

Parent Handbook

Contact Information:

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"Welcome to TootaLou! We are dedicated to providing a safe, nurturing, and engaging environment for children aged 20 months - 4.5 years old. Our mission is to foster a love for learning, promote creativity, and encourage independence.

At TootaLou, we prioritize the safety of every child. Our facilities are childproofed, and our staff is trained in first aid. We maintain appropriate adult-to-child ratios to ensure individual attention and care.

Our play-based program offers a balanced mix of indoor and outdoor activities, including art projects, stories, movement, and music activities. We believe that play is a vital means of cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development. Through play, children build coordination, confidence, and social interaction skills.

Experience the magic of early learning with our Mother Goose-themed-based curriculum, which inspires endless adventures. Additionally, we offer exciting field trips, special events, and extracurricular activities to enhance your child's learning journey.

We look forward to welcoming you to our TootaLou family, where every child's happiness and growth are cherished."

"TootaLou Family Daycare is proud to be a California Certified Green Business and Eco-Healthy Child Care provider **Celebrating 10 Years in 2022.** We are the only certified green daycare in Contra Costa County and one of a select few in the state. Since our establishment in 2004, we have recognized the interconnectedness of our children, ourselves, and the planet, and we believe that all deserve care and attention.

As a Green Business, we actively take steps to conserve resources and prevent pollution. Our commitment to sustainability is verified by local agency representatives

who conduct in-person assessments. We strictly adhere to numerous program requirements to ensure we meet the highest standards of environmental responsibility.

Some examples of our eco-friendly actions include:

- Implementing energy-efficient practices to minimize electricity consumption
- Reducing water usage through responsible water management techniques
- Promoting waste reduction, recycling, and composting
- Choosing environmentally friendly cleaning products and materials
- Providing a natural and toxin-free environment for children
- Integrating nature-based learning experiences into our curriculum

By choosing Toot-a-Lou Family Daycare, you can be confident that your child will not only receive quality care and education but also be part of a community that actively contributes to the well-being of our planet.

We are excited to welcome your family into our eco-conscious and nurturing environment."

"Processing Fee:

To secure a spot for your child at TootaLou, a non-refundable processing fee of \$400 is required. This fee covers administrative costs and ensures the reservation of your child's place in our program. Please note that the processing fee is separate from the tuition fees and is due upon enrollment."

"Payment Policy:

Tuition is due in advance on the **1st of each month** and is **non-refundable**. Payment can be made by exact cash, money order, venmo, or check payable to TOOT-A-LOU.

If payment has not been received by the 5th of the month, a late fee of \$20.00 per day per child will be charged. After the 10th, the child will not be allowed to attend until payment is made in full.

A fee of \$60.00 will be charged for all returned checks, in addition to any bank fees incurred. Following the first occurrence, only exact cash or money orders will be accepted. Please note that fees are subject to change with a two-week written notice.

In cases where the 1st of the month falls on a weekend or holiday break, payment is due before or on the last day of care before the weekend or break.

Please be aware that all months have the same monthly fee, including those with holidays or vacation breaks.

TootALou does not offer refunds or credits if a child misses days of care due to their own or their parent's illness, family vacation, or any other reason."

"Withdrawal Policy:

In the event that you need to withdraw your child from our child care services, we kindly request a 90-day written notice. This notice allows us to adequately plan for staffing and accommodate other families who may be on our waiting list.

Please submit your written notice to us at least 90 days prior to your desired withdrawal date. You may deliver the notice in person or send it via email or postal mail. Our contact information can be found in the provided communication channels.

Upon receiving the notice, we will acknowledge your request and provide any necessary instructions or documentation required for the withdrawal process.

Please note that fees will be applicable during the entire notice period, regardless of your child's attendance. Failure to provide the required 90-day notice may result in forfeiture of any applicable deposits or prepaid fees.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation with this withdrawal policy as it allows us to maintain the quality of care and support we offer to all children and families in our program.

Thank you for entrusting your child's care to Toot-A-Lou. Should you have any questions or need further clarification regarding the withdrawal process, please do not hesitate to contact us."

