



WHISTLER CHILDREN'S CENTRE SOCIETY

Parent Handbook

Whistler Children's Centre Society
7146 Nesters Road Whistler, BC V0N 1B7
T 604-932-1119 F 604-932-6490

director@whistlerchildren.com www.whistlerchildren.com

WELCOME

Welcome to the Whistler Children's Centre Society (WCC). We hope your whole family will enjoy the Centre and the friends you will make here. This handbook has been written to describe our programs, goals, policies and the myriad of practical details that go into making each school day as happy and successful as possible. Please review this handbook and keep it for reference, as it will answer many of your questions.

Upon registration of your child into a program at the Centre, you should have received the following information:

- Society Annual Membership Form
- Child Emergency/Consent Card
- Child Developmental Profile
- Health and Registration Form
- Fee Payment Options Form

If you did not receive any of these forms, please let us know. All of these documents need to be returned to the Director, prior to your child's first day of attendance.

We look forward to having you become a part of our family.

GENERAL OPERATING POLICY

All programs at WCC are licensed by the Ministry of Health, and are in compliance with the Health & Safety Regulations outlined in the Community Care Facilities Act. We offer full-day programs for children between the ages of three months to five years.

WCC is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. All programs will be CLOSED on all statutory holidays as well as a day observed for Christmas Eve and Boxing Day. WCC is closed at 3:00 pm on New Year's Eve. You will receive a calendar at the end of this package with closure dates, please keep it somewhere handy.

HISTORY

The initiative to create space to provide non-profit child care programs came from a group of Whistler residents who needed good, consistent and developmentally appropriate care for their children. These parents formed the Whistler Children's Centre Society in 1983; a non-profit Society chartered the Provincial Societies Act.

Late in 1985, community fundraising and volunteer labor established the facility in which the Whistler Children Centre has operated. The Resort Municipality of Whistler has made the land available for non-commercial day care services through the crown lease with the Province of British Columbia.

Throughout 1990 and early 1991, the Society established a plan which would see the construction of the

Whistler Children's Centre designed to provide a broader range of child care services and programs for families in Whistler. In addition to an extensive community fundraising campaign, financial support was received from Vancouver Foundation, W.M. Young Foundation, Resort Municipality of Whistler, GO B.C. and the business sector. The 5,000 square foot Children's Centre was constructed during the summer of 1991, and opened for service September 9th, 1991.

PHILOSOPHY

We believe that every child has a special style and personality which makes them a unique individual. Our approach to children focuses on respecting and nurturing the uniqueness of each child and helping them to reach their potential – physically, intellectually, socially and emotionally.

To ensure that all children feel safe, loved and cared for, the staff has created a supportive, warm and nurturing environment. In addition, we strive to maintain a stimulating atmosphere to help encourage children's curiosity and desire to learn through play.

Rules and expectations are regularly reinforced to allow each child to gain a clear understanding of the program limitations. A carefully planned program will assist the child in gaining independence, confidence, responsibility and respect for themselves and others.

We offer a consistent daily routine, involving balance of vigorous and quiet activities which aid in fostering each child's intellectual, emotional, physical and social development.

In order to meet the goals set for the program, we believe it is vital to establish a caring and trusting relationship with each child and their family.

MISSION

It is our mission to offer quality programs in a licensed early childhood education setting; we are committed to providing a safe, trusting and respectful learning environment for children, families, staff and communities.

- As a service organization, it is important that we demonstrate excellent customer care. As a service organization, our contact with our clients is very high, and the impact of poor client care is significant.
- We will be professional and respectful in relationships with one another, leaving personal issues outside the classroom. We will not participate in side talk which encourages distrust.
- We recognize the importance of Early Childhood Education and appreciate the work of one another.
- We will understand and value diversity in others, and be tolerant of those differences.
- We will work together with families to create a sense of partnership.
- We will strive to work as a team and value each person for the position they hold, whether it is in the classroom or the administration, and the importance of their role and the skills they bring to the team.
- We will respect the policies that have been put in place and be responsible for following those policies and be accountable for our own behavior and actions.

VISION

To have a solid reputation as the best, most innovative children's centre in the corridor, one that communities, families and staff take pride in.

SUSTAINABILITY

The Whistler Children's Centre takes steps to reduce its environmental footprint in the office and the classrooms.

LICENSED PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

All programs are licensed by the Ministry of Health. Programs are available for children between the ages of Three Months and Grade One entry.

DANDELIONS

Age: Licensed for children ages 3-36 months
No. of Children: 12
Teacher/ Child Ratio: 1 teacher / 4 children
Months of Operation: Year Round
Program Days: Monday - Friday

SPROUTS

Age: Licensed for children ages 3-36 months
No: of Children: 12
Teacher/Child Ratio: 1 teacher / 4 children
Months of Operation: Year Round
Program Days: Monday - Friday

PERIWINKLES

Age: Licensed for children ages 30 months – Grade 1 Entry
No. of Children: 25
Teacher/Child Ratio: 1 teacher / 8 children
Months of Operation: Year Round
Program Days: Monday - Friday

MARMOTS

Age: Licensed for children ages 30 months – Grade 1 Entry
No. of Children: 25
Teacher/Child Ratio: 1 teacher / 8 children
Months of Operation: Year Round
Program Days: Monday to Friday

"OPEN-DOOR" POLICY

WCC supports an open-door communication policy. Parents/caregivers are welcome to drop in, observe and participate in the programs at any time. If you would like to consult with your child's teacher, please let us know ahead of time so that we can give you undivided attention.

