

KNEE HIGH MANUAL

702 E. Cottage Grove

Bloomington, IN 47408

812-855-0150

REVISED 02/02

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. GENERAL POLICIES AND INFORMATION.....	1
ABOUT KNEE HIGH DAY CARE COOPERATIVE.....	1
THOUGHTS ON COOPERATIVE DAY CARE.....	1
PHILOSOPHY OF CARE.....	2
MAXIMS OF CARE.....	2
APPLICATION PROCEDURE.....	3
II. RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERSHIP.....	4
SCHEDULE AND HOLIDAYS.....	4
FEES.....	4
SHIFT DUTIES.....	4
MONTHLY MEETINGS.....	5
OUTSIDE JOBS.....	6
WORK DAYS.....	10
GROUNDS FOR EXPULSION.....	10
LEAVING VOLUNTARILY.....	10
OPTIONAL SATURDAY NIGHT CARE.....	11
III. PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES.....	11
DISCIPLINARY POLICY.....	11
SAFETY CONSCIOUSNESS.....	12
HEALTH STANDARDS.....	13
FIELD TRIP GUIDELINES.....	15
TORNADO AND SEVERE WEATHER EMERGENCY PROCEDURES.....	16
FIRE PLAN.....	17
FIRE AND TORNADO DRILLS.....	18
WORK STUDY STUDENTS.....	18
GUIDELINES FOR GOOD COMMUNICATION.....	19
IV. CHILD CARE.....	20
CHECKLIST FOR NEW MEMBERS.....	20
DAILY ROUTINE.....	21
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ABOUT THE DAILY ROUTINE.....	25
GENERAL SUGGESTIONS FOR WORKING WITH THE CHILDREN.....	27
THOUGHTS ON CARING FOR INFANTS.....	28
THOUGHTS ON CARING FOR TODDLERS.....	28

We strive to keep this manual up to date so that it reflects changes in policies or information and can best serve members and prospective members. Your contributions to the manual are welcome. If you have questions, suggestions, or concerns about anything in, or missing from, the manual, please bring these up at a monthly meeting.

Note to future editors: This entire manual is in a single file in MS Word for the PC, to allow automated formatting/styles and Table of Contents creation. It's best to keep these contents together in one file to reduce problems of having several versions and formats floating. Also, it is strongly suggested that a backup copy be kept on floppy disk.

I. General Policies and Information

About Knee High Day Care Cooperative

Knee High is a family day care cooperative. This means that it is run, managed, and staffed by the parents of the children who go there. We pay the bills, do the dishes, mop the floors, plan and do the field trips, read books, play games, sing songs, put on Band-Aids, teach how to share and be a friend, listen to funny jokes, wash faces and hands, rock babies quietly to sleep, set policies and procedures, worry about the kids, etc.

Knee High has a maximum enrollment of 14-15 children, ages 6 months to about 5 years. At least two parents are on-duty when Knee High is open. With the help of work-study student helpers, we maintain at least a 1 : 3 adult to child ratio most of the time. This allows us to take care of the children's needs, plan activities, go out for walks, and give the children individual attention, as they need it.

Knee High families are highly involved in caring for the children, as well as serving as child care administrators. We all share in caring for each other's children.

Thoughts on Cooperative Day Care

A cooperative is a self-sustaining organism that needs continual attention and renewal. Success lies almost entirely in the commitment of the members. Each Knee High family has chosen cooperative day care for their own reasons. Many choose cooperative day care in order to spend more time with their children. Others want to be more actively involved in determining the way that their child spends his or her time. Some of us want our child to feel part of a larger community of families. Admittedly,

the affordable cost of cooperative care also appeals to many families. Ultimately, however, the decision to remain a part of Knee High rests on trusting our fellow members with our child's care. If we do not all feel that our children are happy, safe and loved, all the clean floors and administrative efforts are of little value.

Philosophy of Care

Perhaps one of the greatest benefits of belonging to a day care cooperative is that we strive as a group to provide our children with the same level of care and attention that we give them at home. Knee High's atmosphere is informal, warm, caring, sometimes chaotic, sometimes organized, sometimes quiet, sometimes loud. Sometimes, most of the children are involved in a single activity - out on a walk, reading together, eating lunch or snacks, singing and playing music, etc. At other times, a few children may be eating breakfast, some may be reading, others may be exploring, doing puzzles or drawing.

The children at Knee High span a broad range of developmental stages. However, we only separate the children when specific activities are not suited to some children. For example, babies do not participate in crafts until they prefer drawing or painting to eating crayons. Most of the time, the children are free to move about the play areas, and to choose who and what they play with. Activities like going for a walk, doing a craft, learning a song or playing a game, are often suggested, but not usually imposed. We do not have a formal teaching mission. Children at these ages learn all day long through play and exploration, at their own pace, with our encouragement and support. Whether or not Knee High provides any more formal instruction for its children depends on the desires of the children and on the current membership.

Of course, we must impose some structure and guidelines. Play activities fit into a daily routine of meals, snacks and naps. We also try to teach the children to respect each other and the adults around them. We encourage the children to share toys, take turns, resolve disputes verbally, and prevent the children from hurting or endangering themselves or each other.

Maxims of Care

- Positive reinforcement: It's better to congratulate a child for doing something well (and thus encourage her to repeat the behavior) than to wait for her to err and then punish her for doing something wrong.

- **Creative Interaction:** Our goal is to stop quarrels before they begin. Be on the lookout for potential trouble, and provide a variety of interesting activities at suitable intervals to keep boredom from erupting.
- **Physical Affection:** We all need hugs and kisses! Besides, they do a lot to encourage the positive atmosphere between adult and child that naturally leads to good behavior on the child's part.
- **Individual Attention:** Children need to know that they're special. Ignoring this need can lead to misbehavior in order to get attention, which is undesirable in any group situation.
- **Firm, Quiet Discipline:** Children can be guided calmly down the paths of good behavior.
- **Responsibility:** Even at an early age, children can begin to learn responsibility. We can teach them to pick up after themselves and to share in the general cleaning; we can teach the older ones to help take care of the younger ones. The children often seem to take pride in simple accomplishments like putting something in the trash or carrying their own plate to the kitchen.

