

Parent Handbook

Dartmouth Day Care Centre



Dartmouth
Day Care Centre

Welcome, we are happy you are here

We would like to welcome you and your child(ren) to the Dartmouth Day Care Centre. The centre was incorporated and opened in January 1974. The centre is governed by a voluntary Board of Directors which meets on a monthly basis. It consists of parents and other citizens interested in our work.

We are Scent Sensitive and Allergy Smart

Our Mission Statement

Our centre is dedicated to provide a high quality inclusive Early Childhood Education program that includes diversity, cultural, respect for community and a holistic framework to support a nurturing environment for all children to reach their full potential.

Anti-Discrimination Policy

Dartmouth Day Care Centre is an equal opportunity employer supporting diverse voices both within and without our organization. As an organization we actively stand against all forms of hate, discrimination and injustice. Dartmouth Day Care Centre is committed to education and change that works to support all persons, beginning with our youngest citizens.

Philosophy Statement

It is the philosophy of Dartmouth Day Care Centre that children are encouraged to learn and grow by providing a foundation of developmentally appropriate experiences where all children can succeed in a safe and nurturing environment. We believe whether play is lively and exuberant or quiet and absorbing, we see the connection between children's play – freely chosen, enjoyable, active and guided by internal motivation rather than external goals – and the learning and social development that helps them to succeed in life. We believe that each child is a unique individual and that all children can learn. We provide inclusive settings that recognize children's varied abilities, interests, needs, and learning styles. Our play-based, child centered program reflects the integration of physical, cognitive, social, emotional, language, self-help and aesthetic areas for the total development of the child. Meaningful play encourages curiosity, discovery and problem solving which allows individual growth and development of a positive self-image. We recognize that parents are the child's first teachers. Children learn best when parents are involved in their educational program. The primary bridge between home and school is the involvement of family and community.

Our Child Care Values

Child Care is available to everyone regardless of ability, race, sex, or religion. We welcome and actively promote inclusive practices and diversity within our setting. Our aim is to make our centre accessible to all families who wish to use them. We work in partnership with parents and other agencies, where appropriate, to support children and families. Parents have the right to pursue work or education with peace of mind, and children have the right to a secure, safe and developmentally appropriate program. Staff will plan for, work with and support all children to meet their needs and take account of any additional needs a child may have. DDC aims to provide an environment that enables children to be happy, healthy and safe. Our goal is to create an atmosphere that celebrates the abilities and uniqueness of all children.

Inclusion Statement

Inclusion comes from the meaning of "to include": to hold, embrace, involve, to count among. Inclusion, at its best, is a model that enriches every aspect of a program, from the experience of the child, to the skills of the teacher, to the harmony and diversity of the day

care community. We believe that all children have strengths and challenges and are fundamentally the same kind of people.

We at Dartmouth Day Care Centre are committed to these statements. We believe in an inclusive, active learning environment that supports the child's uniqueness, dignity, and development. Children with diagnosed or undiagnosed needs are first and foremost children with the right to be included in all aspects of the program and within the community. Diversity in all forms enriches communities to be better and more productive places to Learn, Play and Care. Through using exemplary practices to focus on the children's interest, strengths and needs, we can support the child's development.

We, at Dartmouth Day Care Centre believe partnerships between the child's family, inclusion coordinator, early childhood educators and professional agencies share the vision of providing high quality care and support in a secure, responsive and enjoyable environment. Dartmouth Day Care respects and values input from parents and encourages them to be part of the decision making process for their child. Parents are the primary advocates for their child and we respect their feedback and involvement in all aspects of their child's development while attending Dartmouth Daycare.

Family-centered: We recognize that you know your child best. Our inclusion coordinator will schedule meetings with parents as needed in order to ensure that we are meeting the needs of your family. When required, a routine-based plan will be developed and implemented within the framework of your child's team.

Bias-free: We recognize, respect, and strive to meet the different needs of all families. Your family will make up a unique part of our system. We work with families, outside agencies, and outside groups to meet the needs of your child.

