

# **Family Home Child Care**

## **Parent Handbook**



15 French Village Station Rd  
Upper Tantallon, NS  
B3Z 1E4

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Giant Steps Children's Centre Inc.  
399 Westwood Blvd  
Upper Tantallon, NS  
B3Z 4K2

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## ***ii Definitions***

**Act** -- means the Day Care Act.

**Agency** -- means a business or organization registered with the Registry of Joint Stock Companies that is licensed to approve and manage family home day care in accordance with its Family Home Day Care program approved by the Director under Section 6.

**Approved Family Home Day Care** -- means day care that is provided by a care provider in their home and that is managed by an agency.

**Care Provider** -- means a person who provides approved family home day care.

**Child** -- means a person who is less than thirteen years of age.

**Director** -- means the Director of Early Childhood Development Services at the Department of Community Services.

**ECDO** – means Early Childhood Development Officer.

**Family Day Care Home** -- means a home in which approved family home day care is provided.

**Family Home Consultant** -- means a person hired by an agency to provide services to care providers.

**Fiscal Year** – means the provincial government business year which runs for the twelve months from April 1st of any given year until March 31st of the following year.

**Operate** -- includes manage

**Parent** -- includes a guardian, foster parent or other person having the care and custody of a child.

## **1 Welcome and Introduction**

Welcome to our Family Home Day Care Agency. This Parent Handbook has been designed to provide you with information about our program and policies. Please read it and keep it for future reference. Open, two-way communication is important to our success in caring for and educating your child. If you have any questions, concerns, ideas, or comments regarding our program, the staff or the care provider who is looking after your children, please feel free to speak to us or to put your thoughts in writing.

## **1.1 Agency Contact Information:**

Giant Steps Children's Centre Inc.  
15 French Village Station Rd  
Upper Tantallon, NS  
B3Z 4E4

Agency Directors:

Donna Buckland  
Lisa Rondeau

Phone: 902-820-4040  
Fax: 902-820-4041

Email: [gsfamilyhome@gmail.com](mailto:gsfamilyhome@gmail.com)

Website: <http://giantstepschildrenscentre.ca>

## **1.2 Family Home Consultant Contact Information:**

Family Home Consultant:

**Sarah Mills**  
Phone: 902-820-4040  
Cell: 902-219-1453  
Director:  
**Jannetta Sparkes**  
Phone 902-820-4040  
Cell: 902-579-3511

## **1.3 Care Provider Contact Information:**

Name:  
Address:  
Email:  
Phone:  
NOTE...

The following items are posted on the Family Home Child Care Bulletin Board in the Agency (Giant Steps Children's Centre-French Village Location):

- Agency License
- Behavior Guidance Policy
- Current Members of the Parent Committee
- Parent Committee Minutes
- Act and Regulations
- Parent Handbook
- Recent Inspection Report

The following items are posted in each Family Home on their Parent Bulletin Board:

- Act and Regulations
- Parent Handbook
- Parent Committee Minutes
- Recent Inspection Report
- Behavior Guidance Policy
- Current Menu
- Statement on Breast Feeding
- Provider's Approval Certificate

## **2 Philosophy and Mission Statements**

It is our goal as a Family Home Child Care Agency to support the Family Home Day Care Providers in offering a family oriented, safe, child-centered day care experience. Family Home Day Cares will offer a variety of age appropriate activities, games and toys within a flexible daily structure. Children in the Family Home Child Care will be provided with healthy meals, snacks and nap time appropriate to ages. The Family Home Child Cares will provide a safe home-like environment indoors and a safe outdoor play area for children to explore, while the provider ensures children are properly dressed and supervised at all times. With the support of childcare professionals, Family Child Care Providers may care for all children including those with specials needs.

## **3 Administrative Structure and Personnel**

Our agency is a business which is headed by the [owners/executive directors]  
Donna Buckland ECE and Lisa Rondeau BCS

The staff of the Agency consists of the Director Jannetta Sparkes E.C.E, and the Family Home Consultant. Sarah Mills E.C.E.

## **4 Areas Served**

Our agency serves the following area: Tantallon, Timberlea, Hubbards and the Peggy's Cove Loop,

## **5 Number and Ages of Children**

Our agency serves children ages 0-12. Each care provider will serve a different age group and mixture of children that suits her/his family home dynamics.

By law, each approved Family Home Care Provider is permitted to care for a maximum of 7 children at a time, including their own children, and must not have any other children in their care, subject to the following restrictions:

- (a) No more than 2 of the 7 children may be infants (0-17 months inclusive);
- (b) No more than 3 of the 7 children may be toddlers or younger than toddlers (0-35 months inclusive).

If a care provider is only looking after school aged children, they may care for a maximum of 9 school age children at a time, including their own children, and must not have any other children in their care.

If a care provider is looking after only infants, then the care provider may care for a maximum of 3 infants at a time, including their own infants, and must not have any other children in their care.

Below is the information regarding your Family Home Day Care Provider and the number and ages of the children in their care.

## **6 Programs and Services**

Giant Steps Children's Centre Inc is a privately owned, family oriented, licensed Child Care Centre and a Family Home Day Care Agency. We are committed to providing professional and family support, learning enhancements and equipment lending as well and professional development opportunities for Home Day Care Providers.

We help support and educate Home Day Care professionals to optimize the implementation of developmentally appropriate curriculum. Services that we provide include:

- ✓ Development and maintenance of Home Day Care policies, procedures and record keeping systems and administrative support
- ✓ Professional development and training opportunities for Home Day Care Providers through workshops and conferences and networking opportunities
- ✓ Resource Library, lending professional resources as well as toys and equipment to enhance the Home Day Care program.
- ✓ Playgroup opportunities for Family Home Day Care Providers to network together and with other Early Childhood Educators
- ✓ Access to Early Childhood Professionals for consultation and professional support for Home Care Providers and/or the families they service.
- ✓ Access to Government Subsidy fees for families who choose Home Day Care for their child care needs but are in need of financial assistance.
- ✓ Monthly inspections of the Family Home Day Cares to ensure regulations are being maintained.
- ✓ Support the development of a Parent Advisory Committee as a forum for parents of the Family Home Day Cares; and act as a non-voting supportive member.

