

The Kalamazoo Nature Center's



Parent Handbook 2009-2010 School year





Dear Nature's Way Parents,

Welcome to the 2009-10 school year at Nature's Way Preschool! We are excited that you've made the decision to send your student to Nature's Way and we can't wait to begin the new year!

This Parent Handbook is designed to answer questions that you may have on topics such as: school closings, illness, tuition information, snack suggestions, what your child needs to bring to school each day and appropriate clothing. Please take some time to read through the material prior to the start of school.

Also, look for Chippy's Chatter, which is the Nature's Way Preschool monthly newsletter. This will have a monthly calendar and pertinent information regarding such things as field trips or information we need to pass on to you. You will receive this via e-mail each month and we will also post copy on our website.

We are looking forward to an exciting, and fun-filled year. We are excited about getting to know our new families better and reacquainting with current and past families! Thank you for sharing your child with us and for giving us the opportunity to share our love of nature with them!

If at any time you have any questions, please do not hesitate to talk with myself, Mrs. Morris or Mrs. Verville.

Sincerely

Brenda Mohill
Nature's Way Preschool Director



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MISSION

Our mission is to make each child feel “special” every day at school, and we celebrate the uniqueness of each and every child!

PHILOSOPHY

Nature’s Way Preschool is owned and operated by the Kalamazoo Nature Center, and has been in existence since 1982. This unique program gives children the opportunity to explore and learn about their relationship to the natural world through experiences typically found in child-centered programs such as discovery-based learning through play, large and fine motor activities, sensory exploration, creative expression, making friends and developing social skills. Although the program’s emphasis is environmental education and socialization, incorporation of readiness skills is also accomplished through nature related and interactive experiences. This is all done in a safe and fun learning atmosphere.

STAFF

The staff at Nature’s Way has experience teaching the preschool age child and has knowledge and love of the natural world. They are caring, friendly, and enthusiastic and enjoy working and being with the preschool age child. All staff meets state licensing requirements.

ENROLLMENT

Enrollment for the school year is based on a first-come, first-serve basis. If your child is currently enrolled, you will have first priority to enroll for the following year. This priority policy also applies to siblings of current students as well as siblings of past students.

SCHOOL YEAR

The school year begins the Tuesday/Wednesday following Labor Day, and generally ends the Thursday/Friday in the second week of June.

IMPORTANT CONTACT NUMBERS

Nature’s Way: 269-343-7342

Cell: 269-491-2821

Fax: 269-381-3659

Director’s e-mail: bmohill@naturecenter.org

LICENSING

Nature’s Way Preschool is licensed by the Bureau of Regulatory Services.

ARRIVAL

Each day you and your child will be greeted at the top of the hill (near the parking lot) by one of the Nature's Way Staff unless the weather is extremely inclement. This staff member is available to walk your child down to the school between the times of **9:00am - 9:10am** or **1:00pm - 1:10pm**. Of course, you are always welcome to walk with your child down to school!

Welcome/transition time is from **9:00am - 9:15am/1:00pm - 1:15pm**. Some children need a little extra time to "warm up" and begin their day.

Class begins promptly at 9:15am/1:15pm. Please say your good-byes prior to this time. Some children need that extra special good-bye, so it works great if you and your child come up with some thing special such as: a special "I Love You" signal, a big hug and kiss or a special wave.

If you know in advance that you will be bringing your child late, please inform one of the staff. Transition is the first 15 minutes of each class. Please bring your child to school on time so that they do not miss out on daily planned activities.

*Please note: whether or not you choose to bring your child to school at the designated start time, you are still responsible for picking them up promptly at the end of the day.

DISMISSAL

Dismissal will be outdoors, unless weather is extremely inclement. Please wait outside for your child unless prior arrangements have been made. This prevents disruption and loss of student's attention while we finish our day.

Parents should walk down to the school and meet their child near the front door. The children will be instructed to wait in front of the school for whom ever is picking them up. For their safety, please do not call or wave to them to meet you in the parking lot. Safety is our priority, and we ask for your assistance in this manner.

One of the teachers is always available to walk your child up to your car. This has come in handy with much younger siblings and inclement weather. Please, let one of the teachers know when you drop off your child at the beginning of the school day if you'd like us to walk them out at the end of the day.

