



# Parent Handbook

## **Mission Statement-**

The Children's Playroom exists to facilitate healthy, nurturing families, our own and others, by providing the highest quality drop-in hourly child care for children ages 12 months to 13 years as a service to the families of Colorado Springs.

## **About Us-**

The Children's Playroom is owned and operated by two former teachers at The Classical Academy in Colorado Springs, one of the finest schools in the state of Colorado. Having a desire to continue to work with kids without having to leave their young babies at a full-time daycare, they decided to open The Children's Playroom. Both of the owners have degrees in education, one specializing in Early Childhood Education and the other specializing in Elementary Education. It is our desire to treat each child as if he/she were our very own child. We want each child to leave The Playroom with a sense of being loved and valued. Our commitment is to interact with each child in a way that will model the highest moral character and integrity.

Our workers are CPR certified and trained in administering First Aid, and our Playroom directors are fully certified through the Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care.

## **Our Services-**

The Children's Playroom cultivates healthy families by providing safe, quality drop-in childcare for children ages 12 months to 13 years. Owned and operated by two former elementary teachers, the Playroom offers a safe and fun environment for children to play. Whether you want to go to the gym, get coffee with friends, run errands, simply have a quiet afternoon at home, or enjoy a spontaneous evening out, we can accommodate your pre-planned or last minute childcare needs. We provide the finest hourly childcare in Colorado Springs.

As a "free-play" center, The Children's Playroom is a giant playroom with age appropriate toys. There is a big room for children between the ages of 2 1/2 years to 13

years. There is a toddler room for children between the ages of 1 year to 2 1/2 years. Children are encouraged to play with whatever and whomever they choose. Through creative activities such as finger painting, role playing and costume/dress-up centers, video game centers, craft and drawing stations, kitchenettes, dolls, cars, climbing gyms, books and videos, the atmosphere creates an excellent place for children to learn how to interact with other kids and teaches them character building traits such as sharing, cleaning up after themselves, being polite, and making friends. These skills cannot be learned or taught as well in a babysitting atmosphere in a private residence. Most of all, The Children's Playroom is a fun atmosphere where kids can run and play and don't want to leave!!

As a convenient alternative to conventional baby sitters, parents have a safe, fun, certified, and character building service, which allows for them to do "adult" activities without having to look after children or schedule baby-sitters. The Children's Playroom is an easy, always available option for child care when parents want to go on a last minute date, to an office Christmas party, or just complete daily tasks such as grocery shopping or a relaxing trip to the local gym.

#### **Food-**

The Children's Playroom offers a snack package of animal crackers and goldfish for \$1.00 per child as well as meals and drinks on an a la carte basis as an option for parents and kids. In compliance with local and state health regulations, all food is pre-packaged. Therefore, parents don't need to hassle with feeding their kids before the sitter comes, or going to a drive-thru on the way to the center. Parents are also welcome to bring their own prepared **peanut-free** snacks/meals/drinks.

#### **Policies and Procedures-**

##### **Ages of Children Accepted-**

The Children's Playroom is licensed to accept children between the ages of 12 months and 13 years old. There is a maximum of 33 children per hour allowed as per Department of Human Services regulations. We maintain a staff to child ratio of at least 8:1 for children over 2 years, and 5:1 for toddlers under the age of 2 years. We will maintain compliance with updated Department of Human Services regulations at all times.

##### **Hours of Operation-**

Monday – Thursday	8:00am - 8:00 pm
Friday	8:00am - 11:00 pm
Saturday	10:00am - 11:00 pm
Sunday*	12:00pm-8:00pm

The Children's Playroom will close at 7:00pm Monday-Thursday and Sunday and 9:00pm Friday-Saturday if no children are currently at the center.

The Children's Playroom adheres to a strict schedule for opening and closing. Therefore, we will impose a \$5.00/family penalty fee for the first 5 minutes that a child(ren) remains

at the center after posted closing time and \$1.00/child penalty fee for each additional after hours minute. The Children's Playroom will be closed for the following holidays: Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve (we close at 2pm) and Christmas Day. All other holiday closures will be posted visibly in the store.

