

**Beginning Steps**  
**Child Development Center**  
**100 N. Walnut St.**  
**Rochester, IL 62563**  
**(217) 498-8095**

**Beginning Steps** is located at 100 N. Walnut in Rochester, Illinois, 62563. Our phone number is (217) 498-8095.

Our purpose is to provide individualized, loving care for young children within an atmosphere of structure and learning that will encourage each child's physical and emotional growth. We will strive to provide a smooth transition from home to structured care by giving each child an abundance of affection, encouraging imagination, and providing understanding. It is our goal that every child's stay shall be an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

## **ENROLLMENT AND HOURS OF OPERATION**

**Beginning Steps** will offer services five days per week, Monday through Friday, from 6:30 a.m. until 5:30 p.m., excluding specified holidays. Children eligible for care must be at least six weeks old and may participate through age twelve. There is a maximum 10-hour per day attendance rule. For example, if your child arrives at 6:30 a.m., they must be picked up by 4:30 p.m. If your family is in need of more than 10 hours of care due to an emergency situation, you must call the office for a special circumstance approval. We accept all children regardless of disabilities or special needs.

Enrollment needs to be completed in person or on an appointment basis with the Director. A non-refundable enrollment fee of \$50 per child is required to process each application. A \$50 annual re-enrollment fee will be due the first Monday in January of each year after initial enrollment. Additionally, a non-refundable customer deposit for the final week of care is also required at the time of registration. All enrollment information, including a certified copy of your child's birth certificate, must be completed before scheduling a child for care.

A waiting list is established for each classroom when it reaches capacity. When positions become available, they will be offered to new clients in order of their status on the waiting list. A customer deposit will be required in order to secure a spot for a child. This deposit will be returned upon departure from the facility.

Upon referral of a new family to the center, by a family who is currently attending the center, there will be a \$50 referral credit applied to the referring family's account. The credit will be applied once the child(ren) of the new family begins attending the center.

**\*In the case of more than one child in the center, there will be a \$10 discount off the oldest child's fee.** The same policy is in effect for more than two children attending. The discount **does not** apply to children enrolled **part-time** or **school-age children** in the Summer Camp or Before/After school programs.

Infants I are defined as children 6 weeks to 9 months of age. Infants II are defined as children 9 months to 14 months of age. Toddlers are defined as children 15 months to 24 months of age.

Payment is expected on or before **Monday** of each week. Please remit your payment in the payment box located inside the entrance. Advise the Director whether payments will be remitted in weekly, bi-weekly or monthly installments. A \$10 late fee for Infants through Pre-K and a \$5 late fee for School Age will be assessed to any fees not received by Wednesday at the close of business. Continued failure to remit fees or failure to set up a payment plan if becoming more than two weeks delinquent in payments may result in dismissal from the center. Upon leaving the center, a 7% monthly interest charge will be applied to an account with an unpaid balance. **There will be a \$25 service charge for any check returned from the bank for any reason.** In the event that a delinquent account is turned over for collection, the parent or guardian responsible for the account will be required to pay any fees assessed by the agency and/or attorneys.

## **PART-TIME ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Children who are enrolled in part-time care at Beginning Steps may attend 3 full-time days per week, or 5 part-time days, up to five hours for each of those five days. If you choose for your child(ren) to attend 3 full-time days per week, a schedule of the days your child(ren) will be attending should be turned into the office. Additionally, part-time students cannot exchange days when their regular schedule includes a holiday or cancellation day. Part-time spots are limited and Beginning Steps will set a cap on the number of part-time spots available in each classroom. All parents who wish to enroll their child(ren) in part-time care must first get it approved by the director.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY**

All children and family information obtained by the center is confidential and will not be released to anyone outside of the center without prior written consent. In the case that a parent requests information of another child or parent, a letter must be sent to the office requesting the information. A consent form will be given to the other parent and must be completed and signed before any information will be released.

## **PLANNED MEANS OF COMMUNICATION**

Communication with parents regarding their child will be conducted on a daily basis with a teacher and /or Director.

