

Welcome to Joyful Noise!

A house is a structure designed for comfort, intimacy and warmth. It may contain soft furniture, portraits, plants, books or musical instruments, but when it shelters a family, then it becomes a home. Joyful Noise is a day care home, licensed by the state of Michigan and, as the name implies, a cheerful, lively place, dedicated to providing a beautiful, nourishing haven where children can spend their days.

Play is children's work and I take it seriously, striving to provide a safe, nurturing environment where they can unfold imagination, independence and reverence as a solid foundation for all that is to come. I am concerned with the weakening of children in our society in the forms of poor nutrition, media saturation, and expectations to perform academically at a younger and younger age. The rising instances of poor health and nervous disorders caused by these pressures on young children is alarming, so I stand firmly dedicated to offer child care with high quality food, no television or computers, and an environment with opportunities that are developmentally appropriate for the ages of the children enrolled.

Joyful Noise is an alternative to institutionalizing young children. Instead of being overwhelmed they are secure and soothed, yet stimulated. Here where their natural explorations are not interfered with they have the freedom to truly discover themselves.

Much of the philosophy surrounding child care at Joyful Noise arises out of the Waldorf tradition of education. This influence brings an appreciation of the importance of nature as a teacher, simple toys made from natural materials, honoring the rhythms of the day and the year, observing the child, and the inner development of the adults who care for children. I find these practices in keeping with my beliefs that their first years are of utmost importance and that young children need to be nurtured and strengthened in a mindful, peaceful way for the tasks that they face later in life. Other philosophies of child care that are woven into my practices arise out of countless sources, derived from a lifetime dedicated to learning about and caring for children, and the ever-evolving wisdom that each day on that path brings!

Since this family has been growing since 1981, it is a little more extended than most. It consists of many parents and many children. Some of us sleep overnight in our house, but most of our family arrives just in time for breakfast and departs just before dinner. We spend the day like most families: laughing, singing, eating, resting, cleaning, learning, hugging, crying and kissing. But what unites us is not genes and a mutual family tree; instead we are connected by love, caring and a genuine concern about the quality of our lives. I feel that if children leave our home knowing that the world is an exciting and beautiful place to be, and that they are an important part of this world, then we all have accomplished something worthwhile.

You must know that there is nothing higher and stronger and more wholesome for life in the future than some good memory, especially a memory of childhood, of home. People talk to you a great deal about education. But some good, sacred memory preserved from childhood – that is perhaps the best education. For if a man has only one good memory left in his heart, even that may keep him from evil...And if he carries many such memories with him into life, he is safe for the end of his days. Fyodor Dostoevsky, The Brothers Karamazov

Enrollment Information and Procedure

Hours of Operation

Joyful Noise opens at 7:30am and closes at 5:30pm, Monday through Friday.
Child care that extends beyond these hours will involve making special arrangements.

We will be closed, with pay, for the following holidays. Should the holiday fall on a Saturday or Sunday, the preceding Friday or following Monday respectively will be considered the holiday.

January 1--New Year's Day
Memorial Day
July 4th--Independence Day
July 12th--Chris' birthday
Labor Day
Thanksgiving and the following Friday
December 24th and 25th

There will be additional times when the day care is closed for vacations or employee trainings. There will be no charge for these days. You will be given at least two weeks notice of all closings except in the case of illness or tragedy, when I will notify you as soon as possible. Whenever the day care is closed you are responsible for making other arrangements for the care of your child.

Even when we have snow storms and other schools are closed, Joyful Noise is open. If you choose to stay home due to weather or any other reason, please call me as soon as possible so I know that you're not coming.

Tuition per Child

Full time: 4 or 5 days per week --- \$185.00 per week starting Jan. 2022
Part time: 2 or 3 days per week ---\$60.00 per day

Infants (children 0-2 years of age)

Full time: 4 or 5 days per week ---\$220.00 per week
Part time --- 2 or 3 days per week--\$70.00 per day

Drop In

Children will be accepted on a drop in basis only if there is an opening available **and** they have been previously enrolled in Joyful Noise or are the guest of a child who is enrolled in Joyful Noise. Drop in rates are arranged on a case by case basis.

Latch Key

School Year --- arranged on a case by case basis.

Summer -- regular full time rates

For latch key children, the hours in attendance during the school year will be recorded. The parents will be charged the rate we have agreed on. A summer position is not guaranteed to latchkey children but they will have the first opportunity for those spots if they open up.

Payment

Parents contract with the day care to reserve a place in the day care and full payment is required regardless of whether or not the child is in attendance.

Payment for the week is due on Monday unless other arrangements have been made. Checks should be made out to Christine Bazzett.

Fees

Tuition Deposit

Two week's tuition deposit is required for enrollment at Joyful Noise. This deposit will be applied to your final two weeks of attendance at the day care. If you cannot afford to pay the entire tuition deposit at once I will set up a payment plan for you for the remaining portion. Your child will not be considered enrolled until part of this fee is paid. Parents who qualify for state assistance can waive this deposit.

Enrollment Fee

There will be a non-refundable one time enrollment fee of \$50.00 per family. This fee must be paid to reserve a space in the day care. Your child will not be considered enrolled until this fee is paid. Parents who qualify for state assistance can waive this fee.

NSF Fee

There will be a \$50.00 charge for every bounced check. This fee, along with a money order or cash in the amount of the NSF check is due within two days of notification of insufficient funds. I will accept only cash or money order payments for 30 days after one of your checks bounces. If two checks bounce I will only accept cash or money order for the remainder of your enrollment.

Late Payment Fee

There will be a \$50.00 per week charge for late payments. Two subsequent weeks without payment is grounds for dismissal from the day care and your child's place will become available.

Late Pick Up Fee

If the child is at the day care home after it closes, parent will be charged at 5:31pm a \$20.00 charge and \$10.00 for every 15 minutes thereafter. This fee will be added to your balance to be paid no later than the following week. Time will be as calculated on the day care home's clock located in the kitchen.

Withdrawal Policy/ Change of Contract

Parents are required to give one month written notice prior to change of contract or termination of enrollment. Failure to do so will result in a one week tuition charge and loss of tuition deposit.

Joyful Noise reserves the right to cancel on one day's notice the enrollment of a child for one or more of the following reasons:

- * If the child has special needs which the staff members are unable to adequately meet.
- * If non-payment or repeated late payment of fees occurs.
- * If a parent fails to observe policies of the center and/or does not complete and return the required forms.
- * If physical or verbal abuse of children or staff by a parent occurs.

Dismissal for any of these reasons will result in loss of tuition deposit.

Enrollment Policies and Procedures

Interviews

Enrollment at Joyful Noise begins with at least two interviews; first by phone and then with your child in person. During the phone interview we exchanged important information, and, if we scheduled an on-site interview I offered to provide you with a copy of this handbook to read ahead of time. If you have an initial interview scheduled I will not fill the day care opening until after that scheduled day. However, if you must cancel, I may choose not to reschedule.

The initial on-site interview takes place during working hours, even though this seems inconvenient. I believe it's important for clients to view the daycare in operation before you can determine if this is a good fit for your family. I also believe that you and your child need to be able to observe me (and other employees present) with a group of youngsters who are a bit disrupted from their normal routine so that you can see how we handle ourselves in challenging situations. I also need to observe your child among other children and your methods of parenting in less than ideal circumstances. Another benefit is that your child will have one visit to the day care that was successful, non-threatening and where they weren't 'abandoned' but got to leave with Mom or Dad. This will be comforting to them if they are to attend later. I feel that these benefits outweigh the problem of interviewing in a distracting setting.

