

# THROUGH THE YEARS EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

## FAMILY HANDBOOK

(updated January 2023)



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

Located at...  
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(902) 857-1777

# **THROUGH THE YEARS EARLY LEARNING CENTRE**

## **FAMILY HANDBOOK**

### **WELCOME**

Welcome to Through the Years Early Learning Centre!

We are looking forward to a positive, fun filled relationship with you and your child(ren). To facilitate a greater understanding between us this handbook has been created. This handbook includes guidelines, policies, goals, ideas for family involvement and other important issues. In order to make our relationship as relaxed and enjoyable as possible the pages herein contain mutually beneficial requirements that will help to ensure there are no misunderstandings between either parties. The words, “We” or “Us” or “TTY” refers to “Through the Years Early Learning Centre” and its staff/employees. “You” or “Your” refers to families. Please read this handbook carefully and feel free to discuss any questions or concerns that you may have. Consistent disregard for the policies herein may be cause for termination of the contract of care for your child(ren). Our Nut Safe Facility Policy, Sun Safety Policy, Termination of Care Policy, and Behaviour Guidance Policies are attached at the back of this Handbook. The Centre’s Director will review these policies with you upon admission to Through the Years.

**Families please note that all policies in this handbook are subject to change and you will be given two weeks notice of any changes.**

### **ABOUT US**

In October 2002 TTY opened in the former Fox Point Elementary School building, owned by the Municipality of Chester. Over the course of the next eight years it expanded from 33 child care spaces to 49 child care spaces after renovating the downstairs rooms of the building. In 2009 TTY applied for and successfully obtained an Expansion Grant from the Department of Community Services to build its own building on land leased from the Municipality of Chester at 20 Pte. Richard Green Lane in Hubbards. In June 2010 this building opened and was licensed for 75 children. In August 2013, 15 more school age spaces were added bringing our licensed capacity to 90. In 2015, 10 more spaces were added to school age to bring licensed capacity to 100. To fill the need for after pre-primary and after school care, we partnered with the Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage and in September 2022, we opened the Adventure Club, an after pre-primary and after school program located at Aspotogan Consolidated Elementary School (ACES) in Mill Cove with a capacity of 24 children. In 2023, in partnership with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, we reconfigured our space to create more preschool spaces and less school age spaces, bringing our licensed capacity to 106.

TTY is a nonprofit charitable organization governed by a volunteer Board of Directors made up of community members and family members who oversee the Centre’s programs and staff. Any family member interested in sitting on our Board is welcome to speak to the Director about the responsibility. An Annual General Meeting for the organization is held every fall in which families are strongly encouraged to attend. Several other family meetings and social events are held throughout the year. The Board of Directors along with the staff of TTY that support children and families live these values, mission and vision every day in their work. We are proud to share them with you as you join the TTY family.

## Our Mission

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

## Our Vision

A thriving learning community where all children can dream big and realize their full potential.

## Core Values

*All the work we do is rooted in these core values. They help us align what we do inside our centre and behind the scenes, and guide our decision-making.*

### **1. Relationships**

Relationships are the foundation on which our organization operates. We believe the quality of the experiences we provide is measured by the quality of the relationships with children, families, employees, volunteers, legislators, and community stakeholders. We strive to ensure these relationships are respectful; warm and compassionate; accepting and open; and fair and equitable.

### **2. Communication**

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.

### **3. Lifelong Learning**

We believe that we all share a responsibility to support and nurture the children's and our own natural desire to be lifelong learners. We foster our lifelong learning through our professional and personal growth, and by exploring and experiencing learning on the same level as the children. We celebrate our differences and model respectful, inclusive practices.

### **4. Fiscal and Corporate Accountability**

We are committed to being fiscally responsible; to make decisions based on the needs and goals of the organization both short, medium and long term. We conduct ourselves and our business in a manner that is legal, moral and ethical.

## **CENTRE ENVIRONMENT**

TTY consists of six separate classrooms. **We are licensed by Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development for 106 children per day.**

The INFANT CLASSROOM holds 8 children, aged 5 months to 18 months of age. The ratio of teachers to children in this room is 1:4. The TODDLER CLASSROOM holds 18 children, aged 18 months to three years of age. The ratio of teachers to children in this class is 1:6. The JUNIOR PRESCHOOL CLASSROOM holds 24 children, from 30 months and up. The ratio of teachers to children in this room is 1:7. The SENIOR PRESCHOOL CLASSROOM holds 16 children over 3 years of age. The ratio of teachers to children in this room is 1:8. The two SCHOOL AGE CLASSROOMS hold 40 school-aged children between the ages of 4-12 years of age (30 children in the first room and 10 in the second). The ratio of teachers to children in this room is 1:15. NOTE: These rooms can change due to enrolment changes. The ADVENTURE CLUB After Pre-Primary and After School Program at ACES holds 24 school aged children between the ages of 4-12 years of age. The ratio for this room is 1:12.