We understand that there are times where delays are out of your control. However, please be prompt when picking up your child, as the staff has after class responsibilities to prepare for the next class/day.

Some children become upset when a parent or babysitter is late. If that should occur, the child will be reassured and a staff person will stay with the child until the appropriate person comes to pick them up.

ABSENCES

If your child is ill or is unable to attend class, please call us that morning or as soon as possible. If you know in advance of an absence, please inform one of the staff. If we do not hear from you by the end of the day, a courtesy call will be made.

TUITION PAYMENT

Nature's Way Preschool operates on the money from your monthly tuition fees.

It is essential that payments be made on time to be able to provide a quality experience for your child.

Payment is **due promptly on the 1st of each month.** The monthly tuition is based on the 36 week enrollment and **is not affected by absences due to illness, family vacations, snow days, power outages or other days off.**

Statements will be sent mid-month indicating the total amount to be paid on the first of the next month.

The check should be made to the **Kalamazoo Nature Center**, and mailed along with the bottom portion of your statement to:

**KALAMAZOO NATURE CENTER
7000 N. WESTNEDGE AVE.
KALAMAZOO, MI 49009**

****If you are unable to meet your financial obligation, it is your responsibility to contact the accounting department at the Nature Center at 269-381-1574 x 33.**

LATE FEES

If payment is not received by the 10th of the month, **a late fee of \$25 will be added to your account.**

DELINQUENT TUITION PAYMENTS

If your tuition payment is not received by the 10th of the month, it will be considered delinquent. If your account is not brought up to date by the 1st of the next month your child will be withdrawn from the program, and the tuition that you paid to reserve your child's placement will be kept by the Kalamazoo Nature Center.

Any unpaid balances will be turned over to a collection agency for possible notification to the Credit Bureau.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

If you choose to withdraw your child, a one month's written notice is required. If withdrawal is made anytime after the first of the month, **full payment for the month is required.** The last month's tuition that was paid at the time of enrollment is non-refundable

ILLNESS POLICY

If a child comes to school when he/she is not feeling well, he/she will be more vulnerable to infection. It is in the best interest of your child, and other children at Nature's Way, to keep your child at home when he/she is ill. A child needs to feel well to actively participate in our program.

For the welfare of the children at Nature's Way, we reserve the right to send a child home upon arrival if they appear ill.

Should your child become ill during the course of the day, we will contact you or others on the emergency list to come and pick up your child from school. Please make sure that all emergency contact information is correct on the white information card.

The following guidelines may help illness from spreading and for you to be able to make an informed decision about sending your child to school.

1. After a fever, a child's temperature must be normal (98.6) 24 hours before returning to school.
2. If antibiotics are prescribed, a child must be on them 24-48 hours (depending on the illness) before returning to school.
3. Excess coughing is a germ spreader, and young children often have a difficult time covering their coughs.
4. An unidentified rash, chicken pox, or pink eye requires exclusion. In the event of chicken pox, children may not return to school until after the sixth day of the onset of the rash. The lesions must be dry and crusted.
5. In the event of pink eye, the child needs to be on an antibiotic at least 24 hours before returning to school.
6. If your child has any contagious illness, it needs to be reported to us in order to let other parents be aware, so they can watch their child for symptoms. These would include those listed above, as well as strep, pneumonia, head lice, measles, hepatitis, scarlet fever and flu.
7. We are also required by the Department of Social Services to document and send them information regarding any contagious illness occurring at the school.
8. Vomiting and diarrhea illnesses are often quite contagious and should be managed at home. PLEASE KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME AT LEAST 24 HOURS AFTER HE/SHE AS EXPERIENCED EITHER OF THESE PROBLEMS.
9. Often, children may ask to come to school even if they are ill. Although we understand their disappointment, please keep them home if they exhibit any of the above symptoms. Contact through sharing is unavoidable. Therefore, the best policy is to keep your child home if you have any doubt about his/her physical condition. This will help to promote both a more rapid recovery and a healthier school.

MEDICAL FORMS

The Department of Social Services requires that each child have a full physical every two years, and that those records be kept on file at the school. Immunizations need to be updated by state law and the medical form signed by a physician.

Please Note; If you choose not to immunize your child, you must sign a waiver form.
State law does not allow a child to begin school if these forms are not on file!

For a complete description of the Medical Records section found in the Bureau of Regulatory Services see Appendix A.

