

**Parent Handbook**

***Operational* *Policies and Procedures***

**for Giggles Drop-in Playcare**

***2025***

**406-897-5050**

**gigglesplaycare@gmail.com**(for correspondence with any staff member)

**gigglesmanagement@mail.com**(for preferred correspondence with only Ms Kristi)

**734 9th Ave W**

**Unit 8**

**Columbia Falls, MT 59912**

**Giggles Playcare Hours of Operation**

     Monday-Friday ~ 7:30am-6:00pm

Saturday ~ Closed (except for the last Saturday of each month – Open 10am-4pm)

Sunday ~ CLOSED

**Giggles Playcare Daily Schedule\***

**\*Although Giggles is technically a drop-in daycare, we are a *structured* facility with a schedule and routine that every child that is in care is expected to participate in, to the best of their ability. Please, keep this in mind when you plan to bring your child(ren) in for a visit, specifically our nap and meal/snack times.**

 7:30 ~ Open

 8:30 ~ Morning Snack

 10:00 ~ Morning activity

 11:30 ~ Lunch

 12:30-2:30(ish) ~ Quiet/Naptime

 3:30 ~ Afternoon Snack

 6:00 ~ Closing time (if all kids leave earlier in the day, we will close any time after 5:30)

*Schedule subject to minor adjustments on a day-to-day basis as needed*

**Illness Exclusion**

For the health and physical well-being of each child at Giggles Playcare, we will strictly adhere to the following illness exclusion criteria:

* Fever with a temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher
* Vomiting
* Constant/Excessive cough
* Swelling/Redness of the throat
* Extreme fatigue/out of character lethargy
* Red/draining/crusty eyes
* Head Lice
* Unusual Skin Rash
* Bumps on hands, feet and/or throat & mouth
* Uncontrollable diarrhea
* Mouth/face sores
* Diagnosis of any communicable disease
* If a child is suspected of having a contagious condition, a parent or authorized pick-up person must arrive ***as soon as possible***, not to exceed one hour after initial call.
* A child must be fever and symptom free, without use of medication, for a full **24-hour** period before they are allowed to return to Giggles.
* If a child who has been in our care recently is diagnosed with a contagious condition, please notify Giggles Playcare as soon as possible so we can alert other families that will be affected. **Strict confidentiality will be upheld in every case!**

***Giggles Playcare* 2025 Policies & Procedures**

This document is yours to keep as a reference. Please, share the necessary information with anyone who will be dropping-off and picking-up, so that the process can run smoothly.

***After*** going through the entire document, we ask that you sign the last page and hand it in

at the office, stating that you have fully read, understand, and agree to abide by

the conditions outlined in these pages.

 ***Registration***

* Giggles Playcare is a primarily **pre-booked** (then first-come/first-served for any remaining open spots), organized, structured, drop-off childcare facility for children ages 2 months to 5 years old. Children aged 6-7 who have siblings that are regularly in our care (or who are already established at Giggles from when they were little) are welcome to schedule care for after-school or school breaks, but be aware that we usually fill those spots quickly so make arrangements early. Our facility’s set-up & routine is definitely geared toward the youngest members in our community; older children are usually not interested in the toys & activities that we provide and will get understandably bored, so they will often attempt to entertain themselves in ways that are inappropriate or unsafe for the smaller children in our care. However, we know that sometimes things come up and we want to be there to support our families, so if a child is 8-10 and has younger siblings that come regularly (or again, if they are already established at Giggles from when they were little), they are welcome at Giggles if emergency **short-term care** is needed on an occasional basis.
* Before your child(ren)’s first visit to Giggles, a *parent or legal guardian* must fill out our Admission Form in its entirety. We ask for the completed form to be turned in, faxed, or emailed at least one business day prior to the first drop-off which allows us to process the paperwork after-hours, so we not be neglecting our primary responsibility of caring for the children. The form is available on our website, or a paper copy can be picked up at the office.
* All children should be up to date on vaccinations, and we need to have a copy of their records for our files. If a child is exempt from immunizations for any reason, we must have a notarized exemption form and a health statement from the child’s primary health care professional.
* If desired before your first visit, parents/guardians can be provided with an after-hours tour of the center with Ms Kristi. We encourage you to call or email and make an appointment if you are interested.