## **NOTIFICATION, VACATION AND HOLIDAY CLOSINGS**

Monthly newsletters, parent handbooks, lunch menus, classroom themes etc... can all be downloaded and printed off from our website at [www.beginningstepsdaycare.com](http://www.beginningstepsdaycare.com). In addition, Beginning Steps uses AlertsMadeEasy.com to communicate important announcements with you. For instance, information such as closings due to snow or electrical outage, holiday closings, special Fridays, menu changes, and other event reminders can be easily relayed to you. In order to take advantage of this message service system, you must sign up on our website. Upon signing up, you will receive a confirmation e-mail showing that you have been added to our system. Additionally, you will receive a unique user-name and password so you can update your contact information or change your user preferences at your convenience.

When a child is enrolled in the center, that child is expected to be in attendance for the schedule agreed upon at the time of enrollment. If a child will not be attending on a certain day, notification is expected by 10:00 a.m. If we have not received a phone call stating your child will be here for lunch, he/she will be excluded from the count.

If your child will not be attending due to an illness or extended absence, please notify the center as soon as possible.

A written two-week notice must be submitted to the Director whenever a child is withdrawn from the center. Lack of notice will result in fees assessed at the regular rate. A vacation week may not be taken at this time.

After the first six months of attendance, one week of each twelve-month enrollment period may be taken as a vacation week for children enrolled in full time care. No fee for care is required. During this vacation, the child may not be in attendance. Any vacation or absent time taken beyond the vacation week shall be charged the regular full-time rate,

including holiday closings or closings due to weather/power outage. Children who are enrolled in part-time care at Beginning Steps **are not** eligible for a vacation week in which no fee is required. However, the office and the child(ren's) teacher should be notified anytime your child(ren) will not be in attendance. When taking a vacation week please notify the office **in writing two weeks in advance**. Failure to do so will result in fees charged at the regular rate for that week. Vacation weeks will not be approved for any family with an account in bad standing (i.e. behind on payments, etc.). If an account becomes delinquent after a vacation week is approved, payment for the vacation week will be required upon return to the center. If a vacation week is not used within a twelve-month time period, the vacation week will be forfeited.

The following holidays our center will be closed: **New Year's Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day, the Friday after Thanksgiving and Christmas Day**. There will be an early closing on Christmas Eve at 12:00p.m. and New Year's Eve at 4:00p.m. If a holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the center will observe the holiday the same day that the state observes it. Fees are assessed at the regular rates on holidays.

**Late Fees** are assessed for any child left at the center after 5:45. The fee is \$1 per minute per child. In the event that a child remains at the center after 5:45p.m., Beginning Steps Staff will try to contact the parents/guardians of the child via contact phone numbers provided in the child's file. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached, Beginning Steps Staff will then attempt to contact the individual listed as an emergency contact for the child. In the event that the emergency contact cannot be reached, attempts will be made to contact individuals on the child's pick-up list. Beginning Steps will continue care for the child and make every effort to contact one of these individuals before 6:15p.m. If by 6:15p.m., no one has been successfully contacted, Beginning Steps Staff may contact outside authorities, such as the child abuse hotline or police department.

In the event that Beginning Steps has to close due to an emergency such as, but not limited to, loss of electricity, loss of water, breakdown of the heating or cooling system, or inclement weather, childcare fees will still be assessed at the regular rate. If such closing takes place, it will be posted on our Facebook page and through Alerts Made Easy. Please sign up for Alerts Made Easy Notifications on our website at [www.beginningstepsdaycare.com](http://www.beginningstepsdaycare.com).

Beginning Steps reserves the right to close for a funeral in the event of a current or former staff members passing. Fees will be charged at the regular rate.

## **OPEN DOOR POLICY**

Beginning Steps is open to children of all faiths, beliefs and backgrounds. Consequently, no formal religious instruction shall be provided.

