

## Attendance and Illness Policy

Great Steps Ahead operates 12 months a year, Monday through Friday, with sessions arranged between each family and their specialist. Every effort is made to accommodate schedules and priorities of the family. A monthly calendar is reviewed and given to family, when necessary, along with pertinent contact addresses and phone numbers. GSA also encourages the parent or care giver to be actively involved in each session. An essential component of this program is the formation of the professional-caregiver partnership. Without parent participation, services cannot be delivered within the context of the family and greater cultural community. We affirm the concept that recognizes the family and community form the integral framework from which each child uniquely develops.

Families are encouraged to leave messages at the appropriate phone numbers when an absence is anticipated 24 hours before an appointment. In the event of sudden illness, families should make every attempt to contact the specialist before the scheduled session. Rescheduling appointments are encouraged and will be accommodated whenever possible. Please call if a phone is available and a late arrival to an appointment is anticipated. Staff will wait 15 minutes before making other arrangements.

To protect the staff at GSA and other children, please call your specialist when your child has a fever, rash, diarrhea, or cold so we can help you determine whether services are appropriate during the illness. Illnesses can be very contagious and might have serious consequences for compromised immune systems.

In the event that absences become numerous and without apparent just cause, an established program process will be initiated to ascertain reasons for absences. Frequent absences over a 4 to 6 week period are sufficient reason to warrant formal inquiry by the Director. If there are 3 consecutive "no shows" for scheduled appointments, temporary discontinuation of services will occur until communication/meeting between the specialist, family and pertinent IFSP team members can be arranged. This guideline has been established to ascertain as quickly as possible the reason for the missed appointments and finding solutions or modifications to services.