



## FAMILY HANDBOOK

2022-2023



## WELCOME

Dear Family,

**Margaret's House @ RIT** has been providing high-quality care and early childhood education to children whose parents work or study at RIT and to families in the surrounding area since 1996. Alfred Davis, RIT Vice President Emeritus, provided a substantial gift to build a new home for child care on campus in the Alexander Bell Hall. As a tribute to his beloved wife, Margaret Welcher Davis, he named the center Margaret's House.

Margaret's House strives to provide a sense of community and we are proud to be a department within the Division of Student Affairs at Rochester Institute of Technology. The children of Margaret's House are often out-and-about on the RIT campus enjoying it and taking advantage of all that it has to offer.

The foundation of our programming is based on theory and extensive research. All of our teachers, substitutes and staff members are employees of RIT and are committed to developmentally appropriate practice in the field of early childhood education. We offer bright and cheerful classrooms, a large outdoor playground, and an indoor playroom for use during inclement weather.

Thank you for choosing **Margaret's House**. We look forward to providing your child with a caring and enriching environment.

Sincerely,

*Jennifer Tills*  
Director  
**Margaret's House @ RIT**

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## ABOUT Us

### *Philosophy*

At Margaret's House, we strive to support families with young children in the RIT community so that students can study, faculty can teach, and staff can work...knowing that their children are learning and growing in a happy and safe environment. The program focuses on social, emotional, cognitive and physical development with special consideration given to individual abilities and learning styles. Play serves as the basis for learning and each day will include opportunities for hands-on experimentation and discovery. The staff at Margaret's House consider parents to be a child's first and most important teacher. It is for that reason that we welcome and encourage parents to visit regularly and participate as partners in the education of their children.

### *Mission*

Margaret's House will provide early childhood services for the RIT community. It will serve as a house of learning for children whose families study and work on campus. The program will collaborate with other departments to provide opportunities for students to work, observe, and interact with children, families and staff

The year-round, campus-based program accepts children from 8 weeks of age through the preschool years. The program will be an integral part of the university, advancing RIT's image as a "family friendly" place to study and learn.

Margaret's House will be visible and accessible in its advocacy for the well-being of RIT's families with young children.

### *Certification*

- Licensed by the Office of Child and Family Services
- Active participant in QUALITYstarsNY
- Member of the National Coalition for Campus Children's Centers

### *Definition of Family*

In this handbook we refer to family as a parent, legal guardian, sponsor or anyone else who provides for the well-being, best-interest and responsibility of the child in our care.

### *Hours of Operation*

Child care services are provided from **8:00 AM to 5:00 PM** Monday through Friday. Parents are welcome to bring their children anytime during this 9-hour time period. Extended care outside these hours will be considered for those with extenuating circumstances.

***Margaret's House will be closed:*****Teacher Preparation Day**

- 8/19/22 (Friday)

**Labor Day**

- 9/5/22 (Monday)

**Thanksgiving Break**

- 11/23/22 at 2:00 p.m. (Wednesday)
- 11/24/22 and 11/25/22 (Thursday and Friday)

**Winter Break**

- 12/23/22 at 2:00 p.m. (Friday)
- 12/26/22 through 1/2/23 (Monday-Friday, Monday)

**Professional Development Days**

- 3/17/23 (Friday)
- 5/18/23 and 5/19/23 (Thursday, Friday)

**Memorial Day**

- 5/29/23 (Monday)

**Fourth of July**

- 7/4/22 (Tuesday)

**Teacher Preparation Day**

- 8/25 (Friday)

Families are expected to pay **full cost of care** during all closures with the exception of:

Margaret's House will close at 2:00 on Friday, December 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022 and re-open on Tuesday, January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023. We are offering one tuition-free week during that time for our families with 12-month and 10-month enrollment agreements. **Families will not be billed during the week of 12/26/22**

We understand that families who have chosen a part-time attendance schedule may be interested in making one-time schedule changes under extenuating circumstances. These requests will be considered under the following conditions:

- requested a week in advance
- the week requested does not include a center closure date

We will determine if we are able to accommodate the change requested after considering all the needs in the entire center.

Please consider all of our scheduled days off (see above list) prior to choosing your contracted dates as we are unable to accommodate any changes during weeks which include a center closure.

## ***Admission & Enrollment***

Enrollment forms will be emailed to **new families** when a slot becomes available. If the family chooses to enroll their child at Margaret's House, the first week's tuition is expected at that time. Enrollment forms will be emailed to **current families** late July/early August. All forms must be completed *prior* to a child's first day of attendance.

### ***Enrollment Agreements for Students:***

Please see the current enrollment agreement for specific dates. RIT Student families who need child care during the break between semesters will need to request additional child care services and will be charged the same rate as the faculty, staff and community families during that time. Student families interested in summer care must be enrolled in summer session courses or enrolled in an internship or co-op to be eligible for scholarships and receive student rates.

### **12 Month Enrollment Agreement for Faculty, Staff, Alumni and Community Members**

Margaret's House offers a 12 month agreement for families who need continual care throughout the year. Families who choose the 12 month agreement will be extended 3 tuition-free vacation weeks. One week is automatically applied to the RIT Winter Break. However, families can choose the other 2 weeks by providing written documentation to the main office 2 weeks in advance of the vacation week. **Vacation weeks must be 5 consecutive days and the child may not attend during any of those days.**

*12 month agreements that begin after February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 include only 1 vacation week  
12 month agreements that begin after April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 include no vacation week option*

### **10 Month Enrollment Agreement for Faculty, Staff, Alumni, and Community Members**

Margaret's House offers a 10 month agreement for those who do not need care during the Margaret's House summer session. **Please note that the Margaret's House academic year and summer session dates are not necessarily the same dates as the RIT academic schedule and summer session dates.** The contracted child care dates for this option will begin on 8/22/22 and will end on 6/9/23, coinciding with our 10-month teacher contracts. Families planning to return for the following year are required to pay a \$500 holding fee for the summer months. \$200 of the holding fee will be applied to the tuition for the following academic year. The full \$500 is due between July 1<sup>st</sup> and July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022. 10 month contracts do NOT include any vacation weeks, however no families will be billed for the week of December 26, 2022.

Families who wish to extend their 10-month contracts through the summer must request this extension prior to June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. Should the extension be granted, families may then qualify for a 1 week vacation, however families must have started prior to February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 AND have given notice of the summer extension prior to June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 to be eligible. **Vacation weeks must be 5 consecutive days and the child may not attend during any of those days.**

*We do not enroll children of faculty, staff and community families at Margaret's House for the summer session only. Only children who were enrolled during the previous spring or are signing a contract for the following academic year will be accepted into either the Infant & Toddler or the Preschool program.*

Enrollment is based on openings and availability with the following *priority guidelines* in place:

- 1) Children of RIT/NTID full-time students
- 2) Siblings of children currently enrolled
- 3) Children of Staff and Faculty and part-time students
- 4) Children of alumni
- 5) Children of the general community with no RIT affiliation

### **Inclusion**

**Margaret's House** believes that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging in child care. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program based on his/her individual capabilities and needs.

If your child has a special need and you would like to request additional services you may do so by completing the Margaret's House @ RIT Disability Services Request Form available on the MH website. The request and its supporting documentation will be reviewed and processed by the Disability Services Office. A Disability Service Agreement (DSA) outlining the approved adjustment(s) and/or modification(s) will be generated and provided to the requestor and the Margaret's House Director and/or Assistant Director.

The request forms and documentation MUST be sent directly to the Disability Services Office.

Phone: (585) 475-2023  
28 Lomb Memorial Drive  
Rochester, New York 14623  
Fax: (585) 475-2215  
Email: dso@rit.edu

### **Non-Discrimination**

At **Margaret's House** equal educational opportunities are available for all children, without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, or parent/provider political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation or special needs, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state or local laws.

### **Family Activities**

We believe that a parent is a child's first teacher and we value families as partners in the growth and development of the children in our program. We encourage parents/guardians, family members, extended family and important people in the lives of the children to be involved in the program, visit children's classrooms, participate in events, and provide feedback on the program.

Please see the MH 2022-2023 Academic calendar for dates of specific family and center-wide activities.

## ***Confidentiality***

Unless we receive your written consent, information regarding your child will not be released with the exception of that required by our regulatory and partnering agencies. All records concerning children at our program are confidential.

## ***Margaret's House Staff Qualifications***

The Director of Margaret's House is Jennifer Tills. She holds a B.A. in Sociology and an Infant/Toddler Child Development Associate certificate. Her first position at Margaret's House was as a Substitute Teacher and she accepted an Associate Teacher position shortly thereafter. She became the Staff Assistant for Margaret's House in 2018, was promoted to the Assistant Director position in 2020, and settled in her current role as the Director of Margaret's House in 2021.

Our Associate Teachers have earned or are working toward degrees in education, human services, or a Child Development Associate certification and all have experience working with young children. They participate in orientation and ongoing training in the areas of child growth and development, healthy and safe environments, developmentally appropriate practice, behavior guidance, family relationships, cultural and individual diversity, and professionalism. They attend conferences and workshops and read current literature in order to keep abreast of new developments and best practices in the field. In addition to educational and experiential qualifications, we value such qualities as a positive attitude, strength of character, flexibility, and kindness.