Full participation: All families and children are provided the same opportunities within our centre. An important goal of our staff members is to improve on their present knowledge and to make every effort to utilize their expertise to respond to the needs of each child. Each classroom will be provided with all the information needed to make every child successful in the program. Dartmouth Day Care Centre employs a full-time inclusion coordinator. Our full-time coordinator attends all team meetings, and maintains strong ties with the all team players. Staffs acquire specific competencies to work with diverse children as the need arises. Dartmouth Day Care Centre encourages staff to train beyond the minimum training.

Playing to Learn Curriculum

- Is based on the science of play (supported by the research literature) and our experience with the Nova Scotia Early Learning Curriculum Framework: Capable, Confident and Curious.
- Promotes a clearly defined philosophy and a framework of values concerning play in the lives of children.
- Reflects best practices in play.
- Presents the voices of children, teachers, and others, each with their own perspective on play.
- Contains photographs, diagrams, and examples that offer explanation in visual form as well as text material.
- Explains the role of early learning educators in the lives of children.

- Outlines what early learning educators need to know.
- Highlights what early learning educators need to do.
- Discusses who early learning educators need to be.

Enrollment

DDC encourage parents and their child/children to meet the teachers and take a tour of the centre before starting, as some children can settle in a couple days and others take a little longer to adjust to a new environment. It is important that parents keep the centre informed of any changes to phone, address, emergency contacts, immunizations, and child's state of health. A child is considered enrolled and will be permitted to start in our program once all forms are completed and submitted.

Subsidy: Eligibility

Subsidies are available at a licensed facility that offers full-day care. Eligibility is based on your family's income, finances and social need. You must be eligible in all areas to qualify. Eligibility for child care subsidy **will be reviewed annually** or more often if determined by your caseworker . If you are receiving a subsidy, you are required to notify your caseworker of any changes in your financial circumstances within seven days of the change. If you fail to notify your caseworker, you may lose your subsidy and/or have to repay the subsidy you've already received.

How to Apply

You can apply for Child Care Subsidy using one of the following methods:

1. Contact a Child Care Subsidy Caseworker at one of the office locations listed online at <http://www.ednet.ns.ca/earlyyears/families/childcaresubsidy.shtml>.
2. Download and print an application form (see Forms at <http://www.ednet.ns.ca/earlyyears/families/childcaresubsidy.shtml>) and mail it to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

Applications are reviewed by a Child Care Subsidy Caseworker. You'll have to provide proof of your income (i.e. CRA Income Tax Notice of Assessment and/or a current pay stub) with your application. In some cases, an interview may be scheduled with a caseworker. It is your responsibility to find a child care centre for your child. You will need to let your Child Care Subsidy Caseworker know when your child will be starting and the program's daily fees. If approved for Subsidy, your Caseworker will let you know how much the Department will contribute towards your child care costs. Your child care centre will bill the department directly. Be sure to keep copies of all forms related to your application. More information can be found at the Nova Scotia Education and Early Childhood Development Website (<http://www.ednet.ns.ca/earlyyears/families/childcaresubsidy.shtml>).

Operational Hours

We open at **7:00 a.m.** and close at **5:45 p.m.** Staff will not be responsible for children before 7:00 a.m. All children should be in before **9:30 a.m.** when our structured program begins. If your child will be coming later than 9:30 for any reason, please notify staff in advance.

Ages Served

We enroll children from ages eighteen months to five years of age.

The Day Care Act of Nova Scotia requires that the ratio of children under three will be one staff to six children and over three will be one to eight. Our staff/child ratios adhere to the government regulations with consideration of reducing the children in a group for a better ratio when children requiring extra support are present.

Parent Fees

Full Day	\$39.00(Toddler)
Full Day	\$38.00(Preschooler)

Tuition amounts are done monthly over a 12 month period based on 260 day tuition. Accounts are reconciled the first Friday of each month to “ZERO” or may result in dismissal of your child. Our bookkeeping company will contact you by email to provide you with your tuition amounts for the year.

Payment is only accepted by preauthorized payment. A confidential release of information form will be required to be filled in with your account information. Our bookkeeping company must be notified of any changes to your account.

Parents are responsible for:

- Checking their account and notifying our bookkeeper of any changes
- Informing us of NSF charges applied by your banking institution
- Providing us with payment arrangements in the event that fees are not withdrawn or the account is closed.

You are required to pay for such days as vacation, sickness, absence, statutory holidays, etc. There is no refund for illness and/or holidays.

