

# EXPANDING IMAGINATIONS



*“Caring For Our Future”*

## Parent Handbook

*Revised January 2020*

## **Welcome!**

Welcome to Expanding Imaginations Child Care! We are so glad that you decided to join us! We hope that you and your child will be happy here. Our mission is to form a partnership with you to care for your child or children. Don't worry, you only have to take part as much as you want or are able to, the main thing is that you know what's going on while your child is with us, and that we can support you in parenting. To ensure that we are all "on the same page" we ask that you read this handbook carefully. It will help you become familiar with our philosophy, policies and procedures. These are in place so we can effectively provide quality care, meet licensing standards and ensure that there is structure for our program to run smoothly. Please keep this handbook for reference purposes; it is also available from our website or we can email it upon request.

We rely on open and timely communication between parents, educators and administrative staff to achieve our goals. We know that you know your child, or children, best and we want your input on what you think our program should include. You can communicate with us directly, via email or phone, with a scheduled appointment or in our comment box which will be talk about further on in the handbook. If you have any questions, or require clarification about our philosophy, policies or programs please contact the Program Supervisor.

## **Philosophy**

### *Play*

Spontaneous play where children get to choose their activities and how they engage in them provides the freedom to develop in areas they are interested in. Children's minds are constantly seeking input and they naturally choose activities that challenge themselves; they are learning and having fun simultaneously!

### *Attachment*

A child care centre is a "home away from home"; a place that is safe and loving where parents and caregivers join together to support the growth of each child. We believe attachment-based care, where a child care provider is linked to a child and his or her family for as long as possible, promotes emotional development; where trust is learned and love is felt.

### *Family*

Family is on the front-lines of raising a child - they are there 24 hours a day, 7 days a week - nothing is more important. Our doors are always open, families are encouraged to participate in the program in whatever capacity they want and are able to. We stay in constant communication, and do not believe that family and child care should be separate but blended together. Respect for every child and his or her family is pertinent, regardless of make-up, race, religion, ability and culture.

### *Community*

Children may be a little "drop" in the world but they can make a big ripple that reaches many. Empowerment, empathy and respect are learned by interacting and helping others in our world, whether in Deer Ridge, Calgary, Canada or around the world.

## Contact Us

For absences, late arrivals, day to day information

Phone - 403.251.6021

Email – [supervisor@expandingchildcare.ca](mailto:supervisor@expandingchildcare.ca)

Contract information, compliments or concerns

Phone – 403.251.6021

Email – [info@expandingchildcare.ca](mailto:info@expandingchildcare.ca)

Questions regarding payments

Phone – 403.251.6021

Email – [accounts@expandingchildcare.com](mailto:accounts@expandingchildcare.com)

## Social Media

Website – monthly program calendars and menus

Facebook – reminders of upcoming special days, articles regarding child development

Reviews – like what we are doing? Please take a minute to review us on Google or Facebook

## Hours of Operation / Closure Dates

Our hours of operation are Monday through Friday, from 7 am until 6 pm

We are **closed** on the following statutory holidays\*:

- New Year's Day
- Family Day
- Good Friday
- Victoria Day
- Canada Day
- Heritage Day
- Labour Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Remembrance Day
- Christmas Day
- Boxing Day

We understand that not all workplaces close for each of these holidays but we think that it's important for our staff to receive the same benefits of top rated workplaces. We appreciate your willingness to plan using your holidays or asking a friend or family member to help. We may also be able to help you coordinate alternate care.

We close at 3:30 on Christmas Eve and New Years Eve

\* Please Note! Statutory holidays have been taken into account when setting the fee schedule therefore there are no refunds for these days. Should a statutory holiday fall on a Saturday or Sunday we close for a day in lieu that falls in line with the majority of families

## Programming / Curriculum

Our goal is to provide a high quality early childhood program in an environment where each child has the right to freedom in choices, rest time, active time, nutritious diet, and a clean, healthy environment. We implement the Alberta Curriculum Framework as recommended by the Association of Early Childhood Educators of Alberta to plan our educational activities.

