

# PARENT HANDBOOK

State of Texas  
Licensed  
Home Child Care



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First edition established 1998  
Updated 01/10/2024



**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 LLC 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.**

# Benefits of joining the Almost Mom LLC family

- Over two decades of knowledge working with children and parents
- Specializes in infant through pre-kindergarten ages
- Clean, organized, stimulating, and safe environment
- Lowest child to caregiver ratio
- Individual education curriculum for every child from infancy to kindergarten
- Parent-teacher conferences to openly communicate every child's development and enhance your child to their greatest potential
- Every child receives one-on-one educational instruction daily
- Interactive parent website
- Partnership with caregivers and parents to create a wonderful experience for everyone

Welcome to Almost Mom LLC'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 your child's health, care, and education.

However, for many hours during the day, we are the nurturer on whom your child looks on and depends. Therefore, it is only reasonable that you respect us as more than a "babysitter," and we respect and appreciate 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.

Dear Parent:

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

## Certifications

### ♥ 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

Almost Mom LLC is held to the highest standards required by the DFPS. In addition, Almost Mom LLC is ALWAYS up to date on all State and Local guidelines.

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.

**Almost Mom LLC is a Licensed Home Child Care #1731407 with frequent inspections from the local licensing office to ensure you receive the highest quality care for your children.**

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

### ♥ Child and Adult Care Food Program

Almost Mom LLC participates in the CACFP food program through *Red River Child Care Food Program, 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, 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

**Almost Mom LLC has frequent inspections from the CACFP to ensure you receive the highest quality nutritional home-cooked meals and education on healthy food choices for your children.**

**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 or report [online](#).

Our Staff receives annual training on recognizing warning signs and prevention associated with child abuse and neglect. Almost Mom LL supports all [local organizations](#) that provide information and resources to victims and their families.

To increase employee and parent's awareness of issues regarding child abuse and neglect, we urge staff, parents or guardians to visit this [site](#).

### ♥ **Texas Rising Star (TRS) Program**

**Texas Rising Star certified programs**, like Almost Mom LLC choose to exceed these minimum licensing standards by providing higher quality learning environments for the children in our program. This includes higher quality curriculum, classroom activities, teacher qualifications, and parent education.

Numerous research studies have shown that children who attend higher-quality early learning programs are more prepared for school entry than children who do not attend high-quality programs.

Almost Mom LLC has achieved the **HIGHEST** Texas Rising Star certification of four out of four, offering quality care that exceeds the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Child Care Regulation (CCR) minimum standards. Almost Mom is in a better position to positively affect the physical, social-emotional, and cognitive development of children. Therefore, we are increasingly able to positively affect the development of the children we serve daily.

## ♥ Caregiver Qualifications

All caregivers at Almost Mom LLC are certified by the State of Texas. This means everyone goes through an extensive criminal background process to ensure your child's highest safety and protection.

Almost Mom LLC's caregivers are the best at what they do.

- Are loving, caring, compassionate, patient, and really care about children
- Are the most reliable and dependable
- Are held to a high standard of continuing education
- Create building relationships with parents and children
- Provide a caring, stimulating, and creative environment
- Almost Mom LLC has an extremely low caregiver turnover because they love children and are set up to succeed at Almost Mom LLC



# Policies

## **Children's Bill of Rights**

We, the faculty and staff of Almost Mom LLC, 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, emotional, and psychological maturation.

## **Inclusive Statement**

Almost Mom LLC 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 LLC of any special needs or disability present in their child. Almost Mom LLC requires special needs or disabilities documentation to allow for reasonable accommodations. Parents will be asked to sign release forms to enable information sharing between staff and other professionals and family agencies.

Parents are expected to work cooperatively with the staff and oth-

er professionals and follow through on recommendations and action plans submitted by Almost Mom LLC.

**All activities are modified to meet each child's individual needs, abilities, and language.**

### **Non-Discrimination**

Equal educational opportunities are available for all children, without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, or parent/provider political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation or special needs, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state or local laws.

Our educational programs are designed to meet the varying needs of all students. We do not discriminate on the basis of special needs as long as a safe, supportive environment can be provided.

### **Confidentiality & Liability & Privacy**

It is the policy of Almost Mom LLC to protect the families' privacy 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 access 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 LLC 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 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 provide the best care for your child. Almost Mom LLC 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 LLC. 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.

If an agreeable solution is unlikely and the parents or Almost Mom LLC choose to terminate enrollment, a two-week written notice is required.

## 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 to 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. Unimmunized children are excluded during outbreaks of vaccine preventable illness as directed by the state health department.

