

LAUGH

LEARN

PLAY

Early Childhood Development Centre

Parent Handbook

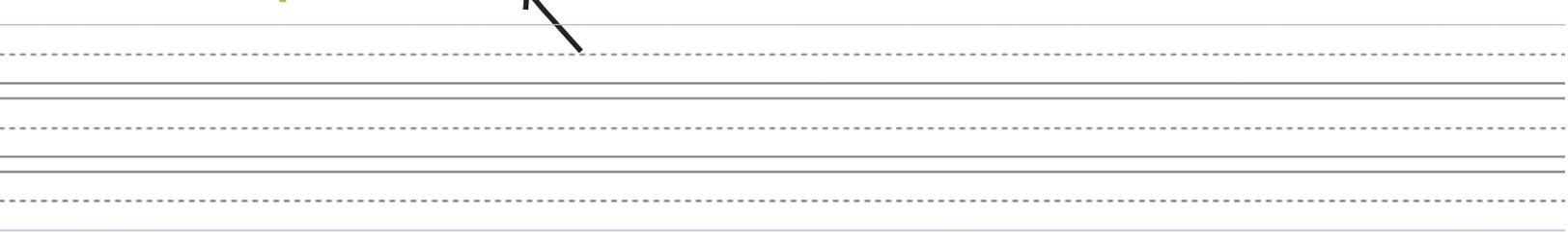


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MISSION STATEMENT

The Drayton Valley Early Childhood Development Centre is located in the heart of our community. You will find it nestled in a neighbourhood that is home to a playground, a water splash park, and the Park Valley Pool.

Our Community

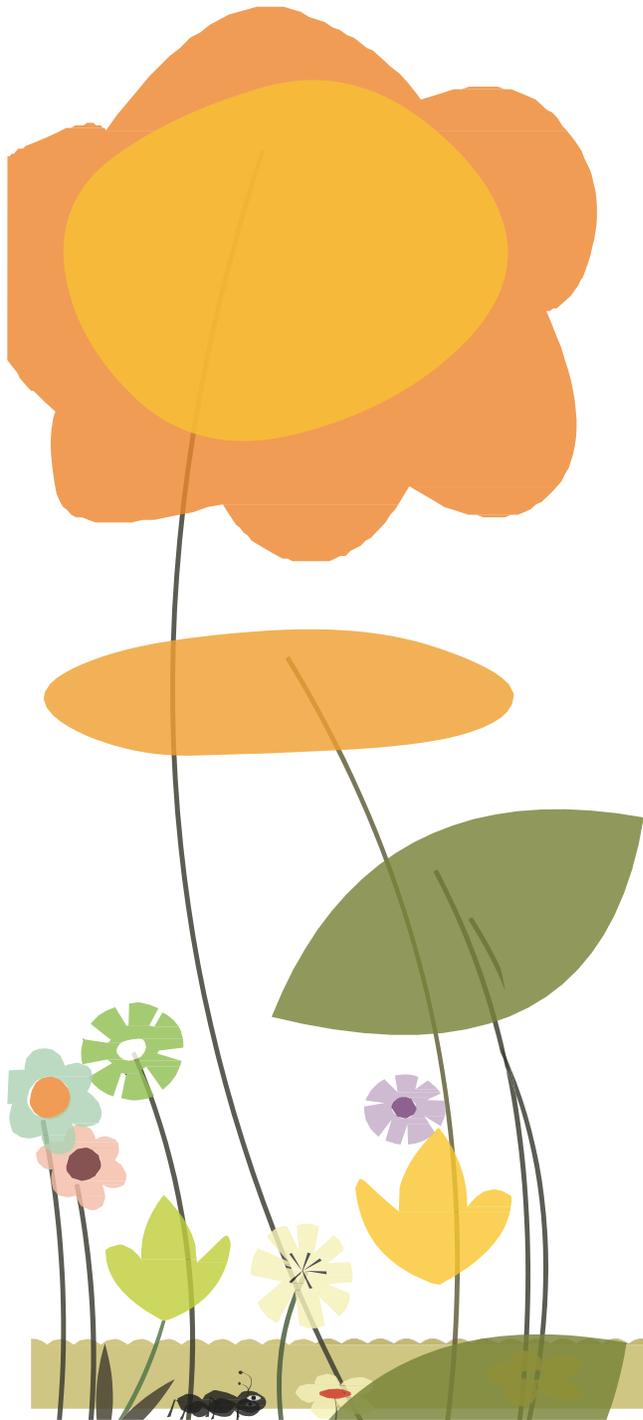
In partnership with other community non-profit organizations, we offer a range of parent education, family support, specialized referral, and early intervention services.

Our Families

Families are of primary importance in a child's development. We will strive to bring about collaboration between the home and our Centre in ways that enhance each child's individual development. The staff has a commitment to develop relationships of mutual trust with the families it serves and to respect the dignity of each family, each family's child rearing values, and their right to make decisions for their children. We will guide each child's progress and help families to understand and appreciate the value of developmentally appropriate early childhood programs.

Our Centre

Early Childhood Educators in our program will facilitate the day-to-day programming within the centre. They will be dedicated to each child's physical, emotional, intellectual, and social development. As trained professionals, they will supplement the care provided by the family through organized activities and will maintain a stimulating and nurturing environment.



HOURS OF OPERATION

Year round, for children ages 12 months – 5 yrs, Monday- Friday 7:00 am until 6:00 pm.
Please note the following government statutory holidays when the Centre will be closed.

- New Year's Day, Family Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Labour Day, Civic Holiday, Remembrance Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, Boxing Day
- The Centre will be closed for two professional development days per year, to be announced in July of each year.
- The child care Centre will be closed for one week over Christmas for maintenance work.

GOALS OF THE EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

Goals for the children:

- To provide an environment that encourages and motivates on all levels: cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development.
- To provide a nurturing environment for children.
- To foster a sense of self-worth in each child.
- To recognize the importance of the individuality of each child.
- To treat each child with respect and understanding.
- To provide optimum nutrition for every child.
- To give the child optimum opportunity to experiment, explore, and discover for himself / herself as much as possible in the environment.

Goals for the parents:

- To provide resources and guidance to parents and caregivers that support the healthy development of their children;
- To mobilize community resources to provide additional required care for children served by the Centre.

Mission Statement

The Early Childhood Development Centre is committed to providing a quality child- care program which will address the full development of each child being cared for. The experiences to be delivered through our Centre will promote the cognitive, social, physical, and emotional growth of the child.

