



Calgary P.L.A.Y. Community Child Development Centre

1227 Kensington Close NW, Calgary AB - T2N 3J6

TEL : (403) 283-3232 FAX (403) 283-6221

Email: ed@playdaycare.org

Website: www.playdaycare.org

PARENT HANDBOOK

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1.0 Our Mission Statement

Parents Looking after Youth (P.L.A.Y.) Community Development Centre was established to provide high quality child care for children aged from birth to six (6) years of age. We are a not-for-profit, parent co-operative child care centre that is emotionally and physically rich; and inclusive of all regardless of economic status, gender, ability, race or age. Our goal is to create a standard of excellence in child care, providing programs that meet the diverse needs of the Calgary community. P.L.A.Y. was accredited by Alberta Children's Services in October of 2006 in recognition of this high standard.

2.0 Our History

P.L.A.Y. Community Development Centre was established by parents in 1973 – funded by a local incentive grant – to provide quality care for their children in the Hillhurst-Sunnyside area.

3.0 Our Philosophy

Our philosophy is to provide an environment that is safe, secure and supportive of children's developmental needs. We believe in providing a positive, nurturing environment that will encourage creativity, intellectual curiosity, social interactions, self-help skills, physical activity and emotional development for all children. We provide age-appropriate programming that meets the needs, interests and abilities of all children. We believe all children have the right to attend a quality child care and preschool environment.

We provide integrated services for children with special needs in accordance with what our facility's physical structure and our staff resources will accommodate. We are not able to provide one-on-one care. We believe integration assists in the healthy development of all children. All staff at P.L.A.Y. are committed to promoting a strong community within P.L.A.Y.

4.0 Hours of Operation, Holidays and Closure Dates

The Centre is open from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., on working days from Monday to Friday. However, children in the Infant Room (0-19 months) must be picked up no later than 5:30 p.m. or will be subject to our late fee policy (see section 9.1 for details).

The Centre will be closed for all general and optional statutory holidays (12 days) recognized by the Alberta Government. P.L.A.Y. will also close between Boxing Day and New Year's Day and for three Professional Development (PD) days annually. The Executive Director will propose closure dates, subject to approval by the Board of Directors, and families are informed of those at the beginning of each year.

5.0 The People at P.L.A.Y.

Caregivers

All staff members are certified at the Child Development Assistant level at a minimum; the majority of the staff are certified at the Child Development Supervisor level. At P.L.A.Y., we recognize the link between qualifications of child care workers and the level of quality care provided. Our goal is to create a standard of excellence in child care. All staff are encouraged to continuously upgrade their skills and abilities by attending courses, seminars, workshops, and conferences.

We hire staff who genuinely enjoy working with children and their families. Early childhood educators at P.L.A.Y. maintain current first aid and CPR certification. Furthermore, some staff members have additional educational qualifications and/or speak a second language. At the time of hiring, references and a criminal record check are completed for each prospective staff.

Our child-staff ratios are:

Infants	(0- 12 months)	1:3
Infants	(12 - 19 months)	1:4

Toddlers	(19 months – 33 months)	1:6
Preschoolers	(3 years - 6 years)	1:8

We strive to provide a higher caregiver to child ratio than provincial government standards require, when possible (for example, 1:5 with younger toddlers). This means that we can provide more time with each child.

The parent-run Board of Directors

The P.L.A.Y. Community Child Development Centre Board of Directors consists of parent volunteers who work with the Executive Director to define the purpose, objectives and scope of service consistent with this philosophical viewpoint. The Board develops policies and bylaws and is responsible for the fiscal wellbeing of the Centre.

The **Executive Director** manages the daily operations and day-to-day policies that govern the Centre and coordinates the educational components of the programs. The Floor Supervisor and Educators make up the total regular complement of staff. External instructors, volunteers, practicum students, aides and parents all form an integral part of our program and enhance the children's experience through their various special skills (see more on parents' contributions below, in Section 8.0).

6.0 Safe Work Environment

6.1. Non-Discrimination Policy

Discriminatory or harassing behaviour, including written or spoken comments, overt actions, unwelcome remarks, jokes, innuendoes or taunting about (but not limited to) a person's racial or ethnic background, colour, physical or mental ability, ancestry, place of origin, gender, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, cultural values, age, size, citizenship, marital or family status, economic status or criminal record are unacceptable.

P.L.A.Y. assigns high priority to the on-going development, implementation and review of a non-discrimination policy, which explicitly prohibits discriminatory behaviour in all of its operating procedures.

6.2 Respectful Workplace Policy

P.L.A.Y strives to maintain a respectful workplace, where all employees are treated fairly and with respect, where difference and diversity are acknowledged and valued, communication is open and civil, conflict is addressed early and there is a culture of cooperation, among staff as well as between staff and families.

7.0 Programming

7.1. Programming philosophy

Our early childhood educators plan and facilitate meaningful learning experiences based on sound knowledge of children's development and on daily observation and documentation of the child's interests, needs and abilities. We implement programming that is relevant and meaningful to the children while creating a safe, positive atmosphere for them.