***Our Schedule***

* Although Giggles is technically a drop-in childcare facility, but we have modeled our business to more closely resemble a traditional daycare structure. We keep a consistent **daily schedule** and loosely organize all daily activities. This routine environment is what we have found works best for our staff, the families that we serve and the children in our care. As such, we require that all children be ready and able to participate in our set schedule, regardless of drop-off & pick-up time. For example, it they are here at meal/snack times, they will sit down with all the other kids and be offered food; if they miss an eating time, they will have to wait until the next scheduled time before they have food; if they come in during quiet/naptime, they must be willing & able to at least sit & rest quietly. We will always work with our families and the children’s individual needs as much as we can, but in fairness to all, we stick to our schedule as much as humanly possible.
* Giggles leadership and our team do everything in our power to ensure that this environment is organized, safe, clean, welcoming, positive and runs smoothly for the children, their families, and our staff. We also accommodate many different schedules, life-styles and families’ needs. Maintaining the balance between orderly and flexible is a huge undertaking, so it is of the utmost importance that our families do their part to allow us to keep things rolling properly. Ms Kristi makes the staff schedule on Friday/Saturdays for the coming week based on the anticipated attendance numbers and in/out times that we have on the schedule for the week. Our staff is awesome about being willing to be available to come in early if we get extra kids or to shorten their shift if we get call-outs/no-shows, but it is not fair (and sometimes not possible) to ask them to constantly rearrange their lives at the last minute. Consequently, we try to stick to the set staff schedule as much as possible. Often that means our bottom line suffers and the business takes the hit; we are willing to do that up to a point but also have to balance staying financially viable in order to keep the lights on & doors open! So, we always appreciate as much ***advance*** **notice** as possible to plan for what days and times children will be coming and going, as well as if a child isn’t going to be using a slot that they booked. Last minute call-outs and no shows (even early pick-ups/late drop-offs) often mean that we end up with more staff on the clock than we can cover financially.
* We *require* that families avoid dropping off and picking up in the hour between 11am-12n; the staff if very busy with the clean-up/diapers/potty-time/lunchtime/nap-prep routine so having kids come & go is extra disruptive during that time. It is also more of a difficult transition for the kids during that time if they have to leave when they want to eat with their friends or are required to come in and immediately go into the business of lunch/nap rather than have some time to play first.

***Drop-Off and Pick Up***

* Giggles staff reserves the right to refuse admittance at **any time** to **any *child* or *family*** at our sole discretion. The decision of the staff member(s) on duty is to be considered final at that time, but if you have any questions or concerns about the situation, feel free to address them with Ms Kristi in person or by phone or email.
* Before dropping your child off at Giggles, please be confident that your child is in good health and has not been recently exposed to a known communicable illness. If a staff member suspects a child may be ill, a wellness check may be conducted before the child is admitted into care, and if the staff member(s) on duty determines that the child is unwell, admittance will be denied until the child has recovered or a doctor’s note is provided.
* At drop off, we require that the child(ren), their clothing, and any items that they bring into the facility must be reasonably clean and sanitary.
* We **DO NOT** **allow non-staff adults or children who are not checked-in into the playroom** at any point while there are children in the facility.
* We ask that when multiple families are picking up or dropping off at the same time, please be courteous of one another and allow us to check in/out with one family entirely without interrupting.
* During peak drop-off/pick-up times we appreciate your patience and ask that you allow us to get kids checked in & out and payments processed on a first-come/first-served basis.
* At drop off, please, put a name tag on your child’s locker. When a child’s locker does not have a name tag, it makes it difficult for the Giggles team to do our job efficiently. The name tags are magnetic and located on the whiteboard above the single tall lockers. If your child is a regular visitor to Giggles, they will have a permanent one with their name on it; if they come more sporadically or have just started attending, there are blank ones and a dry erase marker to write their name.  At pick up time, the magnet goes back on the board so the staff can wipe down all the lockers in the evening.
	+ Please, choose **1 locker** for all children in a family unless more space is required to hold their necessary belongings. When siblings use different lockers, it leaves fewer available for other families, and it makes it harder for us to find the right lockers when we need to get things from them or put away a child’s belongings. More lockers used also means extra cleaning for the staff at the end of the day.
	+ The kids are welcome to take their own magnets on and off their lockers, but we ask that you not allow them to move around or play with the other magnets. Children should not be allowed to get into other family’s lockers or remove name tags from other lockers. Please, monitor your child(ren) while they are in the locker area and lobby at pick-up & drop-off.
* When you give us your pick-up time for the day, **do your best to arrive around that time** and if something unavoidable comes up, **please, CALL as soon as possible** to let us know that it will be *earlier* or *later*. If someone is going to be picking-up other than the person who dropped-off, make sure you are prepared to tell us when that person should arrive. We plan the daily schedule and make staffing & activity decisions based on when children are set to be picked up.
	+ If your child is still in the facility at closing time, we will begin calling the contacts on the account. At closing, a charge of $1 per child per minute past 6:00 will be added to your total for the day.
	+ If you are significantly later than your scheduled pick-up time, even if it is not yet closing time, we may reach out to get information as to why pick-up is late and determine how much longer we will have the child in care.
	+ If your child is not picked up within an hour after closing and we cannot get ahold of anyone, we are required to contact the Columbia Falls Police Department to file a report on an abandoned child.
	+ It is absolutely imperative that your account is always current with **accurate phone numbers, emergency contacts, email and mailing addresses.**
* Giggles staff WILL NOT release your child to anyone who is not on the authorized pickup list on your account. If it is the first time(s) that they have picked up your child, please, make sure they have their ID with them to show the staff member working at that time. Anyone on the authorized list may pick-up or drop-off a child at any time, so make sure that you always let us know if you want/need anyone removed from that list.
* Important notices and information will be posted on the wall board behind the lockers, on the front door & gate or windows in the locker area. **Please, keep an eye out for signage** to keep yourself up to date on things like upcoming closures, changes to cost and/or hours, upcoming special events, etc.  Also, be sure to check your child’s locker and take home any of your children’s artwork or flyers & notes from the staff.
* If we reach the maximum number of children (both pre-booked and currently on site) for the available staff, we will place our stand-up sign in front of our door stating that we are at capacity. Always feel free to call or step inside to see if we will have any spaces opening up soon, since we usually have children leaving at various times all throughout the day. If you have already booked your spot, come on in… it is saved for you!
* If you call in to see if we have space available and give the staff information about your intended drop-off & pick-up, please stick to the information given as closely as possible. If you ask if we have room for a child right away for a couple hours and then come in much later and/or expect to drop off multiple kids for several hours, that can change things.
* **We do allow families that need their children to be with us on a regular schedule to reserve a space on specific days & times and we will keep that spot available for them on as ongoing/long-standing basis.** If you have the same schedule every week, we will keep those days/times for you every week. If you have a rotating schedule, just let us know the days/times that you will need as soon as possible, and we will block them out for you. **You can also book space in advance** for an appointment, meeting, activity, etc. Again, we recommend booking the space as soon as you know when you will need care so that we can make sure you have a spot, and we will have the necessary staff available.
* If you have a space held for you and your child(ren) will not be attending that day, or will be coming in later than planned, or need to stay longer than your normal routine, we ask that you ***please*** let us know as much **in *advance*** as possible so that we can open the spot for another child or make necessary staffing adjustments. Any family that asked for reserved spaces and regularly does not attend at those times **will be removed** from our list and that space will be open to walk-ins. If a family regularly has space reserved for a certain day and needs care on a different day, we will always do our very best to accommodate but cannot guarantee care outside of your normal schedule.