"Termination Policy:

The provider reserves the right to terminate the contract at any time without notice and without refund.

In the event of any issues or conflicts that arise, we are committed to working with the family and the child to find a resolution. However, it is essential to ensure the safety and well-being of all children in our care and staff. Therefore, if there is a personality conflict with the family or child(ren), or if there is verbal or physical abuse towards anyone affiliated with our child care, such abusive or violent behavior will not be tolerated.

While we strive to address and resolve any problems that may arise, there may be instances where the termination of the contract is deemed necessary to maintain a safe and harmonious environment for all children and staff members.

We believe in open communication and will make every effort to discuss concerns and work towards a positive outcome. However, in severe cases where the safety or welfare of children or staff is compromised, immediate termination may be necessary.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in adhering to this termination policy. Our priority is the well-being and happiness of all children in our care. Thank you for entrusting your child to TootALou. If you have any questions or require further clarification regarding our termination policy, please do not hesitate to contact us."

"Trial Period:

Upon starting care at Toot-A-Lou, the family will have a two-week trial period. During this time, the family has the option to terminate the contract if they determine that our child care services are not suitable for their needs. Please note that the holding fee is non-refundable in the event of termination during the trial period.

Payment Policy:

At the start of care, a two-week payment is due. This payment covers the trial period and secures your child's place in our program. After the trial period, the remaining tuition fees for the month are due before care can continue.

Moving forward, regular monthly tuition will be due based on a four-week cycle. We understand that consistency in payment helps us provide uninterrupted care and maintain the quality of our services.

Please ensure timely payment of tuition fees to guarantee your child's continued enrollment and participation in our program.

If you have any questions or require further clarification regarding the trial period or payment policy, please do not hesitate to contact us. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in adhering to these policies."

Please adjust the specific payment amounts, due dates, and trial period duration to align with your individual policies and requirements.

"In the Unlikely Event that Care is Canceled:

At TOOT-A-LOU, we make every effort to maintain our regular care schedule. However, there may be rare occasions when we need to close for a day or more due to unexpected events in our home or with our staff. We ask all families to be prepared for such situations.

Please note that closures due to the Covid-19 pandemic or other closures mandated by government authorities, or as a result of natural disasters, are beyond our control. In the event of closures required by City, County, State, or Federal agencies (such as group quarantine due to a positive Covid-19 case), extreme air quality concerns, natural disasters, or any other unforeseen circumstances, no refunds will be given for the days of closure.

TOOT-A-LOU may choose to close for care when the West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD) unexpectedly closes, such as during extreme air quality days, even if not explicitly instructed to do so by governing authorities. Please note that no refunds will be given for closures in alignment with WCCUSD.

We understand that unexpected closures can be inconvenient, and we will strive to communicate any closures as early as possible. Our primary concern is the safety and well-being of the children and staff in our care.

If you have any questions or require further clarification regarding our closure policy, please do not hesitate to contact us. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in these situations."

"Unforeseen Events:

In the case of a pandemic, local or global emergency, war, acts of Mother Nature, or any other unforeseen events, all families are responsible for continued regular payments to Toot~aLou during any closure resulting from these events.

We understand that unforeseen circumstances can disrupt normal operations and may result in temporary closures. However, it is essential to maintain the financial stability of our program to ensure we can resume services as soon as possible once the situation allows.

Therefore, during any closure necessitated by such events, regular tuition payments are expected to be made as scheduled. We appreciate your understanding and support in fulfilling your payment obligations, as it enables us to sustain the quality of care and services we provide.

If you have any questions or require further clarification regarding our policy on unforeseen events and payments, please do not hesitate to contact us. We appreciate your cooperation and partnership in navigating these challenging circumstances together."

"Drop-off and Pick-up Policy:

TootaLou Family Daycare operates from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Thursday, and from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm on Fridays. These operating hours are strictly adhered to.

