



SAM'S ABUNDANCE OF LOVE

SAM'S ABUNDANCE OF LOVE CHILDCARE CENTER

Waldorf, MD 20603

Operating Hours are 7:00 am to 5:30 pm

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MD License # 259045

Table of Contents

WELCOME (Page 3)
ABOUT ME (Page 3)
PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT (Page 3)
CURRICULUM (Pages 3-4)
COMMUNICATION (Page 4)
TRANSITION PLAN (Page 4)
ENROLLMENT POLICY (Page 5)
SECURITY DEPOSIT POLICY (Page 5)
PAYMENT PROCEDURES, LATE FEES, AND TAXES (Page 5)
HOURS OF OPERATIONS (Page 6)
OPEN DOOR POLICY (Page 6)
COMMUNITY RESOURCES (Page 6)
ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES (Page 6)
SIGNING IN & OUT POLICY (Page 6)
ABSENCES (Page 6)
HOLIDAYS AND VACATIONS POLICY (Page 7)
PERSONAL BELONGINGS (Page 7)
DAILY SCHEDULE (Page 7)
MEALS (Page 7)
NAPS & QUIET TIME PAGE (Page 7)
ACTIVITIES & CURRICULUM (Page 8)
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT (INDOOR/OUTDOOR PLAY) (Page 8)
REDIRECTION VS. DISCIPLINE (Page 9)
HEALTH AND SAFETY (Pages 9-10)
MEDICATIONS (Page 10)
CLEANLINESS & HYGIENE (Page 10)
TOILET TRAINING POLICY (Pages 10-11)
ILLNESS (Page 11)
FIRE SAFETY (Page 11)
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS (Pages 11-12)
FIELD TRIPS (Page 12)
TERMINATION POLICY (Page 12)
REVISIONS TO HANDBOOK AND CONTRACT (Page 12)

WELCOME

Welcome to Sam's Abundance of Love Childcare; hereafter, referred to as SAOL. With many children placement options available, SAOL thanks you for selecting us as your provider and we are grateful that you chose to bring your child(ren) here. In this space, we operate as a triad, the child, the parent(s) and the provider. To foster a successful and healthy environment for all, we have created this parent handbook. It includes my childcare philosophy, which is centered around prioritizing your child's needs. It also addresses the childcare center's policies, procedures, and requirements. Please read this handbook thoroughly through completion. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to discuss them with me. procedures.

ABOUT ME

I am/have:

- A 20+ years veteran of the Metropolitan Police Department
- A licensed-professional childcare provider
- A member of the Charles County Day Care Association
- Credentialed through Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) currently at level 1
- Participating in the Maryland EXCELS Program working towards National Accreditation

PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

SAOL childcare believes that every child should be treated with respect and dignity, and to feel safe and secure while having an opportunity to learn at their own pace to include those with disabilities. SAOL strives to provide a nurturing environment that fosters trust, self-confidence, autonomy, and acceptance of individual differences helps to facilitate the learning process. This will allow the children to thrive while having their physical, intellectual, social and emotional needs met. At SAOL, we believe children learn through play and will benefit from a structured yet flexible schedule. Activities will be offered to stimulate sensory, gross and small motor development, language development and social interaction. Children will also learn to respect one another and each other's property.

CURRICULUM

Our childcare program is structured with individual activities, group activities, supervised free time, and supervised outdoor play. Including providing a developmentally, stimulating educational experience contributing to school readiness.

Fine Motor Development: Activities which promote the development of small muscles such as holding pencils, coloring, puzzles, scissor skills, playing with blocks, manipulating play dough, and using silverware while eating.

Gross Motor Development: Activities which promote the development of large muscles such as crawling, marching, running, jumping, dancing, and sports participation such as-playing catch, soccer, basketball, kick ball, Frisbee, riding bikes.

Dramatic Play: This type of play engages the imagination, builds confidence and prepares young scholars to engage in real life situations. Items included in this play area are themed prop boxes, housekeeping, dress up, blocks, babies and other miscellaneous items.