Application Procedure

All Knee High families must be affiliated with IU (students, staff, or faculty). Interested families should be encouraged to visit Knee High while it is open, and receive an application packet, which contains information about Knee High and an application form. Completed applications are directed to the new member coordinator. Applicant families who are being considered for admission will be invited to an interview with the entire current membership (including all parents and some children). The membership will then decide whether or not to offer probationary membership to the interviewed family. The probation period will last one month. During this time, the family is extended privileges and responsibilities of membership, with the following exceptions: Families on probation do not have voting privileges, are not required to take on extra-duty assignments (see below), and cannot participate in optional Saturday night care (see below). At the end of the probation period, the membership will vote on whether to grant the new family permanent membership.

II. Responsibilities of Membership

Schedule and Holidays

Knee High is open Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., whenever IU is in session. **Note** that this means we are not open over winter break (about three weeks), between semesters (a few days in May, and two-three weeks at the end of August), or when the university closes for whatever reason (e.g., winter weather). During closures, parents sometimes informally arrange to trade daycare, and Knee High's facilities are sometimes used, but this is to be worked out among involved parties.

Fees

Currently, membership dues are \$130 per month per child. This amount is collected in full twelve months of the year. New members who begin Knee High between the 1st and 15th of the month will pay the full \$130 for the first month. New members who start between the 16th and 31st will pay \$65. Likewise, when a family leaves Knee High on between the 1st and 15th day of the month, their dues for that month will be \$65. If a family leaves Knee High between the 16th and 31st day of the month, their dues will be \$130. A key deposit of \$130 is also collected after a family is vote permanent member. This deposit is refunded when a family leaves Knee High in good standing and the keys are returned.

Shift Duties

Each family is required to work 10 hours per week providing child care. This is most often divided into two five-hour (half day) shifts, although the commitment can be broken up into shorter shifts, according to parents' schedules (following a family's probationary period). Families with two children will work the regular 10 hours per week but pay an additional \$200 for the second child.

Families are absolutely required to cover their shifts. Arrangements can be made informally among families to trade shifts when necessary, but you must always arrange to cover your shift. Parents are not permitted to trade shifts with work-study students, because this could result in fewer than two parents being present at one time. Parents within families can trade shifts at any time, as long as both parents are familiar with Knee High's operating procedures.

Monthly Meetings

Parent meetings are held monthly, preferably at the same time each month. In recent years, meeting days have been set at the beginning of each semester according to parents' schedules, in order to avoid conflicts.

Regularly scheduled monthly meetings are a crucial part of membership responsibility, as this is when we make important decisions and discuss the changing needs of each child. Meetings are the only time that all families are gathered together, and thus your best chance to inform us of any problems or changes with regard to your child.

Each family must be represented at every meeting. All parents working shifts at Knee High are strongly encouraged to attend. For parents not working shifts, meetings are a good opportunity to stay involved in current issues. Because of their importance, you can be expelled from Knee High if you miss more than 2 meetings in a semester, or 2 meetings in a row. If exceptional circumstances prevent you from attending, you can leave your written vote with the meeting chairperson and request that all unannounced major votes be by written ballot (the results of which will be delayed until you have a chance to vote, too).

An agenda is posted prior to each meeting, and members are free to list whatever topics they consider relevant for discussion. (To avoid extending the meeting unnecessarily, members should take care to ensure that an issue is not something that can be addressed satisfactorily over e-mail.) In addition, you can ask the Chairperson to raise issues you feel are too delicate to post publicly. Meetings generally last between 2 and 3 hours. We try to keep the meetings as short as reasonable, but only rarely do they run less than 2 hours. Meetings always include a discussion of each child. Only when everyone's questions are answered and comments heard can the Chairperson move on to the business items on the agenda.

Meetings are generally held on campus or nearby, on a weekday evening. The job of chairing the meeting rotates among families (see extra duty assignments, below). Childcare is provided for children at Knee High while their parents attend the meeting. The family chairing the meeting is responsible for coordinating the care of the children. Usually, this means that one parent chairs the meeting, while the other cares for kids at Knee High, with the help of work-study students. Young babies can attend meetings with their parents, but we encourage parents to leave their children at Knee High if they prevent their parents from participating fully in the meeting.

Outside Jobs

Each permanent member family must take on at least one outside job. Depending on how much work is involved in a particular assignment, a family may volunteer or be asked to take on a second assignment or the job may be shared. Currently recognized outside jobs are briefly described below. As many as four codes are assigned to clarify job requirements... **O** = On-Demand jobs that are unpredictable and can't wait; **C** = Must be constantly filled (may not lapse); **T** = requires significant training; **N** = can readily be held by Non-shift-working parent.

Activity Theme Coordinator (may be combined with Programmer): (**N**) Develops and disseminates biweekly themes, including posting/email of craft/activity ideas and purchase of materials for each theme. Collects ideas for crafts, games, songs, workshops, etc., and files past activity themes and ideas. Coordinates themes and evaluations of Ed. school student teachers (Fall) and field experience volunteers (Spring).

Communication Coordinator: (**C N**) Maintains majordomo email lists of parents and assistants. Maintains and develops webpage including timely updates of the roster and shift schedule. Keeps up to date roster of personal information of families and assistants. Provides updated printed family/assistant roster to parents and assistants as necessary. Performs online criminal background checks of each new member of email lists.

Facilities Maintenance: (**N**) Organizes full membership cleaning and maintenance days at least twice per year. Performs or coordinates minor maintenance and installation of inside/outside furnishings (excluding books and toys). Performs scheduled maintenance, including quarterly furnace and air filter changes. Schedules floor waxing (2x/year), carpet cleaning (2x/year), and screen repair (1x/year) by IU. Works with IU Physical plant, etc. when major repairs are needed. Orders repair of or requests replacement parts for non-IU supported appliances (washer/dryer/dishwasher/highchairs/etc). Supervises recycling program, ensuring that recyclables are put out for collection.

Health and Safety Coordinator: (**C N**) Coordinates and ensures compliance of all daycare workers with IU Health Standards. These standards require annual CPR training, annual Universal Precautions training, annual TB tests, annual physical exams and First Aid training every 3 years for every individual. Schedules CPR, FA and UP at the beginning of each semester and an onsite TB test each fall. Posts compliance record charts and ensures compliance by all shiftworking parents and assistants. Keeps first aid kit adequately stocked and ensures that any medical information (general and kid-specific) is available in a card file next to the first aid kit. Schedules annual fire and tornado

drills and does regular safety walkthrough inspections of KH. Encourages compliance with proper sanitation (UP) practices.

