

BRIGHT BEGINNINGS PARENTS POLICY HANDBOOK

Please read the following pages carefully. Should you have any questions regarding any policy please contact the Executive Director. The policies contained in this handbook have been designed to assist the Board of Directors and the Staff of the Centre in providing each child with the best possible care outside his/her home.

GOALS OF THE BRIGHT BEGINNINGS CHILD CARE CENTRE:

1. A safe, warm and caring environment in which a parent may leave his/her child.
2. Enriched environments that will help stimulate each child to reach his/her full potential and prepare the child to meet his/her own needs.
3. Activities and learning experiences have been designed to help each child develop physically, emotionally, creatively, socially and cognitively.
4. To ensure that 2/3's of each child's daily nutritional requirements are met.

STAFFING AND ADMINISTRATION

1. The Bright Beginnings child care centre is a non-profit charitable organization. It is governed by a Board of Directors who are all volunteers. Members of the Board of Directors are recruited from the community at large and the parents of the centre. The Board of Directors are responsible for making the policies that are used in the day to day operations of the Centre. An Executive Director is hired by the Board of Directors to oversee the day to day running of the Centre.
2. The Centre itself is staffed by an Executive Director and the required number of staff needed to meet the operational needs of the Centre. Licensing requires that the Executive Director and 2/3^{rds} of the staff have completed training in a recognized Early Childhood Education program or its equivalency. Staff is required to maintain a current First Aid and CPR certificate.
3. When the Executive Director is absent from the Centre please direct inquiries and concerns to the Assistant Director.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

1. This Centre is licensed annually by the Department of Community Services-Early childhood Development services. The current licensor for the Northern Region is _____.
2. The staff of this Centre are under legal obligation to report all concerns regarding any child or family using these facilities. Staff are not permitted to tell parents when a report has been made to the local Family and Family and Children's Service.

GENERAL ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES

Parents wishing to enrol their child must contact the Executive director or Assistant Director. When there is a space available the Executive Director or Assistant will set up an initial meeting with the parent and child. The Executive director will explain the admission procedures, review the Parents Policy Handbook and give a tour at the time of the official meeting.

Transition into unfamiliar settings is very upsetting to children. To make the transition easier on the child it is required that the child be brought to visit the Centre over a period of three days before he/she starts. The Executive Director and staff involved schedule the times of these visits.

DISMISSAL FROM THE CENTRE

The dismissal of any child from the Centre is a very difficult decision. Reasons for dismissal will vary depending on the situation. All avenues are explored before deciding on dismissal. Dismissal is the last resort. Before the dismissal of any child, the Executive Director must hold a meeting with the child's parent(s). The Centre's Board of Directors will be consulted by the Executive Director. After these meetings a formal letter will be issued. Should the parents wish to further discuss this matter a meeting will be arranged with the members of the Board of Directors.

HOURS OF OPERATION

1. Bright Beginnings Child Care Centre operates from 6:45 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. The Executive Director will discuss the child's hours and days of attendance at the initial meeting.
2. Parents are reminded that the Centre does not officially open until 6:45 a.m. Staff may be in the building before this time, however, the staff opening the Centre does have duties to perform before the regular day begins at 6:45 a.m. The morning staff is not permitted to supervise children before this time. Please do not ask staff to make an exception for your child.
3. Parents must arrange to have their child picked up from the Centre by 6:00p.m. A late charge of \$5.00 will be charged after 6:00 p.m. It will continue to increase by \$5.00 every fifteen minutes thereafter until your child is picked up. This money must be paid directly to the staff that remained with your child upon arrival. If your child is not picked up by 6:00 p.m. and we are unable to reach any listed contacts, Family and Children's Services will be contacted to handle the situation.

OFFICE HOURS

Our office hours are from 8:30a.m. to 4:30p.m. Payments can be made at that time or can be given to the early morning staff or after 4:30p.m. to one of the closing staff. A receipt will be issued from the office when office opens at 8:30a.m. If you wish to speak to Director, Patsy or Assistant, Mary Porter, we will gladly make arrangements for one of us to be available after these hours. (Phone 667 7857).

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE FROM THE CENTRE

*We encourage all parents to have their child at the Centre by 9:30a.m. This is so the different groups can have a smooth transition into their daily programming/routine. We ask that you call the Centre if your child is going to be late or absent due to illness.