Arts & Crafts: Arts and Crafts are projects that emphasizes creativity and instils a sense of achievement and pride in children. These activities boost a child's self-confidence. Please remember to praise your child's work, it may be junk to you but to them it is a masterpiece.

Music & Movement: These activities promote language arts, expand communication and imagination, create a sense of belonging, and is a mood booster. It also promotes memory and cognitive development. Daily use of songs, rhymes, poems, finger plays, dancing, and music.

Science: Science also helps to develop their natural intellectual side and builds math skills. Our activities will encourage investigations, observing, discovering, and problem solving (cooking, growing plants, and short walks in the neighborhood.)

Math: Good math skills are essential for academic success. It teaches skills such as critical thinking and logic. Math is a big part of our every day. Other activities involving concepts such as volume, size, shape, and measurements, and many manipulatives for active play.

Language Arts: Language Arts promotes critical thinking, and speech development. Once a month we will visit the Charles County Public Library during story time.

Outdoor Play: This activity will allow the children to explore the weather, ride bikes, play ball, run, jump, climb, enjoy nature, and play games. All these activities are important in the growth and development of young children and overlap with each other in developing skills. The materials all are developmentally appropriate and accessible for all children.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is very important at SAOL. We will practice effective, open and honest communicative skills. We have an open-door policy for parents to ask questions regarding your child(ren) and to address concerns that impact or has the potential to impact your child. Recommendations and/or feedback are welcome. Remembering that the parent is the child's first teacher, parent conferences will be conducted quarterly to discuss your child's progress. Activity sheets will be sent home weekly with their goals and objectives. Sensitive issues will be discussed in private outside of regular childcare hours either by zoom, telephone or conference. Please be advised if you call during the day, and we are unable to answer, leave a voice message or you can also text me. The best time to call during the day is during our daily quiet time 1pm-3pm.

TRANSITION PLAN

Transitioning children into a new program or school setting requires careful planning. Many steps are taken to ensure that a child(ren) transitions successfully into my program. SAOL wants them to feel welcomed and comfortable, we will make sure these transitions are successful by

utilizing the “All About Me” form that should be completed and returned by the parent. SAOL will assist the parents and children to have a successful transition from my program to school. I also provide care for children who are in the Pre-K half day program and provide before and after care.

ENROLLMENT POLICY

To all parents, there is a \$75 non-refundable registration fee per child required to save a slot for your child at Sams’s Abundance of Love. This fee will guarantee your space for 2 weeks and must be received prior to any paperwork being issued. There are several forms that must be completed and returned before SAOL can assume the responsibility of caring for your child NO EXCEPTIONS. The forms are as follows: Signed Contract and Receipt of Handbook Letter, Parent/Provider Agreement Letter, All About Us, Medical Permission Slip, Health Inventory Emergency Medical Authorization Form, Child Enrollment Form, and Permission to Administer Medicine. Please keep me informed of any change in addresses, telephone numbers, and other pertinent information listed on all the above forms. If you have any questions regarding the completion of these forms, please feel free to ask.

SECURITY DEPOSIT

Before your child is admitted into care, you must pay a two-week security deposit. The deposit protects me from unexpected departures and will be credited towards your last two weeks of childcare when you decide to leave. Deposits are equal to your normal weekly fee. In the event your child does not start care by the agreed upon date, your space will be forfeited and your deposit to hold the position will become non-refundable. For all spaces held longer than two weeks, you will be required to pay ½ of your regular weekly fee until your child is in attendance.

PAYMENT

Your financial obligations will be outlined in your contract. Upon admission payment is due in full to include any late fees accrued every Monday before the close of business, i.e., 5:30 pm. Please remit payment in the form of cash or Zelle at 240-353-2534. Cash App and personal checks are not an acceptable form of payment. Failure to make your payments may result in termination. A late fee of \$10 per day will be imposed after the due date. Parents must pick up their child no later than the contracted time and drop off no earlier than contracted time unless approved by provider.