Parents/caregivers may expect:

- ongoing communication with staff concerning their child's progress and program activities.
- relevant parent education opportunities to help them understand their child's development and the program we offer.
- information about community services.

Staff welcomes feedback from parents on any aspect of the program. Parents/caregivers concerned with the care of their child or any incidents in the preschool or daycare setting, are urged to speak with their child's educator.

OUR TEACHERS

Our Early Childhood Educators, also trained in First Aid, are dedicated individuals with varying educational backgrounds, approved by the Provincial Child Care Licensing Board. All teachers are hired based on educational requirements, positive references, related experience and criminal records review.

The teachers educational backgrounds combined with their varied personal experiences will ensure a stimulating and well-rounded, developmentally appropriate curriculum for the children. Many of our Head Teachers have completed the Lead teacher training as High/Scope curriculum specialists.

GUIDANCE POLICY

At the Whistler Children's Centre we believe that children are unique individuals whose behavior and development are affected by their culture, their environment and their experiences.

We also believe that communication between parents, children, and caregivers are vital links in helping to guide children toward a happy and healthy co-existence in the centre.

Guidance is an integral part of the early childhood experience. Guidance and discipline varies for each child. Children differ in their activity level, attention span, and sensitivity. We acknowledge these differences, set reasonable expectations, and use appropriate guidance. Our goal is to assist children in their development in the areas of confidence, self control, and an awareness and sensitivity to their own needs as well as the needs of others. Discipline needs to be a tool for positive growth rather than punishment.

As Early Childhood Educators, we strive to nurture and encourage children and create an atmosphere of warmth and comfort while allowing a child their independence.

We guide children through the programs with positive language and reminders. We use clear, short sentences as well as non-verbal cues. We ensure each child is given sufficient time to complete tasks, fulfill a request, or follow directions. Whenever possible and appropriate, we give children choices. Choices allow the children to learn responsibility for his/her behavior as well as foster confidence.

In a situation where a child is unable to cope, he/she is removed and redirected to another activity. This is not punishment, but rather a change from the situation until he/she is able to rejoin.

At the Whistler Children's Centre no child enrolled will ever be:

1. subjected to shoving, hitting, shaking, spanking or any other form of corporal punishment
2. subjected to harsh, belittling, or degrading treatment. Whether verbal, emotional, or physical, that would humiliate the child or undermine the child's self respect
3. as a form of punishment, confined, physically restrained or kept without adult supervision, apart from other children, and
4. as a form of punishment, deprived meals, snacks, rest or necessary use of a toilet.

GUIDANCE AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Every child shall be treated with respect and given recognition and praise for his or her strengths. The physical and emotional well-being of each child shall be of paramount importance. Latitude shall be given to each child to develop his or her own interests independently.

Guidance strategies are designed for prevention. We believe in setting clear and reasonable limits, in a positive way, to ensure the safety of each child, protection of their rights, the rights of others and the environment. These limits will tell the child what to do rather than what not to do, focusing on the behaviour and not on the child. This environment fosters each child's self-esteem, preserves each child's integrity and self-confidence.

A carefully planned program will assist the child in gaining independence, confidence, responsibility, and respect for themselves and for others. Rules and expectations are regularly reinforced to allow each child to gain a clear understanding of the program's limitations. The program activities and materials are developmentally appropriate to allow children to meet challenges successfully and learn positive ways of interacting with one another.

Should conflict with materials or other children arise, this is an opportunity to instill conflict resolution or problem-solving skills. Preschool aged children are not too young to develop the skills of conflict resolution. A High/Scope Press Release from September 28, 2004 looks at how High/Scope has developed a conflict resolution approach designed for young children, aged 18 months to six years.

This approach is based on six simple mediation steps that teachers can use with children during emotionally charged conflict situations. The steps are:

Approach calmly, stopping any hurtful actions

Acknowledge children's feelings

Gather information

Restate the problem

Ask for ideas for solutions to the problem and choose one together

Be prepared to give follow-up support

These problem-solving steps have been successfully used by teachers and caregivers in preschool, and Infant and Toddler programs. According to High/Scope Early Childhood Consultant Betsy Evans, who developed these steps, they are effective with a wide range of children from varying family backgrounds.

The steps in conflict resolution with young children are not all that different from steps used by the adults to resolve dispute in labour relations, law, and education. Evans says, "We took what we knew about early childhood learning and integrated that with the practical steps that are widely used by the adult mediators and negotiators," she explains. "The result is like a box of must-have tools—a set of strategies applicable to a wide range of trying situations faced by teachers and parents." Evans believes that as adults we often underestimate the capacity of young children to find solutions to their own problems. "Young children are capable of quick, honest expressions of feeling, and with our support they can often come up with simple, creative solutions to problems", says Evans.

Using the six mediation steps helps turn problems into opportunities. The process of resolving conflict helps children build problem-solving and social skills that they will be able to rely on throughout their lives.