## **Vision and Hearing Testing**

Children who are four must have a current vision and hearing screening completed before being enrolled at Almost Mom LLC's.

A hearing and vision exam must be completed within 120 calendar days after their 4th birthday.

## **Trial Period**

To ensure proper adjustments, all children enter Almost Mom LLC on a trial basis for one month (30 calendar days), beginning on your child's first day of care.

Our program is a fun and exciting place for children to experience and learn about their world and make new friends. But it does take time for a child to adjust to a new child care setting. I will try to make the adjustment easier by encouraging your children to discuss feelings, providing extra attention and support, participating in role-playing and reassuring them of their family's return.

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 must 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.

## **Waiting List**

Siblings of currently enrolled children receive the highest priority on our waiting list.

## **Guarantee Your Child's Space**

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

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

## **Termination**

Care can be terminated with two (2) weeks' written notice. Please fill out the appropriate [Two-week Notice Form](#). 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 LLC or other children in attendance (with all fees due and payable).

Without notification, more than one day of absences can result in an automatic withdrawal (with all fees due and payable). If accepted, re-admittance will include all back pay, including late fees.

If a 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).

# Education & Curriculum

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

## Learning Environment

Almost Mom LLC uses a holistic approach to appeal to the whole child. Healthy body and mind through exercise, play-based learning, and healthy nutritional options.

We provide a rich learning environment with curricula that are developmentally appropriate to each individual child. We have a flexible day routine that allows children to advance at their own pace. Learning and exploring are hands-on and are facilitated through our weekly lesson plans.

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 (found in our monthly newsletter)

### **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 **Screen Time only once a week**

### **Multiculturalism**

Multiculturalism is vital for all children because it sets social goals and promotes respect for all people and the environment we inhabit. I utilize books, music, games, and a wide range of activities as aids to teach children respect for our world and the diversity of life upon it.



# 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 childcare 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 oriented towards a positive outcome for the child(ren).

We publish a monthly [newsletter](#) that will explain the activities we are doing, our current curriculum themes, events that will be happening during that month, 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 between the hours of 6:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. Please be aware that we may be busy with the children and may not answer the phone. If you leave a message, we will get 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 information, including book orders, newsletters, memos, art projects, etc. Parents may also put weekly payments, medication forms, etc., in Heidi's lockbox.

## **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Development skill evaluations will be conducted three times per year for each child, and conferences will be scheduled to discuss your child's results.

Almost Mom LLC and the parents will discuss individual goals for each child to accomplish. Not only will we be working on these goals at school, but we also want you, the parents, to work on these goals at home. If your child gets exposure to developmental instruction in all their environments, they will be more successful. 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.

### **Home Visits** (*Home visits are entirely voluntary*)

Home visiting can be one of the most effective ways to promote a strong relationship between parents and early childhood educators. It is a unique opportunity for educators to get to know their students and families. It is a true honor to share a child's life and be welcomed into your home. Equally, it is a pleasure for parents to know how interested educators are in their children. Home visits are a great way to form a strong partnership between teachers and parents.

#### ***Benefits to home visits:***

- Increased parent involvement
- Building strong connections between home and child care that support a child's success
- A chance for educators to view the child in her home/cultural environment
- The opportunity to discuss the teacher's goals for the child and parents' expectations
- A chance to discuss any needs parents may have
- A chance to continue educational efforts in the home by bringing learning activities, books, or other suggestions to the parents
- A chance for parents to have one-on-one time with the teacher
- A chance for teachers to focus on one child and his family
- Opportunities for the child to share her home life with her teacher
- Times when teachers can model and reinforce positive parent/child interactions

## Tuition & Fees

### Registration Fee

There is a **non-refundable registration fee of \$150**. Contracts, policies, procedures, and fees will be reviewed in **June** of every year and may be subject to change. The annual contract renewal fee is \$100 per child.

### Tuition Deposit/Holding Fee

The **non-refundable Holding Fee** equal to one week of care per your contract is required at the time of registration. We will guarantee your child's position for two (2) weeks. After two weeks you will be required to pay your weekly tuition rate to guarantee your child's enrollment. All fee rules apply.

### Tuition Payments

Specific rates will be outlined in your contract. Payment is **Monday by 5:00 pm** 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.

**Option 1:** Cash

**Options 2:** Personal Check payable to Almost Mom LLC

**Option 3:** Bill Pay thru your individual bank (*you can set up to have your bank automatically mail a check to me weekly, bi-monthly, or monthly*) you can set this up as a recurring event so your payments are never late.