Each classroom has 2 Associate Teachers and a team of RIT Student Classroom Aides. The classroom aides have high school diplomas, are currently RIT students, and have experience with young children. Our Classroom Aides are employees of MH. They are required to complete the same paperwork and background clearance checks as our Teachers. They also receive ongoing training including, but not limited to, a 3 hour orientation, an OCFS regulations training, a 5 hour online health and safety course, and hands-on training in the form of mentoring in the classroom.

When a teacher is ill or on vacation you will find one of our qualified substitutes present in your child's room or a trusted Student Classroom Aide. Although we always strive to have at least one Associate Teacher or Substitute Teacher in the classroom at all times, there will be times when 2 Student Classroom Aides are in charge of a group of children for a day. There will also be periods of time throughout the day, including but not limited to lunch breaks, staff meetings, and teacher planning times, in which our Classroom Aides may be in charge of a classroom.

**Any arrangement/employment between families and our caregivers (i.e. babysitting) outside the programs and services we offer is a private matter, not connected or sanctioned by Margaret's House. The center shall remain harmless from any such arrangement.**

## ***Child to Staff Ratios***

Maintaining proper child/staff ratios is absolutely mandatory. It's important that families understand that a significant change in schedule on any given day can result in ratio problems. If you plan to drop your child off earlier than contracted it is important that you notify the office. We understand that there are unexpected circumstances (i.e. a meeting runs late or a project that needs to be finished) in which you will be late. We certainly understand but still appreciate a phone call, if possible. Families are not charged for changes or for lack of notification. This is

a courtesy policy that allows us to staff the center appropriately and to maintain state regulated ratios.

Children are supervised at all times.

We maintain the following standards for child to staff ratios:

<b>Age</b>	<b>Child to Staff</b>	<b>Maximum Group Size</b>
≤ 18 months	<u>4 to 1</u>	<u>8</u>
18-36 months	<u>5 to 1</u>	<u>12</u>
3 year-olds	<u>7 to 1</u>	<u>14</u>
4 year-olds	<u>8 to 1</u>	<u>16</u>
5 year-olds	<u>8 to 1</u>	<u>16</u>

## **Communication & Family Partnership**

**Emails are the primary mode of communication at the center-level** so please make sure that we have your current email address. It is imperative that you are checking your email regularly and reading all main office correspondences as they may contain important and time-sensitive information.

### **Daily Communications**

It's important that you keep us abreast of what happens in your child's life outside of school. The teacher will better understand what may be affecting his or her behavior or attitude and provide the necessary support that your child may need.

You will have daily contact with your child's teacher during drop-off and pick up. Since the teachers are devoted to caring for children at that time, it is usually not feasible to have a long discussion during regular program hours. If a situation requires a longer discussion, kindly arrange for an appointment by calling the center or emailing your child's teacher, the Director, or the Assistant Director.

Margaret's House uses the **Brightwheel** childcare and preschool daily report app. It is easy to use and can be downloaded on mobile devices or desktop computers. The app allows our teachers to share meal information, toileting, naps, daily routines, photos, reminders, notes and more.

Teachers do their best to input this information in real time. However, their primary responsibility is always the care and safety of every child in the classroom. We expect that if a child needs attention, that data input will not be their priority, and the information will be entered into Brightwheel later in the day. Please note that teachers cannot respond to messages when children are in need of attention. However, we expect that teachers will have the necessary information in Brightwheel by the end of the teacher's day. **You must contact the Margaret's House office directly if you have any questions that are time-sensitive.**

We strongly recommend that you check the updates on Brightwheel throughout the day, and once just before you pick-up your child. Should there be information that you would like that is not listed on Brightwheel at the time of pick-up, please take a moment to ask the teacher directly for that information. As noted above, if that question requires a longer discussion, kindly arrange for an appointment to chat.

Upon request, you can share information with your child's teacher through a "communication notebook". This is a way for you to share details about your child's night, morning, or other important information that is happening in your lives. Please let the director know that you are interested and we will provide one.

### Bulletin Boards

Every classroom has a "Parent Board" that contains the daily routine and lesson plan along with other important information such as our behavior management plan and menu. There are other bulletin boards located throughout the center that provide center news, upcoming events, staff changes, holiday closing dates, announcements, community resources, etc.

### Emergency Card

There must be a current emergency card on file for each child in our care. It is imperative that there is always a way to reach you. We need to be notified of any changes in phone numbers, address, custody/living arrangements and people authorized to pick up your child. Emergency back-up people should be kept informed of procedures to be taken if we need to call them; any changes in their phone numbers or address need to be noted immediately. There must be at least one back-up emergency contact listed for each child.

### Family Conferences

Family conference weeks are scheduled each semester. During these conferences, the teachers will meet with you to discuss your child's strengths, likes and dislikes, and styles of learning. Together, you will set goals for your child's growth and development. You may request additional conferences regarding your child's progress at any time.

While we strive to provide quality care and outstanding service, there may be times when you have a concern. Most issues can be resolved with a simple conversation between two parties. If you feel comfortable, ask your child's teacher for a meeting to discuss your concerns. Teachers often prefer that you talk to them directly but understand if you are more comfortable speaking with the Director. If you have addressed a concern with a teacher and feel the resolution wasn't satisfactory, the Director may be able to help both parties reach an understanding.

### Newsletters

Newsletters are yet another avenue for communication intended to strengthen the home to school connection that will be provided periodically.

### Access Services

Margaret's House uses Access Services to request interpreters for formal parent-teacher conferences, family events, advisory board meetings, and other scheduled appointments.

The staff at Margaret's House have a wide range of ASL skills. Some know just the basics and others have more advanced skills. We are grateful for your support and encouragement in signing.

### Open Door Policy

We are delighted to have family members participate in our program. Parents/Guardians are welcome to visit the program any time during regular program hours. However, we ask that families are aware of the daily routine in their child's classroom to avoid interruptions.

The infant rooms welcome mothers to nurse and parents/guardians to feed their babies.

This “Open Door” policy does **not** mean the doors will be unlocked. For the safety and protection of the children, external doors will be kept locked at all times.

### ***Publicity and Photographs***

The “Permission for Photographs” statement is part of the annual Enrollment Agreement. Families can check whether or not they will allow photographs to be taken and used in our Newsletter and through the Brightwheel App.

On occasion, personnel from RIT University Publications photograph a Margaret’s House event or our participation in a campus activity. The photographs may be included in RIT News and Events, on the RIT website and/or in the local newspaper. You will be asked to sign an additional Publicity Release Form before any such photograph is published.

RIT/NTID students often come to the center requesting permission to take photographs for class assignments or projects. Before permission is granted to a student, he/she is required to complete a “Student Photographer Contract” which limits the use of the photos to the specific class assignment. No additional parental permission will be obtained for photos used for class work.

## **CURRICULA & LEARNING**

### ***Learning Environment***

#### **Infant and Toddler Program**

The goal of our infant and toddler program is for your baby to feel loved, cherished, and protected. The staff at Margaret’s House understand that babies and toddlers need to feel safe and secure in their attachment to their caregiver before they are able to play, learn and explore the world. For this reason, we follow a Primary Caregiver and Continuity of Care model. We strive for children and their primary caregiver to remain together for more than one year (sometimes even two or three years) in an attempt to minimize transitions and stress in a baby’s life and to allow time to build meaningful and genuine relationships. Because we reside on a college campus, this can be challenging as summer enrollment is lower and some of our teachers have 10-month contracts. However, we are committed to making responsible decisions and creating a transition plan if your child must be assigned a new primary caregiver.

Every child is unique. Family preferences and schedules are honored and respected by the staff to the best of the teacher’s ability within the group setting. Development is supported through sensory stimulation, individual interaction, opportunities for supervised socialization, and an enthusiastic response to each new milestone.

Infants are provided a crib for rest time. Families are required to provide a sheet and teachers will wash them weekly or when soiled. Pillows are not permitted.

Infants are provided with tummy time when awake, beginning with 3-5 minutes at a time and increasing when able, at least 2 times per day, allowing them to move freely and explore their surroundings.

Toddlers are often ready for a variety of new and different experiences. They can benefit from more physical activities and more classroom space, as they have mastered walking and continue to discover new ways to move and use their bodies. Toddlers are also recognized by

their innate curiosity and need to explore new things. Our teachers provide a rich learning environment with a comprehensive, research-based curriculum.

Toddlers are offered an opportunity to nap/rest on a cot each afternoon.

### **Preschool Program**

The preschool program at Margaret's House is built with the most current research in mind and is individualized to meet the needs of each child. Through a daily routine that is fun, engaging and meaningful, children develop curious minds and a love of learning. Our teachers lead children through "studies" which are hands-on investigations of interesting topics relevant to the lives of children. There are activities and opportunities for creativity that build confidence and improve social skills. The children will learn through play and their active involvement and experimentation with things and people in their environment.

The scheduled daily program activities will include, but are not limited to: Circle/ "Meeting Time", Large Group, Read-a-louds, Small Group, Choice Time, Meal times, outdoor play, and rest-time.