The final reason I prefer to conduct interviews during working hours is because I hold family time as sacred; mine and yours. I realize that it's difficult for some people to come to a daytime interview, but I feel that in the evenings we're all too tired to do a good job and the weekends are very precious to those of us with children in our lives. If you come away from the interview with unanswered questions you are encouraged and welcome to call or email them to me while you form your impressions. If you feel that you need a second on-site interview after working hours in order to make an informed decision, I will arrange one for you at our earliest mutual convenience for a charge of \$20.00 per hour with a minimum charge of \$20.00. There will be no charge for a second interview during business hours. I will not however, hold the opening in the day care for you just because you have a second interview pending.

Waiting List

Usually several children are interviewing for one opening in the day care. You should let me know as soon as possible after the interview if you are interested in enrolling. I will inform you of my decision within two working days of the last scheduled interview. If your child is not chosen but I feel they would be welcome, you will be invited to be on my waiting list. When another opening arises you will receive an email and need to contact me for a new interview if you are still interested.

Enrollment

If your child is accepted to fill the vacancy you must return to the day care as soon as possible and pay the enrollment fee and tuition deposit. This will secure your position. Failure to do this within 48 hours will result in you losing your spot.

At this time you will receive all forms necessary for enrollment which will include:

- State of Michigan forms
- Medical release form
- Emergency card

- Licensing rules and regulations booklet and receipt form
- Federal food program enrollment forms
- Joyful Noise forms
- Contract
- Parent Handbook
- Child Information form

Please read all forms and the Parent Handbook carefully and call if there are any questions. These forms must be returned no later than the child's first day of care. You must keep the booklets. If you arrive on the child's first day without the forms, you and the child will be sent back home to fetch them. I will not care for children without this paperwork on file.

You and your child are invited to come for as many short visits as necessary to help them acclimate to the day care before the big day when they are left here without you. I suggest bringing them every time you have to pick up and return forms and maybe for one extra short visit just to play. Infants especially need to come to get used to the sounds and smells of a new place while still in the comforting circle of Mother or Father's arms. For day care, please always dress your child in comfortable clothing that can get dirty.

If a child's parents are separated or divorced, I will assume that both parents have equal legal custody and that the child can be released to either parent. If this is not the case, please bring me a copy of your court order with detailed information in writing regarding parental visitation and pick up.

Besides the forms, please bring to the day care by the child's first day:

- a spare set of clothes to be kept at the day care with the child's name written in each article of clothing. This should include underwear, socks, pants, shirt and a sweater or sweatshirt.
- if necessary a large bag of diapers or cloth diapers and covers
- any special instructions, written out clearly
- any equipment that we've previously discussed

Parents will supply all diapers, bottles, creams and ointments for children, including sunscreen. While I would prefer that you use cloth diapers, I will not launder them for you but only rinse them and return them to you at the end of each day, so I agree to also accommodate disposable diapers. Please make sure all items are clearly labeled with the child's name. Because of the toxicity, please do not bring insect repellent.

Home Visits

One aspect that I feel is worthy of interrupting a weekend for is a home visit. It is vastly helpful for me to see where the children in my care live. When you enroll in Joyful Noise, you can choose to make an appointment on a Saturday afternoon for me and possibly another employee or two, to visit your house for about an hour sometime within the first month. You provide the tea or coffee, and I'll bring a little treat. You and your child (if they're old enough) can show me around the place so I can see the toys, bedroom, special places and pets that I'm going to hear all about in the months and years to come. It is comforting for the children to see me in familiar surroundings as we are getting to know each other and for me to cross their threshold in exchange for opening my door to them. If the child spends equal amounts of time at two different homes, or if divorced parents wish it, I will gladly visit more than one home.

The home visit is optional and up to you to request and arrange. I realize that many people are uncomfortable with this suggestion for many different reasons, so I will not bring it up, though I strongly advise it and there is no extra charge.

The First Day Jitters

Some children will do fine getting used to a new day care, and so will some parents. Other children or their parents may have a lot of jitters as we work our way through the first days and weeks. Some suggestions for those initial rough spots:

- Before arriving, be cheerful, calm and reassuring about your reappearance and
- describe how you will come to to pick them up (e.g. after nap and snack time, or after lunch time)
- In the morning, briefly exchange necessary information with me, give your child a hug and kiss and say "Have a good day, I'll see you(repeat what you've told them earlier)
- Then leave directly without looking back.
- Even if your child is shrieking (and some do) continue to your car.
- By leaving this way, you are indicating (and may even say) "I know this is a safe place for you and I'm sure you'll be fine."

Be assured that even the most chilling screams are over in a few minutes, and crying at the door generally lasts only a few days if handled in this manner. Though it may seem hard-hearted and uncaring, this leave-taking method can bolster the child's confidence more quickly as they will learn from your confidence and then from experience that you were right. Protracted leave-taking and emotional good-byes only prolong this period. Try to keep your responses to this adjustment period positive, consistent, supportive and brief.

When picking a child up they often display attention getting behavior as a result of being separated from you all day. Though you are tired from a long day at work, realize that this is their non-verbal way of telling you that you are the most important person in their life and that they've missed you. Sometimes a very 'good' child will sometimes 'fall apart' at the sight of a parent, precisely because the parent is the one they feel most comfortable falling apart with. See it as the compliment it is and the price of being indispensable.

On the other hand, if your child has no problems with transitions, drop offs or pick ups, realize that you are still indispensable and the most important person in their life and just thank your lucky stars.

Daily Program and Policies

Program Schedule

I strive to keep the daily program at Joyful Noise flexible and relaxed so we are able to rise and roll with whatever weather and surprises might arrive on any particular day. However I also realize that rhythm and routine are very important for children's security and well being, so with all those components in mind our day goes something like this:

7:30-9:00 am

Children arrive and are greeted. Breakfast is available if and when they choose during this time. Free play, conversation and cuddling.

9:00-9:30

Clean up from breakfast and any prep work that's needed for lunch. Toileting and diaper changing as needed.

9:30-11:00 or 11:30

Daily walk if possible. Upon returning, outdoor play, weather and time permitting. In harsh weather, free play indoors

11:30-12:00 noon

Preparation for lunch. Food preparation and hand washing.

12:00-12:45 pm

Lunch time and clean up.

12:45-1:15

Story time. Toileting and diapering.

1:00-3:00

Quiet time and nap time

3:00-3:30

Waking slowly with a snack. Diapering and toileting.

3:30-5:30

Outdoor play, weather permitting. In harsh weather, free play indoors. Saying good-bye and departures.

Further discussion of the components of our day will be covered in the following sections. Please note that within this schedule, each infant has their own individual schedule of feeding, sleeping and diapering.

Volunteer Policy

I will directly supervise all volunteers, including those who are parents of children in care.

Communication

Raising a child with another person is one of the most intimate relationships you can have and requires great attention to clear and honest communication. If we cannot communicate in an efficient, thorough and honest manner, the child will suffer as we inevitably become frustrated and resentful of each other. In addition, as the child grows into using language of their own, they will happily tell us many details of home and day care. Believe me, I learn more than I need to know of my clients' family life from the children. This will be more humorous if we are confident that the lines of communication are open and working between all of the adults. Please make me aware of any changes or events in the child's life which may effect their behavior or ability to participate fully in our daily routines or activities. This could be something as simple as the cat being lost, or Grandma coming to visit, or something as serious as divorce or death. Don't think

of anything as too small or too big, but feel free to keep me up to date. I will do the same for you about events at my house and your child's life here. Our lines of communication are initiated during the interviews, the home visit and by this handbook. They will be maintained and strengthened with loving attention in the following areas:

Drop off and pick up times

Do not drop off your child and assume he or she can enter the building alone. Never leave a child unattended. Do not take a child without notifying me or my assistant that the child is leaving.

