



*Handbook &
Operational Policies*

514 N. 3rd
Temple, TX 76501
Phone 254-770-1774
Fax 254-218-3511

www.thepoint.tv/startingpoint

Our goal is to provide the children enrolled in this facility loving quality care. We provide a clean, safe, and comfortable environment for your children to learn, grow, and have fun. We believe in the value of nurturing the whole child – body, mind, and spirit. The body is nurtured through outdoor play and inside free play; the mind is nurtured through arts and crafts, learning curriculum, reading, and musical activities. We nurture the spirit by prayer time, bible story activities, and through the operating of our Christian principles and morals and facing each day as, “This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.” (Psalm 118:24)

In order for us to make our relationship mutually beneficial and enjoyable we have created this handbook to make you aware of our policies and requirements. We ask that you please read all the information contained in this handbook. If you have any questions or concerns, we will be more than happy to discuss them with you. These policies become effective upon acceptance and you will be asked to sign a statement advising that you have read the policy and are in agreement with it.

Enrollment Policy



There are several forms that must be completed and in our possession before we can assume the responsibility of caring for your child. There is NO EXCEPTION. This ensures that your child will get the very best care possible. All forms must be updated either every 6 months or annually unless sooner depending on need. The forms are as follows:

- ❖ Signed Contract & Rate Agreement
- ❖ Signed Parent Handbook Acknowledgment
- ❖ Admission Information Form
- ❖ Sign out Authorization Form
- ❖ Child Shot Record/Health Statement
- ❖ Infant/Child Questionnaire
- ❖ Food Program Form

Trial Period



The first two weeks of the child’s enrollment will be considered a trial period. During that time the parent or provider may terminate the child care agreement at any time. After the trial period is complete, two weeks written notice is required to terminate the agreement. (See Termination Policy)

Registration Fee/Late Fees/NSF Fees



- ❖ A non-refundable \$75.00 registration fee will be charged upon registration of each family. This covers cost and time involved in registration and materials.
- ❖ A \$25 annual supply fee.
- ❖ There will be a \$5.00 per day late fee assessed for each day that payment is late. Repeated late payments may be grounds for termination.
- ❖ A late fee of \$5.00 will be charged for late pickups 6:00pm-6:05pm. In addition, a fee of \$10 will be charged for late pickups between 6:06pm-6:10pm. In addition, a fee of \$1 a minute will be charged for late pickups after 6:10pm. Payment is due at the time of pickup. Habitual tardiness may result in termination of services.
- ❖ There will be a \$35.00 fee for all returned checks. Repayment must be made in cash and immediately. After two returned checks all payments made must be paid by money order or cash.

Pre-registration requires \$75 registration fee and first weeks' tuition which are both non-refundable. This guarantees that you will be able to start on the day that we agree on. This date is secured and cannot be extended to a later date. If an earlier date is needed, you may speak with the director on availability.

Tuition/Payment Procedures



Your specific rates are outlined in your Contract and Rate Agreement. Tuition is due the Friday **before** the week of care. Tuition and fees are computed with the following factors in mind:

- ❖ Food, health supplies, craft/activity/curriculum supplies, toys, play equipment and books
- ❖ Outside activities
- ❖ Provider's continuing education
- ❖ Teacher salary
- ❖ Facility food and supplies
- ❖ Record keeping and daily facility maintenance

Hours of Operation



Normal hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 6:30am to 6:00pm. We are not available for evening and weekend care.

We maintain an open door policy for parents during day care hours. This means that parents are always welcome to call or drop in to see their children. We do ask that you take into consideration our schedule when dropping in or calling, and remember that visitors usually cause children to react in an excited manner. Class schedules are provided, and we ask that you please arrange visitation when it will not coincide with the children's nap time.