Parents are encouraged to attend the center and visit in the classrooms at any time. Parents and family members with a special interest that they feel would be of interest

to the children (i.e. cultural customs, special jobs, talents, etc.) are welcome to set up a time to share with the children. Parents and family members are welcome to visit and help during special events and parties. It is our desire to exceed the expectations and level of care that parents expect. However, Beginning Steps administration and staff will not tolerate threatening mannerisms, inappropriate comments, verbal abuse or profanity from any parents. If any of these behaviors occur, Beginning Steps will contact the proper authorities and take the necessary steps to prevent future occurrences of inappropriate behavior.

## **CLOTHING AND SUPPLIES**

Children should wear clothing that is comfortable, washable, and suitable for all activities, including sitting on the floor and outdoor play. Outdoor clothing will be kept in the child's individual storage area and should be clearly marked with the child's name. Sandals, slip on shoes and open toed shoes of any kind may not be worn. It is very difficult for the children to play in them inside and outside. It creates a tripping/falling hazard. Please be aware of weather conditions and dress children accordingly since outdoor play is a part of each day's schedule. If a child has an accident during the day, we are not allowed to wash the clothing out. Soiled clothing will be placed in a plastic bag and sent home with the child. If your child runs out of diapers and/or wipes, Beginning Steps has a spare supply that will be utilized. All diapers/wipes used from this supply will be charged to your account at \$1 per diaper and \$5 per package of wipes.

### **Infant Supplies (Please label all items!)**

- Ointment and/or powder if desired
- An adequate supply of disposable diapers and wipes  
(Bag/box of diapers and box of wipes)
- An adequate supply of bottles
- At least two complete changes of clothing (shirt, pants, and socks)

### **Toddler and Preschooler Supplies**

- An adequate supply of disposable diapers and wipes, if necessary  
(Bag/box of diapers and box of wipes)
- One blanket
- One pillow (two's through five's)
- One complete change of clothing (shirt, pants, socks, and underwear)
- A doll or stuffed animal for naptime (if needed)
- Backpack (Three's, Four's, and Five's)

Please do not let your child bring toys from home. Toys that are brought from home will be kept in your child's cubby. There are special show and share days in the Two's,

Three's, Four's and Five's in which your child may choose to show a special toy(s) from home. However, guns, swords, or any other violent toy play is prohibited. Beginning Steps cannot be held responsible for lost or broken toys.

## **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE**

Every child must be signed in and out each day. This is important in case of a fire or other emergency that would require evacuation of the building. It helps ensure that all children in attendance are accounted for immediately.

If you know in advance that someone else will be picking up your child, please notify your child's teacher and the Director. If an emergency situation develops, you should call and inform the Director of pick-up arrangements for your child. **Children will not be released to anyone not included on the Consent Form under "Child Pick-Up" and will not be released to anyone other than a parent without notification.** A driver's license or photo I.D must be submitted to the Director or teacher if someone other than the parent will be picking up the child.

## **FOOD PROGRAM**

The center offers nutritious meals and snacks. The children are served breakfast at 8:20 a.m. Lunch is served at 11:15 for Infants and Toddlers and 11:30 a.m. for everyone else. An afternoon snack is provided at 3:00 p.m. A copy of the monthly menus will be displayed for the parent's viewing. Only formula, breast milk, water or milk may be served from a bottle. Juices must be served from a sippy cup. Please do not bring in food from home as the children will not be allowed to eat breakfast or snack in front of other children. Treats for birthdays and special holidays must be purchased from a store and arrive unopened. We cannot distribute homemade treats.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Beginning Steps will notify parents or guardians of upcoming field trips by letter. Each parent must sign a field trip permission slip before the children would be allowed to attend.

## **INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT**

Beginning Steps currently implements an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program. IPM is a program involving the cooperation between day care staff and pest control personnel or other specialist to use a variety of non-chemical methods as well as pesticides, when needed, to reduce pest infestations to acceptable levels and to minimize children's exposure to pesticides.

## MEDICAL INFORMATION

Beginning Steps considers the health and safety of the children a top priority. In order to assure that the children are as healthy as possible, DCFS requires that each child have a physical within six months of admission to the center. The physical is considered valid for up to two years, but immunization records must be kept current.