IU Liaison: (N) Represents Knee High in all dealings with IU administration. Maintains relationship and makes requests of with Child Care Coordinator (Tim Dunnuck 855-5053 dunnuckt@indiana.edu) of the Campus Child Care Support office (www.indiana.edu/~hrm/child_care/) as needed. Represents Knee High at childcare related meetings. Coordinates funding requests and reports to Office of Dean of Students (Suzanne Phillips philli@indiana.edu) when appropriate. (They manage an account dedicated to capital improvements & training for campus childcare centers which funds requests each year.)

Member Coordinator: (O C T) Serves as a central source of information and materials for prospective members. Receives, manages and disseminates membership applications. Schedules and leads applicant interviews and communicates their outcome to applicants. Updates and distributes new member information packet. Assigns mentor families to new members for probation period. Ensures that probationary members receive feedback midway through probation period (comments should be solicited from entire membership). Facilitates assignment and rotation of outside job assignments. If a member or their child has a disability and needs assistance, refers them to the IU Liaison, who is responsible for all ADA compliance and for general information helpful to members who have, or whose child has, a disability.

Organizer: (N) Keeps craft room, kitchen, mud room, cupboards, cubbies and basement orderly and labeled. Periodically checks the craft room's stock of supplies and informs purchaser of needed items.

Payroll Coordinator: (C T N) Turns in time sheets from assistants and special activity teachers on a on a biweekly basis. Ensures completion of paperwork for new hires. Maintains records of work-study funds and requests increases as necessary. Keeps payrate records and activates raises each term. Informs scheduler of the number of funded hours each for each work-study student at the beginning of each term (especially Summer I & II).

Programming coordinator: (N) Organizes hiring of special activity teachers for music, art and other interest areas. Schedules monthly field trips to Wonder Lab and Monroe County Public Library Story Hour. Coordinates annual field trips to fire station, Strawberry Shortcake festival, etc.

Recorder: (C N) Records, types up, distributes, and files monthly meeting minutes. Disseminates bulleted version of kids notes to assistants. Updates and stocks sign-in sheets, diaper charts, Knee High Manuals, and nap chart as necessary. Maintains records in on-site filing cabinet including rosters, child information sheets, field trip permission forms, emergency forms, owner's manuals, parking passes, etc.

Scheduler: (O C T) Produces spreadsheet week- and day- at a glance parent/assistant schedules for each term. Promptly posts schedule changes to the phone and assistant boards (& sends file to Comm Coord). Monitors assistant email list for coinciding absences and contacts shift crisis manager when staffing is likely to fall to critical levels. Requests availability information for parents before each term. Distributes schedule to assistants by email as necessary. Makes requests for new assistants (to Staff Recruiter) as necessary.

Staff Recruiter & Trainer: (O C T) Recruits, interviews, and trains daycare assistants. Attends work-study meetings for ongoing training issues and collects schedules for scheduler. Leads training workshops for parents and assistants as necessary. Maintains an assistant application pool and email list.

Staff Relations: (C T) Schedules and leads three work-study meetings per semester. Facilitates communication between assistants and parents & serves as liason in one on one conflicts. Coordinates oral and written evaluation of assistants and feedback for parents midway each term, maintaining personel files of current assistants. Maintains assistant morale with posters, email, finals week care packages from parents, etc.

Supplier: (O C N) Buys needed supplies on a (bi-)weekly basis using SOA card (currently Target and Kroger). Maintains stock of bulk cleaning supplies (laundry and dishwasher detergent, bleach, wipes, handsoap, facial tissues, and vinyl gloves andalconox [from chem/biol dept]). Purchases items from specialized vendors as needed (air filters, parts, etc., except toys & books).

Toys and Books: (N) Coordinates cleaning, maintenance, organization, and storage of toys. Periodically straightens up book shelves and repairs or discards damaged books. Purchases books and toys as needed. Rotates toys and books in and out of the basement as appropriate for the season.

Treasurer: (C T N) Collects (or extracts) dues, provides receipts, pays bills, and submits reimbursement requests. Manages Student Organization Account and transfers funds to work-study

auditors account. Maintains financial records in order to provide periodic (but not less than annual) reports of financial condition to the membership.

OCCASIONAL OUTSIDE JOBS: (may be re-established based on need or member interest)

Fundraiser: Organizes money-making activities such as book orders, Kroger certificates, candy sales, yard sales.

Historian: Collects pictures and maintains photo albums for kids to look at. Keeps journal of Knee High happenings. Works with communications coordinator to maintain email digest of discussions that might be of use to future members

Meeting Idea Person: This is another rotating position, like the meeting chairperson. Presents and teaches a new activity to the membership at the monthly meeting. Provides the Activity Theme Coordinator with a copy of the ideas to be included in the activity book.

Older Kids Programmer: Organizes more structured or developmental activities for older children (typically kids who are approaching 3 years of age and older).

TEMPORARY JOBS

Meeting Chairperson: Announces meeting, reserves meeting space, organizes child care, posts, prepares and distributes agenda. Chairs the meetings. This is a rotating responsibility shared by all member families in turn.

Mentor Families: (A rotating position.) A mentor family is assigned to help with the orientation of each new family. The mentor family should ensure that the new family receives all of the necessary paperwork, understands the responsibilities of membership, and generally serves as the new family's chief contact. The mentor family will communicate any concerns that may arise during the new family's probationary month, both to and from the membership. The mentor family coordinates review of their new member family at the *middle and* end of the probation period, and communicates the membership's comments and decision to the new members.

SPECIAL INTEREST DUTIES: (Other duties that may be created as needed or based on member interest.)

Craft Room Organizer: Organizes the craft room. Periodically checks the craft room's stock of supplies and informs supplier of needed items. Organizes educational sessions for workers as needed.

Older Kids Programmer: Organizes more structured or developmental activities for older children (typically kids who are approaching 3 years of age and older).

Work Days

In addition to these extra duties, the inside and/or outside maintenance coordinator will usually organize at least one, sometimes two work days each semester. These work parties can include anything from an extra careful cleaning of Knee High, to painting, to major outdoor maintenance and construction projects, to putting plastic up on the windows during winter. Ideally, these should be scheduled for the weekend at a time when most members are able to show up. Again experience suggests that when everyone shows up for a work party, the work gets done more quickly, and the cooperative aspect of Knee High - its greatest asset - is felt by all.