**Option 4:** Credit Card online at the [Almost Mom website](#) (*please keep in mind a service fee will be added*)

Any payments made will be applied to the oldest charges and late fees may still apply if the account is not paid in full by the next tuition due date. 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. No reimbursement or credit will be given in the event of an absence.

## **Receipt**

When you make a payment to Almost Mom LLC you will receive an electronic invoice with the following information:

- Almost Mom's tax id number will be printed on each invoice. *(If you are using your cafeteria/flex plans through your employer you will be required to submit this information).*
- I will email your invoices to the designated email accounts I have on your child's file.

## **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 5:00 pm 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 are 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**

In January you will be supplied with a W-10 tax form of all child care fees paid for the 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 by 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. Therefore, you will need to pay when you pick up your child, which 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).

**Scheduled overtime** with a minimum of 24-hour notice will be \$20.00 per hour per child.

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 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 pm as your pick-up time, your late fees will begin at 4:31 pm even though child care is open until 5:00 pm. If you put 8:30 am 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 am).

**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 so as not to impose on the staff at Almost Mom LLC.

Late drop-off does not constitute late pick-up. Please choose your drop-off and pick-up times carefully. We go by our clock.

## Holidays, vacations, and in-service days

Almost Mom LLC 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 enrollment. Almost Mom LLC's closing schedule, including holidays and teacher in-service days, will also be provided at registration.

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 enrollment 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 Year's Eve & New Year's Day
February	Presidents Day
March	Good Friday (March or April)
April	NONE
May	Memorial Day
June	NONE
July	4 <sup>th</sup> Of July

\* If any 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 LLC will receive 14 paid vacation days per year. Almost Mom LLC will also give advanced notice of when we will be taking off.

### Bad Weather

Almost Mom LLC will adhere to **Keller ISD** bad weather days. If Keller ISD is closed, we will be closed. We will post all closing on our [Facebook](#) page.

## Arrivals/Departures

Please send your child(ren) clean, well-rested, dressed for the day, and fed (if arriving after 7:45 am). Infants must be taken out of their car seat and handed to one of the teachers.

**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.

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.

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 LLC rules during arrivals and departures. If you do not, we will remind the child that their behavior is inappropriate and correct, if needed.

### 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.

### Child Absences - Daily Change in Schedule

If you need to change your child's schedule for the day, **examples:** include 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).

## **Procedures for Release of Children**

You are responsible for your child during drop-off/pick-up 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 (before 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:** Without a **court order** document, both parents/guardians have equal rights to custody. I am legally bound to respect the wishes of the parent/guardian with legal custody based on a certified copy of the most recent court order, active restraining order, or court-ordered visitation schedule. I will not accept the responsibility of deciding which parent/guardian has legal custody where there is no court documentation.

## **Right to Refuse Child Release**

Any adult who appears to be inebriated, intoxicated, or otherwise under the influence is required to leave the premises immediately.

## **Firearms and Weapons:**

A dangerous weapon is a gun, knife, razor, or any other object, which by the manner it is used or intended to be used, is capable of inflicting bodily harm. Families, children or guests (other than law enforcement officers) possessing a dangerous weapon will not be permitted onto the premises.

In cases that clearly involve a gun, or any other weapon on my premises, the police will be called and the individual(s) involved will be immediately removed from the premises. This policy applies to visible or concealed weapons.



## Health & Safety Policies

*Please read it carefully*

The health and well-being of all the children at Almost Mom are of the utmost importance. For the protection of the children, we must insist on strict adherence to our Health and Safety Policies.

**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 the aid of any fever-reducing substance. Administering Tylenol to reduce your child's fever so that you can bring them to Almost Mom LLC's 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 LLC, 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 LLC'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.

**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 other children's health, safety, or well-being in our care, your child must be kept home regardless of the presence of other symptoms. If this occurs during childcare hours, you will be called to come pick up your child.

**Lice: Not permitted**

Until **after** the **second** hair treatment.

**Your child becomes ill at childcare**

Should your child become ill at Almost Mom LLC's, we will care for and comfort the sick child and their symptoms. 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.

When you arrive, we will give you a *Sick Child Information Sheet* documenting your child's symptoms and any medication administered with the dosing amount and time given, so you will know the next time to administer additional medication.

**Exclusion from Attendance**

If your child is thought to have any communicable symptoms, you will be notified and asked to pick them up.

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.