**Prescription Medications** must be in its original packaging, labeled with the child's name, directions for administering the medication, the date, the physician's name, the prescription number and the pharmacy where obtained. If a prescription medication is not labeled with your child's name, directions for administering the medication, the date and the physician's name, you must provide a physician's order that states the above information in order to give permission to administer the medication. Prescription medication can be administered **ONLY** after the receipt of appropriate release from the parents. All **non-prescription medication** must be labeled with the child's name and in its original container. Non-prescription medicines shall be administered in a manner not to exceed the package instructions. Use of non-prescription medications cannot exceed the recommended number of days as stated on the package without written verification from a physician. If the age of your child or the dosage is not indicated, or contradicts the package instructions, you must have a physician's order for staff to administer the medication. We can administer Tylenol or Motrin as ordered on the label. We will only administer these products according to your child's last physical weight on file. It is very important to turn in your child's most current physical form. We cannot give a pre-made formula bottle, cup, or juice bottle with medicine in it to a child.

If your child has an **allergy**, you must notify the center in writing. The information will be placed in the child's file to ensure dietary appropriateness as well as to aid in planning for daily activities.

## SICK CHILD GUIDELINES

A child suspected of having or diagnosed as having a reportable infectious, contagious, or communicable disease for which isolation is required by the Illinois Department of Public Health's General Procedures for the Control of Communicable Diseases shall be excluded from the center. Children shall be screened upon arrival daily for any obvious signs of illness. If symptoms of illness are present, the childcare staff shall determine whether they are able to care for the child safely, based on the apparent degree of illness, other children present, and facilities available to care for the ill child. We are requesting that parents use the following guidelines to determine if their child is sick and should not attend.

\*Children with diarrhea and those with a rash combined with fever (oral temperature of 101 F or higher or under the arm temperature of 100 F or higher) shall not

be admitted to the day care center while those symptoms persist, and shall be removed as soon as possible should these symptoms develop while the child is in care.

\*Children need not be excluded for a minor illness unless any of the following exists, in which case exclusion from the day care center is required:

- Fever over 101 F orally or 100 F under the arm
- Illness which prevents the child from participating comfortably in program activities.
- Illness which calls for greater care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children.
- Rash combined with fever over 101 F (oral)
- Unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing or other signs of possible severe illness
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting in the previous 24 hours, unless the vomiting is determined by a physician to be due to a non-communicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration.
- Mouth sores associated with the child's inability to control his or her saliva, until the child's physician or the local health department states that the child is noninfectious.
- Rash with fever or behavior change, unless physician has determined the illness to be non-communicable.
- Purulent conjunctivitis (pink eye), until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.
- Strep throat (streptococcal pharyngitis), until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated and until the child has been without fever for 24 hours.
- Head lice, until the morning after the first treatment.

In such instances, a note from your child's physician is required if the child is to return to the center within 24 hours. If a child exhibits any of the above symptoms, a parent will be contacted to pick the child up within one hour. If the staff is unable to reach a parent, a person on the authorized pick up list will be contacted. In the case of contagious diseases, Beginning Steps follows the guidelines established by Sangamon County Department of Public Health and DCFS.

It will be Beginning Steps' policy to have at least one staff member certified in CPR and First Aid on site at all times. In the event of an emergency, first aid will be administered by the most qualified staff member until the arrival of emergency personnel. 9-1-1 will be alerted immediately and life support, if necessary, will be maintained until emergency personnel take over. Parents will be notified as soon as possible, ideally as soon as the emergency situation is stabilized. If hospital transport is needed, the information about parental preferences can be obtained from the child's records. In the case of injury requiring hospital transport, the parents will be notified as soon as the emergency situation is stabilized. If hospital transportation is not required, then the child will be under observation until the parent or a designated surrogate arrives to transport the child



to his/her private physician. In the case of minor injuries, the parent will be notified and a joint decision will be made about the appropriateness of the child remaining for the rest of the day. Children that attend Beginning Steps Child Development Center are covered by liability insurance.