***Payment***

* **Payment in full** is required at pick up - we do not carry balances on any account. If payment in full is not made by the end of our business day, a **$5 nonpayment fee** will be added to the balance due and an **additional $1** will be added for each business day until payment is completed. We will not check-in a child on any account with a balance owed unless prior arrangements have been made and authorized by Ms Kristi.
	+ We accept local checks from pre-authorized accounts only.
	+ We *cannot* take credit/debit card payments over the phone; the fees are much higher for a “card not present” payment.
	+ $20, $50 or $75 account credit may be purchased on our website at any time.
	+ We offer **10% additional credit** for all prepay amounts over $100 when paid with cash or check. Examples: When you put $100 cash down, you get $111.11 credit on your account. If you write a $225 check, you get $250 credit on your account.
	+ We also give our military families a 10% discount. A military discount and prepaid discount cannot be combined.
	+ The **sibling discount** is 15% off each additional child on the same account and always applies regardless of other discounts.
	+ **Prepay** amounts do not expire; as long as your account is active in the system and your child is eligible to attend Giggles, those funds will be available to use. **Prepaid dollars are non-refundable** once it goes into the system, however they can be transferred onto another account if you wish.
	+ **Cash is king!** We always appreciate cash payments since we lose a significant amount of revenue on fees with card payments. We will happily take cards anytime, but we do our best to keep our services as affordable as possible for our families and every little bit helps.

***Closures and Delays***

* Giggle closes for a very few holidays in the year: New Years Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving/Black Friday, Christmas Day, and sometimes a day on either side of a major holiday depending on the day of the week that it lands on. At the beginning of each calendar year, we will post a list and send out a copy of those closures to all our regular families. If you would like a copy of those at any time, feel free to ask and we will get you the list. We are *NOT* closed on MLK Day, President’s Day, Veterans Day, Good Friday, etc. We often close early on Christmas Eve and New Years Eve but will always communicate that to our families well ahead of time.
* We *VERY rarely* close for weather, staffing issues, or other unscheduled circumstances. If we are going to close outside of the above scheduled days or if we have to delay opening or close early for any reason, we will post a notice on our **Facebook page**.

We also regularly post reminders about special events, upcoming scheduled closures, changes in daily routine, or anything else that is important for our families to know. If you have Facebook, we ask that you please like and follow our page so that you can stay informed. If you ever have any questions about closures or delays, you can reach out by text, email or Facebook messenger and Ms Kristi will get the message whether we are open or not.