### ***Curricula & Assessment***

**Margaret's House** uses **The Creative Curriculum®**, a comprehensive, research-based curriculum which features exploration and discovery as a way of learning, enabling children to develop confidence, creativity, and lifelong critical-thinking skills. We've chosen this curriculum because it focuses on the skills and knowledge that are most important for helping your child to be successful in school. As part of this curriculum, we gather information about each child's developmental abilities and evaluate progress so we can modify and adjust what we are doing in our classroom to deliver the best individualized instruction for each child. The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers, and Twos is distinctly different from the preschool curriculum. We have expanded daily resources and discovery activities to bridge the transition from our infant/toddler program to our preschool program. Please see our website for additional information.

In addition to the Creative Curriculum, we also utilize a social-emotional curriculum called **AI's Pal's**. It will help your child develop the strong foundation needed for future success by promoting problem-solving skills, resiliency, healthy relationships, self-control and healthy decision-making skills. The curriculum contains intentional lessons with impactful teaching approaches using puppets, puppet scripts, posters, books, songs, family letters and resources, and more, to create a caring, cooperative, and respectful classroom environment that promotes an appreciation for differences.

### ***Developmental Screening***

**Margaret's House** uses the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3) as a developmental screening tool. To coincide with our curriculum-based assessment(s), we monitor each child's achievement of developmental milestones, share observations with parents/guardians, and provide resource information as needed for further screenings and/or evaluations. Developmental screening are conducted one time per semester.

## ***Transitions***

Your child's transition to and within child care should be a positive and exciting learning adventure. We will work with you to ensure that the smoothest possible transitions occur as new routines and new people are introduced. Margaret's House seeks to, when possible, minimize changes of teachers during the school year so that children and families can enjoy the comfort and security of a familiar face and consistent learning environment. If a change in staff is necessary, the program will prepare the children and families by introducing new staff in a responsible manner.

### ***Transition from home to center***

We want to make the first days at our center as easy as possible for you and your child. We know that the more familiar you are with our staff and the classroom routines, the more comfortable you will be. Therefore, we encourage you to visit the center and spend time in the classroom before your child's first day. You may want to be here to observe and/or participate in various activities throughout the day (snack, outside play, lunch, etc.). You are also welcome to spend time with your child on his/her first days as your schedule allows. We trust that you know your child best and you will let us know how we can help make the transition into our program as smooth as possible for your family.

### ***Transition between learning programs***

Children are transitioned from the infant/toddler program to the preschool program based on age, developmental readiness, state licensing requirements, and space availability. During the transition, current and future teachers will meet to propose a plan to introduce your child into the new program. The plan is reviewed by the Director or Assistant Director and shared with the families. Although the plan is detailed and specific, it is also fluid and flexible and the official date of transition may be changed if the children need more or less time for transitioning. There will be a group meeting for parents/families to introduce the new teachers, and discuss the curriculum and daily routine.

## ***Electronic Media***

Experts say that too much screen time can have harmful effects on children. Screen time includes TV, videos, DVD's, computers, tablets, video games and handheld devices such as smart phones. During the first 2 years of life, a child's brain and body experience important growth and development, and exposure to screen time detracts from important social interactions with parents and caregivers. For these reasons, there is no screen time at the center for children under the age of 2 years old.

For children over the age of 2 years old, our normal daily routine does not include electronic media (television/TV, video, DVD) viewing and computer use but, from time-to-time, we may use the computer for Creative Curriculum ebooks related to current investigations or as a teaching aid and discussion stimulator. All Electronic Media will be screened prior to use and will consist of non-violent and high-quality educational material. Our focus is to provide your child a positive experience with increased understanding of the world. In keeping with these recommendations, screen time for children over the age of 2 years old at the center will be limited to no more than 30 minutes per week in our program.

There is no screen time permitted during nap time or meal time at the center and any screen time at our center is commercial free.

## **Diversity & Anti-Bias Early Childhood Education**

As early childhood educators, we feel we have the responsibility to combat racism, prejudice and intolerance through thoughtful, intentional teaching practices that promote tolerance, kindness, respect and acceptance. There is a broad range of cultural-perspectives in the materials we use to expand awareness and promote a respect for differences. Our objective is to help children recognize and feel proud of their own unique characteristics, as well as the uniqueness of others, through thoughtful discussions about similarities and differences through play.

## **Celebrations and Family Fun Days**

We encourage parents/guardians, extended family and important people in the lives of the children in our care to be involved in the program, visit children's classrooms, participate in events, and provide feedback on the program. We offer Family Fun Days each semester, participate in various community service projects, and end each academic year with Margaret's Birthday Party. This is a celebration which honors Margaret Davis, a beloved friend and benefactor who, along with her husband Al Davis, made Margaret's House Child Care Center possible. All of these events provide opportunities for families to socialize and participate in child-centered activities.

Our holiday policy encourages an enhanced understanding of and respect for different cultures and beliefs of children, families, staff and community.

Birthdays are special and we try to give each birthday child recognition appropriate to their age. Teachers try to balance the natural exuberance and energy without creating an overwhelming situation in the classroom. Please consult with your child's teacher if you would like to bring in special food for the simple celebration. Any food brought into the class must be commercially prepared/store bought. We try to avoid foods with high sugar content, and we plan carefully around food allergies that children in the group might have. Nutritious snack alternatives can include muffins, fruit, and frozen yogurt.

We encourage families to consider a gift-wrapped "Birthday Book" donation as an alternative to food for their child's birthday. During story time, the child can unwrap the book and a family member (or the teacher) can read it to the class. We have a special stamp that acknowledges your child for their donation to the classroom book collection.

In an effort to keep celebrations safe, please refrain from bringing balloons as they can present a choking hazard.

## **Outdoor Time**

The children are provided with supervised outdoor play and/or walking trips around the campus at least 2 times per day (morning and afternoon). Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately. Margaret's House has an indoor gross motor area called the Great Hall that is used during inclement weather. We take into consideration temperature, wind chill factor and level of humidity when determining if (and for how long) the children will play outdoors.

## **Rest Time**

Infants sleep according to their own schedule and will be placed on their backs to sleep. If your child needs to be placed in any position other than on his/her back we will need written documentation from the pediatrician.

After lunch, all children less than 6 years of age, participate in a quiet rest time. Children who do not fall asleep are offered opportunities for quiet activities.

Sleeping children are closely supervised at all times and in line of sight of caregivers/teachers.

### Toilet Training

The most important factor in making the toilet learning experience successful and as low-stress as possible is a family/teacher partnership that supports the child. Research indicates that children cannot successfully learn how to use the toilet until they are physically, psychologically, and emotionally ready. Many pediatricians say that most children under 24 months of age are not physically capable of regulating bladder and bowel muscles. The most successful and positive toilet training occurs only after children show signs of physical control or awareness of their bodily functions and when they demonstrate an interest or curiosity in the process. We are committed to working with you to make sure that toilet learning is carried out in a manner that is consistent with your child's physical and emotional abilities and your family's concerns.

There are many steps to successful toilet training. The first step is introducing the child to the toilet and getting them comfortable with just sitting on it. Often, our first step is to give children the choice to sit on the toilet at regular diaper changing times. Once you have experienced some success at home with toilet training, please share your routine with us, so that we may use that information to inform our approach within the limits of our responsibilities.

## GUIDANCE

### General Procedure

**Margaret's House** is committed to each child's success in learning within a caring, responsive, and safe environment that is free of discrimination, violence, and bullying. Our center works to ensure that all students have the opportunity and support to develop to their fullest potential and share a personal and meaningful bond with people in the school community.

Thoughtful direction and planning ahead are used to prevent problems and encourage appropriate behavior. Communicating consistent, clear rules and involving children in problem solving help children develop their ability to become self-disciplined. We encourage children to be fair, to be respectful of other people, of property, and to learn to understand the results of their actions.

### Discipline Policy

We have created a discipline policy that reflects our philosophy of respect and positive guidance with children. A copy of the Behavior Management Plan is included at the end of the family handbook. Some of the behavior management methods that we will use are:

- Redirection – giving children a choice between two acceptable alternatives
- Creating a positive environment
- Clearly explaining expectations, boundaries and limits
- Anticipating conflict situations
- Modeling self-control and respect
- Recognizing children's accomplishments
- Encouraging children to "use their words"
- Gentle restraint in a situation when a child is threatened or in danger
- Encouraging, supporting, and coaching

- Allowing for logical consequences to take place
- Making sure the children are engaged and interest in activities

### ***Challenging Behavior***

Children are guided to treat each other and adults with self-control and kindness.

Each student at **Margaret's House** has a right to:

- Learn in a safe and friendly place
- Be treated with respect
- Receive the help and support of caring adults

When a child becomes verbally or physically aggressive, we intervene immediately to protect all of the children. Our usual approach to helping children with challenging behaviors is to show them how to solve problems using appropriate interactions. When discipline is necessary, it is clear, consistent and understandable to the child.

### ***Physical Restraint and Physical Intervention***

Physical restraint, the act of using force to extremely limit movement for a lengthy period of time, is not used or permitted for discipline. Corporal punishment is prohibited.