Grounds for Expulsion

Shift absence - If you are unable to work your assigned shift, you must arrange for a suitable replacement (another parent). Because the safety and well-being of our children depends on everyone taking their responsibilities seriously, one transgression of this rule can lead to expulsion without any refund of dues paid. This is one of the more serious infractions because the children's safety is adversely affected by an absent shift worker.

Meeting Absences - Missing two meetings in a row or in a semester without sufficient excuse is grounds for expulsion.

By Vote - If your performance as a member or your child's adjustment to Knee High is deemed unsatisfactory by 2/3 of the other membership, this is sufficient grounds for expulsion. Except in extreme cases, you will be given a month's notice.

Leaving Voluntarily

To leave in good standing you should give at least two weeks' notice. The more notice that you are able to give, the better we can recruit for an anticipated opening.

Optional Saturday Night Care

A subset of Knee High families participates in cooperative Saturday night care. The families who participate care for one another's children on a rotating basis on Saturday evenings. Knee High's facilities are most often used for this optional activity. It is the current membership's view that the families participating in Saturday night care set policies for this group, with the understanding that only current and recently departed Knee High member families can participate. New members may join Saturday night care only after their probationary period. Of course, it is expected that all of Knee High's general operating procedures (e.g., for washing dishes, cleaning nap mats, and cleaning up) will be followed when using Knee High's facilities.

III. Procedural Guidelines

Disciplinary Policy

Throughout a child's development, he or she will inevitably behave in ways that are not acceptable, either because they are dangerous, hurtful, or otherwise socially unacceptable. In order to help our children develop appropriate social behaviors, we guide them by the most positive means available towards good behavior. The following constitutes our formal disciplinary policy:

1. **Redirection:** By keeping the children involved in activities that interest them, we can often prevent situations from arising that require further intervention. Also, by ensuring that the children are adequately supervised, situations can be dissipated before they escalate.
2. We can teach the children to resolve their own disputes by taking advantage of opportunities that arise in which we can guide them to peaceful cooperation. If a baby is trying to take a toy away from an older child, ask the older child to get a different toy for the baby. This helps show the child that he is entitled to hold on to the toy that he was playing with, but that he can also help the other child to accept this.
3. **Separation and Information:** Unacceptable behavior sometimes occurs. When it does, the adult's action should be appropriate to the age of the child and follow these guidelines: The most common behaviors requiring intervention are hitting, pushing and biting. When this occurs, the child should first be stopped from inflicting harm to others. If one child is hitting another, stop the child non-violently. For example, you could pick up the child being hit, make sure they're OK, and remove them from the reach of the child who hit them. This is often preferable to removing the child who

is hitting, because it does not reinforce the negative behavior with special attention. Tell the child who hit, in a firm manner, that what they did is not acceptable. Refrain from judging the child (i.e., don't ever tell a child that he or she is bad - only that their behavior is not allowed). If you know what brought about the hitting, or can find out from the kids, suggest an alternative behavior that would have been acceptable. For example, we encourage the children to use their words to tell other children to stop their offending behavior instead of hitting them. We also encourage children who are fighting over a toy to take turns or share. As soon as the incident is over, all is quickly forgiven. However, if a particular toy is repeatedly fought over, the object can be temporarily removed to prevent further problems.

4. Corporal punishment and verbal abuse (including yelling/screaming) are never options. Formal time-outs and removal of privileges are also **not** used as disciplinary tools at Knee High. We believe that at these ages, children can only understand immediate and direct consequences of inappropriate behaviors. Food is also never used as punishment (or reward).

Remember also that children learn primarily by example. Try to remain calm and respectful at all times, and impose any discipline consistently. The key to any long-term improvement in a child's behavior is for the parents to be informed of problems and to participate in their solution. Informally (when the child is picked up) and formally (at meetings) we need to talk to each other about our children and how they are developing. Also keep in mind that all families are different. Use corrective discipline primarily for behaviors that are harmful to others or dangerous for the child.

Safety Consciousness

Childhood, according to one definition, is one potential major catastrophe after another. Children aren't born knowing what is and is not safe; they need guidance, and one of our prime responsibilities to each other is to watch out for these accidents-waiting-to-happen. All caregivers share responsibility for the children's safety. If any toy, furniture or activity seems potentially hazardous, take action: remove it, fix it, talk about it! Any member can and should remove any item that they feel is dangerous. Remember also that a key to accident prevention is good supervision.

Emergency treatment forms: To be filled out as soon as a new member's probation period begins. These forms should be updated as needed (e.g., if you change physicians, discover new allergies, etc.)

TB tests are required by state law for anyone working with children. The Public Health Nurse (315 W. Dodds) administers this test cheaply.

Health Standards

Indiana University Daycare Compliance Guidelines: Indiana University requires the following compliance guidelines be met by all adults working at its daycares (including shift parents and assistants): Tuberculosis test, CPR training, First Aid training, Universal Precautions training and a general health physical. Parents must provide the following for their children: proof that the child has received the standard immunizations (waivers of this requirement are permitted for religious and philosophical reasons) and a general health physical.

Sickness: Children and adults can be at Knee High with common illnesses like colds and ear infections (as long as there is no accompanying fever). However, if both shift parents feel that your child is too sick to be at Knee High, you will be called and you must pick your child up. This usually happens when a child is inconsolable, or requires levels of attention that make it too difficult to take care of the rest of the children.

Fever Policy: Any child or adult with a fever over 100 degrees must leave Knee High and may not return for 24 hours after the fever has been lower than 100 degrees without artificial assistance (e.g., Tylenol).

Vomiting: If a child vomits while at Knee High, the parents should be contacted and generally, they will be asked to pick up their child from Knee High. There may be cases where the adults on shift and the parents agree that the incident probably was not related to illness, and in these cases, the child may be allowed to remain at Knee High. If your child is vomiting due to illness, he or she should not return to Knee High until 24 hours after the last episode.

Contagious Illnesses: If you or your child has been exposed to a highly contagious illness, it is common sense and good manners to inform the rest of us, and to stay away from Knee High if you or your child are contagious.

Medication: We can administer medication to children if specifically instructed to do so. Label any medication clearly and make sure the shift parents understand the instructions. Write down the instructions on the sign-in sheet and on the child's medicine. If you are working at Knee High and give a child medication, write down the time that you gave it on the sign in sheet with your initials so that the child's parents can contact you if they have any questions. If your child's medication is difficult to administer, consider giving a lesson at a monthly meeting.