***Custody Arrangements***

* **Giggles Playcare is a neutral party in any custody arrangements and will not take sides.** (Except in cases involving legal protective orders, non-custodial biological parents, criminal activity, etc.) We cannot be expected to be responsible for regulating individual parenting plans or enforcing the financial responsibilities of each party and will not play the middle-man between legal guardians.
	+ Any individual that is active on the authorized list is allowed to pick-up/drop-off at any time. Giggles staff cannot deny a legal guardian access to their child.
	+ We are happy to record & track who makes each payment, but we will not be put in the middle of disagreements regarding the financial responsibility of each parent/guardian.
	+ If the child(ren) have guardians who split custody and we only have one parent/guardian on the account, that is the parent that we will be communicating with and who be responsible for all of the child(ren)’s arrangements. The legal guardian on the account will be the only person to whom we will give out the child’s information and they are responsible for communicating their arrangements with the other parent. We will not release a child to anyone (parent or otherwise) who is not on the admission form as an authorized pick-up person.
	+ When a child(ren) are enrolled at Giggles the account belongs to the child(ren). We cannot create multiple accounts for a child that is in our care, so if parents who have joint custody both want to have the child(ren) with us, both parents will need to be involved in the enrollment process and be listed on the paperwork.
	+ **All families that utilize our services are responsible for working out their pick-up plans, payments, and other arrangements before their child(ren) enter our care for the day.**

***Medication***

* Giggles staff will administer medication/ointment from its ORIGINAL CONTAINER with prior, written authorization. Medication forms will be filled out with each dose/application information. We will not ever administer medication more than or against the instructions of the medication’s dosage instructions or directions of the child’s medical professional.
	+ Parent authorization is not required to administer a medication to a child in a medical emergency to prevent the death or serious bodily harm of the child in our care, and Giggles staff will administer the medication as prescribed, directed and intended.
	+ All medication will be stored safely, appropriately, and out of reach of children.

***Behavior, Guidance & Discipline***

* Violence (including in play), physical or verbal bullying, rude or sexually inappropriate behavior **WILL NOT BE TOLERATED** from any child at Giggles.
	+ Children hitting, kicking, biting, punching, pushing, scratching, pinching, spitting, throwing things or using language that is mean, foul, disrespectful or inappropriate towards the staff or other children is unacceptable.
* In our facility we praise positive actions and instruct & remind the children how to effectively use appropriate behavior, proper manners and to play safely. In the event that positive reinforcement, instruction and reminders are not effective, we do use timeouts as a safety measure, an incentive to correct unacceptable behavior and as a teachable moment for the child. A copy of our complete “Time-Out Policy” is included at the end of this document.
* We will always do our best to help guide a child to learn to make proper choices through all the normal phases that children regularly go through (separation anxiety, biting/chewing, scratching, “mine”, throwing things, etc). If a particular behavior becomes a harmful habit or a child is displaying a more pronounced degree of an unsuitable action than a typical childhood learning curve, Ms Kristi will bring this to the parents’ attention and we will discuss how to proceed in the best way for all involved. If a parent or guardian ever has any concerns or questions about a behavior that a child is beginning to exhibit, feel free to discuss it with Ms Kristi at any time; she is always happy to support our families in any way. Also, if you do notice that your child is in a phase that we should be aware of, please let us know at drop-off so that we can keep an extra eye out; we will never judge you or your child, and we will do our best to help guide the child while keeping the other children safe & happy, too.
* Teachers at Giggles will always do our best to work with every child to ensure they have a comfortable and enjoyable time while they are in our care. It is perfectly normal and natural for a young child to have some degree of separation anxiety at drop-off. Usually, a child settles in happily before their guardian is even out of the parking lot, especially after a few visits. If a child cannot be comforted, distracted or positively engaged in some activity after a reasonable amount of time, parents or guardians will be contacted to come pick up the child. If a child is unaccustomed to being away from their own environment, we are always happy to work with the family in planning an effective strategy to get them adjusted & comfortable, so that they can be in care without undue stress for anyone. If you are concerned about how your child may react to being left at daycare, please reach out to Ms Kristi and together we will work up a plan to move forward in the best way for everyone.