There are rare instances when we need to ensure a child's safety or that of others requiring a physical intervention which may include using contact to prevent children from injuring themselves or others. A child may be protected from harm in a variety of ways, including being moved from the situation, having their path blocked, or by gently holding or rocking her or him for as long as is necessary for control of the situation.

### ***Notification of Behavioral Issues to Families***

If a child's behavior/circumstance is of concern, communication will begin with the parents as the first step to understanding the child's individual needs and challenges. We will work together to evaluate these needs in the context of our program.

When necessary, a recommendation can be made for an outside consultant to help address a particular concern about a child. There are multiple resources within our community that we can access for support while we work with families to accommodate a child's needs. On rare occasions, a child's behavior may warrant the need to find a more suitable setting for care.

## **TUITION AND FEES**

### ***Payment***

The rate for each child is determined individually and is based on registered days attending and the family affiliation with the university. Payment is always due in advance with no deduction for absences, holidays, professional development days, or closures due to inclement weather, power outages, or other situations beyond our control. Payment is due by the end of the business day on Monday **prior to services rendered**. For more information, please see the information outlined in the *Enrollment Agreement Summary* on our website under the "current families" section, or refer to your completed enrollment agreement.

An application form is required for each family applying to have their child attend Margaret's House. A non-refundable application fee is collected from each family at the time the form is submitted.

If two or more children from one family are enrolled at Margaret's House, a 10% discount is applied to the child care fee of the oldest child.

We are unable to refund child care payments for care/time lost due to illness, vacations beyond what is allotted in enrollment agreements, holidays, professional development days or other absences.

**The RIT Federal Tax Identification number is 16-0743140. This information is also located on the top right of every statement.**

### Student Families

Student families' child care fees will be applied to their accounts through the RIT Student Financial Services Office at the beginning of each term. Payments must be made at the RIT Student Financial Services office or eServices according to their posted payment terms and schedules. [www.rit.edu/eservices/](http://www.rit.edu/eservices/)

### Faculty/Staff/Alumni/Community Families

Faculty, staff, alumni and community families, should make payments online at our website [www.rit.edu/studentaffairs/margaretshouse](http://www.rit.edu/studentaffairs/margaretshouse)

### **Late Payment Charges**

If payment is not received by the end of business of the Monday that it is due, a \$10.00 late fee may be added to your account on Tuesday.

Any payments made will be applied to the oldest charges and late fees may still apply if the account is not paid in full by the next tuition due date. Accounts two weeks in arrears may result in immediate termination of child care services.

If payment is more than 30 business days past due, we may attempt to recover payment in small claims court and/or your account may be sent to a 3<sup>rd</sup> party collections agency. You will be responsible for all expenses associated with these actions including all court and attorney fees.

### **Returned Checks/Rejected Transaction Charges**

All returned checks or rejected ACH (automatic debits) or credit card transactions will be charged the university fee of \$25.

### **Late Pick-up Fees**

**Margaret's House opens at 8:00 AM.**

Please do not drop-off your child prior to 8:00am. Your swipe access to the building is not activated until 8:00am.

**Margaret's House closes at 5:00 PM.**

Please allow enough time to **arrive, sign your child out, and leave the building** by closing time – 5:00 PM. Your swipe access to the building is not active after 5:00pm, if you arrive past that time a late fee will be automatically applied to your account.

***Late pick-up is not a program option. Extended care will be considered for those with extenuating circumstances. All requests for such must be made in writing to the Director.***

If there is an emergency causing you to be late, it is imperative that you contact the main office immediately.

The charge for late pick-up is \$15.00 for the first 15 minutes of tardiness and an additional \$15.00 for each subsequent 15 minute block of time. The fee will be automatically charged to your account. Student families who accrue a late fee are required to pay online at our website within 2 weeks. [www.rit.edu/studentaffairs/margaretshouse](http://www.rit.edu/studentaffairs/margaretshouse)

Please note that children, and even infants, quickly learn and expect their parents will arrive to pick them up a certain time based on the context within their daily routine and even the schedule of other children in the room. We urge parents to drop-off and pick-up at consistent times each day.

### **Special Activity Fees**

From time-to-time there may be additional fees associated with special activities or field trips. These fees are due prior to the event, activity or trip.

## **ATTENDANCE & WITHDRAWAL**

### **Absence**

If your child is going to be absent or arrive after 10:00 AM, please send us a message through the Brightwheel app system to let us know. Alternatively, you are welcome to call us at 585-475-5176 or send an email to both the Director ([intmh@rit.edu](mailto:intmh@rit.edu)) and the Assistant Director ([ansmh@rit.edu](mailto:ansmh@rit.edu)). We will be concerned about your child if we do not hear from you by 10:00AM.

### **Withdrawal**

A written notice, 2 weeks in advance, is required by the center when a child is being withdrawn. When a child is withdrawn without notification, the family is required to pay for an additional 2 weeks.

### **Transfer of Records**

If your child is transitioning to a new school, a written request from you with instructions to where the records should be sent is required.

### **Closing Due to Extreme Weather**

#### **RIT Alert System**

Margaret's House families who are RIT students, faculty or staff are required to sign up for the RIT alert system to receive notification of campus emergencies (such as closure due to

inclement weather). The process for a student to sign up for these notifications is different than the process for faculty and staff, and different than the process for those with no affiliation to RIT. The directions are included in the back of the handbook.

*Margaret's House families who are affiliated with RIT need to make sure that if parent/guardian #2 is not affiliated, that their phone number is added to the alert system.*

### **MH Alert System**

Margaret's House has an alert system that is used if there is additional information or if the emergency pertains to Margaret's House families only. Families must be in the RIT system prior to being added to the MH system. It is the family's responsibility to add non-affiliated RIT parents to the system and keep phone numbers updated.

If it becomes necessary to close early, we will contact you or your emergency contacts as soon as possible. Your child's early pick-up is your responsibility to arrange.

## **DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP**

### **General Procedure**

#### **Drop-off**

A parking circle in M-lot near the child care center has been designated as the Margaret's House "pick-up and drop-off area". Plan to use the designated parking spaces and **make certain that car flashers are left ON and your engine is OFF while you are in the building**. Cars should be parked in "20 Minute – Flashers On" parking spaces which are located behind Rosica Hall. Some additional spots are available along the edge of the circle, no double parking will be allowed. The remainder of M-lot is a reserved parking area on the campus which means that individuals need to pay a fee in order to park in the general spaces from 8:00am to 5:00pm Monday through Friday.

Families are encouraged to have their children exit from the right side of the vehicle, so that they may walk along the sidewalk. The driveway directly in front of the child care center is actually a fire lane and needs to remain clear for access by emergency vehicles. Public Safety and parking officers patrol the parking lot and ticket unauthorized vehicles. Families are responsible to handle any tickets they may incur directly with Parking Services.

Please hold tight to your child(ren) from your vehicle to/from the building. The area in front of our building is used by service and emergency vehicles which means care and caution is required to maintain safety. It is important to look both ways before crossing the crosswalk in front of our building.

Once you have arrived in the center, we require that you walk in the hallways and stay in proximity to your children. It is important that children are supervised at all times, and should they turn a corner and are out of your sight, it creates a dangerous situation. Once your child is in the classroom, we teach and remind them that children are **never** allowed to open an interior or exterior door while in the center. Please reinforce this with your children and we require you to be mindful when you open any door not to allow any children out of the room they are in. This includes the lobby doors to exit the building, only adults are allowed to press the button or open the door to the center. This is an important safety rule which helps support the safety measures teachers take every day to keep your children safe.

Safety is a priority for everyone visiting Margaret's House. We also require parents to bring any siblings into the classroom and/or bathroom when they are dropping off or picking up, children are not allowed in the hallways unsupervised. Any child not enrolled and signed into their Margaret's House classroom must be supervised by the adult responsible for their care at all times.

The following is required upon arrival in the classroom:

- 1) Parents must help their child organize belongings and ensure multiple clothing changes are available in the classroom
- 2) Parents must supervise their child as they wash their hands to ensure the proper hand-washing procedure is followed.
- 3) Parents must sign-in their child into the Brightwheel system.

If your child has not arrived by 10:00am we will assume that he/she is not coming and will not be added to the lunch count or ratio which can effect staffing – so you must call ahead if you will be arriving past that time.

**Make certain that a member of the staff acknowledges your child's arrival and your child's departure.** Our responsibility for your child begins when they enter Margaret's House and the teacher signs them in to the classroom. For some children it is important that their parent helps them get settled into the routine or makes a special point of waving good-bye. These rituals help ease the transition from parent to caregiver. If your child needs this, please allow a few extra minutes at arrival.

Arrival time is a good time for brief sharing with your child's primary caregiver. However, lengthy discussions may distract the caregiver from the children. Please write a note, make an appointment for a longer discussion, or ask the staff member to call you. This holds true for departure time as well.

### Pick-up

Margaret's House closes promptly at 5:00pm and the teachers who "close" are scheduled to leave at that time. **This means that families need to be ready to leave the building by 5:00 PM.** When you pick up your child, sign them out through the Brightwheel system. Make certain that a member of the staff acknowledges your child's departure.

NYS law requires children under the age of 6 to be secured in specially designed car seats when traveling in a motor vehicle. We expect families to follow the safe practice of placing children in the back seat and buckling up before leaving the parking lot. Remember to set a good example and always buckle up your seat belt too.