Our philosophy is to provide a predictable daily routine that is still flexible to instil a sense of security with enough flexibility to allow for individual preferences and independent choice. Each day will incorporate a balance of: (a) indoor and outdoor activities, (b) fine motor and gross motor play, (b) quiet and active interactions and activities, (d) large group, small group and individual activities, and (e) child- and teacher-initiated activities.

Inclusive Integrated Child Care: All teachers at P.L.A.Y. work to create a flexible environment where every child is actually included in the programming. Each child in our program is made to feel valued and cared for. Children who require specialized care

and support are able to receive it when needed. All children are able to participate in the same activities and day to day experiences. All children are made to feel included regardless of physical ability, language and cultural background, etc. P.L.A.Y. will work with families to the best of its abilities and recommend resources.

7.2 Accreditation

P.L.A.Y. received its accredited status from Alberta Children's Services in October 2006. Accreditation is a process based on completing a comprehensive self-evaluation and quality enhancement activities, through which the centre was able to promote and meet standards for excellence in child care, in addition to meeting the provincial licensing regulations. Accreditation supports child care programs in their efforts to improve the quality of their services and helps families choose the best care for their children.

Being accredited also allows P.L.A.Y. to apply for additional provincial government funding to support the recruitment and retention of qualified staff, including staff wage top-ups (dependent on the staff member's certification level) and professional development grants.

Every year P.L.A.Y. goes through a yearly evaluation where we check in with the accreditation standards team and submit new plans, program changes and an evaluation of our goals. In the third year, we go through the entire process once again in order to be re-accredited.

7.3 Programming for Children with Special Needs/Inclusive Child Care Policy

P.L.A.Y. is able to receive partial funding for a caregiver to work specifically with children with special needs. The primary caregiver works together with the various community agencies to develop appropriate individual program plans for children with special needs.

All staff and children are involved in our integrated program to ensure that children with special needs are able to participate in the program to the fullest of their abilities. Since that can have an impact on the ratio of Early Childhood Educators to children, such arrangements are at the discretion of the Executive Director. Given the physical limitations of the facility and current training of the staff, some children's needs will not be able to be accommodated at P.L.A.Y.

8.0 Parent Involvement

8.1. Parents' Volunteering

Parents at P.L.A.Y. have the opportunity to directly influence the quality of care their children receive at P.L.A.Y. **It is mandatory that each family at P.L.A.Y.**

volunteer a minimum of 12 hours per year (September 1 to August 31). This volunteer requirement can be fulfilled in a variety of ways, depending on your areas of interest and the needs of the centre, and can be done in a way that best suits your schedule. You can fulfill your parental involvement requirement either at the child care facility or at home, depending on the task to be done.

Our Executive Director would be pleased to discuss this requirement with you during your initial visit to the centre. Suggestions from parents are always encouraged. **Any family that fails to meet their minimum volunteer commitment shall be subject to a fine of \$100 for every hour they do not fulfill, subject to the discretion of the Board of Directors to waive or lower such fine.**

Parents are welcome and encouraged to attend monthly Board of Directors meetings. In fact, if you are interested in becoming an active participant in the affairs of the centre, then you should consider joining the Board. P.L.A.Y.'s success in providing quality child care is deeply rooted in the interest and participation of parents, community volunteers

and sponsors. We rely heavily on parental and community involvement to enable us to carry out the organization's goals and objectives.

Parents are also always welcome to participate in the activities at the centre. You can check with your child's ECE and find a time to come in and read a book, share a story from your culture, talk with the children about your career, or just spend time observing your child. P.L.A.Y. also holds an Annual General Meeting at which one parent from each household must attend. (**Parental attendance is mandatory.**)

8.1.1. Mandatory Casino: Our parent volunteers also run a mandatory casino every 18 months and all families or a representative must participate. For greater certainty, the obligation to participate at our casino is separate from each family's annual volunteer commitment and the hours worked at the casino do not count towards the annual volunteer requirement.

9.0 Parent-Centre Communication

We recognize that the role of the parent is that of primary caregiver, and that the role of our early childhood educators is to provide care that is supportive of and enhancing to the child and family. In providing this service to you, P.L.A.Y. believes that communication is essential. For this reason, we provide many avenues and opportunities for communication and strongly encourage input and feedback regarding our program and your child's place within it.

There are many opportunities for communication at P.L.A.Y. Including: (a) An open door policy – our Executive Director and our educators are open to discussing concerns and hearing suggestions. (b) Special notices, either posted on the board at the centre, or emailed to parents (i.e. about staff changes, special events, etc.). (c) HiMama application. P.L.A.Y. uses HiMama (www.himama.com), a child care app that allows us to communicate with you our families in real time. HiMama allows you to have updates,

photos, centre and staff communications and much more. Only a parent with a child enrolled at the centre can view the reports, but the application also allows you to share updates with family members or friends who are far away.

