

**Chez Grand'Mere Preschools  
And Infant Care Centers  
Parent Handbook**

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Chez Grand'Mere Preschool. Thank you for sharing your most precious gift with us, your child. In return for your trust, it is our goal to provide a peaceful, loving environment in which your child can grow and develop to his or her fullest potential. We believe that the young child learns through play and the finest gift we, as adults, can give them is time - time to be children.

Our program starts with infant care. The infants are nurtured until they reach an age when they are ready to explore the world around them. Simple projects and small group activities are planned to stimulate the very young child. As they reach the age for entrance into preschool, we help their transition by encouraging them to verbalize their needs. Of course, we also work on potty training.

Our preschool program stresses independence and the use of play as a learning tool. Children are encouraged to make decisions and learn to work and play together with other children and staff members. As the children approach Kindergarten age, we move them toward a more structured schedule that includes learning basic ideas along with learning to listen and follow instructions. Once a child reaches Kindergarten, we provide a curriculum that will prepare them for their transition into the First Grade. We work to instill in all the children a love for school and learning.

The purpose of this handbook is to outline the policies of our school and give you general information about our various programs. Although we have included as much information as we thought necessary, you will probably have other questions. Please feel free to ask the Director any questions you may have. Our environment is an informal one, and we welcome your questions and comments.

It is our sincere wish that Chez Grand'Mere continue to be a vital link between the home and family by providing the best environment to promote growth and development during these important early years of your child's life.

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**Off to a Good Start - Your First Day at the Chez**

Do you remember your first day at nursery school or kindergarten? You

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probably were nervous and excited - and a bit lonely and lost when your mom or dad left. Even when returning to a familiar setting after summer vacation, children usually feel a bit intimidated. They may have a new teacher, there are new children in the group, and maybe that special friend is gone. It's a big deal!

We want to do everything we can to make your child's beginning here as happy as possible. This handbook is designed to fill you in on specifics. If you haven't yet visited the program with your child, we encourage you to come in before the child's first day. Usually a visit prior to your child's first day is less overwhelming; the child can look around the room, get acquainted with us, and just get the feel of the place.

Before the program starts, you may want to read your child a few books with a starting-school theme. Such stories can help the child get in touch with her feelings about going into a new place and separating from you. Reading also gives a child an opportunity to talk about feelings or ask questions about what to expect.

It's also a good idea to go over our daily schedule with the child, talking about some of the things she'll be doing in the course of the day. Some children feel a little less alone and adrift in a new place if they bring along something familiar from home, such as a favorite stuffed animal or even a family photo.

And on the first day, be sure to arrive in plenty of time. In fact, if your child tends to have a tough time in new groups make a point of coming early the first few days so we can help her get involved in something fun, perhaps with one or two other children, before the crowd arrives.

Finally, when it's time to leave, don't slip out when your child isn't looking. Children need to know when you're going and be able to say goodbye. Don't worry. We'll take it from there.

**What is "Developmentally Appropriate Practice"?**

You probably have noticed that our school has a lot of bustle and noise, that children are up doing things, talking, playing, and exploring. Such a classroom environment differs from the old grade-school images of a teacher doing a lot of talking at a blackboard while children sit and listen quietly at their desks.

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Research and experience tell us that to be effective with young children, teaching practices need to be "developmentally appropriate." What this means is simply that educators need to think first about what young children are like and then create an environment and experiences that are in tune with children's characteristics.

Early childhood, after all, is a time of life quite different from adulthood, and even from the later school years. Children 3-6 learn far better through direct interactive experiences than through just listening to someone talk. They learn extraordinary amounts through play and exploration. And the younger children are, the more what they learn needs to be relevant and interesting on the day they learn it, not just in the context of some future learning.

Based on such knowledge about what children of this age are like, we design our program to fit them. It works a lot better than trying to redesign children!

A developmentally appropriate program like ours is age-appropriate. But that's not all. To make the program a good place for every child, we gear our classroom environment and activities to this community and the families involved. We're eager to learn as much as we can about each child's family, cultural background, past experience, and current circumstances. With this knowledge we work to create a program that fits the children and the families we serve.

### **The Power of Play**

Have you ever heard someone remark about an early childhood program - even ours, perhaps - "all the children do there is play"? At good early childhood programs there is a lot of play - and there should be!

