

# Relief Nursery

*Outreach Program*

## Parent Handbook



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# Table of Contents

Page

---

<a href="#">Welcome to the Outreach Program</a> .....	4
<a href="#">Hours of Operation and Closure Dates</a> .....	4
<a href="#">Questions or Concerns?</a> .....	4
<a href="#">Additional Resources</a> .....	4
<b>Support for You Family</b>	
<a href="#">Home Visits</a> .....	5
<a href="#">Support Services</a> .....	5
<a href="#">Parent Education</a> .....	5
<a href="#">Developmental Screenings and Special Education</a> .....	6
<a href="#">Counseling Services</a> .....	6
<a href="#">Substance Use Disorder Recovery</a> .....	6
<a href="#">Confidentiality</a> .....	6
<b>Respite</b>	
<a href="#">Start the Day Right</a> .....	7
<a href="#">School Bus Transportation</a> .....	7
<a href="#">Mealtime</a> .....	8
<a href="#">Toileting / Diapering</a> .....	8
<a href="#">The End of the Day</a> .....	8
<a href="#">Curriculum</a> .....	9
<a href="#">Screen Time and Electronic Toys</a> .....	9
<a href="#">Social Emotional Learning</a> .....	9
<a href="#">Art Activities</a> .....	10
<a href="#">Outside Time</a> .....	10
<a href="#">Guidance and Discipline</a> .....	10
<a href="#">Who will be in the Classroom?</a> .....	11
<a href="#">Open Door Policy / Classroom Visits</a> .....	11
<a href="#">Policy Regarding Background Checks</a> .....	11



# Table of Contents

Page

## Health and Safety

<a href="#">Hand Washing and Sanitizing</a> .....	11
<a href="#">Child Illness</a> .....	12
<a href="#">Notification of Communicable Diseases</a> .....	12
<a href="#">Sunscreen</a> .....	12
<a href="#">Water Safety</a> .....	13
<a href="#">Pesticides and Toxic Substances</a> .....	13
<a href="#">Children with Special Health Needs</a> .....	13
<a href="#">Head Lice</a> .....	13
<a href="#">Administering Medication</a> .....	13
<a href="#">Allergy Care Plan</a> .....	13
<a href="#">Child Injury</a> .....	14
<a href="#">Emergency Plan</a> .....	14
<a href="#">Closures Due to Weather</a> .....	14
<a href="#">Mandatory Reporting</a> .....	14
<a href="#">Safe Sleep Practices</a> .....	15
<a href="#">Staff Training Regarding Safety</a> .....	15

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## Welcome to the Outreach Program

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Relief Nursery's Outreach Program provides home visiting support for families and enriching classroom experiences for young children.

**We look forward to getting to know your family!**

This handbook contains important information about our program. Please reach out to your home visitor if you have any questions.



## Hours of Operation and Closure Dates

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Relief Nursery's Outreach Program runs year-round. The center closes for five weeks during the year in addition to holidays and teacher workdays.

**You will be provided a list of our closure dates.**

Respite is 9am-12pm as scheduled with your home visitor.

## Questions or Concerns?

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At Relief Nursery, we love to hear your feedback. If our program feels helpful, let us know! If you have questions or concerns, please reach out!

## Additional Resources

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Department of Early Learning and Care regulations for Certified Child Care Centers:  
<https://www.oregon.gov/delc/providers/Pages/child-care-rules.aspx>

Request Relief Nursery's compliance history by calling 1-800-556-6616 or visit:  
<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/05584b21689d4f8eb55fa6399277e232>

To file a complaint with the Department of Early Learning and Care call 1-800-556-6616 or visit:  
<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/1dcb77ac5b3f4462b33ba49dcdd9e2ad>



## Section 1: Support for Your Family

### Home Visits

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As a parent, you are the most important person in your child's life. We believe that the best way to support children is to work closely with their whole family.

Monthly home visits are an opportunity for you and your home visitor to get to know each other and to talk about your child's development, your parenting questions, your family's goals, and any challenges you may be facing. Our staff can also help connect your family with other services and support that may meet your needs.



