

Creative Minds Children Services, Inc.
Parent Handbook
Brantford, ON
(519) 754-0811

Our Philosophy

Creative Minds Children Services, Inc. believes in providing a safe and secure, happy, enriching, and loving environment to suit each child's individual needs. Our center responds to today's growing need of an excellent childcare facility and fosters peace of mind for working parents with children aged 0 months to 6 years old.

We will work to make each day a happy learning experience for your child, which includes opportunities for socialization, group play, reading, and arts/crafts. Every effort will be taken to facilitate field trips.

The goals of Creative Minds Children Services, Inc. are to:

- Provide a warm, nurturing and safe environment
- Provide an educational emergent based curriculum for each child to develop in the areas of physical, social, emotional, cognitive, creative and moral growth • Provide an inclusive program to enhance the children's awareness, understanding, and respect for cultural differences and similarities
- Value each child as an individual with unique capabilities and interests • Provide qualified, caring and enthusiastic educators who will nurture each child's learning, thinking and development
- Provide a friendly and caring environment for parents and families • Be open and flexible for families and their individual needs

Staff

Creative Minds employs full-time Registered Early Childhood Educators (R.E.C.E.), part-time R.E.C.Es as well as experienced non-E.C.Es. All employees of the centre, including the cook, are fully certified in First Aid/CPR and have a satisfactory police criminal record check. All staff must adhere to many policies within the centre including our Health Policy, Program Statement Implementation Policy, Child Abuse Policy, Playground Supervision Policy, etc.

Orientation

Before their child can be enrolled, parents will be given the opportunity to tour the center between 9:00am - 11:15am, by appointment only. During the tour, parents can visit the rooms, staff, and view the menus and the program. After the tour, parents will be given a registration package and an overview of its contents. It is optional for parents to bring their child with them during the tour; however, the center encourages the child to come for another visit before their first scheduled day, in order to ease the transition into the daycare.

Wait List Policy

Creative Minds Children Services waitlist works in conjunction with the OneList, supplied by the City of Brantford. In order for families to be considered for a spot in our program, they must first be registered with the OneList. As spots become available, families will be chosen based on the type of spot available and where they are on the OneList. Families will be called to come and tour the centre when they are at the top of the list. If the family and centre are agreeable to each other, the family will then proceed to the registration process. Please see our Registration section for a detailed description of the process.

Registration Procedure

If a parent is interested in enrolling their child, they need to first register online with the OneList. When the child's name is next on the list for a spot at Creative Minds, they are given a tour and a registration package. A \$250 deposit is required before your child starts at the centre. The forms and fees are due upon registration. A child will not be enrolled until these items are brought to the center.

If the child has special needs, the parent shall give the center all pertinent information so the child has the best possible program. If the child needs extra assistance, the center will work with the parents to ensure that this is in place before the child attends the center (i.e. Lansdowne support)

Custody Arrangements

The childcare staff will not get involved in the marital or custody issues of our families. Our professional role demands we stay completely impartial, as we often work closely with both sets of separated parents. If you are divorced, separated or going through custody negotiations, please inform the staff of the relevant custody and parental access details. If there are any restrictions on parental access, such as no visits or pick-ups, we will require official documentation to that affect, such as a court order or a restraining order. Without proper documentation, we cannot deny a parent access to their child. The childcare staff will only be accountable to the enrolling parent, who will provide the daycare with all relevant information and documentation. If an unauthorized parent comes to visit or pick up their child, we will request that he or she leave. In the case of any unfortunate and difficult situation, we will call 911 and have that parent accompanied away from the premises. The safety of the staff and children of the centre is our top priority.

Payment and fees

Upon enrollment, the parent agrees to submit payment equivalent to two weeks of fees, along with the required registration forms. All fees are paid in advance. Payments can be made by either postdated cheques, cash, or e-transfer either weekly, bi-monthly, monthly or by other arrangements as mutually agreed by the center and the parent.

Fees are to be handed in on the morning of your scheduled day. There will be a \$40.00 a day charge for any late fees. If any cheques bounce, there will be a charge of \$80.00 from the center for administrative costs.

Late Fee Policy

The center closes promptly at 6:00pm. Parents are required to notify the center as soon as possible, if they are unable to arrive by closing time. **A late fee of \$1.00 for every minute that a child remains in the center after 6:00pm will be charged.** Time will be calculated using the clocks at the center. Cash payment must be made to the staff who were required to stay after their shift within 24 hours. **Violation of the late fee policy may result in termination of child care services.**

Vacation

Parents are required to give two weeks' notice of their intent to take holidays. **Parents are still expected to pay for their holiday time.** Even if your child is not here on their regularly scheduled day, you will still be responsible to pay for those days.