P.L.A.Y. encourages an open and friendly relationship with each child's family and invites your involvement. We believe that when the family and our ECEs communicate as partners, everyone benefits – especially the child. At P.L.A.Y., we feel that it is vital to a child to get to know all of the centre's staff and Executive Director.

10.0 Fee Payment Policy

Fees are due on the first day of each month via pre-authorized bank withdrawals. These arrangements will be coordinated with the Executive Director prior to your child joining P.L.A.Y. A \$25.00 administration fee will be charged for each instance that there are non-sufficient funds (NSF). If there are two instances of NSF then P.L.A.Y. has the right to ask the parents to pay fees by money-order on the first of each month.

All subsidy applicants are required to pay full fees prior to subsidy approval. If subsidy is granted then your account will be credited.

Written notice of arrears will be given by the third working day of the month. If payment for the month is not received by the fifth working day of that month, then a late fee of \$30.00 will be levied. The parent will then be given a further five days to pay that month's fees, during which time a late penalty of \$10.00/day will apply. Unless prior arrangements are made with the Executive Director, unpaid monthly fees (including any late charges) after 10 working days will result in the Centre terminating its services with your family.

Refunds or adjustments will not be made for time missed (e.g., vacation) or for

statutory holidays. Payment is required for a guaranteed spot in the centre.

Permanent part-time enrollments will pay their full fee for statutory holidays that fall on their regular scheduled day(s). Part-time days will not be exchanged, but additional days may be booked if there is space available. In the latter circumstance, the fees for the additional day(s) are due on the day of attendance. Credits are not issued on absent days. Days booked are considered guaranteed spaces on a month-to-month basis, and payment must be received in advance.

Drop-ins are available at the discretion of the Executive Director. **Payment for the drop-in days is due in full on the day of the drop-in, or at the end of the week for a set of drop-in days.**

Information regarding Alberta Child Welfare Services child care subsidy, including how to apply for it, is available here: humanservices.alberta.ca/child_caresubsidy.

Please note: Fees are set by the Board of Directors and may be adjusted at any time, usually with 30 days notice.

10.1 Late Pick-Up Fee Policy

If you have not picked up your toddler or preschooler by 6:00 p.m., a late fee will be charged as follows: \$1.00 per minute for the first 15 minutes and \$2.00 per minute for the next 15 minutes. We respect our staff and expect staff to complete a full 8 hour day, time spent at the Centre after that takes away from the staff's personal time.

The same structure applies for infants who have not been picked up by 5:30 p.m. Parents who are late will sign a slip acknowledging the time of arrival. The amount owing will be presented to the parent in writing and payment is due within seven (7) days.

A late fee must be paid regardless of the circumstances; however, any late fee charge can be appealed by giving a written request to the Executive Director, who will present it to the Board of Directors for its decision on the matter. Parents at the centre understand that should they be late three or more times in any calendar month, the issue will be brought forth to the Board of Directors. This could result in further disciplinary action such as a penalty, or termination of child care services at P.L.A.Y.

11.0 Nutrition (please also see section 12.3: Allergy Policy)

At P.L.A.Y., we provide a morning snack, lunch and an afternoon snack. Additionally, there is a late snack provided for children who are here after five o'clock. Lunch is only served until noon, unless previous arrangements under special circumstances have been made with the Executive Director or designate. A very significant portion of our budget goes toward the provision of nutritious and well-balanced meals and snacks for the children in our care. Our Executive Director works very closely with the caterer to ensure that children are receiving food that is in accordance with the Canada Food Guide and exceeds government standards.

P.L.A.Y.'s 5-week rotating menu is posted on the Community & P.L.A.Y. Information Board as well as in each room. We believe that children fare much better with well-nourished bodies. P.L.A.Y. provides high quality snacks and meals at appropriate times and in quantities in accordance with the needs of each child. There is always enough for seconds.

The children at P.L.A.Y. are served their meals and snacks in a small group setting. Our morning snack is open concept with children participating if and when they are ready. All children must be seated when eating and drinking. Bottles are not permitted in cribs or on cots.

Lunch is served in the child's small group (infants eat all together). Early childhood educators at P.L.A.Y. participate in meal and snack times. The small group setting is a time used to encourage the children to develop self-help skills and interact socially with their peers. Our caregivers in the infant room focus on the infants' needs through individualized and regular routine feeding schedules. P.L.A.Y. also accommodates the ever-changing dietary requirements of infants. In accordance with the Alberta Child Care Licensing Act, no beverages are provided to infants while they are napping. The menu is modified slightly in the infant room to meet their needs.

Menu items are modified to meet the needs of those children with special dietary requirements. Parents may be charged a food surcharge or may be asked to provide alternatives depending on menu modifications that are necessary. **Any allergies or intolerances and alternative dietary arrangements must be discussed with the Executive Director prior to registration and specifically described in the medical forms (Appendix D).**

In order to protect our children with severe food allergies, no outside foods should be brought into the centre (e.g., snacks, remains of breakfast, treats, etc.).

P.L.A.Y. is a NUT FREE environment (this includes all nuts, not limited to peanuts).

