

PARENT HANDBOOK

State of Texas
Licensed
Home Child Care



Almost Mom LLC
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When you can't be
mom 24 hours a day
Almost Mom is here.

Mission Statement & Philosophy

Our goal is to provide a safe and happy place for children to learn and grow physically, emotionally, intellectually, and socially at their own pace.

We believe children learn through play and benefit from a structured yet flexible schedule. Therefore, activities will be offered, stimulating sensory-motor development, language development, social interaction, and morality.

The development of strong self-esteem is also a major goal. Children will be taught to respect each other, adults and property.

Almost Mom uses a holistic approach to appeal to the whole child.

Our philosophy is to teach children life skills by setting every child up to succeed and not to fail.

Dear Parent:

We want to congratulate you on choosing Almost Mom to be part of your child's early life experience. We focus on the family where we believe families are the child's first teachers. Together with parents and staff, we can create a climate where children learn by being active participants in their learning environment through play and guided instruction and feel loved and safe.

Almost Mom was founded in 1998 to provide a service that was not generally available. Almost Mom's concept is an alternative to traditional daycare homes. In a "home away from home" atmosphere, with small groups. Almost Mom's philosophy is to provide nothing less than the finest possible environment for the education and development of young children. Our highest priority is on the development of self-esteem, confidence, and a love of learning.

The educational goal is to utilize fun and creativity to foster a love of learning, an attitude of inquiry and discovery, and a sense of confidence in the child's ability to master new situations or tasks.

The importance of personality and emotional growth also cannot be overstated. The children are taught verbal labels for feelings and are helped to explore their feelings in small group discussions and story hours. The development of positive self-esteem is the cornerstone of healthy emotional development. Our program is designed to provide many opportunities for personal accomplishment and enhancement of self-concept.

Our carefully planned and supervised physical activities assure proper development of fine and gross motor skills and strength and coordination. In addition, social skill development is emphasized throughout all of the Almost Mom Programs.

Our facility is not a daycare but a big extended family that has a philosophy of providing nothing less than the finest possible environment for young children's safe and healthy development.

Heidi Pearson
Director/Owner

Children's Bill of Rights

We, the faculty and staff of Almost Mom, pledge to recognize and honor this Children's Bill of Rights.

Every child in our program has the right to be respected as an individual with concern for their interests, handicaps, unique talents, and individual style and pace of learning.

Every child has the right to a calm, warm, loving, and nurturing environment where physical attention (hugs and cuddling) is freely given so that a child feels valued and secure and is thus able to develop positive self-esteem.

Every child has the right to personal attention, a relaxed atmosphere, and freedom of choice in their daily activities, which can only be provided in small classes.

Every child has the right to have all physical needs met, including the need for rest throughout the day.

Every child has the right to a clean, safe environment to spend their day.

Every child has the right to experience various activities throughout the day that helps them develop a feeling of independence and confidence. In addition, these activities provide opportunities for creativity, exploration, learning, and development in language skills, gross and fine motor skills, cognitive skills, social skills, and emotional, psychological maturation.

Inclusive Statement

Almost Mom works to realize the dignity and worth of each individual and to eliminate human barriers based on all assumptions which prejudice.

Parents must inform Almost Mom of any special needs or disability present in their child. Almost Mom requires documentation of special needs or disabilities to allow for reasonable accommodations. Parents may be asked to sign release forms to enable sharing information between staff and other professionals and family agencies. Parents are expected to work cooperatively with the staff and other professionals and follow through on recommendations and action plans submitted by Almost Mom.

Conferences

Development skills will be conducted three times per year for each child, and conferences will be scheduled to discuss your child's results. Almost Mom and the parents will discuss individual goals for each child to accomplish throughout the year. Support from parents is crucial for the success of each child. Regular monitoring and conferences will continue to evaluate the success of individualized plans or re-evaluation as needed.

Confidentiality & Liability & Privacy

It is the policy of Almost Mom to protect the privacy of the families in our care. We will do so by following these procedures:

- We will abide by our state's privacy laws.
- We will only share information with our state's child care licensing department that I am required to share.
- You may have access to your child's information during scheduled parent/teacher conferences.
- We will keep all records and information about your child and your family private and confidential unless we have your written permission to reveal specific information to another family member assigned and on file to pick up your child.
- Almost Mom is not liable for any arrangements made outside the premises between staff members and families.

I ask that you also respect my family's privacy of by not sharing any information you learn about my family with others without my written permission.

Grievance or Complaint Procedure

We are all part of the team working to support your family and providing the best care for your child. Almost Mom strives to meet all of your child's needs. We have an open-door policy and encourage you to bring any concerns to us to discuss the issue and resolve the matter to your satisfaction. If you have a concern, don't hesitate to contact the Director of Almost Mom. Sensitive issues will be discussed privately and prompt action from parents and teachers is necessary to facilitate quick resolution. We will define the problem, generate possible solutions, develop a plan of action and decide on a means of progress assessment.

In the event that an agreeable solution is unlikely and the parents or Almost Mom choose to terminate enrollment, a two week written notice is required.

**Texas Department of Family & Protective Services Child
Care Licensing**

1501 Circle Drive Ste 130
Fort Worth, TX 76119
800-582-8286 or 817-321-8604
www.dfps.state.tx.us

You may ask for our most recent Licensing inspection report or questions about the [Minimum Standard Rules For Registered and Licensed Child-Care Homes](#)

DFPS is the agency that licenses child care. DFPS has quality minimum standards for all licensed programs to ensure high educational value, and health and safety for all children. Having a license means that we have demonstrated that we have met the minimum standards outlined in the DFPS regulations.

Almost Mom is participating in the **CACFP** food program through Nutritional Advantage, Inc. The following statement is provided to all families and applies to all staff who help manage this program.

“In the operation of all Child Nutrition programs, children are not discriminated against because of race, sex, color, national origin, age, disability, religion or political belief.”

Anyone who believes they have been discriminated against should immediately write to:

USDA Director, Office of Civil Rights
Room 326-W, Whitten Bldg
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410

WE ARE REQUIRED BY LAW TO REPORT ANY SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT.

