



## **2020 HOPE & HOME CHILDCARE POLICY SUPPORT GROUPS - COLORADO SPRINGS**

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Dear Families,

Hope & Home considers Support Groups an essential ingredient in providing the support and education necessary for you to succeed as foster parents.

In order to make this possible, Hope & Home has over 10,000 square feet of dedicated childcare space and a dedicated team of close to 20 employees and supervisors, an annual budget of about \$50,000 including a budget of \$10,000 for pizza alone. Hope & Home is the only agency in Colorado that provides this service. All of this is provided at no cost to our foster parents.

The world of foster care is a fast-paced world full of changes and curveballs. At our Colorado Springs location, we see over 450 kids come through our doors in the course of one month. There are lots of logistics at play and we appreciate your cooperation in making sure that this process is as smooth and effective as possible.

There are a few things to note that we require each parent to understand and sign off on if you plan to use our childcare services in 2020. Please read and understand this document.

Thank you!

Colorado Springs Childcare Staff and Management  
Alissa Jimenez, Amy Abernathy, and Jenna Opperman

### **GENERAL OVERVIEW**

Childcare is provided for Support Groups and Licensing Classes. Special Hope & Home events like the Teddy Bear Clinic and Summer O' Fun do not include childcare. Those events are designed as connecting opportunities for you and your children. Your children are your responsibility at events. If an event includes childcare it will be clearly communicated as such.

Please note that Hope & Home is not a licensed childcare center. Our childcare program operates under Volume 7's licensing exemption number 7.701.11 B. which states that a license is not required for:

3. A child care center operated in connection with a church, shopping center, or business where children are cared for during short periods of time, not to exceed three hours in any twenty-four hour period of time, while parents or persons in charge of such children, or employees of the church, shopping center, or business whose children are being cared for at such location are attending church services, shopping, patronizing or working on the premises of the business. This facility must be operated on the premises of the church, business, or shopping center. Only children of parents or guardians who are attending a church activity or patronizing the business or shopping center or working at the church, shopping center or business can be cared for in the center.

As such, Hope & Home is not required to and may not meet all of the standards of a childcare facility.

## **SUPPORT GROUP CHILDCARE GUIDELINES**

Please communicate directly with childcare supervisors, about everything related to childcare. The best way to do this is to text the Hope & Home Program Number 719-249-7038 (this is a NON-CLINICAL and TEXT ONLY number; please call the on-call number 719-237-5739 for any urgent issues regarding the children in your home). Amy monitors this text number for our Colorado Springs families.

This Program Number is the same number that you will receive the confirmation text from the day before your Support Group confirming your childcare needs. It is important to respond promptly to this number so that we can coordinate food, staff and activities for each age group. Please respond to this text to confirm your reservation! Please be sure to text us if a last-minute cancellation needs to occur after you have responded with your RSVP.

Childcare operates independently from the rest of Hope & Home. This means that information you give to your home supervisor or licensing worker, the front desk, or post on Facebook is not automatically passed on to childcare staff. Tell us about new kids in your home, kids going home, respite, vacations, dietary needs, behavioral challenges, or any concerns you might have. Please don't pass this on to us through your kids. We need to hear it from you directly!