INSURANCE

The Kalamazoo Nature Center maintains major liability insurance covering all scheduled staff supervised activities at Nature's Way Preschool. Children are covered by this insurance when they are participating at activities put on by Nature's Way. After class periods have ended, while the Nature Center maintains property liability, it is the responsibility of the parent if staying beyond the class period to ensure their child's safety.

FOSTERING CONFIDENCE

The following are some suggestions for fostering confidence in your child and to enhance their preschool experience. Let them know that being ready to go to school is being able to accomplish tasks on their own and then giving them the support to try!

It is true; at times it is easier just to do things for our children. But allowing them to do tasks on their own, gives them a sense of accomplishment and confidence! These simple steps will help them to grow emotionally and will prepare them for school beyond preschool.

- 🍷 Let them help pick out their own bag/backpack to bring to school. Show them how to zip/unzip it.
- 🍷 Let them carry their backpack from the car to the school and then from the school to the car at the end of their class time.
- 🍷 Encourage them to put their backpack and other belongings away in their cubby.
- 🍷 Encourage them to walk down to the school and not be carried.
- 🍷 Encourage your child to also walk down with a classmate.
- 🍷 Encourage your child to at least try to put on their own coat and boots.
- 🍷 Give your child several choices to choose from of what to wear for the day.
- 🍷 Allow your child to dress themselves—remember it is the process and not if things match or not.
- 🍷 Set up play dates with other children in their class.

COMMUNICATIONS

The following are ways in which we will communicate events, progress or general news about your student and the school.

Chippy's Chatter - Nature's Way Newsletter will be available on-line and posted in the school.

E-Mail – We will use this to relay information such as school closings, reminders for field trips or special activities at the preschool.

Theme/Activity Calendar – Each day's theme will be listed as well as field trip dates, break schedules. This will be posted on-line as well as in the school

Kalamazoo Nature Center News – A Kalamazoo Nature Center member benefit.

Evaluations – Regular progress reports on your child.

Conferences – Occur in February or March.

If you ever have any questions or concerns during the course of the school year, we will be more than happy to schedule a time to discuss them with you.

SHARING

We recognize that sharing is an important part of a child's language development. Items related to the theme for the day can be brought in to be shared during circle time.

*Please refer to your calendar for upcoming topics.

If your child would like to bring in one of their pets, please ask the Director prior to bringing it.

CLASS LISTS

Each family will receive a class list for the class their child is enrolled in. In addition to contact information, there will also be the number of students in the class and also any food allergies. In the event that a new student is added or a student leaves, a revised class list will be given.

SNACKS

Each family will be asked to bring a healthy snack for their child's class. Families are rotated throughout the school year and a snack calendar will be given to each family ahead of time. It will also be posted on the front door of the Preschool.

Please be aware of the number of students in your child's class as well as any allergies.

A suggested list of food items is in the handbook

BIRTHDAYS

Every child will have the opportunity to celebrate his/her birthday at school, and his/her snack day will be scheduled as closely as possible to the actual day.

In the event that your child's birthday is during the summer, it will be celebrated toward the end of the school year.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Nature's Way Preschool follows the Kalamazoo and/Portage Public Schools' calendar for the following major breaks: Thanksgiving, Winter Break & Spring Break.

WEATHER RELATED CLOSINGS

- 🌳 Nature's Way Preschool is closed when either/or both Kalamazoo or Portage Public schools are closed. (Morning and Afternoon Classes)
- 🌳 If weather conditions are inclement we may make the decision to close, even if the public schools do not.
- 🌳 If Nature's Way is closed, WWMT/Channel 3 will be notified. Please watch WWMT/Channel 3 (CBS) or go to their website at www.wwmt.com to find the status of Nature's Way.
- 🌳 Parents will also be contacted by e-mail/ or in the case of families that do not have an e-mail, a phone call will be made.
- 🌳 Please do not call the school as no one will be there
- 🌳 If on your child's school day, you think that weather conditions are such that you do not wish to bring your child, we understand. Safety is our utmost concern for you and your family. However, please notify us to let us know your plans to keep you child home.
- 🌳 In the event that weather conditions and/or road conditions worsen during the course of the day, and the decision is made to close the school, you will be notified as soon as possible.
- 🌳 For any other closings such as a power failure, or water problems Channel 3/WWMT will be contacted and the closing announcement will scroll on the bottom of the TV screen. In addition, e-mails will be sent to all families.