* Please do not drop your child off at the door. It is for your child's safety that we ask that you ensure a teacher acknowledges your child's presence before you leave.

* Children are not permitted to be transported to and from the Centre by taxi unless accompanied by a parent or legal guardian. It is realized that this will cause some inconvenience. However, this is done with the child's safety and wellbeing in mind.

*If someone other than yourself or one of your appointed people is to pick up your child you must notify the Centre by phone or by a note. If you do not notify us and we are unable to reach you or one of your appointed people, the child will not be permitted to leave the Centre.

*The staff has the right and obligation to ask for identification of a person unknown to them.

HOLIDAYS AND STORM DAYS

1. This Centre will be closed on the following holidays; New Year's Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Canada Day, Civic Holiday, Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve after 1p.m. Christmas Day and Boxing Day. We will also be closed one day per year for a staff in service day. We will give plenty of notice when this in service day is to take place.
2. This Centre will be closed for Remembrance Day when it occurs on a normal work day.
3. This Centre does not normally shut down on storm days. However, winter weather has been known to change from mild to blizzard conditions very quickly. In the event that the Centre does close for the day due to the severity of a winter storm announcement will be put on the local radio station. Should it be necessary to shut the Centre during the day due to the severity of the weather, parents will be given as much prior notice as possible.
4. The long term loss of any of the following utilities during or after a storm may force the Centre to shut down operations. Utilities include power, heat and telephone.
5. In the event of a storm the staff will make every effort to arrive on time. We ask for your patience in the event staff are late arriving due to a storm.

The decision of storm closure will fall on the Executive Director and the Chairperson of the Board of Directors. In the event that the Executive Director is unreachable the Chairperson will be responsible for making the decision and notifying the Centre. Factors that will be used in deciding to close will be but are not limited to: weather bulletins, local business closures due to storm severity, road conditions and the removal of snowploughs from streets and highways.

THE CENTRE'S PROGRAMS

1. Bright Beginnings Child Care Centre provides care for children between the ages of 18 months and ten years. Children attending the Centre who turn ten during the school year will be permitted to remain until the end of the school year. Those children enrolled in the Centre who turn ten during the summer months will be permitted to remain until the day before the beginning of the new school year.
2. There are four age groups within the Bright Beginnings Child Care Centre. Children are placed into age groups according to the year they will begin school.
3. During the months between September and June the Centre's programs are fun filled and very structured. Lesson plans that are based on weekly themes include a variety of activities that promote the child's growth in all areas of development. In the summer months of July and August the Centre's programs are less structured.
4. Throughout the year the children and staff will participate in multicultural activities. Please let the Executive Director or one of the staff know if there is a special cultural celebration that you would like to see celebrated with the children of the Centre

HEALTH AND ILLNESS

A health questionnaire has been added to the registration form. This must be completed by the parent. The Executive Director after reviewing the information on the questionnaire may ask for further information from the child's physician.

On those occasions when a child must receive medication while he/she is at the Centre the following procedure must be followed:

1. Children must be away from the Centre for 24 hours when they begin an antibiotic.
2. All medication must be in its original container, whether it is prescription or over the counter. An exception to this will be asthma machine medication. This medication must be premeasured.
3. Parents must fill out a medication form. This form indicates the name of the medication, the time it is to be given and the amount.
4. Medications that are to be given as needed for allergic reaction, chronic asthma and fever related seizures must be authorized by the family physician and the child's parent.
5. On the medication form the parent must describe the circumstances which must occur before the medication is to be given. In the event of severe allergic reaction parents will be notified.

6. All medication will be stored in the Centre's locked medicine box to be placed in the fridge or in the locked kitchen cabinet. No medication is to be left in a child's locker.
7. A medication form must be completed for any creams, bug spray, etc. that must be put on a child's skin. The exception to this is sunscreen.

Children who exhibit symptoms such as vomiting, Diarrhea, an elevated temperature with flu related symptoms, a rash, etc. will not be permitted to remain or admitted to the Centre. A doctor's note may be required before the child is permitted to return.

Should a child become ill while attending the Center you will be notified immediately. We can only provide temporary care for an ill child. Parents are reminded of the importance of having a backup should your child become ill.