The phone number for Reporting Abuse and Neglect is 1-800-252-5400.

Welcome

Welcome to Almost Mom's Home Child Care. We want to offer you a safe, clean, and loving environment for your child. Our goal is for you to feel confident in your decision to leave your child in our care. If you ever have any questions or concerns, we are always here to listen to them. Feel free to drop in anytime to visit our home while your child is in our care. We encourage your participation.

One of the essential elements in Licensed Family Home Child Care is mutual respect between both parents and the provider. We have a great responsibility for the health, care, and teaching of your child. However, for many hours during the day, we are the nurturer to whom your child looks on and depends. Therefore, it is only reasonable that you respect us as more than a "babysitter," and we respect you as the parent. Mutual understanding will ultimately benefit your child. And choosing to leave your most precious possession in our care while you are absent, we will provide your child with the type of care you would give them at home.

Background In Childcare & Child Involvement

- Specializes in infant through pre-kindergarten ages
- Licensed daycare provider in Fort Worth, Texas 10/09 thru current
- Registered daycare provider in Keller, Texas 4/06 thru 10/09
- Registered daycare provider in Republic, Missouri 11/26/01 thru 6/3/05
- Licensed daycare provider in Lincoln, Nebraska 11/10/98 thru 2/2/01
- Certified Infant/Child CPR and First Aid
- Frequent state inspections by the local licensing office
- Food Program – Frequent food inspections
- Background checks
- Actively involved in local Family Child Care Association
- Actively involved in Texas Association for Family Child Care
- Constantly updating training in child development

Communication

We encourage you to maintain an open dialogue with us, as communication between Parents and Educators is the foundation for a solid working relationship and a good child care experience. When we accept a new family into our business, we want to be sure that we can openly share any concerns or questions. It is essential that there is a similar childcare philosophy between us. We welcome questions, feedback, or discussions of any kind oriented towards a positive outcome for the child(ren).

We publish a monthly [newsletter](#) that will explain some of the activities we are doing, our current curriculum themes, events that will be happening during that month, our days off, and any other pertinent or fun information that may be of interest to you. Of course, you are always welcome to contribute to our newsletter.

Parents of infants will receive a daily note. Some specific things you may find on this paper would be feedings, diaper changes, schedule, temperament, and things to remember.

You are encouraged to call/text/email me at any time between the hours of 6:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. If you call during the day, please be aware that we may be busy with the children and may not answer the phone. If you leave a message on our voice mail, we will call you back as soon as possible. The best time to call during the day is during our daily quiet time.

We look forward to a terrific partnership with you and your child.

Parent Pockets

Parent pockets are located in the hall closet. Please check your pocket **daily** for various information, including book orders, newsletters, memos, art projects, etc. Parents may also put weekly payments, change of schedule forms, medication forms, etc., in Heidi's lock box.

Enrollment

The STATE OF TEXAS requires all enrollment forms **must** be completed and in our possession **before** we can assume the responsibility of caring for your child. There are no exceptions. You are required to keep me informed of any change in address, telephone numbers, and any other pertinent information on these forms as they arise, **including notifying me of any updated childhood immunizations**. Written notice should be given within seven (7) days of the change. The [Enrollment Package](#) is available online. Any questions regarding the completion of the documents, please feel free to ask.

Immunizations: Each child enrolled or admitted must meet and continue to meet applicable immunization requirements specified by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS). This requirement applies to all children from birth through 14 years. In addition, each child must maintain current immunization records in care, including any immunization exemptions or exceptions.

All immunizations required for the child's age must be completed by the date of admission, unless: (1) The child is exempt or excepted from an immunization by the date of admission; or (2) The child is homeless or a child in foster care and is provisionally admitted for up to 30 days if evidence of immunization is not available.

Exemptions or exceptions immunization requirements: A child may be exempt from immunization requirements for a medical reason or reason of conscience, including a religious belief. To claim an exemption. For some diseases, a child who previously had an illness and is accordingly naturally immune from it may qualify for an exception to the immunization requirements for the condition. You can obtain an [exemption or exception form](#).

There is a **non-refundable registration fee of \$150** due at the signing of the *contract*. This covers the paperwork and the time the Director takes out for the interviews. Contracts, policies, procedures, and fees will be reviewed in **July** of every year and may be subject to change at that time. The contract renewal fee is \$100 per child.

Enrollment is granted without discrimination concerning sex, race, color, religion, or political belief.

Siblings of currently enrolled children receive the highest prior-

ity on our waiting list.

Trial Period

To ensure proper adjustments, all children enter Almost Mom on a trial basis for one month (30 calendar days) beginning on your child's first day of care. During the first month, either party may cancel with a one-day notice. After the trial period, the terminating party must give a two-week notice, and tuition is to be paid in full regardless of which party terminated. Therefore, if you cannot provide a two-week notice, you will need to pay the two-week tuition regardless. Any pre-paid fees are non-refundable.

Termination

Care can be terminated with two (2) weeks' written notice. Please fill out the appropriate ([*Two-week Notice Form*](#)) online. No other notification will be accepted. The entire two (2) weeks' pay will be due at the time of notice. Termination notices **will not** be accepted while the provider or parent is on vacation.

We reserve the right to give written notice of immediate termination where extreme circumstances affect the well-being of anyone at Almost Mom or other children in attendance (with all fees due and payable).

Without notification, absences of more than one day can result in an automatic withdrawal (with all fees due and payable). Re-admittance, if accepted, will include all back pay including, late fees. If parent/guardian breaches contract, they will be liable for all collection, attorney, court, any/and all costs involved in the breach. We will also give two (2) weeks' notice if the child is terminated from care (with all fees due and payable).

Guarantee Your Child's Space

If it is decided that your child(ren) will enroll with Almost Mom, and you will not be placing your child(ren) with me until a later date, you must pay the registration fee and the amount of one weekly tuition upfront to reserve your space. We will guarantee your child's position for up to two (2) weeks. All fee rules apply. The registration fee and holding fee are **NON-REFUNDABLE** if you decide (for any reason) that you will not be enrolling your child(ren).