Any NSF amounts will subject to the banks rates. The Executive Director may consider a cash payment of monthly tuition if the amount cannot be reconciled with the bank. Receipts are issued to the parents at the time of payment.

Withdrawal/Dismissal

A minimum of **two weeks'** notice is required in writing when you are withdrawing or we are dismissing your child from the centre at which time your account balance must be paid in full. Children in a subsidized spot must be in attendance on the last day.

Failure to give this notice will result in a charge of full Per Diem rate for this period. You are responsible to provide notice of the last day to ensure our bookkeeping company is not debiting your account for child care services not utilized. A charge will be applied in the date is not provided.

Arrival and Departure

To ensure the constant safety of the children, all parents must accompany them to their child care classrooms upon arrival. It is strictly forbidden for parents to leave children alone in foyers, hallways, lockers or classrooms. Please inform anyone involved in transporting your child of these procedures.

We ask that each child and parent greet the teacher upon arrival, and say goodbye when leaving.

Absent Children: Parents are asked to call the centre to inform staff in the event that their child will not be in attendance. Please do so prior to 9:30 a.m. when possible.

Arrival Time

Arrival should be punctual (between opening and 9:30 am) for maximum play opportunities for your child. At DDC we consider timely arrival a valuable opportunity for your child to transition from your care to daycare as it provides them with the time to make choices, socialize with others and settle into their day before getting ready for morning activities or outside play time.

Departure Time

If anyone other than a parent or guardian will be picking up your child please inform the centre and ensure the person is on the pick-up list. We will not release your child to anyone else without proper authorization (verbal or written to director). Teachers and the director should know the custodial arrangements as it pertains to your family. ***Photo I.D. is required when parents send an unauthorized person to pick up their child. (i.e. in an emergency or unknown to staff).***

If you are late picking up your child, a \$15 late fee per staff per the first 15 minute period. After the first 15 minutes you will be charged \$5.00 per staff for every 5 minutes. This amount will be charged to your monthly tuition amount.

Steps staff will take in response to a late child:

- After 15 minutes, the teacher will try to contact the parent/guardian.
- After one-half hour, and no response from the late parent, the emergency contact person will be contacted.
- After one hour and no response from the parent or the emergency contact person, DDC will contact Family Children's Services and follow their instruction.

Please Note: This could entail Children's Aid taking the child into protective custody until a parent or guardian can be contacted.

Custody Arrangements

Parents are asked to explain custodial arrangements when enrolling their children in the program. When special circumstances apply such as denial of access to one parent, DDC staff requires written documentation of custody and access schedules issued by the court. When parents are in the process of determining custody in courts, we are unable to deny access to either parent, until we receive court documentation indicating the permanent arrangements.

Drugs/Alcohol

Children will not be released from DDC to accompany a parent or guardian who is under the influence of drugs or alcohol. In such circumstances, DDC staff will call the other parent/guardian, or emergency contact person, and request that he/she come to pick up the child. The police will be contacted if the child is taken from the DDC program despite staff concern.

Communication

Parents are responsible for monitoring the "Parent Information Boards" in the main entrance of the centre and in individual classrooms. Posted in these areas, for your viewing are:

- A copy of the Nova Scotia Day Care Act and Regulations, a copy of the parent handbook, the license for the facility, a copy of the report of the most recent inspection of the facility, a copy of the licensee's behaviour guidance policy, a copy of the current menu, a copy of the daily program plan and routine, a list of the names of the current members of the parent committee, a copy of the most recent minutes of the parent committee, notification of funding provided by the Minister
- Notices regarding special events or other important occurrences can also be found in this area. Individualized notes may often be found in your child's cubby, so please check it daily. Each Friday your child's cubby should be cleaned out.
- DDC believes that parent-teacher communication is important for the creation of a healthy child care environment. **Please make an effort to read any information sent home, journals, emails or the documentation posted on the bulletin board in the class rooms.**
- Emails will be sent with important updates, messages, activities, upcoming events, etc. and any important information from our Board of Directors
- DDC strives to support the parent's involvement. Parent meetings and family social events are held over the course of the year. Information on the topic, time and place will be announced as events are confirmed.