ENROLMENT INFORMATION

Enrolment in our program is open to children within the age limits, 12 months to 5 years, provided the program can meet the needs of the child. Enrolment is granted without discrimination against: gender, race, creed, religion, or political belief. We currently offer full day child care.

Our Centre offers full and part time care. By definition part time is two (2) full days per week, full time is three (3) to five (5) days per week.



1. First month's fees are due when parents confirm acceptance of a space in the centre, including parents who intend to apply for subsidy. Partial month's fees will be prorated to include only those days in which the child has been enrolled. Parents who are applying for subsidy will not receive this money back until they have finished their last month of care to balance out any fees not covered.
2. Administration fee – All new accounts will be charged a one time \$65.00 admin/orientation fee. This is a non-refundable fee which will apply to all accounts (full time, part time). In the event a family terminates care and returns again within the same twelve month period, the fee will NOT be charged again. No reduction in fees or exchange of days for care is allowable for temporary absences due to illness, vacation or statutory holidays.
3. Parents will need to meet with the Program Manager at the centre to discuss policies and procedures (such as drop-off times, pick-up, payment, etc.).
4. Parents must return a completed registration form and emergency contact information card to the Program Manager. These documents must be filled in including Alberta Health Care number and *all* contact names that will have authorization to pick up the child from the premises.
5. The home record is to be completed on one side by the mother and the opposite side by the father for staff to get a well-rounded idea of your child's interests.

Only after receiving all of these items will your child's space be reserved and held for you until your start date.

PROVINCIAL CHILD CARE SUBSIDIES:

Subsidy must be arranged in advance to entering our program. Due to the manner in which child care subsidies are paid out by the province, **parents are required to pay their fees for the first and last month of care in full**, until receipt of your subsidy approval. Upon receipt of

subsidy payments your account will be credited and the next month's invoice will reflect the applied subsidy amount. If you think you may be eligible please come speak to the Program Manager for forms. We can assist in filling out these forms as well. Parents are responsible for fees not covered by subsidy. i.e. Registration fees. Monthly Child Care fees will be covered as assessed by subsidy.

Obtain subsidy information and forms (if applicable) . If you are unfamiliar with the Alberta Child Care Subsidy program and would like information please ask or go on line to www.child.gov.ab.ca. Online applications are also available.

GRADUAL ENTRY

Admission to the Early Child Development Centre begins with a gradual entry as agreed upon by staff and families. Gradual entry has several goals. These include:

- that separation between the child and family be gradual and positive;
- that the child and child care staff develop a positive relationship before the child is left on his/her own;
- that the child and family are gradually introduced to, and become familiar with, the routines, activities, and philosophy of the Centre;
- that the child has a secure start to his/her child care experience with the support of both family and child care staff.

While we understand that gradual entry is not always convenient for families, it is a key component to a positive adjustment to child care. Usually gradual entry begins in the mornings, but we can be flexible, scheduling gradual entry around families' schedules. Before the child attends the child care full-time we require a minimum of three visits of increasing length by the child and his or her family.

WAIT LISTS

In the event that all spaces are full, a wait list will be created and maintained by the child care Centre administration. Parents on the wait list will be contacted when a space opens up in the age group they require. The first month's child care fee and registration fee is due upon confirmation of acceptance. Open spaces will be held for 48 hours before being offered to the next family.

WITHDRAWAL AND TERMINATION OF SERVICE

Families are required to provide at least one month's written notice when they withdraw their child. More notice is preferable if the family can give it. This is crucial as most families on the waitlist require one month's notice for their current care-provider before they can accept a space. In lieu of notice we require one month's payment.

CHANGES IN FAMILY INFORMATION

Families are expected to inform staff of any changes so that registration forms can be kept up to date at all times. We must be able to reach families at all times. We must be informed

immediately of any changes in address, phone number, class schedule, or place of work and if there is any change in the people who are authorized to pick up a child.

CULTURAL CELEBRATIONS

We endeavor to celebrate the cultural holidays and celebrations in a respectful and responsive manner for children enrolled in the program. Please let us know if you have special celebrations, dietary concerns or talents that you wish to share with us to share with the children in the Centre.

INCLUSIVITY AND DIVERSITY

We aim to:

Provide a secure environment in which all our children can flourish and in which all contributions are valued; * include and value the contribution of all families to our understanding of equality and diversity; * provide positive non-stereotyping information about gender roles, diverse ethnic and cultural groups and people with disabilities; * Improve our knowledge and understanding of issues of anti-discriminatory practice, promoting equality and valuing diversity; and make inclusion a thread that runs through all of the activities of the setting.

TERMINATION OF SERVICE

The Drayton Valley Early Child Development Centre can terminate its services to a family under the following circumstances:

- if fees for services are not paid in full and on time and suitable arrangements cannot be agreed upon;
- if the Centre is unable to satisfactorily resolve a problem with a family;
- if a family member harasses, threatens, or commits a violent or unlawful act toward a staff member, child or other family involved in the program;
- if a family picks up their child late three times within six months without having made previous suitable arrangements;
- if the child has been absent from the program twelve consecutive working days without the parent giving notice of the situation and a date when the child will return.
- if, in the assessment of the child care staff, a child is unable to manage safely in a group of children within the given adult-to-child ratio. In this case, termination of services will be a measure of last resort.

All efforts will be made to accommodate the child's needs. These would include:

- working with the family to develop consistent strategies;
- encouraging a collaborative use of all outside agencies to come up with a strategy to best help the child and family.

CHILDCARE FEES

Late Pick Up Fees

The Centre will close daily at 6:00 p.m. All parents are encouraged to pick up their children before this time. **Late charges are \$1.00 per minute past 6:00 pm.** Child care staff are finished work at 6:00 pm and are not paid after this time. Parents who are late picking up their child are keeping staff at work unpaid and will be charged a late pick up fee. These fees will be charged to your account based on the sign-out time.

Payment Policy

The Town of Drayton Valley adheres to Municipal Government Policies regarding billing and collections.

If there are any questions regarding these policies please contact the Town Office at:



info@draytonvalley.ca

780-514-2200



PLEASE NOTE: Childcare fees do not cover the provision of: special field trips, diapers, pull-ups, diaper wipes, special dietary foods, change of clothing or medication of any type.

PROGRAM FEES

Fees for service will be billed on the first of each month. Only payments by cash, interac or cheque will be accepted. There will be a 2.5% interest charge on all overdue fees after 15 days. You will be given 15 day's notice after 30 days to pay the balance owing on account. If at this time the account cannot be paid in full, the Centre will terminate the service being provided. Please ask for current fee schedule.