We currently only have full-time positions available. A full-time position is considered anything three days a week and 6 hours a day. However, you may opt to pay for a full-time position to guarantee a part-time position.

Current child(ren) enrolled at Almost Mom will need to re-enroll for the following year. To re-enroll, you must pay the registration fee upfront to reserve your child's position. All fees and paperwork will need to be handed in at least 30 days before your enrollment for the current year.

Tuition & Payment

Specific rates will be outlined in your contract. Payment is Monday regardless if the child/children are here that day or not, due to illness or vacation. All payments are to be made **prior to services rendered**. Parents are expected to pay according to the terms of their contract. **Please make checks payable to Almost Mom**. Any overpayment will be credited to your account for the following week. Tuition costs are to guarantee your child's enrollment, not the amount days or hours in care.

Late Payment Fee

There is a charge of \$15 per day that payment is not received (to include Sat & Sun). If the fee isn't paid by the end of business Monday, service will be **halted** until the outstanding balance is paid. Continued late payments will result in termination of services (with all fees due and payable). We ask you to consider how you would feel if your employer came to you on your expected payday and told you your paycheck would be delayed?

Returned Check Fee

There is a charge of \$25 plus any additional costs incurred for any returned checks. Service will be **halted** until full payments in cash is made. In addition, if there are more than two (2) returned checks in any one given year, you will be required to pay with cash or money order from that point on.

Taxes

You will be supplied with a W-10 tax form of all child care fees paid for the year. This will be given to you in January of each year. You may request a statement at any time.

Overtime: Late Pickup/Early Drop Off Fee

It is your responsibility to have your child picked up on time. If you know you will be unavoidably late, it is your responsibility to have an authorized alternate person pick up your child. It is not our responsibility to tell you that we have plans after childcare hours so that you can be here on time.

Bad traffic or weather (except in extreme situations) will not be an accepted late excuse, and you will be charged accordingly. Please remember that it is your responsibility to allow ample time to get here to pick up your child on time. In extremely bad weather, a phone call or text is expected to let me know you are on your way.

We would not want you to put yourself in danger in rushing to our home to be on time, but we would still expect to be reimbursed for our services at the **unscheduled overtime** rate of \$1.00 a minute. You will need to pay when you pick up your child, and this should be **cash only**. PLEASE DO NOT ASK IF YOU OWE A LATE CHARGE WHEN YOU KNOW YOU HAVE BEEN LATE (It is embarrassing for all of us). Job-related lateness will not be excused for any reason. **Scheduled overtime** with a minimum of 24-hour notice will be at the rate of \$20.00 per hour per child.

Holidays, vacation, and days off

Almost Mom is open 12 months a year from 6:30 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday except for holidays and in-service days. You will be asked to designate your child’s hour of attendance at the time of enrollment. Almost Mom’s closing schedule, including holidays and teacher in-service days, will also be provided at the time of enrollment.

Fees are to be paid when children are gone for any reason, including illness, public health emergencies, vacation days, and holidays. This is necessary to guarantee your child’s reserved position in childcare. Therefore, advanced notice of the vacation you take is required.

[Almost Mom Calendar](#)

Paid Holidays:

August	NONE
September	Labor Day
October	NONE
November	Thanksgiving Day & Day After
December	Christmas Day & Day After
January	New Years Eve &New Years Day
February	Presidents Day
March	Good Friday (March or April)
April	NONE
May	Memorial Day
June	(Tentative Weekly Vacation)
July	4 th Of July

* If any normally observed holiday falls on a Saturday, we will take off the Friday before. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, we will take off the Monday after.

Paid Vacation: In addition to the above paid holidays. Almost Mom will receive 14 paid vacation days per year. Almost Mom will also give advanced notice of the time we will be taking off.

Bad Weather

Almost Mom will adhere by **Keller ISD** bad weather days. If Keller ISD is closed, we will be closed.

In the event of a power outage longer than two hours, our facility will be required to close. Parents will be notified and will be given 2 hours notice to pick up your child. If a child is not picked up during that time, overtime fees will start to incur.

A copy of our business emergency plan will be available upon request.



Arrivals/Departures

Please send your child(ren) clean, well-rested, dressed for the day, and fed (if arriving after 8:00 am, 12:00 pm). Infants must be taken out of their car seat and handed to one of the teachers. It is normal for some children to have difficulty separating from their parents in the morning or not wanting to leave when it is time to go home. Please be very brief during these transition times. The longer you prolong the departure, the more difficult it can get, and we need to focus our attention on all the children. In our experience, children are almost always quick to get involved in play or activities as soon as their parents are gone.

Do not drop your child off during naptime ([see schedule](#)). Please fill out a [change of schedule](#) form no later than **8:00 AM** if your child is going to be absent that day. If we do not hear from you by 8:00 AM, we will be contacting you. This is for the safety of your child.

Arrival/Departure is also a time of testing when two different authority figures are present (the parent and the provider). Sometimes children will test to see if the rules still apply. Therefore, we ask that parents/guardians please support and enforce Almost Mom rules during arrivals and departures. If you do not, we will remind the child that their behavior is inappropriate and correct, if needed.

Firearms and Weapons:

Except if you are a police officer, Almost Mom prohibits anyone entering the daycare from carrying any type of firearms, weapons, or ammunition for any reason. Violation of this policy will be ground to immediate termination from child care.

Signing In & Out

We are required to have all parents sign in and out for pick-up and drop-off each day. A sign-in/out sheet, pen, and a clock are on the bulletin board for your convenience. This gives a written record of the child's attendance, hours, and the person who brought/picked up the child each day.

You are responsible for your child during drop-off/pickup times, and please be in control of your child(ren). Children are not permitted to go out to their car or run out the door unattended for their safety. Your child will only be allowed to leave with

a person whose name is on file as a person authorized to pick-up your child. [A written notice](#) from a parent (prior to the child being picked up) stating the person's name to pick up your child will be required. In addition, identification will be asked for upon arrival before your child will be allowed to leave with them. This is strictly for your child's safety.

Please Note: If there is a [court order](#) keeping one parent away from the child(ren), we must have a copy in the child's file. Otherwise, we cannot prevent the parent from picking up the child(ren).

