



PARENT HANDBOOK



I. Treatment Philosophy

The purpose of therapy through Child's Nature is to support developmental progress to equip children and their families with functional skills as they relate to personal, social and medical needs in their daily lives. Child's Nature is focused on developing therapy programs that meet the needs of the whole child through a connection with nature and a natural love for learning. When appropriate, clinical outpatient therapy utilizes nature and play as part of therapy, as it is known to have a positive impact on engagement, behavior, motivation, sensory regulation and opportunities for language.

Child's Nature is guided by what is important to the family, what is medically necessary, and what is developmentally appropriate. Intervention is guided by evidence-based practices driven by scientific research and clinical experience.

We understand that children often come to us with numerous caretakers, physicians, educators and therapists involved in their care. Child's Nature is committed to communicating with each child's extended team to ensure that care is coordinated and comprehensive.

All therapy is documented in daily notes. These notes are maintained in a HIPPA compliant electronic filing system and are available for your review at any point in time. This documentation is important for marking your child's progress as it relates to short- and long-term goals as well as for providing clinical documentation to physicians and insurance companies. When possible, therapists will document the therapy session at the point of service.

II. About Child's Nature

We developed Child's Nature out of a deep appreciation for a child's desire to learn and grow through the great outdoors. The practice was founded by Carrie Kerr, whose attention to children and nature began during her college years as a camp counselor at a special recreation association. Working in the outdoors, following a child's lead, and making the most of a day with sunshine, trails and exploration left little to question about finding contentment. That love grew deeper as she watched her own children find their connection with these same encounters.

Carrie's experience grew over the years to include speech therapy, homeschooling, published writing, parent support groups, research, teaching at the university level and advocacy. As Carrie's clinical experience grew, she looked for opportunities to bring her clients into nature for therapy. The benefits to their development were highly evident, resulting in increased verbal language, engagement, behavior and motivation. Inspired by similar results at nature schools in the Nordic regions, she determined she could incorporate nature-based approaches with pediatric therapy. Thus, a dream was born.

Child's Nature, LLC offers pediatric therapy and developmental programs that meet the needs of the whole child through a connection with nature and a natural love for learning. Specialty areas include early intervention and augmentative-alternative communication.

III. Parents and Therapy

Child's Nature is dedicated to the parent-child dyad. As such, all therapy and programs focus on supporting and nurturing parents alongside their children. We know that the real work for your child's progress takes place outside of therapy. We believe it is our job to listen to you and support you in all endeavors related to your child's success. A family's participation in therapy is essential to progress. We encourage parents and extended family members to participate in all therapy sessions.

We ask families to:

Consent to services and sign all required paperwork

- Help identify priorities for therapeutic intervention
- Bring their child to at least 75% of scheduled therapy sessions
- Be present and participate during therapy sessions
- Stay on site during group activities
- Practice the home program provided by therapist
- Communicate relevant changes in your child, family, and insurance coverage

IV. Scope of Services

Child's Nature offers therapeutic programs for children from birth to 21 years of age. Child's Nature does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, cultural beliefs, disability, gender, familial status, parental status, religion, or sexual orientation. Care is taken to be respectful of your cultural and family needs.

Consideration for starting and continuing services include:

- Medical stability
- Need for specialized services
- Ability to benefit from services
- Therapist/Program availability
- Date intake information was received
- Parent implementation of home program
- History of attendance
- Payment considerations

V. Discharge

A child may be discharged from therapy for the following reasons:

Outcomes are met

Re-evaluation shows no need for additional therapy

The child turns three and his/her needs can be addressed in the school

The child is unable to benefit from therapy

Physician recommends discharge

Family moves away

Parent request

Attendance is less than 75%

No show to appointments two times in a row or three times in a year

Failure to make agreed upon payments for services

Lack of availability of therapist

VI. Code of Ethics

Child's Nature will:

Promote the optimal functioning and well-being of the persons served

Respect and promote the rights of persons served

Provide services in the context of a professional relationship based on valid informed consent

Provide services and ensure staff are competent within the boundaries of their education, training, license, and certification

Understand culture and its function in human behavior and society, recognizing the strengths that exist in all cultures

Avoid conflicts of interest that interfere with the exercise of professional discretion and impartial judgment

Respect an individual's right to privacy

Disclose confidential information only with valid consent from the person served

Protect the confidential information of all information obtained in the course of professional service.

Terminate services when such services are no longer required or no longer serve the individual's need

Adhere to licensing and certification law and guidelines

Adhere to mandated reporting laws

Set fees that are fair, reasonable and commensurate with services performed

Make reasonable efforts to ensure continuity of services to person's served

VII. Privacy and Rights

You will receive a privacy notice when you start services and you may ask for one at any time. The notice explains rights under federal law. Requests for information from doctors, hospitals, school and social services agencies involved with the care of your child will be honored when you or your child's guardian complete the Consent for Release of Information form.