TYPES OF CARE

Drop-In Care

Care provided by the Centre that is not regularly scheduled weekly or monthly is classified as drop-in care. To qualify for drop-in care you must, complete an orientation, reading the parent handbook, complete the registration forms, and pay the registration fee of \$65.00. A notice of forty-eight (48) hours is required for booking drop-ins and payment is due upon arrival at the Centre. If your child(ren) has not attended the Centre in six (6) months you will be required to go through the orientation process again and update your registration forms. The registration fee will not have to be paid again for reactivating the file or if you choose to enroll your child(ren) into regular scheduled part- time or full-time care at the Centre.

Should spaces be open during the summer months than the “Drop-In Procedure” will apply, if you require up to three consecutive weeks will be charged per day, scheduling exceeding the three consecutive weeks will be charged a monthly rate.

PARENT ORIENTATION

Parents will be given an orientation before starting their child in the program. This will involve a tour of the facility, information about the program room and communication that will be offered. Orientation for children is also done through staggered entry, check index for where to find that information in this handbook.

CHILDREN'S FILES AND CONFIDENTIALITY

All documents that are part of registration will go into the child's file. Please share a current picture of your child with administration. This picture will be used for providing a visual reference if the child has a severe allergy, if a custody order is in place, or if the child becomes separated from the group. It will be at the parent(s) discretion to provide a picture of an individual(s) who is NOT allowed to pick up the child. All information about children and families in this file is considered confidential and will be stored in a secure place.

ARRIVAL / DEPARTURE



**** VERY IMPORTANT**** Each parent must sign in his or her child on arrival and sign him or her out on departure. Since the posted attendance sheets will be used to verify the presence of children in an emergency, parents must follow this sign-in/sign-out procedure each day. This is legality and is required by the Alberta Children's Services Licensing and Best Practices. Any person who is not the child's caregiver and is signing a child “In or Out” must be 18 years of age or older.

Regular routines for pick up and drop off help reassure children.

The day care is open to accept children between 7:00 am – 9:00 am. If you plan to drop your child off after 9:00 am, you are **required** to call the Centre. This does NOT apply if the child is sick and has a doctor's note for two consecutive days. Daily programming begins each day at 9:00 am and classes are involved in outings and field trips, as well as educational based programming which may result in your child's class being unavailable to accept your child. If you arrive at the Centre after 9.30am and your child is on an outing, parents are required to either meet the group on their outing, **or wait with the child** until their child's class returns to the Centre. Drop off is **not** permitted between 11:30am and 2:00 pm as this is regular nap time. As well, kitchen staff begins preparing for lunch and snacks earlier in the day and will be unable to accommodate fluctuating numbers of children for lunch.

Arrival

We encourage you to take ample time when you arrive and suggest the following routine:

- help your children with his or her belongings in the cloakroom area,
- help your child wash his or her hands when you arrive at the Centre to help prevent spread of infection and disease
- take your child to join his or her group and notify staff that your child is present.



Separation Anxiety

Our Centre supports you and your child as your child works through feelings of anxiety over separation. Our staff is sensitive to the emotions and anxiety when a child starts a new program and is available to help make this new situation manageable for you and your child. A joint effort by parents and staff should promote a relatively smooth adjustment.

The way you feel about your child going to the child care Centre for the first time significantly affects your child's adjustment. The following suggestions may help:

- think and speak positively to your child about beginning care, as your feelings will affect how your child adjusts to the separation,
- help your child deal with his or her feelings,
- assure your child that you will return,
- make sure you inform your child of your arrival and departure (attempts to slip away unseen will increase your child's level of anxiety on subsequent occasions).

Pick Up

Provincial regulations state that children can only be released to adults who are authorized **in writing on the registration form** by the child's legal guardian. Upon registration parents are asked to submit a list of names of persons authorized to collect their children. Any changes to this list must then be made in writing. Children will only be released to individually named adults. **Only in emergency situations will a child be released by verbal permission. All parents are asked to provide a code word known only to the Centre and themselves. In the case of verbal authorization, parents will be asked to provide this code word.**

When an unknown person to child care staff requests a child, that staff member will ask for a piece of photo identification and compare that person's name to the list of persons authorized by the child's legal guardian. If the individual's name does not appear on this list then the child will not be released, the person will be asked to leave the program area and the parent will be notified by phone. **Please remember it is very important to notify staff of any special circumstances regarding pick up (i.e. custody arrangements, restraining orders, threat of abduction etc.)**

If any person (including the child's legal guardian) arrives to collect the child and staff has reason to believe that individual is under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, staff are directed to call the RCMP or Child and Family Services, giving a description of the parent, vehicle, license etc. so that every attempt is made to keep the child being released safe. An attempt will be made to reach another authorized individual provided by the family on their contact list to assist.

It is our Centre's primary objective to provide a warm, home-like environment for your child while they are in our care. We do recognize that families need to work differing and flexible hours at their places of employment. However, we do encourage all families enrolled within our Centre to pick-up their child at their earliest convenience, as your child too has had a busy and active day away from the comforts of your home.

Late Pick Up

If parents are late more than three times (in a six month period without making prior arrangements) they will be asked to make other child care arrangements for their child. If a personal emergency occurs, parents should notify the Centre before closing time so that we will be aware of the difficulty. In the event that a parent or authorized person fails to pick up a child by closing time, the following action will be taken unless suitable arrangements have previously been made:

- At 6:15 pm the staff will attempt to contact the person (s) named by the parent as alternate care-giver.
- At 6:35 pm the Program Manager and / or an Operational Board Member will be contacted and appropriate arrangements will be made for your child. A note will be left with the RCMP stating where your child can be picked up.
- Late pick up fees are \$1.00 / minute for every minute after 6 pm



- Transportation: All parents are responsible for delivering or picking up their own child from the program. Child care staff is not permitted to transport children home from the program. Should the program require transportation for field trips or special outings, a school bus or a van will be provided. A driver maintaining a class 4 driver's license will be used.

UNDERSTANDING A CHILD'S BEHAVIOUR

It is of the utmost importance that our parents feel valued in the decisions made regarding their children while in care. At times staff will ask for you to share information about your child or to possibly come and observe should they have concerns about their development or changes in behavior. In 2013 our Centre implemented an Early Childhood Coach as an additional resource within our program.

The Early Childhood Coach was created to assist everyone in a child's environment. The goal of the coach is to build a strong team that will nurture a child, by providing strategies, resources, and referral where needed.