***Naptime***

* All children (infants excluded) in care at Giggles during naptime (12/12:30 to 2/2:30) will be expected to participate in nap/quiet time.
* The kids who regularly sleep will have a cozy bed in a pack & play, and the ones who may or may not actually sleep will settle into a rocker or on a mat to watch a quiet show. Kids may bring in their own blankets/stuffies/pillow/etc if they have a special one that they like to cuddle with to rest. We have a stock of clean blankets here that they can use as needed. Our regular attendees can also choose to have a personal blanket that they keep here, and we will wash it with our laundry every weekend. If your child has allergies or sensitivities to certain soaps, detergents or fabric softeners, we ask that you send them with appropriate naptime bedding.
* We do allow for pick-up/drop-off during naptime as long as it does not cause an excessive disruption. If a child is coming in during that window, they need to be prepared & able to enter quietly and settle in to rest; we reserve the right to deny care if a child is not able to do so, either on a day-by-day basis or indefinitely. If your child is sleeping when you come to pick them up, you have the option for us to wake them or you can book them out later so they can finish their nap.
* We can encourage a child to go to sleep and do our best to help them fall asleep, but we cannot MAKE any child truly sleep for a specific amount of time. Nor can we prevent a child from falling asleep and we will not wake a sleeping child during naptime unless they are being picked up. Most children play hard while they are with us, so once naptime comes around and the lights go out, the music starts, and everyone settles down… they are usually asleep very quickly!

***Food & Drink***

* We serve lunch and two snacks during the day; the children eat all together at the tables/highchairs or seated on the color mat. Children are not allowed to have food out or eat in the facility except for the scheduled times. If your child is eating in the car on the way in, please have them finish their food/drink *before* entering the building.
* Snacks are included in the cost of care. Unless there is a specific dietary requirement for your child, we serve the same snack to each child from our pantry. Snacks at Giggles are kid friendly finger-foods/pouches that require minimal preparation/clean-up and can be eaten relatively quickly.
* You may send a packed lunch for your child or order our meal for an additional $4.50 charge. Giggles provided lunches always include a minimum of a main protein, a side carb, with fruits and/or vegetables. If you choose to send a lunch, we ask that it be easily served (not requiring cooking or assembling), not contain “treats”, is fresh/in good condition, it is developmentally appropriate for the child and is not overly messy. Giggles reserves the right to make the judgement call to not serve items from the packed lunch if it does not fit these criteria and an equal substitution for our lunch food may be made.
	+ All food and drinks are stored, prepared, and served in safe & sanitary conditions.
	+ Water is available all through the day. Children may bring water bottles from home, or we will provide them with one to use while they are with us. If you do choose to send a personal water bottle, please send *child-sized containers* with some sort of spill protection. Please, send your child **only water (or milk for babies)** to drink throughout the day; fruit juices, nutritional shakes or other healthy drinks may be included in their lunches to be consumed at the table. Soda and other sugary drinks are entirely prohibited.
	+ Please, refrain from sending your child in with To-Go drinks from coffee shops; Giggles staff has cleaned up *way* too many sticky, milky, staining messes within seconds of the child coming in with their ”coffee”.
* Parents of children with *serious* **food allergies** are required to provide written documentation of the allergy and its effect & treatment.  If your child is seriously allergic to nuts, gluten, dairy, or other common ingredients, it is recommended that you provide all food for them as our kitchen and menu items are not guaranteed to be free from traces of these products.
* We do not serve sweet treats except for holidays, birthdays, or other special occasions and then we give all the children the same thing (with the exception of those with special dietary needs).  **Any candy, cookies, pastries or confections sent with a child’s lunch will be sent back home with them.**
* We **DO NOT** allow children of any age to have gum in the facility at any time.

***Infants***

* Our infant care is for the precious little ones from 2-12 months old. Since the needs of babies are different and constantly changing, our infant program is slightly different than the older kids’ schedule and procedures.
* All Giggles staff members who are on duty care for all the children at the same time, however as enrollment & need increases and our setup allows, we are open to developing a more independent infant program. Depending on the ages and care requirements of each infant, how many other children are on premises, and our available staffing at the time, we are currently able to look after 2-4 babies at a time, so we do recommend setting up at least a bit of a schedule if possible and/or calling in to check availability and reserve your space several days prior to drop-in so we can be sure to have sufficient staff on hand.
	+ To be eligible for infant care, the baby must be willing & able to accept a bottle. Sufficient formula or other preferred milk must be provided for the amount of time the child will be in the facility. We do have several styles of bottles available as back-up, but ask that the child’s regular bottles which they are used to using be sent with them, especially for the truly little ones. If a baby is at Giggles frequently on a regular schedule, you are welcome to keep a bottle and a supply of formula/breast milk here that we will use for your child and will let you know when our stock is getting low.
	+ Any little one that we have at Giggles must be able to be independently entertained and will be allowed to self-soothe. If a baby is fussing, we will always make sure as quickly as possible that all of their needs are met and that the child does not physically have a problem (such as diaper change, bottle, nap, change of position/location, dropped toy, etc). Once all those things are checked, the baby is properly situated and if they are still fussy, they will be allowed to self-soothe in the presence and under the supervision of our staff. We cannot spare a staff member to constantly hold or solely focus on any single child of any age for extended periods of time; however, rest assured that they are not set aside and ignored either! We will always do our best to make sure every child is comfortable and happy, but everyone goes through rough patches now & then and we all get through them together.
	+ We have daily infant logs for feeding/sleeping/diapers that can be filled out while the baby is in our care. We usually only use them for the very littlest infants and if requested by the parents. If you would like a written record of your baby’s day at Giggles, let us know and we will happily keep track of that for you. If the day has been particularly busy and we have been scrambling, there will be some estimates on there as we will be filling them out from memory when we get a moment.

***Personal Belongings***

* Kids are always welcome to bring a **blanket, pillow, stuffed friend, or other comfort item** for naptime.
* We do *provisionally* allow children to bring personal belongings from home but if any item causes an issue at any time, we will remove it from the play area and put it away in the child’s locker.
	+ Giggles staff will do our best to keep track of each child’s things, but we are not responsible for belongings that are sent with a child if they get lost or broken while they are in the facility.
	+ We do not allow toys or games with multiple or small pieces in the playroom for obvious safety reasons.
	+ Personal devices (tablets, phones, iPods, handheld gaming machines, etc.) are not allowed in the playroom and must be kept in the child’s locker as we are unable to continuously monitor the way a child uses it. Watches that can be used to take photographs, video or audio recordings, or make phone calls are also not allowed to be worn as it presents an invasion of privacy to the other families in the facility.
	+ Chapstick, lip balm or other topical treatments, and any make-up items must be kept in the locker at all times. Money, rocks, stickers, writing implements, cords, purses/bags and other such items must also be kept in their locker.
	+ Any other item that the teachers deem dangerous, inappropriate, or potentially problematic for any reason, will not be allowed into the playroom at staff’s sole discretion.

***Clothing and Diapers***

* If your child is in diapers or pull-ups, please, make sure to bring plenty of changes for the amount of time the child will be here. For children that come regularly each week, you are welcome to leave a stock of diapers/pullups to keep here and we will let you know when we are getting low. We do have extra diapers on hand and if a child uses more than was sent for the day, we will add a **$1 charge** to your account per diaper that we provide. If we do not have a child’s diaper at the changing station when we go to change them, we may choose to substitute one of ours to save a trip across the room; in that case the account will never be charged!
* Children who have reached the age of 3 or 4 and are not at least mostly potty trained

will need to be working actively and quickly in that direction. Our changing station is not equipped for older kids and our teachers cannot change them on the floor for sanitary reasons.

* + We will always happily work with families with children who have special needs to accommodate and find a solution that works out well for everyone!
* Giggles staff is ready and able to assist our families with potty-training when their child(ren) are ready. We do our best to match the process that the family has in place at home to keep things consistent for the child. However, we cannot offer incentives (such as treats or stickers) for a child to go to the bathroom and we cannot take them into the bathroom in short intervals throughout the day or have them sit on the toilet for long periods of time waiting for them to go.
* In order for a child to be considered “Potty Trained” they must be completely independent in their bathroom activities; they need to be able to know when they need to go, be able to take themselves to the bathroom, do their business without regular assistance, readjust their own clothing, wash their hands and return to the group.
	+ Also, if your child is potty training or recently in underwear, please send plenty of fresh clothes. We ask that any child who is not yet *completely* potty trained to wear a pull-up rather than underwear as we have a lot of children to care for and constantly cleaning up accidents throughout the day takes our staff away from more positive interactions with the kids, and having exposed bodily fluids around toddlers and babies is a health & hygiene concern. Often a child will be ready for underwear at home before they are able to regulate their bodies while in daycare since there are so many distractions here and other things they would rather do. If a child shows that they are not ready to be in underwear while here, we reserve the right to put them in a pull-up at our own discretion.
* At Giggles all diapered children are checked/changed and potty-trainers are taken to the bathroom ***at the very least*** during every one of our diaper “runs”. These runs happen daily at the following times: after morning snack *(around 8:45)* – before lunchtime clean-up *(around 10:45)* – before nap *(around 12)* – after nap *(around 2/2:30)* – after snack time clean-up *(around 3:45)* – midway through the afternoon free play *(around 5:00)*. We also do our best to check diapers right as or shortly after the children come in, as they interact with us throughout the day, and shortly before they are scheduled to be picked up. No child will ever be knowingly left in a soiled diaper at any time; however, we do admit that there are days when things get busy and we may miss something for a *short* period of time. Many children are on a fairly consistent schedule of having a bowel movement a certain length of time after they wake up or eat; this trend does often help us to know when to check them, but it also frequently falls right at a regular pick-up time, so it is a never-ending frustration for us when we have checked a child every 5 minutes for a full half-hour before their parents come, and they go into the locker area and their diaper is soiled. We genuinely apologize for any time this happens but rest assured that we have done our best and that whenever it happens, we literally want to cry!
	+ If a child has a known diaper rash, we are always extra conscious to keep on top of checking them and anytime even a hint of a rash appears, we will always put a provided cream or our own diaper cream on the child to keep the skin protected. There are times in most children’s development such as when they are teething, trying new foods or a little bit unwell that kids can have extra caustic urine/feces that will flare a rash up instantly. Again, when a child is known to be in one of those times, we will be extra cautious but if it comes on them suddenly, there is no way we can guarantee that a child will never go home with an unexpected rash. At Giggles, we are completely confident that every staff member we employ genuinely cares about the children in our facility and will always do their absolute utmost to always provide them with the best quality of care!
* Accidents & food messes can happen to anyone at any time, so **at least** one *change of clothes* is recommended for **every child** in our care. We do have a small selection of spare clothes available. If a child needs to use an article of our clothing, a $10 per item charge will be added to your daily total, which will be refunded upon the return of the **clean** item to Giggles.
* Children are welcome to come to Giggles in their pajamas anytime… the staff will not judge you and will in fact probably wish to trade places with them! If you do send your child in PJs, expect that they will still be wearing the same thing when you pick them up. Unless a change of attire is required due to soiled garments, we do not have the extra time in the day to spend dressing the children in our care.
* Outdoor footwear is not allowed in the playroom; clean & dry shoes may be put in the child’s locker if desired but if they are wet, dirty or snowy please leave them out on the shoe tray to help keep the lockers clean. Slippers may be brought in for the child to wear if desired. Socks are optional.
* Any sweaters, socks, hats, etc that a child takes off during the course of the day will be put away in their locker.

***Extra Care Days***

* On the first Friday of each month, Giggles offers **“Date Night”** care from *6pm-9pm*. This is a fun evening for the kids and allows parents to get out and do something fun every now & then (or clean the house… or take a nap). Space is limited to 10 kids per night, and sign-up is required so we can plan supplies & staff. The cost is a flat $30 for the first child and $20 for each additional sibling; half-cost will be charged to your account for canceling your reservation unless the space is filled with another child. Cost includes Domino’s pizza and fruit for dinner. A child who is signed up for Date Night and has been in regular care on that day is welcome to stay through without being picked up; normal hourly rates will apply until 6:00, at which time the flat rate will be charged, and the hourly will cease to accrue. You are welcome to drop off early so you can get a head-start on your evening, the extra time will be charged at regular hourly rate. As enrollment increases so we are able to bring on more staff, and more people are interested in utilizing this service, we will be open to doing it more frequently; whether twice a month or every single Friday will depend on our situation… stay tuned!
* On the last Saturday of each month, we have **“Weekend Work Day”** care so that parents can do errands, clean up around home, or even do an adventure or self-care day outside of the regular work week. The set hours are *10am-4pm*, however on this day we do have more flexibility in the timing. If you have something to do that starts earlier or ends later, just let Ms Kristi know ahead of time and we will plan to be here as needed. We also hope to be able to make this a regular weekly thing as soon as we have the staff to make it work.

***Book Shop***

In our lobby, we have a small selection of children’s books available for sale. These are new books that we order wholesale, and they are available for our families to purchase at fantastic prices. We do our best to find quality content at the best value and we pass that discount on. The selection is regularly changing and rotating so check in often for great material. We especially love our seasonal, holiday and Montana content sections. You are welcome to make your selections and pay for them separately or you can have us add them to your bill for the day or use account credit to buy them. All book purchases are final. If you have a specific title or subject that you would like us to look for, feel free to suggest it to a staff member and we will check into it for you.

***Parental Code of Conduct***

Giggles staff members are hard-working, multitasking, flexible, exhausted rock-stars… We do our best to meet the varying needs of dozens of different families; we do everything required to care for the children… while answering phones, keeping records, handling money, making snacks & meals, being fulltime janitors & maintenance workers. We know that your children are the most important & precious thing in your lives and that being entrusted with their care is a huge honor and responsibility! The Giggles team enjoys an almost entirely positive relationship with the parents of the children in our care and we are very pleased with the little “micro-community” that we have built here. Since life is hard, unpredictable, stressful and chaotic (especially when small children are involved), we give grace to the parents and ask that the same grace is given our way. We all are allowed to have hard days, bad moods and personal struggles… that being understood, there are a few things that Ms Kristi is very adamant about.

* No adult is permitted to cuss at, threaten, belittle or disparage a Giggles employee for any reason. If you ever have any concern about something, please address it with Ms Kristi directly.
* All decisions made by Giggles staff for the safety, peace and smooth daily operation of our business, are to be considered final.
* Your child(ren) are your top priority; ***ALL*** of the children are our top priority.
* Exceptions to our rules and policies may be made on a case by case basis, but should not become expected.