Our program is child-directed and educator supported. The curriculum is designed around each individual child and is created in each room by the Early Childhood Educators. When forming the curriculum for the month, the educators take into consideration the children in their group and the observations they have made. It also takes into consideration the current interests in the children – for example, if the children are frequently looking at the book based on Ocean Life, water play with ocean animals may be set out, art may be bubble painting, salt and fresh water may be compared as a science experiment. Learning letters and numbers happen as the educators sit and play with the children – discussing the letter sounds, counting the toys, etc.

In the rooms play centers are designed to stimulate the social, emotional, intellectual, creative and physical development of the children. Materials in the play centers are rotated as deemed necessary by staff observations, appropriateness, and the children’s interests. The educators are facilitators to support and motivate the children to pick up on learning opportunities throughout the day.

Spontaneous play opportunities provide the materials needed for children to explore and create according to their own imaginations and ideas. The educators support this by asking open ended questions, supplying more materials and making gentle suggestions. The play centers are in the form of dramatic play, open art, blocks, sand, vehicles, puppets, little people, and more. Structured activities include the children and is still fun but has a goal in place by an adult. The purpose of this would be encourage a skill to develop, such as turn taking, finger strength, coordination, empathy, and more. Structured activities may be a board game, a craft, circle time, a group game. These activities are adult led and never forced on a child.

## **Educator Requirements**

In our program, all educators are certified as Child Development Supervisor, Child Development Worker, or Child Development Assistant in accordance with the Alberta Day Care Staff Qualifications. Infant and Child CPR and First Aid training are required within six months of hiring and there is always someone with First Aid/CPR training onsite. All staff must submit to a criminal reference check at time of hiring and is not allowed to be alone with the children until it is cleared. We have monthly staff meetings to ensure everyone is refreshed on our policies and procedures and feedback is offered regularly from the Program Supervisor. We require our educators to continue their learning, either through courses or workshops, so they can be knowledgeable and up to date on the Best Practices in Early Childhood Education.

## **Staff Responsibilities**

The Program Supervisor is responsible for:

- Hiring and supervision of staff
- Ensuring practices and procedures are followed in accordance with the regulations and requirements of licensing agencies and other governing bodies.
- All operational decisions, including co-coordinating the movement of children between rooms.
- Communication with caregivers and parents to address concerns and/or suggestions.
- Liaising with Daycare Licensing, Calgary Health Services, Fire and Safety, and Alberta Child Care Association
- Coordinating workshops, community events, and resources for families

The Assistant Program Supervisor is responsible for:

- Supervision of staff
- Ensuring practices and procedures are followed in accordance with the regulations and

- requirements of licensing agencies and other governing bodies
- Communication with staff and parents to address concerns and/or suggestions

Your child's Primary Educator is responsible for:

- Tracking your child's development, planning appropriate curriculum, daily care routines
- Communicating directly with parents on a regular basis to ensure cohesiveness between the program and home
- Ensuring your child's room is clean and safe
- Guiding and directing behaviour that unsafe
- Providing activities using the Alberta Curriculum Framework

## Child-Staff Ratios

Alberta Child Care Licensing has set in place the following guidelines to ensure effective supervision of children in a child care program

- 12 to 18 months – 1 educator to 4 children
- 19 to 35 months – 1 educator to 6 children
- 3 to 4.5 years – 1 educator to 8 children
- 4.5 years to Kindergarten – 1 educator to 10 children

Where multiple age groups are combined, the ratio for the majority of the children is adhered to.

Each room has a maximum of 2 caregivers although outside professionals, practicum students or volunteers may participate in the program to meet the needs of a child.

## Complaints or Concerns

We believe that good communication between parents, educators and support staff is essential to providing quality childcare. With this in mind, we ask that if you have any concerns relating to your child, or with regard to our policies and procedures, that you discuss this with your Primary Educator. If you still have concerns or feel that the primary caregiver's response is unsatisfactory please bring it to the attention of the Program Supervisor. If you still feel your concerns have not adequately been addressed you can bring it to the attention of the Program Manager.