The focus is on how to best support the child both in the childcare environment and at home. The coach will observe, make suggestions, create program plans, and meet with staff. Parents are involved every step of the way, and are essential to the success of the team. The Early Childhood Coach has a flexible schedule and is available when convenient for families.

Should you have parenting questions, concerns about your child's development, wish to have our staff or coach go through some early childhood screening tools with you or just stop to speak candidly about your child please stop in and see her. This staff member is available three days per week, speak to the child care manager for current available appointments. Staff and administration will support families in implementing strategies to assist the child with developmental concerns at the direction of the professional to whom the family has been referred. Ask about our referral process.



GUIDANCE POLICY

The guidance policy will be part of our Staff Handbook as well as our Parent Handbook. It will be given out upon registration and will also be posted for all volunteers to have access to. Volunteers / parents will be asked to come in 15 minutes prior to their day to review guidance policies, classroom and menu schedules, emergency evacuation procedures and allergy information of any children they will be working with.

Children within our program will always be treated with respect.

Behavioural expectations vary greatly among different cultures, social groupings and child rearing practices. Adult's feelings about behaviour management are affected by their own background,

culture and what they experienced as a child. The Drayton Valley Early Childhood Centre's philosophy of accepting and enhancing people's cultural differences and similarities is reflected in the development of a sensitive discipline/behaviour management policy.

Discipline/behaviour management is a clear set of rules defining conduct and behaviour that is explained to the children and understood by the staff. The staff model and teach children what is good to do, what is not good, what is safe, what angers or hurts, what pleases and what positive ways can be used to release anger and frustration.

The ultimate goal of discipline/behaviour management is to teach children self-discipline and an understanding of the consequences of their behaviour. When children are self-disciplined and self-directed their needs and interests become clearer to them and to others. From this, a child centered curriculum readily follows.

It is essential that behaviour management is consistent as this minimizes confusion and ensures that children are clear about what behaviour is expected from them and from each other. To do this the centre aims to provide a warm, safe, happy and secure environment as the springboard from which learning can occur. To promote positive disciplinary procedures for children, the staff will use positive techniques of guidance, redirection and reinforcement rather than promote comparison, competition or criticism. When behaviour management is positive it does not damage self-esteem, but allows children to feel capable, competent and to experience pleasure from being around others. It takes into account the children's developmental understandings and abilities, recognizing that needs and behaviours change as children grow and mature. Positive behaviour management praises and acknowledges caring, co-operative and desirable behaviours. Staff use positive language to direct children, for example, "walk inside" not "don't run inside". Language used does not label the child but labels the behaviour, for example, "the way you behaved was not kind" not "you are an unkind boy/girl". Positive language can teach, give simple explanations and/or offer alternatives so that a child can make judgments and choices and thus, in time, wise decisions. It is based on self-control not coercion. It leads to self-discipline, recognizing that this is often a long, slow process. While the need for behaviour management is inevitable, it can be minimized by addressing possible causes of inappropriate behaviour through sensitive and individual programming.

Some causes of inappropriate behaviour include; anger and frustration, boredom, desire for attention, imitation, tiredness, excitement, jealousy, social clumsiness, high activity levels, bullying, and too much choice or lack of choice. The techniques we use for behaviour modification depend upon the personality of the individual child, their developmental level and the probable cause of the behaviour. The staff aims to provide children with an understanding of the limits of acceptable behaviour, the reasons for these limits, consistency in the management of our behaviour, and to provide good role models for acceptable behaviour. If children exhibit socially unacceptable behaviour the staff encourage alternative ways that allows all children to feel safe and secure in their environment.

STRATEGIES FOR BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT:

Staff ensures that positive experiences are provided to support child/ren's self-esteem through use of language. We acknowledge and accept the child's feelings of anger, frustration or jealousy, even if the reaction seems out of proportion to the cause. The feelings are distinguished from what the child actually does about the feelings. The child is encouraged to talk about their feelings. For example, it is made clear that bad feelings are not bad, only the response (action) to those feelings is unacceptable. Staff offer alternatives to unacceptable behaviour and give attention and praise to appropriate behaviour. We provide a balance of quiet activities and vigorous active ones. Give attention to both parties involved in a dispute. We comfort that child that has been hurt and talk to the aggressor. We try to empower the child that has been hurt to tell the aggressor how they feel. Attempt to distract or diffuse the situation. We keep the disruptive child occupied. Respond in a calm but firm manner, indicating to the child what is expected and what choices the child has. Help the child to realize the consequences of his or her actions. When a child is physically hurt, normal accident procedures apply.

If the techniques listed above are not successful, limits are to be reinforced within the centre through time out. This is the last method used and is never used in a punitive manner. Time out means that when a child's behaviour is unacceptable, they are excluded from the situation for a short period of time. They are not put in the corner or on a naughty chair. This exclusion involves explaining to the child why their behaviour was unacceptable and sitting the child in a space away from the incident and other children for a few minutes. After a short period of time has elapsed, the staff members concerned will talk with the child about what behavior is acceptable and if they can behave appropriately, the child than rejoin the activity.



If a child's behaviour is an ongoing concern, parents of the child will be informed and consulted to determine if there are other factors affecting the child's behaviour. Strategies can then be developed which are consistent with the family's child rearing practices. External professionals with behavioural management expertise will be consulted to assist with a situation, which causes concern to staff. Parents of children concerned will be notified of such action. If any parent is concerned regarding a child's behaviour at the Centre, they have the right to take it to the Management Committee. Each situation will be considered on a case by case basis.

In extreme cases the Suspension Policy will come into effect. Please consult the Program Manager for more information on this policy and on the Sensitive Interactions Policy.

Bullying can be generally defined as the use of aggression, intimidation, and/or cruelty with the result of hurting another person verbally, physically or emotionally. Bullying carries the ramification of causing pain and stress to the victim. Bullying is never justified

and is not excusable as “kids being kids,” “just teasing” or any other rationalization and will not be tolerated within the Centre.

Damage to Property—the following are the guidelines that will be followed should damage to the Centre’s property and equipment occur:

1. All damage to child care property and equipment shall be reported by the program staff to the Program Manager on the prescribed form.
2. Incidents which were unavoidable and result in accidental damage - No payment will be required
3. Children shall be held responsible for damage to child care property resulting from willfulness or neglect. Parents will be notified of the cost to replace such items.
4. The cost of property damages incurred will be determined by the Program Manager and reported to the Operational Board.
5. The Town of Drayton Valley will be notified of all charges to parents in result of damaged property and will collect all monies required for restitution.