Please notify me if your child will be absent or substantially late, or of a delay in your regular pick up time.

Please inform me ahead of time of any non-custodial person (including Grandparents, nannies, neighbors, etc.) who will pick up your child from day care. It is a very awkward situation if I cannot contact you to verify the adult who is standing at my door that I do not know. Please be aware that I also cannot prevent a parent from taking a child from the day care, as long as they have legal rights to the child, even if they are not the custodial parent.

If you are late picking up your child there is a late fee you must pay. If your child is still at the day care five minutes after we have closed, I will start calling the home and work numbers of both parents. If I cannot reach a parent I will start calling the emergency contact numbers. I will continue calling parents and emergency contact numbers until someone can be reached who can pick up the child. If the child is still at the day care two hours after we have closed with no other arrangements made I will call the Traverse City city police or child protective services.

Drop off and pick up times are a very brief chance for us to exchange a bit of information about the child. If there are things you need to tell me that you do not want your child to hear, please hand me a note upon arrival or departure. I will do the same for you. I feel that if we are skillful, there are very few things that we can't discuss in front of the children, but sometimes the occasion does arise.

When you come to pick up your child, they are your responsibility from the time you arrive. Otherwise it can be confusing for the child. Be sensitive to your child at this time of day and realize that it's a transition time for them, which is difficult. We all know that times of transition in our lives are the times when we can feel the most vulnerable. This feeling of being vulnerable is even more intense for infants and toddlers, but they do not have the words to tell us so. Sometimes they need you to leave quickly in the morning. In the evening they often need your undivided attention after being away from you for a whole day. To learn how to exchange information with an adult while still giving your child the focus they deserve is an art form and some days we will do better than others. This is still a valuable time for us to 'touch base' and clue each other in on the state of mind that the child may be in as we pass them off, so we must take advantage of it. Please do **not** bring your cell phones into my house with you.

Open Door Policy

One sign of a reputable day care is that you are welcome to walk in at any time your child is in attendance without any advance notice. However, if you choose to do so, I would ask you to please be respectful of the types of activities going on. Realize that you will be disrupting the children's work and their attention will be on you because you are "new." Realize also that unexpected interruptions will interfere with my focus on the children, so please keep your conversation with me to a minimum.

You are welcome to visit any time and observe the activities of the day care. It is helpful for me if I know you are planning to come for an extended period of time. Please plan on observing quietly or taking up whatever work activity I ask of you, but do not plan on chatting with me.

Parents of infants are encouraged to come to the daycare any time they wish to nurse the baby, drop off expressed milk or just to hold their babies.

Phone Calls and Email

You are welcome to call me before 5:30pm on a work day or email me at any time regarding any questions, concerns or information you have about your child or the day care. Since I work directly with the children most of the day, I have limited time to answer the phone or email, but the answering machine will always be on and I will check my computer at least once a week for messages. If you leave an urgent message on the answering machine, I will do my best to respond to you as quickly as possible. Email is best used for anecdotes or issues that are less urgent.

Phone calls after hours and on weekends may not be received or answered until the next working day. If we do answer the phone during off hours you may be asked to call back during the work day in order for us to keep a healthy separation between our private lives and business.

Website

I've created www.joyfulnoisedaycare.com as an online newsletter and resource for parents. Please use it as much as you are able and give me feedback so it can just get better and better!

Parent Conferences

Conferences will be scheduled only as necessary, and no regular days off will be allotted for them. If the other forms of communication are working, then after-hours conferences are usually not needed. However, in extenuating circumstances please don't hesitate to express a need for one. If we're in agreement, a conference will be scheduled at our earliest mutual convenience.

Cultural Diversity and Celebrations

It is important to honor the cultural traditions of all the children in the day care. The best way we can do this for preschoolers is to celebrate the festivals and holidays that their families celebrate at home. I will ask for and gratefully appreciate any and all assistance that you each can give me in doing this. I am very familiar with all of the Christian holidays and also celebrate the local tradition of Cherry Festival. These traditions live in me and I can pass them on in a non-denominational fashion that should not impose any conflicting religious beliefs on children whose families are of differing faiths. Since traditions are best modeled and taught by those who have lived them and who they live in, I would ask that those of you who have other traditions consider coming into the day care for a hour or so and introducing us to them, so that all of the children can share in celebrating correctly with your child. If your work does not permit you to come in, would you please take the time to teach me how to share your traditions with the children.

We celebrate birthdays at Joyful Noise with a special sweet treat and candles. You are welcome and encouraged to join us for afternoon snack when we celebrate the birthday and if you wish to provide the treat we will be thrilled. We break all nutritional rules for birthdays. Again, if you

have some birthday story or tradition that you would like to share with us, we would be eternally grateful. Also, it's fun to have a baby picture of the birthday child so we can all see how much they've changed.

Aside from the celebrations I also strive to expose the children in the day care to Spanish and American Sign Language as often as possible on a preschool level. I feel that in our American culture it is important to become comfortable with the presence of these two languages in our lives. If your heritage includes a different language I would be delighted if you could help us learn some of it on a preschool level!

Privacy Policy

I will do all that I can to protect your family's privacy and I will abide by the state of Michigan's privacy law. In addition, I will keep all records and information about your child and your family private and confidential, unless I have your written permission to reveal specific information. I ask that you also respect the privacy of my family by not sharing any information you learn about my family with others, without my written permission.

Michigan Mandatory Reporting Requirements

The Michigan Child Protection Law requires licensed child care providers to report suspected child abuse and neglect by a parent, a legal guardian, or any other person responsible for the child's health or welfare or by a teacher, a teacher's aide, or a member of the clergy to the Department of Human Services. There are civil and criminal penalties for a mandated reporter's failure to make a report. Likewise, there is a civil and criminal immunity for someone making a report in good faith.

The Child Protection Law requires mandated reporters to make an immediate verbal report to DHS upon suspecting child abuse and neglect, followed by a written report within 72 hours. The reporter is not expected to investigate the matter, know the legal definitions of child abuse and neglect, or even know the name of the perpetrator. Once the report is made, responsibility for determining appropriate action is with Children's Protective Services.

Emergency Policy and Procedures

Fire and Tornado

As required by the state of Michigan, I will hold fire and tornado drills on a regular basis. I will attempt to do this in a fashion that does not alarm the children or cause undue stress. This is tricky, so these drills will be kept to a minimum and be very casual.

In the event of fire the children will be gathered and ushered out the exit furthest from the fire. Once all children are safely out of the building the fire department will be called from a neighbor's phone.

In the event of a tornado the children will be ushered to the basement and be seated on the floor against an inside wall away from windows until the danger has passed.

Parental misconduct

If I determine from actions or from the presence of alcohol on the breath of the person picking up the child that they are under the influence of a substance that will make them unfit as a driver I will suggest that they call someone else to come and pick up them and the child or I will call a cab to pick them up and the parent will pay the cab fare. If the adult will not agree to either of these suggestions I am bound by law to notify the police.

Likewise, if the child shows any signs of abuse such as suspicious burns or bruises, or if the child reports abuse to me I am bound by law to report this to the proper authorities.

If the parent fails to bring an appropriate car seat for the child, I will ask the parent to drive home without the child and return with an appropriate car seat installed in the car. I will charge a late pickup fee under these circumstances if the child is still at the day care after hours.