Arrival and Departures



All children must be clocked in and out daily. NO EXCEPTIONS. If you do not clock your child in or out you will be charged a \$5.00 fee per check in and per check out. We ask that children arrive clean and fed (unless arriving to have meal time here at the facility). It is normal for some children to have difficulty separating from parents. We ask that you please make your drop off brief; the longer you prolong the departure, the more difficult it gets. A smile, cheerful good-bye kiss, and a reassuring word that you will be back is exactly what your child needs. Your child's teacher or teacher's aide will always greet your child and help them to get involved in play or activities to help make the transition easier. We ask that you call the daycare if your child will be in after 9:00am or absent for the day. This helps us with lunch count. You are not permitted to drop off after 9:00am if you have not called the center to let us know that you will be late. Please be mindful of our nap times, 11:30-2:15, and make every effort as possible to not drop off during those times.

Drop off and pick up times are not good times to discuss issues or problems. If you would like to have a conference with either the teacher or the director we will be more than happy to arrange a time that will fit both of our schedules. We do not want to discuss issues concerning children in the presence of anyone but their parents.

Children will only be released to his/her parent or guardian unless otherwise designated by the parents. If someone other than the parent is to pick up the child you must notify us ahead of time and in writing. A child will not be released to anyone without a PICTURE I.D. NO EXCEPTIONS. Please advise anyone you allow to pick up your child that they must present a picture I.D. We do this for the protection and welfare of your child as well as our agency.

Anyone who appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol will not be permitted to leave with a child. Appropriate child seats will also be required prior to release if necessary as stated by state law.



The driveway in the front of the building is for quick pick up and drop off only. Please utilize the parking lot on the side of the building as much as possible. If your child is on the playground at the end of the day, please pick them up at the front gate. The back door is used for children only and we would like to keep access as limited as possible.

Absences



IMPORTANT!! - **THERE WILL BE NO REFUNDS OR ADJUSTMENTS MADE FOR DAYS MISSED DUE TO ILLNESS, HOLIDAYS, OR DAYS OFF.** A place has been reserved for each child that cannot be filled on a short term basis.

Following is a list of holidays that this facility will observe:

- ❖ New Years Day
- ❖ Good Friday
- ❖ Memorial Day
- ❖ 4th of July
- ❖ Labor Day
- ❖ Columbus Day / In-service Teacher Training
- ❖ Thanksgiving Day and the day after
- ❖ Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

Holidays that fall on Saturdays will be observed the Friday prior; holidays that fall on Sundays will be observed the following Monday. We will notify you of any early release dates and times at the first of the year when our holiday list comes out.

Weather



If we are under severe or threatening weather conditions, we may close for business. Typically, if the schools are closed then we are closed also.

Clothing and Attire



Children should arrive dressed for play. All girls should wear shorts underneath dresses/skirts. We like to have fun! Having fun involves outdoor play and arts and crafts that can at times get messy. We ask that you please provide an oversized long T-shirt or an art smock so that it can be worn over the child's clothes during arts and crafts time. We ask that you please do not dress your child in nice clothing and expect them to be spotless when you arrive to pick them up. Clothing should be comfortable and seasonally appropriate for outdoor play. No flip flops or soft sole shoes are allowed. Closed toe shoes or tennis shoes are required. If in doubt, please stop by the office. Children are not allowed to wear any necklaces, bracelets, or rings to school.

Personal Belongings



We prefer that children do not bring toys from home unless it is something that can be shared with the entire group (i.e. books, games, etc.). Little ones often have difficulty sharing and this is even harder when it is their own special toys. If toys are brought, please note that they may be put away, if they are the cause of disagreements among the children. Exceptions to this policy will be that a child may bring a favorite toy for naptime and toys may be brought for show and tell activities. We are not responsible for the loss or breakage of personal items. All personal items must be clearly marked with the child's name.

Supplies



Parents must provide the following items:

COMPLETE CHANGE OF CLOTHING FOR ALL AGE GROUPS.

Infants: Diapers, wipes, powders/ointments, pacifier, bottles, formula, baby food, bibs, nasal syringe, and a complete change of clothes.

Toddlers: Diapers (if applicable), pull ups, wipes, pacifiers, powders/ointments, blanket for rest time, pillow for rest time, art smock or large t-shirt, and a complete change of clothes.

All personal belongings should be marked with your child's name. It is not necessary to bring eating utensils, cups or dishes. If any of these items are brought, they must be marked with the child's name, to avoid mix-ups with other children.