TTY's services include full-day early childhood education for children aged 5 months to 5 years of age and before and after school care for children aged 4 to 12 years of age. Full-day child care is available for school age children when school is not open. The full-day Child Care Program emphasizes early learning goals and concepts through a blend of free playtime and structured classroom and outdoor activities. As of October 2021 we now offer before and/or after pre-primary (PP) care.

Throughout the day your child will have the opportunity to play in a variety of different ways with a variety of materials. Every classroom has areas for dramatic play, gross motor play, construction, sand and water play, creative and cognitive activities, and a reading/book area. We follow a play based child-directed curriculum (circle, creative activity, songs, and stories are based on children's interests, developmental stage and are often expanded upon for weeks or even months). The daily schedule and weekly plans for each class are posted on the bulletin boards inside the classroom. We welcome families' sending in material that will help with our classroom learning environment. Here is a sample of a classroom daily schedule:

### DAILY SCHEDULE

#### JUNIOR & SENIOR PRESCHOOL ROOM

6:30–7:30a.m.- Arrivals/Free Play in Toddler Room

7:30-9:00 a.m.– Free Play in Preschool Room

8:30-9:30 a.m. Open Art during Free Play

9:00-9:45a.m.– Clean Up/Washroom Routine/Morning Snack

9:45-11:15.m.– Outdoor Adventure Time

11:15-11:40a.m.– Small Group Time:

-Songs, felt stories,books, games

11:40 a.m.– Washroom Routine

11:45 a.m.– LUNCH

12:20 p.m.-Washroom Routine

12:30 p.m.– Quiet/Rest Time

1:00 p.m.– Fidget toys for non-sleepers

2:00p.m-Group Activity for awake children

2:30 p.m. Wake Up/Table Top/Free Play

3:00 p.m.– Clean Up/Washroom Routine/Snack

4:00 p.m.– Outdoor Play/Indoor Gross Motor Play

5:00-6:00 p.m.– Combine with Toddlers/Table Top Activities/

## Departures

Infant, Toddler and Junior Preschool classroom has washrooms within their room. The Senior Preschool and After Preprimary classroom's washrooms are adjacent their rooms, and the larger school age classroom's washrooms are down the hall a bit. There is also a single barrier free washroom in the Centre. The Centre also has two offices: the Director's and her Executive Assistant's, a staff room and a kitchen. The Centre boasts a fenced in playground as well. There is an area for the infants, a shared space for the preschool and toddler group, and a larger piece for the school aged children. We also have a multi-use court space on the property.

In accordance with Child Care Regulations at least two thirds of Through the Years' staff working directly with the children will be trained Early Childhood Educators. The staff at Through the Years consists of a Director, Executive Assistant, Early Childhood Educators, Program Support Lead and additional Program Support staff if needed, Curriculum Facilitator, two Adventure Club program leaders, substitutes, volunteers, and a cook. Each summer we have one or more Early Childhood Education students through provincial and federal grants, and throughout the school year we occasionally have practicum students.

## **INCLUSION & DIVERSITY POLICY**

*At Through the Years we strive to provide an environment that is free from bias and prejudice and that is a safe, nurturing space where children can learn the principles of fairness and respect for all. We recognize and respect the diversity of our community (i.e. ability, cultural, linguistic, gender, race, socio-economic status, etc.) and families are encouraged to share their family's identity within the Through the Years learning community.*

### **Strategies for Implementation**

- Educators will treat all children equitably and respectfully and will encourage children to treat each other in the same manner. Through role modeling the ideas of understanding, appreciation and acceptance, educators will lay the foundation that promotes inclusive behaviours in children.
- Educators will work collaboratively with families to provide care that meets the child's individual needs. We will achieve this by gaining understanding of the family's culture, beliefs and child care practices to the best of our ability.
- Educators will share their own valued cultural practices and traditions to create new and shared connections with children and families. This information will be used to provide children with a variety of experiences that will enrich the environment and learning opportunities occurring within the Centre.
- Resources will be provided to all educators that celebrate the diversities within family's lifestyles and cultural heritages. This will be in the form of children's books and felt stories, resource materials and toys (e.g. musical instruments and people figurines).
- We will adapt the child's environment, routine and or daily programming in order to facilitate inclusion and in some cases, at times, add a program support person in the classroom. A Routine Based Intervention Plan (RBIP) may be put in place for a child

that establishes common goals developed in collaboration with the child's support team. Children with differing needs will be provided with support to ensure accessibility in the program by working in close collaboration with the child's supports as required. This will include collaboration with outside teams such as O.T, P.T, Speech and Language, EIBI, Mental Health, Early Intervention, and most importantly the child's family.