Family Home Day Cares approved by the Agency will offer a family oriented, safe, child-centered day care experience. Family Home Day Cares must provide a variety of age appropriate activities, games and toys within a flexible daily structure. Experiences with arts and crafts, science and exploration, reading, language and pretend-play will be expected on a regular basis. Providers may enhance the children's experiences with other opportunities such as outings, cooking or baking and computer time. Children in the Family Home Day Care will be provided with healthy meals, snacks and nap times appropriate to the individual children's needs and ages. The Family Home Day Provider will provide a safe environment indoors and outdoors for children to explore, while ensuring children are properly dressed and supervised at all times. With the support of childcare professionals, Family Day Care Providers may care for all children including those with special needs.

## **7 Special Needs**

Families with children who have special needs are welcome in the Family Day Care Homes. Those children who are diagnosed with special needs must come with relevant documentation (i.e. copy of early intervention intake, reports and assessments from other professionals, etc.) In order to provide appropriate care in these instances full disclosure of medical conditions and needs relevant to the child participating in the program is requested. Documentation from your child's developmental specialists is important because this information will assist care providers in developing routines that promote the inclusion of all children in the group.

If your child has not yet been diagnosed or is in the process, the Care Provider will strive to meet the needs of your child in the group with the support of the Agency and Parents until specific environmental adaptations and planning is developed. The Agency consultant will help support this process by conferencing with other professionals and seeking support from resources available through Department of Education and Early

## Childhood Development, Early Years Branch.

The Care Provider meets with the parents to discuss the child's needs prior to the first day of attendance. The Agency Consultant can be available to attend this meeting if the Care Provider and Parents choose. The goal of this meeting is to share relevant information and to identify any necessary adaptations. Families will be asked to fill out a questionnaire that describes their child's needs (diagnosed or not) in detail. If parent's or other professionals recommend adaptations to the program or environment the Care Provider will make every effort to implement changes, within the Agency's Philosophy to promote the successful integration of the child. Supported funding is not available for Family Home Day Cares. Parents may be responsible for costs of adaptations to the environment or specialized equipment that is required.

My home is NOT NUT FREE, but I will NOT serve nuts to children in the program for snacks or lunch.

### 8 Fees

*Fees are paid regardless of any missed days due to illness, vacations, storms days and all holidays*

<b>Program</b>	<b>Fee</b>
Infant	\$35.00 F.R. \$17.00, <b>you pay \$18.00 a day</b>
Toddler/Preschoolers	\$38.00 F.R. \$16.50, <b>you pay \$21.50 a day</b>
Before and After Care	\$24.70 F.R. \$6.00, <b>you pay \$18.70 a day</b>
Full Days	\$38.00 F.R. 16.50 <b>you pay \$21.50 a day</b>

#### 8.1 Fee payments

- Fees are payable directly to the care provider.
- Fees are invoiced monthly
- Fees may be paid:  
In one lump sum  
By post dated cheques weekly (the Friday before the week begins)  
Biweekly on the 1 and 15<sup>th</sup>  
Monthly on your choice of the 1<sup>st</sup> or the 15<sup>th</sup>.

Alternate payment types may be available at the discretion of a home care provider

#### 8.2 Late Payments:

A \$20 charge will apply to all NSF cheques. This charge must be paid by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month. A late charge of \$5.00 per day after the 10th will accumulate on any unpaid account until the account is paid in full or sent to a Collection Agency.

### **8.3 Late Pick-Up Fee:**

Late pick-ups will be charged a fee of \$5.00 for any part of 15 minutes past departure (after a 5-minute grace period.) This amount will be charged on your next month's bill and paid directly to the day care provider. After a period of 30 minutes a call to the emergency contact will be made to come and pick up your child. If a period of one hour elapses past departure time it is required by Department of Education and Early Childhood Development/ Early Years Branch, that their office be contacted if no telephone contact has been made to indicate that a parent, guardian or emergency contact is on route to pick up the child. Receipts are provided annually.

### **8.4 Fees during Vacations:**

Family Home Day Care providers may choose to take vacation time. Vacation time is valuable for care providers to spend time with their own families and "re-charge" their batteries, so to best take quality care of children. Please speak to parents regarding any vacation. Family Home Day Care providers must inform the parents of the dates he/she is taking vacation no less than 1 and 1/2 months in advance. **Providers are allotted 10 vacation days a year. Parents are expected to pay fees for Providers vacation days.**

### **9 Hours of Operation**

Giant Steps Children's Centre Inc. (The Agency)  
Monday to Friday 7:00 am to 6:00p.m

PROVIDERS HOURS –

### **10 General Holidays**

The agency will be closed on statutory holidays. If any day designated as a holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, then the holiday will be observed on the Monday immediately following. The following are designated statutory holidays: **FEES MUST BE PAID FOR THESE DAYS.**

New Year's Day ,	Heritage Day
Good Friday	
Canada Day	Note: Christmas Eve and New Years Eve... 1:00p.m. Closure
Victoria Day	
Christmas Day	

The agency will also be closed on the following holidays:

Easter Monday  
Natal Day (first Monday in August)  
Thanksgiving Day  
Boxing Day  
Labour Day  
Remembrance Day  
Truth and Reconciliation Day

**Your Family Home Day Care Provider may choose to operate on some of the holidays.**

## 11 Storm Days

Your Family Home Care Provider will be closed in the event of a power outage because of storms or extreme weather. If you decide to keep your child at home, please call your care provider and leave a message. **Child care fees are payable when the Care Provider is closed due to storms.**

## 12 Illness of Care Provider

If the care provider is ill and unable to care for children, the Care Provider will be responsible for contacting the parents to let them know that she/he is ill.

