



Through the Years Early Learning Centre www.throughtheyears.ca

"To nurture curious minds and kind hearts by providing quality care and education."

20 Pte. Richard Green Lane Hubbards, Nova Scotia, B0J 1T0 Phone: 1-902-857-1777 Fax: 1-902-857-1776

FAMILY COMMUNICATION PLAN

Communication is one of the core values that guide us in the work we do here at Through the Years. We are committed to conversations that are cooperative and collaborative. We will be respectful of all points of view and strive for honest and natural relationships that help us build each other up. We will give information and feedback in a timely manner, and expect the same in others.

Communication with families is through daily interactions, email, phone, daily notes for infants and toddlers, posters on the main door of the foyer doors and social media. Families are encouraged to talk with the educators during drop off and pick up. Family involvement is valued and encouraged. Working together with families is a key component of providing quality, personal care for each child in our programs. If you have any concerns, please set up an appointment with your child's educator, or the Director.

Monthly newsletters and calendars come out to families via email, and are posted outside the classrooms as well. Daily plans and writeups are posted on the classroom's bulletin boards. Memos are often emailed in between the newsletters to update parents, and posters of upcoming events are erected around the Centre. Every family has a mail slot in the large bin in the foyer and are asked to check it often for receipts, notices, reminders and children's art work.

As part of the registration papers upon enrolment families either give permission or not to Through the Years to take photos and or videos of your child in class or on outings to use on Through the Years website, Facebook page, advertising, promotion, brochures, educational or professional displays. Sometimes the local newspaper may take a picture as well. Pictures taken by you while at Through the Years of your child are not to be posted on social media if it has other children in the photo, without the permission of the other families.

This Family Communication Plan, along with the following other documents, are available for viewing by families anytime in a large binder located on a table in the foyer:

- Early Learning & Child care Act & Regulations
- Strategies for the prevention of Communicable Disease
- Guidelines for Communicable Disease Control in Day Cares
- Family Handbook & Behaviour Guidance Policies
- Inclusion & Diversity Policy
- Department of Education & Early Childhood Development's Terms & Conditions for: 1. Quality Investment Grant and Program Support Funding, and 2. Inclusion Support Grant

Enrolment/Orientation and Transition:

New families enrolling at the Centre meet with our Director for a tour, and to review the Parent Handbook and enrolment papers. We then encourage you and your child to have a couple visits to the Centre, several if you like, prior to the first day. We ask your family to send in pictures of the family for the family photo wall which gives children a sense of comfort to look at familiar faces. For a new child, the first full day experience can be overwhelming. We recommend that the child's first few days be short (3-4 hours) if possible. Gradually the time should be longer and the child will adjust accordingly. You may call the centre for an update of how your child is doing. If you have concerns, talk to your child's educators and come up with a plan that will best suit you



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and your child.

Transition from one age group to another:

Moving from one age group to another can be stressful for some children. To help ease the transition and make it a positive one:

- A welcome letter and questionnaire on your child for the family to complete and return is sent home from the new room. This helps the educators get to know your child.
- The child visits several times a couple weeks prior to the move.
- If the child is having difficulty with the move, the centre may make an individual plan. This would be a collaborative process with the family and the educators with the end goal to help the child feel safe and secure as they build new relationships and have new experiences.

Board of Directors:

This group is made up of the Director, parents and community members. Terms for board members are one year, and individuals may reoffer for additional terms at the Annual General Meeting held in November of each year. The Department of Education Early Years branch keeps a record of the Board members and there is also a list on the foyer Parent Board. The Board meets monthly to discuss: children's safety, care and well being; enrolment; staffing; facility's licensing status; building maintenance issues; and programming. Board meeting minutes are available for families to view upon request to the Director.

Family/Fundraising Committee:

All families, board members and staff are expected to help with fundraising. We are a charitable organization and fundraising helps us to meet the budget each year without huge increases in child care fees. (25% of funding comes from the Department of Education, the other 75% comes from parent fees and fundraising.) Our Family/ Fundraising Committee meets every two months and has staff, board members and parents and grandparents on it. Anyone can join at anytime throughout the year. They review the safety and programming needs of the children and staff and set goals for purchases of equipment, books, or ongoing maintenance projects as necessary. They then brainstorm, outline and plan the year's fundraising events. Some examples of successful things we have done, or continue to do are : our Annual Duck Derby, monthly Parent Cafes, Halloween Trunk and Treat, Mabel's Labels, and Scholastic Book Orders to name a few.

Family Involvement/Opportunities:

- Read and be familiar with the Family Handbook, Behaviour Guidance Policies and the Inclusion and Diversity Policy.
- Come early and stay a few minutes to play with your child and chat with educators during drop off and pick up.
- Share a special holiday, talent, collection, or pictures from a vacation.
- Play a musical instrument for the children.
- Attend curriculum meetings, parent teacher interviews and open houses that are held throughout the year.
- Arrange a field trip or guest speaker.
- Help with repair or maintenance items.
- Join the Board of Directors or Fundraising Committee.
- Attend the organization's Annual General Meeting in November of each year.



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- Help recruit volunteers or new families.
- Give donations of Kleenex, baby wipes, markers, paper, natural art supplies such as pebbles, sea glass, drift wood, scraps of softwood for carpentry, old pots and pans, dress up clothes, old telephones, gently used books, toys, games and puzzles.

Field Trips:

Family members are welcome on outings. At times families may be asked to drop off and pick up at a different location. Dates and times will be shared with families with lots of notice. We try to provide the children with a variety of experiences as learning takes place everywhere. If anyone is a regular volunteer they are required to have a recent criminal record vulnerable sector check and a child abuse register check.

Confidentiality:

- Through the Years' staff take every precaution to keep information about your child's behaviour, family events, and situations confidential. We will not discuss your child with another family. We ask you to do the same, and respect the privacy of all attending our programs.
- To support positive relationships with all family members, Through the Years will remain neutral in regards to child custody disputes. Through the Years staff understand this policy and demonstrate it by consistent and non-biased communication and treat all as equals and with respect.
- Staff are not permitted to sign affidavits. If there is a court ordered custody agreement regarding restrictions on visitors and access, we must have a copy of the official document in the child's file. Non or joint custodial parents are asked to respect legal agreements. Failure to do so will result in denial of access/visitation and police may be notified. Further action will be on an individual basis.
- Personal information shared in confidence is confidential. The only exception is child abuse, in which case staff is absolutely obligated to call and report to Child Protection Services.

Administrative Contact Information-

Director: 902-857-1777 Email: throughtheyears-director@hotmail.com

Director Designate (when Director is absent): Paulette Benight 902 857-1777 and Karen Robinson 902 857-1777

Executive Assistant: 902-857-1777 Email: throughtheyears-coordinator@hotmail.com

Chair, Board of Directors: 902-209-7541 Email: erin.careless@dal.ca