- Educators will be encouraged to attend professional development that builds awareness of many diverse social topics such as sexual orientation, languages, race, religion, cultural beliefs and values, which will increase their cultural competence and in turn helping them to challenge discrimination and prejudice.
- As inclusive practices require continuous evaluation, staff will familiarize themselves with The Inclusion Principles Scale to guide them in their everyday practices (see attached). Continuous learning goals will be established as a Centre and a plan will be developed for overall inclusive practice improvements.
- Children will never be singled out, or made to feel inferior to or superior than their peers. Educators will have age appropriate discussions about incidents of bias or prejudice that arise in children's play or conversations with each other in order to help them understand and find effective strategies to counteract these behaviors.
- Educators will be fully oriented and trained to understand and apply the Centre's Behavioral Guidance Policies in their daily work.

As a parent or a staff, if you feel that the Inclusion & Diversity Policy has not been followed, the following steps are encouraged.

- Please take your concerns to the Centres' Program Support Lead. They will then work to resolve the issue.
- The Program Support Lead will address the Director of the Centre if they are not able to find a solution to the problem and together the problem will be addressed.
- The Board of Directors will be called upon for guidance only when the Program Support Lead and the Director of the Centre have not been able to remedy the situation.

## **SPECIAL PROGRAMS**

### **Handwriting Without Tears Handwriting Program**

Handwriting Without Tears is a handwriting program developed by occupational therapist Jan Olsen. HWT is a developmental-based curriculum for writing readiness and a multi-sensory approach. The goal of the program is to make handwriting an automatic and natural skill. Children will learn language proficiency, fine/gross motor control, letter/number recognition and color/shape awareness. HWT was the chosen program to use with the preschoolers because it creates learning experiences through motor, social, cognitive, visual perceptual, sensory, playing singing and most importantly it is FUN! Families of preschool children attending school the following September are given additional information at the beginning on the HWT program at the Preschool Curriculum meeting in the fall.

### **Musical Minds**

Musical Minds is a unique program of music and movement carefully created for children 18 months to 5 years of age in group child care settings. It was developed by Catherine Loftin,

B.Mus, M Mus Ed. who owns St Margaret's Bay Kindermusik. It is presently being delivered by co-owner Meghan Boyko. Musical Minds takes place on Thursday afternoons and runs in 8 week themed semesters. Families have the choice to register their child in the 8 week semester at \$40.00 / semester.

### **BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE POLICIES**

A copy of our Behaviour Guidance Policies is part of this Family Handbook and located at the back of this document. The Director will be reviewing this policy with you upon enrolment. Every staff and volunteer adheres strictly to these policies and yearly review of these policies is a requirement of their position.

### **NUTRITION**

The Centre employs a cook to provide us with delicious snacks and homemade meals. The menu has been created in accordance with the province's Food and Beverage Standards and with the support of a dietician from Public Health Services. For full day children the daily menu fulfills 1/3 of their daily nutritional requirements according to Canada's Food Guide. Each day we serve a morning snack, a lunch meal, and an afternoon snack, which is included in your child care fee. The menu has four different weeks that rotate throughout the year and will be posted for parents on the bulletin board and can be found on our website. Families may also request from the Director a copy of their own. In cases of food allergies or special diet notes we want parents to be reassured that all staff and volunteers are mindful of these circumstances at all times. A list of children's names and allergies / special diet notes is posted in each classroom, and in the kitchen. This is updated regularly. Families **MUST** provide the alternative food should there be a food allergy / special diet situation.

**TTY strives to be a peanut & tree nut safe facility.** Please refer to the back of this document for our Nut Safe Facility Policy.

Staff is responsive to children's cues around hunger and provide snacks and meals outside of the regular schedule as required. Staff create a relaxing and enjoyable meal environment. When working with children, staff is committed to modeling healthy eating practices themselves. Unless they have special dietary considerations that prevent them from doing so, staff will eat the same foods as the children do. Staff encourage children to respond to hunger and feelings of fullness and children are not forced to finish food that has been served. Meals include servings from all four food groups identified in Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide. Snacks include servings from at least two of the four food groups, one of which must be a serving from the Vegetables and Fruit group. Full fat milk (3.25%MF) is served to children under the age of two years. All other children drink 2% milk. For food safety reasons no food can be accepted by way of donation from a parent. Food served in the Centre is purchased either at Bell's Independent, Sobeys, Superstore or in bulk at Armstrong Food Service or The Real Canadian Wholesale Club.

### **ADAPTING THE MENU FOR INFANTS**

When babies are 6 months old they begin to learn to swallow, chew and pick up solid food. This is a time for getting used to new tastes and textures of food. At Through the Years infants will explore new foods and learn to enjoy healthy foods. Upon enrolment, Infant Feeding Plans are created for your child. Infant Feeding Plan is used for ongoing communication between the infant's parent / guardian and the care provider or the staff, including the cook. The Infant Feeding Plan is used to record and communicate the infant's progress during the transition to solid foods and indicates, when requested by the parent, how menu items are prepared to accommodate the infant's developmental stage. Staff allow infants to explore their food, feed themselves and respond to hunger and fullness cues.