FIELD TRIPS

Parents are responsible for driving to and from field trip sites. **It is important on field trip days, that parents and children be prompt and meet/pickup at the assigned times.**

- 🌳 There will be some field trips in which we'll recommend that other arrangements be made for siblings. On some occasions the walk might be too long for little ones, or if the field trip is somewhere other than the Nature Center, the site may have restrictions. We will keep you informed!
- 🌳 It is always the choice of the parent to stay and participate in any of our field trips. When the field trips are at the Nature Center, we encourage parents to take advantage of their membership by exploring the self-guided trails, the gift shop, and the hands-on exhibits in the Interpretive Center.
- 🌳 It is not necessary to bring backpacks on field trips.

WEAPONS

Any sort of toy weapon or action figure is not permitted at Nature's Way Preschool, as they tend to promote aggressive behavior. While we understand that children can and will turn anything into a "weapon", they will be re-directed in their play and informed that the school rule is weapon play is not permitted.

TOYS

Special toys from home are to be left in backpacks or in the family car. These can become distracting and can create issues when children play with them during free time. We also don't want them to lose/forget them which often results in anxiety.

* **Exception: when bringing a special toy has been suggested by a teacher to aid in separation or anxiety issues.**

SUPPLIES

- 📌 A backpack, labeled with your child's name, and large enough for art projects. It should also be one in which your child is able to open/close it on their own. Please send it with your child each day of school, as we generally have something to send home.
- 📌 A filled water bottle
- 📌 An extra set of clothing that can be left in your child's backpack. (shirt, sweatshirt, shorts/pants, underwear, socks)
- 📌 A picture of your child for our "friend's board."
- 📌 Appropriate weather related clothing such as: boots(rain/winter), coat/jacket, snow pants, hat, waterproof mittens

CLOTHING

- 📌 Weather permitting; WE SPEND TIME OUTSIDE EVERY DAY. The only exceptions would be thunderstorms or extreme wind chills and or temperatures.
- 📌 Please make sure that your child comes to school with weather appropriate clothing so they are prepared to spend time outside! On rainy days, umbrellas are fine, but please explain to your child that for safety reasons, they will not be permitted on our walks.
- 📌 Please do not send your child to school in clothing that is for special occasions. Clothing should be durable, washable and weather appropriate. Play is important and your child should not have to worry if they happen to get dirty or wet.
- 📌 We ask that an "extra set" of clothing, including footwear, be brought and kept in your child's backpack. (shorts/pants, underwear, socks, shirt)
- 📌 Our policy is that teachers not stay in with children who are not prepared to be outdoors. Please make sure your child comes to school in appropriate outdoor clothing. If this does not occur, you will be called and asked to bring back appropriate clothing or you will need to pick your child up from school at the time the class will be going outdoors.
- 📌 Since our activities encourage "exploration," whether through art activities or being outside, everyday/durable clothing is recommended.
- 📌 When your child comes home dirty from exploring, we have done our job! 😊

PLEASE LABEL COATS, BOOTS, AND SNOWPANTS



HEALTHY SNACK IDEAS

1. Cheese and crackers
2. Crackers (graham, animal, goldfish, saltines, etc.)
3. Cereal
4. Trail Mix—ABSOLUTELY NO NUTS OF ANY KIND!
5. Pretzels
6. Mixed fruit
7. Bananas
8. Grapes—SLICED IN HALF
9. Apple slices
10. Strawberries
11. Cheese slices/string cheese
12. Popcorn

****Please try to provide products without high fructose corn syrup. Most grocery stores carry an organic brand that is comparable in cost to other brands and does not contain the additives and preservatives.**

As you may have noticed, peanut butter and nuts are missing from this list! Over the last several years, we have had children who are allergic to tree nuts, peanuts and peanut butter. Some crackers not containing peanut butter are often made using the same machine as those made with peanut butter. Please make sure to read the label before purchasing/and bringing crackers to school!

Home made items are fine to be brought in, but please provide a written list of ingredients.

Please do not send in previously opened containers of food for your child's snack contribution for the class. (Examples: half used boxes of crackers, raisins, pretzels)

BIRTHDAY SNACKS

Birthdays are a special time, so it is one time when we "relax" our healthy snack suggestions!