Years of research on children's learning and development document the many benefits of play for children's intellectual, social, emotional, physical, and language development. Children play in many ways. They play independently, sometimes near each other but with each child engrossed in his own activity. They engage in what is called "parallel play," perhaps using each others' toys or even talking, but

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not coordinating their play. They also play cooperatively, organizing roles and scenarios for group play. As they get older, children are capable of more cooperative, coordinated play. But all kinds of play are valuable.

As kids play with each other, they learn to see other children's points of view and begin to become more empathetic and caring. They come to understand customs and rules in their own culture and to appreciate those of others. They learn to use language in new ways to describe their play and to interact with others. And in play, children develop their muscles and coordination.

Adults support children's play by providing space, opportunity, and materials. We set up areas where kids can play without fear of damaging furniture or injuring themselves. We make sure that they have the time to choose and to become engaged in their own play activities. And when we provide them with simple, interesting materials - no newfangled, expensive gadgets required - kids take it from there.

Play is fun, but it also is serious business that pays big dividends to its eager, young investors.

### **The Best Learning is Active Learning**

Active learning takes advantage of children's natural desire to move and touch. Young children love to manipulate items and explore new ideas. They enjoy the opportunity to see how things work and to test their own theories.

Active learning takes advantage of children's natural motivations, abilities and interest. Children get lots of opportunities to investigate what interests them - to solve problems, discover relationships, and make comparisons.

Children use all their senses to make discoveries: *how heavy is it? does it smell? can I find another one that feels the same? what does it sound like when I drop it? how is it different from the other items?* Using their hands, eyes, nose,

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ears, and mouth to explore an item, children gather more information and remember what they learn.

As they interact directly with the environment, children not only gather sensory information, they also refine their senses and motor skills. For example, it takes very refined movement of the hands and fingers to produce the penmanship required for writing. Squeezing clay, picking up puzzle pieces, and lacing threads through beads are ways for young children to practice using hands and fingers.

We organize the classroom environment to promote active learning, and we do lots of things to encourage and promote active learning, and we do lots of things to encourage children to think and talk about their discoveries and creations. The next time you want your child to learn about something, provide the materials, space, and time. Then step back and watch. You will be surprised at how much more the child will discover through active involvement.

**Dynamic Classrooms Are Not Quiet!**

Quiet classrooms do not mean that young children are learning. In fact, since oral language is very important during the early years, quiet classrooms may indicate that young children are *not* learning all they could be.

Talking gives a child the opportunity to experiment with new words. It provides the vehicle for expressing ideas and testing current knowledge.

Shared experiences are important; they give children something to talk about. Children learn the nuances of communication in groups by trying out their language skills. For example, they learn what a question sounds like and how loud is loud enough.

Using words and talking about how things work, making comparisons, and retelling experiences lead to increased intellectual development. When children reconstruct experiences, sequence events, and point out similarities or differences,

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they are clearly engaging in higher-level thinking skills. And when kids are encouraged to ask questions, they not only gain information from adults' responses but also build their competence - and confidence - as active seekers of knowledge and understanding.

The vocabularies children use in reading and writing are based on the words they are familiar with from listening and speaking. But expanded vocabularies and other aspects of language growth occur through using language. Talking in the classroom may be a little noisy, but positive results are easier heard!

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

### **Infant Care Program**

Our infant care givers are very special people, as are the children they care for. They maintain the highest standard of cleanliness to promote a safe and healthy environment for our infants. Our infant care program prides itself on its individualized care. Children will always be held when being fed as well as provided with encouragement and help in developing muscle control and strengthening. The older toddlers will also be provided with outside play and preparation activities for a smooth transition into the preschool program.

#### **Infant & Toddler Daily Communication Sheets**

Every morning we ask that you take a few minutes and write down how your child's night was, how the morning is going, when your child last ate, and any special instructions you may have for the care giver. This information will help your child's care giver anticipate your child's special needs and make the day easier for them both. We also ask that you include your telephone number for that day

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where you can be reached in case a question arises.

During the day, care givers will write down information pertaining to your child's activities and schedule for your review. This information will include feedings, nap times, and "special" information so you can share in their days. Our care givers know the importance of letting you know how your child's day was, especially if a new event occurred! If you have any questions or specific requests, please ask the care givers and make a note on your child's daily communication sheet.

**Needed Materials**

All parents are required to bring those items needed for the care of their infant and toddler, including diapers, ointments, wipes, bottles, formula, baby food, as well as extra clothing. Blankets should also be included. We provide clean sheets daily for infants. Be sure that all items are marked with your child's name to prevent loss and confusion.

