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HAPPY HANDS CHILD CARE  
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**PARENT HANDBOOK**

### **1. Mission Statement and Admissions Policy**

Our goal is to provide a balance program in a safe, caring, happy environment that will support the developmental needs of your child (ren). We emphasize creative learning experiences, a positive self-image, and physical fitness. We are here to provide a place for children and their families no matter what their race, religion, cultural heritage, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, gender, color, sex, national origin or abilities...

### **2. Goals for Children who attend Happy Hands:**

- To develop personal worth
- To feel secure and safe
- To express individuality
- To respect the individuality of others
- To value warm relationships with other children
- To develop warm relationships with adults
- To develop acceptable means of expressing frustration and anger
- To develop self-direction
- To learn to make choices
- To explore a variety of materials
- To develop a sense of pride in process and product
- To develop new interests and skills
- To increase awareness of environment
- To begin to think critically
- To expand language skills in communication, vocabulary, and comprehension.
- To develop writing skills.
- To develop awareness of and appreciation for the written word
- To increase attending skills
- To use ordering and counting skills
- To improve small motor skills
- To improve large motor skills

### **3. Hours of operation:**

We are open from 7am-5pm Monday through Friday. Staff may be here early, this is their prep time, so please be considerate by arriving no earlier than 8am. If additional hours are needed before 7 am or after 5 pm please feel free to ask, as sometimes arrangements can be made.

### **4. Daily Schedule**

- 7:00-8:00- Teacher Prep Time
- 8:00-8:30- Welcome, write names, tabletop activities, journals
- 8:30-9:00- Toilet, wash hands, breakfast
- 9:00-9:30- Morning meeting
- 9:30- 10:30- Choice time projects
- 10:30- 11:30- Gross motor time (usually outside)
- 11:30-12:00 Toilet, wash hands
- 12:00-1:00 Lunch
- 1:00-3:00 Quiet time
- 3:00-3:30 Toilet, wash hands, snack
- 3:30-4:00 Choice time
- 4:00-5:00 Teacher's choice/ gross motor time
- 5:00-5:15 Teacher clean up time

\*If your child is going to be picked up earlier than scheduled, please let the teacher know at drop off. The children often become involved in a project: an unplanned pickup may cause unnecessary confusion!

### **5. Winter Weather**

When weather conditions are expected to affect school delays or cancellations in Franklin County you **must** give a text or call to Michelle's cell or verbally to Michelle before 6:15 am the day of the delay. Simply just text "yes s/he will be here or no s/he will not be here". If no text/call is received **by 6:15am care will not be available for your child that day** (payment will be expected). We will attempt to put a message in the "Daily Gram" the day prior, but we are not always aware of weather conditions before writing the daily gram.

## 6. Substitute Care Arrangements

When Happy Hands is closed due to planned or unplanned days off a substitute provider may be available for your child(ren). Arrangements for this care must be made in advanced. This gives you the opportunity for you and your child to meet the person, and they are given copies of all necessary forms as per E.E.C. (Early Education and Care). Please speak with Michelle if you wish to put arrangements in place.

7. Swimming Lessons are a part of our program which all children determined by staff to be old enough to participate will be required to take part in. Parents will be notified of the swimming lesson schedule and additional fee when it is determined for that year.

## 8. Health Care Policy

All children are required to have a physical exam prior to entry (we give 30 days from the child's 1<sup>st</sup> day to have medical forms completed.) Each child is required to have age-appropriate immunization, and lead screening per requirement of the E.E.C.

A Coronavirus vaccine is required for all family members living with the child who is in our care, ages 12 and above as of 8/1/2021. As the CDC makes it available to those under the age of 12, they also will be required to have the vaccine. Updated 7/12/21

Sickness in children is a very difficult area to manage in a group situation. On the one hand, we are not equipped to look after sick children, but on the other hand, we realize that parents rely on us to provide care on a regular basis, and that they cannot stay home with their child for every little sniffle. Our policies represent our best efforts to balance these (often conflicting) needs.

First, it is important to realize that in a group situation such as this, illnesses (both major and minor) spread rapidly despite everyone's best efforts. The staff is instructed to be meticulous about hand washing and hygiene. Children who appear to be sick are isolated as much as possible from the group, and parents are called and asked to take a sick child home as soon as possible. Anyone who arrives more than one hour after being telephoned to pick up a sick child will be fined \$20.00 for every fifteen minutes or fraction thereof.

Parents are always notified when a contagious illness has appeared in the group. We are in frequent touch with our pediatric consultant when questions arise about children's health.