The door monitoring ID card "swipe" system automatically stops working at 5:00pm. Families no longer have access to the building and a late fee will automatically be applied to your child's account if you arrive after that time.

### **Cell Phone Usage**

The times you spend in the center dropping off and picking up your child are the primary windows of time we have to communicate with you about your child. In order to make the best use of these opportunities, as well as to be attentive to your child and other children, we ask that you NOT use your cell phone at any time while visiting the center.

## ***Authorized & Unauthorized Pick-up***

Listing emergency contacts on your child's Emergency Card provides us with written authorization to release your child to those persons in 2 circumstances:

1. In the case of an emergency when you are unreachable
2. In the case that you have made a plan to have that person pick-up and have communicated that to us either verbally, or in writing.

Please note: in the absence of an emergency, we are **not** able to release your child to anyone, even those on the Emergency Card, without prior verbal or written authorization. If you make an alternate plan for pick-up on a given day, please contact us, even if the pick-up person is on your Emergency Card.

If the person is **NOT** on the Emergency card, we will need your **written** authorization (email, letter) prior to releasing your child to them. Your child will not be released without prior written authorization to anyone not on the Emergency Card.

Each person picking up your child will be required to show a picture ID as verification, and we will make a photocopy of their ID on their first visit. Please notify your pick-up person of our policy and ask them to bring a photo ID each time they come to pick-up your child.

Margaret's House will need copies of any court ordered custody agreement in order to safeguard your child. Without a custody agreement, we are not able to prevent the release of your child to a parent.

If a child has not been picked up after closing and we have not heard from you, attempts will be made to contact you, and the contacts listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. Provisions will be made for someone to stay with your child as long as possible, but if we are not able to contact you or a person listed as an Emergency and Release Contact, we will call the local child protective services agency.

## ***Right to Refuse Child Release***

We may refuse to release children if we have reasonable cause to suspect that any person picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way that may endanger the child. To protect your child, we may request that another adult listed as an Emergency and Release Contact pick-up the child or we may call the police to prevent potential harm to your child. Reoccurring situations may result in the release of your child from the program.

## **PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

### ***What to Bring***

Please put your child's name on **everything** that is brought from home, including the clothes they are wearing and all extra clothing. We reserve the right to label possessions that come to us without labels.

**Infants and toddlers** need their own supply of diapers and wipes, a crib sheet, formula or breast milk and baby food (also see the Meals & Nutrition section).

**Every child** needs:

- Clothes in which to **play**. Children need to feel relaxed and comfortable in their clothes in order to participate in the program.

- For safety reasons, **only sturdy sneakers or rubber soled shoes are acceptable. Sandals and open-toed shoes are a safety hazard and are not allowed.**
- Multiple complete change of clothes (including socks) should be provided and left in the building.
- Please make sure to check your child's extra clothing on a regular basis to see that these are appropriate to the current season and that they still fit your growing child. Replace clothes sent home to be laundered. Each classroom has an area set aside for extra clothes storage; please see classroom staff for assistance.
- A small washable blanket, for naptime, to leave at Margaret's House. We will launder nap blankets weekly.
- Appropriate clothing for outdoor play every day. Winter clothes must include boots, mittens, warm hat, and snow pants or a snowsuit.
- A sturdy tote bag with the child's name clearly printed on the outside. Please help us maintain a safe environment by keeping all plastic bags (including grocery bags) out of the reach of children.

A special note about toys and other treasures from home: Please do not bring them to the center. Such items are easily broken, lost, and/or misused when brought into group settings. Assure your child our center maintains a generous supply of toys and materials. If a child brings a toy into the center, we will use our discretion to keep it in the office for a parent to pick up at the end of the day or have the child put it above his/her cubby for safe keeping. Toy guns, weapons and war play toys and figures will not be permitted in the center.

Please refrain from putting barrettes, beads and other small items on your child as they can present a choking hazard to children less than 3 years of age. Children's earrings can also present a choking hazard so we ask that they be removed or are equipped with safety screw backs.

## NUTRITION

### *Food Prepared for or at the Center*

A nutritious lunch and two snacks are provided daily.

Please check the Daily Routine schedule posted in your child's classroom for the times. Lunch and snack menus are posted for your reference on the parent bulletin board. The lunch menu rotates on a six-week basis. The snack menu rotates on a weekly basis.

Please note that our snacks are intended to supplement rather than replace meals.

Snack and meal menus are created in accordance with the USDA Child and Adult Food Program (CACFP) meal pattern requirements. Lunches are prepared off-site and delivered daily. One percent, (1%/low-fat), milk is served to children two years of age and older (unless otherwise directed by the child's health care provider), with snacks and lunches. Juice is not served to children at the center.

Water is encouraged for thirst. Safe, fresh drinking water is available for children to serve themselves throughout the day, indoors and outdoors, including during meals and snacks.

The families of infants will be asked to provide a written statement to set forth breast milk, formula, and feeding schedule instructions and will need to be updated on a monthly basis and/or if changes are made. The center will consult and work with the families of infants to develop a plan to introduce age appropriate solid foods. The American Academy of Pediatrics currently recommends the introduction of solid foods at the age of 4 to 6 months.

For more information on healthy food and beverage choices and the prevention of childhood obesity, please refer to the Margaret's House website under the "current families" section.

### **Food Allergies**

For the protection of all of our children at Margaret's House, we strive to be a **NUT FREE FACILITY**. Please refrain from sending in any nuts or nut products with your child, including but not limited to peanut butter, almond butter, Nutella, any nut, or any food product with nuts in it. A lovely alternative to peanut butter is sunbutter, created from sunflower seeds. **Parents must inform the center of any known allergies**. Food allergies need to be documented by a physician. The center will need a written 'food allergy action plan' that will identify mild and severe allergic reaction symptoms, and explain when to use any medications. A written plan is essential for minimizing the potential for a life threatening reaction.

The center maintains a notebook of ingredient lists for foods regularly served for snack and lunch. Families may be asked to review the lists to create a reference menu for their child with particular food restrictions; the menu will be posted in the child's classroom.

Food allergies can be life threatening and each child with a food allergy should have an action plan for emergency care completed by the family physician.

### **Meal Time**

Meals for children are cooked off-site and plated for each child. Meals are delivered to the classroom at the classroom's scheduled time. We encourage children to listen to their bodies for cues that they are hungry or thirsty. Children are encouraged to try a "no-thank you" helping of something new but are never coerced. Food will not be used as a threat, as a punishment, or as a reward at Margaret's House.

Creative food experiences and simple cooking activities are included in our curriculum. These activities often give children the courage to broaden their ranges of taste.

Families whose children are on special diets will need to provide a written statement regarding menu variations and may be asked to provide additional food items for their children. Information regarding children's food restrictions allergies will be posted in each classroom and the kitchen. Written instructions can be provided to families to guide the selection of foods brought from home. Families need to clearly label all food brought from home. The label needs to include the child's full name, date and type of food.

A caregiver who is trained in first-aid for choking is present at all meals.

### **Infant Feedings**

Infant feedings follow these procedures:

- Infants will be held for bottle-feeding until able to hold his or her own bottle. Bottles will never be propped.
- Infants are fed "on cue" to the extent possible (at least every 4 hours and usually not more than hourly) and by a consistent caregiver/teacher.
- Breastfeeding is supported by providing a place for nursing mothers to feed their babies. Expressed breast milk may be brought from home if frozen or kept cold during transit. All breast milk and formula shall be returned to the child's home or discarded at the end of each day. Previously frozen, thawed breast milk must be used within 24 hours. Bottles must be clearly labeled with the child's full name and the date the milk was expressed.
- Breast milk and formula brought from home must be dated and labeled with the child's first and last name. **All bottles of formula must be sent to the center pre-made and ready to serve.** Those bottles of pre-mixed formula will be stored in a refrigerator in the classroom until near the time it is needed, and will then be warmed in a crock pot filled with warm water in the room. We will not mix formula at the center, with the exception of supplemental bottles at the end of the day or in extenuating circumstances.
- Labels on all milk/formula containers should be resistant to loss of the name and date/time when washing and handling.
- Solid foods will only be introduced after a consultation with the child's family.
- Infant Feeding forms will be completed by families and updated monthly. An updated form is required the first day of the month, before the child can be left in our care.

### **Children 24 Months and Older**

- No child shall go more than 4 hours without a meal or snack being provided.
- Children are encouraged to self-feed to the extent that they have the skills. Children are encouraged, but not forced to eat a variety of foods.
- Round, firm foods that pose a choking hazard for children less than 4 years of age are not permitted. These include foods such as whole grapes, raisins, peanuts, popcorn, thickly spread peanut butter and hard candy.
- The center menu is distributed annually, after revisions, and are posted on parent boards.

## **HEALTH**

**Please familiarize yourself with the following information.**

**Our goal is for Margaret's House to be a healthy place for your children.**

**We need your support in following all of the policies below.**

The very best prevention for the spread of germs is frequent hand washing. We require parents to have children wash hands upon arrival and encourage parents to wash hands at departure to minimize germ transfer between home and child care. We have children wash before and after meals, after toileting, nose blowing and many other times throughout the day. You can help establish good habits by doing the same at home.