You are scheduled for childcare for hours listed in your Contract and Rate Agreement based on your work hours and commute time; this is **not to exceed more than 10 hours per day**. Anything over 10 hours per day will be charged at the overtime rate. We require two weeks notice in writing if you need to change your enrollment hours. We reserve the right to terminate your childcare arrangement if your new hours do not work (with all fees due and payable). If you drop off before or pick up after these times, you will be charged an early/late fee. (Examples: If you put 4:30 p.m. as your pick-up time, your late fees will begin at 4:31 p.m. even though child care is open until 5:00 p.m. If you put 8:30 a.m. as your drop-off time and you drop off earlier than that, you will be charged an early fee even though child care is open at 6:30 a.m.)

Repeated late pick-ups/early drop-offs, can be grounds for termination of services (with all fees due and payable) even if you call us to let us know. Calling us to inform us that you will unavoidably be late does not waive your late fees. This is to assure that children are picked up on time as not to impose on the staff at Almost Mom. Late drop-off does not constitute late pick-up. Please choose your drop-off and pick-up times carefully. We go by our clock.

Daily Change in Schedule

If you need to change your child's schedule for the day, **examples:** early pick-up, late drop-off, vacation, dr. appt., etc. Please fill out a [Change in Schedule](#) form as far in advance as possible, to guarantee we are available (with all fees due and payable).

Symptoms Requiring Removal Of Child From Child-care (no exceptions)

Please do not bring your child if they are sick; the health and well-being of all the children here are of the utmost importance to us. For the protection of the children, we must insist on a strict adherence to our illness policy. Please read it carefully.

Communicable Diseases: Not Permitted by law in childcare. Some of these illnesses are, but are not limited to, **Infectious Conjunctivitis (pink eye), Impetigo, Hepatitis A, Scabies, Ringworm, Infectious Diarrhea, Chicken Pox, Scarlet Fever, Lice, Strep Throat.** If your child is thought to have a communicable disease, you will be notified and asked to pick them up. Your child will be accepted back into care when no longer contagious and must have a doctor's note saying so. All other parents will be notified of the possibility of a communicable disease and what symptoms to watch for.

Fever: 100 degrees or higher, Not Permitted. A child needs to be fever-free for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to childcare; that means the child is fever-free without aid of any fever-reducing substance. Administering Tylenol to reduce your child's fever so that you can bring them to Almost Mom's is grounds for termination.

Diarrhea: Not Permitted. Children may return to care 24 hours after beginning an antibiotic or needs to be diarrhea-free for a minimum of 24 hours. Infants and toddlers with fevers and/or diarrhea pertaining to teething will only be accepted into care with a doctor's note stating that these symptoms are due to teething.

Vomiting: Not Permitted. If your child vomits while at Almost Mom, you will be expected to come within the hour to pick your child up. The child must stay home until 24 hours have passed with no vomiting episodes.

Running Nose: Your child may be brought to Almost Mom's if they have a common cold (occasional slight cough, clear runny nose, occasional sneezing). **Discharge of any color other than clear is not acceptable in child care.** A constant runny nose, which lasts longer than a week and you suspect may be due to allergies, will require you to bring a doctor's note stating the same.

Rashes: Not Permitted. Any rash other than diaper rash must accompany the child to child care with a note from a doctor stating it is not contagious.

Runny or Crusty Eyes: Not Permitted. Watery, matted, or red/pink eyes are not acceptable in child care under any circumstances.

Excessive Crankiness: If your child is irritable, excessively whining or crying, wants to be constantly held, or requires more attention than we can provide without jeopardizing the health, safety, or well being of the other children in our care, must be kept home regardless of the presence of other symptoms. If this occurs during child care hours, you will be called to come pick up your child.

Lice: Not permitted back to child care until **after** the **second** hair treatment.

24 Hour Rule: Your child must be free from any of the above symptoms for a minimum of 24 hours before they can return to child care. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** If you arrive in the morning and tell me your child's fever broke at noon the previous day, you will be asked to leave. If you arrive and tell me your child vomited in the middle of the night and was feeling fine in the morning, you will be asked to leave.

Please take these rules seriously. It is always best to call us and ask if you are unsure whether or not you may bring your child. It is always best for you to have a backup plan available to you if your child is ill and you cannot miss work. Any infractions of the rules and you will be called at work or school to come and pick up your child. Repeated calls to have you return to Almost Mom to pick up your child may result in termination (with all fees due and payable). If someone in my family has any of the above symptoms, we will call you the previous evening or as soon as we are aware of the situation to determine whether or not you want your child exposed to such symptoms. We will ask you to make other arrangements if we feel the illness in my family will hinder the quality of care we give your child.

Child becomes ill at child care

Should your child become ill at Almost Mom's, we will care for and comfort the sick child and their symptoms. Until your child is picked up, we will notify you of your child's symptoms and ask how you would like to treat the symptoms for example Tylenol or Motrin for fever. You will be expected to pick up your child immediately. If the child is not picked up within one hour from notification, the emergency contact person will be called. When you arrive, we will give you a *Sick Child Information Sheet* documenting your child's symptoms and any medication administered with dosing amount and time given, so you will know the next time to administer additional medication.

Medical Emergencies

We must have a number to reach you at ALL TIMES. If we cannot reach either parent within a 30-minute time frame, the alternate emergency number given to me will be called. All possible care is taken to provide a safe and healthy environment; however, children have accidents. We are certified in Pediatric CPR and have emergency first aid training.

In case of emergency, we will administer the necessary first aid required, an ambulance will be called, and your child will be transported to the hospital. You will be notified as soon as possible. Parents will be asked to sign an *Incident Report Form* acknowledging that they have been notified of the accident. A copy of this form is placed in your child's file. All costs involved in emergency treatment and the cost of an ambulance are your responsibility. The owner/staff and my family cannot be held liable for any sickness/injury of either the parent/guardian or child while on these premises or while the child is in the company of myself/staff during outings. For minor injuries like bumps and bruises, we will provide first aid, and a *Boo Boo Report* will be taken and sent home.