Concerns and/or complaints about possible non-compliance with Daycare Regulations and/or the Social Care Facilities Licensing Act can also be brought to the attention of the Regional Daycare Services Office. Complaints to this office can be made anonymously and the identity of the complainant will remain confidential. All complaints are investigated and written complaints will receive a response indicating whether or not the complaint was verified and was action or recommendations were made as a result of the information. You can contact the Regional Licensing Office at:

Calgary and Area Child and Family Services Authority  
 #300, 1240 Kensington Road NW  
 Calgary, Alberta T2N 3P7  
 Telephone: 403-297-6100

The program will be visited periodically and inspected by a designated licensing officer to make sure that the program is complying with all licensing regulations and the Social Care Facilities Licensing Act. Licensing Inspection Reports will be posted on the program's parent resources

bulletin board.

## Communication Methods

We WANT your input! You can connect with us by phone – (403) 251 – 6021, email – supervisor@expandingchildcare.ca, or face to face 😊

We also have a comment box located in the entryway. We know that sometimes it isn't easy to communicate minor complaints or a staff member does something great and you want them to get some kind recognition. Feedback is important for us to know what may need more attention or thank someone that has done an extra-good job. Notes will be read by the Program Supervisor regularly and handled appropriately.

We will email you information regarding your child's care. We will not spam you, or ever give your email address out to anyone. Pictures will be emailed regularly so you can see what your child has been up to. For group pictures including your child to be sent, please ensure you initial that option of the 'family consents' form.

HiMama is an online service we use to send daily reports and information regarding your child via email. In the younger rooms it will include nutrition, napping, toileting/diapers, and pictures. When the children are older it will involve less information as the children are able to share their day with their parents. HiMama can also be used to send messages between home and the program.

Survey's are conducted twice yearly to make sure we are on the right track of providing quality care. If we are not effectively meeting the needs of our clients then we want to know about it so we can reassess our policies and procedures.

## Privacy

Through HiMama families receive pictures of their child with other children. We require that families do not share the photos on social media of any type to protect the privacy of the children that attend our program. Expanding Imaginations Child Care also will not share photos of the children's faces on social media.

## Fees

The fee for your child is stated on the Contract you signed with the program upon enrollment. Child care fees are due on the 20<sup>th</sup> day of the month prior to receiving child care services. If the fees are 3 days late without a payment arrangement made before the due date, a late fee of 5% of the total fee will be applied. At 7 days past due, an additional penalty of 10% is applied to the total amount past due. If payment is 2 weeks late, and no arrangement for payment is made, child care services will be suspended until payment is received.

Should the Client Family fail to contact the Child Care Program within the 2 weeks after the fee due date to arrange payment for childcare, the amount owing will be sent to our collections agency, along with an additional month fee in lieu of one calendar month termination notice. Should your overdue account be sent to our collection agency, you will also be responsible for covering any additional fees or commissions charged for their services.

*We recommend providing post-dated cheques for your convenience*

Fees are pro-rated over 12 months and refunds or credits are not given for "sick" days, holidays,

or any other absences.

Should you arrive after 6:05 to pick up your child, there is a late fee of \$1.00 a minute. The payment must be made in cash and goes directly to the educator who was kept late.

## **Termination of Contract**

To end your contract with Expanding Imaginations Child Care we require one calendar's month. This means the client family must provide to the program notice, in writing on the last business day of the month prior. For example, to end care for February 1 notice must be received on the last day of business of December. Contracts are NOT able to be canceled with 30 days notice, or from a specific day of the month. Should you require a partial month of care after the one calendar's month notice we can prorate the fees for the extra time or offer a drop in rate.

## **Missed Payments**

If you are unable to pay your fees, please contact Timothy Audy as soon as possible to arrange a payment schedule. If fees are not up to date by the time the next month is due, child care services will be suspended until the account is brought up to date. If payments are frequently missed, or if you do not uphold your end of the payment arrangement, child care services will be terminated and payment for an additional 1 month's fee in lieu of notice will be applied.