Parents will be required to make alternate care arrangements. **The Provider may use some of their 10 allotted days a year as a sick day and fees must be paid.**

## 13 Child Attendances

The following are policies regarding attendance at the Family Home Day Care. Parents must read and sign a written agreement to adhere to these policies.

- a) Parents/Guardians will arrive ten minutes prior to the Family Home Day Care's closing time to ready the child(ren) for prompt departure.
- b) Children are accepted on a full calendar month basis. Written confirmation to withdraw from care must be given on the 1<sup>st</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, one full calendar month prior to withdraw. Parents will be responsible for payment of full fees for one full calendar month in lieu of appropriate notice.
- c) Parents/Guardians shall read and adhere to all the policies and procedures in the Parent Handbook concerning (but not limited to) sick children, late fees, etc.
- d) Parents grant permission for their child(ren) to be taken off the premises for the purpose of conducting group (walking) outings.
- e) Parents grant permission for their child(ren) to be given medical attention or taken to the hospital (via ambulance if necessary) in the event of sudden illness or accident, should they be unavailable.
- f) Parents understand that a \$100 deposit is due upon registration. \$100 will be used towards the child care fees for the month when attendance begins. Parents agree the deposit is non-refundable should they decide not to attend after they have registered.
- g) Parents agree to pay the amount indicated on their attendance form for their child(ren)'s attendance. Payments are to be made promptly on the agreed date each week/month.
- h) There is no reimbursement for children's absences for any reason such as (but not limited to) illness, vacation, statutory holidays or extreme weather. The Family home Day Care will be closed for all statutory holidays. The Family Home Day Care Provider reserves the right to cancel care due to extreme weather but will make every effort to remain open.
- i) Parents understand and agree that child care fees are waived when the Family Home Day Care Provider is ill or unavailable to care for their children. In this event, Parents agree that they are responsible for finding alternate care arrangements.
- j) A \$20 charge will apply to all NSF cheques. This charge must be paid by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month. A late charge of \$5.00 per day after the 10th and will accumulate on any unpaid account until the account is paid in full or sent to a Collection Agency.

### 13.1 Your Child's First Day:

Revised 2025

The first day that a child attends the Family Home Day Care is a very important day for your child. Children who are introduced to a child care setting with the help of their parents tend to cope better with their new situation. The introduction helps to open lines of communication between parents and the Care Provider, so that special information about the child can be shared. In addition, you and your child become familiar with the environment, Care Provider, the routine, and the activities at the Family Home Day Care. We suggest the following ideas for your child's introduction to our Family Home Day Care:

- We suggest that you and your child visit the Family Home Day Care together the first day. This should be a brief visit with you in attendance for the first hour or so. The child's first day should not be overwhelming or tiring, so a half-day is best.
- If taking the time off is not possible for you, we suggest bringing your child in early the first few mornings and spending that time together in the Family Home Day Care.
- We suggest that your child's first few days be shorter than normal, so that his/her days are not too overwhelming and tiring.
- If this is your child's first child care experience, you and your child may need some extra support. The Care Provider will assist you and your child through the transition. Please feel free to share your concerns and feelings with her/him.

## **13.2 Withdrawal**

We hope that your child[ren] will be part of our family for many years, however we understand that children will leave our care from time to time. If you plan to withdraw your child from the Family Day Care Home, you must provide **one month's** written notice.

## **13.3 Arrivals and Departures:**

Each Family Home Day Care will have individual preferences for Arrivals and Departures. Parents are asked to respect these procedures. \* Please note that your Family Home Care Provider has a **NO IDLE** policy. Please turn your vehicle off while you drop off and pick up your child.

### **13.3.1 Arrival**

- You must bring your child into the home. His/her outerwear must be removed in the designated area
- 
- Your child must be escorted into the home and greeted by a Care Provider. The responsibility for your child is yours until s/he is physically in the care of the Family Home Day Care Provider. Children are not to be left at the door or unsupervised area.
- The person arriving with your child may need to sign the attendance sheet, noting the date and time of arrival. Some Care Providers will sign the children in as they greet you. This allows us to see who is on the premises during fire drills and emergencies, and to keep attendance records. For after school programs, the Care Provider will record these times in the morning and after school.
- For infants and toddlers, on arrival please advise the care provider of any special circumstances that may affect your child's behaviour or well-being that day. These are noted in the daily records, which you are entitled to view.
- Please let your Child Care Provider know if you are going to be bringing your child later than the expected time and approximate time of arrival. Late arrivals may mean your child misses out in some planned activities. If an outing is planned parents may be expected to drop late arriving children to the outing destination after dropping their children's belongings to the Family Day Care Home.
- Please notify the Care Provider if your child will not be attending and the reason for the absence.

## **SAFE ARRIVAL**

When school age children are enrolled in the Family Home Day Care the care provider shall implement a *Safe Arrival Policy and Procedure* throughout the course of the school year.

Parents should call the care provider whenever their child is absent from school and will not arrive to the Family Home Day Care off the bus.

Care providers shall take attendance as the children arrive after school. Should any child not arrive off the bus as is typically scheduled, the care provider will contact, in order, the following individuals until a confirmation of absence has been determined:

1. One or both parents/guardians
2. School administration
3. Emergency contact

Parents are first and foremost responsible for the safe arrival of their child to the Family Home Day Care, should arrival via bus, for any reason, not occur.

The Family Home Day Care Provider must relay all information regarding the child's absence to parents if the parents are not aware of the absence. For example: if the child has missed the bus and the school has informed the care provider that she/he is still at school.

