While we love the children we help bring into this world, we regretfully must ask you not to bring children from 3 months to 10 years of age with you when you come for your appointments. Because this is a very unpopular policy, I would like to explain the medical reasons behind it.

Children of this age are exposed to and contract many viruses in the course of their time at school and play with their friends. While they may not make the children themselves very sick, exposure of them to the pregnant women in our waiting room is dangerous to the unborn children. When a woman is pregnant, her immune system is in a “hibernation” mode, which allows the baby, which it technically a “foreign body” to her immune system, to grow safely in her womb without the immune system rejecting it as it would like a kidney transplant, for instance. This “hibernation mode,” while it allows the unborn child to grow safely, unfortunately makes the pregnant mother more susceptible to acquiring these virus infections from children in the close proximity of our waiting room. Some examples of potentially harmful viruses children frequently carry are as follows:

1. **Parvo virus B19** (“Fifth Disease”) – while making the affected child only slightly ill with a rash, can cause a severe anemia in the fetus, leading to congestive heart failure and sometimes fatal complication known as “hydrops fetalis” if a susceptible pregnant woman contracts it. The virus is very contagious and could easily by passed by a child sitting in the same room with a pregnant mother.

2. **Coxsackie B Virus** (one of the “common cold” viruses) – while again, only causing mild upper respiratory cold symptoms in the child in the waiting room, can cause myocarditis, a serious heart infection in the pregnant woman’s unborn baby, which can be fatal.

3. **Rubella** (“German measles”) – which only causes an almost unnoticeable mild rash and fever for the child in the waiting room, can cause a devastating group of birth defects in a susceptible pregnant woman’s unborn child, and can lead to fetal or neonatal death.

Because we have a limited space in our waiting room as it is, and because these children can unknowingly pass these dangerous viruses to pregnant women, we must therefore ask you not to bring your children in this age group to your appointments. If you must bring them because of unavoidable circumstances, we will have to ask you to wait out in the hall until called back for your appointment to limit the exposure of your child to our pregnant patients in the waiting room.

We trust you will understand now the reasons this policy is necessary to protect both your unborn child and those of other pregnant women.

I have read the above statement and understand the reasons for this policy.

Patient’s Signature: _________________________________  Date: ______________