- YOUR CHILD MAY NOT ATTEND DAYCARE THE NEXT DAY IF HE/SHE HAS BEEN SENT HOME DUE TO ILLNESS

Parents will be asked to sign a form stating that your child is being sent home and when he/she can return. This is to insure your child is feeling well enough to return and also to avoid spreading illnesses.

The children do spend time outside daily, weather permitting. Please do not ask for your child to remain inside. Due to child/staff ratios it is impossible to have one child remain inside.

Staff will attend to minor injuries such as cuts and scratches. When an injury occurs which the staff feels should be seen by a physician one of the following will take place:

1. The child's parent will be contacted to come and take the child to the hospital or doctor's office.
2. The child's parent will be notified. If it is felt that waiting for the parent to arrive will put the child's health at risk an ambulance will be called. The Executive Director will accompany and remain with the child until the parent arrives. In the event the Executive Director is unavailable, the Assistant Director will accompany and remain with the child or appoint another staff in her/his place.

Occasionally chicken pox, scabies, head lice, etc. arrive at the centre. When a child is sent home, a parent will be informed as to when the child may return. Under some circumstances a note from the family physician will be required.

FEES

1. The daily fee rate is discussed periodically with the Executive Director and Board of Directors. Increases are necessary to offset cost increases.
2. The current full rate is \$25.75 Per day
3. Parents have an option of paying a month in advance or bi weekly before their child attends their first day.
4. Bills are issued at the first of every month for that month. All parents are required to either pay their bill in full at the beginning of the month or make bi-weekly payments. Please see the Executive Director to make payment arrangements.
5. All monthly bills must be paid in full before the next bill is issued. Should there be an outstanding balance; a warning notice will be issued along with a \$25.00 late payment fee. Parents will be given five days to pay the outstanding balance and the late fee. If payment has not been received, the child will not be permitted to attend until the account is paid in full.
6. Parents who withdraw their child are still responsible for the bill incurred while their child attended the Centre. If you are unable to settle your account before your child's last day please make arrangements for payment with the Executive Director. Failure to make these arrangements will result in your account being turned over to a collection agency. Parents with outstanding bills wishing to re-enrol their child will not be given a space until the account is paid in full.
7. The daily rate will be charged for all sick days, absent days, vacation days and holidays that fall on the child's normal days of attendance. Please let the Centre know when your child is ill, absent or on vacation.
8. Under the subsidy program a child attending the Centre year round is eligible for 5 sick days and 3 absent days per month. The child is also eligible for 15 vacation days per year. The year is based on the government's calendar April 1st to March 31st.

PARENT MEETINGS AND NEWSLETTERS

1. All Centres that operate year round are required to have parent meetings throughout the year. These meetings will vary in topics and themes. Parents are strongly urged to attend these meetings.
2. Parents may suggest topics or guest speakers for these parent meetings. Please give your suggestions to the Executive Director.
3. Newsletters are a vital part of the communication network. The Executive Director and the Assistant Director prepare newsletters throughout the year. Please read and keep your newsletter handy. It will contain information about upcoming events, holidays, closures, and clothing for the season, changes in policies, changes in subsidy rates, parent meetings, recipes, songs and much more.

FUND RAISING AND PARENT INVOLVEMENT

1. The Bright Beginnings Child Care Centre is a non-profit organization. This Centre depends on daily fees and money earned through fund raising to operate. From time to time fund raising projects are organized. Success will only be achieved if everyone works together on these endeavours. Parents are encouraged to help organize and/or suggest fund raisers.
2. The Bright Beginnings Child Care Centre is a registered charity and is able to issue income tax receipts for donations. Parents may request that the Executive Director charge a \$2.00 a month donation to each month's bill. At the end of the year parents who have paid this extra charge will be issued a tax receipt. Parents knowing individuals who wish to make donations to the Centre should either have them contact the Executive Director or give the individuals name and phone number to the Executive Director.
3. Any parent of the Centre may become a member of the Board of Directors should there be an opening on the Board. Any parent interested in becoming a Board member should submit his/her name to the Executive Director. All names will be given to the Chairperson.
4. Parents are encouraged to participate in the Centre's programs and outings. If you are interested in helping at a special event, please see the Executive Director.