Health Policy

Please do not bring your child to day care if any of the following apply:

- 1) if they have a fever (low grade fever does not apply to babies who are teething)
- 2) if they have diarrhea or have vomited in the past 24 hours (this does not apply to the normal 'overflow' of babies still on a liquid diet.)
- 3) if they have a major communicable disease such as influenza, chicken pox, measles, mumps or scarlet fever.
- 4) if you feel they are not well enough to spend some time out of doors.
- 5) if they have a painful sore throat.
- 6) if there is thick mucus or pus draining from the eye.
- 7) if your child has head lice or nits.

If your child develops any of these conditions while in my care, you will be called and are expected to pick up your child as soon as humanly possible. Your child will be isolated until you arrive.

Our life in Northern Michigan means that some of us spend many months in a row with runny noses and I do not expect you to keep your child home because of colds or allergies. However, if your child is pale, listless and sleepy, that may be more than just a routine seasonal ailment and I strongly suggest you keep them home with you for observation rather than bring them to daycare where my attentions are divided.

Accidents

When minor injury occurs, first aid will be applied and you will be notified at pick up time. If an accident occurs that may require a doctor's care, I will call you first as I administer first aid. If parents or guardians are unreachable I will leave a message and proceed to notify persons on the emergency information form on file. If no one can be reached I will proceed with the child to the hospital emergency room as soon as the back up assistants can arrive to care for the other day care children, and you can meet me there.

It is of utmost importance that you maintain current home, work and emergency phone numbers for the safety of your child. I need to be able to contact someone at all times in case of emergency.

Medication

I will not administer any medications to children for the purpose of modifying thought patterns or behavior. If you wish your child to take these medications, please administer them at home. Because of the serious nature of their side effects, I reserve the right to terminate your enrollment due to use of these medications.

Medication will not be dispensed to any child for fever.

Other medication will only be given to children under the following conditions:

1. A written authorization on the proper form provided by the state, dated and signed by the parent is on file.
2. The medication is in the original container and labeled with the child's name and the label includes the dosage and directions for administration.

A written record of times and dates of dosage will be kept on the back of the permission form.

Immunizations

Parents must inform the provider of all immunizations their child has received. The provider is not able to inform parents about the immunization status of other children in the day care. People who enroll in my program may come in contact with others who are underimmunized or not immunized.

Toilet Training

I will work closely with each family to insure that toilet training techniques remain as consistent as possible between home and day care. Though many parents like to use food as a reward for toileting, I will not follow that practice here. The day care setting will offer the child a chance to see older children practicing their toileting skills, but realize that day care is a distracting place and your training will progress more quickly at home where it is quieter and the child can better concentrate on listening to their body's signals. Therefore, you will have plenty of time to relate to me your techniques and progress before they become relevant in my home. As always, communication is the key.

Prevention

Many poor health problems can be prevented by cultivating cleanliness, dressing properly and eating a wholesome variety of foods. At Joyful Noise we embrace these practices in the following ways.

Cleanliness

* Hand washing is one of the most important ways to insure good health. The children and staff both will wash their hands with soap and running water after playing outdoors, before meals and snacks, after toileting, diapering and nose blowing. Faces and hands will be washed after meals and snacks.

* Shoes are removed at the door to keep outside dirt off our play surface (the floor.) If children have gone barefoot or worn sandals out of doors their feet will be washed upon entering the house.

* Toys and play surfaces will be cleaned with disinfectant on a regular basis, as well as food preparation areas.

Clothing

Outdoor play in all kinds of weather is important for children. If it is snowy or rainy we may go for only a short walk, or play on the porch for a few minutes, but the children will get out and experience the weather almost every day the temperature is above 20F. (Wind chill will be considered.) Please see to it that your child comes properly equipped to be out of doors in whatever weather we are having. This means especially warm hats, socks, sweaters and jackets when it's chilly; rain jackets, waterproof footwear and hats when it's wet. If your child is not well enough to go outdoors for a few minutes then please don't bring them.

In the summertime please see that they have sun hats or caps and a swimsuit that can be left at the day care for playing in the sprinkler on hot days. Please do not bring a towel. If your child has skin allergies, please bring the brand of sunscreen you wish me to use, with your child's name written on the bottle.

In chilly weather please see that your child is dressed warmly enough to accommodate drafts. The children usually play on the floor and it is the nature of a day care that the door opens and closes often. Dressing in layers insures that they will not lose the precious body heat they need to develop properly. Often children will say they are hot just because their clothes feel tight or uncomfortable. Body temperature can easily be checked by feeling the neck, tummy and back and seeing if the child is sweating or not. You can bring your own pair of slippers to leave at the day care for when shoes come off if you wish. I encourage newborns to wear warm skull caps.

Stress and Rest

Most illness and disease are caused by stress and this statistic is not limited to adults. Please insure that your child has as little stress as possible in order to help keep them healthy. This means limiting 'screen time,' over-scheduling and inappropriate expectations. It also means seeing that they get adequate amounts of sleep and rest to support their immune system. We have rest time every day at Joyful Noise for two hours. School children are required to play quietly indoors or go outdoors to play during this time. Pre-schoolers will lie down with a book in a cozy "nest" with their own sheet, blanket and pillow, and must remain prone and quiet. Whether or not sleep comes is not important, but rest time and the rhythm of resting is. Most children will sleep for one or two hours.

Many parents want their children to skip napping in order to insure that they will go to sleep promptly for them at night, but this is an error in thinking and an unhealthy practice for the child. Children have difficulty going to sleep at night because of exhaustion, over stimulation, lack of a quieting routine or absence of discipline surrounding bedtime practices. It is a rare child who will not sleep at night because they have had too much rest during the day, since children require many hours of sleep in order to grow properly. If you are having trouble getting your child to go to bed at night I'll be happy to discuss your evening snacks and routines with you and offer some suggestions.

In addition to keeping stimulation at healthy levels and respecting the need for rest and sleep, I try to maintain a peaceful attitude about time, schedules and personal rhythms. There is much rushing and haste in our society which brings about great undue stress and illness for us. I strive to let the children and the day progress at a relaxed and unhurried pace and encourage you to consider the benefits of such an environment in your own home.

SIDS Prevention Policy

Although the cause of SIDS is unknown, I will observe these practices in order to attempt to reduce the risks in the day care:

- All infants under age one will sleep only on their backs on a firm surface.
- Infants will not sleep with thick comforters, stuffed animals or pillows.
- Sleeping infants will be kept warm but not too warm.
- Our home will always be 100% smoke free.
- Sleeping infants will be carefully monitored; if breathing stops I will start CPR immediately and call 911.

Nutrition Philosophy and Practices

We cannot expect our children to develop healthy bodies and healthy minds if we try to cut corners in the area of nutrition. We are what we eat and children are still forming organs and developing brain cells. They require enough energy to stay robustly active so their muscles and nerves can gain the strength that only vigorous movement can bring. They cannot do this important work on the empty fuel of white flour, white sugar and hydrogenated fats. A good rule of thumb is to choose foods that have gone through the smallest number of machines to get to you. I depend on parents to limit these harmful foods at home and I will also limit them in the day care.

Federal Food Program

Joyful Noise is enrolled in the Federal Food Program which allocates a small amount of money monthly to day care homes to help defray the cost of sound nutrition for pre-school children. You will need to fill out yearly enrollment forms for this program. I am required to complete menus and attendance forms daily. It also insures that I adhere to nutritional standards set by the food program and I am visited quarterly by one of their representatives for inspection and nutritional counseling, three of those visits unannounced.