Hours of Operation/Holidays

The center is open from 6:30am – 6:00pm, Monday – Friday. During the holidays, the center will be closed on the following days:

Good Friday Labour Day Family Day
Thanksgiving Day Christmas Day Boxing Day
New Year's Day Civic Holidays Canada Day

On Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve, the center will close at 2pm.

If your regularly scheduled day falls on a holiday, parents will need to be granted permission to have their child(ren) attend the centre the following business day. Due to the continuous growth of the centre, we may not be able to accommodate the transfer of days.

Class Ratios

In accordance with the Child Care and Early Years Act, the following ratio will exist in each of the program rooms:

Toddler 18–30 months 1:5
Preschool 30 months – 5 years 1:8
Infants 4 months-18months 3:10

Withdrawal from the Child Care Centre

If, for any reason, you decide to withdraw your child from the daycare, we require a two week written notice to be submitted to the office. If you chose, at the time of registration, to use your fees to go toward your last two weeks, your fees will be covered and your child may or may not attend the daycare.

Any outstanding fees must be paid before your child's last day.

Discontinuation of Childcare Services

Discontinuation of child care services may occur if:

- Staff is unable to meet the behavioral or physical needs of your child in our daycare
- Environment/setting - every reasonable effort has been made to accommodate those with special needs
- Lack of parental support when dealing with challenging situations •

Arrears in accounts of 30 days

- **Tardiness in picking up your child on 3 consecutive occasions within 3 months.**

Curriculum

Creative Minds aims to create a welcoming, nurturing and home-like environment. Bringing natural elements into the classrooms provides an infinite number of possibilities and conveys a sense of calmness and tranquility for both the children and teachers. Teachers bring in natural materials to provide opportunities for investigation, experimentation, and observation. The environment is set-up to encourage interactions among the children and the teachers and to build relationships.

Observation and Documentation of Child's Development

Observation is a way for the teachers to gain insight into how the children are thinking, learning and making sense of their world. Documentation is a tool the teachers will use to track your child's development. The screening tool that will be used is the Nipissing District Developmental Screen and other screening tools (ASQ, Ages & Stages etc.) and the areas of development covered include vision, hearing, emotional, fine motor, gross motor, social, self-help, communication, and learning and thinking. The screens coincide with key developmental stages up to age 6.

If a parent wishes to view and discuss their child's development, they can make arrangements with their child's teacher to go over the teacher's observations and documentations.

Documentation of the children's efforts is a huge element in the classrooms. Each classroom uses many forms of documentation such as: photo albums, murals, scrapbooks, written observations and also posted around the room in order to reflect and extend on their creations.

Arrival and Departure

When dropping off or picking your child up from the center, please ensure that you let a staff member know that you are there to drop your child off or pick them up. If you know that you will not be picking your child up, be sure to notify the center as soon as possible in writing who will be. If the person is not named on the emergency pick-up list, we require that the person to bring photo identification. The child will not be released without name verification. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that all information maintained by the center is up to date at all times.

We would like your child to be at the center no later than 9:00 am. This will allow your

child to fully benefit from the daily programming being implemented. When dropping your child off, please inform a staff member of any early pick-ups, late pick-ups, anyone different picking up your child or any doctor's appointments the child may have that day.

Please be aware that although Creative Minds offers flexible care, we must accommodate a large number of families and we may not be able to meet your scheduling changes. For example, requiring a switch in days or in drop-off/pick-up times. Please inform the office of your changes and we will try to accommodate these changes, if possible.

Parking

Parking is available in the centre parking lot behind the building. Please be conscious of others, as there may be children, parents, staff or visitors walking.

Entrance and Exit

Parents are to use the back door dedicated to parents to either enter or exit the centre. The front doors are locked and parents are encouraged to NOT use this door as it does not latch properly.

Nutrition

Creative Minds is committed to providing well-balanced meals and snacks according to Canada's Food Guide. We will support parents whose children require special nutritional adjustments to the meals and snacks. A morning snack is served between 7:30am and 8:30am, lunch between 11:00am and 11:45am, and an afternoon snack between 2:00pm and 3:00pm. Menus are posted inside the classrooms and in the hallway cabinet.

