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**First Friends Daycare Society**  
**Parent Hand Book**  
**(Revised June 2015 )**

## **Introduction**

Welcome to First Friends Daycare Society. We are pleased that you have enrolled your child(ren) in our Center.

The Parent Hand Book is provided for your information. Hopefully, it will assist you with any questions you may have concerning the Center. Please feel free to contact the Director , Ann Stewart – 855-4493 if you have any questions regarding the Policies.

First Friends Daycare is operated by an elected Board of Director's. It is run on a daily basis by the Director. The Center is maintained financially by the fees we charge to Parents for the care of your child(ren). In order for the Center to maintain a quality program at the lowest possible cost to you, we must maintain a full enrollment at all times.

The fees charged and collected from the Parents pay for the expenses of the daycare; wages, groceries, utilities, maintenance, school and office supplies, equipment for the children (inside and out). Many of these expenses are constant throughout the year regardless of the number of children enrolled. Thus you can see it is imperative that fees are paid in full, on time and paid for everyday your child's space is available to them. In other words, as long as your child is enrolled in the Center, the fee is charged for the space whether your child is in attendance or not. This includes statutory holidays, sickness , vacations etc. Failure to maintain an up-to-date account could mean the loss of your child's(ren's) space.

Again, if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact our Director's  
Ann Stewart  
865-4493  
email [annstewart@bellaliant.com](mailto:annstewart@bellaliant.com)

We look forward to caring for your child(ren) in our Center.

**First Friends Daycare Society**  
**Parent Hand Book**

Please be advised that the following items are posted on our Parent Board located above the sign in table up stairs and on the Parent Board in the hall way downstairs.

1. A copy of the Daycare Act and Regulations
2. A copy of the Parent Hand Book
3. The License for First Friends Daycare Society
4. A copy of the Behavior Guidance Policy for First Friends Daycare Society
5. A copy of First Friends Daycare Menu ( four week rotating)  
( is in compliance with the Food and Beverage Criteria to ensure they meet the Standards for Food and Nutrition.
6. A copy of the Daily routine at First Friends Daycare
7. A list of the current members of the Parent Committee at First Friends
8. A copy of the most recent minutes of the Parent Committee Meeting.
9. Notification of the Funding First Friends Daycare Society is provided by the Minister
10. A copy of the Food and Nutrition Standards
11. A copy of the Daily Program Standards
12. A copy of the Exclusion Criteria
13. The Food Establishment Permit
14. The Certificate of Incorporation with Joint Stocks
15. A copy of the Strategies for Prevention and Spreading of Communicable Diseases
16. A copy of the Fire Drill Record Log
17. Any other information required by the Minister

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## **Philosophy**

We believe that Early Childhood Education is crucial to the future functioning and growth of All children. We strive to create an environment that is secure, stable and inclusive, where All children can grow into the 4 developmental stages; Social, Emotional, Intellectual and Physical, considering the individual needs and the different levels of development of each and every child.

## **1.Goals and Objectives**

The Policies in this Hand Book are an expression of our concern and desire to protect and care for your children during the time he/she spends at the Center.

Our Programs provide:

- a) consistent positive reinforcement and enjoyment
- b) positive self image
- c) self worth
- d) friendship
- e) exploration of their own creativity
- f) value and respect for the children
- g) help for the children to function and be themselves in a group setting
- h) development of each child's potential
- i) a learning environment of fun
- j) life experiences through imaginative play, creative art, music and movement, field trips, crafts, etc.
- k) development of large and small motor skills
- l) for the child's uniqueness to be realized and expressed according to his /her learning patterns of uniqueness

## **2. Curriculum Objectives**

- a) To provide an enriched learning environment for all children which enables the children to express themselves in the available centers; blocks, reading, arts, crafts, sand, water etc.
- b) To maintain a flexible program geared to the needs of all children
- c) To provide a program structured to the needs of all children yet, flexible enough to meet the needs of the environment.

## **3. Staff Objectives**

- a) To use positive reinforcement
- b) To recognize a child's uniqueness
- c) To provide a well organized structured program allowing the children to choose from a number of available activities and to participate in large and small group activities.
- d) To help the children develop social skills that will enable them to interact with other children in a variety of settings.
- e) To prepare a program for the four stages of development
- f) To record and observe the children by evaluating their behavior, motor development, vision, fine movement, hearing, speech and social behavior.

## **4. Equipment**

A Variety of toys which add a variety of interests:

- gross motor equipment
- fine motor equipment
- creative equipment
- learning materials
- materials designed for group and individual use.