## **Subsidies**

The provincial Child Care Subsidy Program, which is operated by Child and Family Services Authority, is available to help families who require child care but may not be able to pay the full cost of child care fees. The Program Supervisor can supply Child Care Subsidy Program Information if you feel you may be eligible for financial assistance. All information relating to subsidies is prepared and kept in total confidentiality. More information can be found at <http://humanservices.alberta.ca/financial-support/15104.html>, including an estimation calculator to see if you qualify. You can also call 1-877-644-9992

## **Absence from the Program**

Please notify your child's caregiver at least 24 hours in advance if you know your child will be away from the program for a day or more. Absence due to illness should be reported to the program before 9:00 a.m. and the nature of the illness must be disclosed. If we do not hear about your child before 9:00 am we will assume your child is absent.

## **Late Drop Off**

If your child will be dropped off after 9:00, we require a phone call to let us know. This allows us to ensure there is enough food prepared, and that staff know to include your child in programming. Should we have lower than usual children for the day, the staff are given the opportunity to take the day off. If you bring your child in unexpectedly we may not have the staffing to care for your child and may need to refuse care for the day.

## **Discipline Policy**

The goal of child guidance practices is to help children develop self-control and problem solving skills so that they can make appropriate behavior choices. Our policy is that any child guidance action taken is reasonable in the circumstances, consistently followed, and that it is used only to redirect or stop undesirable behavior that puts the child, or other children, at risk. Physical abuse or "corporal punishment" of any kind, including shaking, pushing, slapping or

spanking is **not** acceptable under any circumstances. Any form of contact (including verbal) that ridicules, humiliates, degrades, insults, or takes away from a child's self-esteem, is also considered a form of "corporal punishment" and is **not** acceptable under any circumstances.

Our program is designed to foster an atmosphere of co-operation, self-esteem, and mutual respect for others. Positive behavior is to be encouraged and recognized at all times through praise and encouragement. Providing creative Imagination Stations, activities, and adequate materials for each child reduces potential disagreements and can assist in reinforcing positive behaviour through role modeling. An "A, B, C" form may be filled out for your child's records to help track and find a solution for the conflicts that happen regularly. We stay in the present when discussing unwanted behavior with the child and avoid talking about past behaviour. A consequence should not carry over to the next day but each day is a fresh opportunity to do better.

### *3-5 year olds*

Every effort is made to anticipate and prevent conflicts. Undesirable behaviour is used as a learning tool to help a child understand the cause behind their actions, and to encourage self-control in making choices with desirable outcomes. The situation is discussed with the child and helps them to solve the conflict and problems where appropriate. If the behavior continues, the child may be redirected away from an activity or situation to avoid further conflict. A method used by our caregivers to start a conversation about a situation is to simply ask "what happened?" Positioned at child height, time is taken to listen and help the children find a solution they are happy with. "Redoing" a situation with an appropriate reaction helps a child learn what methods can get them what they want in a respectful way.

### *19 months - 3 years*

The best method for guiding behaviour at this age is prevention. The room is set up thoughtfully leaving little opportunity to climb or run. Caregivers are actively engaged with the children, helping them interact appropriately, and redirecting to new activities when a child is ready for something new. This age needs to be active and hasn't developed the self-control to only practice new skills when it's safe. Emotions are the fuel behind conflict and labeling how the child is feeling and showing acceptable ways to communicate helps a child see there are other ways to get what they want. When necessary, a child may be redirected to another appealing activity to stop conflict. A child is never be isolated (time out) or talked down to for their behaviour.

### *Under 19 months*

Undesirable behaviour is guided by prevention and intervention strategies to react quickly to stop or redirect undesirable behavior as soon as it occurs (i.e. hitting, biting or pushing). Calmly talking and redirecting a child to another activity can reduce stress for both children. Caregivers will not react to negative behavior with any kind of negative response. Positive behavior is rewarded with smiles and/or hugs.

Should your child have ongoing inappropriate behaviour, we will ask for a meeting with the child's parents/guardians. The meeting will be for communication and problem solving purposes. If there is concern for your child's safety or the safety of others we may request consultation from Child Care Support Services. This is a government funded program to help children be successful in child care programs. If a child maintains to be a safety issue for themselves and/or others and all resources and strategies have been exhausted, we will require for the family to find childcare elsewhere.