### **13.3.2 Departure**

- Children must be picked up by the closing time designated by the Care Provider.
- If, due to unforeseen circumstances, you will be late picking up your child, you must call the care provider in advance. Note that a late pick-up fee will be charged and due immediately.
- Parents of infants and toddlers should review the daily activities log to see if any unusual occurrences impacted their children during the day.
- Children must be picked up by an authorized parent or guardian. In the event that you are unable to pick up your child, you must notify the Care Provider in advance regarding who will be coming for your child, and an approximate pick-up time.
- The Care Provider will only release your child to those persons listed on the authorization form. Authorized persons may be asked for identification on the first (or subsequent) occasions of pick up.
- Changes to this authorization list should be made in writing but also may be made verbally in person or via telephone. If notification has not been given we will contact you for authorization. If you cannot be reached we will not release the child to the person.

### **13.4 Vacation:**

Family Home Day Care Providers may choose to take vacation time. Vacation time is valuable for Care Providers to spend time with their own families and "re-charge" their batteries, so to best take quality care of your children. The Care Provider is allotted 10 paid vacation days. **The fees for the 10 paid days will be expected.** The provider will give you at least 2 months notice of their planned vacation.

## **14 Your Child's Needs**

- Our Family Home Day Care Programs are designed to encourage and facilitate active learning and development through exploration and play. To ensure that your child gets the most out of the program and is safe, comfortable and happy throughout the day, we have developed the following guidelines:
- Your child will need the following personal items, which should be kept at the Family Day Care Home (and replaced with clean items when required):
- a small blanket, pillow and sheet for rest period, a toothbrush, and a complete change of clothing (underwear, socks, pants, shirt, etc. - just in case!).

- Your child may bring a safe, soft plush toy for rest period, such as a plush or stuffed toy, a doll, or a favorite nap time blanket.
- Your child's possessions will be stored in an organized manner. Ask the Care Provider where the storage area is and check it daily. You may find notices, artwork, soiled clothing, etc in this area. Please collect any items which need to be taken home, and be sure to replenish spare clothing and bedding in good, clean condition.
- If your child is being toilet-trained, you are responsible for providing adequate diapers any special toileting supplies that your child needs (the Care Provider will keep you updated on your child's diaper needs).

Children should wear comfortable clothing so that they can participate in all aspects of the program. Please send your child in the appropriate outdoor clothing for the day. We try to go outside at least once a day, at the playground, for walks, or field trips, and in all kinds of weather. Following are lists of seasonal outerwear that your child will require:

Summer	Winter	Fall/Spring
sun hat summer jacket waterproof rain boots outdoor sneakers swimsuit sun screen light sweater shorts rain jacket	wool hat snowsuit (snow pants, coat) scarf winter boots 2 pairs of mittens warm sweater pants outdoor sneakers	sun hat wool hat jacket rain pants raincoat waterproof rain boots outdoor sneakers sun screen mittens

- All items of clothing should be clearly labeled with your child's name or initials.
- While every effort is made to protect your child's clothing and possessions from loss or damage, we can not guarantee that this will not happen. Family Home Care Providers may provide a Lost and Found box that you can check regularly.

## 15 Health Policies

At our family home day care we are concerned about the health and safety of all children, staff and care providers. Staff and care providers are strict about enforcing health regulations. Infections can spread rapidly within a family home, so universal precautionary measures are taken at all times.

### 15.1 Illness:

We ask families take a pro active role in limiting the spread of communicable diseases in the Family Day Care Home. If your child is going to be absent due to illness, call the Family Home Day Care and notify the Care Provider of the condition of your child. Please do not send children that are sick or have been sick in the past 24 hours to the Family Day Care Home.

The following precautions will help in conjunction with the daily health rituals to minimize illness:

- Please have your child wash their hands upon arriving in the morning
- You will be informed of any contagious condition your child may have been exposed to while at the Family Home Day Care.
- In the event that your child has been hospitalized for any reason, s/he will require a note from the doctor stating the child is ready to return to the Family Home Day Care.
- Please respect the Health Policy listed below

## Family Home Child Care Health Policy

Care Providers will inquire about children's health and well being upon arrival. Children must be able to participate in the entire days activities, use your discretion if your child is lethargic or displays other non-specific symptoms.

Upon arrival Care Providers have the right to refuse care to children who display obvious signs of illness. Obvious symptoms of illness include but are not limited to:

- Temperature of 100.4 F or 38 C or higher
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea: very loose bowel movement twice or more within 1 hour
- Rash: other than an allergic reaction or existing condition.
- Coughing: persistent coughing for more than 1 week.
- Thick or discolored discharge from nose or eyes

A doctor's note that deems that your child is not contagious may be required in certain cases, if your child visits the doctor please ask to have a signed note stating that they have been seen.

- If your child becomes sick while at the Family Home Day Care, you will be called to come and pick up your child as quickly as possible. We do not have a space to care for a sick child for extended periods of time. A call to your emergency contact shall be made if you are unreachable.

All children must be **symptom free for 24 hours** without fever medication before returning to the Family Home Day Care.

The Family Home Day Care Provider will notify you when your child may attend following an illness. Please respect these policies, they benefit your family when your child is healthy too.

Parents will sign the illness policy form with the proper procedure to follow depending on the illness indicated by the provider on the form.

### **15.2 Medication:**

No over the counter medicines will be administered, except in emergency situations and then only under the advice of a paramedic or Doctor. If you feel your child requires over the counter medication to participate they will be deemed too ill to attend the Family Day Care. Over the counter medication may be required in certain special cases and therefore MUST be accompanied by a Doctor's note e.g Benydryl for allergic reactions.

Prescription medications may be administered only when the medicine is in its original container showing: the child's name, date of prescription, and dosages. Parents must complete the form to authorize any medicine to be administered by the Family Home Day Care Provider.