Meals and Snacks

Until 9am **breakfast** is available to the children. I don't care if the children have already eaten at home or not; many children can't relax into digesting when they are being rushed out the door and may only really find their appetites once they have arrived at their destination. Better to bring the child to me hungry than to dull their appetite with a sweetened processed cereal bar that will leave them cranky by mid-morning. Some children like to eat two breakfasts which is just fine with me!

The breakfast they will be offered at Joyful Noise will be wholesome and predictable: usually there will be whole grain toast, peanut butter, fruits, vegetables, and some form of eggs, cheese or meat with milk or water to drink. This meal is optional for the children and they can choose which components they wish to have on their plate. They can also choose when to come to the table, until 9:30am after which breakfast will no longer be served and they must wait til lunch to dine again.

I do not serve a **morning snack** since there are barely two hours between our hearty breakfast and lunch. A morning snack is not necessary with our schedule, unlike some other day care

centers. The children all have their own water bottles with their name written on them so they can have water whenever they want all day long.

The **lunch** menus are usually determined by the children. The Special Helper of the day has been asked the week before what they wish to have on their day. (See more about the Special Helper in the appendix.) I help them through the process of choosing foods that adhere to the requirements of the food program, so they slowly learn about food groups and balanced diets. The menus may often seem redundant to adults, since children love to repeat their favorite foods. However, regardless of the menu, their enthusiasm for lunch seems to increase when it was the choice of one of their peers. My attitude is that it's not health food if they don't eat it, and I would much rather have the kids devouring my healthy form of pizza or tacos five days in a row than to throw out a variety of foods. Of course, I also am the Special Helper from time to time and take advantage of those days to introduce new foods to the children and broaden their gastronomical experience a bit.

Most of the reliable research that I have found shows that diets low in vitamins, minerals, fats and protein are harmful to growing bodies and minds, so I strive to use only whole grains, whole milk, real butter and eggs, and the best quality fruits, vegetables and meat I can find. I try to buy local and organic whenever possible, and always appreciate any help you can offer in finding sources of good quality local foods at a reasonable price.

If you wish your child to abstain from meat this is not the day care to send them to. I will never force children to eat the food offered to them, so if they are naturally vegetarian I will not interfere with that. But I will not withhold meat from a child nor will I tolerate a child telling the other children that meat is bad for them or that they are bad to eat meat.

Your child may not bring their own food to the day care. If you wish to contribute wholesome food to our kitchen please see the list of suggested donations in the appendix.

At lunch time the children must come to the table. I quietly say a small, non-denominational 'gratitude' for the food (sometimes just to myself) and they are given portions of each menu item. They are welcome to have more of any item they wish. They are never required to eat anything and may leave the table when they feel they have had enough and ask to be excused. If they are old enough they carry their own dirty dishes to the kitchen.

Afternoon snack time comes as the children arise from rest and the older children come in from school or outdoor play. It consists of two different food groups, healthy and wholesome, and has been chosen by the Special Helper. Snack time is the time of day where we may have sweet treats if it is a birthday or special holiday. Special holidays come on a regular basis as we mark the local and calendar holidays including the first day of each season, so I strive to keep the holiday treats wholesome, using only whole grain flours and natural sweeteners. So that I don't ruin their appetites for dinner, they are not allowed seconds at snack time.

Allergies

Any food allergies will be honored and the menu of the day will be adjusted for your child with appropriate substitutes for the allergens. Please put all allergies in writing.

Children who are allergic to bee and wasp stings should have a bee sting kit at the day care with their name on it and written instructions for how to use it.

Allergies are becoming more and more common among children all the time and point to areas of our environment where we need to be wary, as well as the need to strengthen the children's

immune systems. Besides food and bug allergies, many children have environmental allergies that surface as congestion, asthma, cognitive problems, speech and hearing problems, nervous behavior or skin rashes. Please be careful of the cleansers and detergents you use at home; in the day care I use only the mildest and most environmentally sound products that I can find to protect your child.

Infant feeding and weaning

Infants will be fed according to parental instruction. If the child is using formula I will buy the brand of formula specified by the parent and prepare it according to their written instructions. Parents must supply the type of bottle and nipples they prefer me to use, but I will purchase any bottle liners necessary. Breast milk will be stored and served according to parental instructions. Weaning, likewise, will take place according to each parent's wishes, introducing foods as specified by the parent until the child reaches the age where they can eat the same menu as the older children. Nap time bottles will be given as long as the parents wish.

Free Play

The importance of unstructured play time for young children cannot be overemphasized. I have included in the appendix a fact sheet on play compiled by the Alliance for Children that states the conclusions of lengthy research on this topic. The value of free play in establishing the foundation skills needed to grow into well adjusted, productive adults is overwhelming, and so it is the foundation of our daily program at Joyful Noise.

It is difficult for some adults to understand how to let children have unstructured time. Free play does NOT mean letting children run amok, bouncing on the furniture, doing whatever in the world they wish to do. It does mean letting children choose their activities freely in a safe, structured environment that offers endless stimulation without undue over-stimulation. It does NOT mean presenting the children with pre-conceived, goal oriented tasks or projects that they then can 'freely' choose from. It means letting the play be child directed with the adult in the background as role model, arbitrator and facilitator. It does NOT mean the adult ignores the children, copping out on doing the hard work of lesson plans and directing the day. For the adults in charge, it means 'riding the wave'; keeping completely in tune with the pulse of each child in the group, while taking advantage of the season, the weather and the daily schedule to cradle and steer each day so that it is at the same time nurturing, creative and educational, involving body, mind and spirit.

Children who come from environments where activities were always planned for them, or from environments where they were allowed to watch a lot of television or computer screens often have a week or two of adjustment when they enter a program where they are allowed to play freely. They actually do not know how to play; their imaginations are stunted and need to unfold a bit into the freedom. They complain that they are 'bored' because there is no adult 'entertainment committee' making suggestions for them. They are forced to use mental muscles that are underdeveloped. It doesn't take long before they catch on though, and soon are making up games and working busily with the others. Children who know how to play will quickly show their peers the skills they need if adults just stay out of the way. The best thing an adult can do to teach a child how to play is to occupy themselves with some sort of meaningful work in proximity to the children, as children's play is all imitation of adults, and they cannot truly play well if they do not have real adults doing real work around them to imitate.

Some parents worry that free play will not provide their children with the experiences they need to prepare them for later academics. Nothing could be further from the truth. On the contrary, introducing academics too early does not provide children with the experiences they need to

prepare them for higher learning, just as giving them the keys to the car too soon will not prepare them for driving. During free play a child receives the abundance of varied nerve stimulation needed to develop brain synapses. The fundamentals of reading, math and sciences are found in practical life activity as they sort, count, arrange and order a wide variety of substances. They experience chemistry in the kitchen, biology in the garden, and social studies in the neighborhood. Literacy is fostered through conversation, story telling, puppetry, book time, poetry and music throughout the day.

At Joyful Noise we have two periods in the day where free play is scheduled. If at all possible, this play will occur outdoors; nature is the best environment for children's imaginations as well as the healthiest for their bodies and souls. We usually play in the back yard, but will sometimes venture to the neighborhood park so that the children will have a broader experience of the town we live in. If the weather is too hot, cold or wet to spend much time outdoors, the indoor environment is also rich with objects from nature, books, art supplies and imaginative toys for them to build their play with. When safety permits, they will always be allowed to help with whatever task of meaningful work that the adults are engaged in, as this bit of side by side time is important to better inform their play.