11.1 Birthdays

We celebrate each child's birthday at P.L.A.Y. at the end of each month. Due to food allergy concerns, we ask that you do not bring treats to the Centre on your child's birthday. Monthly birthday cupcakes will be prepared by the caterer for all children celebrating a birthday that month-the children and will be served during the afternoon snack time.

12.0 Health Care and Illness Policy

In order to safeguard the health of all of the children at P.L.A.Y., our philosophy is that children and staff have the right to participate and attend a child care centre that promotes and provides a healthy environment. All children at P.L.A.Y. go outdoors for gross motor activity twice a day (weather permitting). If your child is not well enough for outdoor play they should be kept at home. Children are required to be kept at home if they have any symptoms of a fever over 38C, diarrhea, a new or unexplained cough/rash or vomiting.

12.1 Exclusion of Sick Children and Communicable Diseases Policy

If it has been determined by staff that a child shows any symptoms as outlined below, then the parent(s) will be notified and asked to collect the child. An ill or contagious child will be isolated from the other children by a primary caregiver until the parent(s) arrives. Parents will have 30 minutes to collect their child from the time they are notified that their child is ill/unwell, this is only to include travel time. If the parents fail to answer the phone or return emails, the emergency contact will be notified and asked to come and collect the child.

At the Executive Director's discretion, a child returning to the Centre may be required to have a doctor's certificate if the child appears to have had a highly contagious condition. The decision to ask a parent to pick up his/her child is left to the discretion of the Executive Director. In the event that the Executive Director is not present, the floor supervisor or the Centre designate shall decide.

Illnesses and symptoms:

Cold like symptoms (including but not limited to cough, congestion or a runny nose).

If your child has any of these symptoms, it should be discussed between you, the parent/guardian, and our early childhood educator, as to whether or not the child should attend P.L.A.Y. that day. (The Executive Director will be notified of all decisions.) These symptoms are signs the child could be contagious.

Vomiting

If your child at P.L.A.Y. vomits, parents/guardians or emergency contacts will be notified immediately and asked to remove the child from the centre. The parents should not bring the child again until they have been symptom-free for at least 24 hours.

Diarrhea

Diarrhea is a repeated bowel movement that has an unusual odour or appearance, and can be discoloured or watery. When the 2nd incident of diarrhea occurs at the centre, parents/guardians will be contacted and asked to remove the child immediately from P.L.A.Y. The child may not return until the bowel movements have returned to normal, at least 24 hours after the first occurrence.

Fever

Children are required to be kept at home if they have a fever over 38C.

Chicken Pox

To minimize the spread and prevent other children at P.L.A.Y. from being exposed, it is our policy that parents keep children home for 5 days after the appearance of the first spot or until the last spot has crusted over.

Conjunctivitis/Pink eye

Common symptoms associated with pink eye include: the surrounding white of the eye is red/pink, eyes could be scratchy, itchy and hurting. The child will often rub their eyes and there could be a yellow discharge. Pink eye is highly contagious, we ask that your child be kept home for at least 24 hours after starting the first dose of the prescribed antibiotic treatment.

Rash

Any new or unidentified rash should be seen and diagnosed by a doctor, and stated in writing that the child may return to P.L.A.Y.

12.2 Medication Policy

Medication (both prescription and over-the-counter) will be administered to your child only when a proper medication form has been completed. Parents are asked to inform your child's early childhood educator of the medication and complete a P.L.A.Y. medication form noting the medication, dosage and the precise times, and if the medication needs to be stored in the fridge or room temperature.

The staff will note each time that the medication was administered. Medications must be returned to parents/guardians according to the Individual Medication Record finish date.

For prescriptions, the medication must be in its original container and the child's name must be clearly visible on the container/label. The prescription label must be on the container. The label must have the prescribing doctor's name, the date of issue, instructions for dosage and frequency. Only full-time staff members with valid First Aid Certificates will be responsible for administering medication to the children in their care, two full-time staff members must administer medication. Medication, including medicated creams, epipens and inhalers, will be stored in a designated locked medication box.

Parents are responsible for ensuring all medication they provide has a valid expiration date. All medication that needs to be refrigerated is kept in locked medication box located in the kitchen. Forms for epipens and allergies must be completed and filled out every 6 months by parents.

Please inform your child's early childhood educator when your child is taking

medication at home that may affect him/her during the day.

12.3 Allergy Policy

At P.L.A.Y., we take allergies very seriously. We make every attempt to ensure the safety of all children at P.L.A.Y., and pay special attention to those with moderate to severe food and environmental allergies. Our caterer checks ingredients on every item prepared in their kitchens, and the P.L.A.Y. kitchen is checked by the Executive Director or Floor Supervisor if unsure. All unlabelled products will not served and should not be found in the kitchen area. Soy or Rice Milk options are provided for children with milk intolerances, and special care is taken in the preparation of all of our meals. Our child care centre makes every attempt to limit food allergens, and all parents are asked to comply with this rule by not bringing **any** snack items, birthday or holiday treats or unfinished breakfast items to the Centre.