Rights of Family:

As a parent with a child receiving services at Child's Nature, you have the right to:

Participate in program planning, decision-making and implementation of your child's services

Receive results of all evaluations, examinations and test results

Participate in the development of your child's Plan of Care

Review records

Confidentiality

Rights of Children:

As a child receiving services at Child's Nature, you have the right to:

Communicate and be heard

Be free from all forms of abuse and neglect

See your therapy file

Be told the results of all evaluations and your progress in therapy

Be respected and treated fairly

VIII. In-Home Therapy

In-home therapy is provided for early intervention services as authorized by the service coordinator. Outpatient pediatric therapy after the age of 3 takes place at our facility or, in special circumstances, at a child's home or school. Our ability to provide in-home therapy is based upon therapist availability, geographic distance from the clinic, and whether or not your insurance company will approve services in the home. The parent/caregiver must remain in the home and participate during home-based services.

We require the following conditions be met for visits occurring in your home:

Caregiver and child should be awake, dressed and ready for therapy

You give your full attention to activities occurring during the therapy session, participating as necessary and appropriate

Television and radio should be turned off during therapy

Phone calls should be limited during the therapy session

Animals will be blocked from the therapy session. (In some cases, therapy may need to be relocated to a different setting if therapist has allergies to animals.)

No smoking, drinking or use of drugs will occur during the home visit

If there are ill people in the home, inform the therapist prior to the visit as to the nature of the illness. Therapist may cancel the session at his/her discretion based on his/her comfort level for being exposed to the illness in the home.

IX. Attendance

Our attendance policy requires a child to attend 75% of his/her scheduled sessions.

If you are unable to attend your scheduled appointment, contact your therapist as soon as possible.

If you do not call in advance to cancel a therapy session, this is considered a “no show.” Two consecutive no shows or three no shows in a 12 month time frame is reason for discharge.

Therapist absences do not count against your attendance. You will be notified as soon as possible if a therapist is absent due to illness.

Make up sessions will be offered given therapist availability.

If you are late for a session, we will still end at the originally scheduled time so as to tend to the rest of our day and clients.

Illness

No child should attend a therapy session or receive in-home therapy if they are ill. Similarly, if someone in your home is contagious, in-home therapy should be cancelled! Therapy should be cancelled due to:

Chicken Pox	Pinkeye	Rotovirus	C.Diff
Body or Head Lice	Strep Throat	Staph Infection	Impetigo
Ring Worm	RSV	Diarrhea	Vomiting
Fever	Nasal/Ear Discharge that are illness related	Rashes or Open Sores	Cough that is illness related
Exposure to contagious disease			

We understand that children get sick, some more than others, and especially at certain times of the year. We want to support you through these times. If illness is affecting therapy services, we will work with you to be as accommodating as possible. We know it is hard taking care of all of the needs of a family!

X. Managing Behavior

Because we are focused on the parent-child dyad, the family will guide discipline issues, however we do not support corporal or psychological punishment for discipline. Therapists will work with the family to identify the communication behind any negative behavior and establish positive reinforcement routines to increase desired behavior. We will make every attempt to prevent challenging behaviors by establishing clear and consistent limits, supporting communication, providing choices, and allowing children time to respond. Staff will then further work with families to determine discipline based on developmentally appropriate behavior and expectations.

XI. Payment for Services

Child's Nature is a fee-for-service practice. Services may be covered by your insurance provider or as a self-pay system.

Insurance-Covered Therapy:

Should you choose to have us bill insurance for therapy, we will do a preauthorization of insurance coverage prior to initiating services. It is the family's responsibility to follow-up with insurance and provide confirmation to Child's Nature that therapy has been approved. This may require persistently calling your insurance carrier until you get the information/authorization you are seeking. So that you are not left with unforeseen bills, services will not commence until insurance has approved services. Should you want to begin services prior to authorization from insurance, be aware that you may be responsible for the entire statement.

As a service to you, Child's Nature will bill and work to collect payment from your insurance provider. We will bill your primary insurance only. We do not accept secondary insurance. It will be your responsibility to cover the co-pay and/or deductible from your primary insurance. Co-pays are due at the time of service. If your insurance carrier determines that our services are not covered under your insurance contract, or if they only make a partial payment of our fees, the remaining fee will become your responsibility and will be due when you receive your bill. Insurance is notorious for denying claims, even if they authorized services. Insurance charges that are unpaid 90 days following the service will become your responsibility. Therapy for accounts past due may be placed on hold until your bill is paid. There is no guarantee that your therapist will still be available at that time. We will provide you with a receipt for payment should you choose to resubmit the claim and seek reimbursement from insurance.

Medicaid/HFS/All Kids

Child's Nature, as an agency, is not a Medicaid provider. One of our therapists will provide independent services through Medicaid/HFS for nonverbal children seeking Augmentative Communication services. Please contact us for a referral to her.

Self-Pay Therapy:

We offer a self-pay rate for families who would prefer to pay privately for

services. We will provide you with an invoice, including billing codes, should you choose to later submit your claims to your insurance carrier. Payment is due at the time of service. Therapy for accounts past due may be placed on hold until your bill is paid. There is no guarantee that your therapist will still be available at that time. Please contact us for self-pay rates.

The therapy time appearing on your financial statement reflects the total time that the therapist spends on behalf of you and your child; this includes time for setting up, cleaning up, and writing a treatment note, in addition to the direct “hands on” therapy. Time is billed in 15-minute increments.



For Questions or Concerns, Please Contact:

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