Unless otherwise identified on the Infant Feeding Plan, children who are six months of age or older, receive daily meals and snacks that are based on the menu. Families bring food from home during their child's transition to solid food. These are to be labelled with the date, children's names and contents. Honey is not served to children who are less than 12 months of age. Through the Years is a breastfeeding friendly facility. Moms needing to breastfeed throughout the day will be provided with a comfortable, quiet space to do so. If formula or breast milk is sent in it must be labelled with children's name, date and contents.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Communication is a highly important aspect of a successful centre. When a new family is accepted at the Centre we like to be sure that we can share openly any concerns or questions that may arise regarding the well being of your child(ren). It is important that there is a similar childcare philosophy between us. This will ensure we are working together with the same goals in mind. We welcome feedback, questions or discussions that will focus on a positive outcome for the child(ren). Issues that may be considered "sensitive" will be discussed in private and remain confidential.

A monthly newsletter and calendar will be published that will explain activities we are doing, current curriculum themes, meal schedules for the coming month, as well as upcoming events, fundraising efforts and any other pertinent or fun information that may be of interest to you, family and friends. Please feel welcome to contribute submissions for the upcoming newsletter(s). Deadlines will be the 2<sup>nd</sup> last Tuesday of each month as the newsletter contains meal plans are due to be available the last Monday of each month.

Families of infants and toddlers will receive a daily note through our online communication tool HiMama providing information on your child(ren)'s day. Some typical information may include: activities, rest time, temperament, meals and things to remember. There is also space for parent comments.

Families of preschoolers and school age children will not receive a "daily note" in HiMama but they will usually get a report on a class activity or outing that has taken place that day.

There is a FAMILY BOARD in the foyer of the Centre. The following are posted on this board:

- The license for the facility
- List of Board of Directors
- Monthly Newsletter and Calendar
- Illness Exclusion Criteria
- The most recent inspection report
- Current menu
- The most recent Family / Fundraising Committee minutes and list of names of members of the Committee
- Fire Drill Record & Staff Responsibilities in Case of Fire or Emergency

Available for parents for viewing in a binder in the foyer are the following:

- Department of Education and Childhood Development Terms & Conditions for the Quality Investment and Inclusion Support Grants
- Family Communication Plan
- Family Handbook
- Our Strategies for the Prevention of Communicable Diseases
- Guidelines for Communicable Disease Prevention and Control for Child Care Settings
- Early Learning & Child Care Act & Regulations



- Inclusion & Diversity Policy

Each classroom has their own bulletin board in which the following information is provided for parents:

- Daily Schedule
- Program Plans and daily write ups
- Monthly Calendar & Newsletter
- Menu
- Special Notices

We have a website, [www.throughtheyears.ca](http://www.throughtheyears.ca) where you will find information about our Centre, programs, policies, and newsletters. We also have a Facebook page where we post pictures, fundraising information, notices, etc. to help parents stay current on what's happening at TTY. Find us on Facebook at Through the Years Early Learning Centre.

### **ENROLLMENT POLICY**

There are several forms that must be completed and in our possession before we can assume the responsibility of caring for any child. There will be no exceptions. This is to ensure that your child will get the utmost care possible while at the Centre. Some of the forms will include:

Registration Form  
 Family Contract and Rate Agreement  
 Health Record (with accompanying immunization record)  
 Emergency Medical Authorization Form  
 Outing Permission Form  
 Image/Artwork Media Release Form

There may be others.

You are required to keep the Centre informed of any change in addresses, telephone numbers and any other pertinent information listed on any/all of the above listed (or/additional) forms. Please alert the Director of new immunizations as they occur so your child's Health Record can be updated. If you have any questions regarding the completion of these forms, please feel free to ask for assistance.

### **WAIT LIST**

We maintain a comprehensive wait list for those wanting to secure a spot in advance of needing it. We suggest families book a spot well in advance of needing it. Your child's name, birth date and whether you want full time or part time will be noted as well as your contact information and desired start date. We encourage families to check in every few months by phone or email to remain current on the wait list and for an update on availability.