### **Drop off and Pick up-**

Each parent who drops off a child at The Children's Playroom will be required to fill out a registration form and informational paperwork. In addition, the Department of Human Services requires that we receive your child's immunization record (on the Colorado approved form) by the first visit and physician statement of health no longer than 30 days from the time the child first visits the playroom or by the second visit. *If the appropriate medical information is not provided within the allotted time period, your registration will become invalid and your child may not visit the playroom until the proper paperwork has been recorded.* Registration forms may also be downloaded online prior to your first visit. You can print them off, fill them in and bring them to the store on your first visit. Please allow 10 minutes for your initial drop-off and 5 minutes for each subsequent drop-off to ensure that all sign-in procedures are followed. It is your responsibility to make sure that your kids are ready to play (socks on, clean diaper, hands sanitized)!

All children must be signed in and out at all times as a matter of accountability and child safety. A working, available telephone or contact number must be left for us to contact a parent in the event of an emergency.

If a person other than a parent is picking up a child, we must be notified at the time of checking in, and that person must have proper identification.

There are times in which a parent may be called to pick up their child early (illness, uncontrollable crying, behavior, etc). In these instances, an employee of The Children's Playroom will call the parent, explain the circumstance, and ask the parent to please come and pick the child up. The parent needs to arrive within 30 minutes of receiving the phone call. If the child is still at the center 30 minutes after the "early pick-up need" phone call has been made, the hourly rate for that child will double due to the fact that we need an additional employee to come to the center to properly care for that individual child. The double hourly rate is at the FIRST child rate. Therefore, the parent will be charged \$16.00 an hour if they leave the child at the center past the 30 minute notification time/phone call.

### **Rates and Reservations-**

\*1 hour minimum\*

Hourly rates are the following:

(Children must be siblings to use the group rate)

First Child: \$8.00/hour

Second Child: \$4.00/hour

Each additional child: \$3.00/hour

### Bulk Hours

Buy hours in bulk at a discount rate:

10 Hours-\$75 (\$.50 off per hour)

20 Hours- \$145 (\$.75 off per hour)

30 Hours- \$210 (\$1.00 off per hour)

Bulk hours are for one child only. The rate for each additional child is consistent with the standard rates for siblings but may also be purchased in bulk for convenience.

We will not refund any unused block time, all sales are final.

Payment for childcare is due in full at the time of check out. Rates will be based on hours rounded to the nearest 15 min.

Reservations are highly encouraged since we are limited to 33 children per hour. If you do not have a reservation, we operate on a “first come, first serve” basis. All reservations will be held for twenty minutes.

Please cancel reservations if your plans change.

We accept MasterCard, VISA, or cash.

### **Out-of-state customers-**

We would love to assist you during your visit to Colorado! Out of state customers may use the facility one time with a completed registration form. The registration fee will be waived but there will be an increase of \$2.00 and hour per child. In order to use it more than once, we must have a physician statement of health and immunization record on file.

### **Registration-**

Upon your first visit, there will be a registration fee of \$25 per family. This fee is due each year on your registration month anniversary.

The Children’s Playroom must have a completed registration form and immunization record before a child may be left in our care. In addition, we must also have a completed statement of health by the second visit or within 30 days (whichever comes first).

### **Activities-**

The Children’s Playroom is created to be a safe place where kids can be kids. We have a daily schedule that we follow for those kiddos who prefer structure and we also provide a “free-play” environment for kiddos who prefer to just play with whatever they choose.

We encourage children to be creative in their playtime and therefore we have centers for art, role play, listening and watching, building, and playing!! Any movies, video games or music allowed in the center will be family friendly. There will be a scheduled “quiet time” from 8:30 pm until close Friday and Saturday evenings in which a movie will be shown. The television is usually playing some kind of music DVD at all times. However, children are not allowed to simply sit and watch the television for long periods of time. It

serves mainly as a distraction for those kiddos who need to simply take a break for a few minutes.