## **Inclusive Care**

Expanding Imaginations Child Care is an inclusive program that accepts families and children regardless of ability, race, ethnicity, economics, sexual orientation, development and family make up. As the capabilities and needs vary from person to person we ask that everyone stays non-judgmental and offers a community of support.

## **Health Policy**

If your child displays the following symptoms, they MAY NOT attend the program

Temperature of 100 F (38C) or higher

Vomited within 24 hours of arrival

Diarrhea within 24 hours of arrival

Rash that has not been diagnosed as non-contagious

Profuse runny nose that is not clear in colour

Bad cough or sneezing

If the child is not well enough to participate in the daily program

Or requires more attention that is able to be provided (ie, held constantly)

If your child is absent because of a highly contagious or communicable disease (i.e. measles, mumps, head lice, strep throat, unexplained rash), a doctor's note may be required before your child is allowed to return to the program. A list of diseases and Calgary Health Service recommendations on this policy will be made available to you upon request, and is available on the health board in the program. If your child attends the program but is deemed unfit to stay, you will be notified and pick up must be arranged and occur within 2 hours of being notified. If both parents are unreachable within 30 minutes, we will phone the emergency contacts. If we haven't heard from you or your emergency contacts, as a last resort, after 2 hours, Alberta Child and Family Services must be called in to care for the child.

Children who are new to being in childcare, get sick more often as their body hasn't developed a strong immune system. Children under 2 years old especially seem to catch every virus. Please have prearranged a plan for what you will do when your child is sick and unable to attend. We are not able to give Tylenol to reduce a child's fever to keep them in the program as they are still contagious.

## **Immunization**

We understand that immunizing your child is a personal choice and we do not require all children in our care to be immunized. If you have chosen to immunize, Child Care Licensing requires us to keep an updated record on file. If you have chosen not to immunize, we require that you sign a form stating that your child is not immunized and that you understand in the case Health Services should declare an outbreak of a disease that can be immunized against, such as measles, your child may not attend the program.

## **Emergency Closure**

If the program is without water or power for a half hour it will need to close due to inability to meet health and safety requirements. Parents will be contacted by email and phone and be required to pick up within the hour. If your child is at school you will be required to make arrangements for pick up. The daycare will also be closed due to adverse weather conditions where recommendations are made for people to stay home or evacuate the area.

## **Emergency Evacuation**

Fire drills are conducted monthly to ensure children and staff is familiar with the evacuation process. In the event of a fire and/or emergency evacuation, staff and children will exit the building and assemble in the parking lot; we will then walk to McDonalds at 13780 Bow Bottom Trail. Staff will be responsible for collecting Sign In/Sign Out sheets and emergency cards. Head counts will be made both inside and outside the program to ensure that all children and staff are accounted for. The Program Supervisor will contact parents, guardians or emergency contacts for children once everyone has been accounted for. A copy of the emergency evacuation route is posted in the entrance of our program.

## **Medical Emergency/Accident**

If a serious accident or medical emergency occurs, your child will be transported to the nearest medical center or hospital by ambulance. Parents, or your emergency contact, will be notified of the location. Whenever possible, a staff member will accompany your child. Parents are responsible for any fees incurred for the Ambulance.

Accidents or incidents that do not require emergency first aid will be noted in an Accident/Incident report that will be brought to the attention of the parent. The educator, parent and Program Supervisor will sign this form and a copy will remain in your child's file for future reference.

## **Medication Policy**

Provincial regulations require written parental consent when administering prescription and/or other "over the counter" medications. The following procedures MUST be followed before caregivers administer drugs or medications:

- Drugs and medications MUST be in their original containers.
- Drugs and medications MUST be handed directly to the educator upon arrival at the centre.
- Drugs and medications MUST have the child's name on the container, the name of the medication, and dosage

The form filled out must match the information on the medication. If there is a discrepancy between what is filled on the form and what is written on the medication, medication is unable to be administered and the parent will be contacted by phone or email.

## **Security**

If someone other than the parent is picking up the child, you must advise the program ahead of time. If there is an emergency and someone other than a parent will be picking up the child, we will ask you to provide their full name. The person will be asked to provide government-issue photo identification before the child is released into his/her custody. The safety and security of the children at the program is paramount. Please advise program staff and/or the Program Supervisor in writing if anyone is restricted from access to your child. If there is a restraining or custody order against a parent, we will require a copy for our files.