Sun Protection: We keep a supply of non-allergenic children's sunscreen and try to apply it regularly (at least once in the morning and once in the afternoon) when the children will be outside. You are welcome to provide your own sunscreen and should describe your child's sun protection needs on the Sun Chart on the refrigerator (i.e., if he/she should always wear a hat, you do not want your child to wear sunscreen, etc.).

Hand Washing: Proper hand washing is a simple and effective means of decreasing the spread of germs. Adults and children should wash their hands frequently throughout the day at Knee High. It is especially important to wash hands after using the bathroom, after every diaper change (adults and children), before handling food, and before and after eating. Hands should be carefully washed with warm soapy lather for at least ten seconds. After rinsing, it is important to be aware of minimizing contact with potentially soiled surfaces (e.g., the trash can in the bathroom) before returning to other activities. Each of the children have their own towel hung in the bathroom. Adults presently share a single towel. All towels should be laundered daily

Diaper Changing and Potty Use: We try to follow the guideline of changing cloth diapers every two hours and disposables every three hours. Poopy diapers are changed as soon as they are noticed with loose poop dumped into the toilet and flushed. Dirty cloth diapers are placed in individually labeled, plastic bag-lined pails in the bathroom, and taken home by parents at the end of each day. It is not necessary to rinse out soiled cloth diapers before putting them in pails. Disposable diapers are bundled up using adhesive tapes and placed in the trash. After each diaper change, the changing mat must be sprayed clean and wiped dry. Additionally, after each use of the toilet, the seats should be sprayed with the Alconox solution and wiped dry. We are currently using a mild soap solution (Alconox) for this purpose. A 10% bleach solution has been recommended to us by the public health nurse. However, we have found that this is a very strong solution to expose our children to several times a day. We are still looking for the perfect disinfectant to use between diaper changes. Finally, as mentioned above, children and adults should wash their hands thoroughly before leaving the bathroom.

Dish Washing: Dishes are washed in the dishwasher as soon as it is filled (at least once per day). It is helpful to leave a note on the next day's sign-in sheet as to the condition of any dishes in the dishwasher. If the dishwasher is not available, a four-step process is used. Dishes are first washed in hot soapy water, then rinsed to remove soap. The dishes are then set in a basin of bleach water (1-2 capfuls of bleach per basin) to soak for at least 30 seconds. Finally, the dishes are air-dried in dish racks. It is very important to submerge dishes completely in bleach water, and to allow them to dry thoroughly before putting back in cupboard. Instructions for dish washing are posted next to the sink.

Disinfecting: Spray bottles filled with bleach water are used for spraying down high chairs, tables and chairs (as needed) after each meal and for disinfecting the nap mats and cots. These spray bottles can also be used on other items like door knobs, the refrigerator handle, and other surfaces. To disinfect toys you should dip them in the bleach water basin, wait about 30 seconds and rinse them. Toys that are frequently handled and mouthed, such as blocks and dishes should be disinfected weekly. Spray bottles should be refilled every morning with fresh bleach water. High chairs, nap mats and cots should be sprayed lightly with bleach water on Friday afternoons and allowed to air dry.

Laundry: Dirty laundry such as bibs, towels, wash cloths, and painting smocks should be accumulated in the baskets in the bathroom and washed regularly enough to ensure that bibs and wash cloths that contain food remnants do not begin to attract bugs. If you do not have enough laundry for a full load each day, the dirty laundry can “rest” in the washer until the load is ready.

Field Trip Guidelines

Field trips fall into two categories: walking field trips and car field trips. Parents can give or withhold general permission for these activities by filling in the permission forms that are given to new members.

In good weather, we frequently take children out on walks, using a cart, strollers or backpacks. We often go to parks, sometimes to local museums with exhibits for children, or to the local library. If you give permission for your child to go on walks, you will not be informed each time a walk is planned. However, you must answer “yes” or “no” on the sign-in sheet every day to give permission for your child to go outside. Whether or not your child has general permission to go on walks, s/he will not be allowed to go if you check “no” in the “outside” box for that day.

Occasional special activities, such as a car trip to Bryan Park, or using public transportation, require general permission for car trips on the field trip permission form and specific parental consent for each activity. This can be done by posting a special permission sheet on the refrigerator for the activity. Note that car seats must also be available for each child going on a car trip, as required by law. When this happens, parents usually leave their child’s car seat at Knee High.

If you are planning a field trip, keep in mind the following:

1. Field trips can be oriented to kids of all ages, not just to the oldest children.

2. Make sure that the parents of children going on the field trip have signed permission forms for that activity.
3. A parent must go along on all field trips, and a parent must remain at Knee High with children who are not going along (or to care for children who have not yet been dropped off for the day).
4. Let the parent who remains behind know the itinerary (locations and returns) and advise them by phone if there is a change of plans.
5. If the entire staff is going along, leave written notice of the field trip itinerary in a conspicuous place, in case a parent comes by unexpectedly to pick up their child.
6. Take along the special field trip pouch, which contains copies of each child's emergency medical forms with you. Water and cups for drinking should be taken along in warm weather. Also, take along an extra diaper or two and wipes.
7. Do not use field trips as an opportunity to get personal errands done.
8. Do not leave a parent behind in an untenable situation. Do not expect them to take care of three children and have lunch ready when you get back. Consideration for the other kids and parents should be kept in mind regarding length of field trip, who should go, etc.

Tornado and Severe Weather Emergency Procedures

Bloomington has a centralized siren meant to warn us if a dangerous weather situation arises. We also have a weather radio in the kitchen above the sink.

Should a tornado or severe weather situation arise, everyone at Knee High should go down to the basement storm shelter in the southwest corner for the duration of the emergency. You will find a few flashlights, drinks and a snack item or two. We have yet to make this room hospitable, so you should try to grab supplies such as the weather radio, portable phone, blankets, diapers, drinking water, books to read, the sign-in clipboard, and whatever else seems appropriate as you head down there. Remember that getting everyone out of harm's way as quickly as possible is the first priority. It is dark and dingy, so try to calm the kids as best as possible.

Fire Plan

In case of fire alarm go to the fire alarm panel and see where it says the fire is. The panel is located behind the door on the back porch. Press 1234 OFF on the panel, which will silence the alarm. **Go** check to see if there is a real fire. Press 1234 OFF again to reset the alarm. This alarm is wired to IUPD.