Vision and Hearing Testing

Children who have turned four years of age must have a current vision and hearing screening completed before being admitted back at Almost Mom's. A hearing and vision exam must be completed within 120 calendar days after their 4th birthday if a child turns four years old during the school year.

Disaster and Emergency Response Plan:

Fire/Tornado/Hurricane:

- ◆ Practice drills are conducted monthly and recorded.
- ◆ Parent Notification: A staff member carries a print version of contact information and a picture of each child during all emergency drills.
- ◆ All parents will receive an emergency evacuation plan card to carry with them at all times, which includes all emergency contact information.
- ◆ If interested, ask to see a copy of our emergency preparedness plan.

Our home is equipped with at least two fire extinguishers, smoke detectors as well as a carbon monoxide detector.

Almost Mom is also enrolled with **SNAP** (Special Needs Assistance Program) with the Fort Worth-Tarrant County Office of Emergency Management. This program is designed to help emergency responders better prepare for disasters at the residence of 8932 Risky Trl Fort Worth, TX.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has placed a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Public Alert Radio within Almost Mom. This NOAA Public Alert Radio is intended for public safety and the purpose of providing alerts and warnings. Effective alert systems are critical to supporting school and community emergency response.

Keller Emergency Radio Station 1650 AM

Emergency Assistance: Emergency numbers are posted by each telephone. Vehicles are equipped with cellular phones for emergency use.

Health and Safety Matters

Hand washing

- ◆ Hands will be washed before and after meals, after bathroom use, after nose blowing and wiping, and after handling an ill child.

Teeth Brushing

- ◆ Every child with teeth will brush after breakfast and lunch.

Toys & Equipment

- ◆ Toys will be sterilized daily or as needed.

Medication

All medications, prescription or otherwise, must be given to me permitting me to administer medication. Please fill out the appropriate [*Medication Form*](#).

If you have given your child medication in the morning before dropping off, please fill out a *Self Report Medication Form* available on the bulletin board. This is for your child's protection. In addition, should they need any medical attention we would give emergency personnel vital information regarding your child's medical symptoms.

Health Crisis/Pandemic: Quarantine/Closure

Our program may be forced to close down temporarily because of a public health emergency, such as coronavirus. This may happen, and I am forced to shut down by a government agency, or because we believe it is in the best interest of our families that we do so. If this happens, your child's tuition rate will only be charged half of your normal contracted rate to guarantee your child's enrollment.

Can We Go Outside?

Almost Mom Rules for Outside Play

Please make sure your child is appropriately dressed.

Too Hot

Temperature 100°/Heat Index 100° ...No Outside activities.

Temperature 95°/Heat Index 95°Outside activities is limited to 25 minutes with unlimited access to water during outdoor exposure.

Temperature 90°/Heat Index 90°Outside activities is limited to 30 minutes with unlimited access to water during outdoor exposure.

This means that:

- If the temp is 95°, but the heat index is 101°, you cannot go out.
- If the temp is 95° and the heat index does not exceed 100°, you can go out for no more than 25 minutes, but the children need to have access to water.
- If the temp is 88°, but the heat index is 95°, you can go out for no more than 25 minutes, but the children need to have access to water.

Too Cold

Wind Chill Factor below 40° with rain.....No outside activity.

Wind Chill Factor below 40° without rain.....Outside activity is limited to 15 minutes BUT children must have the ability to cover all extremities.

Wind Chill Factor below 35°.....No outside activity.

This means that:

If a child wears shorts/skirt or has no coat, they cannot go outside if the wind chill is below 40°.

Too Hard to Breathe (Air Quality)

Green or Yellow.....No Limit to outside activity

Orange.....Children with Asthma must remain inside.

Red or Purple.....No outdoor activities are allowed.

Air Quality is announced on Morning news programs.

House Rules

There are specific house rules that all children will be taught to follow. This is for the safety and well-being of everyone. We expect children to treat our home and their surroundings with respect.

NO running, jumping, or screaming inside the house.

NO hitting, pushing, biting, grabbing, kicking, spitting, pinching.

NO roughhousing, climbing, sitting on, pulling, or lifting/
carrying other children.

Children are **not allowed** to walk around with food, cups, or bottles or have food in the playroom at any time.

NO standing or climbing on toys, chairs, tables, or furniture.

NO mistreatment of toys - i.e., standing on, throwing, bashing, hitting with. Parents will be responsible for the cost of replacing the toy if this happens.

NO going out the door anytime without an adult.

NO name-calling, teasing, swearing, foul language such as “shut up” or potty talk.

NO gum allowed.

NO guns or violent play allowed.

NO willful destruction of property. Parents will be responsible for the cost to replace.

Behavior Management & Guidance

Setting boundaries is a gradual process that extends throughout childhood. Boundaries teach children to develop their self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction so they can ultimately be independent and responsible. At Almost Mom, we will only use positive methods of guidance. Ultimately, we want your child to understand acceptable behavior and self-control (ex: good choices and bad choices). Remember, setting boundaries is always individualized and consistent for setting each child up to succeed.

As a parent never, underestimate how intelligent your child is. Yes, they are your baby, but your baby is extremely smart, and they understand what you are saying even before they can respond to your verbally. Children are natural-born pleasers; they want their authority figures in their lives to be proud of them. Therefore, to set your child up to succeed, instead of telling your child what NOT to do, tell them what they CAN do!

Behavior management is **NEVER** any form of physical punish-

ment at Almost Mom. It is against the law!

The Chair is a sacred place here at Almost Mom; a place of peace, a place to focus, a place to gather your emotions and think about making good choices, and sometimes a place to sit if you are feeling overstimulated and want to be alone.

Positive Reinforcement:

Children are constantly seeking attention, and it is always best to give positive attention.

Remind:

Every child will be reminded of behavior expectations daily by using clear and positive statements.

Redirect:

A child may be redirected to another activity and given an opportunity to try again at another time.

The Chair:

The child must find their “happy heart and happy face.”

Report:

If your child has ongoing guidance problems, the parents/guardian will receive a *Guidance Report* explaining the events and consequences. Therefore, if you are the parents are recognizing the same behavior at home, we will be able to work as a team to correct the child’s behavior.