### Support Services

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In addition to home visits and respite, we offer many other kinds of supports for families. Ask your home visitor if you would like more information about any of these services:

- Clothes Closet and Food Pantry
- Family Events
- Parenting Education and Support
- Developmental Screenings and Special Education
- Child and Family Counseling
- Substance Use Disorder Recovery Support

### Parenting Education

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Parenting education classes are an opportunity to connect with other parents, learn about child development, and talk about everyday parenting challenges.

Topics may include building a strong connection with your child, supporting emotions, and learning new ways to respond to challenging behaviors.

Childcare, dinner, and limited transportation are available.



## **Developmental Screenings and Special Education Services**

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We work with families to complete developmental screenings that help us understand what skills your child has, what they are learning, and what their next steps may be.

These screenings look at areas such as language, movement, problem-solving, and social-emotional development.

If your child might benefit from additional support, we will talk with you about your options and work together to decide what support may be the best fit for your child.



## **Counseling Services**

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Counseling services are available at no cost for Relief Nursery children and families who have OHP. Our counselors use play therapy, which gives young children a safe way to express feelings, work through difficult experiences, and learn new skills.

If you are interested in counseling services or have concerns about your child, talk with your home visitor.

## **Substance Use Disorder Recovery Support**

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Peer support staff at Relief Nursery work one-on-one with parents who are in recovery or who are experiencing challenges with Substance Use Disorder. They can provide rides to recovery meetings and help people connect with other community services. We also offer a support group called Parents for Recovery. Childcare and a light dinner is included. Limited transportation assistance is available. If you are interested, ask your home visitor or classroom teacher to submit a referral to our recovery support services.

## **Confidentiality**

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At Relief Nursery, we respect your privacy. We keep the information you share with us private and confidential. We will not share information about your family without your written permission unless we are required by law (for example, responding to a subpoena or court order, or making a mandatory report).



## Section 2: Respite

### Start out Right

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For many children, respite may be their first experience in a classroom. Our goal is to help your child feel safe, cared for, and excited to learn. As children become familiar with their classroom, they build confidence and feel more comfortable trying new things.



- **Morning Routine** – Children feel more relaxed and confident when they know what to expect. Help your child develop a consistent routine to get ready for school.
- **Sign In** - Whether you are bringing your child to the classroom or helping them onto the Relief Nursery bus, please remember to sign your child in.
- **Saying Goodbye** – Sometimes children feel sad when saying goodbye to their parent. If your child has a hard time with this transition, your home visitor can work with you to find strategies that make saying goodbye easier.

**To help us plan for each day and keep your child's respite spot, please let your home visitor know as soon as possible if your child will be absent.**

### School Bus Transportation

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When possible, Relief Nursery provides transportation for children who would not be able to attend respite without it. Transportation is based on availability and cannot be guaranteed.

If your child rides a Relief Nursery bus, please have them ready at their scheduled pick-up time. If your child will be absent, such as when they are sick, please let us know as soon as possible so we can cancel transportation for the day.

Please let us know right away if your contact information, pick-up or drop-off location, or approved pick-up people change. We review each family's transportation needs every six months.



## Mealtime

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We serve two meals during respite time. We work to make meals a positive experience where children can practice skills, build relationships, and enjoy time together. Each month, you will receive a menu so you know what your child will be served.



We ask that children do not bring food from home unless there is a specific need. If you have questions about this, please talk with your home visitor.

**If your child has any food allergies, please let your home visitor know.**

## Toileting / Diapering

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Children are not required to be toilet trained in order to attend respite. We check children's diapers within 90 minutes of their arrival in the classroom. Children wearing diapers or pull-ups are changed immediately when they are wet or soiled.

Children who are learning to use the toilet are encouraged to practice with support from a teacher as needed.

Teachers always wear gloves when changing children or helping with toileting, and they sanitize changing tables after every use. Staff and children wash their hands every time after changing diapers or using the toilet.

No ointment will be used unless you have completed the Child Care Division non-prescription medication form.

**You do not need to send diapers to school with your child.  
Relief Nursery provides diapers during class time.**

## End of the Day

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When you pick your child up from school, please remember to sign your child out. If someone else will be picking up your child, please contact your home visitor ahead of time. Your child will only be released to you or someone you have approved in advance. Anyone picking up your child must show a photo I.D. at pick up.



## Section 2: Curriculum

### Curriculum

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Children learn best through play. Every day we create opportunities for children to explore, build friendships, solve problems, create art, move their bodies, enjoy time outside, and discover new ideas.