Discipline Policy

At Joyful Noise we use preventive, non-physical methods of discipline aimed at encouraging self control, self esteem, self direction and cooperation.

Licensing also requires me to add that caregiving staff shall not hit spank, shake, bite, pinch or inflict other forms of corporal punishment. We will not restrict a child's movement by binding or tying him or her. We will not inflict mental or emotional stress such as humiliating, shaming, threatening a child, or using derogatory remarks. We will not deprive a child or meals, snacks, rest or necessary toilet use. We will not confine a child in an enclosed area such as a closet, locked room, box or similar cubicle. Of course.

Preventive: By being watchful, interested and present, much behavior that would require intervention can be avoided. This is accomplished first by gently and consistently enforcing clear rules that are easy to remember and follow, such as: no hurting people or things, walking in the house, only throw things outside, ask before you touch something that's not yours. Good rules for all of us. Sometimes I will not intervene when an argument is escalating because it is not against the rules to argue and children must develop problem solving skills on their own whenever possible. If the argument looks like it may quickly come to blows I will step in so that no child is hurt or inflicts harm. This also applies to risky physical behavior outside. Children must be allowed to fall in order to learn balance and limits; but I will not allow children to take risks that are unduly dangerous. Please realize that bones can break even falling out of a chair, and children can fall from the branch of a tree and land in one piece, so there is no exact science in risk taking.

Non-physical: There will be no touching a child in any way that will hurt the child. Usually all that is necessary to correct a problem is to help both children talk through whatever misunderstanding they are having. Sometimes separating the children or making arbitrary decisions about how to share the toy in question is necessary. If a child's behavior requires that they be separated from the other children and they refuse to come I will gently carry them to the new location. If they are flailing at me I will hold their arms or legs firmly so they will not be able to hurt me, but I will not hurt them.

While some child care centers have discontinued use of the time out chair, I still feel that in

certain situations it is appropriate as a last resort, especially for purposefully violent or defiant behavior in children three and older. The child is not shamed or otherwise humiliated, but only told quietly, (after one or two warnings that this would be the consequence,) that they must sit in the chair in the kitchen. If they refuse, then they will sit on my lap in the chair. "If you hit, you sit," is a rule the children learn quickly, so there are no warnings for hitting once they are old enough to learn that rule. The children sit for as many minutes as they are years old, and I set the timer so that they don't sit for longer. Children under three will not be put in time out.

Discipline: Discipline is not punishment. Discipline implies teaching, coming from the word *disciple*. As in all teaching, the best discipline uses the fewest words. Punishment implies hurtful consequences and something to be avoided, so I avoid it.

Self-control: The aim of discipline is to help children learn to behave appropriately on their own. I will teach children to control themselves when they feel they are getting angry, so that they can have the emotion of anger without hurting anyone. I will teach them proper manners so they can be in social situations without destroying property or depriving others around them of their ability to enjoy themselves. Of course, if these skills are not also enforced at home, your child will have a much harder time learning them. Proper diet and rest help give a child the tools they need for better self control, as we are all cranky and out of sorts when we are feeling tired or weak. Each child has different capabilities and so there will be different expectations for each child, but the instruction will be the same. The best way they will learn self-control is by the example of the adults around them, so I strive to be a model of self-control and always work to cultivate the inner character which supports that trait.

Self-esteem: Children will learn to behave much more quickly if we treat them with the same respect that we would treat our friends or co-workers. If we can see them as peers on this planet while still recognizing that they are new here and only just learning a staggering amount of information, we will be able to understand their shortcomings and gently guide them in a way that does not humiliate them or make them feel ashamed of themselves. If we feel a child needs to learn humility, the best way to teach them is to demonstrate it. At Joyful Noise we treat children with the respect they deserve and they learn to respect others this way.

Self-direction: Once children learn to not only control their energies, but direct them, then our discipline is really successful. By helping children work through difficult situations, (not by avoiding them,) we teach them to direct themselves through the sometimes confusing maze of social interactions to a peaceful outcome. This is done at Joyful Noise by intervening only when necessary and suggesting several possible paths for a conflict to go and letting the children choose. Soon they start to see how looking for these solutions is a fun game, and use their insight and powers of reason to play that game on their own. Self-direction is also reinforced by daily unstructured play time and by the example of adults who partake in meaningful work around them.

Cooperation: Cooperation is practiced almost every moment in a home day care setting in the same way it is in an active family. When children help the adult with their work they learn the proper language and gestures for initiating and sustaining cooperative behavior, then they practice this during free play time. When it's time to pick up the toys they see that many hands make light work. Older children learn cooperation with nurturing the younger ones, and the younger ones imitate. When there is a conflict, they see how it is resolved more quickly as everyone works together. They see when the group goes on outings how we all must cooperate in order to enjoy the excursion. I ensure that the spirit of cooperation permeates Joyful Noise, so the children come away from their day here understanding it on a deeper level than a superficial teaching of the word could ever give.

I challenge all my clients to behave in a manner worthy of imitation, not only when your children

can see you, but even when they can't, for children see into the hearts of the adults they are with, and who you are is the most important part of disciplining your child. Since children need to see how we struggle with our tasks, don't expect your child or your self to be flawless, but to be honest about your flaws and willing to work on them. I promise to do the same.

Other Programs

Latch Key

When children reach school age there is still room for them here. The benefits of a family environment and unstructured free play are even more important when a child starts to attend formal schooling. Older children can have a comfortable place to release the stress of their school day and the company of children of mixed ages offers a healthy contrast to their day spent with peers of the same age. Younger children give the older children a chance to learn the art of nurturing and the younger ones look up to the school age children as role models, learning basic self-care and social skills. This natural 'eco-system' of children helps boost the self esteem of all and they learn things that grown ups could never teach them.

Before school your child will be offered breakfast if they arrive in time. Children who attend Oak Park Elementary school will depart, walking, in time to arrive at school on time, but not early. I cannot watch them as they walk to school, so they must be able to walk responsibly on their own. Parents are required to sign a release form for this privilege and if children misbehave or dawdle to or from school I will request that parents transport them. Parents must arrange transportation for students attending all other schools.

After school, children will receive a snack and then be allowed to play or do their homework, whichever they prefer. I will not force a child to do homework, the choice is completely theirs. On half days, snow days and school holidays, your child has regular full day care, including lunch. If your child is too sick to go to school, they are too sick to be here, and I will have no assistant scheduled for times when school is in session, so you may not bring them.

During holiday vacations and summer months Joyful Noise offers a perfect 'home base' for older children to recuperate from the pressures of academic life. Some parents like to enroll their children in other classes and camps with the home day care as a pick up and drop off point during the summer. I cannot offer transportation to any other programs or activities. Other parents prefer to let their child have the more relaxed, creative life of unstructured free time to explore projects of their own choosing. I am happy to brainstorm with the older children about what materials they need in order to pursue their interests during these pastoral times, so every summer is different here, tailored to the children who attend.

Field Trips

The field trips at Joyful Noise are simple to accommodate the youngest in our group and our mode of transportation will always be walking; usually a walk around the neighborhood or to F&M park. On the occasional summer day, if the particular group attending is conducive and/or if I have extra help, we will go swimming at Bryant Park, our neighborhood beach. I will never take children in the water unless I have an assistant present or unless the group numbers three or less. Without an assistant we may still go and just play on the sand. This is a lot of fun on days when the beach is experiencing its different seasons and the water is very cold. I feel it is important for children who live near the Great Lakes to witness all their nuances first hand.