### **WITHDRAWAL POLICY**

**If you wish to withdraw your child from TTY, we require two weeks written notice, which must include the reason for withdrawal.**

## PAYMENT PROCEDURES

Children can attend the Centre either part time or full time. Full time is considered 5 full days per week. Part time is anything less than this. Child Care fees for those on set schedules are as follows:

Infant Room- Full time: \$11.54/day  
Part time: \$12.65/day

Toddler Room- Full time: \$14.05/day  
Part time: \$15.17/day

Junior Preschool- Full time: \$13.37/day  
Part time: \$14.49/day

Senior Preschool- Full time: \$12.94/day  
Part Time: \$14.05/day

School Age Program: Full time after school or PP only: \$9.43/day  
Full time before school or PP only: \$5.36/day  
Full time before and after school or PP: \$12.94/day  
Part time after school or PP only: \$9.98/day  
Part time before school or PP only: \$5.91/day  
Part time before and after school or PP: \$14.05/day  
Full day for full timers: \$20.08/day  
Full day for part timers: \$21.19/day  
Embedded days: additional \$4.46  
Early dismissal (with lunch): additional \$6.68

Adventure Club After Pre-Primary and After School at ACES:

Full time after school: \$10.68/day  
Full time before and after school (BS at TTY): \$12.69/day  
Part time after school: \$11.23/day  
Part time before and after school (BS at TTY): \$13.80/day  
Embedded days: additional \$4.46  
Early dismissal (with lunch): additional \$6.68

These above rates are for children who come on the same days each week, year round. You have contracted to these days, the spot belongs to your child, **and fees are expected to be paid whether your child is present or not.**

**School Age Policy at TTY:** In order to hold/keep your full time school age spot for the fall you need to pay full time, full day fees for the summer. If school age children withdraw from their spot in June for the summer but want a spot in the fall, a first come first serve list will be kept by the director, but re-enrolment is NOT guaranteed.

Another policy unique to School Age is around full day PD days. If your child will not be attending a full day PD day, you must inform us at least 48 hours in advance to not be charged. This is to ensure we have adequate staff to cover ratio and prepare ample food.

**Adventure Club School Age Policy at ACES:** This program runs from the first day of school in September to the last day of school in June. This program only runs when there is school. There is no program on holidays, inservice days, snow days and summer. Families from this program can request full day summer care at Through the Years' Hubbards site. This will be on a first come first served basis.

## **The Director requires two weeks written notice if you wish to change your enrollment schedule.**

Those enrolling full time will be given priority over those enrolling part time. This is chiefly a business decision based on the necessity to full every available space. The part time family will always be asked first if they wish to move to full time before losing their spot. Part timers may be asked at times to change their days to accommodate a full time child.

### **SCHEDULED DAYS**

A parent may choose at the beginning of each month or each week, depending on when they get their schedule, which days they require child care. They will then only be charged for those days. These scheduled days will be accommodated only if there is room on the chosen day and is done on a **first come, first serve basis**. We require 48-hours notice to be given (not including weekends) if you want to cancel a scheduled day and not be charged. Child care fees for those on scheduled days are as follows;

Infant Room	\$15.44/day
Toddler Room:	\$17.95/day
Junior Preschool:	\$17.29/day
Senior Preschool:	\$16.84/day
School Age Program:	\$11.66/day after school or PP only \$6.48/day before school or PP only \$16.85/day before and after school or PP \$23.98/day full day
Adventure Club After Pre-Primary and After School at ACES:	\$12.91/day after school \$16.60/day before and after school (BS at TTY)

### **DROP IN**

Families who may also need care on a day that their child is not contracted to come may call up the day before or the morning of and ask if there is room for their child at the Centre that day. If there is you may bring your child and pay the "Scheduled Days" rate.

### **CENTRE CLOSURE**

**Parents will be given a credit for their fees paid on a day that the Centre is unable to open all day due to a power outage or other emergency like a broken furnace, no water, blizzard, etc. If the Centre is open but is forced to close early or can not open until noon because of any of these reasons, families will NOT receive any credit for this day.**

### **MAKING PAYMENTS**

Your specific rates will be outlined in your **Family Contract and Rate Agreement Form**. Fees are payable in advance, the first half due on your **first** contracted day of care of each month and the second half due **mid-month**. If you wish to pay at the beginning of the month for the entire month this is fine, **but no other exceptions will be made**. If you go away on vacation, payment is due before you leave, to ensure the security of your child's space upon your return. In case of illness on the day payment is due, your payment remains expected, unless you contact the Centre to negotiate alternative arrangements. This is your responsibility, even if the Centre is aware of your absence (illness, vacation, etc).

Payments may be made by cheque, cash or e-transfer as long as no cheque is returned NSF. Cheques must be dated for the day of which payment is due. Payments can be sent to [throughtheyears-coordinator@hotmail.com](mailto:throughtheyears-coordinator@hotmail.com) if you prefer e-transfer. All fees must be paid in full by the end of the current month. In the event of non payment in full the Board of Directors reserves the right to terminate care. Repeated late payments may be grounds for termination (see Termination of Care Policy attached at the end of this Handbook).

### **SAFETY**

All staff have up-to-date first aid training including infant CPR and are experienced and comfortable performing any duties necessary in an emergency. To ensure the utmost fire safety there are posted procedures of evacuation in every room, and monthly fire drills are carried out with the children. As well, fire extinguishers nearby, and staff has received training in their use.