ARTICLES REQUIRED DAILY FOR YOUR CHILD'S COMFORT

- A complete change of clothing
- Diapers and/or training pants if your child is not fully trained
- Adequate and appropriate clothing for outdoor play
- A hat with a peak with a wide brim(for months of May to September)
- Indoor footwear(sneakers preferred)
- Other clothing as listed in the newsletters or requested by staff

CHILD CARE INCLUSION POLICY

We welcome all children into our Centre, as they come to us or as referred to us. We seek to provide a warm, nurturing environment where all children may thrive. We take all children we are able to accommodate.

We include developmentally and age appropriate programs, well-educated and competent staff members, an Inclusion Co-Ordinator and the flexibility to adapt to each child's need. Each child is included within his/her age group and is able to participate in all activities.

We offer the same hours of operation for every child. If a support teacher is needed, his/her hours of employment are adapted to suit the needs of the child. We fully encourage parental in-put and keep in close contact with parents regarding their child's day.

We are open to outside agencies (Early Intervention, Mental Health, Hearing & Speech etc.) Their expertise in helping us set up and implement programs where children will thrive, is considered to be of great benefit to us as Child Care Providers.

We have witnessed the benefits of encouraging all children to be included. We see children helping each other, children who anticipate the needs of others in their groups, and older children bonding with younger children. This environment is good for all children as it teaches the life lessons of acceptance and diversity.

QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS

Any parent having question or who wish to discuss a problem regarding their child or the program, please do not hesitate to contact the Executive Director, Patsy Bennett. She may be reached daily from 8:30a.m. to 4:30p.m. at 667 – 7857. In the event that the Executive Director is absent, please address questions and problems to the Assistant Director, Mary Porter.

Parents may take grievances to the Board of Directors if they feel it is necessary. The current Chairperson of the Board is, _____

Custody and access.....

The primary responsibility of Bright Beginnings Child Care Centre is to the children. All possible steps are taken to ensure their emotional and physical safety is maintained at all times.

The daycare staff cannot become involved in the marital or custody issues of our families. We must be informed of the relevant custody and parental access details. If there are any restrictions on parental access such as visits or no pick-ups, we will require signed, official documentation to that effect, such as a court order or a restraining order. Without proper signed documentation, we cannot deny a parent access to their child.

The daycare staff will only be accountable to the enrolling parent, who will provide the daycare with all relevant information and documentation.

Please note: The following amendments have been added to our Parent Policy Handbook as of July 1st, 2011:

44 (1) A licensee must have a parent handbook to assist parents in making informed decisions regarding the care of their children.

(2) A parent handbook for a facility must include the following:

(a) A statement that all of the following are posted at a conspicuous place in the facility and an indication of where they are posted:

(i) a copy of the Act and these regulations,

(ii) a copy of the parent handbook,

(iii) the license for the facility,

(iv) a copy of the report of the most recent inspection of the facility,

(v) a copy of the licensee's behaviour guidance policy,

(vi) a copy of the current menu,

(vii) a copy of the daily program plan and routine,

(viii) a copy of the most recent minutes of the parent committee,

(ix) notification of funding provided by the Minister,

(b) any information required by the Minister.

A list of Standards for Food and Nutrition in Regulated Child Care Settings, added to the Parent Policy Handbook and were implemented as of July 1, 2011 are as follows:

3.0 Breastfeeding

- 3.1 Regulated child care settings welcome mothers to breastfeed anywhere in the facility or at home.
- 3.2 When requested, regulated child care settings provide a comfortable space for breastfeeding mothers (e.g. a chair in a quiet space).

4.0 Adapting the Menu for infants

- 4.3 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.

5.0 Food Safety

5.4 Child care facilities that hold a Food Establishment Permit can only purchase or receive donations of food or beverages from an establishment permitted by the Department of Agriculture.

5.6 Despite sections 5.4 and 5.5, some foods may be donated to or purchased for regulated child care settings under the following circumstances:

- (i) the food is considered to be low risk food by the Department of Agriculture, including whole fruits and vegetables that have not been cut except for the purpose of harvesting and dry non-potentially hazardous baked goods (i.e. those that do not contain cream, custard, cream cheese, meat or any other potentially hazardous food as a filling or a topping; and
- (ii) the food brought into the program is acceptable to the licensee.