Mealtimes and Snacks



Meals consist of breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack. Children who arrive after meal times should arrive fed. Menus will be posted on the bulletin board in each classroom. Copies of the menu are provided to parents upon request.

7:30am – 7:50am Breakfast

10:45am – 11:10am Lunch – Infants, Toddlers

11:05am -11:45am -Twos and Older Two's

11:45am – 12:05pm Lunch – Threes

12:05pm – 12:25pm Lunch – Preschool

2:45pm – 4:00pm Snack (starting with toddlers/twos)

If your child requires a special diet, we will need to discuss the conditions as well as document the needs of the child. We will need to have a physician write instructions describing any foods the child is not permitted to eat. If possible, an appropriate substitution will be made. In some instances, children with special meal needs will have to have the parents supply the meals. **If your child has any food allergies we require that this is given to us in writing and documented in your child's records.**

We ask that you please do not bring special snacks for your child unless there is enough for all the children. This is just common courtesy and will avoid conflict between the children.

Parents of infants will need to supply all formula, breast milk, and baby food. We provide Sam's Choice infant formula with iron and baby cereal. If you choose to use our formula and cereal, you must fill out

the food program form. We will need to have written documentation of their schedule in order to meet your infant's needs.

Cleanliness/Hygiene



We do our best to maintain strict cleanliness and hygiene standards. Children's hands are washed before and after meals and after toileting. We use paper towels for drying hands, so children do not have to use the same towel. If you would like for your child to brush his/her teeth following meals, we ask that you please provide the toothpaste & toothbrush along with a portable holder that we can label and place in your child's cubby.

Infants sleep in separate cribs supplied with clean sheets. All bedding is washed regularly. Toddlers use washable nap mats or cots for naptime. Each child has a separate mat or cot that is numbered for their individual use. All mats and cots are cleaned with disinfectant after each use.

Each Friday you are required to take any blankets, pillow cases, etc. that your child uses home in order to wash them. Please don't forget to bring them back on Monday!

Children use separate cups, plates, bowls and eating utensils. High chair trays, booster seats, etc. are disinfected and cleaned after each use.

Toilet Training



When you feel your child is ready for toilet teaching, we ask that you begin this teaching **at home** during a weekend or vacation. We will follow through and encourage your child while they are in our care. Toilet training will be done in a relaxed manner with the cooperation of the family. **Your child must be showing signs of readiness**. If you would like information on toilet training, we will be more than happy to provide you with some.

Children should not be kept in diapers part time and training pants part time as this can be confusing and delay the process. We ask that your child be kept in pull ups or appropriate training pants at all times. Parents need to supply training pants with plastic pants or pull ups, plus a couple of extra changes of clothing each day (don't forget socks and shoes!). We also ask that during toilet training you dress your child in "user friendly" clothing as much as possible. The best items are shorts and pants with elastic waists, or dresses. Try to avoid really tight clothing, pants with snaps and zippers, and overalls. These are difficult for children to remove "in a hurry."

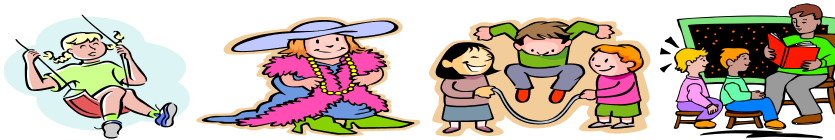
Naps/Quiet Time



There will be designated nap/rest time each day. All children must nap, rest, read or play quietly during this period. Rest time gives everyone a much needed break during the day. Without rest time, some children are argumentative in the afternoon, short-tempered with others, and not real happy when they go home in the evening.

Infants nap at varying times and their schedules will be accommodated.

Activities/Curriculum



We do not provide transportation, nor do we do field trips.

We will utilize a variety of activities to allow your children to have fun, improve social skills, and to encourage creative expression. Free play, reading, arts and crafts, music/singing, dancing, play pretend, and puzzles are just some of the activities we will be doing. We do not have any splashing or wading pools, but we do have water table play.