## **Abusive Behaviour**

Expanding Imaginations Child Care is a safe place for children, their families and the people who work here. All forms of abuse is not tolerated by the staff or towards the staff. This includes yelling, swearing, demeaning words, aggressive body language, sexual innuendos. Should a

client display abusive behaviour toward the staff or children, their contract will be immediately forfeit with no refund of fees. Should anyone onsite be deemed a threat Calgary Police Services will be notified.

## Personal Belongings

Parents will be required to supply at least two full change of clothes, including shirt, pants, socks and underwear. Please clearly label all belongings with your child's name and a pair of non-slip indoor shoes or slippers (to be kept at the program year round). Seasonal weather must be supplied - appropriate clothing includes the following examples:

- **Spring:** Sweater, mittens, hat, rain gear (rubber boots, splash pants).
- **Summer:** Sunhat, sunscreen, light clothing.
- **Fall:** Sweater, mittens, hat.
- **Winter:** Hat, mittens, snow boots, snow pants, warm jacket.

## Clothing

Holes in knees are welcome. Art supplies and sensory activities are available every day. Please send your children in "play clothes". We want the children to feel free to explore and get messy without worrying about stains or dirt. Although we make our best efforts by encouraging the use of paint smocks and bibs, messes do happen. Staff are not responsible for your children's clothes. Although we do our best to keep track of what belongs to who, at times things go missing. We will do our best to help find missing items, we are not responsible for things are aren't found.

## Sleep/Rest Time

Younger children and infants normally require a rest time or short quiet period. Parents are asked to provide a blanket and sheet for their child's comfort during this period. These should be labeled with your child's name using a permanent marker and will be laundered on a weekly or "as needed" basis.

## Toys

Bringing toys from home is discouraged unless it has been requested for programming such as Show and Tell. The program will provide play equipment and toys to be shared; a favorite "cuddly" toy for sleep time is permitted providing the child is aware that it is for sleep/quiet time only.

## Screen Time

T.V. and DVD/Video recordings will only be used on special occasions and for educational content for children 3 years of age and older. Movies will be G-Rated and previously viewed by staff and/or the Supervisor. The play centers will remain open for those children who do not want to participate. Tablets are used to play music, take pictures, curriculum planning and

## Health/Nutrition

We will provide a nutritious breakfast, lunch, and two snacks every day out of our kitchen. Our four-week rotating menu will follow the Canada Food Guide and include multicultural flavours. Snacks will be available throughout the day as needed with the following set schedule.

- Breakfast: 7:15 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.

- Snack: 9:30 -10:00 a.m. (depending on the room)
- Lunch: between 11:00 and 12:00 p.m. (depending on the room)
- Snack: 3:30 p.m.

Any concerns about the menu should be discussed with the Program Supervisor. Children are never forced to eat their food. Food is not used as a punishment, reward or withheld for any reason. Please let your child's caregiver know about any food allergies, family diet choices, or food that your child has an extreme dislike to. Whenever possible we will provide food substitutions but for children whose diet varies greatly from the program menu we may require food to be provided from home.

Children will be encouraged to participate in setting up and clearing tables. Staff will sit with the children during snacks and lunch and interact with them. Older children will have the opportunity to serve themselves with guidance. Caregivers use this opportunity to model and encourage proper table manners, using words like "please" and "thank you".

## **Allergies / Dietary Concerns**

Should your child have an allergy or diet concern, whenever possible we will substitute it with another comparable choice from our menu. Should your child require a replacement that is not on our menu it is the parent's responsibility to supply a comparable substitute. In the case that your child has an anaphylactic reaction, parents must supply enough medication for the length of time it takes for medical attention to arrive. If the allergen is something that is found onsite (ie nuts, seafood) a waiver may be required.

## **Environmental Toxins**

Expanding Imaginations Child Care works to reduce the amount of environmental toxins children are exposed to. Aerosol sprays and pesticides are never used onsite and our parking lot is an 'Idle Free Zone'. We use unscented soaps and detergents and we refrain from artificial room fresheners. Please be conscious of perfumes and colognes when you pick up or drop off your child as we may have staff or children with scent allergies and sensitivities.