### Support Group Child Care Guidelines: (pursuant to Vol 7 Rules)

1. We can only provide childcare for children (anyone 18 and under) who are currently in your care. This can include your biological children, adopted children and children currently in foster care (whether they are placed with you or doing respite care.)
2. We cannot watch friends or relatives of children, children from other placement agencies, or kinship placements.
3. Children must be able to walk and be fairly independent to be in childcare. Infants can stay in support group with parents.
4. Parent(s) must remain in the building while their children are in childcare.
5. Behavioral concerns and/or dietary restrictions must be planned for in advance of children being in childcare. Please do not surprise us!
6. Parents need to be aware of the standard programming for childcare. We do not have the staff to watch children separate from the activities provided nor are we able to restrict activities. Please be willing to find alternative care for your children if they cannot participate in such activities.
7. If children are struggling to engage in programming, please be willing to come out of support group and help.
8. Due to the sensitive and confidential nature of topics discussed in Support Group, children older than toddler-aged cannot sit in Support Group with you.
9. In general, we try to maintain a ratio of 50/50 for children in care vs. bio kids. When this ratio gets substantially upside down, it becomes cost prohibitive for Hope & Home to operate. We try to keep this ratio by rebalancing groups at the beginning of every year. But it doesn't always work. If you are in a support group that has very few foster children in childcare and a lot of bio kids, we may ask you to leave your biological children at home or bring someone to Support Group to help in childcare.

Hope & Home childcare is not a place for you to try to enforce consequences for behavior or restrictions. If you ask us to enforce those consequences, we will ask you to find alternative childcare for your kids. This is an intentional decision we've made for a multitude of reasons, including:

- We do not have excess staff to provide supervision for these consequences. Leaving a child unsupervised falls outside our policy guidelines, as we must ensure all children are supervised at all times while they're in our care.
- Kids in foster care have a lot of uncertainty in their lives and we want their few interactions with Hope & Home to be positive ones. If kids move from your home to another Hope & Home family, we want their childcare experience to be a consistent and positive one. We strive to make sure that childcare at Hope & Home is filled with positive, healing, and growth-oriented experiences.

## **CHILDCARE PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS**

### **BOBOLI GARDENS**

#### **Toddlers:**

The littlest ones in care spend their time in the Gardens exploring a space specifically designed with new walkers in mind. Children play on foam climbers, discover toddler specific toys, and enjoy sensory rich experiences with caring staff. Our evenings are full of dancing, counting, and singing. High fives and smiles are endless, and bubbles abound! They'll end the night with the 3-5-year olds for dancing and a mini-movie (20-30 minutes of an age appropriate movie or TV show). At 8:15pm staff will bring toddlers down to adults in Support Group.

Dietary Notes: Dinner: cheese pizza in small bite-sized pieces | Movie Snack: goldfish | The following are gluten free and dairy free available options if we know about dietary needs ahead of time: Gluten Free – gluten friendly crust pizza, veggie straws snack or fruit snacks / Dairy Free – pizza without cheese (please indicate if pepperoni and sauce or sauce only is preferred), veggie straws snack or fruit snacks). If your child has other dietary needs, please provide an alternative dinner or snack for your child.

#### **3-5-year olds:**

The 3-5-year olds enjoy various themed rooms during their time at Boboli Gardens. At check-in, the children are split into teams for exploring the Gardens (indicated by a color sticker on their nametag) and will rotate through the rooms with their team leader and typically 2-4 other children – ensuring that ratios are kept small and everyone gets lots of positive attention and encouragement! They'll spend about 30 minutes in each area of the Garden, becoming explorers in the sensory-rich discovery room, creators in the color-filled art room, and dreamers in the imagination-focused play space. We break up the evening with dinner and dancing (from GoNoodle.com). Towards the end the night we head to a “mini-theater” for 20-30 minutes of an age appropriate movie or tv show. At 8:15pm staff will bring 3-5-year olds down to adults in Support Group.

Dietary Notes: Dinner: cheese pizza in small bite-sized pieces | Movie Snack: goldfish | The following are gluten free and dairy free available options if we know about dietary needs ahead of time: Gluten Free – gluten friendly crust pizza, veggie straws snack or fruit snacks / Dairy Free – pizza without cheese (please indicate if pepperoni and sauce or sauce only is preferred), veggie straws snack or fruit snacks). If your child has other dietary needs, please provide an alternative dinner or snack for your child.