Television is not used on a daily basis and is not a part of our normal daily schedules. Television will be used as a special reward, activity during rainy days, and an extension to the lesson plan. In these cases, we usually watch no more than one hour of television per day. Viewing is limited to movies that have been approved by management. Examples include: Disney, Biblical, and Educational.

We carefully screen everything the children watch. We avoid any type of graphic images, potentially frightening images, unpleasant language, or anything of that nature. We choose appropriate materials based on our professional conservative and Christian principles.

Children 18 months and over will participate in a daily curriculum. Usually this curriculum uses bible stories, art and craft projects, games, songs, finger plays, storytelling, exercises, and much more. Some of the projects will be taken home to share with the family and others will proudly be displayed in the classrooms. The weekly activity schedule is posted on the bulletin board in each classroom. This is not a rigorous academic program but a time to provide a little extra learning stimulation for the children while having fun.

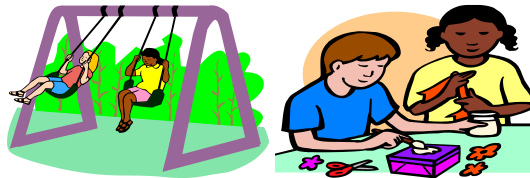
Parental Involvement



There will be times and ways you can get involved in your child's day care experience. You are welcomed and encouraged to participate in any or all of these. Some examples of ways to be involved include:

- ❖ Lending objects for units of study
- ❖ Coming and talking about your job, when asked
- ❖ Helping to provide treats or other items for our parties

Indoor/Outdoor Play



We provide a variety of age-appropriate toys for indoor play. During free play time each child may select one or two things at a time to play with. Children can get easily frustrated or upset when there are too many toys to choose from. It is also more difficult for them to help with clean up because too many toys everywhere can be overwhelming. We will show them how to put things away before selecting other toys. This also allows all the children to have an opportunity to play with a variety of toys.

We will be playing outdoors every day that weather permits. Please make sure that your child is appropriately dressed for outdoor play at all times. Children are scheduled to go outside once in the morning and once in the afternoon. Our outdoor play ranges from 15-45 minutes depending on the weather. You may bring bug spray and sunscreen to keep in your child's cubby to use especially during the spring/summer months. Your child's teacher or teacher's aid will apply with your permission upon going outside.

Infants

All parents are required to complete an Infant Feeding Schedule upon enrollment which will be updated every 30 days. We will also have you complete an Infant Information Sheet that will help us in providing better care for your child. This sheet will ask you specific questions regarding your infant's needs as well as some of your personal preferences. Each infant will have a supervised nap period that allows the infant to maintain his or her own pattern of sleeping and waking periods.

All bottles, pacifiers, food, diapers, wipes, and clothing must be labeled with your infant's first and last name. All feedings, diaper changing, and activities will be documented throughout the day. A daily report will be given to you at the time of pick up.

All parents are required to sign the Safe Sleep for Infants form upon enrollment. This form relates to sleep requirements and restrictions, including sleep positioning, and crib requirements and restrictions, including mattresses, bedding, blankets, toys and restrictive devices.

We provide a comfortable place for our moms to breastfeed in the classroom or in the sanctuary for more privacy. You have the right to breastfeed or provide breastmilk for your child while in our care.

Discipline Policy



We maintain a positive discipline policy, which focuses on prevention, redirection, love, consistency and firmness. Two main patterns of behavior are stressed: respect for other people and respect for property. Below is our Discipline and Guidance Policy:

- **Discipline must be:**
 1. Individualized and consistent for each child;
 2. Appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and
 3. Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control

- **A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following:**
 1. Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior;
 2. Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements;
 3. Redirecting behavior using positive statements; and
 4. Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

- **There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:**
 1. Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment;
 2. Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training;
 3. Pinching, shaking, or biting a child;
 4. Hitting a child with a hand or instrument;
 5. Putting anything in or on a child's mouth;
 6. Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child;
 7. Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language;
 8. Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed; and
 9. Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age.