- Please send measuring utensils along with your child's medication.
- All medications are to be given directly to care provider, and for safety reasons must not be left with child's spare clothing and bedding in the cubby area.
- It is recommended that a child who has been prescribed an antibiotic take it for 24 hours before returning to the family home day care.
- Certain medical procedures can only be done with special training. If your child has special medical needs, these cases must be discussed with your child's Family Home Day Care Provider

### **15.3 Universal Health Precautions**

Those who work at our agency or are associated with the agency as Care Providers, help control the spread of infections by practicing proper hygiene and universal precautions. Children, Care Providers and agency staff and volunteers wash their hands thoroughly with warm water and soap before meals, after toileting, before and after administering first aid, and throughout the day as required. Dishes, eating surfaces and diapering areas are sanitized after each use; toys are checked for breakage daily and sanitized at least twice each week. Floors are cleaned daily, as required throughout the day. The laundry, kitchen and bathrooms are maintained in a clean and organized manner.

Universal precautions adapted by the Family Home Day Care include:

- hands are washed immediately after exposure to blood, and all other bodily secretions.
- all cuts are covered with a sterile bandage until healed.
- disposable latex gloves are worn by staff treating open cuts.
- blood-soiled surfaces are disinfected with bleach, which kills HIV.
- laundry stained with blood and other bodily secretions is washed separately in hot, soapy water.
- materials stained with blood and other bodily secretions are placed in sealed garbage bags and discarded in a lined, covered plastic container.

### **15.4 Emergency Preparedness:**

- The agency inspects all of the Family Home Day Cares on an annual basis to ensure that the premises are safe.
- The agency and each Family Home Day Care have an emergency evacuation plan and practice fire safety procedures during a monthly fire drill.
- All Care Providers have been trained in First Aid and infant CPR and are required to keep their training up to date.
- Please inform the Family Home Day Care of any changes to your address, place of work, telephone numbers, and authorization list, and injuries that your child receives outside the program.

### **15.5 Accident Reports:**

Care providers are required to complete an accident report form for any incident or accident which requires first-aid treatment. It will be signed by the person who administered treatment, and by a representative of the agency (upon the monthly visit), and placed in the child's file. Parents are informed of any injuries at the appropriate time depending on the extent of the injury.

Maintaining confidentiality regarding any concerned parties is a priority.

### **15.6 Emergency Medical Treatments:**

Emergency medical treatment will only be provided by the Care Provider if their first aid training gives them the skills required to do so. All agency staff and volunteers, and all Care Providers have current training in emergency first aid and CPR. If a child requires emergency medical treatment that cannot be safely provided by the Care Provider, the parent will be called to take the child for professional medical attention. If the parent cannot be reached, an authorized person will be called to fulfill this responsibility, and efforts to contact the parent will continue. Any extraordinary costs associated with transporting the child for emergency medical care (such as ambulance) will be paid by the parents of the child.

## 15.7 Emergency Evacuation:

In the event that we have to evacuate the Family Day Care Home due to fire or other emergency and the home is not fit for immediate habitation, the parents or an authorized person will be contacted immediately and expected to pick up your child **immediately** at the designated emergency location.

## 16 Nutritional Information

### Nutrition

Snacks and meals at Giant Steps family homes are largely homemade and prepared on site. All snacks offer at least two food groups, and include at least one serving of vegetables or fruit. Servings are age appropriate. Meals are prepared daily and consist of all four food groups, vegetables and or fruit covering half of the plate and provide 1/3 of a child daily-recommended amount of calories and nutrients. Promotional materials are not used to serve meals and snacks.

- Food will **not** be used as a punishment or reward: ie: “*eat your meal and you can have milk*” or “*finish your veggies and you can have more noodles*”
- Children will not be asked to leave the table while they are still eating.
- Children are **encouraged to respond to hunger and feelings of fullness** and not forced to finish food that has been served.
- A **care provider will sit at the table at all times**, or as much as possible, when children are present.
- The **care provider will sit and eat with the children**, engaging children conversation (this does not mean you cannot give direction). Meaningful social conversation is an important part of family style dining.
- Staff will **model good eating habits** for the children at their table – eating the same food and a either the same drink or a drink in a mug (not a hot drink) or water bottle.
- Ensure the food is accessible before starting the process of clean up/washing hands, so **children will not be expected to sit and waiting for too long** (up to three minutes is an appropriate with time – shorter for toddlers)
- Children should go to the meal table in a **calm and unrushed manner**, i.e. children are calmly told that meal time is ready and to wash their hands before they are seated.
- Children should be **encouraged, but not forced to use table manners**. Table manners will be taught as a regular part of the meal time curriculum.
- *Children will place a small amount of each food on their plates so the food is available to try. Children will be encouraged to try all foods.* (not to the point of a power struggle)
- Each child will take an **appropriate sized serving of food** and be **permitted to have more** until they feel full.
- At each mealtime a child or children should help with clean up or set up.
- **Children will all eat independently.** Staff will model appropriate use of eating utensils, table manners, and social interaction.
- Children will be assisted only when necessary, and help will be minimized as independence grows.
- Children should be encouraged and shown how to clean up their own spills and messes as appropriate. **No child will be chided for accidents** e.g. “*It's okay, Andrew, everyone has spills. Let's get some paper towels to clean it up and keep the cup further on the table so it won't spill again*”.
- Caregivers will hold bottle fed infants and older infants will participate in family style dining opportunities that include self feeding where appropriate.

Breastfeeding mothers are welcome anytime throughout the day to nurse -- and a comfortable space will be provided for them to do so. Serving of breast milk will be available at parent's requests and milk may be stored in the homes refrigerator and must be properly labeled with the date expressed and the child's full name.

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 age. Infant Feeding Plans are on file when applicable and available for review.

Care Providers allow Infants to explore their food, feed themselves and respond to hunger and fullness cues.

Honey and products containing honey are not served to children who are less than 12 months of age.

We support families with cultural, religious and other dietary restrictions. Families are permitted to bring in alternatives to the menu and whenever possible the alternative should be a similar snack or meal. This food from home will be labeled and refrigerated as needed. Daily alternatives such as lactose-free or soy milk may be labeled with the child's name and left in the Centre fridge.

When **celebrating milestones or birthdays, we ask that families do NOT bring in food items** to share. If you would like to honor your child's birthday we ask that you share items such as stickers, pencils or other non-food treats.

