

Plan on Sick Days...They Will Happen!

It is inevitable that working parents with a young child will sooner or later have to cope with their child being ill. Parents need to develop a plan that allows them to manage the difficult problem of caring for their sick child in a way that:

- ✓ **Decreases stress for the child;**
- ✓ **Eases tension and guilt for you; and**
- ✓ **Makes business run smoothly for your employer.**

How Sick is Too Sick for Child Care?

Children suspected of having a communicable disease such as chicken pox, measles or strep throat may not be placed in child care. Furthermore, children exhibiting symptoms of illness such as undiagnosed rashes, sore throat, vomiting, or diarrhea also should not be in care.

These guidelines apply to both children's centers and family child care homes. When enrolling your child in care, discuss the caregiver's sick child care policies.

Be Prepared:

Before your child gets sick, consider what your choices will be. After thinking about your commitments, you will know what problems you face in caring for your child when he or she is sick.

Caring for the Sick Child Yourself:

This is likely the very best choice for your child. What are the policies regarding use of sick leave at your workplace? Can you rearrange your schedule at work or school, or bring work home? If two parents care for the child and have flexible schedules, you may want to share equally in caring for the child during an illness.

Finding an Alternate Care Situation:

Most working parents will need to call on an alternate caregiver to provide care for their sick child. Search for a dependable adult whom the child knows and likes. Likely prospects are relative, friends, neighbors, retirees, and college students.

Get acquainted with several alternate caregivers before you need them. Invite them to your home to meet you and your child. The better acquainted you are with each other, the easier it will be for your child when sickness occurs. Check in advance about transportation arrangements and fees.

Several nursing agencies can provide sick child care in the Pinellas and Hillsborough County areas. These services provide trained workers to the sick child's home for short-term care. If you are interested in this option, call the agencies in your areas to find out how they operate (fees, training of caregivers, etc.).

The numbers for these agencies can be found in the yellow pages of your phone book under NURSES. In addition, there are a few area hospitals which provide sick child care services to the public (see the attached listing). Before placing your child in one of these programs, be sure to contact the hospital and discuss their policies. If possible, take your child to visit the program before he or she gets sick in order to alleviate some anxieties and fears.

For more information please call *Child Care Resource and Referral of Pinellas* at (727) 547-5750.

Sick Child Care Options

| | MORTON PLANT HOSPITAL Clearwater Rainbow Recovery 727-441-2878 | TAMPA GENERAL HOSPITAL Kid's Care 813-844-7192 |
|----------------------------------|---|---|
| HOURS | 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Closed Weekends and Major Holidays | 6:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. |
| COST PER HOUR | \$4.00 per hour | Sliding Fee Scale \$2.50 - \$3.50 per hour |
| MINIMUM # OF HOURS | 4 hours | 4 hours |
| AGES ACCEPTED | 3 months to 12 years | 4 months to 15 years |
| SICKNESS LIMITATIONS | No contagious diseases such as chicken pox or strep throat. Accepts children with colds and gastro illnesses. | No contagious or communicable diseases. (No isolation available) |
| STAFF | L.P.N. | L.P.N. |
| TOTAL CHILD CAPACITY | 14 | 15 |
| STAFF/ CHILD RATIO | Infants 1:3 Older Children 1:5 | Infants 1:3 Older Children 1:5 |
| REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS | They require a one time pre-registration fee of \$10. This fee is good at Morton Plant Hospital. When child is sick call the evening before care is needed, or early the next morning. A current immunization record is required. | Parent should call as soon as possible when care is needed for a sick child. A current immunization record is required. |

BAYFRONT MEDICAL CENTERS - BEARLY SICK PROGRAM - 893-6789
 OFFERED TO THE EMPLOYEES OF BAYFRONT MEDICAL CENTER
THE ST.PETERSBURG TIMES - ST. ANTHONY'S HOSPITAL - PREMIER COMMUNITY BANK
SUNCOAST MEDICAL PLAZA - BANKERS INSURANCE CO. - ECKERD COLLEGE
HOME SHOPPING NETWORK - CERIDIAN
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