If a discipline problem arises that does not respond to the above mentioned techniques, we will hold a conference with the parents. Together, we will try to find a solution. If your child's behavior prevents us from being able to properly care for the other children, you may be called to remove your child from care. If the problem continues, other arrangements for the care of your child will have to be made, for the safety and well-being of all.



Starting Point is a “well-child” care facility. Every effort is taken to reduce the spread of illness by encouraging hand washing and other sanitary practices. Your cooperation with our Illness Policy is extremely important. The following Illness Policy is enforced for the health and well-being of all concerned:

The following would prohibit a child from being admitted for care:

1. The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in child care center activities including outdoor play;
2. The illness results in a greater need for care than caregivers can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children in care;
3. The child has one of the following, unless medical evaluation by a health care professional indicates that you can include the child in center activities:
 - a) Oral temperature of 101 degrees or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs of symptoms of illness;
 - b) A tympanic (ear) temperature above 100 degrees that is accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness; or
 - c) An axillary (armpit) temperature above 100 degrees that is accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness; or
 - d) Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness such as lethargy, abnormal breathing, uncontrolled diarrhea, two or more vomiting episodes in 24 hours, rash with fever, mouth sores with drooling, behavior changes, or other signs that the child may be severely ill; or
4. A health care professional has diagnosed the child with a communicable disease, and the child does not have medical documentation to indicate that the child is no longer contagious.

In the event that a child becomes ill and needs to be picked up, the parent(s) will be called and will be expected to come pick the child up within one hour. If the parent(s) cannot be reached, or have not arrived within an hour, the emergency contact person will be called and asked to come and pick the child up.

A child needs to be fever free for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to Daycare, that means the child is fever free without the aid of Tylenol® or any other fever reducing substance.

Medical Emergencies



Minor bumps and scratches are inevitable, but we will make every effort to keep the children safe through supervision and childproofing. Minor injuries will receive appropriate first aid and you will be notified of any accidents. If an emergency injury or illness occurs, you will be contacted immediately. If necessary, your child will be taken to the nearest hospital you documented on the child's admission information form.

Parental Notifications



The following are minimum standards rule for all parental notifications for Emergency or Medical Situations:

We will notify a parent **immediately** after a child:

1. Is injured and the injury requires medical attention by a health-care professional
2. Has a sign or symptom requiring the exclusion from the center
3. Has been involved in a situation that placed the child at risk.
4. Has been involved in any situation that renders the center unsafe, such as a fire, flood, or damage to the center as result of severe weather.

Parents will be notified of less serious injuries when the parent picks the child up from the center.

All parents in the center will be notified within 48 hours of becoming aware that a child or employee has contracted a communicable disease.

A parent will be notified and a signature obtained on an Incident/Illness report whenever a child is injured while in the center.

Medications



Medication can be administered to your child in our care only with a signed Permission for Medication Administration form. The authorization must include the following:

The times our director/assistant director is to administer each medication according to label directions; Medication must be in the original container labeled with the child's full name and the date brought to the child care center.

If your child has a recurring medical problem such as headaches, asthma attacks, or allergic reactions, we ask that you sign a Medication authorization form to allow us to administer the medication when symptoms occur for up to a six-month period. We also ask that you give us written documentation of

what symptom to watch for and how the medicine should be administered. We will notify you before administering medications.

Conferences & Questions

Should you have any questions and concerns that you wish to discuss we want you to know that we are always here for you. We believe that continued communication between staff and parents is a crucial part of effective care giving.

At the sign in sheet there are Director Contact Forms available for you to complete should you wish to use them. You may also call the director and set up appointments or call-meetings to discuss any questions or concerns you may have.

Immunizations & Other Testing



Each child enrolled must meet applicable immunization requirements specified by the Texas Department of Health & Immunizations. You can access the Texas Department of Health Internet website at www.tdh.state.tx.us/immunize to find more information. These immunization records are required before enrollment can begin. If you choose to exempt your child from any immunizations, you must have a notarized Affidavit Exemption from Immunizations for Reasons of Conscience form. This form is only valid for two years from the date it is notarized. You will be required to get another one as needed.