The six steps are used differently depending on the age and developmental levels of the children. Preschoolers in conflict are often able to describe what the problem is. With toddlers, the adult may have to observe what is going on and provide much of the language describing both the problem and the solution.

Reasons for teaching children these skills are broad. "While many of our children are not at risk for violent behaviours, they are at risk for not reaching their full potentials as caring friends, loving spouses, supportive parents, and cooperative work colleagues", says Evans.

Early childhood programs not only help prevent the spread of violent behaviours among children and youth but also encourage the development of essential social abilities that allow children to grow as productive, independent members of our society. We encourage you to discuss with the teachers any concerns that you might have about our guidance of the children or any other aspect of the program. It is important that we work closely together.

PARENT/TEACHER COMMUNICATION AND INVOLVEMENT

Parent involvement and communication is important in all of our programs. Each program issues a parent newsletter at the beginning of each month. The newsletter is full of information regarding your child's program, and other useful and interesting articles. It is the parents responsibility to read this newsletter and be aware of class outings, special theme days etc.

The teachers in your child's program will observe your child throughout the year to assess their development, physically, emotionally, socially, cognitively, creatively and language skills. Most communication between parents and teachers will take place, informally, during the arrival and departure period. These discussions are brief yet significant.

Successful communication, between families and teachers, links the child's two worlds - home and child care setting - and allows everyone to make the transition with a minimum of difficulty. Your ideas, suggestions and any other contributions to our programs are welcome.

Parents can also become involved through their attendance and participation at monthly Board of Directors Meetings. Information is shared and decisions are made regarding the operational policies of both campuses at these meetings. Board meetings are held the fourth Tuesday of every month at 6:00 p.m. in the Marmots room.

In addition, we offer support services for children who may require additional support within their program to ensure that their days are as successful as possible. Support services may include consultation with a Speech and Language Pathologist, resource support, or staffing support to assist children throughout their day. If you have any concerns regarding your child's development, you may discuss this with the Director of Child Care Services to learn more about the Supported Child Care Program.

SUPPORTED CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Inclusive child care is child care that includes every child, regardless of ability. It is child care where every child is welcome, and where every child belongs. Some children need extra support to take part in everyday activities. A child may need this extra support due to a physical challenge, such as a sight or hearing impairment, or to other challenges, such as a delay in developing speech, language, motor or intellectual skills.

Inclusive child care means that all families have the same child-care choices. To make sure our early childhood setting is ready to include a child who needs extra support, we may have to make some adjustments such as adding a seating device to enable to child to sit independently, rearranging the room to accommodate a wheelchair, or incorporating some simple sign language into songs and other activities.

Supported Child Development helps make those adjustments possible. Supported Child Development is a way of making sure children who need extra support are able to participate in "typical" community early childhood settings.

WCC is an inclusive early childhood facility, and will offer Supported Child Development Services. If your child requires extra support, please meet with the Executive Director to discuss your needs and determine whether the teachers will be able to support your child appropriately. If a referral has not already been made to the family, and Centre staff believes your child would benefit from Supported Child Development Program, a referral will be discussed with you.

Under Supported Child Development, you as the parent/caregiver will be actively involved in all aspects of your child's care. You will help decide what training, equipment and staffing that our Centre will need to support your child. And you will help determine which professional services - including speech or physical therapy or nursing care - your child will receive while attending preschool or daycare. Should you wish to learn more about the Supported Child Development, you can arrange to meet with the Executive Director.

PHYSICAL CARE POLICIES

The purpose of our physical care policies is to provide as high a level of physical health and well being of the children attending our Centre, as reasonably possible. We do ask for your full cooperation with the following:

Dressing and Toileting: Children entering the Centre do not need to be toilet trained. As part of our philosophy of inclusion and equal opportunities, we support children developing at different ages and stages. However, should your child not be toilet trained, please ensure that you provide the Centre with plenty of diapers or pull-ups. While your child is at the Centre, you can expect their teachers to:

- a. encourage individual responsibility to dressing and toileting. Assistance and support will be given to children to develop these skills;
- b. encourage the development of healthy personal habits by modeling good personal hygiene with particular attention to proper hand-washing techniques.

As part of our philosophy, we value each child and respect and support his or her individual developmental needs. Within our curriculum, we begin to emphasize independence. Teachers support the development of self-help skills with each child, through appropriate expectations for dressing, feeding, washing etc.

In order to provide a healthy environment for all children in our care, we do require children who are not fully potty trained to be in training pants (pull-ups) or diapers. As part of our role as caregivers, we will ensure that your child has regular bathroom routines to promote potty training.

When your child is able to stay dry in-between routines, we will encourage the beginning of a potty training program. If your child is already in the process of training, please discuss this with your child's caregiver. We will request that they remain in training pants (pull-ups) or diapers until they are able to stay dry in-between bathroom routines. At that time, we will encourage your child to begin to use underpants, and continue to support their use of the bathroom. The regular visits to the bathroom should reduce the likelihood of "accidents," however; we realize that they do happen. Be sure to send extra clothes for your child.

If you are interested in potty training and would like to develop a program for your child to support their growth in this area, we would be pleased to assist you. Let the staff in your child's program know and we will help design a program that would suit you and your child. In addition, we have several articles about toilet training that you may find helpful or interesting. We would be happy to make a copy for you, just let us know.