A published (5 week rotational) menu is posted in the rooms, and main parent board. In the event a parent of an allergic child feels uncomfortable with the meal options, they will be asked to provide an acceptable alternative while working with our Executive Director or Designate for their child.

All meals are served with the children seated together at the tables, and care will be taken to ensure the children are not sharing food; however, P.L.A.Y. is not responsible for any child consuming food that has not been specifically prepared for him or her.

For new children joining P.L.A.Y. with moderate allergies, a list of food items and reactions must be provided to P.L.A.Y. in writing from the parents for the child's file. Any treatments or doctor prescriptions must also be provided.

For children with severe or life threatening allergies, P.L.A.Y. requires a list of all allergies, along with a signed doctor's certificate and recommended treatment for each

separate allergy for the child's file. Children requiring Epipen treatment must provide this to P.L.A.Y. to be kept in proximity to the child at all times. All staff have been trained in the use of the Epipen, and it will be taken with the child's supervisor from location to location within the center, as well as being a part of the First Aid kit that accompanies the children on field trips. It is the parent's responsibility to replace an Epipen prior to its expiration date.

Although P.L.A.Y. makes every attempt to limit food allergens, we cannot guarantee an environment free of all possible reactions. P.L.A.Y. Community Development Centre and its staff cannot be held responsible for any allergic reactions suffered by children in its care -- whether at the facility or outside the facility -- caused by contact with any allergen.

Parents with children who suffer from allergies are asked to sign a consent form to be kept in their child's file acknowledging P.L.A.Y.'s Allergy Policy and accepting the terms and limitations of liability within. (A consent form may be found in Appendix C of this Handbook.)

12.4 Accidents and Incidents

In the event that your child is involved in a minor incident at P.L.A.Y. (e.g., a bump or bite), an Incident Report form will be completed. The form will have the details of the accident/incident and any follow-up treatment, and will be signed by the Early Childhood Educator and the Executive Director. At the time of pickup, the parent will be required to sign the form, which will then be filed at the Centre in the child's office file. These forms are to remain at P.L.A.Y, and may not be taken home, we are happy to provide you with a photocopy.

If the child requires medical attention, the Early Childhood Educator will inform the Executive Director, who will call an ambulance and then notify the parent of the

hospital for which the ambulance is destined. If the Executive Director or Assistant Executive Director is not available, an ECE will call for an ambulance and contact the parent with the hospital information. Any costs that are incurred are the responsibility of the parent.

13.0 Withdrawal and Dismissal from the Centre

One full months' notice must be given to the Executive Director on the last day of the month, for example: If you wish to withdraw for the month of July, then notice must be given on the last day of May, therefore making the child's last month June. This applies for any child, part-time or full-time, being withdrawn temporarily or permanently from the program. Parents who do not give one months' notice are financially responsible for the subsequent month's fees after withdrawal of their child. Again, as mentioned in the Fee Payment Policy section, payment must be received in order to guarantee a spot.

P.L.A.Y. Community Development Centre reserves the right to withdraw any child if the Executive Director, in conjunction with the Chair of the Board of Directors deems it to be in the best interest of the centre, the child or the family. Notice of termination will be given in writing, signed by the Executive Director and the Chair of the Board. Fees for any unused portion of care will be refunded and included with the notice of termination.

14.0 Non-Compliant Behaviour Policy

P.L.A.Y. Community Development Centre understands that occasional aggressive behaviour including biting is a normal part of early childhood development. However, P.L.A.Y. believes that in order to provide an environment that is safe and secure for all children at the daycare, P.L.A.Y. must set limits for persistent non compliant behaviour. The following policy will apply to all children enrolled at PLAY:

(1) Incident Reports: An incident report is to be completed for any situation where a child is injured. Parents of the children involved will be given a copy of the Report and will be asked to read and sign the report upon receipt. The signed copy of the report will be placed on the file for each child involved.

(2) Meeting with Executive Director: For either persistent non-compliant behaviour, or on the occurrence of one serious incident, the Executive Director will meet with the parents or guardians of the child to develop a written behaviour plan suitable to both the Executive Director and the parents.

(3) Plan Implementation: The Executive Director will use reasonable efforts to implement the plan. To achieve this, the Executive Director may request the assistance of any daycare staff member or members.

(4) Pickup of Child: Following any incidence of serious non-compliant behaviour (including but not limited to fighting where a child is injured, or biting where skin is broken), the Executive Director may telephone a child's parent or guardian to require that a child be immediately removed from the daycare for the day.

(5) Notice of Permanent Removal: If a non-compliant behaviour is not resolved through implementation of a written behaviour plan, the parents may be required to make alternative child care arrangements. PLAY will attempt to provide parents with a minimum of one month's notice of such a removal.

(6) Immediate Removal Without Notice: Notwithstanding anything previously stated in this policy, if at any time the child's behaviour causes the Executive Director and the Chair of the Board of Directors to be concerned for the safety or well being of the children or staff, P.L.A.Y. may require a child to be immediately and permanently removed from the daycare.