TAXES

SAOL will supply you with a W-9 year-end summary of all daycare fees paid during the year for tax purposes. This will be given to you in January each year or when services are terminated.

LATE FEES

The late fees will be as follows: \$ 1 per minute, per diem. Repeated late pick-ups will subsequently incur a breach of contract and you will forfeit your child's slot in the childcare as well as your deposit.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Normal hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Your specific hours will be outlined in your contract. SAOL requires two a weeks' notice if you need to change your contract agreement time. SAOL offers full-time, part-time and drop-in care. You are required to notify me by 8:00 a.m. if your child (ren) will be absent for the day or if you will be late arriving. Consistent disregard of these considerations may be cause for termination. If you arrive after 9:30 am, you must present a doctor's or dentist's letter. SAOL will not be available for evening or weekend care.

OPEN DOOR POLICY

SAOL maintains an open-door policy for parents. This means that you are always welcome to call or drop in to see your children at any time during regular childcare hours.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES will be shared with parents as they become available.

ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES

Children are to arrive clean and unsoiled. It is normal for some children to have difficulty separating from parents, at SAOL we ask of the parents to please be brief drop off and pick up so we can ensure that the other children are not distracted. This is a time of testing when two different authority figures are present (the parent and the provider), and all the children will test to see if the rules still apply. Please knock, the door remains locked for everyone's safety. Children who arrive during quiet time will be expected to remain quiet (they may play/read quietly) until quiet time is over, so that others will not be disrupted from their naps. My normal procedure is to release the child only to his/her parents or someone else the parents designate. If someone other than the parent is to pick up the child, please notify me ahead of time. A verbal notice is fine on that day if this person is on the list of people who are authorized to pick up your child. If the person is NOT on that list, SAOL MUST have written permission to release your child. Please inform emergency contacts, or people designated to pick up your child, that proper identification is needed for your child to be released. This is simply a measure taken for your child's safety.

SIGNING IN & OUT

SAOL is 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 located by the door for your convenience. This gives us a written record of the child's attendance, hours, and the person who brought/picked up the child each day.

ABSENCES

There will be no refunds or adjustments made to your childcare fee for your time missed due to illness, holidays, or school closings. Although SAOL will make every attempt to be available each day, if for some reason we am unable to provide care at any time we will give you 24-hour notice. When I must be away for a short time (1 - 4 hours), backup care will be provided by one of the authorized substitutes who is able to carry out the terms of this contract.

HOLIDAYS & VACATIONS

The provider will receive 12-paid vacation days (one day per month), five sick and five personal days per year; and three bereavement days per immediate family member. Three weeks notification will be provided prior to vacation. Vacation pay is charged at a contracted daily rate and is non-refundable. Payments are also required for sick and personal days, when emergencies occur such as illness, death, accidents, trainings, or other unexpected occurrences. Payments are expected for these days, parents will be notified as soon as possible. In addition, payments are still due when daycare is closed. SAOL will be closed on all federal holidays and follow Charles County Public Schools for delayed opening/closing. We follow closing as it relates to the State of Charles County Government for any additional emergency closures. We will be closed the preceding Friday with pay, when a holiday falls on a Sunday or Monday. In addition, there are days needed for appointments or training that is mandated. SAOL will try to schedule these days as far in advance as possible so that you can arrange other care for your child. SAOL also will try to pick a day that is convenient for most parents, if possible.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Each child shall maintain two (2) complete sets of clothing; personal items must be clearly marked with the child's name which will be kept in their assigned cubby. You may bring a pack of diapers and wipes to be stored in the changing table or a weekly supply of items. Additionally, each child should also have bedding, to include a sheet and blanket which shall be taken home each Friday. Clean bedding is to be brought on the succeeding Monday. Soiled clothing will be sent home and must be replaced on the next day.