Children's food and life-threatening allergy information along with a photo will be posted in every the home

Giant Steps Children's Centres family home day cares operate within reg. 25 (1) standard 5.4 our centres only purchase or receive donations or food or beverages in accordance with the Department of Agriculture`.

When medical, religious, or cultural beliefs require a child to bring food from home, or when the child is in a school age program where lunch is not provided, foods must be labeled with the child's name and refrigerated if necessary

## **17 Rest Period**

Infants sleep according to their own individual schedules that are discussed between parents and Care Providers. For children less than 5 years old, a rest period is a part of the day's schedule. During rest period, all children under 5 years of age are required to **rest** for one half hour, including those who do not sleep. After this half an hour, any children that are not sleeping may engage in quiet activities until the rest of the children wake up. Children will not be permitted or expected to sleep longer than developmentally appropriate, so that they may participate in afternoon activities and not to disrupt their night time sleep habits.

## **18 Policies on Reporting Suspected Child Abuse**

As per the protocols outlined by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development / Early Years Branch for the prevention and reporting of child abuse, the agency staff and the Care Provider is legally required to report cases of suspected child abuse.

## 19 Behaviour Guidance policies

- The agency has a written behaviour guidance policy with respect to permitted and prohibited behaviour guidance practices. The policy applies to all agency staff, volunteers and care providers.
- Staff, volunteers and care providers are required to follow the guidelines at all times
- A copy of the behaviour guidance policy is posted on the parent bulletin board in the Family Day Care Home and is also posted at the agency facilities. A copy may be obtained from the agency.
- The written behaviour guidance policy is reviewed with staff, Care Providers and Volunteers: prior to the start of their employment or their interaction with the centre or agency; and annually thereafter to ensure that staff, Care Providers and volunteers understand and are able to apply the policy.
- The written behaviour guidance policy must be reviewed with the parents of each child when they are first enrolled in the Family Home Day Care Program.

Various behaviour management methods shall be used, including but not limited to, positive reinforcement, setting fair and consistent limits, modeling and redirection to appropriate behaviour. We at Giant Steps understand that children differ in temperament, age and experience and will ignore certain behaviors when appropriate. We work toward anticipating children's needs, being firm but flexible and providing choices and explanation. Parental input is valued and welcomed at any time regarding the individual cases of their own children.

Care givers shall incorporate various effective methods of encouraging acceptable behaviors by:

1. Providing a sufficient number of interesting activities.
2. Providing opportunities for children to make valid choices.
3. Setting clear and consistent limits of behaviour and consistently enforcing classroom rules.
4. Speaking clearly to children, letting them know what behaviour was unacceptable in a positive way. (Speak in such a way that the child can understand and provide alternative behaviors)
5. Giving advance warnings or transitions so children will know what happens next.
6. Using positive reinforcement.
7. Using modeling and positive direction to show children what is acceptable behaviour.

Under certain circumstance, Care Providers may be required to use gentle physical contact to guide behaviour. Adult touch, during a frustrating situation can have a calming affect of the child, thereby exhausting disruptive behaviour.

### Prevention/Pro-active Strategies

- Be a positive role model, turn taking, language, and shared experiences.
- Provide a sufficient number of age and developmentally appropriate activities.
- Establish and maintain effective classroom routines and change when necessary.
- Recognize, acknowledge and make room for individual differences when planning activities.
- Give advance warning about transition times.
- Provide opportunities for children to make valid choices.
- Setting clear limits on behaviour in a positive way.
- Ask children then insist on everyone's attention before you begin an activity
- Use specific examples (and immediately after the deed) to show children that you value them, statements such as...I liked it when you...It helped the class when you.... I felt happy when.... I knew you were ready to listen because...
- Enforcing appropriate classroom behaviour in a positively and consistent manner.
- Moving around the room and play area outside at all times. Use free play time to increase the amount of meaningful interactions you have with your group.
- Phrase directions in a way that tells children what to do rather than what not to do.
- Establish eye contact and get close to the children.
- Use a positive tone appropriate voice level.

- Speak clearly and respectfully, be polite.
- Encourage children to take responsibility for the classroom toys.
- Involve children in rule making, acting as a facilitator, guiding responses if needed.
- Be generous in giving positive feedback.
- Greet children individually as they arrive.
- Find a way to know and celebrate each child's talents or abilities.
- Make time to talk with each child everyday even for only a minute.

#### Intervention

- Use positive reinforcement, especially praise
- Letting children know when they did something unacceptable, why it was unacceptable and what they can do instead.
- Being prompt with gentle verbal reprimands when misbehaviour occurs
- Focus on the misbehavior not the child.
- Approach children privately when talking to them about behaviours
- Use the least intrusive strategies to gain student compliance.
- Use natural consequences whenever possible and match behaviour to consequences at all times.
- Individual behaviour plans when deemed appropriate for consistent behavioural difficulties.
- In accordance with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development/ Early Years Branch the following policy must be written into all licensed facilities guidelines;
- Physical contact with children can be used as a last resort with the intent to guide positive behaviour or relieve children from immediate danger, hands on shoulders, hold child's hand, gentle guiding hand on a child's back, hugs or holding child in your arms

In accordance with the Department of Community Services; Child Development Services policies the following policy must be written into all licensed facilities guidelines;

"Our policy strictly prohibits corporal punishment of any kind, including but not limited to: Striking a child directly or with an object, shaking, spanking, slapping, kicking, squeezing or other forms of aggressive physical contact or forcing a child to repeat physical movements. Any forms of harsh or humiliating or belittling or degrading responses emotional, verbal or physical are also strictly prohibited. No child shall be left alone, unsupervised as a form of punishment for any reason nor shall any child be denied basic needs including food, shelter or bedding i.e. withholding meals, snacks or desserts or taking away a child's blanket at nap time."