15.0 Child Guidance Policy

Guiding children's behaviour sets the tone and is an integral part of any quality child care program; this is achieved through intervention and prevention. When we intervene, the inappropriate behaviour is dealt with before it has occurred or during, and by being vigilant we can try to prevent inappropriate behaviour before it has a chance to occur. Our child guidance is reviewed annually.

All ECEs, management and P.L.A.Y. volunteers will model appropriate social behaviour for children at all times by staying calm in difficult situations and setting a positive example by treating all children with consideration and respect and respecting each and every child's unique qualities. ECEs will celebrate the differences in each child and will understand and respect that all children have different needs and abilities.

Teachers will meet the emotional, physical and mental needs of children by providing an aesthetically pleasing room design/flow and appropriate transitions between each planned activity. The programming at P.L.A.Y. will demonstrate each teachers understanding and knowledge of a rich environment that is calm and her/his understanding of their group. Discipline methods that involve food deprivation, mental anguish, emotional or physical punishment are unacceptable at P.L.A.Y..

At the time of hiring, all staff read and sign that they have read, understand and agree with the written P.L.A.Y. Child Guidance Policy.

15.1 Guidance for Infants

ECEs in the Infant Room model the type of interactions that they want the children to develop. Infants are at the beginning stages of social development and P.L.A.Y. believes that modelling appropriate behaviours, redirection (i.e., engaging the infant to focus on another activity) and providing alternatives and extras of the favourite toys all

contribute in assisting infants to develop positive and pro-social behaviours. Verbal redirection is phrased positively by trying to avoid the use of “No” and “Don’t.”

The environment in our Infant Room is set up to encourage and facilitate safe exploration and play. ECEs are consistent with the limits they set and focus primarily on safety and respect for each other. Infants are encouraged in their accomplishments and helped to feel increasingly competent. Our infant ECEs have extensive knowledge and experience working with infants, enjoy caring for them immensely and are warm and responsive to their needs.

15.2 Guidance for Toddlers and Preschoolers

Discipline or any form of punishment, threats, yelling or abuse of any kind by management, ECEs, external instructors, volunteers or practicum student at the centre will not be tolerated at P.L.A.Y. Our ECE’s recognize that consistent testing of limits and expressions of opposition to adults is part of developing a healthy sense of self as a separate, autonomous individual. ECEs only say “No” when the prohibition relates to children’s safety. ECEs use positively worded directions (e.g., “I cannot let you climb over the tables, because you can hurt yourself. You can climb outside on the climber.”) and not just restrictions (e.g., “Don’t climb on the table.”). Teachers model the type of interactions with others that they want children to develop. ECEs recognize that most of the time when children are aggressive, hurting, or biting other children, it is because they lack the skills/wording to cope with frustrating situations such as wanting another child’s toy.

15.3 Using Guidance and Setting Limits

Behaviour we see and want to recur in children is praised: “I feel so happy inside that everyone used their safe walking feet on the stairs.” We as ECEs must set clear limits and guidelines that are child friendly, easily understand and concise. A concise statement is short and clear ex: “Please put your shoes on, it’s time to go”. Teachers are

to avoid the use of negative statements,” Don’t yell”, instead we focus on the positive and say, “Inside voices please”. Limits and guidelines are explained logically using adult-centered ideas, “If you cannot sit by the train table without touching it, you will have to find another seat”.

Children should know that teachers are readily available to help, but children are encouraged to solve their own situations/problems. Incidents that occur at P.L.A.Y. between children are dealt with immediately and in a positive manner. Teachers give children choices where there are choices to be given ex: “Would you rather use the soccer ball or play with the wiffle bat?”

At P.L.A.Y. we do not promote the use of or use time out, instead, we focus on redirection, the child is able to break away from the situation and focus his/her attention on a quiet activity. Children are praised for their accomplishments and helped to feel increasingly competent, in control of themselves and their self-esteem is intact. The environment of the playroom will be constantly scrutinized to eliminate potential hazards and problems. Teachers prepare the playroom environment to allow for predictability and repetition, as well as for events that can be expected and anticipated.

16.0 Transitioning of children to the next age group

A child’s transition to the next age group room can be an exciting yet a scary time. The child will be moving away from cherished friends, beloved ECEs and an environment that is known and comfortable. Therefore, at P.L.A.Y., we handle the child’s transition gradually and with sensitivity. A few weeks prior to the child’s expected move, the child is integrated slowly by having short daily visits with the new group provided that ratio allows for this. Slowly the visits get longer (as long as the child seems comfortable with the situation). No child will be forced into an upsetting situation.

Parents are invited to spend as much time as they would like in their new child’s room

to meet the teachers and familiarize themselves with the new surroundings and routines. A transition conference will be set up if requested by the parent so that the parent may have the opportunity to talk about changes that they may expect in the new room. All children enrolled in the Centre will be given first priority to move to the next chronological age group. Selection of priority will be based on date of birth, length of time required to save a space, and an evaluation of the child's developmental needs. Decisions will be made by the Executive Director, in consultation with the child's primary ECE and the P.L.A.Y. team and in consultation with the parent.