In general, children who do not feel well should stay at home; children who feel well, who are not contagious, and who can participate in all the normal activities of the day, may be at Happy Hands Child Care. Some of our rules regarding specific conditions are as follows:

**Specific policies:** these policies from here through Strep throat have been updated 1/4/25

If your child has two or more of the following symptoms you will be asked to keep your child at home.

-cough

-runny nose that has color discharge

-sore throat

-Fever: When a child has a fever (100.0 degrees or more), he/she must stay home until the fever has been down for 48 hours. If a fever develops here, we will call you, and you should come as soon as possible. Fevers in young children can arise quickly.

Vomiting: A vomiting child must stay home or go home if he/she is at the childcare. He/she may not return until the vomiting stops for 48 hours.

Diarrhea: A child with diarrhea must stay home. Diarrhea that has not come back in 48 hours means the child may come back to the childcare. Diarrhea at the childcare will require you to pick up your child.

Antibiotics: A child with a contagious condition for which antibiotics have been prescribed may not attend the childcare until he/she has had 24 hours' worth of medication. A non-contagious condition on antibiotics may return as soon as the child feels well. (i.e.: ear infection)

Impetigo and conjunctivitis: These are very contagious conditions and must be treated with antibiotics for 48 hours before the child may attend the childcare. If your child has red, runny eyes or scabby, runny sores, the teacher will call you and you must take your child out of the childcare until he/she is checked by the doctor.

Strep throat: This can show a variety of symptoms. You should have your doctor check for strep if your child has a fever, rash, or sore throat. The child with strep must stay home until he/she has had 48 hours of antibiotics. We will notify you if there are cases of strep in your child's group, so that you can be on the alert.

Chicken pox: Children who have been exposed to the contagious disease may attend the center during the incubation period, but you must inform us if your child has been exposed so that we can let others know. Children who have contracted this disease must stay home until all contagion has passed.

Lice Policy: Regular head checks will be done at Happy Hands. If a child is found to have head lice their parents will immediately be called to pick them up. To return to Happy Hands the child needs to have been treated with a lice removal product. Upon return to Happy Hands the child's head will again be checked if more than 6 nits are found the child will be sent home. Daily head checks will continue until no nits are found. If it lasts more than five school days, we must have a note from a physician that it is being treated.

The final word: In all cases, the final decision about whether a child may attend Happy Hands is made by the director. If above health care issues are not resolved within a timely fashion it may be grounds for filing a 51A.

#### Emergency Procedures:

If your child becomes ill at Happy Hands, you will be notified and asked to pick him/her up as soon as you can (within 30 minutes).

In case of an accident at Happy Hands, the procedures are as follows: if the accident is minor, simple first aid treatment is applied on the spot, and you will be notified either at the time, or when you pick up your child, and you will be given an accident report.

If the accident is more severe, we will call you immediately. If you cannot be reached right away, we will call you emergency contact person and will arrange to take the child to the doctor if that seems advisable.

(Examples of a more severe injury include a cut that seems to need stitching or a bite that breaks the skin.) If the accident is very serious, or if a life-threatening situation exists, we will call an ambulance and request transportation to the hospital. A teacher will accompany the child to the hospital. Meanwhile, another staff member will call you and your pediatrician and arrange to have your child met and treated as soon as he/she arrives at the hospital.

Diapering/potty training: We only use cloth diapers or cloth training pants with exceptions. We provide cloth diapers, covers, training pants and wet bags for dirty diapers/pants. Updated 7/1/22

### **9. Medications**

At the back of the "Policy Book" please find a copy of the medication form necessary if you need to send your child with medication. Prescription and non-prescription medication, including topical creams apply.

### **10. Discipline and behavior management guidelines**

We are committed to making this childcare a safe, happy and healthy environment for children. The need for adults to reprimand children is minimized by providing an exciting program and by making limits and expectations clear. Discipline is defined as child guidance, requiring a problem-solving approach.

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. We try to sense potential problems and step in gently, rather than picking up pieces afterwards. We adjust our expectations according to the individual abilities of each child.

Some hitting, pushing, etc., is to be expected. It is related to development, working out the difference between affection and aggression, frustration and stress.

The goal of adult intervention for discipline purpose is unique to each child and each situation. Teaching children is much more significant than extinguishing disruptive behavior. We may redirect younger children or help older children to analyze conflict situations.

We value children's feelings. We help children to articulate their needs and desires and offer positive reinforcement and positive role models. We never resort to physical punishment. Consistency is essential for guidance and limit setting. Careful observation and clear communication are our goals.

**Mandated Reporter-** We are mandated reporters and as such if we see or hear of an incident, we feel worthy of reporting we will:

- If the situation allows notify the parent of the child.
- Call DCF and make a report.
- Follow up with how we can support the family.
- Continually be in contact with DCF and the family.