### **Daily Schedule-**

#### **\*Schedule is subject to change**

- 8:00 a.m.** – Free Play
- 9:15 a.m.** – Arts & Crafts
- 10:00 a.m.** – Morning Snack
- 10:15 a.m.** – Game/Music Time
- 11:00 a.m.** – Story Time
- 11:30 a.m.** – Lunch
- 12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.** – Quiet Time with Movies or Quiet Play Activities
- 2:30 p.m.** – Game/Music Time
- 3:00 p.m.** – Afternoon Snack
- 3:30 p.m.** – Arts & Crafts
- 5:00 p.m.** – Game/Music Time
- 5:45 p.m.** – Story Time
- 6:00 p.m.** – Dinner
- 8:00 p.m.** – Evening Snack
- 8:30 p.m.** – Movie Time

### **Healthy Play-**

The Children's Playroom has bright and squishy, soft-sculpted foam pieces which provide a safe, fun environment that nurtures kids and their imaginations. Our play area promotes fun, healthy and happy kids – providing countless activities for children in a safe and healthy environment. Our unique play area provides a great place for children to exercise while they learn. Our low profile climbers, slides and crawl tunnels help develop gross motor skills, test spatial relationships and build confidence. *Education Week* research reports that kids gain cognitive benefits from play and exercise. Play can improve thinking processes that involve planning, organizing, developing abstract thought and maintaining self-control in as little as 20 minutes of interactive activity. And more play counteracts childhood obesity.

Active play experiences are a part of a healthy lifestyle that parents want for their children. The play pieces are anti-bacterial and are the healthiest choice for kids play experiences.

Our play area is designed and manufactured in accordance with the highest industry standards and safety guidelines. All play elements in the large room are soft, squishy, and surrounded with padded safety flooring. Our play area design was reviewed by a certified PLAYTIME safety inspector, adheres to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) standard safety specifications for playground equipment.

The Children's Playroom helps children be healthy and happy!

### **Liability Release-**

The parent/guardian hereby releases The Children's Playroom, its owners, directors and employees from any and all liability, of any kind whatsoever arising out of any physical or mental injury incurred or sustained by any child(ren) listed on the registration form while he/she participates in any program while at The Children's Playroom facility and this includes any injury sustained while using any equipment provided by The Children's Playroom. The parent/guardian acknowledges and affirms that he or she has carefully read the entire parent handbook and this liability release section by signing the registration form at the first visit, and has asked and obtained a satisfactory explanation of any part that he or she does not understand.

### **Communication-**

No one knows your child like you do! We encourage communication between parents and The Children's Playroom staff. We want to make your child's stay at The Children's Playroom a positive experience. Please let us know of any special requests you may have for your child.

The Children's Playroom is regulated by Department of Human Services. The minimum standards policies for child care centers and our inspection reports are available for review. We maintain an open door policy. Parents may visit and observe our center at anytime. A director or group leader is available to discuss any concerns about the policies and procedures. If a parent would like to stay in the center with their child, we must have a completed criminal background check.

### **Discipline Policy-**

We work with each child through giving him/her verbal warnings and redirecting him/her. However, when these attempts do not work, time-out will be imposed. However, there are instances in which a child is simply not ready for this type of free play environment. In these instances, we may encourage parents to wait a few months, and then try again. If we experience repeated difficulties with any child, we reserve the right to refuse admittance to The Children's Playroom for that child.

### **Emergency/Disaster Policy-**

Safety is our number one priority and our center was built with that in mind.

In the unlikely event of any the following, our policy is as follows:

**Fire** - the staff will evacuate the building. Attendance will be taken and children will safely escorted out of the building to Summit Cleaners.

**Tornado** - the staff will calmly lead the children to the back of the center where they will be most protected from broken glass, etc.

**Blizzard**- if conditions worsen or watch is in effect, parents will be called to pick up their children. The on-site director will monitor news reports closely. The center will close early so that staff may safely make their way home. The center may not open on days in which heavy snowfall is present.

**Abandoned Child** - if a child is left in our care for more than one hour past closing time, and we are unable to reach any of the emergency contacts, which the parent has provided, the local police will be notified.