Nap Time: All children in our programs are required to have quiet time - a time to relax and to reflect on the day's activities, a time not to have to interact. In group care, nap-time/quiet-time is an important necessity in the children's routine. The children are at school for a long period and require time to re-group and to relax their muscles and their minds. Children may sleep or simply lay quietly on their beds with a book or other quiet activity.

We appreciate the fact that some children outgrow naps, but play can be hard work and a quiet period gives them a chance to relax before the afternoon program. Infants will rest/nap as their individual routine dictates.

Bedding and cribs are cleaned on a regular basis and your child will have their own individual bedding. Quiet/rest times will depend on the age of the child.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Good health and safety practices are at the heart of quality programs for young children. Young children are especially vulnerable to infectious diseases and injuries. Coughs, colds, and other infections spread more easily in a group setting. At both of our Centres, we have a special responsibility to keep illness from spreading from one child to the other children and to the teachers.

A key to preventing illness in a child care or preschool program is to form a trusting working relationship with parents, and the sharing of information about their child's health and illnesses. This is why the Centre requires you to share with the staff any illnesses your child may have prior to enrolment, and throughout the school year. This allows the staff to take any necessary precautions in addition to advising you whether your child may or may not be able to attend child care at any given time.

The tables, chairs, toys and equipment are disinfected frequently throughout the day as a preventative measure to the spread of communicable diseases.

You are the best judge of your child's health and we trust you will not bring a sick child to the Centre. Please remember that if your child cannot participate in **ALL ASPECTS** of the regular daily program, they should remain at home.

The following criteria will be considered in determining if your child must go home:

- any complaints of unexplained or undiagnosed pain;
- an acute cold with fever, severe runny nose and eyes, cough and sore throat;
- fever of 100.4F / 38.0C or more;
- diarrhea or vomiting;
- known or suspected communicable disease.

Please be aware that the use of fever suppressant medication such as Tempera or Tylenol simply masks a high fever. An infant or toddler who requires fever medication to keep his/her temperature below 100°F is too ill to cope with the group setting of daycare. Teachers cannot administer such medication.

If your child registers a fever over 100.4°F at home or daycare, he/she must remain away from the Centre until the temperature has stayed below 100°F (37.7C) without fever medication **for at least 24 hours**.

We also ask that if your child has diarrhea that you keep him/her away from the Centre until he/she has at least one normal bowel movement. Should your child develop diarrhea at the daycare you will be contacted and asked to take the child home. If your child has been vomiting, we ask that your child remain away for at least 24 hours after the last bout of sickness. Again, should your child develop this in their program, you will be contacted and asked to take your child home.

If your child has had an infectious disease or is exhibiting any of the symptoms outlined in above, the Centre staff may request that your child be examined by a Doctor and receive medical clearance before re-entering the program.

The Centre requires you to inform the facility within 24 hours of a diagnosis of a contagious disease, i.e. head lice, pink-eye, chicken pox.... We recognize that the above requirements may seem very strict and we know it is often difficult to make alternative care arrangements on short notice. When everyone adheres to these policies, we can minimize the opportunities for cross-infections and recurring bouts of illness. In the meantime, staff will also be working to maintain high hygiene standards through careful hand washing at diapering and feeding times and by regular disinfecting of toys and equipment.

MEDICATION

ONLY GIVEN WITH YOUR WRITTEN CONSENT AND ONLY THOSE PRESCRIBED BY A DOCTOR CAN BE

ADMINISTERED BY STAFF.

WE WILL NOT ADMINISTER MEDICATION UNLESS WE HAVE OUR SIGNED CONSENT FORM STATING THE CORRECT DOSAGE, TIME TO BE GIVEN, NAME OF MEDICATION AND ANY ADDITIONAL FACTS.

MEDICINE MUST BE IN THE ORIGINAL CONTAINER - FOR YOUR CHILD'S SAFETY, AND OTHERS.

DO NOT PUT ANY MEDICATIONS INTO YOUR CHILD'S BOTTLES OR LUNCH BOXES; MEDICATION MUST BE GIVEN DIRECTLY TO YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER.

ALL MEDICATION IS KEPT IN A LOCKED BAG.

Staff will check expiry dates, maintain written record of the time, dosage given, and provide a signature of the staff member involved in administering the medication.

You must administer non-prescription medication unless authorized by the child's physician.

Please notify staff of any medications being given to your child outside of daycare hours. The teachers will then know when to monitor for a possible recurrence e.g. fever. If your child must be taken for emergency treatment and you cannot be contacted, this information will also be of critical importance.

Care of a Sick Child and Notification of Parents: Caring for sick children is unavoidable in early childhood settings and it is important to be able to provide this care.

Should your child become ill while at the Centre, the staff will ensure that he/she is in a quiet location, comfortable and closely supervised by a staff member. Teachers will notify you immediately and explain your child's illness. If a fever, vomiting, diarrhea or other infectious disease is the cause of his/her illness, you will be asked to pick your child up as soon as possible.

In the event that you cannot be reached, the staff will contact an authorized person from your child's emergency card. If the emergency contacts are unavailable, and your child requires medical attention, the senior staff or the Director of Child Care Services will take your child to the medical clinic.