****Cupcakes, brownies, cookies are only for birthday snacks!**



SCHOOL RULES

In order to provide a safe learning environment, and because the safety and well being of your child/children is our utmost priority, we would like to share with you what our school rules are. We will be explaining these at school, but would encourage you to review these with your child/children.

1. Come to school ready to have fun!
2. Free time is for having fun with friends.
3. Be respectful of teachers and classmates.
4. Be respectful of classroom animals.
5. Be respectful of everything outdoors (trees, ants, spiders)
6. Be a good listener.
7. Only teachers or parents open the doors.
8. Being outside or walking on the trails is always with teachers or parents.
9. On hikes, stay on the trail, unless instructed otherwise.
10. Walk behind the lead teacher and in front of the teacher at the back of the line.
11. Walking feet are for inside, running feet are for outside.
12. Wash your hands before eating snack, after using the bathroom, and after blowing your nose.
13. Circle time is "learning time."
14. Raise your hand when you have something to share.
15. Listen while others are talking.
16. Hitting and/or pushing classmates is hurtful.
17. You do not need to ask permission to use the bathroom, just go!
18. Toy weapons or action figures are to be left at home.
19. Pretend weapon play is not permitted and will be re-directed.
20. Putting fingers or objects in the animal cage is harmful.

Nature's Way Preschool R.E.A.L. Rules

Respect your classmates, staff, classroom animals, and nature

Enjoy all school activities and help your classmates enjoy them too

Ask as many questions as you want! We want this to be a fun-learning environment and all questions will be answered to the best of our ability. If we don't have an answer, we will strive to find out!

Listen to your teachers, your classmates and nature around you.

Discipline

At Nature's Way Preschool we set clear expectations for classroom and outdoor behaviors. The goal is self-discipline, which guides children to be responsible and cooperative with others and is a learning process for the child.

Being given daily opportunities for outdoor play, allows the children appropriate ways to release the amazing energy that this age group has!

Conflict situations will be approached with love and understanding. An uncooperative child will be counseled about his/her behavior by one of the teachers, and if the situation warrants, may be removed from the situation. Examples would be: hitting, pushing, biting or forcefully taking an object from another child.

When the child demonstrates that he/she is ready to appropriately be part of the group, they will then be encouraged to participate.

Serious problems will be discussed with parents. If, after corrective actions have been implemented to help rectify the problem, and if the behaviors are not corrected, parents will be asked to withdraw their child.

Children are always offered choices, and removal is always the last resort.

During group activities all children are expected to remain as part of the group, **however, no pressure is ever exerted, to participate in group activities.**

Our goal is that preschool is a positive learning experience for your child!

Behavioral Issues

Nature's Way Preschool staff strives to make school fun, friendly, respectful and educational.

- 🚫 If a child's behavior is disruptive to the program or to the experience of others, appropriate actions will be taken.
- 🚫 Disruptive behavior is defined as a behavior that adversely affects the activities of the classroom.
- 🚫 If a child's behavior is aggressive (hitting, kicking, and biting) toward staff or other students, the parents will be called and **the child will be sent home immediately.**

If a child's behavior is consistently disruptive to the program or the experience of others, a conference with the parents will be held.

If after corrective actions have been implemented to help rectify the problem, and if the behaviors continue, parents will be notified that the Preschool Director may determine that the Nature's Way Program cannot meet the needs of the child. In the best interest of the program, other students and the child, parents may be asked to remove their child from the program.

Emergency Procedures for Fire and Tornado Drills and Serious Accident/Injury

FIRE

Fire drills are held each season of the school year. Initially the children are introduced to what the term fire drill means, why it is important to have them, and what is expected of them when the smoke alarm sounds.

Procedure

One teacher sets off the smoke alarm. Children are directed to the front door, where another teacher is waiting. The other two teachers help direct the children out of the building, while doing a head count in the process. A teacher takes the cell phone and container with the white cards, the children are taken outside to a designated spot, a head count of children and adults is done, and then we discuss with the children which number we would dial in an emergency.

TORNADO

A tornado drill is held two times between the months of April and October. We discuss with the children what a tornado is, and why it is important to do a drill.