MEALS

Nutritious meals will be served to all children ages 12 months and older who are enrolled. You are responsible for feeding your child(ren) if he/she arrives to childcare after a mealtime. Infants are always fed on demand.

NAPS & QUIET TIME

All children are required to lie down for a rest period in the afternoon, they can choose to 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 happy when they go home in the evening. SAOL will provide nap mats, cots or pack-play cribs. If your child has a special blanket or stuffed animal that he/she sleeps with, please send it along. Infant naps vary and their schedules will be accommodated.

ACTIVITIES & CURRICULUM

The main goal of this childcare is to have fun, improve social skills, and encourage creative expression. SAOL will utilize a variety of activities to accomplish this goal. Free play, reading, arts and crafts, music/singing, dancing, dramatic play/pretend, puzzles, and educational TV/videos are just some of the activities we will be doing. SAOL provide a preschool program from September through June for children ages 2 - 5 at no additional cost to you. Some of the activities include arts & crafts, music, math, science, stories, games, as well as 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 monthly activity schedule is posted on the bulletin board by the front door. The goal of preschool 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 the environment around them. Music helps to develop young brains and will play a strong role in day-to-day activities. We may have special music activities and may also play music during other activities, for example, during arts and crafts or mealtimes.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

There will be times and ways you can get involved in your child's childcare experience. You are welcomed and encouraged to participate in any or all of these. Some examples of ways to be involved include:

- Chaperoning on field trips
- Helping to prepare lunch or snacks
- AM or PM story time

INDOOR & OUTDOOR PLAY

Indoor play: SAOL provide 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 cleaning up, when there are toys everywhere, because it is so overwhelming to them. For this reason, during free play times, each child may select one or two things at a time to play with. They will be shown how to put those things away before selecting something else.

Outdoor play: We will be playing outdoors every day that weather permits. Please make sure that your child is appropriately always dressed for outdoor play. Our activities will include taking walks, backyard playground (swings, slide, teeter totter), water play (sprinkler or wading pool in summer), bike/toy riding, sandbox, and more. During spring and fall, our outdoor play will probably range from 20 - 45 minutes, and in the summer, it may be two hours or more long (maybe not all at once).

REDIRECTION VS. DISCIPLINE

My philosophy is that you use discipline to teach a child. SAOL achieves this through love, consistency, and firmness. We stress two main patterns of behavior: respect for other people and respect for property. The children are explained the rules of the childcare home frequently, so they are all familiar with the guidelines. Please keep in mind that there WILL be disagreements between children. Young children, especially those who are not adept at communication, have a hard time expressing their feelings. Sometimes they hit or throw toys, etc. Although teaching children appropriate behavior is what we will be doing, remember that this behavior is normal in most cases. The following methods of discipline will be used:

- Encourage children to solve problems themselves

- Intervention and discussion
- Re-direction to another play area
- Loss of privileges
- Thinking Chair