Last Resort:

When a child’s behavior is continually upsetting or dangerous to others or themselves, a call will be placed to the parents for the child to be picked up. If problems persist and cannot be resolved, this can be a cause for termination of care at will.

Damage to Property:

Children are expected to treat all property located at the facility with respect, including but not limited to toys and furniture. In addition, parents agree to pay for the accidental or willful destruction of any property located at Almost Mom at the replacement cost, if such destruction was, in the sole option of Almost Mom, caused by the child.

Diapering

Disposable paper cover and latex gloves are used when changing diapers. Soiled diapers, wipes, gloves are immediately thrown away. The hands of the child and caregiver are washed thoroughly and dried with a paper towel. Diapers are changed as needed and are checked often. Creams, ointments, and powders are not routinely used. On occasions that these products are required, it will be discussed with parents. We very seldom have a problem with diaper rash. Most cases occur because of the child has been on certain medications.

Potty training

As parents have decided it is time to start potty training, we will be more than happy to help, providing that it is done when the child is **ready**. Some signs to look for include appropriate language skills to communicate the need to use the potty, **staying dry** for long periods of time, the ability to dress and undress self, and **interest** in staying dry or clean. We take a very relaxed attitude towards potty training; children potty train quickly when ready.

Your child is about to begin a new chapter in their life called potty training. This is a very important event because your child is about to become a big girl or boy. And for you, the parents, this is a new chapter in your life as well. Your child is going to see how much patience and understanding *you really* have. Remember, every child learns at their own pace, so let's all have fun teaching your child to become more independent.

While your child is learning to use the potty, please **NO** overalls, onesies, belts, buckles, snaps, buttons, or zippers; we are a true believer in having a “diaper party”, that means we celebrate not wearing diapers anymore and we throw away our diapers as a family. Our recommendation would be to go to the store with them and let your child pick out their new underwear. We suggest wearing underwear every day for potty training. If you feel the need for your child to wear plastic pants over the underwear, that is fine. The whole idea is for your child to feel the wetness when they have an accident. This is where your patience and understanding come into play as parents.

- Be consistent is the number one rule. What we do at Almost Mom, you as parents must follow at home.
- 20 minutes after your child has something to drink, they will likely feel the need to go potty. At that point, your child will sit on the potty chair or the big potty, whatever your child prefers until they go potty or 3 or 4 minutes is up. We will read potty books, sing a song, whatever it takes for your child to feel comfortable enough to go potty. If, after a few minutes, your child does not feel the need to go potty, they will pull up their pants, and we will return to the playroom. We will set a timer for another 5-7 minutes, and when the timer goes off, we will repeat the process.
- We use a reward system for going potty, i.e., stickers, extra privileges, etc.
- At least two (3) extra sets of clothes must remain at Almost Mom
- Pull-ups are a good idea to use at bedtime if your child can not stay dry at night.

If, after 2 (two) weeks, your child is not attempting to follow the potty training schedule, they may not be ready to use the potty. And if your child is not ready to use the potty, it is easier to keep them in diapers until they are ready to train again at a later time. If you have any questions or suggestions about potty training at any time, please feel free to talk to us.

Meals

Almost Mom participants in the **Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)** and will make every attempt to provide enjoyable and nutritious meals for your child. Please understand your child's health, and because of our involvement with the nutrition program, we can't always accommodate their selective tastes. However, we do offer a variety of foods.

Mealtimes are as listed. **Should your child arrive later than meal times, you will be responsible for feeding them before coming to Almost Mom.**

BREAKFAST: (7:00-8:00) milk or fruit juice, fruit, and grain product such as cereal, oatmeal, pancake

LUNCH: (11:30-12:00) milk, a meat or meat sub, two veggies or one fruit, a grain product such as bread, macaroni

SNACK: (2:30-3:30) fruit, water, and some kind of grain product such as crackers, gold fish, graham, etc.

[Menus](#) are posted on bulletin board at all times.

For **infants**, you supply all formula or breast milk and baby food until their first birthday. Infants will be fed as I'm directed by you.

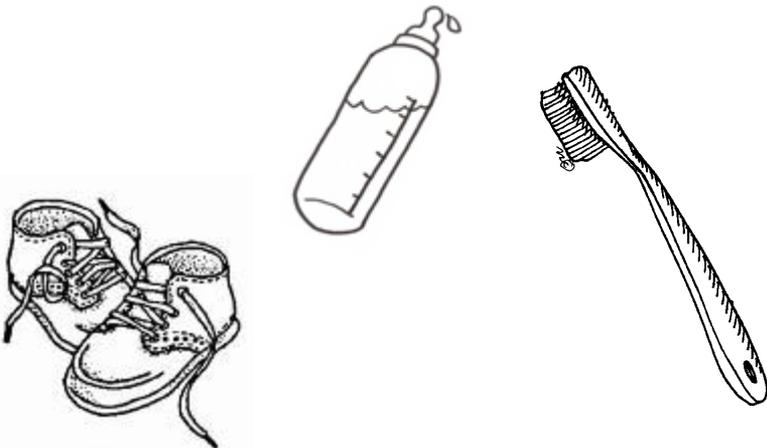
Special Diets-If a child has a particular dieting need, substantiated by medical evaluation, we must be informed and given a doctor's note. Substitute meals or snacks may then be brought in from home, and it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide.

Birthdays -Each child receives special recognition on their birthday. Simple celebrations are held during afternoon snack time. Parents wanting to provide snacks on this special day are welcome.

Supplies needed:

(all items need to be marked with child's name)

- ◆ Provide any special items other than those provided by Almost Mom
- ◆ Be sure child is dressed appropriately and comfortable (PLAYCLOTHES)
- ◆ A change of clothes to remain at Almost Mom is REQUIRED
- ◆ A washable blanket for naptime that may remain at Almost Mom's
- ◆ Toothbrush
- ◆ Swimsuit and swim diapers (summertime only)
- ◆ Sunscreen (summertime only)
- ◆ Diapers and wipes
- ◆ Diaper creams or ointments
- ◆ Bottles
- ◆ Baby food
- ◆ Infant sleep sack
- ◆ Almost Mom cannot be responsible for personal belongings from home, so it is requested that items including toys and games be brought to Almost Mom only on designed "share days." Children become very territorial with their toys, and this often causes problems between children. War toys, weapon toys, violent action figures are not permitted at any time. Please also be aware of possible choking hazards. Toys must be able to fit into your child's box to ensure your child's toy is returned home safely.