I find most other field trips more stressful than beneficial for children of this age group. Because of unpredictable weather, our outings must be fairly spontaneous and flexible, so the grown ups must be as well. For this reason I have you sign a clause in my contract allowing me to take the child on field trips, so that we don't have to worry about permission slips for every walk around the block or trip to the park. If any field trips are planned that vary from the norms outlined here you will be notified ahead of time.

Appendix

Toy Day and Weapon Play

Tuesday is Toy Day. This is the day of the week where children are allowed and encouraged to bring a toy from home to share with the other kids. This is entirely optional, and once they get here if they decide they do not want to share their toy, they don't have to. If they choose not to share, however, the toy will be put up and no one will play with it.

Toys brought for toy day should be durable. Please don't send Grandma's heirloom china doll or a balsa wood airplane. Also realize that pieces may get lost forever, so puzzles are not usually a good idea, unless the child is old enough to take care of it themselves or suffer the loss.

The only other rule about Toy Day is no weapons. I feel that weapon play is valuable for children in the sense that it is a part of adult life that they are confronted with and must reconcile in their play. Also it is valuable in helping them find feelings of power in a world where they are essentially quite powerless. For children who have been abused or come from particularly frustrating homes, weapon play can be healing. But in a large group of children from varying households, toy replicas of weapons can often incite all kinds of out of hand, rowdy behavior that doesn't occur when the children just play with imaginary weapons. Even these, the children are only allowed to use outside and not at each other unless both parties have agreed to the game. I tell them that grown ups do not use their weapons in the house, nor do they use them on their friends, so they may not do any differently. This seems to be a compromise that we all can live with.

Books are not toys and your child may bring a book to share any day they want. Again, nothing fragile or precious. Another item that is not a toy is any special friend or object that acts as security for the child. These are allowed all day every day and no one expects them to share it. The children all understand the difference between a special friend and just an ordinary toy and there is never a problem with this variation on the rule.

If your child insists on carrying in a toy on some day other than Tuesday, you don't need to fight that battle. I will handle it with them once you are gone. We don't need to make transition times harder than they already are.

Special Helper of the Day

On the door of the toy closet, we have posted a calendar with names written on every day that Joyful Noise is open. These are the Special Helpers of the day. The names are assigned in a regular order so no one is Special Helper more or less than another, no one is Special Helper more than once a week, and my name gets assigned as regularly as everyone else's.

A child can be Special Helper if they are old enough to answer the question, "What would you like for lunch and snack on your Special Helper day?" I ask this question of the children during the week before their day and together we plan the menu for that day, write it on the menu sheet for the food program and put the ingredients on the grocery list. The children not only learn language, pre-reading and writing skills by seeing their thoughts transformed into words, they also learn nutritional basics and that the process of food preparation begins with imagination and breaking down the components of their choices to items on a grocery list.

The creative learning process continues on their special day when they see and help their wishes become food which everyone shares. The Special Helper is especially pleased when their favorite food is a big hit with the other kids and they get heartily thanked for their choices!

Besides choosing the menus the Special Helper gets to do all the tasks that by definition only one person can do, such as choosing a book for story time, sitting on my lap while we read it, helping to set the table and any special one person jobs that come up during the day. They also get to pick a sticker from the basket first thing in the morning.

Being Special Helper teaches children how to share privilege, responsibility and how to take turns. It also gives me an opportunity to work with each of the older kids individually on a regular basis. It is not *your* Special Helper day, so please do not send any goodies from home or special items of interest to share. This, of course, does not apply when your child is Special Helper on their birthday, which is, of course, a very special day for you!

Donation Wish List

paper that is blank on at least one side
toys that have all their pieces and are in good condition
children's books that have all their pages and have no marks in them
outer wear in good condition
pieces of natural fabric (cotton, wool, silk, linen, flax, peat etc. no synthetics please)
sandpaper
pieces of wood; small and large
tree stumps/ round logs of stump size
wooden spools all sizes
crayons
enamel ware dishes; cups, bowls, plates; not chipped
wool yarn
raw wool
wool felt
beans for beanbags
wooden or metal buckets and wash tubs
small gardening tools; no plastic
fresh local organic food
sea shells
crystals
polished stones
beeswax
beeswax candles
sand for the sand box
plants for the garden

If you have something to give that's not on the list, feel free to ask. Supplying a child care center is creative work and we're always open to new ideas.
And of course, I always gratefully accept cash donations and gift certificates.

If you donate something that we can't use directly in the day care I will sell it at one of our fund raising garage sales or I will donate it to another day care or a local thrift shop unless you indicate otherwise.

Time for Play, Every Day: It's Fun—and Fundamental

Child's play is more than just fun and games. It is closely linked to children's intellectual, social, emotional, and physical progress. Decades of research clearly demonstrate that active childhood play—especially the social, “let's pretend” play children do with others—boosts healthy development across a broad spectrum of critical areas. The benefits are so impressive that every day of childhood should be a day for play.

But play is at serious risk today. Many children lack the time, space, and encouragement at home and school to create their own child-powered fun. Video games and other electronic toys threaten to undermine the whole process of play, with grim implications for the intellectual and emotional health of children.

Several trends in education and family life are combining to rob childhood of healthy, creative play:

- Pressures on 3-to-6-year-olds to sit still for academic lessons and standardized testing.
- Too many sedentary hours—often alone—spent looking at screens: televisions, computers, and video games, with their prepackaged scripts that stunt imagination.
- Loss of school recess and safe green spaces for children to freely explore nature.
- Rushed and over scheduled lives, full of adult-organized or adult-oriented activities.
- A glut of toys that take control of play away from children and channel them into violent behavior modeled on popular TV, movie, and video game characters.

THE BENEFITS OF PLAY

Child-initiated play lays the foundations of learning. Through play, children learn to interact with others, to recognize and solve problems, and to feel the sense of mastery that results. In short, play helps children make sense of and find their own place in the physical and social world.

- **Physical development:** The rough and tumble of active play, outdoors as much as possible, is a natural preventive for the current epidemic of childhood obesity. Such play also spurs and helps to coordinate children's sensorimotor development.[1]
- **Academics:** A host of studies demonstrate the close link between play—especially social make-believe play—and cognitive growth. Play is tied to creativity, imagination, and out-of-the-box problem-solving skills. It also helps lay the groundwork for later academic success in reading, writing, mathematics, and science. Play provides language-rich, hands-on experiences with the real-life physics—earth, water, wind, and gravity—that help children later comprehend the scientific and mathematical expressions of these physical realities. Research also suggests that recess boosts school children's academic performance.[2]
- **Social and emotional learning:** Research suggests that social make-believe play is related to increases in collaboration, cooperation, empathy, and impulse control, reduced aggression, and better overall emotional and social adjustment.[3]

- **Sheer joy:** The evidence is clear—healthy children of all ages love to play. Experts in child development say that plenty of time for childhood play is one of the key factors leading to happiness in adulthood.[4]

TIPS TO REVIVE PLAY

1. **Reduce or eliminate screen time:** Children may be bored or anxious at first, unsure how to entertain themselves. Be prepared with simple playthings, good storybooks, and suggestions for make-believe play to inspire their inner creativity.
2. **Choose simple toys:** The child's imagination is the engine of healthy play. Simple toys and natural materials, like wood, boxes, balls, sand and shovels, beeswax, clay, stuffed animals, and generic dolls invite children to create their own scenes—and then knock them down and start over. Battery-driven gadgets distract them from real play.
3. **Encourage outdoor adventures:** Sticks, mud, water, rocks, wind—even bugs and weeds—make a paradise for play. Reserve time every day, when possible, for outdoor play where children can run, climb, find secret hiding places, and dream up dramas. If safety is a concern, organize with other parents to take turns monitoring urban playgrounds or streetside play, or to help clean up and maintain local open spaces.
4. **Let your work inspire play:** When adults are deeply engaged in work—like cooking, raking, cleaning, or washing the car—their example inspires children to deeply immerse themselves in their play. Children like to help for short periods and then go off and play. Avoid interrupting or taking over play, but be available as needed. Let children know their play is important.
5. **Become an advocate for pro-play policies:** Share the evidence about the importance of imaginative play in preschool and kindergarten, and of recess for older children with other parents, teachers, and school officials. Lobby for safe, well-maintained parks in your community. Start an annual local Play Day. (For how-to tips, see www.ipausa.org.)