Staff will encourage positive interactions between children, will promote a supportive environment in which children’s development and self-expression may be stimulated, and will focus on the child’s assets and strengths. Staff will encourage children to be responsible for their behaviour by reasoning with the child and offering set limits. Should the child choose to continue negative behaviour or lose control and cannot reason, the child will be removed for a “cooling off” period away from the situation. In all instances, staff will discuss with the child the reason for cooling off and the importance of the limits that have been set out. In the case where a staff member is experiencing difficulty with the child’s behaviour (i.e. total disregard of a caregiver’s authority or hurting others physically) the parent will be called to pick up their child. The Operational Board reserves the right to discharge or suspend a child from the program should the disruptions persist

NAPTIME PROCEDURES

Nap is very important for children; it needs to be a relaxed enjoyable experience in order for children to feel comfortable and secure. Rigid, uptight and stress in staff is easily picked up by the children. It is important to establish and follow a naptime routine that is consistent and predictable for the children. This routine should include:

- Turn off one set of lights in the room
- Ask all children to take washroom turns, do diaper changes and wash hands
- Turn on some relaxing music at a low volume
- Have all children lay on their beds

- A staff member should visit each child, encourage them to lay still to rest their bodies so they can grow and cover them with their blanket
- A staff should sit with children offer to rub their backs and help them to relax
- Once children are asleep make certain they are covered and monitor them on a regular basis.

WAKING PROCEDURES

All children have different sleep habits. If you have children waking earlier be prepared by having:

- A lit area away from the sleeping children
- Books ready at hand to read to one or two children at a time
- Quiet activities set out on table for them to find ie playdough or colouring
- A cd player and books on tape at a listening centre

Encourage children as they wake up to take their time, stretch and use the bathroom. Offer them a drink or a quiet moment with you to help ease them back into playing. If a child has been awakening earlier than they are ready for, take the time to rub backs or rock them for a while to help them relax and get back to sleep.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Because families are of primary importance in a child's development, we will strive to bring about collaboration between the home and our Centre in ways that enhance each child's individual development. The staff has a commitment to develop relationships of mutual trust with the families it serves; to respect the dignity of each family, each family's child rearing values, and their right to make decisions for their children; to interpret each child's progress; and to help families understand and appreciate the value of developmentally appropriate early childhood programs.

Parents are encouraged to participate in our daily activities as it may fit into their busy schedule. To better establish relations with our families we encourage the following:

1. Parent Orientation: Each parent new to the facility will be given a tour and have an opportunity to meet the program staff. Upon registering, parents will receive a parent handbook which outlines all of the Centre's policies, procedures, and philosophy.
2. Gradual Entry: Each family registering will be asked to come in for an orientation and then a second visit to spend time with their child within the program setting. This is to build confidence in both parent and child. It also will give staff an opportunity to

Learning from
and with each
other to raise
the children in
our community

understand the individual needs of the child and to ask questions pertaining to care. (i.e. allergies, fears, exceptional needs or gifts)

3. Communication: It is of utmost importance that parents are at ease while their child is in care. Parents are welcome to phone or drop in at any time to inquire about or visit with their child. The staff at the centre are here to support families and will help in any way with resources or information you might be seeking regarding concerns you have about your child.
4. Daily Programming: Any parent who feels they could lend their talents or gifts to a theme or occasion is greatly encouraged to do so. There is always opportunity to enrich a theme or special event with guests or visitors. Please let staff know if you would be interested in donating your time this way.
5. Current Events Board: A board containing the month's events, menu plans, etc. will be available for parents to review. Any suggestions will also be welcome and can be made to staff or the Program Manager.

PARENT CORRESPONDENCE:

Administration will provide parents with letters and newsletters. All correspondence will be placed in your child's locker or as deemed necessary, emailed to you. We do encourage you to read through all information sent home as it will keep you up to date with upcoming events or notices of changes.

Parent Committee

If you are interested in being part of a parent committee please contact the Program Manager.

COMPLAINT POLICY

Situations may arise that you as an involved person within our program may need addressed. Please address any concerns in the following manner:

- Verbal or written concern.
- If the issue is not resolved, please discuss it with the Program Manager. Please inform him/her that you have discussed it with the staff.
- Contact the Early Childhood Development Centre – Operational Board if the situation is not handled to your satisfaction.
- If the above steps are not successful, you may lodge a complaint with the Town of Drayton Valley Community & Social Development 514-2200
- Inquiries with regard to Licensing Standards and Best Practices or further information can be obtained through Central Alberta CFSA (403) 341- 8642.
- All concerns will be documented and then shared with both the parent and staff member (as needed). Both will have opportunity to read through, be clear on their feedback and notation of changes to be made to rectify concern will be noted.

- Parent, staff member and Program Manager will all sign this document once a resolution has been achieved.

Copy of this will go to the child's file and one to the staff member's file only if disciplinary measures were part of the resolution.

RESTRICTIONS / GUIDELINES

- The use of *aerosol sprays* is prohibited in the Child Care Centre.
- The use of *pesticides*, both indoor and out is prohibited when children are present. Children are to be kept away from any area where pesticides have recently been applied and kept indoors if pesticides are being or have recently been sprayed for as long as is recommended by the local health authority. Please speak with the Program Manager or Public Works for more information.
- *Toxic plants* are not permitted in the Early Childhood Development Centre. The outdoor play space will be monitored and kept free of toxic plants at all times. A list of these plants is available upon request. If you notice any toxic plants please notify the Program Manager immediately. Planning for our Outdoor Play space was conducted with this practice in mind but with the intention to expose children to many different varieties of plant life for exposure and sensory experience.
- All *sand boxes* will be covered when not in use.
- Children's *wading pools* must be drained after each use and stored up ended or in the storage shed .
- The Early Childhood Development Centre only permits non-toxic *arts and crafts supplies*. If you have a concern about any supplies please speak with the Program Manager.
- Staff is required to *check toys and equipment* routinely during use to ensure that any potential hazards are identified and responded to in a timely and appropriate manner.
- *Space heaters* are not permitted within the Early Childhood Development Centre.
- All *fans* used within the Centre will be in excellent repair with covers securely in place and are placed on high shelves away from the children.
- All *appliances* used within the Early Childhood Development Centre must meet CSA safety standards, be in good repair and cleaned on a regular basis.
- As there is limited space for storage at the Early Childhood Development Centre we are unable to allow personal childcare items that have not been approved by the Program Manager to be stored at the Centre. Large items such as car seats, strollers, tricycles, etc. left in the Centre creates a fire hazard and the items will be removed from the facility to be placed outside the premises. The Centre accepts no responsibility or liability for any personal items left on the premises.
- It is **required** by law that any person who suspects (or knows of) child abuse, must report it immediately to the appropriate Child and Welfare authority. Therefore, any case of suspected abuse of a child or disclosure of abuse by a child attending the Centre will be documented and reported to the Program Manager as well as the provincial governing body.