**Preschool Program**

It is our belief at the Chez Grand'Mere Preschool the child learns through play: play is a child's work. Through their play, children explore the world around them, confront problems, make decisions, experience new feelings, and discover solutions that may or may not work. Our goals center around respect for self and others, freedom to make choices, taking responsibility for one's own actions, and building a sense of trust. In accomplishing these goals, a child learns to trust himself and to adventure into new experiences that promote growth and development when he or she feels they are ready. No stress is put on a child to achieve more than they are ready to handle. In this way the child is able to move along at his or her own pace and experience success in activities they choose. This success encourages them to move on to new challenges that will further their growth and development. Believing in one's self is an essential ingredient for the future growth of each child.

Upon enrollment, children are placed according to their chronological age. Later they are grouped according to their development age. Our program's planning centers around the child's individual abilities and needs. It is our goal that each

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child experience success in his or her endeavors.

**Kindergarten Readiness Program**

To prepare children for their transition into Kindergarten the year before they are old enough, they begin to spend time in a "classroom" environment. They begin to learn simple ideas, but more importantly they learn how to listen and follow instructions. Simple projects are designed to reinforce the importance of listening and following directions. They also begin work on their alphabet, colors, shapes, and other ideas which will be more fully developed in Kindergarten.

**Kindergarten**

Ideas introduced throughout the child's preschool years will be built upon and reinforced. Reading, early math, and science concepts will be taught in preparation for entrance into First Grade. Our program does meet state requirements and our classroom sizes are kept small to facilitate learning.

**Summer Program**

Summer means outside water play and children are encouraged to bring a swimsuit and towel for use throughout the summer. Be sure to mark each item with your child's name – it's too tough to remember who belongs to what when we have a stack of wet things, even for the children. Swimsuits and towels will be sent home each Friday for washing and should be returned the following Monday along with your child's sheet and blanket.

The sun is hot and young children burn easily. We do not supply sunscreen. If your child's skin is sensitive, you may wish to bring sunscreen marked with your child's name to be left in their tote box. Let the staff know how to apply and please fill out a sunscreen utilization form.

If your child has problems with his or her ears, or if they have tubes in their ears, please let us know so we can take proper precautions. If you do not wish for

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your child to take part in water play, we will arrange alternate activities.

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**Admission Requirements**

Before your first day, you will be given several forms which must be completed and returned before your child can start school. We are required by law to maintain each child's file with the following:

- Child's Preadmission Health History
- Registration and Admission Agreement
- Physician's Report
- Identification and Emergency Information
- Consent for Emergency Medical Treatment
- Parent's Rights
- Personal Rights
- Emergency and Medical Treatment Cards
- Earthquake Preparedness Form
- Infant Food Service Plan (for infants only)

We also require a copy of your child's current immunization record for our files. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to keep this information current, including new addresses, home and work numbers, and immunization records.

**Registration Fee**

Along with the registration forms, a one-time registration fee per child of \$40 is required to cover the cost of processing. In addition, Kindergarten students will have a yearly book fee of \$100.

**Racial - Non Discrimination**

Chez Grand'Mere Preschool strictly adheres to a policy of racial and sexual non-discrimination. No child will be denied admission on the basis of race, creed, color, or national origin.

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**Licensing**

Our preschools are licensed by the State of California, Department of Social Services, Nexus City Square, 750 The City Drive, Suite 250, Orange, CA 92686 (714) 703-2800. Social Services has the right to examine all children's files and to interview children regarding complaints made against the school. All information will be kept confidential. License numbers for our schools are:

1239 N Harbor Blvd, Anaheim      300606930 & 300610616  
1636 W Catherine, Anaheim      300606726 & 300606727  
1510 W Almond, Orange      304270225 & 304270226

**Tuition**

Tuition is due in advance of child care in accordance with the attendance schedule you have set for your child. Your payments should be consistent with the schedule you have set at the time of registration: weekly, semi-monthly, or monthly. We ask that you accept responsibility for timely payments according to our rate sheet. Late fees will be charged on past due amounts as follows:

if tuition is not paid by the third day it is due, a \$5.00 late fee will be added.

if tuition remains unpaid by the tenth day, an additional \$10.00 late fee will be added to the amount due and the student will not be permitted to attend until all past due amounts are paid and tuition is current.

Special arrangements can be made in times of financial difficulty by contacting the Director. If, however, no contact is made and tuition is not received by the tenth school day past the due date, you will be asked to withdraw your child with the loss of all priority rights.