Procedure

One teacher tells the children a tornado drill will be taking place. Another teacher closes both bathroom doors. The third teacher takes the cell phone and information cards. The children, accompanied by all three teachers, are directed to the hallway where the bathrooms are. The children are then instructed to kneel in a tuck position facing one of the walls, and to cover their heads.

SERIOUS ACCIDENT/INJURY

All staff at Nature's Way Preschool have been trained in CPR and basic emergency first aid. This is part of the licensing regulations for the State of Michigan.

Procedure

Should there be any emergency involving your child, these are the steps that we will take:

1. Asses the situation, and if warranted, 911 will be called. Staff will respond as necessary until emergency help arrives.
2. You will be contacted and appraised of the situation
3. If the situation requires professional care, a staff member will accompany your child to the Hospital you have requested on the white information card
4. In the event that we are unable to reach you, we will call the individual(s) you have designated as your emergency contact. Please make sure that all information provided is accurate.

* This information is posted on the Parent Information Board as per Licensing Regulations.

EMERGENCIES

Procedure

Should there be any emergency involving your child, these are the steps that we will take:

1. Asses the situation, and if warranted, 911 will be called. Staff will respond as necessary until emergency help arrives.
2. You will be contacted and appraised of the situation
3. If the situation requires professional care, a staff member will accompany your child to the Hospital you have requested on the white information card
4. In the event that we are unable to reach you, we will call the individual(s) you have designated as your emergency contact. Please make sure that all information provided is accurate.
5. If you have a family emergency that requires your child to be picked up early, please call the school at 269- 343-7342.
6. In the event of a fire, we would follow the evacuation procedure by first getting all the children and teachers out of the school and then calling 911. One teacher would contact the parents with the cell phone, while the other two teachers would be responsible for providing comfort to the children.
7. In the event of a Tornado, we would follow our emergency procedure and seek shelter in the hallway of the preschool. Parents would be contacted by cell phone.

Appendix A: Specific Information Pertaining to Licensing of Nature's Way Preschool

R400.5102 Licensee:

Rule 102. All staff and volunteers, including parents that interact with children, will follow the guidelines developed in working with the preschool children at Nature's Way Preschool.

1(b) All staff are required to submit to Michigan Department of State Police criminal history check and a Family Independence Agency check for history of substantiated abuse and neglect.

2(b) Nature's Way Preschool has developed and implements a written screening policy for all staff and volunteers, including parents, who have contact with children. No volunteer is ever left alone with a child.

2(c) Nature's Way Preschool requires a written statement signed and dated by staff at the time of hiring indicating all of the following information:

- (i) The individual is aware that abuse and neglect of children is against the law.
- (ii) The individual has been informed of the center's policies on child abuse and neglect.
- (iii) The individual knows that caregivers are mandated by law to report abuse and neglect.**

(3) Nature's Way Preschool insures that the actual number and ages of children in care at any one time never exceeds the number and ages of children for which the center is licensed.

(4) Nature's Way Preschool ensures that a child is released only to persons authorized by a parent.

(5) Nature's Way Preschool has a written and on-going staff training plan.

(6) Nature's Way Preschool cooperates with the department in connection with an inspection or investigation.

Cooperation shall include the following:

- (a) Nature's Way Preschool shall provide access to all records, materials, and staff to enable the department to conduct and investigation.
- (b) Information provided by Nature's Way Preschool shall be accurate and truthful.

R400.5104.a Staff; parent participation; volunteers

Rule 104 a (1) Staff shall not be present in a childcare center if either of the conditions applies:

- (a) They have been convicted of child abuse or neglect.
- (b) They have been convicted of a felony involving harm or threatened harm.

(2) Volunteers shall not have contact with children while in the care of a childcare center if either of the conditions applies:

- (a) They have been convicted of child abuse or neglect.
- (b) They have been convicted of a felony involving harm or threatened harm.

(3) Before staff or volunteers may have contact with children while in the care of a child care center, the staff or volunteer shall provide the center with documentation from the Family Independence Agency that he or she has not been placed on the Central Registry for

substantiated abuse or neglect, as defined in Act N.238, Public Acts of 1975, as amended, being 722.621 to 722.636 of Michigan Compiled laws. If the volunteer is a parent, then this sub rule may be waived if the center has a written plan of supervision for such parents.

R400.5106 Program

Rule 106. The following criteria are based on the standards required by the State of Michigan for our licensing of Nature's Way Preschool.