If SAOL feels there is a chronic behavioral issue that needs attention, we will let you know so that you and SAOL are handling it in the same way and your child has continuity in discipline between our homes. These types of behaviors might include such things as biting, use of bad words, chronic hitting, etc. Together, we will try to find a solution. You may be called to remove your child if his/her behavior prevents me from being able to properly care for the other children. If the problem continues, other arrangements for the care of the child will have to be made, for the safety and wellbeing of all. Under NO CIRCUMSTANCES will there be any spanking, physical abuse, verbal abuse, name-calling or isolation used. Neither food nor sleep will ever be withheld from children as a means of punishment. As a home day care provider, we have a responsibility by law to recognize and report any evidence of child abuse, physical or emotional or neglect.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Under no circumstances will parents be allowed to bring a sick child to school. Exposure to anyone sick with a contagious illness increases the chance of the other children and/ or staff becoming sick as well. Fever is defined as having a temperature over 98.6°F taken under the arm, or over 99.5°F taken orally. A child needs to be fever free for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to childcare, meaning without the aid of Tylenol or any other fever reducing substance. Diarrhea or more than two (2) loose stools within the last 4 hours, vomiting or runny nose, your child will not be received. Your child may be brought to care if he/she has a common cold (slight cough, clear runny nose, occasional sneezing). A sick child should be allowed to recover fully after an illness so that other children in the group do not risk exposure and so that the child is able to fully participate in childcare activities. Under no circumstances will your child(ren) be received. If your child becomes ill while in my care, SAOL will notify you immediately. You are required to pick up your child within 60 minutes of notification, if you cannot be reached then your emergency contact will be called. Children may return to care 24 after symptoms of illness end or with written authorization from your doctor stating the name of illness and when the child may return to group care. Please notify me as soon as possible when your child becomes ill so that we may notify the other parents. If your child is thought to have a communicable disease, you will be notified and asked to pick him/her up. He/she will be isolated from the other children and given special attention and comfort until you arrive. Your child will be accepted back into care when no longer contagious. All other parents will be notified of the possibility of exposure and told what symptoms to look for. Your child's privacy will be respected. If someone in my family has any of the above symptoms, we will call you the pre activities of the daily schedule, then your child must stay home.

MEDICATIONS

Both nonprescription and prescription medications, ointments, and creams can be given to your child if needed. Parents are required to fill out the proper forms and to supply all medications in

their original containers. All written instructions shall be valid for six months unless a shorter time is designated by the physician, dentist, or parent. These must be labeled with the child's name. NO EXCEPTIONS! SAOL may not exceed the manufacturer's recommended dosage unless with written physician's instructions when administering nonprescription medication. SAOL may not administer nonprescription oral medication for longer than 3 consecutive days. SAOL may not administer nonprescription topical ointments, creams, or lotions for longer than 14 consecutive days when used for skin irritations. SAOL is required to keep 6 bottles of Syrup of Ipecac in my First Aid Kit. I may administer this only when following verbal instructions of the poison control center or a licensed physician.

CLEANLINESS & HYGIENE

SAOL does it's best to maintain strict cleanliness and hygiene standards. Children's hands are washed before meals, after meals and after each bathroom break. We use paper towels for drying hands, so children do not have to use the same towel. SAOL washes hands frequently and use antibacterial gel. Infants sleep in individual cribs or pack and play, at about age 2, washable nap mats are labeled for each child's usage.

TOILET TRAINING

Toilet training will be done in a relaxed manner with the cooperation of the family. If potty training is begun when your child is ready, the task is easy and quick. If a parent undertakes the task of potty training when they want it to happen, the task is arduous and painful for all concerned. Thirty months of age is a good rule of thumb to start checking for signs of readiness. When we agree that the time is right for your child and until he/she is totally successful in his/her toileting. Try to avoid tight clothing, pants with snaps and zippers and belts, overalls, and onesies, as they require more effort for children to remove "in a hurry". Do not bring your child in panties or underwear until he/she has nap time and bedtime control established. SAOL ask that you begin toilet training at home during the weekend or vacation. SAOL will follow through and encourage your child while in my care. When a child is ready, the process should go quickly. If your child does not have immediate success, he/she will be put back into diapers, and after a respite, the process will be attempted again. The child must be always kept in pull-ups or 5-ply training pants. Putting a child in diapers part time, and training pants part time, can be confusing and delay the training process. Please keep in mind that the activity level here can distract your child from responding to an urge to use the potty, more so than at your home. Therefore, we will continue to use diapers or pull-ups until your child can and will announce that he/she must use the bathroom (not just at home, but here, as well) and can control his/her bladder and bowels for a few minutes beyond that announcement. Your child's readiness is something we can discuss because consistency between our homes will be very important. This is a special time for your child, a sign that he/she is growing up. Toilet training should be a good experience.