What's the smartest thing a young child can do with a computer or TV?

Play with the box it came in! Computers tend to insist on being just a computer, programmed by adults. But an empty box becomes a cave, a canoe, a cabin, a candy shop—whatever and whenever the child's magic wand of imagination decrees.

The Alliance for Childhood is a partnership of educators, health professionals, parents, and other advocates for children working to foster a broad public commitment to each child's right to a healthy and developmentally sound childhood. This fact sheet is the first in a series the Alliance is publishing on the healthy essentials of childhood. (For more information contact the Alliance for Childhood: P.O. Box 444, College Park, MD 20741, Tel: 301-779-1033)

OTHER RESOURCES:

International Association for the Child's Right to Play (Play Day kits): 516-463-5176;
www.ipausa.org
Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment (Annual Toy Guide): 617-879-2167;
www.truceteachers.org
The Lion and Lamb Project (Nonviolent play ideas): 301-654-3091 or 301-537-8193;
www.lionlamb.org
TV Turnoff Network (Take Action page for limiting TV time): 202-333-9220; www.tvturnoff.org
Playing for Keeps (Play ideas and resources for parents and educators): 877-755-5347;
www.playingforkeeps.org

NOTES:

1. Anthony D. Pellegrini and P.K. Smith, "Physical Activity Play: The Nature and Function of a Neglected Aspect of Play," *Child Development* (vol. 69, no. 3), June 1998, pp. 577-598.
2. Doris Bergen, "The Role of Pretend Play in Children's Cognitive Development," *Early Childhood Research and Practice*, 4(1), Spring, 2002; Jerome L. Singer, "Cognitive and Affective Implications of Imaginative Play in Childhood," in *Child and Adolescent Psychiatry: A Comprehensive Textbook*, Melvin Lewis, ed., 2002, pp. 252-263; Susan J. Oliver and Edgar Klugman, "What We Know About Play," *Child Care Information Exchange*, Richmond, WA, September, 2002; Edgar Klugman and Sara Smilansky, *Children's Play and Learning: Perspectives and Policy Implications*, New York: Teachers College Press, 1990; Pellegrini and Smith, op. cit.
3. Robert J. Coplan and K.H. Rubin, "Social Play," *Play from Birth to Twelve and Beyond*, Garland Press, 1998; Klugman and Smilansky, op.cit.; Singer, op. cit.
4. Edward Hallowell, *The Childhood Roots of Adult Happiness*, New York: Ballantine, 2002.

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Christine Bazzett

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2008- 2012 Employed as a part time trainer by Child Care Connections (aka 4C Council.)
Includes creating new curriculum as well as presentation. Students are elementary teachers, preschool teachers, parents and home day care caregivers.

2006 Designed and launched www.JoyfulNoiseDaycare.com and www.BonkersInstitute.org

2004-present Reopened Joyful Noise Daycare

2001-2004 **Live-in Nanny** for Peter Rogoff and Dena Morris of Arlington, VA

- Directly cared for two children, a boy and girl of preschool age, including transporting to school, appointments and activities, preparation of meals, arranging for activities, nurturing and contributing to the nurturing environment, bathing, bedtime, overnight travel including flying and extended primary care of children for over a week at a time.
- Researched activities in the area and offered suggestions to parents.
- Planned meals and performed weekly grocery shopping.
- Did various errands for the family.
- Oversaw workers who came into the home in the day time.
- Assisted with children's laundry.
- Offered suggestions to the parents regarding the children's environment, needs, discipline and behavior.

1981- 2001 **Owner, Joyful Noise** (group day care home) Traverse City, MI

- Developed and implemented **curriculum** for children age newborn to twelve years. Directly **cared for and nurtured** children enrolled.
- Designed an appropriate childcare and business **environment** within the shared space of a private home.
- Stayed abreast of **new findings** in the child development field.
- Interviewed and selected **prospective clients**.
- **Worked intimately with current clients** to maximize quality of care for their individual child.
- **Planned, purchased and prepared food** served to children according to the guidelines of the federal food program.
- Interviewed, hired, trained and supervised **employees**.
- Oversaw all and performed most **maintenance and repairs** of facility.
- Created and maintained **accounting and bookkeeping** systems.
- **Purchased** supplies.
- Created **advertising and marketing**.
- Performed **community outreach**.

2003 **Presented a workshop** on home day care at a the national Magical Years conference in Fair Oaks, CA

1995-2001 **Helped form and attended a Waldorf study group** in order to explore the pros and cons and modern applications of Waldorf methods of education.

1978-present **Mother** of two children, born in 1978 and 1980. Grandchildren born 2004, 2005, 2006 & 2007.

Summer 2001 Wrote an **article published** in State of Michigan Department of Consumer and Industry Services newsletter concerning science activities with pre-school children.

Winter 2000 **Taught a workshop** for local childcare resource agency on incorporating Waldorf techniques in home day care.

Fall 1997- June 2000 **Helped form and co-facilitated a daycare provider support group** in cooperation with local child care agency. Group continues to meet regularly under new leadership.

1993-2000, 2006, 2007 **Judged annual Odyssey of the Mind:** a creative competition for school children.

1994-1998 **Member of Parent Committee for Indian Education Funds for Public Schools.** Committee determined how federal funds were spent for Native American students in Traverse City Area Public Schools. Served as secretary for two years.

1987-1991 **4C Council Board of Directors Member,** a child care resource and referral agency. Served two of those years as chair person.

1989 **Participated in the Traverse Bay Area Career-Tech Center Cooperative Education program** employing and evaluating students for academic credit. Also acted as resource for classwork, hosting groups of students for on-site observation of child care.

Fall and Winter 1973 **Montessori School Teacher's Aide,** Child Guidance Clinic, Traverse City, MI. Assisted teachers in educating minimally handicapped children. Studied Montessori methods. Received high school credit.

Summer volunteer work during high school. **Teen Aider at Camp Roy-El summer camp for handicapped children.** Supervised and assisted severely handicapped campers during activities such as eating, swimming, crafts and social events such as campfires and talent shows.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Northwestern Michigan College, Traverse City, Michigan
A.A. with honors, June 1996

Related coursework: Day Care Training, Child Development I & II, Program Management, Early Childhood Education, Early Childhood Curriculum, Children's Literature, Developmental Psychology

2007, 2008 Conversational Spanish I & II

1985-2007 **Yoshokai Aikido**: currently hold rank of 4th kyu

1997 **Basic American Sign Language** (for those working with young children)

1983 **4C Council Preferred Day Care Provider Training**

1982 **4C Council Summer Training**

1982 **Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District's Nutrition Education for the Young Child**

1963-1974 Private **piano lessons**. Two years of private **guitar lessons**. Self taught on soprano and alto recorder.

Countless Early Childhood conferences, seminars and workshops.