- Unacceptable Behaviour: The following acts will not be permitted at the ECDC centre or site under any circumstances: Smoking, drinking alcoholic beverages, or the use of or possession of illegal drugs and alcohol.
- Confidentiality: Staff will respect confidentiality of families at all times. In cases of emergency or injury, information may be released to the proper authorities, medical staff, or in the case of suspected abuse, the appropriate child welfare authority. Information may be released to other authorities with written or verbal permission from the parent or guardian. Staff cannot release information on other staff or board members to parents or the general public.
- Toys from home: Please leave toys at home. There are lots of activities to participate in and plenty of toys to play with in the program rooms. Stuffed animals are welcome to come for naptime. This policy is in place to prevent accidental loss, breakage, or inappropriate toys.

Please note that staff will not accept responsibility for lost or damaged toys. **NO GUNS, WAR TOYS, OR OTHER TOYS OF DESTRUCTION.** These items are absolutely unacceptable to be on the ECDC premises as they promote aggressive behaviour. We encourage children to find other means to express anger or frustration.

DAILY ROUTINES

Many common play activities help to meet the goals of learning socially, emotionally, cognitively, and physically. These are some of our objectives set out for the children through play.

Centres: Blocks, dress-up materials, pretend play (i.e. small toys such as cars, dolls etc.) and craft materials will be open to the children at all times. To retain diversity and interest, sand/water tables, computers, music/sound centres, puzzles, and crafts such as painting will be opened at varied times throughout the day. These centres will at times also directly reflect the theme for the month to encourage language and vocabulary growth. Children will be able to come and go as they are open. Limitations upon number of children at a centre will vary dependent upon behaviour and materials being presented. Some of these



centres will at times be set up for one-on-one time for children. There is a great importance for one-on-one time to observe a child's developmental growth. It will be through observation and time such as this that caregivers will be able to evaluate their own day to day programming and enrich or alter it to meet children's specific needs.

ACTIVITY	WHAT IS LEARNED
Finger-plays	Language development, fine-motor skills, counting, co-ordination, and self-esteem.
Games at circle time	Large motor skills, creativity, cooperation, and spatial awareness. Children also increase vocabulary, cultural awareness, and practice rhythm and rhyme through song and games.
Pretend Play	Social skills, (cooperation, turn-taking, and sharing) language and vocabulary development, imagination and emotional expression.
Puzzles	Problem solving, abstract reasoning, shapes, and spatial concepts.
Block Building	A foundation for more advanced science and comprehension including gravity, stability, weight, and balancing concepts.
Sand-box Play	Measuring and problem solving. Fine motor skills.
Cooking	Math skills (counting and measuring), nutrition, and science concepts (prediction, cause, and effects).
Colouring / Painting	Creativity, emotional expression, symbolic representation, fine-motor skills, pre-reading, and pre-writing skills.
Water play	Math skills such as conservation, weights and measurement, counting, data and information collection, etc. while learning to work and interact with other children.
Music and Movement	Children learn to channel aggression, relieve tension, and express themselves through music and dance, while learning new skills in rhythm, balance, grace and co-ordination, and developing kinesthetic and cultural awareness.
Outdoor / Gross Motor Play	Meet the children's physical development needs which in turn affect the development of other domains. They need to be physically fit, and that means possessing endurance, muscular strength, flexibility, and good health. They need to learn skills in locomotion, dynamic and static balance, body and space perception, rhythm and temporal awareness, rebound and air borne activities, projectile management and other manipulative motor skills.
Ipads / Technology	Children develop knowledge in the use of computers and programs such as Microsoft Office and play with educational computer games while learning language and math skills. Aids in hand-eye co-ordination and teaching of concepts such as colours and numbers.

“If we want children to flourish, to become truly empowered, then let us allow them to love the earth before we ask them to save it. Perhaps this is what Thoreau had in mind when he said, “the more slowly trees grow at first, the sounder they are at the core, and I think the same is true of human beings.”

PROGRAM DELIVERY

This is a general outlook of the day to show program flow.

Each program room will develop activities and change the schedule (i.e. toileting that involves diapering will be done on an as needed basis) to meet the needs of their age specific group.

7:00 – 8:00 a.m.	Arrival / Health Check / Free choice in activity areas
8:15 - 9:15 a.m.	Snack—will be available for a half hour (in the room) and then remaining food will be sent to the kitchen. Children arriving later can have the snack brought to the room until 9:15 am. Children engage in free choice activity. areas after finishing eating.
9:15 - 9:45 a.m.	Clean-up
9:45 - 10:30 a.m.	Group Time—by choice for children who are interested for up to 15 min. Caregiver facilitated activity at one table for short time to encourage language/ listening skills. Sand/ Water and all required centres available to children at this time.
10:30 – 11:00 a.m.	Outdoor play or vigorous indoor activity (including teacher-directed games)
11:00 – 11:30 am	Toileting, clean-up, water/sand play (sensory motor time)
11:30a.m.-12:00p.m.	Lunch—children will all sit together for lunch. This is an excellent opportunity to model table manners with children.
12:00 - 12:30 p.m.	Preparation for nap, story time
12:30 - 2:30 p.m.	Naptime—Children are required to rest for a reasonable period but not required to sleep. Developmentally appropriate activities are available for those who are awake before others, i.e., quiet books, puzzles, listening centre done while sitting on cots.
2:30 - 3:00 p.m.	Toileting/hand washing and Snack
3:00 - 3:30 p.m.	Group Time—Free choice in activity areas. Teacher facilitated play to introduce turn taking, enhance speech, work on visual/fine motor skills.
3:30 - 3:45 p.m.	Preparation for outside play
3:45 - 4:45 p.m.	Outdoor play or vigorous indoor play
4:45 - 6:00 p.m.	Free choice in activity areas, including water and sand. Clean-up of areas not in use.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Except in the most inclement weather, we are required by CFSA Licensing and Best Practices, to take the children outdoors everyday throughout the year. There will be no exception made to this aspect of the programming. Children will be going outside twice a day, depending on the weather, please make sure that each child has the appropriate outdoor clothing.

A first aid kit and all emergency contact information will accompany staff while they are off the Child Care playground area. All outdoor play structures comply with the standards outlined in the current edition of “*Guideline of Children’s Play spaces and Equipment*.”