For children to fully participate in our program, we kindly request that they arrive no later than 9:00 am. If a child needs to leave before naptime, the latest pick-up time is 12:00 am. Please note that there are no pick-ups permitted between 12:30 am and 2:30 pm due to naptime.

We understand that emergencies can happen unexpectedly, leading to delays in pick-up. In such cases, if you are unable to pick up your child on time, you will be charged an additional fee of \$1.00 per minute for every minute past 5:00 pm. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in promptly picking up your child at the designated time.

Please ensure that all emergency contact information provided on the form is accurate and up to date. This will help us in cases where someone other than the parent or guardian needs to pick up the child. For more details regarding the procedures for alternative pick-ups, please refer to the "Emergency Contacts" section on the provided form. Please note that there are no exceptions to these procedures for the safety and well-being of all children in our care.

Additionally, we have implemented specific drop-off rules in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Please refer to the COVID-19 section for detailed instructions and requirements regarding drop-off procedures.

Thank you for your cooperation and adherence to our drop-off and pick-up policy. Should you have any questions or need further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact us."

"Requirements:

Before your child begins child care at Toot-a-Lou, we kindly request that families complete the following:

1. Child Care Contract and State Paperwork: Please ensure that the Child Care Contract and all required state paperwork are filled out entirely and signed by the parents/guardians. These documents are essential for enrollment and should be returned **before** your child's start date.
2. Your two-week payment is due. This payment covers the trial period and secures your child's place in our program. After the trial period, the remaining tuition fees for the month are due before care can continue
3. processing fee of \$400
4. Portable Playpen children 2 yrs under: Please provide a portable playpen for your child's use during naptime. A receipt of purchase is required for verification. Additionally, include one fitted sheet and a blanket for your child's comfort.
5. Clothing and Diapers: Prepare three sets of clothing for your child, each set placed in a zip bag with your child's name clearly marked. Additionally, please provide an adequate supply of diapers for your child's needs.
6. Copy of Immunization Record: It is essential to provide a copy of your child's immunization record. This is crucial for maintaining a safe and healthy environment for all children in our care.
7. Sunscreen and Water Bottle: Please provide sunscreen labeled with your child's name for outdoor activities. Additionally, include a water bottle with your child's name to ensure they stay hydrated throughout the day.

We appreciate your cooperation in fulfilling these requirements before your child's start date. These items and paperwork contribute to the smooth transition and well-being of your child in our program.

If you have any questions or need further clarification regarding these requirements, please do not hesitate to contact us. Thank you for entrusting your child to Toot-A-Lou."

"Breakfast, Lunch, PM Snacks:

At TootaLou, we follow a daily schedule to ensure that your child receives proper nutrition throughout the day. Our meal and snack times are as follows:

Breakfast: 9:00 am

Lunch: 12:00 pm

Afternoon Snack: 3:00 pm

We strive to provide balanced and nutritious meals for your child. Our menu is carefully planned to accommodate various dietary needs and preferences. We encourage children to try new foods and promote a positive eating environment.

If your child has any specific dietary restrictions or allergies, please inform us in advance so that we can make appropriate accommodations.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding our meal and snack schedule, please don't hesitate to reach out. We aim to provide a healthy and enjoyable dining experience for every child in our care."

"Other Notes:

To ensure a positive and enjoyable experience for your child at Toot-a-Lou, please take note of the following:

1. Dressing for Play: Please dress your child in comfortable clothes suitable for active play. We encourage children to engage in various activities, both indoors and outdoors.
2. Weather Considerations: Depending on the weather conditions, please provide appropriate items such as a sun hat, sweatshirt, raincoat, rain boots, or any other clothing that will keep your child comfortable during outdoor playtime.
3. Special Toys: We foster a sense of sharing and playing together at Toot-a-Lou. To maintain a harmonious environment, we kindly request that all special toys remain at home. We provide a variety of toys and materials for children to enjoy and explore during their time with us.
4. Birthdays: We love celebrating birthdays at Toot-a-Lou! During snack time, we acknowledge birthdays with a happy birthday song. However, we kindly request that parents do not bring cupcakes or any gifts/favors to avoid any potential allergies or disruptions to the daily routine.