Parent Committee

The parent committee is made up of parents, staff and the director. The committee meets at least 2 times a year to discuss the safety, care and well-being of the children, the status of facility's or agency's license; the programs provided by the licensee; the equipment and materials available to children; staffing patterns and staff qualifications. Parents are given a two week notice regarding the date of the meeting as well as agenda involving the topics being discussed.

Behaviour Management

Child Guidance

The goal of DDC is to develop partnerships with families while providing consistent quality child care. We want children in our care to understand and accept responsibility for their actions. Children must be able to recognize behavior which conflicts with the DDC Character Values of respect, responsibility, caring and honesty. Children will be encouraged to make appropriate choices. For those occasions when children make choices that are not acceptable, a guidance process

has been developed.

Methods for Behavior Management:

- Redirection: guiding a child into acceptable options when engaged in an unacceptable activity.
- Logical and Natural Consequences: staff will ensure children are aware of the results of their actions or choices.
- Limit Setting: boundaries are developed within the classroom for the class as a group and for individual children according to each situation.
- Modeling: demonstration of appropriate ways of interacting
- Providing Choices: appropriate choices are outlined and children are encouraged to make decisions for themselves
- Setting up for Success: planning and preparing the environment
- Emphasizing positive behavior: giving inappropriate behavior less attention
- Positive Reinforcement: use of encouragement

DDC emphasizes the provision of well-planned programs which meet the needs of individual children, thereby generally eliminating most obvious opportunities for inappropriate behavior. DDC teachers regularly incorporate many effective methods of encouraging acceptable behavior by:

- Providing a sufficient number of interesting activities
- Providing an opportunity for the children to make valid choices.
- Setting clear limits on behavior and consistently enforcing classroom rules
- Giving advance warning about transition times so the child will know what happens next.
- Positive reinforcement
- Positive direction to show him/her what they can do.

Under certain circumstances, staff members may be required to use physical contact to guide behavior. An adult touch during a frustrating situation may have a calming effect on the child, thereby extinguishing disruptive behavior.

We do not permit:

- Corporal punishments (i.e. spanking, striking with objects, shoving, or any other aggressive physical contact)
- Harsh, humiliating, belittling or degrading responses of any form – verbal, emotional or physical.
- Leaving a child alone and unsupervised in a room or hallway.
- Withholding food as punishment
- Excluding children from activities as punishment
- Offering food for reward for positive behavior or for completing a task.

In some cases where a child's team (parents, staff, professionals from outside agencies) has determined that food is the most appropriate and natural way to reinforce desired behaviors and support the child's development, then a Routine Based Plan is developed for the child. The RBP would include a plan for replacing and or reducing the use of food as a motivator.

We Emphasize Positive Behaviour

DDC realizes the importance of parents and teachers working together as partners in the child care process, in order to create a consistent and stable environment for children.

Teachers will inform parents of any behavioral concerns. If necessary, a meeting will be scheduled so parents and teachers can share information and form a consistent behavior management plan.

Parent Program Involvement

DDC encourages parents to become involved in our child care program. A contribution of a parent's time and /or talent can greatly enhance our program, and is very much appreciated.

Staff -Parent Relationships

DDC asks that you respect the professional work ethics of our staff and refrain from involving your child's teacher in your family life outside of the child care program (i.e. contractual babysitting, family social events, etc.) At DDC we feel that each and every child and family has equal importance and we seek at all times to communicate this to the children. Outside involvement can often work to undermine this principle in the eyes of the children and we ask for understanding on this issue.

Rest and Nap Period

Rest time is important part of a child's day and development. We at Dartmouth Day Care centre recognize that all children require a rest period or nap for children to emotionally, physically and cognitively recharge to be effective capable confident and curious learners in the early years of development. Sleep is crucial to healthy child development. Evidence states that children ranging in age from 1-3 years typically require 12-14 hours of sleep per day. Children aged 3-5 years typically require 10-12 hours per day. Dartmouth Day Care Educators will discuss the rest period with families upon entrance of their child's program to ensure that each child's needs for rest are being met. The rest period is scheduled at a consistent and natural time during our daily routine. For toddlers and preschoolers, this is typically after lunch. The Rest time area for all children is nurturing and welcoming to meet all children's needs. Children who have difficulty falling asleep and it is identified by their teacher and parents will work together with the family in supporting the child's needs during this time to assist and be comforted by the educators. Ensuring a warm loving relationship is built with the child during this time. This also includes children identified that are non-sleepers and only require a rest period. Children identified at any given time with non-sleeping needs with collaboration as a team with the child, and family will provide a plan of what the child's rest time will be, and what strategies will be emplaced to support the child's wellbeing during rest time.