**Lost Child** - children are counted constantly at our center. The front and back doors are always locked and have alarms to prevent anyone from entering or leaving the center unnoticed. In the unlikely event of a lost child, the police will be called and parents will be immediately notified.

**Accident** - in the event of an injury to a child, the center is equipped with a fully stocked first aid kit, and our staff has CPR and first-aid training. Accident reports are written up for all minor accidents that leave a mark on the child. These reports are kept in your child's file. If further action is required, we will call 911 for emergency medical assistance. You will be contacted immediately by telephone in the event of a serious injury.

### **Well Child-**

To keep all of the children and staff healthy and safe, we cannot except children at The Children's Playroom with the following symptoms: fever of 100 degrees or over within the past 24 hours, a persistent cough, a runny or green nose, diarrhea, or vomiting. If your child is dropped off with any of these symptoms, you will be required to come and pick them up.

Parents are required to sign a medical emergency release form at the time of registration.

### **Special Needs-**

The Children's Playroom asks that parents of special needs children inform staff members of any and all special needs. As a parent-center team, we will determine if the center is equipment to meet the special needs. If so, we would like to create a developmental plan that is safe and healthy for staff, your child, and other children. If one on one attention is needed, an increase in hourly rate will apply. All services offered to special needs children will be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

### **Personal Items-**

Toys from home are not permitted. If a toy from home is brought, we will require that the child leaves the item in his/her cubby. All personal belongings (cups, lunch boxes, etc) should be marked with first and last names to avoid confusion. The Children's Playroom will not take responsibility for personal items lost or left at the center. Lost and found items will be stored for a maximum of 30 days in the front of our center, after this time items will be donated to Good Will. Children may bring in their own food if it is  
PEANUT FREE!

### **Shoe Policy-**

Socks **must** be worn at all times to protect the health and safety of all children and staff at The Children's Playroom. Shoes are NOT permitted due to the installation of the soft play elements. Shoes may be stored in the cubby. Socks may be purchased for \$2.00 a pair.

### **Potty-training/Diapering-**

All diapered children **MUST** arrive at The Children's Playroom in a clean, dry diaper. Children must be 100% potty-trained if in regular underwear, otherwise the child must wear a disposable diaper \*no cloth diapers\*. There will no attempt to potty train any child under the age of 18 months. Diapers may be provided for \$.50 each. Over-the-counter ointments for diaper rash may be administered to children with written parental authorization. These preparations may not be applied to broken skin unless there is a written order by your prescribing practitioner.

### **Medication-**

Prescription medications can be administered only with the written order of a person with prescriptive authority and with written parental consent. It will be kept in a lock box at the front desk. A medication log will be kept daily.

### **Quiet Time-**

A quiet movie time will be on Fridays and Saturdays starting at 8:30pm until closing so those who need to sleep may have the opportunity to do so. During this time, an educational or family feature children's video will be shown.

### **Child Abuse-**

We are required by law to report any suspected child abuse. A "How to Report Child Abuse" form is available for all parents, as required by Colorado law.

You can also report abuse or neglect by calling (719) 444-5700 or email [childabusereport@elpasoco.com](mailto:childabusereport@elpasoco.com)

### **Under the Influence-**

We ask that anyone under the influence provide another driver come with the parent to pick up the child. If a parent is suspected of driving under the influence, authorities may be notified.

We reserve the right to refuse any family that does not adhere to our policies.  
We also reserve the right to make changes to the handbook. It is the parents responsibility to stay updated on the policies and procedures of The Children's Playroom.

It is our privilege to serve you. We sincerely hope that our service can be a blessing to your family. We appreciate any kind of feedback, both positive and negative, to ensure that we are meeting all of your needs. Thank you for choosing The Children's Playroom.

Owned and Operated by  
Matt and Tiffany Gowler  
And  
Daniel and Lisa Grothe

If a parent would like to file a complaint concerning suspected licensing violations,  
contact :

Colorado Department of Human Services  
Division of Child Welfare  
1575 Sherman Street  
Denver, CO 80203  
Main Number (303) 866-5932  
Fax Number (303) 866-5563