Due to allergy concerns, please be aware there may be children with severe allergies in the center. Unless otherwise discussed with the Supervisor, please refrain from bringing any food or drink into the center. Everything will be provided for your child.

Safety

The centre is locked during the hours of 7:30am and 3:30pm. Parents or visitors wishing to gain entry into the centre during this time MUST "buzz in" at the entrance door.

Rest and Reflection

All children under the age of five are required, by the Child Care and Early Years Act, to have rest time. Beds will be provided. Rest and reflection is for two hours a day. The lights are turned off and calming music played to help children relax and rest. Those children who do not sleep or whose parents only want them to sleep for a specified amount of time, are provided with a 'Busy Bag' which contains quiet toys, such as: puzzles, books, small toys etc. Parents are also encouraged to provide any 'quiet' rest time activities for their child to use during this time. Infants are given the same two hour

rest period but those children who are required to have more rest periods in a day are allowed to do so.

Inclement Weather

All children in attendance at the centre for 6 hours or more are required to play outdoors for up to 2 hours a day, weather permitting. Inclement weather is described as being temperatures lower or higher than the set temperature (at the discretion of the supervisor and the Brant County Health Unit). Weather situations, such as blizzards, freezing rain, blowing snow, thunderstorms etc., will also require the children to stay indoors.

Although, Creative Minds understands children may feel under the weather or parents may feel the weather is too hot, too cold, windy, etc., if you do NOT want your child to go outside during their scheduled outdoor time, your child, unfortunately, will not be able to attend the centre that day. Creative Minds is not equipped with extra staff to watch the children who are unable to go outside.

If outdoor play is not possible, the centre will ensure appropriate gross motor activities are planned.

Creative Minds uses The Weather Network for up-to-date weather information to make decisions concerning outdoor play, including air quality and the UV Index.

In the event the centre needs to close, due to inclement weather, during center hours, a combination of phone calls, emails and reminders (using the remind app) will be used to contact parents. If the centre will not be opening, due to inclement weather, parents are to listen to CKPC 92.1 radio for closure updates.

Clothing

Please label your child's clothing. This will ensure that your child or staff will not have difficulty finding clothes. Please provide play clothes for painting and water play (i.e. plain t shirt), an extra set of clothing in case of accidents, and inside shoes. Please bring in a sleep toy and blanket for the nap time to give your child a sense of home and security, should your child require them.

Toddlers/infants need to bring in a labeled cup, diapers, wipes, and lotions that may be required at diaper change, extra clothing, and a sleep toy/blanket.

Children's Belongings

Parents are encouraged to bring in blankets for their child to use at sleep time, as well as any stuffed toy that will help their child feel safe and secure while they sleep. If your child does not nap any longer, you are also welcomed to put together a "sleep bag" which will accompany your child on their cot. "Sleep Bags" can contain such items as books, puzzles, crayons and colouring books, and hand held games. Once sleep time is over, these bags will be placed in your child's locker until the next time your child is at

the center. Although we are permitting hand held electronics, Creative Minds takes no responsibility over them. Also, if your child is being disruptive with the handheld device, their teachers may take the device away for the duration of sleep time.

Parents are discouraged from letting their children bring toys from home as they may cause conflict in the classroom.

Field Trips

Throughout the year, various off-site excursions will be planned to special places of interest that add an educational benefit to the children. A signed field trip form will be required in order for your child to go on these trips. The field trip form will include information on the destination, time and date. A minimal charge may be required to partially cover transportation and entrance fees. If you wish your child not to go on a certain field trip, please inform staff ahead of time. You may be asked to find alternative care for your child on that day, if the center cannot accommodate them while their class is on the field trip. You are invited and encouraged to join us; however, we do ask for all parents in attendance to give their full attention to the children. Please, no cell phones or any other hand-held device which may take your attention off the children.

Throughout the year, the centre will use the neighborhood for walking-field trips. These trips may be used for nature observations, material collection, or fun!

Health Policy

Staff will observe the arrival each child in order to determine if they have any possible symptoms of illness. When a child becomes ill, the parent will be notified to pick up the child within an hour. **If a child has been sent home with fever, diarrhea or vomiting, they may not return for 24 hours after their fever broke and/or last bout of diarrhea and/or vomiting. If a child requires antibiotics, they may not return for 48 hours after the first dose.** If the parent cannot be reached, we will contact the next person indicated by you on your child's emergency care form.