(Rest period is not to support or reflect staff to ensure lunch breaks are taken. Rest period will follow all day care regulations in ensuring ratio is maintained to support the safety and wellbeing of all children resting or sleeping during rest time).

Health Policies

The promotion of healthy development is fundamental to DDC care. We know this is important to parents of young children, therefore, if your child is showing symptoms of illness please make alternate child care arrangements so as not to expose other children to illness. This will allow your child to rest and recover. In the event that your child becomes ill while in our care you or an emergency contact will be called to pick up your child as soon as

possible. In the event of a potential contagious illness your child will be removed their classroom and kept away from the other children. We ask that your child be kept home until they are symptoms free. We may ask for a doctor's note before readmitting the child to our program. Although some illness is inevitable in group care, DDC staff tries to minimize this by practicing good hygiene, disinfecting toys regularly, and making daily health checks. All children in attendance must be able to participate in all areas of the program, including outdoor play. It is not always possible for us to provide alternative supervision or activities for children unable to participate in all areas of the program.

Our **“Common Childhood Diseases Chart”** has been created by **Nova Scotia Health Promotion and Protection** we ask you to adhere to the return (to child care) dates given if your child develops any of the symptoms/diseases listed.

Fever: is usually a sign of infection. The degree of the fever is not as important as the child's behavior (cranky, fussy, irritable, sleepy, and lethargic). Look for a rash or other signs of illness. If the fever exceeds, 39C or 102F, the child should see his/her physician.

It is necessary that parents develop back up plans for the care of their child in the event of illness.

Your Child cannot attend the Full-time Daycare Program if he/she:

- Has a temperature of 101 degrees Fahrenheit (38.4 degrees Centigrade) or over.
- Has not been fever free for 24 hours.
- Has vomited while at daycare or within the last 24 hours (vomiting is more severe than an infant's "spit up").
- Has diarrhea (abnormally loose, watery bowel movements that are much more frequent than usual). Children will be sent home from the program upon the second incident of diarrhea during the day.
- Has been on a prescribed medication for less than 24 hours for a condition requiring exclusion from the program according to the Communicable Disease Program. Your child must be symptom free and able to cope with all aspects of the program.
- Has a rash that has not been identified by a physician to be determined as not contagious or that seems to be worsening.
- Has a severe cold with fever, sneezing and heavy nasal drainage that affects their mood and ability to participate in the program.

Communicable Diseases

Disease Symptoms Return Date

Disease	Symptoms	Return Date
Colds	Stuffy or runny noses, sneezing, watery eyes.	When the child can actively participate in all parts of the program.
Flu	Sore throats, muscular aches, fever; chills, vomiting and diarrhea can be involved.	When the child can actively Participate in all parts of the program.
Diarrheal Diseases	Abnormal loose stool, cramps; diarrhea can be infectious.	Children should be kept home until diarrhea stops.

Strep	Red and painful throat. fever, swollen neck glands, white patches on tonsils.	48 hours after antibiotic treatment
Impetigo	Spreading sores which can develop golden color crusty area. Little dot-like sores spread around the original sores. Can appear on the face, hands, legs, feet, and buttocks.	48 hours after antibiotic treatment.
Chicken Pox	Very itchy rash starts with pink bumps. Watery discharge.	5-6 days after rash appears or when the chicken pox are all scabbed over.
Pertussis (Whooping Cough)	Intermittent spasms of coughing; leads to choking and/or vomiting causing reddening in the face.	5 days after antibiotic treatment.
Hepatitis	Viral infection of the intestinal tract. Cause fatigue and nausea, flu-like symptoms.	One week after illness appears.
Mumps	Large swelling from the face to neck, jaw and in front of the ears. Often accompanied by cold like symptoms.	9 days after swelling begins
German Measles	Fever, cold-like symptoms followed by a fine rash, swollen glands behind the ears.	5 days after rash appears
Meningitis	Fever, headache, neck pain, or stiffness, vomiting (quick onset). Flu-like symptoms.	When a physician gives a clear medical report.
Red Measles	Fever, cold-like symptoms followed by a bright red rash, from the hairline down, redden eyes, sensitive to light.	5 days after rash appears.