New York State mandates that outdoor play be a part of our program. At Margaret's House, a child who is well enough to be at school must be well enough to participate in outdoor activities. Please send your child with proper clothing. It is essential to your child's well-being and comfort.

We will post information regarding exposure to contagious illnesses in classrooms. We, at the same time, ask you to notify us if you find that your child shows signs of a communicable condition or has been diagnosed with a particular illness.

## **Immunizations**

All children registered at Margaret's House are required by NYS Office of Children and Family Services regulations to submit a ***Child in Childcare Medical Statement*** form prior to their first day of attendance. The form includes immunization information required for entry into daycare. As per NYS Public Health Law (section 2164 Rules and Regulations Subpart 66 [www.health.ny.gov/prevention/immunization/schools](http://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/immunization/schools)). All children receiving primary series and boosters should be current and up to date appropriate to their age. Reminders may be sent to parents regarding what is needed to maintain compliance. Children who fall out of compliance will not be permitted to continue to attend the child care center until they receive the required immunization and/or boosters and are in compliance with NYS health laws

It is important that your child have a lead blood screening test. This can be done by your health care provider or county health department. Results of the screening should be a part of your child's health history. If you would like more information on lead poisoning and prevention, as well as how to request a lead blood screening test, please see the Margaret's House website under the "current families" section.

## **Physicals**

Routine physicals are required according to the current recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org). A Medical Statement for Children in Child Care, or acceptable complete physical, needs to be received before your child begins the program. Families are responsible for assuring that their child's physicals are kept up-to-date and that a copy of the results of the child's health assessment is given to the program. Prior to enrollment, and yearly thereafter, OCFS requires that the physical form/medical statement include a statement from the child's doctor indicating, "the child is free from contagious and communicable disease and is able to participate in child day care." Additionally this form must have been completed within the previous 12 months. Please see the Margaret's House website under the "current families" section for additional details and for a link to the ***Child in Care Medical Form*** referred to in this section.

## **COVID VACCINE**

A covid-19 vaccine for children 6 months-5 years was approved by the CDC, authorized by the FDA, and recommended by the AAP, an important step to protecting our youngest population. In alignment with this development, and RIT policies, Margaret's House will be requiring all enrolled children 6 months and older to be vaccinated for covid-19, excepting those children with a completed medical exemption form. **This requirement will go into effect January 1, 2023.** We know that it can take up to 4 months to complete the required dose schedule and then 2 additional weeks to be considered fully immunized; we encourage families to begin the vaccination process, in consultation with your child's doctor, as soon as you are able. Please provide documentation of each dose your child receives to Margaret's House as soon as they are available.

As OCFS allows, children who are not yet enrolled, or too young to yet be immunized, can be enrolled and attend provided the immunizations are in process and appointment dates are provided to Margaret's House, with documentation provided immediately after each appointment. Beginning January 1, 2023, all newly enrolled children 6 months and older will be required to submit proof of the first dose in the vaccination process within 30 days, and be fully vaccinated within 5 months of their first dose.

These requirements are subject to change with any updates provided by OCFS, Monroe County, or RIT.

We know that the RIT community has an extremely high vaccination rate, and we also know that many Margaret's House families have been anxiously awaiting the vaccine for our littlest tigers. Not only will this vaccine protect the children we hold so dear, but given the current guidelines, it will allow children to continue attending immediately after an exposure to a covid positive case, instead of having to quarantine for 5 days, reducing additional stress on families.

We look forward to the year ahead knowing that our Margaret's House family will have this added protection against covid-19.

### ***Illness & Exclusion Criteria***

We understand that it is difficult for a family member to leave or miss work, but to protect other children; you may not bring a sick child to the center. The center has the right to refuse a child who appears ill. You will be called and asked to retrieve your child if your child exhibits any of the following symptoms while in care, this is not an all-inclusive list:

- Fever of 100°F or higher
- Cough
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Diarrhea – stools with blood or mucus, and/or uncontrolled, unformed stools that cannot be contained in a diaper/underwear or toilet
- Vomiting – green or bloody or more than 2 times during the previous 24 hours.
- Unexplained rash, unless a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease.
- Illness that prevents your child from participating in activities
- Illness that results in greater need for care than we can provide
- Acute change in behavior – this could include lethargy/lack of responsiveness, irritability, persistent crying, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing
- Mouth sores with drooling unless the child's health care provider states that the child is not infectious
- Pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge, until on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Head lice, until treatment and all nits are removed.
- Scabies, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Chickenpox, until all lesions have dried and crusted.
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough), until 5 days of antibiotics.
- Hepatitis A virus, until one week after immune globulin has been administered.
- Tuberculosis, until a health professional indicates the child is not infectious.
- Rubella, until 6 days after the rash appears.
- Mumps, until 5 days after onset of parotid gland swelling.
- Measles, until 4 days after onset of rash.

- Any child determined by local health department to be contributing to the transmission of an illness during an outbreak

**Children who have been ill may return when:**

- They have documentation from pediatrician saying they are free to return to group care OR a negative COVID test

**AND**

- They are free of fever, vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours.
- They have been treated with an antibiotic for 24 hours, if prescribed.
- They are able to participate comfortably in all usual activities.
- They are free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling (not related to teething) unless:
  - The child's physician signs a note stating that the child's condition is not contagious, and;
  - The involved areas can be covered by a bandage without seepage or drainage through the bandage.
- If a child had a reportable communicable disease, a physician's note stating that the child is no longer contagious and may return to our care is required.

**Margaret's House families are required to follow all RIT policies and procedures  
Please refer to the following link for updated information regarding COVID-19**

<https://www.rit.edu/ready/>

**Allergy Prevention**

Families are expected to notify us regarding children's food and environmental allergies. Families of children with diagnosed allergies are required to provide us a letter detailing the child's symptoms, reactions, treatments and care. A list of the children's allergies will be posted in the offices, each classroom and the kitchen. We are trained to familiarize ourselves and consult the list to avoid the potential of exposing children to substances to which they have known allergies.

**Medications**

We do not administer medication to children at Margaret's House unless all other options are exhausted and an arrangement has been made with Margaret's House administration. We ask that parents administer medication prior to arrival or after departure from the center. If a child requires a dose during the middle of the day we ask that the parent return to the center to administer the medication.

**OCFS Medication Consent Form for Prescription Medication**

**If extenuating circumstances leads to the determination that a child will receive medication administration at the center, parents must carefully read the following section:**

Parents must provide the center with a completed OCFS written "Medication Consent Form" with instructions from a healthcare provider for prescription medications. The parent/guardian must

complete a section of the form as does a child care program office representative. A “Log of Medication Administration” will then be attached and delivered to the child’s classroom.

A Medication Administration Training (MAT) certified staff person will administer any needed medication and record all information by completing the log items at the time of each dosage. Parents are required to sign the log at the end of each day, acknowledging that medicines have been given.

The medication label and the doctor’s written prescription *must have identical information* and include your child’s name, dosage, current date, frequency, and the name and phone number of the physician. All medications must be in the *original container with the potential side effects insert*. Please specify the dosage and time(s) to be administered for each medication.

**Parents must inform the office that medicine is needed on any given day.**

Please inform your child’s caregiver when you have administered medications at home. This will help us to be alert for changes in behavior, appearance, or signs of allergic reaction. Parents will be notified by phone of any side effects and/or adverse reactions to medications.

The New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) regulations state that “...medication may be administered only upon written permission of the parent or guardian and written instructions from a health care provider...the child day care center may administer over-the-counter topical ointments including sunscreen lotion and topically applied insect repellent, upon the written instructions of the parent or guardian.” When we are willing and able to administer prescription and non-prescription medication to children, these additional specific procedures must be followed:

All long-term medications (more than 10 days), prescription or *non*-prescription, must be discussed and approved by the director. In the case of medication that needs to be given on an ongoing, long-term basis, the authorization and consent forms must be reauthorized at least every six months. Any changes in the original medication authorization shall require a provider to obtain new instructions written by the licensed authorized prescriber and a change in the prescription.

**All medications should be handed in at the front office.** Medications should never be left in the child’s cubby and children should never be given even the simplest medications (Chap Stick, cough drops) to handle on their own at the center.

**Medication must be in the original container, with the side effects insert, labeled with the child’s complete name, the medication name, recommended dosage, time intervals for administration, method of administration, expiration date and, for prescription medication, the prescribers name and license number.**

**Non-prescription medications** also require written permission and instructions signed by the child’s primary care physician. The written permission must include your child’s name, dosage, current date, frequency, and all medications must be in the original container. Non-prescription medication should not be administered for more than a 3-day period unless a written order by the physician is received.

**Non-prescription topical ointments** such as diaper cream, teething cream or insect repellent require a note signed by the family, specifying frequency and dosage to be administered as well as the length of time the authorization is valid which cannot exceed 12 months. Families are required to provide the ointments labeled with child’s first and last name and sign for each ointment.