A parent will be contacted to pick up a sick child when the child exhibits any of the following symptoms at the centre:

Fever – 102f/38.8c or higher (parental consent is required to give a child medication for a fever of 100f or over; however, they do not need to go home. If the child presents other symptoms, such as severe runny nose, coughing, or being lethargic along with the fever, parents will be contacted for pick-up. If the child's fever has not reached 102f, they are allowed back in the centre the next day; however, if they are sent home with a fever of 102f or higher, they must stay home for 24 hours.)

Diarrhea - 2 loose stools in one day or 2 in one hour

Vomiting - 1 episode at the center

Rash – only if rash is accompanied by another symptom i.e. Fever, discharge From eyes and/or listlessness not consistent with child's regular

temperament

Staff will write up incident reports for any observations or complaints from the child of any medical attention your child may require, such as an earache, swollen ankle, etc. The parents will be asked to sign that they have been informed of the situation and have been advised if the child should be seen by a doctor.

A doctor's note will be required for any illness during an outbreak of a communicable disease. This is to keep track of how many children are sick. The information is collected and given to the Brant County Health Unit.

If there is a communicable disease at the centre, parents will be notified with a notice on the centre entrance door. If you find that your child is exhibiting the signs of a communicable disease, please call and notify the centre.

Your child is more than welcomed to come to the center when they have a mild cold (runny nose, slight cough) but are still able to participate in the daily programming.

Due to the rising number of children enrolling, parents will need to keep their child(ren) home from the centre for 48 hours, if they have been prescribed antibiotics. The health and well-being of the staff and children are our first priority.

For more detail, please refer to the Health Policy located in the centre office.

Medication

If your child is on an anti-biotic, they must return with the medication that needs to be administered (unless given at home).

Any medication brought into the center that needs to be administered MUST be in the original container and labeled with the child's name, doctor's name, name of medication, date and expiration date, dosage, and when to be taken. A medication form will also have to be signed in order for the staff to administer the medication. In accordance with Ministry legislation, all medication will be in a locked container.

Anaphylaxis Policy

Prior to enrolment, or as soon as an allergy is diagnosed, an Individual Anaphylaxis Health Care Plan will be developed with the center, the parents and appropriate health care professionals. At the time of enrolment, parents will be asked to identify any special dietary needs their child has. Whenever a child with severe allergies is enrolled, or newly diagnosed, all staff will be informed of:

- The child's name and room
- Where the child's Action Plan will be located
- Where the child's EpiPen is located
- Which staff member(s) will be responsible for the administering the EpiPen

Staff will be trained in the prevention, recognition and treatment of anaphylaxis, including the use of the EpiPen. Emergency procedures will be conducted and evaluated every 6 months to ensure that all staff are confident in the procedure and able to act in an emergency. All information on the child's Individual Anaphylaxis Health Care Plan will be reviewed annually with the parents to ensure that information is current to the child's developmental level. It is the responsibility of the parents to supply the EpiPen and ensuring that the medication has not expired.

Teething Policy

Upon arrival, please, inform your child's teacher if your child is teething.

Accidents

Whether indoors, on the playground, or on a trip outside the center, the children are watched carefully; however, accidents that do occur will be reported to the parent.

If emergency medical care is necessary, the Director may take the following

- steps:
- Attempt to contact parent or guardian.
 - Attempt to contact the parent or guardian through any of the other persons listed on the emergency information form
 - Call ambulance
 - Have child taken to the nearest hospital in the company of a staff member

Any of the expenses incurred will be the responsibility of the child's parents or guardians.

Policy for Impaired Parent/Guardian

- The staff will try to persuade the parent/guardian to call their emergency contact person to come pick up the child instead
- If unsuccessful, the staff will call a cab for the parent/guardian and arrange for an alternate pick-up from the child's emergency list
- If the parent decides to drive home, the staff is to get the license plate number and description of the car and call the police
- If the parent decides to walk or take the bus, a staff is to call the Children's Aid Society and report the parent/guardian

Injuries and Other Emergencies

Minor cuts and abrasions suffered while at the center will receive proper care -- specifically, they will be washed with soap and warm water and properly bandaged. Treatment will be logged and we will tell you how and when the injury occurred. We are also required to log any injuries we observe on your child which have occurred outside

of our care. (Log Sheets are available to all staff and will be kept on record). All Accident Reports will be either photocopied or sent through email for your record.