HEAD LICE

Head Lice are tiny, wingless parasitic insect that lives among human hairs and feeds on tiny amounts of blood drawn from the scalp. Lice (the plural of louse) are a very common problem, especially for kids. They're contagious, annoying, and sometimes tough to get rid of. But while they're frustrating to deal with, lice aren't dangerous. Their bites can make a

child's scalp itchy and irritated, and scratching can lead to infection. It's best to treat head lice quickly once they're found because they can spread easily from person to person. At various times throughout the year we can have cases of head lice. For this reason we have set up the following procedures as to how, as an organization work effectively to contain an outbreak of lice. We do checks throughout the year on all the children, to avoid and manage any outbreaks. We are a **LICE FREE CENTRE** for these reasons.

Protocol for Head Lice

- Upon finding a child with nits or live lice parents will be contacted and the child is sent home to be treated with proper medication.
- All soft toys, stuffed toys, dress up clothes, bedding and carpets within the child's room and areas in the building where the child has been for long periods throughout their day are washed and cleaned.
- All children and staff are checked in the child's room as well as in other rooms throughout the centre.
- Any children with long hair will neatly be tied up to help avoid being infested.
- A Health Alert is posted on the main entrance, describing details on lice, listing the number of children affected, and information on treatment for parents and families.
- The child and/ or children who are sent home upon returning the next day are thoroughly checked to see that they are lice free. Each day for a week or more the children throughout the centre are checked upon entering the centre.
- If there are live lice found in the child's hair, the parents are asked to take the child home and retreat them if necessary to ensure they are clean and can return to the program.

Medication

DDC staff are authorized to dispense prescription medication after the necessary forms are completed and signed by parents. It is preferable however that the children receive all medication at home, if at all possible. Prescription medications must be provided in the original container, with the prescription label on it indicating child's name, name of medication, dosage of medication and instruction for storage and administration. A parent/guardian must complete the **DDC Medication Permission Form** provided by the staff. This form must be initialed by staff at time of administering medication and by the parent/guardian at pick up time verifying their knowledge that the medication was given.

Non-Prescription Medication: A doctor's not must be provided giving instructions and permission for DDC staff to administer the medication, etc. with doctor's signature also a permission slip from parent.

(Please Note: Parents are required to bring the medication directly to the teacher. Medication should not remain in the child lockers, or backpack and MUST be removed by the parent)

Anaphylaxis Policy (Nut Free Policy)

DDC has designated its centre as "Allergy Safe"/"Peanut Free" and will not knowingly serve nut products. All DDC staff are aware of children's allergies by the allergy list in the kitchen and classrooms. Parents can meet with the child care staff/inclusion coordinator/cook regarding their child's allergies to discuss action plans regarding food substitutions, menus, etc. Anaphylactic reactions to other substances (for example: eggs) will be dealt with on a case by case basis. As a result, no outside food will be allowed unless planned. In this case

please do not send any food from home. Specific information will be provided to parents/guardians should there be a child with a life threatening allergy at the centre.

Nutrition

Morning /afternoon snacks and hot lunches are provided in our full day child care programs. Our menus are posted on the board, right next to the main entrance. We adhere to Canada's Food Guide; making upgrades when needed. Please insure food being brought into the centre is labeled with the child's name and follows the Food and Nutrition Standards and Food and Beverage Criteria.

Please inform the centre upon intake of any food allergies or diet restrictions your child may have.

Staff and care providers are to respond to children's cues around hunger and provide snacks and meals outside of the regular schedule as required. Staff and care providers will create a relaxing and enjoyable meal environment by planning a routine from play to meal/snack time. Staff and care providers will encourage children to respond to their hunger and feelings of fullness. Children will not be forced to finish foods that they have been served.