### **TAXES**

We will supply you with a year-end summary of all child care fees paid during the year for tax purposes. This will be given to you in January of each year. If the Executive Assistant is asked to generate a second tax receipt it costs \$10.00.

### **NSF CHEQUES**

The fee for a cheque returned NSF to the Centre is \$20.00. The Centre has the right to halt services until full payment of child care fees and NSF charges has been made to the Centre, in cash.

### **HOURS OF OPERATION AND HOLIDAYS**

Through the Years will operate from Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., year round. The Centre will be closed on the following holidays:

1. New Years' Day
2. Heritage Day
3. Good Friday
4. Easter Monday
5. Victoria Day
6. Canada Day
7. Natal Day
8. Labour Day
9. Truth and Reconciliation Day
10. Thanksgiving Day
11. Remembrance Day
12. Christmas Day
13. Boxing Day

Childcare fees ARE charged on the above holidays with no exceptions.

Adventure Club After Pre-Primary and After School at ACES families are charged for holidays that fall within the school year.

### **OPEN DOOR POLICY**

Through the Years maintains an "open door policy" for parents. This means you are always welcome to call or drop in to see your children at any time during regular childcare hours. If you do visit during "rest periods", we would ask that you respect that some children may be sleeping and ask that care be taken not to disturb them.

Please keep a careful eye on your child(ren) when dropping them off or picking them up. There may be other vehicles on the premises and care must be taken to avoid any mishaps. Please do not allow your child (ren) to leave the Centre unattended. Your child(ren)'s safety is our first priority. Our front door is equipped with an automatic door opener for those using a wheelchair. We ask families to teach their children what it is used for and encourage them to refrain from pushing it.

### **ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES**

If your child is not coming in on a day he/she is contracted to you are asked to contact the Centre by 8:00 a.m., if not before. We ask that all children are in for the day by 9:00 a.m. It is at this time that the snack and lunch numbers are given to the cook. More importantly, this is when the planned program for the day begins, and late stragglers will not only be missing out, but will disrupt the flow of the program in session. We understand that there are the occasional times in which you will need to be late dropping off your child, and we ask that you call and let us know in this case.

Children are expected to arrive clean and fed. We strongly discourage families from bringing in breakfast for their child unless absolutely necessary. If you must bring breakfast it must fall within the Food & Beverage Guidelines for nutrition we need to follow as a centre, set out by Department of Community Services.

It is normal for some children to have difficulty in separating from parents or cry when being dropped off. Please be very brief (no more than 5 minutes is sufficient) during drop-off times: the longer separation is prolonged the more difficult it becomes. A smile, a cheerful good-bye kiss and a reassuring word that you will be back are all that is needed. Children are nearly always quick to get involved in play or activities as soon as parents are gone. You are required to inform the Centre if you are at any other location than what is listed on your child's enrolment records. You are also required to provide a telephone number for that place.

Please be brief at pick-up times also. This is a time of testing when two different authority figures are present (the parent and the ECE) and all children will test to see if the rules still apply.

If a child is arriving or leaving the Centre during rest period, we ask that you try to keep your child's voice at low volume as to not disrupt the other children.

Normal procedure for leaving the Centre is to release the child(ren) to his/her family or someone else the families have authorized on the enrolment forms. If someone other than the parent is to pick up the child(ren) please notify the Centre as soon as possible. A verbal notice is fine on that day if the particular person is on your list of names, which you submitted at the time of enrolment. If the person is NOT on the list, we MUST have written permission to release your child. If the person who comes to pick up your child brings along a written permission, with your name signed to it, we will call you to verify that you did write the permission request. Please inform emergency contacts, or people designated to pick up your child(ren) that if we do not know them we may need to ask for a piece of photo identification. We do not mean to offend them. This is simply a measure taken for your child's protection. We will not let a child leave without a parent's verbal permission, even if that person is listed on one of your designated pick-up people.

**Families are asked to check their mailbox in the foyer on a regular basis for important notices, newsletters and their child's artwork.**

### **LATE PICK UP FEES**

A late fee will be applied to any family picking up a child past 6:00 p.m. at a rate of \$10.00 per 15 minutes. This begins at 6:01 p.m. This fee is noted and added to your next bill. Families who are late more than 5 times per year may be asked to leave the Centre. Please do not bring your child earlier than you're contracted to on your Family Contract and Rate Agreement Form as Centre staff is brought in in the morning at a staggered rate based on the staggered arrivals.

## **SIGNING IN AND OUT**

Teachers are required to sign in and out your child each day. Please be sure a teacher is aware your child is arriving or departing so this attendance record can be kept accurate at all times. Please do not send older siblings under the age of 16 into the Centre to pick up your child. For health reasons, do not leave your car running while dropping off or picking up your child.