In special circumstances, a group of the oldest children in either the Infant Room (babies aged 17-19 months) or the Toddler Room (children aged 19-36 months) may be placed in a transitional group within the setting of their next level. The Infant Group will remain at the same staff ratio (1 to 4) as appropriate for their age level, but will engage in activities alongside and, when appropriate, with the children in the toddler room. The older toddlers will be at a 1:6 ratio and engaged in the toddler program located in the preschool room.

17.0 Attendance and Security

Parents are required to sign their child in and out each day, and to sign out in full at the end of each week. Signing in and out is mandated by licensing and ensures that P.L.A.Y. has an accurate record of attendance in each room.

In order to help your child with the transition from home to child care, we ask that upon arrival, parents come into their child's playroom and spend a few minutes talking to the ECE. **Parents are required to notify the Centre by 9:00 a.m. if their child will not be attending that day. PLAY also requires advanced notification if your child will be away on vacation.**

Prior written authorization/notification to the Executive Director and room staff is

required if someone other than the parent/guardian is picking up the child. **Without this authorization, the child will not be released. Note that alternates will be required to provide identification.**

All interactions at P.L.A.Y. will be between children, staff, parents and authorized alternates only. Any community volunteer, aide or practicum student will be required to undergo the same security and interview procedures as regular staff in order to participate in the program.

17.1 Card Key Entrance

The entrance to the facility is locked from the outside unless there is a function going on. Upon enrolment of their child, parents or guardians must purchase a card key that unlocks the front door. The cost of the initial card key, additional and replacement card keys is \$25.00 per key.

18.0 Procedure and Policy for Children at P.L.A.Y. after 6:30 p.m.

In accordance with licensing regulations, if a child is remaining at the Centre after 6:30 p.m., the following procedures will be followed:

1. The ECE will attempt to contact all contacts listed on the child's emergency record;
2. The Executive Director, floor supervisor or designate will be contacted;
3. Either the Executive Director or Floor Supervisor will return to P.L.A.Y. and call Calgary and Area Child and Family Services who will come and remove the child from P.L.A.Y. (Child Intervention Services Intake Line number is: (403) 297-2995.)

19.0 Procedure for Suspected or Known Child Abuse

Cases of suspected or known child abuse will be documented and reported as required by law. All records shall be kept in the strictest confidence.

20.0 Neighbourhood Walks & Field Trips

Trips to the Safeway on 10th St., the shops on Kensington Rd., Riley Park, CBC Park, and the grass area on the south side of the Bow River between the 10th St. footbridge and the heliport do not require a parental permission slip. All other destinations will be considered field trips and require approval first by the Executive Director and then by the parents.

20.1 Neighborhood Walks

The following safety precautions are to be taken:

1. Ratios must be maintained and should be verified if a child joins late.
2. A sign should be posted on the room door or whiteboard outlining the route taken and/or destination, management is to be verbally informed before children and teachers leave the building.
3. Emergency contact cards of each child are to be taken with the group whenever the children are out of the Centre (i.e. in the church gym, in the Centre's playground or in the neighbourhood).
4. Staff must count the children before exiting the room, again before leaving the building, upon arrival at the destination and before returning to the Centre and upon arrival at the Centre. Frequent counts should take place at alternate times throughout the walk.
5. Depending on the size and age of the toddler children, they are to be "roped up" for all walks. Exceptions may be made for those children holding the hand of a teacher. The teacher should be attached to the rope as well.

6. Babies should be taken outside daily in strollers, weather permitting. Babies that walk should be removed from the strollers and allowed to run around in the fresh air for short periods in a safe environment.
7. ECEs are to position themselves appropriately among the children, with one staff at the front, one at the back, and the remainder interspersed among the children.
8. If the children are visiting a busy park, yellow P.L.A.Y. shirts are to be worn by each child so that they can be easily identified.
9. When on walks, no more than 2 groups should walk together; toddler room, 10-12 children maximum; preschool room 16-18 children maximum.
10. Safety rules should be reviewed with children on an ongoing basis (i.e. destination, crossing streets, talking to strangers, partners, rope).

20.2 Field Trips

The following additional safety procedures must be carried out for field trips:

1. ECEs will obtain approval from the Executive Director and post a permission slip for the parents prior to the trip. Parents **MUST** sign allowing consent for their child to participate in the outing.
2. A minimum of two staff are required on all field trips. Parents may be approached to volunteer. Parents will have to read all required information and sign a consent form saying they have read and understood all P.L.A.Y. field trip policies and are attending as a volunteer.

3. Ratio for a field trip that requires public transportation should be no more than three children per adult.
4. Teachers should be familiar with the destination, as well as the safety and appropriateness of its facilities.

21.0 Clothing and other belongings

At P.L.A.Y., we ask that children come prepared to go outside at least twice a day for fresh air and play. Therefore, to ensure that your child can join the fun and have a comfortable day, please bring weather-appropriate clothing. A list of what your child needs can be found at the back of the handbook.