If your child has an allergy to food or special dietary concerns, please inform the Executive Director when enrolling your child into the centre. Please fill out the section on your child's health questionnaire as it pertains to your child's situation. There could be a variety of reasons for this, including life threatening food allergies and other medical conditions that require special dietary considerations to be implemented. It is important that staff, the cook and parents demonstrate openness and a non-judgmental approach toward children's dietary requirements to ensure that all children receive the nourishment they need in a supportive environment. All special dietary concerns are posted on the allergy list, which is posted in the kitchen/classrooms. Any special dietary foods are labeled on the serving tray before delivered to the classroom. (Example: soy milk- labeled with child's name in fridge).

Modeling Positive Attitudes towards Food and Nutrition

The types of foods that children choose and the attitudes that they develop towards food and nutrition, are influenced by their peers and the adults in their lives. When adults consistently model healthy eating practices and positive attitudes towards food and nutrition, they directly influence and encourage children to develop positive ideas and attitudes about food and nutrition. Staff and care providers are important role models in regulated child care settings and can influence children's attitudes toward food and nutrition through their own behaviors and actions with food. When working directly with children, staff and care providers model healthy eating practices by eating the same food as the children at snack and meal times.

Emergencies

In the case of a serious accidental injury or illness, we will make an immediate call for an ambulance, and then attempt to contact: (in order)

- The parent/guardian (s)
- The designated emergency contact person

- The child's physician

Please keep us informed on current phone numbers, special emergency numbers and contact persons, custodial arrangements, schedules, and any other pertinent information.

Child Belongings

The centre is not responsible for the loss of personal belongings such as (toys, clothing, etc). It is very helpful if **all of the items** your child brings to the centre are **clearly labeled** with initials or their last name. Please bring an extra set of clothing, clearly labeled to be available at the centre and a blanket or stuffed toy for nap time. Blankets and sheets will be washed every week (more if needed). Remember to dress your child appropriately for both indoor and outdoor activities.

Articles Required

The following articles are to be provided for your child by you:

indoor footwear, rubber soled

complete change of clothing

adequate clothing for outdoor play, for all seasons

diapers if child is not toilet trained

baby wipes (non-scented, alcohol-free)

sun hat (sunglasses)

NOTE: sun screen will be provided by the centre for a small fee or you may supply your own.

The centre is well equipped with interesting and stimulating toys for the children and we asked that toys brought from home be limited to attachment toys (their favorite Teddy that they can't do without) and those brought in for special "show and tell" presentations. It is simply impossible to keep the Centre's toys and equipment separate from personal belongings.

Storm Days

The Centre will remain open if at all possible, with due consideration given to the children and staff's safety in and around the Centre. You are, however, asked to use your own judgment as to road conditions, etc. and whether it is safe to bring little ones out. The answering machine message will be changed at the centre by 6:00 am with updates as to the whether the centre will be open/ closed/delayed opening. Please phone the center before bringing or sending your child to be sure the center is open. The information will also be posted on CBC radio by 6:00 am. You can also check the website for updates: **dartmouthdaycare.ca**

Fire Procedure

Fire Drills are performed on a monthly basis and recorded. When the alarm sounds, the children will be taken out of the building in an orderly fashion to the designated meeting area. All fire drill protocols are in the classrooms by the main door. Head counts will be performed insuring everyone is safe. When it is determined that the building is safe, the children will return to their classrooms and another head count will be performed. In case of emergency you will be contacted to pick up your children and the teachers will stay with

the children until they are picked up. If an emergency dictates we leave the building our “safe zone” is across the street at the church.

Field Trips/Off Site Excursions

When an outing is planned outside the day care vicinity, parents will be notified of the details in advance and will sign a permission form detailing the trip. If you do not wish your child to attend, simply do not sign the slip and they will remain at the centre in another classroom. Trips within the day care vicinity, i.e., Beazley Field will not require a signature as this is considered part of regular day care activities. Children under the age of three will not ride on public transit or go on outings outside of the vicinity of the Centre.

Parent Input

We urge participation of all parents as an essential part of the ongoing care of your child. DDC values the opinions of its consumers. Parent surveys will be distributed on a yearly basis. Children’s progress reports are also completed twice a year (December and July) and parents/guardians may request a parent/teacher interview at any time. Should a parent have any questions, comments or concerns, the centre director is available to address these. Any special circumstances concerning your child in the adjustment stage to the centre will be discussed with you. If you have concerns about the care of your child is receiving, please address this with the Executive Director. If you are not satisfied with the response you receive, please forward your concerns in writing to the Chairperson of the Board of Directors.