### **11. Meals**

Breakfast, lunch, and p.m. snack are provided. This childcare facility participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), a federal program that provides healthy meals and snacks to children receiving childcare.

CACFP homes and centers follow meal requirements established by USDA.

Breakfast- Milk, Fruit or Vegetable, Grains or Bread

Lunch- Milk, Meat or Meat alternative, Grains or bread, two different servings of fruits or vegetables

Snacks- (two of the four groups) Milk, meat or meat alternative, grains or bread, fruit or vegetable

## 12. Transportation Plan

Any transportation to and from Happy Hands is the responsibility of the parents/guardians of the child in care.

In an emergency, parents need to pick their child up immediately after notification.

Children that walk or take public transportation to Happy Hands need to be accompanied by an adult.

Children with disabilities will have transportation plans included in their IEP's.

Whenever a field trip occurs a permission form must be signed and dated. The following information will be included on a field trip permission form:

- Name of providers on trip
- Type of transportation used
- Destination
- Date of trip
- Departure Time and return time
- Child's name
- Signature of parent/guardian and date

For all field trips we will carry a first aid kit, seatbelt cutter, cell phone, and emergency cards for each child, medications, appropriate diapering and extra changes of clothing, and anything needed for specific trip.

More information can be found at:

[http://www.mass.gov/Eeoc/docs/EEC/regs\\_policies/20090122\\_606\\_cmr.pdf](http://www.mass.gov/Eeoc/docs/EEC/regs_policies/20090122_606_cmr.pdf)

## 13. Payments

A rate of 7.50 per hour (or any part of an hour) is charged for full time (38+ hours) slots. A rate of \$8.00 per hour (or any part of an hour) is charged for part time (<38 hours) slots. These rates are contracted rates and are set in the "Contract". Updated 7/1/2022

Additional Fees: field trips.

Payments Due: Payments shall be made at drop off time the Friday prior to the week of care.

Late Fee: A late fee of \$20.00 will be charged if payment is not received on time. Payments received after dropping off time, even made on the same day are considered late. Updated 7/1/2012

Overtime rates: Overtime will be considered as drop off before the scheduled time and pick up after the scheduled time. If the parent/ legal guardian makes prior arrangements with the provider, the child/children may come early or stay late at your regular hourly rate or any part thereof. This would be for any time before your scheduled hours of care or after. If a parent/legal guardian arrives earlier or later than agreed upon times without prior arrangements, the rate of \$1.00 for every minute after will be charged. Updated 7/1/2014

Rates for holidays, vacations, and other absences: We are paid for 15 closed days a year. Our new year starts July 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. These days are listed on individual contracts. A two week minimum notice will be given. Charges for child's absences will be at regular rate. Charges for provider's illness or other emergency will be at no charge. Charges for provider's vacation please see above. Charges for parent's vacation will be at regular price.

Termination process: This contract may be terminated by the Parent/ legal guardian or provider by giving two weeks' notice in advance of the ending date. The Parent/Legal Guardian may terminate at any time with this written notice but is still responsible for payment for the said two weeks. The provider reserves the right to terminate the enrollment of any child whose needs cannot be met by the childcare provider. The provider may also terminate this contract without any prior notice if the parent/legal guardian does not make payments as stated in the agreement. By signing the contract, the provider has been given permission to share all information in regard to payment and this agreement with other childcare agencies, provider, and courts. Any court fees charged to the provider if contract is broken will be the responsibility of parents/guardians.

## 14. Required Forms

All required forms (except, medical/immunization forms) must be completed and returned before the start of care. The following forms are required:

- Payment contract
- Food program contract
- Photo permission
- General permission
- Supervision permission
- Book borrowing permission

- Request form
- 2- emergency cards

Enrollment packet – Page 1,2,3,4, and 6

Updated 3/17/2025

17. Plan for meeting potential emergencies 7.11(7)(f) Details the procedures to follow in the case of:
- o a missing child 911 will be called and a search will start, back up care will come to watch other children.
  - o a fire, natural disaster We will evacuate to the neighbors, if a bigger disaster we will evacuate to the Red Roof in Deerfield Ma parents will be texted with all information.
  - o loss of power, heat or hot water We will contact parents to pick up. The provider will take all children's information and materials needed for evacuation. The provider will use her vehicles to transport children in an evacuation.
  - Escape routes for each floor level ground out entrance, first floor out back porch door or front door.
  - Describe how information will be obtained from local authorities in deciding whether to evacuate or shelter in place. We are on Emergency list with the town who will notify me by text message.

Updated 4/8/25

Updated 7/31/25