Should a fire occur inside Knee High the goal is to get all children and adults out of the building as quickly as possible. Once outside, all persons should be at least 20-30 feet away from the building. In general, one adult should remain in the house until all children are out of the building; one adult should remain outside with whatever children have left the building. The other adults should assist the remainder of children with going from inside the house to the outside. If possible, one adult should grab the attendance board to check off children and the portable phone to call for help. However, the priority is for everyone to be removed from house. Calls for help should be made later.

If the fire is at the front of the house, children should be taken out of rear door and to the far side of the yard. If the fire is at the rear of the house, children should be taken out front door and to the vacant lot across Cottage Grove. If the group must be split up, all children and adults should meet at the vacant lot on Cottage Grove as soon as possible.

If time is of the essence and/or doors are blocked, exits may need to be done through the windows (this may be especially true in the nap room). If this is necessary, it is best to have one adult inside handing children, one at a time, through the window to another adult.

Nap Time: If children are asleep when a fire occurs, they will need to be carried out—there is not time to awaken them. One adult can exit with the awake children; the other adults can set up a “bucket brigade” to carry the remaining children out of the nap room (through a door if possible, otherwise through windows). Nap room doors not being used should be closed to prevent further spread of the fire.

Windows: Many of our windows are difficult to open. If time is of the essence, windows should be smashed with a chair or other heavy object. Be sure to knock as much of the glass out as possible to minimize cutting on the way out of the window. Also beware of glass on the ground when exiting.

Things to remember and be aware of:

- Once windows and/or doors are open, more oxygen becomes available for the fire and it will spread more quickly.
- All adults should know where fire extinguishers are and how to use them for small-contained fires. Focus on getting children out of the house as quickly as possible if the fire is large.
- All adults and children should go to the same outside area.
- All doorways should be kept clear so that they can be used for emergency exits. This is especially important in the nap room. Do not ever leave the rocking chair or a sleeping child where they block any of the doors.

Fire and Tornado Drills

For the fire drills, please have one adult stay in the house with the nappers, but everyone else should be taken across to the stump. Tell the kids what they are doing if they are old enough to grasp the concept.

For tornado drills, head for the basement. Once again leave an adult with the nappers and explain to the kids what is happening.

Work Study Students

Student helpers play a crucial and integral role at Knee High. While on shift, parents and work-studies work side by side. Keep in mind that many of our student helpers have much more group child care experience than many parents. Even if they do not, they should be treated as equal child care providers. Do not expect work-study students to change all the diapers or wash all the dishes. Remember, however, that if a problem with a work-study student arises on your shift, you will be expected to handle it and/or report it to the work-study coordinator. Also remember that you should try to recognize if students are overwhelmed by a situation and help them if you can. What we look for in our work study assistants:

1. A genuine interest in children.
2. Dependability, showing up when scheduled, ready to work. Our children's safety and happiness depend on our having reliable staffing.

3. A willingness to chip in and share in the work.

Direct any interested students to the work-study coordinator.

Guidelines for Good Communication

Although Knee High is primarily a day care facility, the cooperative aspect of our day care brings with it special characteristics. We are a group of families who spend an unusually large amount of time together, and who all know each other's children and parenting styles intimately. This closeness, along with the importance of our responsibilities to our own and each other's children can sometimes lead to friction. The purpose of this section is to provide guidance on how to handle conflicts when they arise.

The key to a healthy atmosphere is to be able to resolve little gripes before they fester. Ideally, all involved parties take constructive criticism well (i.e., without defensiveness or hurt feelings), are tolerant of others' differences, but realize that it's time to talk when the differences become disturbing.

You are within your rights to insist that, for instance, the next shift show up on time or your child's diaper be changed more often. The easiest way to handle the matter is to mention it matter-of-factly to the persons involved. No matter how trivial an issue it may seem, make a practice of voicing your opinion; then when something really important is at stake--like your child's well-being--nothing holds you back from what's right.

If you find yourself bothered by something going on at Knee High, but can't bring yourself to discuss it openly with whomever is involved, use other established channels. For example, you could involve a third party and ask them to discuss the issue with the other party, with or without mentioning your name. You could also bring up the issue in general to the membership-at-large at the next meeting, or ask someone else to do this for you.

Remember that in order for Knee High to work for you and your child, you must be able to trust all of the other members. This type of relationship cannot develop overnight, and it cannot survive unless you feel that you can voice your opinions, and listen to others', whether or not they represent the majority.

IV. Child Care

Checklist for New Members

New families need to take care of a couple of things in their first few days at Knee High. Here's a brief checklist:

- **Sign-in sheet:** Have another parent show you how to sign in your child. Write down any special instructions, whether or not your child can go outside, and the time that you expect to pick up your child.
- **Paperwork:** You need to fill out three sheets of information: child information form (information to help parents and work-studies get to know your child), emergency treatment (a consent form for treatment in the event that we cannot reach you and your child requires emergency medical attention), and field trip permission (to inform us of your willingness to allow your child to go on walks or car trips). Additionally, you should provide the Knee High recorder with your contact information for the roster (complete names, child's dob, address, home/work phones, physician name and phone).
- **Food:** You provide all of your child's food and beverage (except water). We will heat your child's food in the microwave oven only if you specifically instruct us to do so (i.e., attach a note to food to be heated).
- **Manual:** You must read this manual, especially before you begin to work shifts at Knee High.
- **Labels:** You need to label your child's lunch box, lunch containers, beverage container and his/her nap bedding.
- **Hooks and cubbies:** Have someone show you where your child's hook and bathroom cubby and porch cubby will be located.
- **Supplies:** You need to bring a supply of diapers (cloth or disposable) and extra clothes for your child. These are placed in your child's bathroom cubby.
- **Dues:** Pay your first month's dues. Have someone show you where the dues box is located.

- Knee High provides mats and cots for napping (a few portable cribs may also be available for younger babies), dishes and utensils for serving food.

Daily Routine

7:30 am - Knee High Opens:

- Currently, two parents typically open Knee High. Children can be dropped off anytime after 7:30.
- Opening duties are posted in the kitchen and include: Unlocking back and front doors, posting new sign-in and potty charts, putting liners in kitchen and bathroom trash cans, putting liners in diaper pails, replacing all bleach water solutions (kitchen tub, spray bottles from kitchen and bathroom), removing old drink cups from the refrigerator (dump contents and wash cups if you find any), putting away clean dishes, folding and putting away clean laundry.
- Parents should bring clean nap bedding on Mondays and put it on their child's bed.