### **CAMPO DE FIORI**

#### **6-12-year olds:**

Once checked in, kids head back to Campo de Fiori and meet in the Gelateria for pizza. The team leader helps each child pick their customized track for the evening, ensuring each child engages in experiences that excite them! There are five themed rooms to choose from and we will typically rotate through three of them in one night, spending 30 minutes in each. Kids can choose the excitement of the Wii Video Game Room (6 and up), the challenge of the Xbox Room (10 and up only), the tranquility of the Art Room, the imagination of the Tea Room, or the fun of the Board Game Room. If the weather is nice outside, the playground is our first stop after pizza and before heading to the themed rooms. Rooms are designed to allow kids the space to engage in teamwork, create, build confidence, relax and play. Ultimately, we want each child to know through their experiences in Campo de Fiori that they are unique, smart, and absolutely wonderful. Delicious ice cream sundaes are served in the Gelateria before the group heads to the Theater to enjoy 30-45 minutes of an age appropriate movie. At the end of the evening, adults will pick up their 6-12-year olds in the Theater.

Dietary Notes: Dinner: cheese or pepperoni pizza | Movie Snack: ice cream sundae | The following are gluten free and dairy free available options if we know about dietary needs ahead of time: Gluten Free – gluten friendly crust pizza, ice cream and toppings for snack (ice cream and toppings are gluten free) / Dairy Free – pizza without cheese (please indicate if pepperoni and sauce or sauce only is preferred), popsicle for snack. If your child has other dietary needs, please provide an alternative dinner or snack for your child.

## JERICO JAVA

### 13 and up:

Teens gather in Jericho Java after checking in. Pizza is enjoyed while adults order drinks for the evening. Some teens will choose to learn how to barista and begin a “coffee career” at Jericho Java, being trained by advanced baristas and creating unique drink combinations...for actual tips! Other teens will choose to hang out in the living room, playing games, watching a movie, or working on homework. Ice cream sundaes (with all the toppings!) are enjoyed by all! At the end of the evening, adults will pick up teens in Jericho Java.

Dietary Notes: Dinner: cheese or pepperoni pizza | Snack: ice cream sundae | The following are gluten free and dairy free available options if we know about dietary needs ahead of time: Gluten Free – gluten friendly crust pizza, ice cream and toppings for snack (ice cream and toppings are gluten free) / Dairy Free – pizza without cheese (please indicate if pepperoni and sauce or sauce only is preferred), popsicle for snack. If your child has other dietary needs, please provide an alternative dinner or snack for your child.

### GENERAL NOTES:

- If your child cannot participate in any of the above activities alternative childcare may be required.
- Please do not order a Jericho Java drink for your child. Jericho Java drinks are only for adults and children participating in our teen programing.
- Once your child is dropped off with you at the end of the night (1-5yo are generally brought into Support Group by staff) or picked up by you (6-12yo should be picked up in the theater, 13+ should be picked up in Jericho Java) your children are your responsibility. If your child has not been picked up by 8:25pm, we will bring your child to you. Please do not let your children visit the Zoondoogle factory, run around the building, or shop at Giovanni's without your supervision.
- No matter their age, everyone leaves with Zoondoggles to spend (or save!). Children will receive at least 15 Zoondoogle dollars each time they come to childcare at Hope & Home.

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In the unlikely event of a fire alarm. Do not pick up your child from childcare. Adults please exit the building in a safe and orderly manner, and you will be reunited with your child outside of the building. This is critically important because childcare staff must be able to account for all of the children under their supervision when exiting the building.

## ILLNESS

Please use your best judgment when bringing kids to Hope & Home. We work with a wide range of children with varied medical histories. If your child has been sick in the last 24 hours, please do not bring your child. Your Home Supervisor will work with you to make up the training material for the month.

*If you have any questions, please contact Hope & Home. We hope these guidelines make it possible for all our current and new families to take advantage of our support groups and our amazing Jericho Java, Campo de Fiori, and Boboli Gardens Childcare Programs!*

Name 1 (printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name 2 (printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_