Daily Schedule

Young children, toddlers, and babies enjoy a structured schedule that allows for flexibility. A schedule helps the day flow more smoothly, allows the children to anticipate coming events, and aids in achieving various goals. We will adhere to our written schedule to the best of our ability, considering that anything can happen when children are involved. However, there will be times when we have to make adjustments to the schedule. Therefore, we would appreciate it if you consider our schedule when picking up or dropping off your children.

Activities

The main goal at Almost Mom is to provide a variety of fun learning experiences for all children. There are various activities like free play, reading, arts & crafts, music/singing, dancing, pretend play, puzzles, games, math, science, and letter, shape, color, and number recognition in a monthly theme format. Some of the projects will be taken home to share with the family, and others will be ones that you can ask about. The goal at Almost Mom is to have fun and provide a little extra learning stimulation for the older children. It will not be a rigorous academic program as young children still learn best from participating in and observing their environment. Music helps to develop young brains and will play a strong role in day-to-day activities. We may have special music activities and play music during other activities, such as during arts and crafts or meal times.

Indoor play– There are a variety of age-appropriate toys for indoor play. Toys may be rotated or placed temporarily out of use so that the children do not become bored. Younger children have less-developed organizational skills and can get easily frustrated or upset when too many toys to choose from. It is also more difficult for them to help with clean-up when there are toys everywhere because it is so overwhelming. For this reason, during free playtimes, the child can choose one box of toys at a time to play with. They will be shown how to put those things away before selecting another box.

Outdoor play- We will be playing outdoors every day that weather permits. Please make sure that your child is appropriately dressed for outdoor play at all times. Our activities will include taking walks, backyard play, water play (sprinkler play in summer), bike/toy riding, sandbox, and more. Our outdoor play will probably range from 20 - 45 minutes during spring and fall, and in the summer, it may be two hours or longer (maybe not all at once). Children will use sunscreen when long outdoor play periods are planned; children will use sunscreen/sunblock to protect them from possible sunburns.

Water Play- Almost Mom has many activities involving water play throughout the year. These include but are not limited to sensory water tables, water bottles, sprinkler play, and bathing a soiled child.

Nap/Rest Time- All children under the age of 5 are required to lie down for a rest period in the afternoon. No child is forced to sleep; however, they must remain quiet and either nap, rest, read, or play quietly during this period. Rest time gives everyone a much-needed break during the day. Without rest time, some children are argumentative in the afternoon, short-tempered with others, and not real happy when they go home in the evening. Naptime is our only opportunity to take a break, clean up after lunch, do paperwork, fill out daily notes, and do activity planning. If your child has a special blanket or stuffed animal that they sleep with, please send it along. We ask that you please avoid picking up or dropping off your child during nap time, as it disturbs the other children's rest period. Infants nap at varying times and their schedules will be accommodated. Somewhere between 12 and 18 months, children usually drop down to one nap per day.

Education & Curriculum

Heidi has been writing infant thru preschool age curriculum for over 22 years. Our curriculum consists of age-appropriate learning and activities that will advance your child in their learning progress toward kindergarten and beyond

All activities are modified to meet your child's individual needs and abilities.

- **Language Arts:**

listening, communication, reading, writing

- **Physical Development:**

fine motor, health & safety, gross motor

- **Mathematics:**

numbers, shapes, patterns, logic

- **Creative Development:**

visual art, music & dance, dramatic play

- **Science:**

life science, earth science, physical science, technology

- **Socio-emotional development:** Social relationships, self-concept, self-direction

- **Morality:**

Bible lessons & Bible verses

Monthly Concepts:

Color, shape, number, letter

Weekly themes:

We list each week what our theme will be along with a book. In addition, we support the love of reading through literacy and support parents by offering Scholastic book orders every month.

- **Monday:** Manipulatives
- **Tuesday:** Art & crafts
- **Wednesday:** Writing
- **Thursday:** Science/Cooking
- **Friday:** Fun Friday

Almost Mom uses a holistic approach to appeal to the whole child.

Daily Time Schedule

Our schedule will be maintained as much as possible.

<p>6:45 – 7:00</p>	<p>Arrival</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ At arrival all parents must sign in on the in-sign sheet and initial (infants must also document the last time infant was fed and the amount given) ◆ Start infant sheets upon infant arrival (infant sheet consists of: times fed, amount given, diaper changes, meals eaten, napping, special happenings, child's mood, and supplies needed) ◆ Free play with quiet activities such as books, puzzles, table games, and non-messy art materials
<p>7:00 – 8:00</p>	<p>Breakfast (look at menu) as per State Food Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Children will help with clean up and play with table toys, read books, or listen to story tapes until everyone finishes breakfast and cleans up. ◆ Everyone needs to wash their hands and brush their teeth (everyone will need your help in the bathroom doing this)
<p>8:00 – 9:00</p>	<p>Outside play (weather permitting) Playtime (Play with kids in toy room)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ During extreme hot or cold weather, the infants will not go outside. ◆ Infants will be placed in swings, bouncers, or play yards. Those infants that walk will be allowed to do so at their leisure. Stroller rides may also take place at this time once or twice a week. I have a double and a quad stroller available. Each child is supported in a child size seat with a seat belt. The children love stroller ride time. <p>Child's Choice Free Play</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Children can choose from different stations or box. Examples include blocks, legos, animals, babies, cars & trucks, books, dress up, etc. ◆ Play time will consist of floor time which could include ball play, rolling, blocks, puppet play, stacking blocks, peek-a-boo, bubbles, etc. Infants will also have time in the swings, bouncers and exersaucers. I will plan activities to develop oral motor skills and the other senses of touch, sound, and smell. The activities planned will include sensory materials that are appropriate for infants. These activities will be tailored to accommodate the changing needs of each individual infant. ◆ Floor time exploration Example: tummy time ◆ Touching, feely books and textures ◆ Wooden puzzles
<p>9:00-10:00</p>	<p>Toileting Hand Washing/Change diapers (diapers in boxes labeled with names on shelves)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Diaper changes take place every 2 hours unless needed more frequently example: BM ◆ When changing diapers I will stress conversation with the infant to help develop the verbal skills a child needs. <p>Infant nap (infants nap in bassinets or playpens)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Babies are put down for nap from 9-10 (infants should be allowed to nap on their own schedules, and even older children may need to nap unexpectedly at times) <p>Arts & Crafts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Children will be able to explore their imagination, be creative, and learn it is okay to do a project their own way. Examples: painting, drawing, sidewalk chalk or paint, making a craft, etc.