Two parent representatives serve as members on the Board of Directors. This represents one third of our board complement. Parents are encouraged to contact the parent rep with suggestions and/or ideas related to any parent activities or special events that may be going on in the day care. The Parent reps will keep the parents informed of activities and other issues relevant to parents through newsletters and memos.

Vacations

During the vacation period, families are required to make a payment regardless of attendance. Payment is required for this period of time. We highly recommend that all children have an adequate break from the Centre each year for his/her well-being. It is required for parents/guardians to notify the executive director of vacation days in advance. Absenteeism that is not reported within three days as either a sick day, absent day or vacation day will be treated as a voluntary dismissal of your child.

Legal Responsibilities

Section 23 of the Children and Family Services Act for Nova Scotia states:

Every person who has information, whether or not it is confidential or privileged, indicating that a child is in need of protective services shall forthwith report that information to an agency.

Under this Act, any child care practitioner who has reasonable grounds to suspect a child may be abused or neglected has a legal obligation to report the matter to the local Children’s

Services Agency. Failure to do so may constitute an offense, punishable by not more than \$5000.00 and/or imprisonment for a period not exceeding one year.

It is the child care practitioner's responsibility to report suspicion or disclosure of abuse. It is not the child care practitioner's responsibility to investigate or "prove" that abuse is taking place before a report is made. A report is not an accusation; it raises the concern and is a request for investigation.

Termination of Child Care Space

DDC recognizes that a child care centre is not always appropriate for all children. Many supports are put into place to create a happy and successful placement for all children. In cases of severe behavior issues, it may be necessary to terminate the childcare space. A decision to terminate a child's space will be made in consultation with parents. It is a priority of DDC that all children are safe program.

Practicum Students and Volunteers

In cooperation with high schools, community colleges and universities in the area, our centre is frequently used as a source of practical experience for students in early childhood education. These students enhance the staffing and permit individualized care and special activities which might otherwise not be possible. These students work under the direct supervision of full time staff at all times.

Court Service Costs

In the event that a written assessment and/or court appearance is required regarding a particular child in our day care, a charge of \$85.00 per hour for the Executive Director and \$50.00 per hour for the staff, plus disbursements, will be submitted for this service.

Cell Phone Policy

We ask that parents refrain from using their cell phones on day care premises. This will ensure a smoother transition upon drop off and pick up of your child. These times often require communication with staff and attention to your child or children who require your full focus.

Smoking Policy

In order to provide a healthy environment for our families and children, smoking is not permitted on our premises, neither in nor around the perimeter of the centre.

Photography Policy

Our program includes documentation of children through photography, and on occasion video or audio recording. All documentation is for use within the facility. Images or video are not permitted for use outside of Dartmouth Day Care Centre, nor outside of the location where the child is enrolled. On occasion staff may request to use photos in displays outside of the facility but are not permitted to do so without first contacting the Executive Director, and not without receiving written permission from the child's parent/guardian.

Sun Safety Policy

Dartmouth Day Care Centre is taking all necessary measures to protect our children and staff from the harmful effects of UV Rays. Sun safe practices will be on going throughout the year with extra precautionary measures during the months of May – September. In an effort to keep families and staff informed, our sun safety policy is available to all parents and staff. Temperatures and UV index will be posted in a clear visible spot each day for reference.

Sun Safety Policy Statement

Dartmouth Day Care Centre will take the necessary precaution to protect the children within the program from the harmful effects of the sun and UV Rays.

Breast Feeding Policy

Our Centre welcomes and encourages mothers to breastfeed anywhere in our facility. Our Centre provides a supportive breastfeeding environment, therefore, if you require a space to breastfeed please let us know.

Income Tax Receipts

Income tax receipts for Child Tax Credits will be issued before the end of February of the following year. It is your responsibility to ensure DDC has your current address. Your income tax receipt will be available at the office or mailed to the last known address. There will be a charge to produce duplicate receipts if yours is lost or we were not informed of an address change. A \$25.00 cost will be levied for a duplicate receipt.

Updated November 2021