All enrollees who are four years of age or older will need to be screened for possible vision and hearing problems. First time enrollees will need to be screened prior to completion of the first semester of enrollment or within 120 calendar days of enrollment, whichever is longest. Parents must provide us with any copies of shot records, vision and hearing tests.

A written health statement from a health-care professional who has examined the child within the past year is required upon admission. This statement must indicate that the child is physically able to take part in the child care program.

Termination Policy



We reserve the right to terminate for the following reasons (but not limited to):

- ❖ Failure to pay
- ❖ Failure to complete the required forms
- ❖ Lack of parental cooperation
- ❖ Failure of child to adjust to the center after a reasonable amount of time
- ❖ Physical or verbal abuse of any person or property
- ❖ Our inability to meet the child's needs
- ❖ Lack of compliance with handbook regulations
- ❖ Serious illness of child

We appreciate as much advance notice as possible when terminating and will give the same courtesy in return. Parents are required to give two weeks written notice when they decide to terminate child care. The two weeks will be paid in full, regardless of whether or not the child is in attendance.

We will give two weeks written notice of termination for which full tuition is due, whether or not the child is in attendance. We reserve the right to give written notice of immediate termination where there are extreme circumstances that affect the well-being of the provider or other children in attendance. In this situation, the two weeks payment of tuition is still required.

Child Abuse/Neglect



It is provincial law and our responsibility as a child care provider to report any and all abuse or neglect to a child. All of our caregivers are trained in the signs of abuse and neglect as well as the procedures for reporting such abuse or neglect. Lastly...

If you have any comments, complaints, or praise that you wish to share with the local licensing office you may do so at:

Texas Department of Protective & Regulatory Services
2500 N. Main, Bldg. B
Belton, TX 76513
254-939-4255

www.txchildcaresearch.org

Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400

If at any time you would like to review the Minimum Standard Rules set forth by the Texas Department of Protective & Regulatory Services, we want you to know that they are available to you. Please see the Director or your child's teacher. A copy of the Minimum Standard Rules is in each classroom. Copies of the most recent inspection reports are located on the bulletin board in the front hallway. If at any time you wish review inspection reports & minimum standards, please see the Director.

Fire:

Familiarize yourself with fire extinguisher locations. In the event of a fire that is contained and can be put out with the use of a fire extinguisher the teachers' first responsibility is the safety of the children. Remove the children immediately. Fire escape routes are posted in each room and should be followed. Be sure to familiarize yourself with the fire escape routes. If possible to use the extinguisher to put out the fire; do so and call 911.

Tornado/Severe Weather:

We have designated bad weather safety areas, maps are found in each room. In case of an emergency all staff and children will take shelter along the wall sitting with their heads down covered by their arms.

Volatile Persons:

In the event that the staff feels that an individual's behavior is endangering any child 911 should be contacted immediately.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION PREPAREDNESS

In case of an emergency that would require evacuation from our center we have two separate locations depending upon required evacuation distances set emergency workers.

If the requirement is to just to evacuate the premises, all of our children will be taken to **the Scott and White EMS building directly across the street** from the center. Staff will wear safety hazard vests and stop traffic as children cross the street holding their safety ropes with their designated teachers.

If the requirement for an evacuation is greater than one block (as in the case of a gas emergency), the **Central Fire Department located at 210 N 3rd** will be our designated evacuation location.

Emergency Contact Numbers are:

Ashlyn Fuller-Director	254-760-8434
Elizabeth Fuller-Assistant Director	254-421-7584
Annette Donaldson- Owner	254-931-0911
Rick Donaldson-Owner	254-718-7959

Current Tuition Rates



Our current enrollment tuition for care is as follows:

Fulltime Enrollment Weekly Rates

Infants (birth – 12 months)	\$140.00
Infants (13months – 17 months)	\$125.00
Toddlers (18months – 2 years)	\$115.00
Threes	\$110.00
Pre-schoolers (4yrs – 5yrs 11mos)	\$105.00

After School Weekly Rates (3:00pm-6:00pm)

School age (5yrs – 7yrs)	\$60.00
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