Please ensure that teachers are aware of the whereabouts of you or your emergency contacts at all times. If your child becomes ill, it is a requirement of the Provincial Child Care Facilities Licensing Board that we contact you immediately so that you can make alternate care arrangements or that we can advise you to meet a staff at the emergency clinic should we feel your child needs urgent medical attention.

We do recommend that if your child is on antibiotics or has been sent home sick from daycare, that he/she remain home for at least 24 hours before returning to the hustle and bustle of their program. In the case of contagious diseases, i.e. pinkeye, the child may not return until 24 hours after starting medication. Insufficient recuperation time can leave a child with very low immunity levels and increases his/her susceptibility to secondary infections.

Hygiene/Tooth-brushing: Good hygiene results from observing routine cleanliness practices for both children and staff, and regularly disinfecting the facilities. We will promote dental care with the children and encourage all children to participate in the tooth brushing program. Toothbrush holders are located in each program's washroom to store each individual child's toothbrush properly. Please provide a toothbrush for your child to keep at the Centre.

Infections can be spread through the sharing of personal items. The centre's policy prohibits the sharing of combs, hairbrushes, toothbrushes, clothing, bedding, or towels and will label these items with the owner's name.

REPORTING SUSPICIONS OF CHILD ABUSE

This is something that we hope will not be necessary, but we are all required by law to report suspected or

disclosed child abuse. When we do, we are not permitted to contact the parent unless specifically directed to do so by the Ministry of Children & Family Development/ Ministry of Human Resources. It is not our responsibility to determine if abuse has happened; it is the responsibility of the Ministry to investigate and decide if abuse has occurred. These procedures are designed to protect the child.

ENROLLMENT & TRANSFERS INTO PROGRAMS

Priority for registration will be given to:

1. Children currently attending a program and who are transferring to the next program.
2. Siblings of children already in a program.
3. Subject to #1, 2, children are accepted on a first-come, first-serve basis, according to the waiting list.

Requests regarding the transfer from one program to another should be made in writing to the Director. 'Requests for Change of Days' forms are available in the Administration Office. Or, email director@whistlerchildren.com with your request.

CHANGE DAYS OR WITHDRAW CHILD FROM PROGRAM

Parents will complete a "Withdrawal of Child Care Services" form, available in the Admin Office or online. One month's written notice from the 1st of the month prior is mandatory when your child is to be withdrawn from their program or their enrollment is to be changed (adding or dropping days).

CALCULATION OF FEES

Fees are based on the assumption that the average month has four weeks of childcare days (i.e., if a child is enrolled full-time, five days per week, we assume the child will receive at least 20 days of care in any given month (5 days/week x 4 weeks).

In the event that a child is attending part-time, 2-4 days per week, the same assumption applies. Based on a four week month, a child attending 2, 3 or 4 days per week, will receive 8, 12, or 16 days of care, respectively.

We make this assumption to create allowances for statutory holidays or other Centre closures as there are several months throughout the year in which a child actually attends 4.5 weeks, but has only paid for 4:

For example, a child attending full-time, 5 days per week, may actually attend 23 days, but has only paid for 20. This also occurs for children attending 2, 3 and 4 days per week, where they actually receive more days than what is allowed for in the fee structure.

Centre will be closed on all Statutory Holidays, Weekends and 2 additional days around Christmas.

New Year's Day (Jan), Family Day (Feb), Good Friday (Apr), Victoria Day (May), Canada Day (July), BC Day (Aug), Labour Day (Sept), Thanksgiving (Oct), Remembrance Day (Nov), Christmas Eve (Dec), Christmas Day (Dec), Boxing Day (Dec)

PAYMENT OF FEES

Fees are due by 1st of every month

A \$15 Late Fee will be charged to accounts

Vacation or illness **do not** constitute a fee reduction

Drop-In Fees are due same day as the Drop-In

METHODS OF PAYMENT

CAFT (Customer Authorized Fund Transfer)

On-line banking

Post-dated cheque

Cash

Timely payment of fees is essential to the operation of the Centre. In accordance with your parent agreement, if your account remains unpaid over several weeks we will suspend your childcare space until the balance is paid.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES

Annual Membership Fees (\$60) will be posted to your account each June 1st. This Membership entitles you to be a voting member of the Whistler Children's Centre Society, and helps defray the cost of maintenance and insurance.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Subsidy Applications for financial assistance with child care fees are available in our administration office. The BC Ministry has widened their umbrella of eligibility so you may want to take a closer look at this option to help with your monthly fees. <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-young-children/child-care/financial-assistance-for-child-care>

TAX RECEIPTS

Issued in late February each year for prior year's income tax purposes. Receipts are only mailed if requested.

TERMINATION OF SERVICES

When a conflict arises, staff will make every attempt to work with the family to resolve the issue to the mutual satisfaction of all parties, provided the arrangement does not compromise the mission and values of the WCC, put staff, the children or other participants at risk, or diminish the value of the WCC experience for other participants.

All situations are dealt with on an individual basis, taking into account the specific needs and circumstances of the family. After working with the family and making every attempt to resolve the situation, the Executive Director, may come to the decision that it is not appropriate for the child to continue involvement in the Whistler Children's Centre.

The following are some situations where this would be the case.

