

Jolly Giraffe's Philosophy of Family Childcare

Hello! My name is Sarah Davidson and I am so glad to meet you! I want to send you a little note about what my philosophy of childcare is, and how I have designed my business model to be as close to a home setting as possible. Please read on to discover if we are a good fit for each other.

Family childcare in a **home setting** is one of the best alternatives for working parents. It provides a **small, secure, and nurturing environment**. A family childcare home offers children a true **“home away from home.”** Children of different ages learn, play, and grow together—much like siblings—developing social skills, empathy, patience, and cooperation. This type of environment is very different from a traditional childcare center. Childcare centers often offer longer hours, larger classrooms, and children grouped strictly by age. In contrast, my childcare home is a **small, mixed-age setting** where I am the **sole caregiver**, with a **maximum of 10 children** in my care. Children learn vital skills by interacting with others who may differ in age, ability, and understanding, helping them grow naturally through play and shared experiences.

Hours, Calendar, and Backup Care

My childcare home follows the **Vigo County School Calendar**. When the school is closed—including for bad weather—I am closed as well. Because of this, my program operates differently than a traditional 52-week childcare center that may be open 12–14 hours per day.

- **Hours of operation:** 7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
- Designed specifically to **support schoolteachers**
- Closed during the **summer**, with limited optional weeks available for teachers who need time to prepare classrooms

Because I am the only caregiver, it is **strongly recommended** that families using a childcare home have a **backup caregiver** (such as a grandparent or babysitter). I do not have substitute staff available if I become ill or need to close unexpectedly.

Payment Philosophy

Unlike childcare centers, I do **not charge for all 52 weeks of the year**.

- Families **only pay for the weeks the daycare is open and operating**.
- **Tuition for the 2026 – 2027 school year is \$200 per child.**
- I **do not charge** for my vacation days
- I **do not charge** for weeks I am closed

My philosophy is simple:

There are many excellent childcare centers and licensed daycare programs available. I have intentionally chosen to be a **family childcare home**—one that **caters to teachers** and charges only what is fair. I want teachers to have opportunities to get a little ahead financially by having childcare that is **open when they need it and closed when they don't**—and not paying for care they aren't using.

Who This Program Is Best For

This family childcare program is best suited for families—especially **school teachers and school staff**—who value a **small, home-based setting**, predictable school-year scheduling, and a mixed-age environment where children learn together naturally. It is a great fit for families who appreciate consistent routines, shorter operating hours, and a caregiver who is deeply involved in their child's daily experiences. Families who are comfortable with school-calendar closures, summer breaks, and the need for a **reliable backup caregiver** will thrive in this program. If you are seeking long hours, year-round care, or the structure of a large childcare center, this program may not be the right fit—and that is completely okay.

Who This Program May Not Be Best For

This program may **not** be the best fit for families who require **long or extended hours, year-round care**, or coverage during school closures, holidays, or summer months. Families who need guaranteed care during provider illness or unexpected closures may be better served by a larger childcare center with substitute staff available. Additionally, this program may not be ideal for families who prefer children to be grouped strictly by age, require frequent schedule flexibility, or are uncomfortable with a home-based environment. Families seeking a traditional 52-week childcare program with extended daily hours may find that a childcare center better meets their needs—and that is perfectly okay.

A Personal Commitment

I love children. I love spending my days **playing, coloring, dancing, singing silly songs, reading stories, and watching children grow**. My goal is to be a place where parents can leave their children feeling confident that they are safe, loved, and cared for—not lost in a large, impersonal setting.

I want my home to be a **soft place** for your little ones and a **supportive place** for you as a parent.

I am not a daycare center, and that means I **may not be the right fit for every family—and that's okay**. I encourage you to read this handbook carefully and decide whether my philosophy aligns with your family's needs.