## **ILLNESS**

Please give us a call or message us on the HiMama app before 8:00 a.m. if your child will not be attending Centre because of an illness or any other reason. Children who are in a contagious period of an illness will not be accepted until they are past the contagious stage. Families must report to the Centre any contagious illness, which has been diagnosed by a doctor. The Centre requires a letter/form to be completed by the child's doctor stating that the child is past the contagious stage of the illness before the child can return to the Centre.

Children who are not well enough to comfortably cope with the regular Centre's program environment due to an illness must be kept at home. A child will not be accepted for the day if he/she exhibits symptoms of illness such as:

- \*Fever
- \*Diarrhea
- \*Persistent cough
- \*Swollen glands
- \*Vomiting
- \*Infection

## **The child must be free from the above symptoms for twenty-four hours before returning to the Centre.**

If a child begins to exhibit symptoms of illness, or a communicable disease such as head lice or pink eye is discovered, during the day a parent will be notified immediately. It is expected that the child to be picked up by the family member or authorized person as soon as possible.

### **IMPORTANT NOTE:**

In case of an epidemic of a communicable disease (over 10% of total children in one classroom) this above policy is subject to change.

## **MEDICATIONS**

The staff at Through the Years is permitted to give medication authorized by a doctor or family member. All medication must be in the original container with a readable label. Families will be asked to complete an authorization form for each new medication. Over the counter medications will not be given by the staff unless the family has completed a Non-prescription authorization form. Homeopathic or natural remedies will be given with written consent from a family member if medicine is in a bottle with ingredients clearly marked on it. **ALL MEDICATIONS INCLUDING PUFFERS ARE TO BE GIVEN DIRECTLY TO A STAFF PERSON, NOT IN THE CHILD'S BAG, FOR SAFETY REASONS.**

## **REST PERIOD**

Through the Years has a two hour rest period as part of the day's schedule for all classrooms. Preschool children who do not sleep still are required to rest on their mats for one half hour. After this half hour, these children may engage in quiet activities for the remaining time. We will not prevent any child from sleeping or wake your child early.

## **ABSENCES**

There will be no refunds or adjustments made to your child care fee for time missed due to illness, a holiday or days off. A place has been reserved for each child that cannot be filled on a short-term basis.

### **YOUR FUNDRAISING RESPONSIBILITIES**

As Through the Years is a non-profit organization, our annual operating budget relies heavily on fundraised monies (approximately \$15 000.00 a year). We make every effort to keep families' fees as low as possible but in exchange for this we require a firm commitment from our families to help with ongoing fundraising events.

### **CHILD ABUSE POLICY**

As per the protocols outlined by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development for the prevention and reporting of child abuse, the Centre staff is legally required to report cases of suspected child abuse and any disclosures by children.

### **SUSPECTED ALCOHOL OR DRUG USE**

Staff has legal responsibilities in reference to suspected use of alcohol or drugs in the person dropping off or picking up a child. Child care staff as professionals who are dedicated to the well-being of children, play a very important role in young children's lives. Their responsibility is to protect children in their care from abuse and neglect. To this end if we feel there is substantial risk that a child may suffer physical harm we are obligated by law to report this to Child Protective Services and to the RCMP. We ask that families respect the difficult position of assessing the sobriety of a guardian and avoid consuming drugs and alcohol until after your children have been dropped off or picked up and are safe. But if you choose to, be prepared, we will be addressing you with our concerns and contacting your emergency contact to come pick up your child and notifying CPS and the police.

### **ACCIDENT REPORTS**

Staff is required to complete an accident report form for any accident which required first-aid treatment by the staff. It will be signed by the staff member who administered treatment, and by the Director. It is then shown to the family and signed by the family before being placed in the child's file. Families are to be informed of the injury upon pick up of the child, unless it is a serious injury in which you will be notified right away. Confidentiality will be maintained.

### **PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

We encourage children not to bring toys from home. Younger children sometimes have a hard time sharing with others and it is even harder with their own "special toy". The only exception is their comfort item for naptime, which will be put away until naptime. Children will have an opportunity to bring in a special item from home on "show and tell" days and special activity days.

The Centre will not be responsible for any loss or breakage of your child(ren)'s personal items. All personal items must be clearly marked with your child's name.

### **SUPPLIES**

You are responsible for supplying a full change of clothing (including socks and underwear) and indoor shoes or hard soled slippers and any other supplies that your child may need. Any child who wears diapers or pull ups, families are responsible to supply their own. Wipes are to be provided by the families as well. Through the Years, with your permission, will assist your child with toilet training while they are in attendance at the Centre.

Dress your child each day ready for a day of play. **DO NOT DRESS THEM IN ANYTHING YOU WOULD BE UPSET IF IT GOT STAINED.** Children learn best when they are free to get messy: exploring play materials and their food freely without fear their parents may get upset

because their clothes are dirty. Soiled clothing will be sent home and a clean change of clothing should be sent to the Centre on your next scheduled day. If your child is wearing a dress to the Centre, please wear shorts underneath also. All blankets and bedding will be laundered every week.