Behavioural Concerns

The WCC is not equipped to deal effectively and appropriately with a child whose behaviour requires ongoing significant intervention (i.e. persistent unprovoked physical violence, persistent bullying, verbal harassment of peers or staff or continual unauthorized departure from the centre). The Teachers in consultation with the Manager will make every attempt to link the family and child to the appropriate services.

Unresolved Custody

Issues If a family's custody issues result in continuous conflicts at the centre (i.e. non-custodial parent continually attempting to pick the child up at a time not specified on the court order), and places the child, staff and other children at risk, then the family will be asked to make alternate care arrangements.

Philosophical Differences

Occasionally, the needs and opinions of a family do not fit with the principles, policies and procedures of the WCC. The Executive Director will try to promote discussion to come to some agreeable terms with the family. If this is not possible, it is in the best interests of the family to enroll the child in a program that is more in line with their needs and beliefs. The WCC reserves the right to ask the family to find a more suitable child care arrangement.

Inappropriate Conduct

A family member harasses, threatens or commits a violent act toward a staff person, child or other family involved in the child care program.

Late Pick-Up Issues and Fees

The centre is unable to satisfactorily resolve problems of continual late pick up with a family. Non-Payment of Fees where required, staff will work with the families to develop alternate payment plans. Default on fees will result in termination of services.

ORIENTATION

When your child starts please allow 3 - 4 days for gradual entry. This allows the child enough time to become comfortable with the staff, as well as become accustomed to leaving you. A gradual entry will ensure a happy adjustment to their new environment.

When you register your child and your child is accepted into one of the programs, the Head Teacher will contact you to set up several gradual entry visits, at your convenience. The gradual entry may be shorter or longer, depending on how well your child adjusts and adapts to their new environment.

Children transferring to and from other programs will gradually enter their new programs during their enrollment.

Families are always welcome to stay with their child during the first few visits to the Centre.

SIGNING YOUR CHILD IN AND OUT – A MANDATORY LEGAL REQUIREMENT

It is very important that you sign your child's name on the SIGN IN/OUT sheet every day. Let teachers know that your child has arrived or write comments concerning your child on the SIGN IN sheet.

It is equally important to sign your child out every day by marking the time of departure and your initials. Please let us know that you are leaving with your child. Only those people authorized by you are allowed to pick up your child. Any change in your authorization must be made known to staff and noted on the Emergency Consent Card. Once signed out, your child is your responsibility.

If a person arrives to pick-up your child that is not authorized on your child's E-card, or on the sign in/out sheet, you will be notified so that we may receive verbal consent. In addition, please inform any persons picking up your child that they will be required to show picture identification.

LATE DROP OFF OR ABSENT CHILDREN

If your child is going to be late or absent, please telephone and let the staff know.

Arrivals in all programs after 9:30 a.m. are discouraged unless pre-arrangements have been made. Late drop-off can sometimes make the transition into the classroom difficult for children and it may interfere with your child receiving maximum benefits from the program. In addition, late arrivals may make planning of field trips and other group activities difficult for staff members and the other children in the program.

Arrival and departure times should be kept as consistent as possible - licensing requires that a child's day does not exceed ten hours.

Please be aware that if the staff on duty at pick up suspect that a parent or designate is under the influence of alcohol, they will approach the situation in the following manner:

Offer to call a relative or friend to pick up the parent and child.

Offer to call a cab.

Inform the parent that if he/she chooses to drive the car with or without the child, the staff will notify the police immediately.

LATE PICK-UP OF CHILDREN

WCC closes at 5:30p.m. It is imperative that children be picked up on time. Those who are late picking up their children will receive one written warning. Please be aware that second and subsequent late pick-ups will result in a late charge of \$10.00 for the first 15 minutes or portion thereof and \$1.00 per minute after that. Failure to pay your late charge within one week will result in losing your space until payment is made. Please be sure your watch is set with our clock.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Due to a child's illness, service interruptions, or unforeseen circumstances out of the Centre's control, parents will be contacted and asked to pick up their child(ren) immediately.

TRAFFIC FLOW FOR ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES

Please be careful and watch for small children! Traffic flow at WCC is one way in & one way out:

At WCC - enter in the driveway closest to Lorimer Rd and leave via the exit closest to the Dandelion's building.

It is imperative that car engines be turned off while in the parking lot and emergency brakes applied. Children are not to be left unattended in your vehicle during pick up and/or drop off times. Thank you for your cooperation.

WCC is a smoke-free environment inside and outside. Please extinguish your cigarette in your car ashtray, not our parking lots.

CLOTHING & PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Please send your child to the Centre in comfortable, washable play clothes that are clearly labeled with our child's name. Messy indoor and outdoor play activities are always a part of your child's curriculum. To promote your child's independence, we suggest clothing that is easily managed by your child.

The following articles of clothing must be provided for all children and remain either at the Centre or in their backpacks:

A complete change of clothes; socks, under-wear, pants, shirt and slippers or soft, comfortable indoor shoes.

Boots and "muddy buddies" (rain gear); mittens, hats and snowsuits are required during the wet and snowy fall and winter months.

Bathing suit, towel, shorts during the summer months.

PLEASE LABEL ALL ARTICLES OF CLOTHING (initials are fine too!), everything from socks and under-wear to lunch kits and thermoses'. The Centre and staff are NOT responsible for lost articles but will certainly do their best to help your child keep track of their belongings. (We have an ongoing fundraising program called "Lovable Labels" that you may want to look into).