## **20 Parent Involvements and Communication**

Family Home Day Care Providers should have daily communication with parents either verbally or written communication through notes, activity boards and individual children's daily sheets. Parents and Care Providers must communicate openly and often to permit the best care of their children as possible. Families respecting the policies of the Care Provider and Care Providers respecting the wishes of the families, help to build a strong relationship.

The agency is extremely interested in having parents involved in the Family Home Day Care Program. Communication with parents and receiving feedback from parents are keys to our success. The Agency may communicate with parents through the Care Provider and when required, directly by regular mail and email, where possible. The agency also has established a website, which also contains information which is important to parents. See: [giantstepschildrenscentre.ca](http://giantstepschildrenscentre.ca)

### **20.1 Parent Bulletin Board:**

Each care provider must have a parent bulletin board that contains information of interest to parents and information required by the regulations to be posted (see list below).

The bulletin board must be posted in a conspicuous place in the FHDC home. Besides the required information, the bulletin board should also include program information that may be of interest to parents, notices regarding upcoming meetings and activities, as well as parenting and community information that may assist parents. The regulations state that the parent bulletin board must include the following information:

- A copy of the agency's license from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development / Early Years Branch.
- A copy of the Family Home Day Care's last Annual Checklist that was conducted by the Agency.
- A copy of the Family Home Day Care's *Approval Certificate*

A notice indicating that the following information is available for viewing by the parents

- *The Day Care Act*, the *Day Care Regulations*, and the *Family Home Day Care Program Regulations*.
- The Agency's policy respecting licensing and care provider approval
- The Agency's policy regarding enrollment and attendance information.
- A copy of the Agency's behaviour guidance policy
- The minutes of the last parent advisory committee meeting
- Notice of the next parent advisory committee meeting (at least two weeks before the meeting date)
- Rules and procedures respecting evacuation in case of fire or other emergencies
- A card listing addresses and telephone numbers of staff members, substitute staff, taxi, ambulance, hospital, fire department, police and other emergency information
- A copy of any critical issues notification sent to parents (see #30 below).

## **20.2 Critical Issues Notification:**

When critical issues arise which could impact the way the family home day care is run or managed, the agency must provide notice in writing to parents. In particular, the Agency must notify the parents if any of the following occur:

- (a) The approval of a care provider or a family home day care they manage is or will be revoked;
- (b) A family home day care or agency is closed or sold;
- (c) Conditions are imposed upon the agency's license or any written information about the agency's license or program has been given to the agency by the Director;
- (d) The police or an agency established under the *Children and Family Services Act* are investigating a matter involving a care provider or other person associated with the Family Home Day Care, unless the police or the agency established under the *Children and Family Services Act* directs otherwise.
- (e) Notice of a closure or sale under (b) above must be given at least 2 weeks before the date of the closure or sale. Any notices under this section must be in writing and must be sent by registered mail to the last known address of a person who is required to be notified; posted in a conspicuous location in the Family Day Care Home.

## **21 Parent Advisory Committee**

This parent led committee is a requirement of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Early Years Branch.

The agenda will cover a variety of issues concerning parents of Giant Steps programs, covering staffing, programs, equipment and policies. Meetings will be announced via email and posted at each location no less than 2 weeks prior to the meeting. Minutes will be posted no more than two weeks following each meeting. All parents are welcome to attend and bring forth agenda items.

Membership of Parent Advisory Committee

Revised 2025

**(1)** An agency's Parent Advisory Committee must be composed of at least 7

Members, as follows:

(a) Four members of the committee must be parents of children currently enrolled in a Giant Steps program, at least one must be a parent of a child in family home day care..

(b) One family home day care provider (all care providers are encouraged to attend.)

(c) One representative of the center or a director

(d) One representative of the Giant Steps staff

**(2)** The majority of the voting members of an agency's Parent Advisory

Committee must be parents of children currently enrolled in a Giant Steps program

**(3)** An agency's Parent Advisory Committee must be open to all parents of children enrolled in the Giant Steps Programs.

**(4)** An agency must give the Director all of the following information for each member of the agency's parent advisory committee:

(a) name;

(b) mailing address;

(c) email address, if any;

(d) telephone number.

**(5)** An agency must notify the Director annually of any changes in the composition of its parent advisory committee or any changes in the information required by subsection (4).

The Director must give a copy of any notice or written information about the status of the agency's license to each member of the agency's parent advisory committee at the same time that the Director gives it to the agency.

## **22 parent advisory committee meetings**

**(1)** A parent advisory committee must meet at least twice a year.

**(2)** At least 2 weeks before the date of an agency's parent advisory committee meeting, written notice of the meeting must be posted in a conspicuous location in each family day care home the agency manages.

**(3)** A notice of a Parent Advisory Committee meeting must inform the parents that they may place items on the meeting's agenda.

**(4)** An agency must ensure that the agency's parent advisory committee has an opportunity to discuss any matters of interest or concern to the parents, including all of the following:

(a) the safety, care and wellbeing of the children;

(b) the agency's license;

(c) the services provided;

(d) the equipment and materials available for the children;

(e) staffing patterns and staff qualifications.

## **23 Parent advisory committee minutes**

**(1)** No later than 2 weeks after the date of an agency's Parent Advisory Committee meeting, the agency must:

(a) produce minutes of the meeting

(b) post a copy of the minutes in a conspicuous location in each family home day care the agency manages.

**(2)** A copy of the minutes from an agency's Parent Advisory Committee meeting must

(a) remain posted in accordance with clause (1)(b) until the minutes of the next meeting are posted; and

(b) be kept on file by the agency for inspection by the Director, as required.

## **24 Grievance Procedures**

Although the Family Home Day Care Agency, through approved Care Providers, makes every attempt to offer the highest quality care to all children and families, there may be occasions when parents have concerns about particular events, situations or Providers. If that occurs, parents are encouraged to talk to the care provider as a first point of contact. It is best to have this discussion after regular hours, one-on-one, when the Care Provider is not still looking after children.