We appreciate your cooperation in following these guidelines, as they contribute to a safe, inclusive, and engaging environment for all children in our care. If you have any questions or need further clarification on any of these notes, please feel free to contact us."

"Discipline:

At TootaLou, we believe in fostering a positive and respectful environment for all children. Our approach to discipline emphasizes redirection and positive role-modeling.

In instances where a child's behavior needs guidance and redirection, our caregivers will employ appropriate strategies to help them understand and learn from their actions. We encourage open communication and partnership with parents to address any behavioral concerns.

It is important to note that if a child receives three written notices for behavioral issues, indicating a consistent pattern that requires additional intervention, the contract may be subject to termination. These written notices will be shared with the parents and require a signature for acknowledgment.

Our goal is to create a safe and nurturing space where children can learn, grow, and develop positive social skills. We appreciate your cooperation and support in maintaining a harmonious and respectful environment for all children in our care.

Should you have any questions or require further information about our discipline policy, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. We are committed to working together with parents to ensure the well-being and development of every child."

"Medication:

To ensure the safety and well-being of your child, the following guidelines are in place for medication administration:

1. Prescribed Medication: A written consent form from the child's doctor is required for the administration of any prescribed medication. This form should include details such as the name of the medication, dosage instructions, and any specific administration requirements.
2. Over-the-Counter Medication: Written consent from the parent/guardian is necessary for the administration of over-the-counter medication. Please provide a completed consent form specifying the name of the medication, dosage instructions, and any relevant details.

Please note that it is essential for us to be informed if your child is currently taking any medication. Kindly provide us with the necessary information regarding the medication and dosage by completing the designated section on the form.

At TootaLou, we prioritize the well-being and safety of all children in our care. By adhering to these medication administration guidelines, we can ensure that your child receives the necessary support while minimizing any potential risks.

If you have any questions or require further information about our medication policy, please feel free to reach out to us. We are here to address your concerns and work collaboratively to meet your child's needs."

"Illness Policy:

At TootaLou, we prioritize the health and safety of all children in our care. To maintain a healthy environment, we have established the following guidelines regarding illness:

1. Notification and Pickup: In the event that your child becomes ill with symptoms such as a temperature over 100 degrees, vomiting, diarrhea, suspected pink eye, chickenpox, ringworm, discolored nasal mucus, foot-mouth disease, slap cheek, or any other infectious disease, we will notify you immediately. It is essential that you arrange for your child to be picked up promptly.
2. Return after Illness: Sick children should remain at home until they have been symptom-free for 24 hours or have obtained a doctor's note indicating they are no longer contagious. This helps prevent the spread of illness and ensures the well-being of all children and staff. Please follow these guidelines before allowing your child to return to child care.
3. Missed Days and Charges: You will be charged in full for any missed days due to illness. No adjustments will be made for missed days. This policy helps us maintain the quality of care and ensure appropriate staffing levels.
4. Notification of Absence: If your child will not be attending child care for a particular day due to illness or any other reason, please notify us by 8:00 am. This allows us to plan accordingly and ensures the safety and well-being of all children in our care.

Please remember that if your child has any of the listed symptoms or if you have recently administered Tylenol or Ibuprofen to them, it is advisable to keep them at home as they may be too ill to attend school.

By adhering to these guidelines, we can create a healthier environment for everyone in our preschool community. If you have any questions or require further clarification on our illness policy, please feel free to reach out to us."

"Emergency Policy:

At TootaLou, the safety and well-being of your child are of utmost importance to us. In the event of an emergency, we have established the following procedures:

1. **Major Emergencies:** In the case of a major emergency that requires immediate medical attention, such as a life-threatening situation, emergency medical services will be contacted, and your child will be transported by ambulance to the appropriate medical facility. The priority is to ensure the well-being and prompt medical care for your child in these critical situations.
2. **Minor Emergencies:** For minor emergencies that do not require immediate medical attention but still necessitate medical evaluation or care, we will contact the family/guardian listed on the emergency contact form. It will be the responsibility of the family/guardian to pick up the child promptly.
3. **Financial Responsibility:** Families are financially responsible for all medical and dental costs incurred during emergency situations. This includes expenses related to transportation fees from an ambulance company, life flight services, fire department, hospital, doctor, dentist, and any other medical or dental services provided. It is important to ensure that your child's medical insurance coverage is up to date and applicable to such situations.