Payments due and withheld beyond the agreed terms shall be subject to 18% interest per annum. We reserve the right to pursue all remedies or courses allowed in law or equity or otherwise in any jurisdiction in which relief is sought. In case

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suit is brought to enforce any of our rights, the customer agrees to pay such attorney fees and court costs as the court may deem reasonable.

All returned checks are subject to a service charge of \$25.00.

No refunds are given for registration fees paid or missed days. 30 days notice prior to any increases will be given in writing to each parent or guardian.

**Holidays and Vacation**

Chez Grand'Mere Preschool will be open year round with the following exceptions:

Memorial Day	Independence Day
Labor Day	Thanksgiving Day
Day After Thanksgiving	Christmas Eve
Christmas Day	New Year's Day

Tuition is due and payable for holidays that fall on your child's regularly scheduled days. Sorry, no make up days are allowed.

Each child is eligible for two weeks vacation per school year after three months of regular attendance. These two weeks are tuition free.

If more than two weeks are taken in a year, it will be necessary to pay half the normal tuition per week taken to hold your child's space. We ask that notification of vacation time is made in writing one week in advance so we can notify our staff.

**Extra Time**

Operating hours are posted in the front lobby of the school. Children are to attend school only on the days reserved for them at the time of registration. There are no make-up days for holidays or sick days. Should it be necessary for your child to attend an extra day, please check with the Director to see if space is available.

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There will be an extra charge added to your normal tuition. No drop-ins will be allowed.

**Leaving and Picking Up Your Child**

Only individuals listed on the emergency and information form are allowed to pick up your child. If someone else will be picking up your child, please notify the Director. Such persons will need to bring identification for verification. No one under 18 years of age will be allowed to sign a child in or out, nor take the child from the facility.

According to California State law, children must be signed in and out daily. Your signature gives us temporary custody of your child which allows us to call for medical treatment, if necessary. Sign in/out sheets are located in the front lobby under your child's last name.

**Late Pick-Up**

Our school closes promptly at 6:00 pm. Children not picked up by this time will be charged a late fee of \$5.00 for the first 15 minutes and \$1.00 per minute thereafter. Such fees are due at the time of pick-up and should be paid to the person in charge. We ask for your understanding regarding this matter as after 6:00 pm our staff is not being paid.

**Withdrawal Policy**

We require two weeks written notice of your intent to withdraw your child from our school. We ask that you give your Director as much notice as possible so she can fill the space quickly. If you withdraw your child with no notice, you will be responsible for an additional two weeks tuition.

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**Illness and Health**

Please check your child for any signs of illness before bringing him or her to school. State law requires a child be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school. A child who is ill cannot benefit from our program. Should your child become ill at home, please notify the Director of the circumstances. If your child should become ill at school, you will be notified and will be required to take the child home as soon as possible.

No credit will be given for the first continuous week of absence. Full tuition will be due and payable for this period. If your child is ill for more than one continuous week, only half your normal tuition will be due until the child is well enough to return to school. For illnesses longer than one month, special arrangements must be made. To be re-admitted to school, your child will need a doctor's release.

**Medication**

If your child has an allergy or is recovering from an illness (and no longer contagious) and still requires medication, it may be given at school if:

Prescribed medication is in its original prescription container.

Over-the counter medication is in its original container.

The child's name, dosage, name of physician, and name of pharmacy, are properly labeled on the container; in the case of over-the-counter medication, the child's name and age must be marked on the container.

All medications must be turned into the Director or Assistant Director upon arrival.

Parents must complete the information listed on the medication sheet, including your child's name, date, type of medication, amount and time to be administered. This information must be completed daily for all medicines. Parent signature is also required.

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We will attempt to give medicines as prescribed. However, this is a courtesy only and any child who needs to be severely regulated should be kept at home.

### **Injuries**

Be sure to keep all addresses and telephone numbers current in your child's file. If your child is hurt or has another emergency situation, the following will be done:

If the injury is not serious, simple first-aid will be administered by the school staff. An "Ouch Report" will be filled out and sent home for the parent. The report will include what happened, how the injury occurred, and what first aid was administered.

If injury is serious or may require doctor's attention, the parent or other responsible person will be contacted and asked to come to the school. The parent can then make a decision regarding preferred treatment of the injury or illness.

In cases of severe or life threatening injuries, the paramedics will be called. As soon as possible thereafter, the parent or guardian will be contacted and advised accordingly.