If the Care Provider is not able to address the concern satisfactorily, or if the concern is serious enough to warrant immediate review, parents are encouraged to contact the Agency's consultant to help resolve the issue. The Consultant will then investigate the concern/situation, will schedule meetings as necessary with appropriate parties to gather relevant information, and will work with the Care Provider and the parents to resolve the issue. Parents and the Care Provider will be kept informed throughout the process (within confidentiality requirements).

Our goal is to provide quality child care. We encourage parents to bring their concerns directly to the Care Providers or the Family Home Consultant as soon as they arise, so that we can work together to resolve issues quickly without impacting the quality of the Care Provided.

The Family Home Day Care Consultant maybe reached at the numbers listed at the front of this handbook.

### **Parent Guide: Conflict Resolution & Contract Termination Process**

At Giant Steps Family Home Agency, our goal is to provide a safe, nurturing, and collaborative environment for all children and families in our care. In rare instances when concerns or conflicts arise, it is important for everyone involved to understand the supportive steps we take to address challenges and work toward solutions. Open communication and partnership between parents, providers, and the agency are essential throughout this process.

Below is a step-by-step guide outlining the process that may be followed:

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#### **1. Observation & Documentation**

If a concern arises related to a child's behavior, the provider-parent relationship, or circumstances that may impact the child or others in care, **the provider is required to inform the consultant or director**. A consultant may then visit to observe the environment, assess interactions objectively, and begin documentation. Support services, such as early intervention (EI), EIBI, or referrals, may be explored if appropriate.

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#### **2. Support and Guidance**

Following initial observation, the consultant may offer strategies and suggestions tailored to the child's needs, family dynamics, or provider concerns. These are designed to promote understanding, improve the environment, and support everyone involved.

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### **3. Communication Log Book**

A dedicated communication log will be used to document behaviors, concerns, conversations, and all steps taken in an effort to resolve the issue.

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### **4. Follow-Up and Parent Meeting**

If challenges continue, a meeting may be arranged with the parent(s), provider, consultant, and/or director to review documentation, share insights, and discuss possible solutions collaboratively.

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### **5. Mediation (If Needed)**

If the concern centers around conflict between the provider and parent(s), and previous guidance has not resulted in improvement, a mediation meeting may be scheduled. The goal of this meeting is to resolve misunderstandings in a respectful, productive way.

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### **6. Termination of Contract (If Necessary)**

If all reasonable efforts to resolve the concern have been made and issues persist, **termination of the provider-parent contract may occur**.

**Giant Steps Family Home Agency must be notified prior to the termination of care, or immediately following termination if an urgent situation required immediate action.**

**The final decision to terminate care rests with the provider.**

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### **7. Final Notes**

Our priority is always to support children in a safe, respectful, and consistent care environment. This process promotes transparency, fairness, and collaboration before any final decisions about care are made.

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### **Behaviors That May Prompt Observation and Intervention**

These behaviors may impact the safety, well-being, or emotional health of the child or group care setting. If these behaviors are observed repeatedly or escalate over time, the observation and documentation process may begin.

#### **Child-Related Behaviors:**

- Aggression toward others (hitting, biting, kicking, spitting, scratching)
- Self-injurious behavior (head-banging, biting self, etc.)
- Frequent and intense tantrums or emotional outbursts
- Inability to follow safety rules

- Bullying or targeting other children
- Disruptive behavior affecting group activities or routines
- Extreme defiance or refusal to follow instructions
- Sexually inappropriate behavior/language beyond developmental norms
- Withdrawal or non-responsiveness suggesting emotional distress

**Parent/Guardian-Related Behaviors:**

- Repeated failure to follow policies or care agreements
- Disrespectful communication toward the provider
- Inconsistent attendance or repeated late pick-ups without communication
- Refusal to support behavioral plans or follow through on support recommendations
- Creating conflict with the provider or other families
- Disregarding program boundaries or safety guidelines

*Note: This list is not exhaustive and is meant to provide examples. Every situation will be approached with empathy, respect, and a focus on resolution.*

## **ANTI-GOSSIPING AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

Giant Steps prides itself on its family atmosphere and relationships both within the Centre/Family Home and within the community at large. Staff /Providers are bound by both confidential and anti-gossiping policies that are grounds for dismissal when breached. We ask that our families respect that practice when chatting with staff, friends, family, and neighbours. When families have questions and concerns, we ask that they speak directly to administration to seek a resolution. Policies and procedures are in place to make childcare provisions in the best interest of all families; however, some decisions are made for individual families and children within this framework. Individual circumstances will not be discussed among staff/providers and parents, and we ask that families respect this practice also. This practice extends to social media venues such as Facebook and Instagram (not limited to). Families should be aware of privacy when posting to such media outlets (including photographs) and should abide by the anti-gossiping practice within these forums.

### Definition of gossiping

1. Rumour or talk of a personal, sensational, or intimate nature.
2. A person who habitually spreads intimate or private rumours or facts.
3. Trivial, negative chatty talk or writing.

Any form of gossiping will not be tolerated, whether it be about administration, centre policies, staff members, Family Home Providers, children, or families and when cases of malicious or persistent reoccurring gossip occur, childcare spaces may be revoked. Giant Steps operates both a Facebook and an Instagram page. We use photos of our program online but post only strategically taken photographs to obscure children's identities unless we have express permission from parents for specific photographs. Each centre /Provider location also operates a Facebook page for families enrolled in that centre. Families & Providers will be removed from the group if/when they are no longer a part of the Giant Steps program. These pages are candid shots of children and their activities and do not obscure their identity. Our attendance contract contains the option to give or deny consent for photo release.

If you have not already signed the sheet below, please print a copy, sign and return to your home care provider.



I, the undersigned, have read through and understand all the policies and procedures within the Family Home Day Care Parent Handbook and agree to adhere to these policies while my child is enrolled at \_\_\_\_\_'s Family Home Day Care.

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_