INCLEMENT WEATHER

The Early Childhood Development Centre will stay open all day on regularly scheduled days regardless of the weather, providing that the building is deemed safe and comfortably heated. The primary consideration in the event of severe weather conditions shall be the health and safety of children. Parents are expected to exercise good judgment and care when deciding whether or not to bring their child(ren) to the Centre when weather conditions are extreme.

If in the event a weather advisory is sent out regarding severe weather, children will remain in the centre. Our centre will follow the weather forecast given the Environment Canada website, www.weatheroffice.gc.ca

Winter: Inclement weather will be deemed when the temperature outside is -20C including wind chill in the winter months. Children will be dressed in appropriate clothing either in hats, mitts, boots, snow-pants and jackets. Please provide a second pair of mitts as weather warrants it.

Spring / Summer: If the Temperature is higher than 29 C for summer months the children will remain indoors. Appropriate attire for summer is a summer hat, t-shirts, shorts for summer. Parents are asked to provide sunscreen SPF 30 during the summer months for all children. Please put sunscreen on your child upon arrival or before coming in the morning. Please clearly label the bottle for staff.

Closure of Centre

On rare occasions, it may be necessary to consider emergency closure. The Town of Drayton Valley believes that the safety and lives of children and employees must be a primary concern.

Procedures

1. The decision to close the Centre for emergency purposes shall be made by the Program Manager in consultation with the Director of Community Services or his/her designate. Factors which may result in closure include but are not limited to:
 - Failure of plumbing, heating or ventilation installations of the nature likely to be detrimental to the health or safety of children or employees; and/or any other

emergency / disaster conditions likely to be detrimental to the health or safety of the children or employees

2. In the event that school closure may be necessary: The Program Manager shall immediately initiate steps to advise as many parents as possible, and shall keep staff and administration fully informed, and shall ensure the safety of every child.

MEALS

There will be a monthly menu posted outside the kitchen. The cook will be a trained professional who will be knowledgeable about the safe handling and preparation of the childcare menus created. This team member is responsible for providing nutritional snacks and meals that meet all standards set out by the Alberta Nutritional Guidelines for Children and Youth and in compliance with the Canada Food Guide.



Nutrition

In developing our rotating menu plan and nutrition program for children we will be using the Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth as our reference. These guidelines can be found at [http:// www.healthyalberta.com/](http://www.healthyalberta.com/). These guidelines were commissioned by Alberta Health and Wellness and were prepared by the Alberta Institute for Human Nutrition at the University of Alberta. Parents are informed in the Orientation process that outside food is not allowed in the Centre as it may not fall under the Canada Food Guide Standards (unless required to meet special dietary restrictions). Should parents provide meals that do not meet the requirements of the Alberta Nutrition Guidelines; staff will supplement to provide balanced meals and snacks. Menus are reviewed every three months and revised with reflection upon season, interests of family, staff, children and cultural understanding.

Serving Sizes:

- portion sizes will be appropriate for the age of the child based on hunger and fullness
- size and number of servings provided will be consistent with Canada's Food Guide.
- children will be allowed second portions until they are full.
- new foods will be introduced in small amounts and provided on multiple occasions for children to try.

ADDRESSING FOOD ALLERGIES:

To prevent children from coming into contact with foods they are knowingly allergic to staff will:

- post a current list of children's names with their allergies and type of reaction within each program room. This list will be available to staff/volunteers and casual staff for reference.
- have ingredient lists in the kitchen for all food served should parents request more

information in the event their child reacts to something that is not a recognized food allergy to them.

- provide updated information from Alberta Health Services and provide assistance in maintaining an allergy aware environment.
- ensure the Centre is “nut-free” as per provincial guidelines.

Special Diets:

- Parents will need to authorize in writing any food restrictions based on medical conditions, cultural or religious preference.
- The cook and program staff will maintain a record of all children with special diet restrictions.
- Staff will ensure that appropriate substitutions are available to children with medical, cultural, or religious food restrictions

Prohibited /Caution Foods

Foods that will not be served *regularly** at the Child Care Centre are:

1. Foods containing limited nutrients
2. Poor choices of fiber
3. High in sugar, fat and / or salt
4. Are not part of the four food groups in Canada’s Food Guide

Examples being chocolate bars, chips, cake, soft drinks, iced tea, high sugar cereals, deep fried foods, whipped cream.

**note: on a child’s birthday or special occasion, we may have a “treat” but it will not replace any part of the regular snack or lunch menu.*



COMMUNICABLE DISEASE AND HEALTH

We know that health is a complex issue in a child care environment. In establishing our health policy, we considered the following factors:

- The inability of a child who is too ill to cope with the day's program.
- The need to protect all our children from communicable disease.
- Parent's need for a guideline to assist them in deciding whether to bring a child who is "not quite well" to the child care facility.
- The responsibility and commitment of parents who work full time and their ability to pick up an ill child

To reduce spread of flu or any type of common virus or communicable disease the centre has the following hand-washing policy.

HAND WASHING

How to wash your hands properly with soap.

1. Use liquid soap or a clean bar of soap. Wet your hands with warm, running water. Rub on soap, lather well. You don't need antibacterial soap; regular soap is sufficient.
2. Rub your hands together briskly for at least 15 seconds.
3. Scrub all over, including the backs of your hands, wrists, between your fingers, and under your fingernails.
4. Rinse under running water.
5. Dry with a clean towel.

Wash your hands BEFORE and AFTER:

- preparing, serving or eating food, or feeding others.
- brushing or flossing your teeth.
- putting in or taking out contact lenses.
- after blowing your nose or wiping a child's nose.
- after coughing or sneezing.
- after handling garbage.
- playing in the sandbox.
- using the bathroom.



WHEN YOUR CHILD IS SICK

If a child appears to be ill, the child may be separated from the other children, and staff will notify the supervisor and parents immediately. If the parent is not available, emergency contact numbers will be phoned for your child to be picked up.