In the event that your child should need to borrow an item of clothing from the Centre, we would appreciate it being laundered and promptly returned.

Each child has a specially marked "cubby" for jackets, extra clothes, nap blankets and most treasured art projects. Please check your child's cubby each day to take home items that need not remain at school. Some programs also have 'mail' slots.

TREASURES & POSSESSIONS

Toys from home are the child's link between home and school. Children may want and need the security of something of their own in a school situation. Children are welcome to bring security items that may help them relax during rest time, blankets and/or cuddlies.

We try to encourage children to bring other items on special Show-n-Tell days, rather than every day. It has been our experience that toys from home often get mistreated or broken by other children, leaving children upset, angry or sad.

Play guns, weapons and other toys that encourage aggressive play are never welcome in our classrooms. We are trying to build cooperation and concern for one another in our Centre; these items promote

aggression, competition, and hostile feelings. Please leave them at home!

BIRTHDAYS & OTHER IMPORTANT CELEBRATIONS

Your child's birthday is an important and special day. The staff of your child's program will discuss your child's birthday with you a few days in advance. We welcome you to attend the Centre, either at snack time or at lunch time, when the staff will be celebrating the birthday.

If you would like to bring in a cake or muffins for the class, let your child's teachers know ahead of time, otherwise they will prepare something special.

The Centre also celebrates the following holidays: Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, and Father's Day.

We would also like to celebrate other holidays that may be important to your child. If your family celebrates another holiday that is an important part of your culture, we would love to incorporate it into your child's program.

We believe in providing a multicultural environment in which children can learn from each other. When you enroll your child, please notify the staff about other important days in your child's life.

FIELD TRIPS

Staff may plan spontaneous walks or hikes around the Centre property.

All field trips are well supervised.

Staff will notify parents of an upcoming class outing that will require parent volunteers. A sign-up sheet would be posted in your program, that would outline the trip, ratio requirements, and any items that your child may need, i.e., a bathing suit.

THE VALUE OF PLAYING GAMES

Spontaneous play relaxes us and focuses our attention, so that we can experience our own creativity. In the same way as children engage in the reverie of spontaneous play, we-adults- can rediscover the joy and importance of play and creativity. (And the bond this creates with our children.)

In an article entitled, "Let's Play with Our Children", Walter F. Drew discusses the value of play and the growth in all areas of development that children experience through play:

"Play develops curiosity and self-determination.

Play builds knowledge of social relationships and ourselves.

Play builds self-esteem and a sense of personal power.

Play enables us to focus and develops our power of concentration.

Play builds the foundation for success and personal competence.

Play teaches us to value differences.

Play is the heart of rejuvenation...

This last sentence seems to sum up the value of play so clearly. Imagine routines without games. Care givers use games to circumvent or smooth out many confrontations with children. For example, playfully sing the jingle, "Buckle up for safety, buckle up!" as you put the seat belt on your child, or pretend a facecloth is a choo choo train as it wipes across a dirty face after snack.

"Let's play with our children! Let's take the time to relax and play for our own well-being! Through creative play, everyone learns in his or her own way-exploring, thinking, discovering. We do not have to know all the answers or be certain of what needs to be done next. In play, we acknowledge our willingness to be equal, to not know, to learn with our children. By playing as adults-by ourselves or in collaboration with others-we learn again the value of play and creative energy in children." -Walter F. Drew

NUTRITION

Nutrition and Lunches: You can expect your teachers to model healthy attitudes towards food, nutrition, and healthy lifestyles. We ask that you support this by sending balanced lunches, excluding empty foods such as candy, candy-like foods, chips, or foods containing high amounts of sugar. Please ensure all food items are labeled and easily identifiable.

Children who eat a high sugar diet are generally less able to concentrate, engage successfully in teacher-led activities, or rest comfortably during quiet times of the day. Please support your child's early education and avoid sending candy, chocolate, or other high sugar foods to daycare, as they interfere with their growth and development in the preschool or daycare classroom.

High sugar foods include; fruit-roll ups, some granola bars, and fruit snacks.

If you need suggestions for healthy lunches and snacks, ask one of your child's teachers to assist you. They would be happy to offer suggestions for fun snacks that are low in sugar.

When sending fruit, please prepare it at home in the manner in which your child prefers to eat it. For example, if your child eats apples peeled and cut, then please send them already prepared. With as many as 25 lunches to prepare each day, staff does not have time to make soup or noodles in the kitchen. However, if these foods are prepared ahead of time in a container, staff will be able to heat it up in the microwave.

We are a peanut free facility.

Healthy lunches directly influence a child's ability to concentrate, and to feel content and secure throughout their day.

HELLOS & GOODBYES: What do the children think?

As many of you already know, children often experience separation anxiety in the morning when you bring them into the daycare program. Some children may even experience anxious feelings without outwardly displaying any clinging or emotional behaviours.

To help your child cope better with separation, be sure to give them a big hug or kiss goodbye in the morning. It's always important to say "goodbye" and tell your child you will see him or her at the end of the day.

At the end of the day, remember that a hug would brighten their day. (Both you and your child may be exhausted from a hard day at work; you both could use a hug!)