# 24 Hour Rule

**Your child must be free from any symptoms for a minimum of 24 hours before they can return to child care.**

## **NO EXCEPTIONS**

### **Readmission**

Your child will be accepted back into care when no longer contagious. If your child has a communicable disease, you are required to have a **Health Care Professional Release Form** stating when your child can return to childcare. All other parents will be notified of the possibility of a communicable disease and what symptoms to watch for.

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. In addition, 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 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).

Suppose someone in my family or staff has any communicable diseases. In that case, 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.

# Emergencies

## Medical Emergencies

We pride ourselves in having a warm, loving and safe environment in which your child can explore, learn and experience many different things.

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.

## 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, including 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, and carbon monoxide detector.

Almost Mom LLC 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 LLC.

The 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.

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

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

## **Health Crisis/Pandemic: Quarantine/Closure**

Our program may temporarily close down 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.

## **Health and Safety Matters**

Hand washing

- Hands will be washed before and after meals, after bathroom use, 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 in writing, permitting me to administer medication.

- **Prescription medications** require a [Medication Form](#) signed by the family. The label on the medication meets this requirement. The medication must include your child's name, dosage, current date, frequency, and the name and phone number of the physician. All medications must be in the original container (you may request pharmacies to fill your prescription in two labeled bottles). Please specify the dosage and time(s) to be administered for each medication.
- **Non-prescription medications** require a [Medication Form](#) signed by the family. Non-prescription medication will not be administered for more than a 3-day period unless a written order by the physician is received.

If you have given your child medication in the morning before dropping them 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.

# Can We Go Outside?

Please make sure your child is appropriately dressed in play clothes. We go outside every day.

Our yard is used as an extension of our program, and daily activities are conducted outside whenever weather permits.

## 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.

# Behavior Management & Guidance

## 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.
- **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 of replacement.*

## 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 to ultimately be independent and responsible.

At Almost Mom LLC, 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 you 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 punishment at Almost Mom LLC. It is against the law!

The Chair is a sacred place here at Almost Mom LLC; a place of peace, a place to focus, 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 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 cause 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 LLC at the replacement cost if such destruction was, in the sole option of Almost Mom LLC, caused by the child.

## **Notification of Behavioral Issues to Families**

If a child's behavior/circumstance is of concern, communication will begin with your family as the first step to understanding your child's individual needs and challenges. We will work together to evaluate these needs in the context of our program.

On rare occasions, a child's behavior may warrant the need to find a more suitable setting for care. Examples of such instances include:

- A child appears to be a danger to others.
- Continued care could be harmful to, or not in the best interest of the child as determined by a medical, psychological, or social service personnel.
- Undue burden on our resources and finances for the child's accommodations for success and participation.

# Diapering & Potty Training

## Diapering

Every child has an individual changing mat. Soiled diapers and wipes 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, they will be discussed with parents. We very seldom have a problem with diaper rash. Most cases occur because 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 an 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. Your child will 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,” which 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.

## Meals

Almost Mom LLC participates 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 LLC.**

**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 grain product such as crackers, goldfish, graham, etc.

Menus are posted on the bulletin board at all times.

### Infants:

You supply all formula or breast milk and baby food for infants 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 your child's name)**

### Almost Mom Recommendations of Children Supplies

- Provide any special items other than those provided by Almost Mom LLC
- Be sure your child is dressed appropriately and comfortable (PLAYCLOTHES)
- A change of clothes to remain at Almost Mom LLC is REQUIRED
- A washable blanket for naptime that may remain at Almost Mom LLC'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 LLC cannot be responsible for personal belongings from home, so it is requested that items including toys and games be brought to Almost Mom LLC only on designed "share days." Children become very territorial with their toys, which often causes problems between children. War toys, weapon toys, and violent action figures are not permitted. 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 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 adjust the schedule. Therefore, we would appreciate it if you considered our schedule when picking up or dropping off your children.

### Activities

The main goal at Almost Mom LLC is to provide a variety of fun learning experiences for all children. 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 LLC is to have fun and provide a little extra learning stimulation for the 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 substantial role in day-to-day activities. We may have special music activities and play music during other activities, such as 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 there are 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. Our activities will include taking walks, backyard play, water play (sprinkler play in summer), bike/toy riding, sandbox, etc.

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 LLC 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 plan activities. 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.

## For Your Information

### Pets

We have a family pet in our household. All of the animals' 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? If you had a child identification card with you, you would always be prepared in an emergency. Therefore, everyone enrolled at Almost Mom LLC'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 LLC employee as a nanny

- If a family hires a current or past employee from Almost Mom LLC to become a nanny, then the parents will be invoiced \$5,000 per child by Almost Mom LLC. As stated in the employee handbook, the employee will also be invoiced.



# NOTES