Clothing worn by your child should be suitable for play and be easily laundered, as it will likely get dirty! As the children are encouraged to dress and undress themselves, clothing that is easy to remove is appreciated.

Year round, please bring indoor/outdoor footwear, children may not wear flip flops or crocs, (slippers do not comply with fire regulations). Please label all personal belongings with your child's initials. Although the caregivers attempt to keep track of all items of clothing, P.L.A.Y. is not responsible for lost articles. A lost and found box is available for misplaced belongings.

We ask that children do not bring toys from home. This will prevent competition and disappointment. Exceptions will be made for a "security item" or when staff plan for a special occasion (e.g., a teddy bear picnic or show-and-tell). Please see the Executive Director if you have questions regarding the exceptions.

22.0 Records Requirements

Children's Records

The following information will be required prior to a child's enrollment, records will be kept in the office.

Records obtained for children's files are as follows:

- Completed Enrollment Form (Name, Birthday, Home Address & Phone Number, Parent/Guardian Names, And Emergency Contact Person).
- Health Care Number
- Child Profile - for Infants
- Emergency Card
- Behaviour Policy Agreement
- Photo Consent Forms
- Allergy Forms
- A letter stating if a child is vaccinated or not (this will help to avoid any mishaps, and let us inform parents whose children have not been vaccinated of a serious outbreak).

Portable Records

Each room has portable records that contain emergency contact information for each child enrolled at PLAY that include the following:

- Child's name, D.O.B., Home address
- Parent/Guardian (name, home address, telephone number)
- Emergency Contact person (name, home address, telephone number)
- Medical information (doctors name, phone number, Alberta Health Care #, allergies if any).

23.0 Information changes

Please notify the Executive Director promptly **in writing** of any changes in address, telephone numbers, health information, emergency contacts, or pick-up persons. It is a licensing requirement that the children's information be kept current at all times.

Emergency contact forms are updated yearly.

24.0 Emergency Procedures

In the event of a fire or other incident that requires evacuation of the building, the children will be removed according to our emergency procedure. They will be taken outside to St. John Reception Centre of the Calgary Catholic School District, located at 15 12th Street NW. All parents will be notified and asked to pick up their children. The children will be supervised at St. John's by our staff until all children are picked up. St. John's will be used throughout the entire year in case of an emergency.

A fire drill is conducted each month (weather permitting), in compliance with Child Care Licensing regulations. This ensures that we are all prepared in the event of an emergency.

In cases of **medical** emergency, the Executive Director shall make all reasonable attempts to contact the parent or guardian. If neither the parent/guardian nor the emergency contact can be reached, P.L.A.Y. shall make necessary decisions to ensure prompt and proper medical care for the child should this be needed. Any resulting expenses will be borne solely by the parent of the child.

Appendix A: Parent Agreement

Parents, please read the Handbook in detail. Feel free to discuss any concerns or questions regarding the implementation of any of our policies with the Executive Director. Please sign the following registration form indicating that you have read and understood the policies outlined in the Handbook. At enrolment time, you will be invited to discuss the policies herein to ensure that they are understood.

Parent Agreement

(Please sign this agreement and remit it to the office.)

I have read and understand the PLAY Community Development Centre Parent Handbook and I am in agreement with the outlined policies and procedures.

Parent Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix B: Parent Consent for Photo Use

Please return the completed form to the office to be kept in your child's file.

Photo Use Consent Form

I am the parent/guardian of _____, a minor born

.

I grant PLAY Community Development permission to make use of this child's photograph for the following stated purposes (please check all that apply):

Internal publications and promotional items including posters, newsletter, bulletin boards (i.e., this is for in-house use of photographs only).

External publications and promotional items including the PLAY website, WinePLAY, posters, pamphlets.

OR

I refuse permission for any use of this child's photograph for any of the stated purposes.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date Signed

Appendix C: PLAY Allergy Policy Parent Consent (pursuant to section 12.3 Allergy Policy)



Section 10.2 PLAY Allergy Policy
Parent Consent Form

I have read the Allergy Policy of PLAY Community Development Centre. I accept that **PLAY Community Development Centre and its staff cannot be held responsible for any allergic reactions suffered by children in its care -- whether at the facility or outside the facility -- caused by contact with any allergen.** I agree to accept the allergy-related risks associated with enrolment of my child in PLAY.

Parent Name _____ Child's Name _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix D: Doctor's Certificate for Child Allergies and Treatments (pursuant to section 12.3 Allergy Policy)



Doctor's Certificate
Child Allergies and Treatments

This note is to certify that _____ (child's name) has known allergies to

the following

substances _____

_____.

If he/she should come into contact with any of these substances, the following
treatment(s) is/are

recommended: _____

_____.

The specific symptoms displayed by this/these allergic reaction(s) is/are: _____

Parent's name:

Doctor's name:

Parent's signature:

Doctor's signature:

Date: