

Document # 1

HOPE FOSTER HOME – BABY CARE POLICY

Most of the babies whom we have with us have been rejected and would have had difficult and painful experiences. They are helpless and are totally dependant on us to love them and protect them from harm. At **ALL** times, be gentle with them and treat them as precious creations of God and let them know that they are loved. **No baby will be abused verbally or physically in any way. Anyone who treats a baby unkindly in any way will be dismissed immediately.**

All babies are individuals and although we try to fit them into our routine to make our work easier, please allow for their individual personalities so that they will grow as normal children in a loving home environment and not as “institutionalized” children. For example, some babies feed every 2 hours and some every 5 hours. Some sleep well and some don't. Some may be colicky and cry when being fed. Some need more physical contact and want to be held more than others. Get to know your babies well and give them the care that they need.

Before they are able to speak, their only way of communicating is by facial expressions and by crying. Crying means that they could be tired, hungry, sad, lonely, bored, frightened, in pain, needing physical contact, teething, too hot, too cold, or any combination of the above. They could also upset by loud noises or crowds of people. Be sensitive to their needs.

You may have children of your own or you may have been taught your own way of caring for babies. Some of the methods outlined here may be very different from what you have been taught before, but we ask you to follow our principles of baby care while you are working in this Home. This is very important.

Each baby will have her own schedule prepared by the Director. Please follow this schedule precisely. DO NOT CHANGE ANYTHING ON THE SCHEDULE WITHOUT THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE DIRECTOR. This is very important to the baby's well being. If there is anything on the schedule that you feel would be better for the baby, please discuss this with the Director first.

Basic Baby Care

A) Bathing and Dressing

- 1) Babies should be bathed or washed twice a day. Once in the morning and again in the evening before bedtime. Babies enjoy this time so give them time to play in their bathes with a few toys.
- 2) Make sure the water is at a comfortable temperature.
- 3) Have all the things you need (towel, face towel, shampoo etc.) ready before you put the baby in the water. **Never leave a baby alone in the bath, even for a few seconds.**
- 4) Be gentle when you wash them. Their skin is very tender. They usually don't like water on their faces. Just wash their faces gently with a wet face towel. Wash their hair daily.
- 5) Towels are not to be shared. Each baby will have 2 towels of its own. Hang the towels to dry when you are finished. Put the towels in the laundry to be washed at least once a week or before, if they are dirty.
- 6) When drying the babies, pat them dry rather than rubbing. Check their bodies for skin problems, diaper rash, rashes in the folds of their necks, armpits, and thighs. Apply diaper rash cream when necessary. If the rash is unusual or severe, let your supervisor know and she will inform the doctor.
- 7) Wash your hands before and after every diaper change
- 8) **Never leave the baby alone on the change table even for a few seconds.** They could turn over and fall off.
- 9) Always dress them in clean clothes and fresh diapers. If they have dirtied or wet their clothes during feeding, change them. Stained clothes are to be returned to the laundry to be treated with stain-remover. Dress them appropriately according to the weather. The room temperature in the Home should be at a constant, comfortable temperature, so there is no need to over-dress the babies in the Winter. If your babies' clothes are too small or stained, please inform the supervisor so that new clothes can be chosen for the baby. Do not go to the storeroom to change the clothes yourself.
- 10) For babies who are just learning to crawl or walk, do not put socks or shoes on them while they are indoors. Babies learn different sensations through the soles of their feet. You will deprive them of this learning experience if you keep their feet covered all the time.
- 11) Encourage toddlers to dress themselves, even allowing them to choose what they would like to wear as long as it is appropriate.

- 12) Babies' nails need to be cut or filed. This is best done while they are asleep. Their hair is to be kept neat and tidy.

B) Sleep Time

- 1) Most babies need to have a morning nap and an afternoon nap. Younger babies need more sleep than older ones. Assess babies' needs according to their age and put them to sleep as necessary.
- 2) Different babies have different rituals about going to sleep. Some will go to sleep as soon as they are put down, some may cry for a short time (1 to 2 minutes) before falling asleep. Don't leave your baby to cry till she is distressed. Some may need to be rocked. Some want a pacifier. Do whatever your baby needs to make their sleep time pleasurable.
- 3) Put them in their cribs to sleep and close the door to shut out noise. Check on them frequently. Some babies need to be patted back to sleep if they wake too soon. Babies are irritable if they do not get enough sleep.
- 4) Small babies should be put to sleep on their sides or on their backs, but if an older baby turns over to sleep on her tummy, that's also ok.
- 5) Remove all bibs or anything that may tighten around the babies' necks while they are asleep.
- 6) Very young babies do not need a pillow. Make sure that they are warm under their blankets but not too hot.
- 7) If their sheets are dirty or wet, change them. Fold their blankets and tidy their beds after they wake up.

C) Feeding

- 1) Your babies should be fed according to their requirements. Their Feeding Charts must be filled out after every feed.
- 2) Wash your hands well before you prepare their milk of cereal feeds.
- 3) The cook will prepare food for the older children. Encourage older children to feed themselves if they want to, even if they make a mess. Make sure the children wash their hands before they eat.
- 4) If the baby is not hungry, encourage but do not force feed. Do not feel guilty or discouraged if your baby does not finish her food.
- 5) Only bottle-fed babies will be allowed to be fed in the Playroom. All other children must be fed in the dining room. No drinks or food is allowed in the Playroom.
- 6) Solids should be started between 4 to 6 months of age. Start with a teaspoon of watery rice cereal, slowly adding more and thicker cereal as the baby learns to use her tongue to swallow. Add different cereals to her diet to get her used to different tastes.

- 7) Older babies should be encouraged to drink water and fruit juices especially in hot weather. Encourage older children to use a cup.
- 8) After feeding, clean the bottle and utensils. Return the bottles to the sterilizing containers. Dry the plates and cups and put them back in their places.
- 9) Throw away any uneaten food or milk.
- 10) Clean up the area of any food or liquids that may have been spilt around where you have been feeding. The area may be needed to feed another baby.

D) Play Time.

- 1) Playtime is very important in a child's development.
- 2) When they are not asleep, they should be in the playroom or in the outdoor playground if the weather permits. Toddlers may be allowed to play outside and get dirty, but must be washed after playtime and changed into clean clothes.
- 3) Make sure that they play with toys that are appropriate for their ages and not dangerous to them, e.g. small toys that can be put into their mouths and choke them should not be given to them.
- 4) Make sure the toys are clean.
- 5) Teach them to share toys and play together and put away their toys when they are finished.
- 6) If you have to leave your child for a few minutes, make sure someone else is watching your child for you.
- 7) If the weather is nice, take your children for walks even outside the compound.

Isolation Rooms

Care of the babies in the Isolation Rooms is under the direct supervision of the Doctor. The control of the spread of infection is very important in this area. Extra care must be taken with regards to cleanliness.

- 1) Babies and staff in this area are to be kept apart from the healthy babies to prevent the spread of infection. Other babies or staff who are not assigned to work in this area should not enter the isolation area when sick babies are there.
- 2) Staff must wear their over-garments in the isolation area and take them off when they leave, putting them back on when they re-enter.
- 3) Staff must wash their hands when entering and leaving the area. As well as other times as described when caring for babies.

- 4) Babies must remain in the isolation area until they are clear of infection. The Doctor will decide when the babies are well and can leave the Isolation room.