We send a monthly curriculum plan home to all families.



### Screen Time and Electronic Toys

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We do not use televisions, tablets, computers, or other screens in our classrooms. Instead, children spend their time playing, exploring, creating, talking, and learning with teachers and other children.

We also avoid electronic toys, such as LeapPads, because they can take away from hands-on play and social interaction. We believe children learn best through active play and real-life experiences.

### Social Emotional Learning

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At Relief Nursery, we help children build social-emotional skills, including:

- Making friends
- Asking for help
- Taking turns
- Sharing ideas
- Solving problems with others
- Naming and coping with feelings
- Showing kindness and empathy

**Strong social-emotional skills support children's success in kindergarten and beyond.**





## Art Activities

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In our classrooms, art is about the process, not the finished product. Children are encouraged to explore different materials, use their imaginations, and express their ideas.

**Art can be messy!**  
**Send your child to school in clothing that is okay to get dirty.**



## Outside Time

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Outdoor play is part of every respite session. Spending time outside helps children:

- Practice physical skills like running, climbing, jumping, and throwing
- Explore nature and the world around them
- Experiment with different materials
- Build confidence and a sense of adventure

**Please send your child to school dressed for the weather and in clothes that can get dirty.**

*If your child needs a warm coat, socks, or other clothing items, let your home visitor know.*



## Guidance and Discipline

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At Relief Nursery, we understand that children's behaviors are a way of communicating their needs and feelings. We work to prevent challenging behaviors by building relationships, supporting children's emotions, and helping them learn new skills.

When challenging behaviors happen, we first make sure everyone is safe. We try to understand what the child is communicating and what may have led to the behavior. We respond in a way that helps the child feel supported and learn new ways to handle challenges.

**We believe the purpose of discipline is to teach, not to punish.**

Relief Nursery staff will never spank, yell at, isolate, shame or humiliate children. We do not restrain children unless it is necessary to prevent immediate danger, such as stopping a child from running into the parking lot.



## Section 4: The Respite Team

### Who will be in the Classroom?

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Every respite session has a team of people that collaborates to make sure your child has the best possible experience.

The number of children in a classroom depends on the ages of the children.

- 6 weeks to 24 months – up to 6 children
- 24 - 36 months – up to 8 children
- 3 - 5 years – up to 11 children

### Open Door Policy / Classroom Visits

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YOU are part of the classroom team, too! You are welcome to drop in for a brief unannounced visit any time. If you would like to come in for a longer visit or join the classroom for a meal, please schedule this ahead of time with your home visitor.

### Policy Regarding Background Checks

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All employees and volunteers at Relief Nursery have completed a background check. Adults who have not completed a background check (such as other parents) and staff who are not qualified as teachers never have unsupervised access to children.

## Section 5: Health and Safety

### Hand Washing and Sanitizing

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Staff and children wash their hands:

- Before and after eating, preparing food, or giving medication
- After coughing, sneezing, blowing nose, wiping a child's nose
- After changing a diaper, using the bathroom, or assisting a child in the bathroom
- After coming in from outside, or handling garbage or items that might be contaminated with urine, fecal matter, saliva or mucus





## Child Illness

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Children must stay at home if they have any of the symptoms listed here.

Please notify your home visitor right away if you will be keeping your child home from respite.

If a child arrives at class with any of these symptoms, you will be notified to pick up your child.

If we cannot reach you, your emergency contact person will be contacted.

- Temperature over 100.4 during the last 24 hours
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Severe or persistent cough (even without a fever)
- Yellow color to skin or eyes
- Unidentified or contagious rash
- Open sores or wounds discharging bodily fluids
- Stiff neck and headache with one or more of the symptoms listed above
- Lethargy, decreased alertness, increased irritability, increased confusion, or behavior change that prevents participation in usual activities
- Difficulty breathing / wheezing
- Complaints of severe pain
- Eye lesions that are severe, weeping, or pus filled

## Notification of Communicable Diseases

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If anyone (including staff, children and parents) enters the classroom and is later found to have had a communicable disease (such as measles, chicken pox, etc.), a letter will be sent to all families whose children attended that day notifying them of possible exposure.

## Sunscreen

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With your signed permission, we will apply sunscreen to your child anytime they will be spending 30 minutes or more in strong sunlight.