If there is a special occasion that calls for special clothing (a visit or a party right after child care or a trip to the photographer), please send the special clothing with your child. We will put the good clothes away until the expected time of your arrival for pick-up. We will help your child to clean up and get dressed prior to your arrival.

The Centre will request certain items for certain times of the year such as boots or snowsuits, or a sun hat. All items must be labeled with your child's name. You must maintain these items at all times. Failure to do so is grounds for termination. Please keep in mind that if you do not bring a needed item, it may prevent all of the children from going outside. If it becomes necessary for the Centre to purchase supplies and/or requested items for your child(ren) you will be billed on your next payment due date. This is not to say you should panic should you forget mittens on a certain day. We will have extra available at such times.



## **NUT SAFE FACILITY POLICY**

At Through the Years we **STRIVE** to be a peanut and tree nut safe facility by following these guidelines:

- Monday through Friday from 6:30am – 6:00pm year round Centre staff will be present to monitor that no food containing peanuts or tree nuts is brought into the Centre. Outside of these times we will advise those using the facility of our nut safe policy but will not be present to guarantee foods containing nuts are not brought into the Centre.
- We will ask people entering the Centre during operating hours to wash their and their child's hands and face upon entering if we suspect they have eaten nuts. We ask that if they have eaten nuts prior to coming the Centre that they brush their teeth before leaving home.
- While we strongly discourage bringing breakfast/snacks into the Centre, if they are brought they **MUST** be Nut Safe as well as follow the Centre's nutritional guidelines

## SUN SAFETY POLICY

PLEASE NOTE- WHILE CHILDREN ARE ATTENDING THROUGH THE YEARS EARLY LEARNING CENTRE THESE GUIDELINES NEED TO BE ADHERED TO OR THE FAMILY MAY BE DENIED CARE. THESE POLICIES ARE PUT IN PLACE FOR THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF ALL THE CHILDREN IN OUR CARE.

- Children's outdoor time will be limited between the hours of 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. on days the UV index is rated HIGH. On these days our daily schedule may be changed and outdoor time will occur in the early morning and late afternoon.
- Longer outings and beach trips will occur on days the UV index is rated moderate or low. Sunscreen will still be applied on these days though.
- Sunglasses are also recommended as well as t-shirts with sleeves (not tank tops) and long shorts or dresses (please wear shirts under dresses).
- All children will be required to wear sunscreen. This will be applied 15 to 20 minutes prior to outdoor time. If you are bringing children in the morning during outdoor time please apply sunscreen at home. If you are not able to please alert morning staff person and they will apply it to your child right away.
- Each family will be asked to contribute around \$10.00 per child for part time and \$20.00 for full time at the beginning of the summer towards the purchase of sunscreen. The sunscreen will have a minimum SPF of 30. This will be the sunscreen staff will use on all the children. There is a designated sunscreen checklist to ensure all children in attendance have received sunscreen. If your child is **allergic** to the type of sunscreen we use, with a doctor's note, you do not have to pay the \$20.00 and you may send your own kind to be used only on your child. Please label this bottle with your child's name.

In the summer our daily schedule may change to permit for outdoor time when the UV index is lower. We also make small changes to our lunch menu in the summer to allow us to enjoy more seasonal fruits and vegetables and fewer hot meals.

## **TERMINATION OF CARE POLICY**

Under the following circumstances the Board of Directors, in consultation with the Centre Director, may terminate your child care agreement.

- Consistently failing to pay fees on time.
- Consistent disregard or noncompliance of policies set out in family handbook.
- Showing lack of respect for Centre staff.
- A situation where a child puts the safety and well being of the other children in jeopardy.
- A situation where a child puts the safety and well being of Centre staff in jeopardy.
- A situation where a child is consistently disregarding rules of the classroom or playground.
- A situation where a child is consistently treating Centre property inappropriately.

The following procedure will take place before a decision to terminate a child's care is made.

1. The Centre Director will discuss the issue with the family and come up with an Action Plan to rectify the situation.
2. If the problem persists, a written notice will be given to the family. In the letter the Plan of Action will be reviewed and modified if necessary. Families will also be informed in this letter that if the situation does not improve in a determined period of time, the Board of Directors may need to terminate their child care agreement.
3. If no significant improvement is noted after the period of time the Board of Directors will meet and discuss termination of care. The family will be given one week written notice if this decision is made.

There may be a situation where it takes a day or two for the Centre Director and parent to meet after an incident. In this case we reserve the right to send home a child immediately following an incident if we feel the child cannot cope at the Centre. We also reserve the right to refuse care until the meeting can take place regarding a situation, and a Plan of Action is formulated.

Please be aware that we cannot accommodate a school age child at the Centre if that child is unable to attend school or is sent home early for the day. We do not have a full day school age program during the school year.