We understand that emergencies can be unpredictable and stressful. Our staff members are trained to follow appropriate emergency protocols to prioritize your child's safety and well-being. We will make every effort to communicate with you promptly and provide any necessary assistance during these situations.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding our emergency policy, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. We are committed to working together with families to ensure the best care and response in emergency situations."

"Child Abuse Reporting Policy:

At TootaLou, the safety and well-being of all children is our top priority. As a mandated reporter, we have a legal obligation to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect. Our Child Abuse Reporting Policy is as follows:

1. **Reporting Obligation:** We are committed to promptly reporting any suspicion of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. This includes but is not limited to physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, or any other form of maltreatment.
2. **Reporting Process:** If we have a reasonable suspicion or evidence of child abuse, we will take immediate action. We will report our concerns to the designated Child Protection Service within 72 hours of the suspicion or evidence. This ensures that the appropriate authorities are informed and can initiate an investigation if necessary.
3. **Confidentiality and Cooperation:** We understand the sensitive nature of child abuse reporting, and we treat all information with the utmost confidentiality. We will cooperate fully with the investigating agencies and provide any necessary information or support during the investigation process.

4. **Reporting Outcomes:** As mandated reporters, our role is to report suspicions of child abuse or neglect. The responsibility for investigating and determining the outcome of such reports lies with the relevant child protection agencies. We will fully cooperate with their process and provide any necessary assistance.

By adhering to this Child Abuse Reporting Policy, we aim to protect the well-being and safety of all children in our care. We are committed to creating a safe and nurturing environment where children can thrive.

If you have any questions or concerns about our Child Abuse Reporting Policy, please feel free to discuss them with us. We are here to address any inquiries and work collaboratively to ensure the safety and well-being of all children."

"Vacation, Client, Provider, and Holidays:

Please refer to the provided calendar for scheduled holidays and closures. In the event that a holiday falls on a weekend, childcare services will be closed on the following Monday.

We encourage families to plan their vacations during our scheduled closures and vacation periods. This allows for better continuity of care and ensures that your child receives consistent attention and engagement from our team.

Please note that tuition payments are due before you embark on your vacation. This helps us maintain the operational efficiency of our childcare services and ensures a seamless transition when you return.

We appreciate your cooperation in adhering to these guidelines, as they contribute to a smoother experience for all families and enable us to provide quality care to each child in our program.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding vacation scheduling or payment arrangements, please feel free to discuss them with us. We value open communication and are here to assist you."

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"Additional Policies:

1. **Schedule Changes:** If you need to make any changes to your child's schedule, please submit the request in writing. We will make every effort to accommodate your schedule changes. Please note that changes in the schedule may incur additional fees.

2. **Contact Information:** It is important to promptly notify us of any changes in your contact information, including address, home or work telephone numbers. If you cannot be reached at any of the provided numbers on a given day, please provide an alternative contact number on the sign-in sheet.
3. **Authorized Pick-up:** For the safety and security of your child, only authorized individuals will be permitted to pick up your child. Please provide the names of authorized individuals in writing, and they must present identification when picking up your child. This policy is in place to ensure the protection of your child and maintain a secure environment.
4. **Backup Child Care:** Families are responsible for arranging backup child care in the event of unexpected closures or unavailability. In the case of needing to close due to personal reasons or illness, we will make every effort to inform families by 7:30 am. If you require assistance in finding drop-in providers in your neighborhood, you may contact Contra Costa Child Care Council at (510) 758-5439.
5. **Provider Personal Days:** Child care is a demanding profession, and to ensure high-quality care for your children, the childcare provider is entitled to receive full payment for up to ten personal days per year. These personal days may be utilized for illness, training, doctor's appointments, and professional development.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation with these additional policies, as they contribute to the smooth operation of our child care program and the well-being of all children involved.