One article suggests that each day after work and school, you could develop a play ritual, 15 minutes of one on one with your child at home. Rituals/routines give your child time with you that are consistent and fun to look forward to at the end of their day. Play would be a little therapy for both of you and it would strengthen that bond between you and your child.

If you or your child experience separation anxiety, don't hesitate to ask your teacher for additional reading materials and strategies that may help the both of you get through this difficult time.

Tips for Easing Goodbyes

Some children can't wait to try a new adventure, meet new friends, or stay at a new care setting. Other kids, however, become anxious and even fearful of separating from a parent. What to do? Here are some tips to make separations go more smoothly.

Talk with your child--even a young one--about what the new arrangement will be in advance, and have your child talk about what it might be like. Answer any questions your child might have. Be sure to explain that the separation is only for a time, but that you will always return. If you set a time, be sure to stick to it.

Make arrangements to stay with a child for a while for the first few days at a day care center, care setting, or school. Your child will be comforted knowing that you are part of the adjustment to the new routine.

Let your child bring a favorite toy, stuffed animal, or blanket for comfort. Some children also like having a family picture to reference during the day. Do be sure to find out in advance whether items from home are allowed.

Be sure to talk about your child's emotions with the caregiver or teacher. If possible, have your child meet the adult who will be caring for your child in advance of the first day of the new setting. Let your child know that this adult will take care of them in your absence.

Tell your child that you will stay for a certain period of time, and then will leave. Then, stick with the plan. Believe the caregiver who says the child will calm down once the parent is gone. This is true in almost every situation, and the child most always is fine within minutes after a parent's departure. Caregivers and teachers report that parents who stay past the transition period often cause more disruption and confusion than reassurance with a child.

If possible, watch outside the room and see for yourself how quickly your child adjusts. This is often very reassuring for the parent.

Reunite with your child in a positive way at the end of each day, and don't be in such a rush that you don't look at artwork or hear about special activities. Your child wants to tell you about his/her day, and a way to keep separation sadness at a minimum is to make happy connections when you get back together.

While rare, there are times when a child simply does not adjust to a new care situation. If your child seems hysterical day after day and is not taking to a setting after a couple of weeks or so, it may be that you will need to consider another option. Before making another change, however, visit with the director or teacher and see if there are additional measures that can be taken to make the adjustment. In the end, parents know what is best for their child.

DONATIONS AND FUNDRAISING

As a non-profit society the Centre is reliant on donations and fundraising to sustain the high quality of programming while keeping costs affordable. Please see our website for a list of ongoing fundraisers and annual fundraisers. <http://whistlerchildren.com/fundraising>

For more information on how you can help, please contact the Administration office at 932-1119. The Centre is a registered charity and is able to issue tax receipts for cash donations.



Sarah McSeveney Scholarship Fund Makes Annual Grants to Promote Early Childhood Education in Memory of Local Teacher.

In 2006, thanks to generous donations from friends and relatives of Sarah McSeveney; the Whistler Children's Centre (WCC); families served by the Centre; and the community at large, the Sarah McSeveney Fund was created in memory of former Whistler Children's Centre Teacher, Sarah McSeveney, a former Squamish resident who died suddenly in a tragic car crash in October 2005 at the age of 31.

Sarah touched the lives of many families in the four years that she worked with the WCC and in particular, the three years as Head Teacher in the Daisies Infant Program. Sarah was a lifelong learner, fervent advocate for high quality early childhood education and had a thirst for knowledge. A scholarship fund seemed to be an appropriate and lasting tribute to what Sarah represented in the center and the community.

The first grants from the Sarah McSeveney Scholarship Fund were announced on June 03, 2006. The scholarship is awarded annually to a graduating high school student in the Sea-to-Sky corridor who is entering a college or university program in Early Childhood Education. In the event that there are no high school graduates seeking the grant, the award may be made to an individual who has lived and worked in the Sea to Sky Corridor and who wishes to pursue further education in early childhood education and who plans to return to the Sea to Sky Corridor following their education. The Fund is held and managed by the Community Foundation of Whistler in perpetuity and when the fund reaches an adequate size, income from the fund is used to make annual grants to students pursuing post secondary education in early childhood education. Applications for grants are received by the staff at the Secondary Schools in School District No. 48.

Our goal is for the contributions to the fund to exceed \$25,000 in capital, so that the fund can be self-sustaining in its ability to make annual grants of \$1000.00 based on the annual income earned. At present, the fund currently contains about \$11,000 in capital. Donations to the scholarship fund may be made directly to the CFOW by contacting cflow@telus.net or www.whistlerfoundation.com. For convenience, cheques payable to the CFOW may be placed in either of the Whistler Children's Centre drop boxes. Contact for the Whistler Children's Centre Society: admin@whistlerchildren.com or 604-932-1119.

Founded in October, 1999, the Community Foundation of Whistler is a charitable organization that serves the Sea to Sky Corridor. It currently manages twenty-four different funds including three scholarship funds. To date the CFOW has received over \$3.5 million dollars from individuals, businesses and other charities and directs investment earnings to projects that help improve the quality of community life in the Sea to Sky Corridor.

If you have any questions about the centre policies and procedures, please don't hesitate to make an appointment to speak with the Executive Director, Kari Gaudet at director@whistlerchildren.com.