## **GUIDANCE & DISCIPLINE: PREVENTION/REDIRECTION**

At Beginning Steps Child Development Center, our goal is to prevent as many discipline problems as possible. This will be accomplished through the use of prevention/redirection techniques. In some cases, the center will work with the parents to develop a plan best suited for their child.

### **Prevention**

There are numerous ways in which to maintain a child's interest level while keeping their frustration level low, thus encouraging positive behavior. For example, establishing a positive relationship with each child, talking to the children in a polite and respectful manner, praising good behavior, being clear and consistent about expectations and notifying children in advance about transitions are some of the ways in which our staff uses prevention to help avoid discipline problems.

### **Redirection**

Expectations and limits shall be clear and understandable to the child and will be consistently enforced and explained to the child. Some techniques used for redirection include, but are not limited to, veering the child away from the undesirable behavior, redirecting him/her toward another activity, and helping the child to engage in an alternate activity.

Beginning Steps will take documented steps to address the child's behavior and other needs in order to keep the child enrolled in care. If all documented steps have been exhausted without improvement, it may become necessary to work with the family on a 'planned transition' to a more appropriate setting, where the child's unique needs can be better met.

## CURRICULUM

In accordance with Beginning Steps philosophy, we strive to ensure that each child is shown individualized, loving care within an atmosphere of structure and learning that will encourage physical, cognitive, social and emotional growth. At Beginning Steps, we use The Creative Curriculum, which gives us a blueprint for planning and implementing a developmentally appropriate program. The Creative Curriculum allows each teacher to personalize the curriculum by incorporating their individual interests, teaching style, and information about the children and their families into the curriculum.

Our curriculum identifies goals in all four areas of development:

- **Social Development:** To help children feel comfortable in a classroom environment, trust their new environment, make friends, and feel they are a part of the group.
- **Emotional Development:** To help children experience pride and self-confidence, develop independence and self-control, and have a positive attitude toward life.
- **Cognitive Development:** To help children become confident learners by letting them try out their own ideas and experience success, and by helping them acquire learning skills such as the ability to solve problems, ask questions, and use words to describe their ideas, observations, and feelings.
- **Physical Development:** To help children increase their fine and gross motor skills and feel confident about what their bodies can do.

## ASSESSMENT & SCREENING

Beginning Steps utilizes the “Teaching Strategies Gold” assessment tool and the Brigance screening tool to ensure that we are meeting the needs of the children in our care and to keep teachers and families informed about the children’s developmental progress. These screenings and assessments will take place twice per year. Upon receiving your child’s results, parents will be given an opportunity to sign up for a conference with their child’s teacher(s) to review results and discuss questions or concerns. Additional information regarding Brigance Screening and Teaching Strategies GOLD Assessment is available in the office.

## **BOARD MEMBERS**

President/Secretary/Treasurer -Mary Lou Roszhart

Business Address: 3327 Club Drive  
Miramar Beach, FL 32550  
Phone: (217) 725-1752

Vice-President- Jennifer Frey

Business Address: 100 N. Walnut Street  
Rochester, IL 62563  
Phone: (217) 498-8095

**PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THIS FORM TO THE OFFICE. THANK YOU!**

I/We have read and completely understand all information included in the Beginning Steps' Parent Handbook.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

I/We have read and completely understand the Beginning Steps' Guidance and Discipline Policy.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

I/We have read and completely understand the Beginning Steps' Sick Child Guidelines.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

I/We have read and completely understand the Beginning Steps' Late Pick-up Policy.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

I/We agree that our child's picture may be taken by staff or parents during parties or special projects.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

I/We give Beginning Steps' staff my consent to apply topical products (diaper cream, sunscreen, lotion, etc.) to my child when necessary.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

I/We do **not** wish to be notified when the facility will receive a pesticide application.

I/We do wish to be notified when the facility will receive a pesticide application.