We provide sunscreen with SPF of 15 or higher unless you prefer to send your own. If you send sunscreen, it will be labeled with your child's name and will be used only for your child.

Aerosol sunscreens are not allowed. We do not use sunscreen on children younger than six months. If your child's skin is broken or show signs of a possible allergic reaction, we will stop using the sunscreen and notify you.



## **Water Safety**

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Relief Nursery does not allow swimming pools, wading pools, or other water containers that could pose a risk to the safety of the children.

## **Pesticides and Toxic Substances**

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We do not use chemical pesticides, fertilizers, or other products that may be harmful to children. In order to maintain a pest-free environment, we may use natural alternatives.

## **Children with Special Health Needs**

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If your child has a health need that requires extra support from our staff, we will work with you and your child's health care team to make a plan. For example, a nurse may provide training to staff on how to give medication.

We welcome children with special health needs and will work to provide care that supports your child while maintaining a safe and supportive classroom environment for all children.

## **Administering Medication**

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We need your written permission before we can give your child any prescription or non-prescription medication, including cough syrup, pain relievers, diaper cream, and other products.

All medications must be labeled with your child's name, the medication name, dosage, directions for use and storage, and the prescribing doctor's name (if applicable). Prescription medications must also include the date they were filled. Medications are stored in a locked box out of children's reach.

## **Allergy Care Plan**

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If your child has an allergy, we will work with you to create a written Allergy Care Plan. The plan will include information about how to avoid the allergen, signs to watch for, and instructions for giving medication if needed. You will be notified right away if your child has an allergic reaction while in our care.



## **Head Lice**

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Children do not need to stay home because of head lice. With your permission, we can apply preventative spray, or if your child contracts lice, we can provide treatment. Talk with your home visitor if you would like more information about this.

## **Child Injury**

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You will be notified if your child is injured while in our care. Many minor injuries only need a hug, comfort, or a Band-Aid before children return to playing.

All classroom staff are trained in first aid and CPR, and each classroom has a fully stocked first aid kit. If your child has a serious injury, we will call 911 and contact you right away.

## **Emergency Plan**

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Relief Nursery practices regular emergency drills and has a plan for responding to emergencies such as fires, earthquakes, or other unsafe situations. If we need to evacuate, we will contact you and provide instructions for where to pick up your child.

See our Emergency Plan on our website for more details: <https://reliefnursery.org/families/>

## **Closure Due To Weather**

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In most cases, Relief Nursery follows the school district's decision to keep schools open or to close them. Please call the Relief Nursery front desk in the morning to confirm if there is a change in schedule due to weather.

## **Mandatory Reporting**

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Relief Nursery staff are legally required to report all concerns or disclosures of possible abuse and neglect to the Oregon Department of Human Services. As much as possible, we work closely with parents to provide support and develop positive steps forward if a report has been made. Our intention is never to create additional stress for families, but to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children. If your child will be coming to respite with a new injury, it is helpful if you let your home visitor know ahead of time what caused the injury.



## Safe Sleep Practices

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Our respite program does not have scheduled naptime, but children occasionally fall asleep during class. Sleeping children are always monitored. A teacher may hold a sleeping child or help them rest in a comfortable area of the classroom (for children over 12 months old).

We follow additional sleep safety practices for infants:

- Infants are placed on their backs to sleep in a Pack-n-Play. No items, such as blankets, pillows, or stuffed animals, are placed in the Pack-n-Play.
- Items such as hoods, hats, headbands, bibs, necklaces, and clothing with ties or drawstrings, are removed before an infant sleeps.
- We do not swaddle infants or children. Weighted blankets, weighted clothing, and other weighted items are not placed on sleeping infants.
- If an infant arrives asleep in a car seat, they will be moved to a Pack-n-Play right away.

## Staff Training regarding Safety

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Relief Nursery classroom staff are trained on the following topics:

- Adult, Child and Infant CPR and first aid
- Food safety practices
- Prevention and control of infectious diseases
- Proper handwashing procedures
- Safe sleep practices
- Protocols for responding to emergencies
- Preventing the transmission of blood-borne pathogens

Staff who transport children are trained in the following topics:

- Driver safety protocols
- Selecting the right car seat for a child
- Installing car seats
- Preventing and responding to emergencies while transporting children