If you have any questions or require further clarification on any of the policies mentioned above, please feel free to discuss them with us. We are here to assist you and provide a nurturing and safe environment for your child."

COVID-19 Policy:

State/CDC Guidelines: Please refer to the COVID Family Plan for more detailed information on our COVID-19 policies and procedures.

If a child is showing any symptoms of illness, they cannot attend school without being cleared by a physician and/or receiving a PCR/molecular COVID-19 test.

If anyone in your household has experienced any symptoms of illness in the last two weeks (including fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, new loss of taste/smell, headaches, fatigue, general body aches, sore throat, congestion/runny nose, nausea/vomiting, diarrhea), or if you have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or has shown symptoms in the last two weeks, or if you have been advised to self-quarantine due to exposure to someone with a coronavirus infection, your child should not attend daycare.

Additionally, if your child is diagnosed with or exhibits symptoms of bronchiolitis, RSV, norovirus, influenza, ear infection, pink eye, hand-foot-mouth disease, chickenpox, measles, strep throat,

fifth disease, roseola, pinworms, ringworm, or has a fever, vomiting, inability to soothe, fever of 100 or higher, cough, runny nose, or rash (excluding diaper rash) after being given medication of any kind, they must be free of illness and fever for 72 hours and cleared by a physician before returning to school.

We kindly request that every morning before bringing your child to daycare, you take their temperature. If their temperature measures 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher, please keep them at home.

These policies are in place to ensure the health and safety of all children and staff members in our care. We appreciate your cooperation and understanding in adhering to these guidelines.

If you have any questions or require further information regarding our COVID-19 policies, please refer to the COVID Family Plan or reach out to us directly. We are committed to maintaining a safe and healthy environment for everyone involved.

Employees Right:

Employees have a right to privacy that is recognized and protected in various jurisdictions. This right acknowledges the fundamental principle that individuals should have control over their personal information and be free from unwarranted intrusion or surveillance in the workplace. Here are some key points regarding employees' right to privacy:

1. **Personal Information Protection:** Employees have a reasonable expectation that their personal information, such as their contact details, medical records, financial information, and social security numbers, will be handled with confidentiality and used only for legitimate employment-related purposes. Employers are generally required to handle this information responsibly and protect it from unauthorized access or disclosure.
2. **Non-Intrusive Workplace Monitoring:** While employers have a legitimate interest in maintaining a productive work environment, they must balance it with employees' privacy rights. Monitoring practices such as email monitoring, video surveillance, or computer usage tracking should be limited to justifiable business purposes and should not infringe on employees' reasonable expectations of privacy. Employers are often required to provide notice of such monitoring practices to employees.
3. **Social Media and Online Privacy:** With the rise of social media, employees' online activities have become an area of concern. Generally, employees have a right to privacy regarding their personal social media accounts. Employers are restricted from demanding access to personal social media accounts or taking adverse actions based on an employee's lawful off-duty social media activities. However, employees should exercise caution and be mindful of their online conduct, as certain public posts could impact their professional reputation or the employer's interests.

4. **Confidentiality and Whistleblower Protections:** Employees often handle sensitive company information or become privy to trade secrets and proprietary data. They have a right to expect that such information will be kept confidential by their employers. Additionally, many jurisdictions provide legal protection to employees who disclose illegal or unethical activities within their organization (whistleblowing), ensuring their privacy is safeguarded during the reporting process.
5. **Medical and Genetic Privacy:** Health-related information is highly personal, and employees have a right to privacy regarding their medical conditions. Employers should maintain the confidentiality of employees' medical records, only sharing information on a need-to-know basis, and complying with relevant privacy laws, such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) in the United States. Similarly, genetic information, including DNA test results, should be handled with utmost privacy, as it can reveal sensitive information about an individual's health or predispositions.

Thank you for choosing Toot-A-Lou for your childcare needs