<p>10:00 - 11:00</p>	<p>Circle Time (Curriculum)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Children will each get a turn being helper for the day, we do calendar, weather, counting, patterns, ABC's, finger plays etc. We also, have a color, shape, letter, number for each month.
<p>11:00 - 11:30</p>	<p>Dramatic Play or Cooking (Start making lunch) (look at menu) as per State Food Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Children will have chances to do cooking activities (i.e. make a pizza, silly faces, cookie, hot dog roll etc.) children will help on prep they do NOT actually cook. I will put meals in the oven etc. If there is not something appropriate for children to prep they will engage in dramatic play, where they can be a firefighter, dancer, mommy, daddy, anything they want to be.
<p>11:30- 12:00</p>	<p>Lunch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Serve food in family-style serving bowls and small pitchers so that children can learn to pour their own milk or juice and serve their own food. Give children time to practice with pitchers during water, play, and be tolerant of spills and accidents. ◆ Allow infants and toddlers to feed themselves when possible ◆ Allow children enough time to eat. Some children are slow eaters, ample time should be allowed. ◆ Try to establish a calm and pleasant atmosphere. ◆ Encourage children to talk about what they are eating, how the food is prepared, or something of a solely social nature. Pleasant conversation will create a comfortable atmosphere. ◆ Mealtimes are exceptionally good learning times. Children begin to serve themselves, try new goods, and develop attitudes about food and nutrition. ◆ From an early age, even as young as toddlers, children can learn to set the table, clean the table after eating, and put their napkins in the trash can. ◆ Have quiet activities available for those who are finished early ◆ Everyone needs to wash their hands and brush their teeth (everyone will need help in the bathroom doing this)
<p>12:00- 12:30</p>	<p>Story Time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ I will read the children stories while they sit on their nap/rest area. ◆ Plan a quiet activity for the children right before rest time, such as reading a story or playing soft music.

<p>12:30 – 2:30</p>	<p>Nap/Rest Time (Toddlers nap on mats in the baby room. Infants nap in bassinets or playpens)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Everyone has a rest period. Preschool children who can't sleep rest quietly on their cots, looking at books. As children wake up diapers are changed, hands are washed. Cots are put away. ◆ Remember that each child has a different sleep pattern and a different way of falling asleep: some drop off right away, some need to suck their thumbs, or pacifiers, to relax, and others keep their eyes open until the very last minute, reluctant to miss a single thing that may be going on. ◆ Have each child sleep in the same place and with the same cot every day. ◆ Encourage children to bring sleep toys or special blankets from home to use at rest time. These objects can be kept on the child's cot. Children should not be teased about needing these things; they will give them up when they are ready. ◆ Give children time to settle down at their own pace. Children should not be forced to sleep but encouraged to relax. Sleep usually follows. This is a good time to spend a few moments alone with each child. ◆ For children who can't sleep offer a quiet time. Children can read books ◆ Alternatives available for those who are finished early ◆ Infants will wake up from nap on their own time
<p>2:30 – 3:00</p>	<p>Toileting Hand Washing/Change diapers (diapers in boxes labeled with names on shelves)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Children will help pick up their nap mats and blankets and put away in hall closet.
<p>3:00-3:30</p>	<p>Snack Time (look at menu) as per State Food Program</p>
<p>3:30-4:00</p>	<p>Music Time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Children will get to dance, sing, play an instrument etc. during this time.
<p>4:00-5:00</p>	<p>Outside Play (weather permitting) Playtime (Play with kids in toy room)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Sidewalk chalk ◆ Nature hunt ◆ Bubbles ◆ Balls are always fun! So many different types of activities can be done with balls, and children love them. ◆ And you can't forget the playground it is always fun. <p>Projects are assembled, and parent information (infant sheets) made ready. Events of the day and plans for the next day are discussed with children and parents as they leave.</p> <p>Toileting Hand Washing/Change diapers (diapers in boxes labeled with names on shelves)</p> <p>Dismissal</p>

Pets

We have and could have in the future a family pet in our household. All of the animal's food and waste are not accessible to the children. All animals will be kept in good health and current on all vaccinations. While some interaction between children and animals is inevitable within a home setting, the children will be separated from and will never be left unsupervised with the animals.

Pictures

We may take candid pictures of the children during the day and on field trips for craft projects, newsletters, and decorating the playroom. If a child's image is used on the website, the child's name would not be included.

Incentive Program

If you refer a child for a full-time position, you will receive a free week of childcare after the child has been here for one month.

We believe all parents should have their child's vital information with them at all times. No one wants to think anything will happen to their child, but what if something did? Would you be prepared? Well, if you had a child identification card with you, you would always be prepared in an emergency. Therefore, everyone enrolled at Almost Mom's will receive a child identification card.

Donations

Items we always need:

- ◆ Toys, books, dolls, markers, infant supplies, etc., that your child has outgrown.
- ◆ Clothes or costumes for dress-up, paper for the copy machine or the never-ending drawings by our many artists!
- ◆ Any art supplies.
- ◆ All donations will be noted and appreciated.

Employing an Almost Mom employee as a nanny:

- ◆ If a family hires a current or past employee from Almost Mom to become a nanny, then the parents will be invoiced \$3,000 per child by Almost Mom. As stated in the employee handbook, the employee will also be invoiced.

NOTES