### **General Information**

#### **Discipline**

Our staff will never use corporal punishment, frightening, or threatening measures, nor associate food or rest with punishment. Within our program, we strive to lessen disciplinary problems by following these guidelines:

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- Never pushing a child beyond their abilities
- Intervening before a crisis begins
- Setting realistic limits and helping the child to know and understand such limits
- Positively reinforcing achievements

Although we have established these guidelines, children will push beyond these limits to test our sincerity. In such situations, our staff will use the "time out" method, which means the child will be removed from the main flow of the program to sit quietly and take time out. Before re-entering the program, the teacher will explain in simple terms why the child was removed. In more severe or on-going behavioral problems, it may be necessary to arrange a conference to discuss the problem and appropriate measures with the parents. We reserve the right to ask any child to leave our program without notice.

### **Clothing**

Please dress your child in comfortable play clothes. Old play clothes offer the most freedom and eliminate worries over soiling good clothes. Part of our program is to encourage self-help. This is best achieved when clothing is easy for the child to remove, especially for those children in the process of potty training. We discourage the use of bib overalls and body suits as they hinder our self-help goals set for the children. Sandals and boots are discouraged; please have your child wear tennis shoes as they offer the best traction for play. Flip-flops are not allowed. Please mark all jackets and sweaters with your child's name.

Each child is required to keep an extra set of clothing at school, including underwear, pants, shirt, and socks. All items are to be marked with your child's name to prevent loss. Children in the process of potty training will need more than one set of clothes. All soiled clothing is to be taken home each day.

### **Nap Time**

All full day students will be offered a nap period from 12:00 until 2:30.

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Children will need to keep a sheet to cover their mat and a small blanket at school, both marked with your child's name. These items are stored in plastic bags during the week to help prevent the spread of germs. Sheets and blankets should be taken home on Fridays to be washed and returned on Monday morning.

**Toys from Home**

We ask that you leave your child's toys and stuffed animals at home or in the car; we accept no responsibility for lost or broken items.

**Lunch and Snacks**

Nutritious snacks will be provided mornings and afternoons for all preschoolers and toddlers. A menu showing what will be served will be posted in the front lobby each week for your information.

Tuition for preschoolers and toddlers includes lunch. Monthly lunch menus will be posted in the front lobby. If your child will not be eating the lunch provided by the school, please pack a lunch and send it with your child. (If you do pack a lunch, pack wholesome foods.) No candy or gum, please. Sorry, there is no refund for missed lunches.

**The Sound of Music**

Kids of all ages are naturally drawn to music. Infants coo at lullabies, toddlers bang on pots and pans with a wooden spoon, and preschoolers sing and dance to music.

Children learn a variety of skills from musical experiences. Shaking, tapping, and beating instruments enhance fine motor development. Children listening for a beat, the sounds of different instruments, tones, and lyrics are developing auditory discrimination.

Kids can experience the emotional effects of music by listening to and creating

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music that is soothing, exciting, or funny. Music promotes creative development as children experiment with new rhythms, sounds, and movements.

We are fortunate to have Mr. Gary Greeno and his "Kids Love Music" program visit our school every other week and conduct classes for our preschoolers. The cost for this class is included in your tuition.

**Parent Involvement**

We encourage all parents to take an active role in their child's experience in preschool. Weekly lesson plans are posted in the front lobby for each class centered around the school's weekly theme for your review. Please make sure to check for art work each day and actively discuss your child's day with them.

**Visitors**

Our door is always open to those who wish to see our program in progress. If you have relatives visiting or friends who wish to visit our school, a phone call ahead of time will be appreciated but is not required.

**School Communication**

Although we do have an open door policy, if you have questions or concerns about our program that cannot be adequately answered when you drop off or pick up your child, please contact the Director to set aside some uninterrupted time to get together to discuss such concerns. If you need to discuss matters concerning your child, a conference between the teacher, Director, and yourself can be arranged.

**Birthdays and Special Occasions**

Birthdays are very special occasions for all children. If you wish to celebrate your child's birthday at school, please notify the teacher in advance so special time can be arranged. The teacher will be able to tell you how many children to plan for

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on that day.

Throughout the year, we will celebrate special days, such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day, etc., with parties for the children. If you wish to bring in a special treat or participate in the parties, please let the teacher know. All parents are encouraged to participate and are welcome.

### **Babysitting**

Our staff is not allowed to babysit for children from our school without a written release from you releasing Chez Grand'Mere from any liability or responsibility.