***Exclusion***

The exclusion of a child from care is determined by the following criteria:

* Whether or not the child can/will participate in the activities and daily schedule of the facility.
* Whether or not the child requires more care than the staff can provide, without compromising the care needs for other children in the facility.
* Whether keeping the child in care will pose an increased risk to the other children and/or staff in the facility.

**Giggles Playcare reserves the right to exclude any family and/or child from the facility based on our sole discretion.**

This “Policies and Procedures” document is in no way to be considered an exhaustive list of every possible situation or a full explanation of our entire daily routine. Giggles reserves the right to make exceptions to these policies as needed on a case-by-case basis. Policies may be changed, refined or added to at any time and notifications in writing will be posted.

***If you ever have any questions, concerns or requests, please,***

***feel free to talk them over with Ms Kristi at any time!***

Thank you for choosing Giggles for your childcare needs and we appreciate the trust you are placing in us. Children are the most precious members of our community, and we do not take this responsibility lightly!

**Giggles Playcare Time-Out Policy**

 At Giggles we continually strive to positively guide the children to behave in a safe, considerate, polite and suitable manner. We always do our best to talk to them in a clear and age-appropriate way about how friends are expected to behave while at Giggles, why the rules are in place, and what can/will happen if they do not follow them. Kids are given multiple reminders when they are not making good choices and after we know that they have a firm understanding of their actions & the consequences, we will give them a final warning. If they continue in the action, they are removed from play and placed in some form of time-out (depending on the circumstance and the child). Older children are asked to sit down on the color-mat and be calm for a few minutes when in need of a minor behavior-reset, or to sit at the edge of the room away from the rest of the group if it is a more serious breach. For younger children that may not be able to sit independently for their thinking/calm-down/reset time or that may accidently harm themselves/others while they are emotional, we put them safely in a pack & play. After the child has finished any emotional response and is calm again, we always get down on their level and talk to them one-on-one; we to tr y to \*find out what led them to behaving in the way that they did, \*make sure they understand why they had to have a time-out, \*help them understand how their actions affect them, their friends and/or the teachers, and \*assist them in deciding what they could have done differently. We end the conversation by affirming that we will always care about the child, want what is best for them and send them off with a hug if the child wants it. If apologies are necessary, the child then goes to the affected person and mends the relationship as needed.

 At Giggles, behavioral correction measures must be equal and consistent among all the children for our program to function properly. It is understood that each child learns in their own way and that effective discipline often needs to differ between kids, which we do as much as we can; however we cannot change our fundamental process for each child/family preference. Also, rest assured that every child’s circumstances are considered at any given time (i.e. if a child is new to Giggles, is very young, is overtired, has special needs to be taken into account or is currently going through a hard time in their life) and discipline measures are adjusted accordingly to the best of our ability. As we get to know each individual child better, we can more effectively connect with them and usually avoid most issues becoming serious enough to warrant a time out. It is perfectly normal for every child to go through phases in their development where they will push boundaries and/or may try out new unacceptable behaviors that will require correction for a time until they understand that those actions are

not going to be allowed.

 If the issue(s) that earned the child a time-out is serious or is becoming a recurring behavior(s), then a “Time-Out Report” will be filled out and placed on/in the child’s locker. However, if the child is simply having a bit of an “off” day or the problem is momentary and it has been dealt with & moved on from, then we will usually let it go unless directly asked by the pick-up person.

**Rules for a safe, fun time**

**at Giggles**

**We do not use mean, rude, or bad words…**

**only say kind, true, polite, and appropriate things.**

**We keep our hands & feet to ourselves,**

**unless you are using them to be nice & helpful.**

**We take turns & share all toys, play equipment**

**and craft supplies…**

**we *do not* share cups, food, or clothes.**

**Only food and drinks go in our mouths…**

**NEVER toys, craft supplies or body parts.**

**We always stay at the table or in a highchair while we eat.**

**We use our walking feet in the building, watch where**

**we are going, and always be careful of our friends.**

**We use our inside voices, and don’t shout or yell.**

**We always use the climbing ramp to get into the playset…**

**the slide is for going down on our bottoms.**

**We use our manners to ask when we need something**

**and wait patiently until we get it.**

**The bathroom is not a place to play… we go in one at a time,**

**do what we need to do, wash our hands, and come out.**

**If you need help, call for a teacher!**

**Children 2 years and older do not go into the Baby Zone.**

I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ have **read, understand, and agree to *all*** of the updated policies and procedures that Giggles Playcare has provided above.

By signing, I acknowledge that I understand that the policies and procedures above are in place so that my child and all other children in attendance can get the care and attention they need while at Giggles Playcare. I also state that if I have any questions or concerns about something, I have had the opportunity to voice my opinion to the management.

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Child(ren) name(s)

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Parent/Guardian signature                                                                                          Date

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Parent/Guardian signature                                                                                          Date

 *Giggles Playcare 2025 Parent Handbook / Policies & Procedures document*