When you drop off your child:

- Sign in by circling your child's name. Put down a time for pickup. This is only important so that we can know not to take your child on a walk if you will be picking them up soon. Note any medicines that should be given on the sign-in chart and the medicine board and whether or not you want your child to go outside. Also note any special napping needs (e.g., two naps, early nap, don't nap after 3:00 pm, etc.) or other preferences (e.g., you want your child's shoes to stay on when he/she goes outside).
- Put lunch in refrigerator. Make sure lunches and drinks are labeled.
- Put diapers and change of clothes in your child's cubby. There are hooks in the porch cubbies for coats and jackets. If you use cloth diapers, put a new plastic bag in your diaper pail.
- Write down any special need for diapering or potty needs on the bathroom chart. Write down the time that you last changed your child's diaper.
- If your child needs some special attention at drop off time please don't be afraid to ask someone for help. Also let someone know if your child needs breakfast, or needs to be put into day clothes (early morning kids often come in pajamas).

7:30 - 9:30 am:

- Most children arrive during this period. This is often a period of free play. Offer short duration activities, like puzzles, or book reading. A structured activity can also be planned during this period if enough children have arrived early.

9:30 am - Morning Snack

- Get the kids to wash their hands before eating.
- Offer snack and drinks. Use high chairs or tables or both. Some of the youngest children may need to be spoon fed, or need one on one attention while eating. All of the kids generally eat in the snack room. Someone should always be in the room and supervising while children are eating. It helps greatly if an adult actually sits at the table with the children while they are eating to encourage them to remain seated and eat well.
- Food should not be microwaved unless specifically noted by parents or requested by the child. Microwave instructions should be on the container in the lunch box. Microwave foods only in the small glass bowls (do not put serving plates in the microwave.) Stir microwaved foods to dissipate hot spots and always check to make sure the food isn't scalding.
- Food and drinks are only allowed in the kitchen and the snack room (except for bottles used to help babies get to sleep in nap room). Remind the kids of the rule if they stray onto carpeted areas.
- Involving kids in cleanup is a fun way to get the kids helping and having fun, too. Ask them to bring their plates to the kitchen and put their drinks in the refrigerator. Even the younger ones enjoy carrying their plates to the kitchen.
- Wash dishes, clean and put away tables and high chairs and sweep or mop floor as needed.
- Check all diapers, change as needed and record changes on diaper chart.
- Try to get older kids to go potty. Write down their times, too.

9:50 - 11:30 am:

- This is a good time for a structured activity, such as a craft, walk, circle time, or other special activity. Morning and afternoon shifts should always have an activity planned for their shift.

- Depending on when children arrive and what you have planned for the day, it may be possible to do your major planned craft or activity before snack time. Otherwise, offer any number of possible "mini-activities" available to you: puzzles, music, organized play (hide-and-seek, ring-around-the-rosy, etc.).
- Some children, especially the youngest, will be getting tired by mid-morning. Check diapers before naps.
- Before lunch time comes clean-up time. Children should be encouraged to help pick up whatever has been used. One parent can supervise hand-washing in the bathroom.
- Someone should begin preparing lunches 10-15 minutes before serving time. It is easiest to have all of the lunches ready to serve before getting the kids seated.

11:30 am - Lunch Time:

- Lunch is a sit-down, social affair. Children should be encouraged to remain at the table for a reasonable length of time (10 minutes minimum?) to ensure that they eat and that they do not distract others from doing so. "Inside voices" are suggested, as is general dinner table conversation.
- Wash dishes, clean and put away tables and high chairs and sweep or mop floor as needed.
- Check all diapers, change as needed and record changes on diaper chart. Wash kids' hands.
- Try to get older kids to go potty. Write down their times, too.
- This is also shift-time change for parents. Try to leave Knee High in reasonable order, though this isn't always possible. Inform your replacements of any special instructions or irregularities. Afternoon people should also check the sign-in sheet for special instructions. Morning shift parents should not leave Knee High until their replacement has arrived - two parents must be present at all times.

12:15 - 3:00 pm: Naps and afternoon activities:

- Offer naps to the early afternoon nappers. Check diapers or encourage potty use before naps. Almost every child has a particular nap time routine. Find out what or who works best for each

child. Look over the Nap Chart on the nap room door or Child Information sheets in the file cabinet for tips on each kid's nap time routine.

- Naps are hard so don't be discouraged if you don't always (or ever!) succeed with some of the kids. If you're getting impatient with the child you're trying to get to sleep, ask another adult to take over for a while.
- Our kids' napping needs are constantly changing. During some periods, most of the kids go down for naps soon after lunch. At other times, more kids take mid- to late-afternoon naps. Use their schedule to determine when to structure afternoon activities. If most of the kids are awake now, this is a good time for a structured activity, such as a walk or craft.
- Check diapers as kids wake up from their naps and offer a drink or food if the child has missed lunch or a snack.

3:00 pm - Afternoon Snack:

- Get the kids to wash their hands before eating.
- Offer snacks following the same guidelines as for morning snack. If a child happens to be napping during a meal time, it is helpful to note on the chart that the child needs a snack upon awakening.
- Wash dishes, clean and put away tables and high chairs and sweep or mop floor as needed.
- Check all diapers, change as needed and record changes on diaper chart. Wash kids' hands.
- Try to get older kids to go potty. Write down their times, too.

3:20 - 5:30 pm: Afternoon activities and cleanup:

- Kids and grownups are free to choose activities: free play, crafts, something organized, play outside, etc.
- Also, use this time to begin end of the day cleaning, if possible.
- Offer snacks to children who have napped through meal time.

- Shift parents should be sure to check pick-up times on the sign-in chart before starting a field trip at this time. Otherwise, all other crafts and activities used for morning shift are appropriate here.
- Afternoon cleaning duties are also posted in the lunch room and include: putting away toys and books, and generally straightening up, taking out kitchen and bathroom trash, picking up toys off the snack and playroom floors, emptying left-over cups and washing all dishes, spraying the changing pad, straightening up yard, storing cart and strollers in shed, turning off the lights, closing the windows and locking the doors.

When you pick up your child:

- Take home dirty cloth diapers and any soiled clothing.
- Collect your child's lunch box and any stray food containers.
- Check the sign-in sheet for any notes left by parents or work-studies. Cross your child's name off the sign-in sheet and record the time of pick up.
- If you need to have a friend or family member pick up your child please write that down on the sign-in sheet and tell the parent on duty. It would be a good idea to call the afternoon parent also and remind them that someone else will be picking up your child. A description or photograph of that person would be great!
- Everyone is expected to pick up kids no later than 5:30. Afternoon shift parents should be able to leave at 5:30, so please try to be on time. If you arrive right at 5:30, offer to lock up when you leave. If you have an emergency that makes you later than 5:30 please call Knee High and let someone know.
- Take home bedding on Fridays so you can wash it.

