and older will also receive a timeout for aggressive/ violent behavior. Time outs will last for as many minutes as they are old (ie- 4 years old means a 4 minute time out)

If there is a persistent problem or violent behavior, I will talk to the parent so we can find a solution together.

We are a fully inclusive childcare and we make every effort to make sure all childrens' needs are met. If your child has special needs, we will work together to implement a plan to help them succeed.

## **Christian**

We are a Christian childcare, and I will teach and model Christian values to the kids. Throughout the year, I will teach the kids bible stories, we will sing bible songs, and we have many activities that will help the children learn more about God and how much he loves us! We learn that God calls us to love others and treat people with kindness.

## **Fees**

Please pay for childcare in advance. You may choose to pay weekly, bi weekly, or monthly. My preferred method of payment is through venmo (my username is @Ashley-Lynne-Stone ), but checks and cash are also ok.

Cost for part time childcare is \$45 a day. Full time is \$180 a week for 5 day weeks and \$150 a week for 4 day weeks. (The childcare is only open every other friday)

If your child is absent on a day that the daycare is open, payment is still expected.

Our hours are Monday through Thursday and every other Friday from 7:15am until 5:15pm. If you are early/late, there is a \$5 fee for every 10 minutes.

## **Vacations/Holidays**

At the childcare, we will celebrate all Christian holidays. During Christmas, Easter, and throughout the year, we will learn about and have a lot of activities celebrating the biblical stories of Jesus.

The daycare is closed for the following holidays: New years day, Memorial day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Christmas day.

I will also take one to two weeks vacation every year, and the daycare will be closed. I will notify you as early as possible when I will be on vacation, and I will give at least a 2 weeks notice.

There will be no charge when the daycare is closed.

## **Safety**

I have also taken several classes to ensure your little ones safety! I'm trained in Infant/child CPR and first aid, bloodborne pathogens, safe sleep for infants, and shaken baby syndrome. There are also many safety measures throughout the house to keep your child safe, such as: smoking is never allowed, all lower cabinets have safety locks, electrical outlets have safety covers, there are several carbon monoxide and smoke detectors, and tornado and fire drills are practiced each month. I will always have 6 children or less in care at a time.

## **Clothing**

Please try to make sure that your child has a change of clothes that stays here at the daycare. While I try my best to keep kids clean, learning can be messy! We do a lot of art projects and outside play, and bathroom accidents are common with little kids. It is also helpful to leave a light jacket or sweatshirt here in case it is unexpectedly chilly.

### **Quiet Time**

We will have a quiet nap time every day from around 12:00 to 2:00 (depending on when they wake up). During this time, the kids will lay down to rest. (infants who need a morning/ afternoon nap will also rest at 9 and 4) If a child does not take a nap, they may read books or have a quiet activity on their nap mat. If possible, it is very helpful to limit visits and pick ups/ drop offs during this time to help the kids settle in for rest.

Kids 18 months and older will be given a nap mat and a blanket to sleep on. Children under 1 year will sleep on their own (ie. no blankets), in a port-a-crib, on their back.

You are more than welcome to send your little one with a sleep sack (one that allows their arms to be unswaddled), special blanket, or stuffed animal.

### **Meals and snacks**

I will provide healthy meals and snacks for children throughout the day. I participate in the Campfire 4C food program, which provides support for healthy meals. Children will be served at least one whole grain a day and meals will be low in sugar. Breakfast is served from 8:00-8:30 and will include a fruit and milk. If your child arrives after this time, please make sure they have eaten! Snack is at 10, lunch at 12 and will include milk, protein, fruit, vegetable and grain, and another snack is served at 3.

I will also provide baby food during meal times and infant formula (similac pro-advance with Dr. Brown's bottles). If there is a particular brand of formula or type of bottle that you would like your little one to have, please bring it with you.

Please bring a leak-proof sippy cup that we can use for water- the kids will have access to this all day long.

### **Sick Policy**

I will notify you immediately if your child develops any of the following symptoms:

- temperature of 101 degrees Fahrenheit
- Vomiting or Diarrhea
- Rash (other than a diaper or heat related rash)

Should your child develop these symptoms, they will need to be picked up within 1 hour.

The listed symptoms must be gone for 24 hours (without medication) to return to the daycare. This is to avoid other kids also getting sick!

If your child has lice, please wash their hair with lice shampoo twice (24 hours apart) before returning to daycare. Please also let me know as soon as possible so that I can take measures to keep it from spreading.

If my daughter has any of these symptoms, I am required to be closed. I will let you know as soon as possible so you can make other arrangements.

### **Health, Medications and Immunizations**

I need to have written permission before giving a child any medication. All children in the daycare must have the appropriate immunizations for their age. Every September I will sit down with you to update your child's "child in care" form, which will help me keep my records up to date with any health changes.

### **Pick up/ drop off/ visits**

Occasionally your child may need to be picked up from daycare by someone other than a parent or guardian. For safety reasons, that person needs to be on your emergency form or I need to have written permission for your child to be released. I will also check someone I haven't met driver's licence when they come to pick up, or you can send me a picture of them. I also work with the Lowell School District to transport children to and from my home, if needed.

For little ones under a year old, I'll fill out a report sheet throughout the day so you know the details of when they ate, had diaper changes, and slept! If your child is over 1 year and you would like a daily report sheet, please let me know and I can fill one out for you.

You may stop by to visit anytime during daycare hours. You don't need a reason- you are always welcome!

### **Communication**

There are several ways I will communicate with you! Throughout the day I will occasionally send messages and pictures via text or facebook messenger, depending on which you prefer. I also love to get to talk face to face! Every day when your child is picked up I'll let you know how their day went and how they are doing on meeting their goals (ie walking, talking, potty training, etc). In house conferences are available upon request.

We have a private facebook group page called Stepping Stones Home Childcare where I will post pictures of the kids and some of our fun activities that we do!

### **Tentative daily schedule**

8:00- breakfast

8:30-free play and infants first nap

9:00- circle time/ read aloud

9:15- art activity followed by free play

9:50- snack

10:00- outside time

11:00- free play/ sometimes a small show while I make lunch

11:30- Lunch

12:00-read books and nap time

3:00-snack

3:30- circle time followed by free play

4:15- outside time

**Helpful things to keep at the daycare** (because mornings are way too chaotic to remember everything every day!):

Diapers

Wipes

Diaper rash cream

Change of clothes

Sweatshirt

Naptime things

Sippy cup (leakproof!)

Sunscreen

Bug spray