**Sunscreen** is recommended for protection before going outdoors. The Enrollment Agreement has a sunscreen consent section under "other agreements". This is where families will indicate whether or not they give permission for staff to reapply sunscreen before going outdoors. If your child will be using sunscreen, we request families put sunscreen on before arriving to school and our teachers will reapply in the afternoon. **Families are required to provide sunscreen labeled with child's first and last name.**

### ***Communicable Diseases***

When an enrolled child or an employee of the center has a (suspected) reportable disease, it is our legal responsibility to notify the local Board of Health or Department of Public Health. We will take care to notify families about exposure so children can receive preventive treatments. Included among the reportable illnesses are the following:

- Bacterial Meningitis
- Botulism
- Chicken Pox
- Diphtheria
- Haemophilus Influenza (invasive)
- Measles (including suspect)
- Meningococcal Infection (invasive)
- Poliomyelitis (including suspect)
- Rabies (human only)
- Rubella Congenital and Non-congenital (including suspect)
- Tetanus (including suspect)
- H1N1 Virus
- Any cluster/outbreak of illness
- Tuberculosis

## **SAFETY**

### ***Clothing***

Please dress your child in practical clothing that allows for freedom of movement and is appropriate for the weather. Your child will be involved in a variety of activities including: painting, outdoor play, sand, weather, and other sensory activities. Our playground is used as an extension of the center, and daily programs are conducted outside whenever weather permits.

One particular aspect of concern is the risk associated with children's clothing that may become entangled with climbing or sliding equipment that could lead to choking or other serious harm. All drawstrings from children's clothes should be removed as a precaution.

Sandals and flip-flops are not appropriate for center play and make it difficult for your child to participate in some activities. For safety reasons, **only sturdy sneakers or rubber soled shoes are acceptable. Sandals and open-toed shoes are a safety hazard and are not allowed.**

## ***Injuries***

Safety is a major concern in child care and so daily safety inspections are completed inside and outside the center area in order to prevent injuries. Basic First Aid will be administered by a trained caregiver in the event that your child sustains a minor injury (e.g., scraped knee). You will receive an incident report outlining the incident and course of action taken. If the injury produces significant swelling or needs medical attention, you will be contacted immediately. Should your child get a splinter, or any other object, lodged underneath their skin, we will inform you via Brightwheel so that you may take appropriate action. Each classroom is equipped with a first aid kit meeting the state regulations. Our staff is trained in CPR and First Aid.

In the event of a serious medical emergency, the child will be taken to the hospital immediately by ambulance, while we will attempt to contact you or an emergency contact.

More details regarding our plan to support your child's health can be found in our full Health Care Plan on our website under the "current families" section.

## ***Biting***

Biting is a normal stage of development that is common among infants and toddlers – and sometimes even among preschoolers. We are always upset when children are bitten in our program and we recognize how upsetting it is for parents. We also know that children bite for a variety of reasons and it is not necessarily related to behavior problems.

When biting happens, our response will be to care for and help the child who was bitten and to help the biter learn a more appropriate behavior. Our focus will not be on punishment for biting, but on effective replacement behaviors. Although rare and considered a last resort, termination of enrollment may be necessary in the case of ongoing and long-term biting behavior. In some instances, we may need to accept that our program is not a good match for a child.

## ***Respectful Behavior***

All children and families will be treated with respect and dignity. In return, we expect the same from all of our families. We will not tolerate hostile or aggressive behavior. If this occurs, or if your involvement with Margaret's House results in an impediment/disruption to our business practices, we reserve the right to ask you to control your behavior or to remove your children from our care.

## ***Smoking***

The poisons in secondhand smoke are especially harmful to infants and young children's developing bodies, therefore the indoor and outdoor center environment and vehicles used by the center are non-smoking areas at all times. The use of tobacco in any form is prohibited on the center's premises.

## ***Prohibited Substances***

The use of alcohol or illegal drugs is prohibited on the center's premises. Possession of illegal substances or unauthorized potentially toxic substances is prohibited.

Any adult who appears to be inebriated, intoxicated, or otherwise under the influence of mind-altering or polluting substances is required to leave the premises immediately.

## **Dangerous Weapons**

A dangerous weapon is a gun, knife, razor, or any other object, which by the manner it is used or intended to be used, is capable of inflicting bodily harm. Families, children, staff or guests (other than law enforcement officers) possessing a dangerous weapon will not be permitted onto the premises.

In cases that clearly involve a gun, or any other weapon on our premises, the police will be called and the individual(s) involved will be immediately removed from the premises. This policy applies to visible or concealed weapons.

## **Child Custody**

Without a court document, both parents/guardians have equal rights to custody. We are legally bound to respect the wishes of the parent/guardian with legal custody based on a certified copy of the most recent court order, active restraining order, or court-ordered visitation schedule. We will not accept the responsibility of deciding which parent/guardian has legal custody where there is no court documentation.

## **Suspected Child Abuse**

We are mandated reporters, and as such are required by law to report all observations of child abuse or neglect cases to the appropriate state authorities if we have reasonable cause to believe or suspect a child is suffering from abuse or neglect or is in danger of abuse or neglect, no matter where the abuse might have occurred. The child protective service agency will determine appropriate action and may conduct an investigation. It then becomes the role of the agency to determine if the report is substantiated and to work with the family to ensure the child's needs are met. Our center will cooperate fully with any investigation and will maintain confidentiality concerning any report of child abuse or neglect.

Child abuse and neglect can manifest itself in a variety of ways, there are many risk factors and many varied signs and symptoms. If you would like more information regarding child abuse and maltreatment, please visit [healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org) for more information:

<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/What-to-Know-about-Child-Abuse.aspx>

An adult who suspects child abuse or neglect can call the statewide toll free hotline at 1-800-342-3720. If you are deaf or hard of hearing please call TDD/TTY at 1-800-638-5163 or have your Video Relay System provider call 1-800-342-3720. If you feel that there is an immediate threat call 911 or the local police.

Additional information regarding prevention, identification, and reporting of Child Abuse and Maltreatment/Neglect can be found on the Margaret's House website under the "current families" section.

## **Regulatory Oversight**

All Childcare Centers in Monroe County are overseen by the Rochester Regional Office of the New York State Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS). Information regarding the New York State Child Day Care Regulations can be found on-line at <https://ocfs.ny.gov/programs/childcare/regulations/> and the Rochester Regional Offices can be reached at 259 Monroe Avenue, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Rochester, NY 14607, phone: 585-238-8531. The State OCFS maintains a toll-free child care complaint line during normal working hours, 800-732-5207.

## EMERGENCIES

In an emergency or time-critical situation when the Director is not present or reachable by phone, the Assistant Director serves as the acting director. If neither the Director nor the Assistant Director is present at the time of the emergency, the Staff Assistant will work closely with the most Senior Teacher to decide on a course of action. The names of the individuals in charge is posted on the parent bulletin board in the lobby of the center.

RIT Public Safety monitors the child care center operations. Officers patrol the area and are called upon in the event of an emergency; they also inform the center of potentially dangerous situations. Public Safety informs staff, faculty, and students of emergency situations via the Campus Emergency e-mail Notification system, RITAlert (more information on RIT Alert and MH Alert systems in the "Closing Due to Extreme Weather").

The center's emergency action plan includes evacuation procedures which are practiced monthly (see "Fire Drills"). Throughout the school year 'shelter-in-place' drills and 'shelter-in-place' evacuation drills" will also be performed so that children and staff can practice what they may need to do in an actual emergency. Families will be notified in advance of these drills and need to be aware that access to the building may be restricted during these drills.

Our first evacuation sites are outside the dorm area and the playground. Primarily, our first evacuation site is between Residence Halls C and D, just SOUTH of our main entrance. For longer evacuations (more than 15 minutes and/or inclement weather, dangerous conditions, etc.) we proceed to Rosica Hall, Grace Watson /bldg. 25 or NTID Student Development Center depending on the nature of the emergency or direction from Public Safety. In the event of an extended evacuation, we will contact families as quickly as possible via phone to notify them of the plan for reuniting them with their children.

### *Lost or Missing Child*

In the unlikely event that a child becomes lost or separated from a group, all available staff will search for the child. The family and public safety will be notified immediately if a child is missing. Our teachers always carry a cell phone and have copies of the Emergency Contact forms at all times.

### *Fire Safety*

Fire Drills will be scheduled and executed once a month at Margaret's House. If the fire drill occurs while you are present, follow the lead of the staff and evacuate with us. Stay with your child's group and follow them to the designated meeting place.

### *Emergency Transportation*

In the event your child needs to be transported due to a medical emergency, if no other authorized person can be contacted and the need for transportation is essential, an ambulance will be called for transportation. A proper escort will accompany and remain with the child until a family member or emergency contact arrives.