(1) A center shall implement a developmentally appropriate curriculum which shall include all of the following areas:

- (a) Physical development, including large and small muscle activities.
- (b) Social development, including communication skill.
- (c) Emotional development, including positive self-concept.
- (d) Intellectual development.

(2) The center shall provide the following activities daily:

- (a) Quiet and active.
- (b) Individual, small groups and large groups.
- (c) Large and small muscle.
- (d) Child initiated and staff initiated.
- (e) Not less than 30 minutes of developmentally appropriate emergent literacy activities.

(3) The center shall prepare for the week a daily guide relating to the curriculum and each age group. The center shall post the guide in a conspicuous place or otherwise make it available to parents.

(4) A center shall permit parents to visit the program for the purpose of observing their children at all times.

(5) A center operating with children in attendance for 5 or more continuous hours per day shall provide for daily outdoor play, unless prevented by inclement weather condition.

(6) A center shall provide for each child under school age in attendance for 5 or more continuous hours a day with an opportunity to rest.

(7) A center shall provide children less than 3 years of age with an opportunity to rest regardless of the number of hours in care.

(8) A center shall permit children under the age of 12 months of age to eat and sleep on demand.

Nature's Way Preschool is an environmental education program with an emphasis on socialization in a natural setting. This program provides the child the opportunity to learn through hands-on activities in a fun and safe environment to the best of their ability. Each day children are given opportunities to participate in science and nature study with guided learning time including activities that help to develop fine and gross motor skills and social skills.

Unless the weather is extremely inclement, each day children spend time outdoors on nature hikes, organized games and free play, which encourage large muscle opportunities and social interactions.

Parents are encouraged to play an active role in our program through various committees.

On a daily basis, a parent provides a healthy snack for all the students in the class on a rotating basis.

Each child is required to wash his/her hands prior to snack, after using the bathroom, or blowing their nose.

R400.5107 Discipline

Rule 107. Staff uses developmentally appropriate positive methods of discipline that encourages self-control, self-direction, self-esteem, and cooperation.

R400.5111(1-7) Children's Records

- (1) At the time of the child's initial attendance, a child information card, using a form provided by the department or a comparable substitute, filled out by the parent, including written permission, signed by the parent, to seek emergency medical care shall be obtained and kept on file and accessible in the center.

Rationale: Assures that centers have contact and medical information for each child.

- (2) Child information cards shall be updated annually or when changes occur.
- (3) At the time of initial attendance, one of the following shall be obtained and kept on file and accessible in the center:
 - (a) A certificate of immunizations showing a minimum of one dose of each immunizing agent specified by the department of community health. (Technical Assistance --A copy of the child's immunization record or a list of the child's immunizations is sufficient documentation for this rule.)
 - (b) A copy of a waiver addressed to the department of community health and signed by the parent stating immunizations are not being administered due to religious, medical or other reasons.
- (4) When a child has been in attendance for 4 months, an updated certificate showing completion of all additional immunization requirements as specified by the department of community health shall be on file unless there is a signed statement by a licensed physician or his or her designee stating immunizations are in progress. (Technical Assistance—A copy of the child's immunization record or a list of the child's immunizations is sufficient documentation for this rule.)
- (5) Within 30 days of initial attendance, the following shall be obtained and kept on file and accessible in the center:
 - (b) For older toddlers and pre-school age: A physical evaluation performed within the preceding year signed by a licensed physician or his or her designee. Any restrictions shall be noted.

Technical Assistance—Physical evaluations are acceptable from the following:

- o A Doctor of Medicine (MD)
- o A Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (MO)

- A designee who is supervised by a licensed physician such as a physician assistant, nurse practitioner, or nurse.

Any person who is not supervised by a licensed physician and who is working independently is not considered a designee and therefore is not acceptable under this rule.

(6) Physical evaluations shall be updated as follows:

(c) Every two years for older toddlers and pre-school age.

(7) The center shall assure that if a parent objects to a physical examination or medical treatment on religious grounds, the parent provides a signed statement annually that the child is in good health and that the parent assumes responsibility for the child's state of health while at the center.

Rationale—Respects a parent's religious beliefs while protecting other children at the center from potential health risks.

Technical Assistance—The parent's statement should include information about any health problems or restrictions that might affect a child's participation in the program such as: allergies, asthma, or developmental issues.