5.7 Foods that have been donated to or purchased for the facility must:

- (i) be labelled with the source of the food;
- (ii) include a list of ingredients and any special preparation, storage or serving instructions; and
- (iii) be in accordance with the Standard 6 (special dietary considerations).

6.0 Special Dietary Considerations

6.3 Special dietary considerations, including allergy and anaphylaxis information specific to an individual child is communicated to all staff, those who prepare and serve the food, care providers, substitutes, volunteers and student interns. This information is posted in the food preparation area and any other places necessary to ensure that those people who need to know this information are able to view it.

6.4 Any other protocols, anaphylaxis policies and general information related to special dietary consideration are posted in a clearly visible location in the child care setting.

7.0 Meal and snack routines

7.1 Daily meal and snack schedules provide children, staff and care providers with enough time to prepare the eating area, serve the food, consume the food and clean-up.

7.2 Staff and care providers are responsive to children's cues around hunger and provide snacks and meals outside of the regular schedule as required.

8.0 Meal and snack time environment

Rationale Infants and children are born with the ability to regulate how much food and drink they require for healthy growth and development. Staff and care providers are responsible for what and when children eat, and children are responsible for how much or even if they want to eat. Respecting children's ability to determine when they are hungry, and when they are full will promote healthy eating behaviours that will have lasting effects.

It is important that adults sit with the children as they are important role models during meal and snack times. When children are engaged with adults during snack and meal times, and watch adults eating various types of foods, they are more likely to eat the same foods. Over time, when children participate in meal service and serve themselves, they are also more likely to take only the foods they require. Meal and snack time provide excellent opportunities to foster children's self-help and social development.

8.1 Staff and care providers create a relaxing and enjoyable meal environment (e.g. plan for transitions in routine from play to meal/snack).

8.2 For all snacks and meals, child care settings provide safe and sanitary seating and table arrangements with tables, chairs and table settings (e.g. plates, utensils, cups) that are appropriate for children's ages and competencies.

8.3 Staff and care providers implement appropriate seating accommodations and provide specialized utensils, when needed, for children with special needs.

8.4 Children with special needs join their peers for meal and snack times.

8.5 Staff and care providers encourage children to respond to hunger and feelings of fullness and children are not forced to finish food that has been served.

9.0 Modeling Positive Attitudes towards Food and Nutrition

Rationale The types of foods that children choose and the attitudes that they develop towards food and nutrition, are influenced by their peers and adults in their lives. When adults consistently model healthy eating practices and positive attitudes towards food and nutrition, they directly influence and encourage children to develop positive ideas and attitudes about food and nutrition.

Staff and care provider's role models in regulated child care settings can influence children's attitudes toward food and nutrition through their own behaviours and actions with food.

9.1 When working directly with children, staff and care providers model healthy eating practices that are consistent with these standards.

11.0 Food is Not Used to Reinforce Desired Behaviours

Rationale Children are served best when they are supported to develop competence, self-awareness, and a sense of self-worth in their child care setting. Ensuring that there are many opportunities for children to develop trusting and genuine relationships with the adults and peers in their child care setting will contribute to this. Children display positive behaviours and meaningful activities when the environment reflects their interests, is child-centered and play based.

When children are respected for who they are and are supported by caring adults and peers to resolve difficult situations, external motivators, such as food, are not required. Using food as a motivator teaches children that food is associated with an action and not with hunger. It can teach children to prefer some foods over others and can alter children's natural ability to respond to internal cues that allow them to know when they are hungry and when they are full.

11.1 The licensee's Behaviour Guidance Policy states that:

- (i) Staff, volunteers and care providers do not offer food to reinforce positive behaviours
- (ii) Staff, volunteers and care providers do not withhold food as a consequence for inappropriate Behaviours.
- (iii) Food is not used as a reward for completing a task or finishing a meal (e.g.) dessert will not be Withheld if the child does not finish the main meal).

11.2 When a child's team (which may include staff, external professionals and the child's parents/guardians) has determined that food is the most appropriate and natural way to reinforce desired behaviours and support the child's development, then a routine-based plan (RBP) must be developed for the child. The RBP must include a plan for replacing and/or reducing the use of food as a motivator.