# Margaret's House

## FY2022-2023 Calendar

8/22/22	First Day of Classes and ALL Enrollment Contracts
8/24/22	Munch -n- Mingle Family Event
9/1/22 – 9/2/22	Parent Information Nights
9/5/22	Closed for Labor Day
10/10/22 – 10/21/22	Parent Teacher Conferences
10/26/22	The Great Hall Pumpkin Patch Event
11/7/22 – 11/11/22	Bring Your Parents to Lunch Week
11/23/22	Close at 2 p.m.
11/24/22 – 11/25/22	Closed for Thanksgiving Break
12/16/22	Last Day for Student Contracts
12/23/22	Close at 2 p.m.
12/24/22 – 1/2/23	Closed for Holidays
12/26/22 – 12/30/22	Tuition Free Week
1/16/23	First Day Back for Student Contracts
2/3/23	Family Fun Event
3/17/23	Professional Development Day
3/20/23 – 3/31/23	Parent Teacher Conferences
4/3/23-4/7/23	Week of the Young Child
4/28/23	Margaret's Birthday Celebration
5/12/23	Last Day for Student Contracts
5/18/23-5/19/23	Closed Professional Development Day
5/29/23	Closed for Memorial Day
6/9/23	Last Day for 10-month Contracts
7/4/23	Closed for Independence Day
8/25/23	Closed for Teacher Prep Day
8/28/23	First Day of Classes Fall 2023 and ALL Enrollment Agreements

<b>Color Keys</b>	Margaret's House is Closed
	10-month Contract Start/End Dates
	Student Contract Start/End Dates
	Family Event Planned (More information to come)
	Parent/Teacher Conferences

September						
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July						
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August						
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\*\*Any additions or changes will be sent out via email and/or newsletters

OCFS- 6018 (3/2015)

NEW YORK STATE  
OFFICE OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES  
**PLAN FOR BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT**  
**Child Day Care Programs**

Provider/Director Name: **Jennifer Tills** Facility ID Number: **43327**  
 Program Name: **Margaret's House @ RIT** Date: **08 / 31 / 2021**

This form may be used to meet the regulatory requirement to submit to the Office a written plan for behavior management. You can choose to use this form to meet this requirement, or submit an acceptable alternative.

Valuable information is available from your local child care resource and referral agency and other resources. Information is also available on the agency website: [ocfs.ny.gov](http://ocfs.ny.gov).

The program is responsible for educating all staff on this plan upon employment and as needed. The program must supply copies of this plan to all staff and parents of children enrolled in the program.

- A child may only be disciplined by the director, group teacher, assistant teacher, provider, substitute, and/or assistant.
- The program must apply all rules consistently and appropriately to the ages of the children and their developmental level and abilities.
- Any discipline used will relate to the child's actions and be handled without prolonged delay.
- A child may be separated briefly from the group, but, only long enough to gain self-control and must be in view of, supervised and supported by a director, group teacher, assistant teacher, provider, substitute, and/or assistant.
- Corporal punishment is prohibited.
- No child can be isolated in an adjacent room, hallway, closet, darkened area, play area or any other area where a child cannot be seen, or supervised.
- Withholding or using food, rest or sleep as punishment is prohibited.
- Methods of interaction that punish, demean or humiliate a child are prohibited.
- Any abuse or maltreatment of a child, either as an incident of discipline or otherwise, is absolutely prohibited. Any child care program must not tolerate or in any manner condone an act of abuse or neglect of a child by an employee, volunteer, any person under the programs control.
- Physical restraint is prohibited.

**By submitting this form, our program chooses to implement and follow this plan for behavior management, and will attach any additional information as needed.**

The following acceptable child guidance techniques will be used (check all that apply):

- Redirect. In a conflict, give an alternate toy or activity to one of the children competing for the toy. Have multiples of popular toys.
- Focus on "Do" rather than "Don't." For example, "We walk inside" instead of "Stop running inside."
- Offer choices: "You can either sit on the rug or at the table for story time."
- Encourage children to use friendly words rather than physical acts. For example, suggest using the phrase, "I was playing with that toy."
- Praise positive behavior: "Thank you for using your words."
- Model desired behaviors in order for the children to learn by example.
- Arrange the program space to positively impact children's behavior. For example, avoid large open spaces that might encourage children to run indoors.
- Listen to the children and respond to their needs proactively to achieve their goals. Keeping the children engaged with activities helps prevent conflict.
- For preschool and school age children, involve the children in the development of the classroom rules and consequences.
- Other (please describe)

If applicable, please attach any additional information regarding your behavior management plan.

## RIT Alert and Margaret's House

 **R·I·T Alert** is the university's emergency notification system. It consists of two technology systems to ensure redundancy and to use multiple modes of communication in order to reach as many people as possible. RIT Alerts are sent by the Public Safety Department to everyone in the system. The link to more information about RIT Alert is <https://www.rit.edu/fa/buscont/content/rit-alert-emergency-notification-system>.

- Alertus is a facility-based system that activates beacons, desktop notifications, social media and web sites.
- Everbridge is used by Margaret's House to send individual messages to people in the system primarily to mobile phones (text and voice).

### Parent / Guardian "Enrollment" in Everbridge:

RIT Employee – Employee information is taken directly (and automatically) from Oracle Self Service. The employee must input their mobile phone number in the system.

Non-Affiliated Spouse or Other Individual – The employee must input this mobile phone number in Oracle Self-Service as a *mobile secondary number*. This will be sent to Everbridge.

### Student "Enrollment" in Everbridge:

Student – Student information is taken directly (and automatically) from the Student Information System (SIS). The student must input their mobile phone number in the SIS for it to be sent to Everbridge.

Non-Affiliated Spouse or Other Individual – The student must input this mobile phone number via start.rit.edu.

### **Non-Affiliated Parent/Guardian**

A non-affiliated individual must be added to the system manually. Provide the first name, last name, mobile phone number, and secondary mobile phone number to Margaret's House administration.

## Follow-Up and Non-Emergency Communication

Everbridge can be used by Margaret's House administration to send follow-up messages after RIT Alerts or non-emergency information of an urgent nature to parents and guardians who have mobile phone numbers in the system. The messages could include:

- “We’re Okay” message after an RIT Alert is sent
- Alternate pickup location or time if there is a problem with the facility

In order to be included in this type of communication, parent’s / guardians must give permission to Margaret's House administration to be added to a Margaret's House only notification group.

## Instructions for Faculty/Staff to Add/Update Contact Information

Faculty and staff (including Adjunct Faculty and RIT Temporary Employees) information for the RIT Alert emergency notification system is taken from the Human Resources Information System (HRIS) – Oracle Self Service.

Employees may add a non-affiliated spouse mobile phone number as a *mobile secondary phone type*.

1. Go to [myinfo.rit.edu](http://myinfo.rit.edu).
2. Log in with your user name and password. You will be taken to the My Personal Information and Contacts page
3. Review your phone number information in the Phone Numbers and Emergency Notification Information section.
4. Click the Update button on the right to add, change or delete information
5. To update contact Type already listed, simply change the number shown
6. To add a secondary mobile phone number:
  - a. Click on Add Another Row
  - b. Select *mobile secondary phone* from the drop-down box and add number
  - c. When finished, click on the Next button to the right
  - d. Review your changes and click Submit
7. To delete a contact Type, click on the delete row icon (trash can) next to it

**Instructions for Student to Add/Update Contact Information**

**Student Primary Mobile Phone – Student Information System**

1. Go to the [Student Information System \(SIS\) Information Access Center](#)
2. Click on the *Student Information System* link

The screenshot shows the RIT Student Information System Information Access Center. The top navigation bar includes the RIT logo, the text "Rochester Institute of Technology", and links for "Index", "Directories", and "Search". The main title "Student Information System Information Access Center" is displayed in red. Below the title, there are three main categories: "Students", "Public", and "NEW - Student Apps". The "Students" category contains links for "Student Info System", "Enrollment Verification", and "eServices". The "Public" category contains links for "SIS Class Search", "SIS Course Catalog Search", "Tiger Center Public Class Search", "Tiger Center Course Catalog", and "Visual tour of the Class Search". The "NEW - Student Apps" category contains a brief description and a link to "Tiger Center".

3. Log in using your RIT Username and Password
4. In the Student Center area, add or change the number in the *Cell/Mobile Phone* section

The screenshot shows the "Personal Information" section of the RIT Student Center. It includes fields for "Emergency Contact Name" (with a dropdown menu showing "other personal..."), "Permanent Address" (redacted), "Current Address" (redacted), and "Cell/Mobile Phone" (highlighted with a red oval). Below these fields is the "RIT Student Email" field.

5. Save

## **Student Secondary Mobile Phone – start.rit.edu**

- 1. Go to [start.rit.edu](http://start.rit.edu)**
- 2. Click on *RIT Alert Preferences***

**Welcome to start.rit.edu!**

This site allows you to modify your information at RIT. You can change your RIT Computer Account password. You can also manage email, identity, and contact information. Some of this information is provided by authoritative sources at RIT and can only be viewed here. Additionally you can register new computers on the campus network or view and modify your existing computers.



- 3. Log in using your RIT Username and Password**

A screenshot of the RIT Login page. It features a 'RIT Login' header and a 'Login to start.rit.edu' sub-header. Below this is a 'RIT Username' input field and a 'Password' input field. A 'Log In' button is positioned between them. At the bottom of the page, there are links for 'Forgot Username?' and 'Forgot Password?'. Below these links, text reads: 'Need assistance? Please contact the ITS Service Desk at 585-475-HELP (4357) or [servicedesk@rit.edu](mailto:servicedesk@rit.edu)'.

- 4. Add secondary mobile phone number (this number is up to the student)**

- 5. Save**