Additional Comments about the Daily Routine

- Depending on what you have planned, you may want to divide the children into groups. Some crafts, for instance, work better with a small group of older kids than they do with the younger children.

- Each morning and afternoon shift is responsible for at least one craft or planned activity. Parents should come prepared! You may want to leaf through the activities or craft idea files. Ask someone to show you where these are located.
- Suggestions for mealtimes: Try to indulge in conversation with the kids at mealtime. Talk about the food they are eating or play "games" to get them to eat. Sit down at their table and talk if you have time. Don't be surprised if you don't have time! Mealtime can get very hectic. Choose a book to read to them while they eat. The gigantic books are good for this. Everyone can see the pages without getting up. The idea is to make meals fun, enjoyable and to get the kids to eat!
- Meals can be served outside at the picnic table. This requires more work and time, but the kids really enjoy the change. Watch for bees and wasps in the summer however!
- Although it is easier to do meals on a schedule there are times when this will not be possible. Some children may sleep through a meal and will need to be fed when they wake. If it is less than a half hour before the next snack or lunch time then you might consider trying to wait to feed them, but go ahead and immediately feed any child who is miserably hungry. If you need to feed one or two children and it is not snack or lunch time for everyone try to feed them in the kitchen. This will help avoid a "domino" effect on the rest of the gang wanting to eat.
- Some kids are too young to be expected to stay on our meal schedule. Feed them whenever they need food. This definitely includes the kids who are under one year old.
- Nap room guidelines: We try to keep at least 18 inches between mats. This is not always possible, but try to maximize the distance between kids and place neighboring nappers in opposite directions (head to foot). This is a Health and Safety regulation to reduce the spread of communicable diseases.
- For reasons of hygiene, because some children may have allergies, and in consideration of differing parental food philosophies, children should not be allowed to share each other's food.
- As a general guideline, we strongly encourage members not to send candy with children. We recognize that parents have the last say on what their child eats, but prefer that candy be served outside Knee High.

- Clothing and shoes can easily be misplaced unless they are immediately put in cubbies upon their removal. Taking the time to do this is enormously helpful for parents at the end of the day when they come to pick up their children. Older children can be asked to help put their clothing and shoes away.
- When you think you have free time: Deep clean a high chair or two, empty a shelf and wipe it down, clean and disinfect a container of toys, sweep the front porch or the ramp, straighten up the craft room, wipe down the inside of the refrigerator or microwave oven.

General Suggestions for Working with the Children

1. State suggestions or directions in a positive, rather than a negative, form.
2. Give the child a choice only when you intend to leave the choice up to the child.
3. Your voice is a teaching tool. Use words and a tone of voice which will help the child feel confident and reassured.
4. Avoid trying to change behavior by methods which may lead to loss of self-respect, such as shaming or labeling behavior as "naughty" or "selfish."
5. Avoid motivating a child by making comparisons between one child and another, or by encouraging competition.
6. Redirect the child in a way that is related to his/her own motives or interest whenever possible.
7. The effectiveness of a suggestion may depend largely on its timing.
8. Avoid making models in any art medium for the children to copy.
9. Give the child the minimum of help in order that s/he may have the maximum chance to grow in independence, but give the help the child needs.
10. Make your suggestions effective by reinforcing them when necessary.

11. Forestalling is the most effective way of handling problems. Learn to foresee and prevent rather than mop-up after a difficulty.
12. When limits are necessary, they should be clearly defined and constantly maintained.
13. Be alert to the total situation. Use the most strategic positions for supervising.
14. The health and safety of the children are a primary concern at all times.
15. Enjoy the children!

Thoughts on Caring for Infants

Non-mobile infants absorb and organize a great deal of information about the world around them, so adults should talk and sing with them about what is happening and bring them objects to observe and manipulate.

At times it is also important to carry infants around the inside and outside of Knee High to show them interesting events and people. Also, they need comfort or intimacy. Adults should respond immediately to infants' cries of distress.

Feeding - Each baby has special ways of being fed and eating his/her food (or not eating it). A strong effort should be made to adhere to the suggestions of their parents, in how and how much to feed them. Ways of feeding of change from month to month and parents should bring up their special concerns at each monthly meeting.

Baby supervision - all children need supervision, particularly the little ones who are more vulnerable to the energetic older children who play around or with them. Someone, at any given time needs to keep a special eye on the babies. Delegate a baby person at any given time. Toddlers starting to walk need to be watched as well for what they might get into/onto.

Thoughts on Caring for Toddlers

Kids at this age are practicing newly acquired skills and experiencing feelings of autonomy and success. Adults should give kids space, time, and encouragement to succeed at new skills. Patience is

essential as toddlers struggle to do something, such as put on a sweater, open a lid to a container in their lunch box, etc.

Also, this is the stage where kids are really into imitating adult actions, such as sweeping, pouring juice into a cup, helping to take care of the little babies. Feel free to let kids help you do something if they show interest and give them positive feedback in their attempts.

Adults should still remain close, giving attention and physical comfort as needed. Kids at this age have conflicting feelings and emotions of wanting to be independent at times and dependent at other times.

Language is exploding at this age. Kids are experimenting with new words all of the time. Sometimes the language of a toddler will sound like she/he has been spending time in another country. Kids need encouragement and positive feedback to their language. Never correct speech, but it is very important to repeat what they say. If you know what they are trying to say, you can repeat the word correctly, because this is what they think they are saying. Just don't let them know that you think they said it wrong. If you do not know what they are trying to say, give reinforcement with smiles and eye contact. They can get very frustrated when they are trying to say something that you don't understand, so sometimes asking them questions about what they are saying helps communication.

Toddlers are also developing social skills. They are not yet able to understand the concept of sharing and should not be expected to be willing to share. Taking turns is a much better way to handle disputes when two children want to play with the same thing. You can suggest to the first-comer that they give the second-comer a turn when they are finished. Think of something else that one of the kids might be interested in playing with. Of course, if we have a duplicate toy (and we have lots!), get the duplicate for the second child.

Children should never be rushed and schedules should be flexible enough to take advantage of impromptu experiences. Attempt to balance active and quiet activity throughout the day.