## **Candy and/or Other Treats**

Please do NOT let your children arrive at the program with gum, candy or any type of sweet treat. You can supply your child with a nutritional snack if they arrive between nutrition times. Please keep in mind that other children at the program may have allergies to food articles brought in by your child.

We celebrate all the birthdays of the month on one designated day. Our cook will bake a special snack and each room will celebrate the children who have turned a year older that month. Parents are welcome to attend this celebration, or to visit on their child's birthday, however we ask that treats are not provided as we have children who follow different diets and have allergies that would be excluded from such a treat.

## **Community Involvement**

At Expanding Imaginations Child Care we believe that "it takes a village to raise a child" and have created several different initiatives for the children, families and our staff to help create and

sustain that village. From learning about our surroundings, finding ways to make positive changes, and getting involved, we believe in making Calgary the number one place to live in Canada. We will organize field trips that involve volunteering in our community as well as onsite projects that help others; these opportunities are open to parents as well. We will announce these activities before they occur and we will have forms for you to sign before we head out.

## **Parent Involvement**

We value your involvement and encourage parents to form good relationships with the educators in attending to the daily care of your child. You are welcome to visit your child whenever the opportunity arises. Please communicate with your child's educator on a daily basis. We provide opportunities for parents and educators to interact on a social basis via seasonal celebrations, community involvement, volunteering, parties. We ask that you keep your relationship with your child's educator on a professional basis. We operate on an open door policy; however, we ask that as parents you respect the needs and activities of the other children when attending the program.

## **Role of a parent volunteer on a field trip**

When a parent attends a field trip with the child care program they may only be left alone with their own children. Their role is solely to assist the educators with the children.

They parent should:

Engage in conversation with the children

- Hold the children's hands while crossing the street

- Share their personal knowledge

- Help diffuse a conflict between children

The parent must not:

- Smoke or use inappropriate language

- Spend an excessive amount of time on their cellphones

- Punish any child (including their own) with degrading words or tone of voice, yelling, withholding food, spanking, hitting, slapping, flicking or any other way as stated in the program's discipline policy

- Be alone with any child other than their own, including taking them to the bathroom.

## **Code of Ethics**

As stated earlier in this handbook, our philosophy is based on the "Learning through Play" concept where children are given freedom of choice to play and grow intellectually, physically, emotionally, creatively, and socially, through participation in a variety of activities in a fun, safe, clean, healthy and nurturing environment. We recognize that each child develops in their own unique way and at their own pace. In fulfilling that philosophy all our staff have acknowledged and are bound by the following Code of Ethics.

1. To work in partnership with outside professionals, parents and other child-care providers in promoting the health, safety and well-being of all children.
2. To provide a clean and caring environment that will enable children to participate fully in all activities and to promote trusting and cooperative relationships that respects the uniqueness of the individual.

3. To treat all children equally without regard to race, sex, economic status, or ability and to respect the dignity and importance of each child and to act in a professional manner at all times to ensure no child is exposed to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement at any time.
4. To respect the rights of parents as primary caregivers and to support those in ensuring all children have the opportunity to reach his/her optimum physical, social, emotional, creative and cognitive areas of development.
5. To strive for excellence on an ongoing basis by following "Best Practices in Child Care" and maintaining and enhancing our own skills and knowledge.
6. To keep all information regarding children and their families confidential unless given permission by the families to release it or as required by law.
7. To support a climate of trust in the workplace and ensure that Early Childhood Educators are able to speak and act in the best interest of children without fear of recrimination.
8. To ensure integrity within the program and in all of your professional relationships as it pertains to working with children and parents.

## **Thank You!**

We hope that this Parent Handbook has been helpful in providing you with the information you need to know in regards to our policies and procedures. Please read it carefully before signing the terms and conditions outlined in the Child Care Agreement that the Program Supervisor will provide for you. If you have any additional questions please do not hesitate to bring them to our attention. We are happy to have you with us and hope you and your child will be happy with us.