### **Emergency Plan**

Although we hope that a major disaster will never occur, we do prepare just in case. The children are continually drilled in the DROP procedures in case of earthquake. They are taught to get under a table or up against an inside wall and to face away from glass. Once the shaking has stopped, the children will be escorted outside where they will wait until a thorough inspection of the building is made for damage.

We also conduct monthly fire drills to familiarize the children with emergency procedures. Once the alarm is sounded, the children are instructed to line up and file out of the building and onto the play yard.

In the event of an actual emergency during school hours, the children will be kept under school supervision until called for by the parent or guardian. Each family is to have an emergency card on file with two names of people to be

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contacted in the event neither parent can be reached. If an emergency occurs outside school hours, we will follow the same procedures as the public schools for closure. Please listen to your radio for information.

**Earthquake Preparedness**

We ask that the parents refer to the earthquake preparedness sheet in our registration packet. All children need to have food kits and emergency forms available at all times.

**Child Abuse**

We are required by law to report any instance of suspected of child abuse as stated in the following paragraph:

“Any person who fails to report an instance of child abuse which he or she knows to exist or reasonably should know to exist, as required by this article, is guilty of a misdemeanor and is punishable by confinement in the county jail for a term not to exceed six months or by a fine of not more than five hundred dollars (\$500.00) or both.” (Section 11172 of the Penal code).

**Insurance**

We carry both liability and group accident insurance. The accident insurance is intended to supplement your family health insurance. Details concerning insurance can be secured from the Director as the occasion arises.

**A Bit on Biting**

Biting is a behavior that is very disturbing to all concerned. It frightens the child who is bitten and alarms his parents. It also worries the parents of the child

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who bites - and often scares the biter as well.

Although most children do not bite, especially after age 3, biting is by no means rare in groups of young children. When it does occur, biting cannot be ignored.

Children bite for different reasons. Sometimes they feel frustrated or threatened; in other cases, they get a sense of power over others. We try to help children recognize their feelings and learn words to express them.

We must clearly label biting as unacceptable and explain the reason in words that the child can understand. After first comforting and caring for the child who was bitten, we say something like this: "Biting hurts. I do not allow other people to hurt you and I will not allow you to hurt other people by biting them. You may not bite anyone."

If biting happens again, we may remove the child from the other children. We will explain that she can play with the others only if she does not bite.

We make it a major priority to prevent further biting, both to avoid damage to potential "bitees" and because the shrieks and tears of another child are often rewarding to the biter - increasing the chances of still more biting. Other children in the group may decide to try biting, too.

To nip biting in the bud, we assign an adult to stick close to the child who has bitten, ready to jump in and prevent a bite. Of course, we also talk with the child's parents to ensure that we're all responding consistently - at home and at school.

In addition, we want to see what parents notice about the biting, such as cues that the child is about to bite or observations about situations in which biting seems to happen.

We want all parents to know that we take prompt, determined action to eliminate biting in our classroom. In the past, our methods have worked and biting has been brought to a quick stop. However, we reserve the right to dismiss a child from our program if biting persists.

**Chez Grand'Mere Preschools  
And Infant Care Centers  
Parent Handbook**

**Fostering Tolerance and Respect**

Children are born without biases about other people of any race, culture, gender, or disability. We sometimes wonder if we can raise children free of prejudice by just leaving well enough alone and making sure not to pass on negative attitudes. Unfortunately, it doesn't work this way; society's messages are too pervasive. As parents and teachers, we need to take positive action if children are to grow up comfortable with who they are and respectful of others.

We want to work with you to create a program that helps to counter society's messages of bias and reflects the cultural background of all the children and families. To begin with, we choose books, dolls, and even pictures on the wall, with an eye to finding balance and showing children what they see too little of elsewhere. For instance, we make a point of showing men and women of all ethnic backgrounds doing a variety of jobs, men as well as women doing household chores and spending time with children, and different kinds of families enjoying themselves.

Are we doing all this to be "politically correct"? Not really. We're committed to helping children grow up confident of their own identity, respectful of other people, and aware of the rich diversity of their community and world. We can do this only by working closely with our families, hearing your perspectives, and finding out more about the cultural background that each child brings to the program.

Parents are even more important than teachers in children's development of attitudes. If you have any questions about how our program is addressing issues of bias and diversity or if you want to talk over issues that arise at home, please let us know what you're thinking or wondering. Of course, we are far from having all the answers. We want to hear what you're thinking, and we're always happy to talk things over.

**Site Addresses**

Harbor School

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**Chez Grand'Mere Preschools  
And Infant Care Centers**  
Parent Handbook

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