



So you want to know more about...

# Naptime

## The Nitty Gritty

At Gretchen's House, we provide all children in full-day care the opportunity to rest every day. This keeps us in compliance with the State of Michigan Childcare Licensing Regulations, which are listed on the reverse side of this flyer. In addition, we expect most children three years old and younger to take at least one nap of an hour or more in length. This is based on the standards set forth by the American Academy of Pediatrics in Caring for Your Baby and Child, and on our extensive experience with children participating in our very active program.

### Expectations for Rest Needs

- All full day programs will have a designated rest period: approximately one to two hours for toddlers and younger preschoolers (three year-olds); approximately 1 hour for older preschoolers (four and five year-olds). These time frames may

vary based on the needs of the majority of children in each program.

- Children who are not sleeping after approximately one-half hour rest may do quiet activities on their mats or in a separate area of the room, if possible.
- When several children are not sleeping, a staff member will take them to another area of the center.

### The Physical Nap Environment

- Infants (approximately twelve months old and younger) sleep on demand throughout the day.
- **Infants** will be put to sleep on their **backs**, unless physicians advise staff otherwise in writing.
- Infants may be rocked to sleep in a chair or swing but will be moved to a crib once asleep.
- Infant cribs may not have bumper pads, per our FIA Licensing Consultant.

- Any mobiles used on infant cribs will be removed once the child can pull to a stand.
- Toddlers and preschoolers rest following lunch. Younger toddlers who are still making the transition to one longer nap may go to sleep earlier.
- Toddlers and preschoolers may bring small, firm pillows for nap if parents so choose. These are usually marketed as "travel pillows." Parents should provide a blanket from home which will be sent home for washing as needed.
- Sheets or other bedding provided by the center will be washed once weekly or whenever soiled.
- Children will not share bedding.
- To help children relax, teachers may pat or rub their backs.
- During nap or rest time, the lights will be dimmed and soft music or story tapes may be playing.

## Quiet Time Activity Ideas

Remember that kids don't need to be **doing** something all the time. Watching television or playing video games is actually not a restful activity because it requires children to pay close attention. Sometimes kids just need time to think about things! When your child needs rest, try:

- Reading books
- Coloring or drawing
- Playing with Legos
- Listening to books on tape
- Listening to quiet music

### Further reading

- *Solve Your Child's Sleep Problems*, by Richard Ferber
- *Nighttime Parenting*, by Dr. William Sears

# State of Michigan Childcare Licensing Provisions

## Rule 106

- A center shall provide each child under school age in attendance for 5 or more continuous hours a day with an opportunity to rest.
- A center shall provide children less than 3 years of age with an opportunity to rest regardless of the number of hours in care
- A center shall permit children under 12 months of age to eat and sleep on demand.

## Rule 109

- A center shall provide each child with a cot constructed of a fabric or plastic which is easily cleanable.
- The bedding shall be for the exclusive use of the

child between launderings.

- The cot and bedding shall be kept in a clean and sanitary condition.
- Cots shall be positioned in a manner that there is free and direct means of egress.
- “Cot” may also mean a bed or other similar sleeping equipment.

## Rule 204

- Children less than 12 months of age shall sleep in cribs or beds with side rails and firm mattresses. Children 12 months of age and older shall sleep in cribs, beds, or cots. Each sleeping device shall have a washable, waterproof covering and appropriate bedding.

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Why won't you keep my child awake during nap time if I ask you to?** Keeping tired kids awake makes them miserable and unable to enjoy the rest of their day, including the time after you pick them up. Even though it may be possible to keep a tired child awake at home, we provide group care and don't have the staff to entertain children one-on-one so they won't nap. More importantly, interfering with children's natural sleep/wake cycles has ramifications for their whole 24-hour cycle. An overtired child will tend to have a harder time relaxing at bedtime than one who has gotten a brief rest in the middle of the day. Rest assured that we cannot “force” a child who is not tired to sleep...it just doesn't happen.

### **My child naps well at the center but not at home.**

**Any suggestions?** Find out how your child goes to sleep at the center, and see if you can approximate those conditions: timing, background music, light level, or calm-down time before nap can all make a difference. It may also be the case that your child isn't getting the same amount of activity on her home days. Kids don't need to play full steam every single day but try getting out in the morning for more cardiovascular activity: walking, swinging, or biking. If your child does well without a nap on home days, that's fine, too.

**My child is so irritable when I pick him up at the end of the day. Can you let him nap longer?** We provide ample time for each age group to rest based on average sleep needs. If a child naps excessively during

the day, there may be problems with the length or quality of his nighttime sleep. Most kids, like adults, are mildly irritable during the day-to-evening transition. A light snack at pick-up time (a piece of fruit or a couple of crackers) can provide a pick-me-up for children and parents without interfering with dinner. A glass of water also helps!

**My child won't go to sleep at night because he naps at the center.** While it's easy to reach the conclusion that eliminating naps will make bedtime easier, it may not be the case and might even make it harder! Here are some other variables to explore: 1. Is he getting enough sleep at night? 2. What is your bedtime routine like? If it's too long and involved, your child may be stretching out the process to engage your attention. 3. Is he having any caffeine during the day? If you still need help, we'd be happy to work with you on establishing a good daily rhythm.

**How do you determine when children are ready to give up naps?** We look at their disposition before and after naptime. If they are clingy, whiney, irritable, or aggressive, those are cues that they are not getting something they need. If their naps have decreased dramatically in length, their nighttime sleep is reasonable, and they appear comfortable in the program throughout the day, it may be time. Keep in mind that life changes: a move, a loss, or a new sibling, can change sleep and eating habits temporarily.