Obvious symptoms that indicate a child is ill are:

- A fever over 38 degrees Celsius and low energy. Even if a fever is being controlled by Tylenol it is an indication that your child is fighting infection and should be seeing a doctor as soon as possible. * *In the event that a child's fever reaches a temperature greater than 40 degrees Celsius an ambulance will be called to transport the child and staff member to the Drayton Valley Hospital & Care Centre. The parent will be contacted as soon as possible and updated on location and condition of their child. Parents will assume care of their child at the hospital and any costs incurred for ambulance or care provided by the hospital.*

- Unexplained pain.
- Vomiting two or more times in a 24 hour period. Excessive vomiting can lead to dehydration.
- Diarrhea (two or more water stools in a 24 hour period).
- Cold with fever, runny nose and eyes, coughing, and sore throat.
- Sore throat, difficulty swallowing.
- Unexplained Rash or red eyes (thick mucous or pus draining from eye).
- Headache or stiff neck
- Stomach ache, diarrhea, or vomiting.
- Severely itchy body, or scalp.
- Known or suspected contagious illness. eg.chicken pox, mumps, and measles

Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to keep ill children at home to prevent the spread of illness at the Centre. Children must be free from symptoms for 24 hours before returning to the Centre. Please ensure you have back-up plans to accommodate any such spontaneous child care needs.

There are other times when a child is not showing signs of a definite illness but yet not able to handle the stress of the day. In these instances, it will be the decision of the supervisor and the staff as to whether the child should be sent home.

Medication

Staff does not administer medication or herbal remedies to children. Staff will only assist with the administration of inhalers / Epi-Pens for severe allergic reactions or Ventolin (as prescribed on a label specified for this child). If a child requires medication on an ongoing daily basis, please have the parents advise the Program Manager in writing immediately.

Children who are given either of the medications listed above will be monitored closely for any ongoing allergic reactions. Parents will be notified if the listed inhalers / Epi-pen were administered detailing cause of reaction, time, and any other pertinent information related to the ongoing monitoring of the child. All medications will be returned to families when the authorization period has ended. Children given the above listed medications are cared for by staff with the appropriate training and background.

Parents are required to notify staff, in writing, if their child(ren) have taken any medication or herbal remedies within four (4) hours of arriving at the Centre.

IMMUNIZATION

All immunizations must be up to date with reference to the following schedule advised by the Public Health Agency of Canada

Immunizing on schedule gives your child the best immunity possible and lasts throughout childhood. Booster doses are required for some vaccines.

If parents are not having their child participate in the regular immunization schedule, they are responsible to provide a written notice to the Program Manager to be held in your child's file. Staff will try to contact parents should we ever feel that their child could come in contact with any of the listed communicable diseases that would put them at risk.

Note: each bullet represents one vaccine/injection

- Diphtheria, tetanus, acellular pertussis, polio, haemophilus influenza type b
- ² Annually, during influenza season
- ³ Measles, mumps, rubella
- ⁴ Diphtheria, tetanus, acellular pertussis, polio
- ⁵ Diphtheria, tetanus, acellular pertussis

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Evacuation Procedure

Children will leave the building as stated in the fire drill procedures. Attendance will be immediately taken once the children are at the west fence of the playground approx. 15 meters from the building. Once all children are accounted for the group will proceed through the north gate of the playground to the sidewalk and head north to the Scout Hall. The distance is approximately a five-minute walk.

Scout Hall
4801 – 52nd Ave
Drayton Valley, AB
Phone: (780) 514-2225

EMERGENCY LOCATIONS AROUND TOWN

Town of Drayton Valley, Civic Centre	5120 52 Street
R.C.M.P Detachment	5409 Industrial Rd
Omniplex	5737 45 th Ave (near Lion's Park)

GENERAL INFORMATION

Appeal Process/Grievance

Situations may arise that you as an involved person within our program may need addressed. Please address any concerns in the following manner:

- Verbal or written concern is discussed with the staff member within five (5) working days.
- If the issue is not resolved, please discuss it with the Program Manager within an additional five (5) working days. Please inform him/her that you have discussed it with the staff member first.
- If the situation is not handled to your satisfaction you may contact the Early Childhood Development Centre – Operational Board within a further ten (10) working days and a rendering will be made within fifteen (15) working days.
- If the above steps are not successful, you may lodge a complaint with the Town of Drayton Valley Community & Social Development Department 514-2200
- Inquiries with regard to Licensing Standards and Best Practices or further information can be obtained through Central Alberta CFSA at 403-341- 8642 or <http://www.centralalbertacfsa.gov.ab.ca/home/538.cfm>

OPERATIONAL BOARD

This board is comprised of three members of the community, as well as two council appointed members. Please ask child care management for contact information.

PROGRAM MANAGER

The Program Manager is available to you for information regarding programming and registration. The Manager will give you an orientation of the Centre and answer any questions regarding your child's placement in the program. If you would like information regarding any other joint programs being offered through the Centre and another outside agency such as Parent Link or Brighter Futures, please feel free to ask us or peek into our Parent Room for brochures and upcoming workshops for parents.

Assistant Program Manager

The Assistant Manager will act in the manager's absence. Please bring any concerns to this person should you need immediate assistance. They also will help you with questions regarding, booking days, clarification on policies or procedures or to aid with billing.

Early Childhood Educators (ECE)

The ECEs will facilitate the day-to-day programming within the program. They will be dedicated to each child's physical, emotional, intellectual, and social development. As trained professionals, they supplement the care provided by the family through organized activities and will maintain a stimulating and nurturing environment. Each E.C.E will work an 8 hour day that is staggered to ensure we comply with the Licensing Standards and Best Practices in Child Care. All staff welcomes any information you can share with them about your child to help provide an easy transition from home to the centre. Some examples of information that staff would encourage is; child's sleeping pattern changes, illness, dramatic changes in home environment, changes in your child's eating habits, etc.

VOLUNTEERS / WORK EXPERIENCE CANDIDATES

We will welcome volunteers and work experience students who are interested in coming into the centre. These people will not be included in child/staff ratios and will not be left alone to have sole responsibility of the supervision of children within the program. Criminal record checks and references will be required before a volunteer will be able to assist with the program. All work experience students will undergo an interview before joining the program for the designated time required to fulfill their course.

LOST AND FOUND

The employees of the Centre will pick up all clothing left in park or boot room and place in the lost and found box located in the boot room. Once every three months these clothes will be laid out and if not claimed will either be sent to the Thrift Shop or used as extra clothing at the child care centre.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Drayton Valley Early Childhood Development Centre

5024 48th Street, Drayton Valley, AB T7A1E1

Fax: 780.621.0143 Ph: 780.514.2248

Email: ecdc@draytonvalley.ca

We can also be found on:

- Town of Drayton Valley Website
- Facebook

Notes or Questions you may have about the handbook, jot down here and ask the next time you are in!

Please complete the below form and return it to the Early Childhood Development Centre.

I, _____ have read the Parent Handbook in its entirety and I am aware of and understand all the policies and procedures at the Early Childhood Development Centre.

Signature

Date

Witness



TOWN OF DRAYTON VALLEY