Creative Minds Children Services, Inc. has an Emergency Management Policy and Procedure Manual to follow in emergency situations. In the event of an emergency, parents will be notified by phone when it is safe to do so. If parents desire to review the entire policy, please see the office.

In the event that the Emergency Evacuation Procedure must be implemented, all staff are aware of all designated emergency exits and procedures. The following steps will be followed:

- Children are informed to stop playing and line up by emergency exit located in the classroom
- Staff will ensure that all children are present and lead children to designated location
- Once at the emergency location, staff will re-call children's name to ensure all is present

Lockdown Procedures

In the event of a lockdown situation, the centre and classroom doors will be locked and windows covered. Children and teachers will remain in their classrooms until such time as the lockdown has been lifted. For a more detailed explanation of the lockdown procedures, please see the centre office for a more detailed description of the procedure.

Respect

We will instill two patterns of behavior in the children: respect for other people and respect for property. There will be no hitting or shoving other children or verbal abuse towards each other. If a child is in a situation where this is occurring, they will be redirected to another activity until they can return to the regular program. If the behaviour persists, the supervisor will have a conversation with the parents.

Creative Minds also believes in the respect between teachers and parents. Even though there may be times when there has been an upsetting situation occur or something has happened in our individual lives, we need to maintain a certain level of respect with each other. We all serve as role models for these children and, therefore, we must hold ourselves to a higher standard. If there is a conflict between parents and/or teachers, please refer to the Parent Complaint Policy or come to the office.

Program Statement Implementation Policy

- Guidance is used to teach children through love, consistency and firmness. • Children will be treated with understanding, respect, and with consideration of their development and age.
- Corporal punishment will never be used.

- The rules at the center are frequently explained.
- Positive reinforcement, redirection will be used to guide the children.

Suspected Child Abuse Policy

Any staff member or person who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been abused or neglected must report the suspected abuse to the appropriate Children's Aid Society (CAS). It must be reported to CAS by the staff member on the day the suspicion is noticed. The supervisor will also be notified of the action taken. The Children's Aid Society will then commence an investigation and will contact the family, usually within 24 hours. In accordance with CAS guidelines, the center will not inform the parents that a report has been made.

Serious Occurrence Posting:

If a serious occurrence occurs at the centre, notification will be posted outside the room of occurrence within 24 hours of occurrence. The notification will be posted for a period of 10 days.

Compliance of Policies of the Centre

All parents are expected to be familiar with and adhere to the center's policies and procedures at all times. If a parent fails to comply with the center's policies and procedures, the following will apply:

- A Verbal warning by the Supervisor
- Written warning by the Supervisor
- A discussion as to whether their child should be discharged from the center

Supervision of Students and Volunteers

Parents will be notified of any students or volunteers at the centre. Parents need to know and understand these students and/or volunteers could be male or female and that they have gone through an orientation before entering the classroom. Volunteers and students are not permitted to take children out of the classroom, or away from the center; nor are they alone with children at any time. They will be assigned a teacher in the classroom, in which they are to stay with at all times.

Students, volunteers and new hires receive an orientation which covers the Following:

- Review of their Police Vulnerable Sector Check
- Job Descriptions
- Behavior Management
- Philosophy of daycare and policy and procedures.
- Playground policies and procedures
- Responsibilities

Complaint Resolution Procedures

If there are any concerns or complaints regarding your child or the day care program in general, please contact your child's teachers to discuss the issue. If the issue cannot be

resolved completely then contact the centre supervisor. We can only improve on our service if you let us know of any concerns. Our office is always open to communicate with parents about their child's care. Please see Parent Complaint Policy for more detail.

Prohibited Practices

As per the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, no licensee shall permit, with respect to a child receiving child care at a child care centre it operates or at a premises where it oversees the provision of child care,

1. There shall be no corporal punishment of a child by an employee or by another child or group of children;
2. There shall be no physical restraint of a child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting themselves, or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until risk of injury is no longer imminent;
3. There shall be no locking of the exits of the child care centre for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures;
4. There shall be no use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame, or frighten the child or undermine their self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
5. There shall be no depriving a child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding;
6. There shall be no inflicting any bodily harm on children, including making children eat or drink against their will.

The following policies and procedures are attached. If parents/guardians would like to review any of the centre's other policies and procedures, please come to the office and ask to view the Policy and Procedure Manual.

Policies and Procedures attached:

- Waitlist Policy
- Parent Concern Policy
- Program Statement