ILLNESS

If your child becomes ill while in my care, we will notify you immediately. You are required to pick up your child within 60 minutes of notification. If you cannot be reached, then your emergency contact will be called. If your child is out due to illness, regular fees still apply. SAOL

reserves the right to determine when a child should be sent home to illness. Children may return to care 24 after symptoms of illness end or with written authorization from your doctor stating the name of illness and when the child may return to group care. Please notify me as soon as possible when your child becomes ill so that I may notify the other parents. If your child is thought to have a communicable disease, you will be notified and asked to pick him/her up. He/she will be isolated from the other children and given special attention and comfort until you arrive. Your child will be accepted back into care when they are no longer contagious. All other parents will be notified of the possibility of exposure and told what symptoms to look for. Your child's privacy will be respected. If someone in my family has any of the above symptoms, I will call you the pre activities of the daily schedule, then your child must stay home.

FIRE SAFETY

We have a written fire evacuation plan and practice a fire drill with the children at least once each month. In addition, we incorporate fire safety curriculum into my program occasionally.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

SAOL wants to assure you of my concern for the safety and welfare of the children in my family childcare home. Considering recent world and local events, we have developed an emergency plan that will be put into place in case an emergency arises. Plans for emergency care are reviewed annually. The specific type of emergency will guide where and what special care will be provided. SAOL feels that the children and staff are safer in the home unless the home is not safe, and we will not leave unless we must. Shelter at the home – This plan would be put into place in case of weather emergency or unsafe outside conditions or threats. In this plan, the children will be cared for indoors at the home and all the doors will be locked to restrict entry. Parents will be notified if they need to pick up their child before their regular time. Evacuation to another site – This plan would be put into place if it is not safe for children to remain in the home. SAOL has arranged for alternate sites for care. The choice of site will be determined by the specific emergency and where would be an appropriate place to go.

Method to contact parents – In case of emergency, parents will be called/texted. If we need to evacuate to another site, a note will be placed on my door to tell you where to pick up your child, and a call/text will be made once we are safely at our new destination. Depending on the distance from my home, the children will either walk or be transported to the alternate site. Parents will be called and reunited with their children as soon as possible after the emergency. When you enrolled your child in my care, you completed a list of emergency contacts and people who may pick up your child. The purpose for sharing this information with you is not to cause you worry, but to reassure you that we are prepared to handle all types of emergencies in a way that will ensure the safety of your child(ren). In the event of an actual emergency, SAOL will call you as soon as it is safe to do so. At that time, you will be informed about what steps will be taken. If you have questions regarding this information, please share them with me.

FIELD TRIPS

Occasionally, we may have the opportunity to take a field trip. All children will be placed in safety-approved car seats as required by State laws. You may be requested to provide a car seat for the day and/or pay any fees associated with the trip. You will be required to sign a permission slip that SAOL will carry with me. We also carry copies of the emergency forms with a picture of each child attached. In the event of an emergency away from the childcare home, your child will be cared for, and you will be notified. It is not required that your child attend the field trip, but it will be your responsibility to find and pay for alternate care if you do not wish for them to attend. You still pay your regular childcare fees.

TERMINATION POLICY

SAOL reserves the right to terminate for the following reasons (but not limited to):

- Failure to pay
- Failure to complete the required forms
- Lack of parental cooperation
- My inability to meet the child's needs
- Lack of compliance with handbook regulations

You are **required** to give two weeks written notice when you decide to terminate childcare. The two weeks will be paid for in full, regardless of whether your child is in attendance. SAOL will give two weeks written notice of termination for which full tuition is due, whether your child is in attendance. SAOL reserves the right to give written notice of immediate termination where there are extreme circumstances that affect the well-being of myself or other children in attendance. In this situation, the two-week's payment of tuition is still required. Termination notices will not be accepted while provider or parents are on vacation.

REVISIONS TO HANDBOOK AND CONTRACT

There will be a yearly revision to this handbook and the accompanying contract. All families will sign a new contract each year. SAOL reserves the right to make changes in rates and policies, as we deem necessary. You will be notified, in writing, of any changes that may occur. Every attempt will be made to give at least two weeks' notice of changes.