## **5. Staffing & Administration**

The Center is staffed by a Director and Staff according to the number of children enrolled. As required by the Department of Community Services, two thirds of the staff have Early Childhood training or equivalent and all have a current First Aid Certificate, Clearance through the Child Abuse Registrar, and a Criminal Record Check.

The Center is also licensed and inspected annually by the Community Services, Day Care Services Division as per the Daycare Act and

Regulations. The Center is also inspected by the Fire Marshall on a regular basis and annually by the Department of Health.

## **6. Programs**

### **Full Time Daycare**

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Child/Teacher Ratio</b>	<b>Hours</b>
18 months -3 years	6 to 1	6:45 a.m. to 6:00 pm.
3-5 years	8 to 1	Monday – Friday Year round

### **Description**

Full time daycare is an all day program designed for children who require full time supervision outside the home. This is a quality program designed to meet the four developmental stages of each child.

Structured and free play times are a part of the daily program. Children may have breakfast at the Daycare provided it is supplied by the Parents and falls within the Food and Beverage Criteria in Regulated Child care Settings ( a list of acceptable items is available upon request)

A lunch and two snacks are provided daily by the Daycare. The Daycare is responsible to ensure that all foods served meet the Food and Beverage Criteria.

### **After School Program**

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Child / Teacher Ratio</b>	<b>Hours</b>
5 yrs – 12 yrs	15 to 1	6:45 am. - 6:00 pm. Monday – Friday year round

### **Description**

The After School Program is provided for children who attend school regularly. The school we service is Sackville Heights Elementary. The Bus (Stock ) picks the children up in front of the Daycare and drops them off in the afternoon. When the schools are closed the children can attend the Daycare for the Day. We also offer a March Break and a Summer program for our School Age Children

Children may have breakfast at the Daycare provided it is supplied by the Parents and meets the Food and Beverage Criteria. A list of foods that fall within the Criteria is available upon request. Lunch and afternoon snack is provided by the Daycare and meets the Food and Beverage Criteria under the

Food and Nutrition Standards in a Regulated Child Care Setting.

Parents are responsible for paying for Field Trips and any other outside activities. The cost of these outside activities will be kept to a minimum as much as possible.

All Programs take advantage of indoor, individual and small group activities as well as larger group and outdoor activities.

## **7. Income Source**

First Friends Daycare Center is a non profit Center, which is owned and operated through an elect Board of Director's as a Community Service. The Center is maintained financially by the fees that are charged to the Parents for the care of their children.

## **8. Enrollment**

The following is the procedure to be followed when registering your child at this Center.

- a) Visit the Center and complete a registration form ( a non refundable registration and membership fee of \$27.00 applies upon acceptance into the Center.
- b) If there are no immediate vacancies, your application will be placed on the waiting list.
- c) You will be notified immediately when there is a vacancy.
- d) The Parent Policy and any other pertinent information will be given and reviewed up enrollment.
- e) **Orientation** This a very important for your child. In order to help him/her make a happy adjustment, gradual introduction is recommended. Therefore, the following introduction procedure is suggested.
  - 1) Day 1 - ½ day attendance is suggested ( morning 9 -11)
  - 2) Decide if a shorter day is needed for the first week for each individual child.
  - 3) Be available to assist us in helping your child to adjust to this new experience the first week of attendance.

4) Naturally, we understand the difficulties that this schedule can present to working parents, and we are willing to make alternate arrangements if necessary. This is a very important transition for any child and all help from parents is greatly appreciated.

## **9. Arrival and Departure**

- a) Children should be accompanied to and from the Center by a Parent or Guardian. In the event that an alternate arrangement is made. Please advise the Center ( Director / Teacher )
- b) Children Must **NOT** be left at the door of the Center or in the Parking Lot.
- c) Parents must sign their child(ren) in and out of the Center each day on the sheet provided. The child's name, time of arrival and departure and the Parent's / Guardian's signature is required.
- d) It is essential that Parents never remove their child from the Daycare/ Playground without informing the Staff on duty.
- e) Upon leaving the Center with your child(ren) they are your responsibility and must not at anytime be left alone on the premises.
- f) The Daycare will not be responsible for any lost or stolen items. It is suggested that you label everything and do not leave any valuables at the Center

## **10. Times of Arrival and Departure**

- a) The Center is open from 6:45 am. To 6:00 pm. ( 11 hrs a day ). Parents and children should vacate the premises no later than 6:00 pm. We are obliged to enforce this policy very strictly. A \$10.00 an hr late fee will be charged unless you are unavoidably detained. Please call to let us know if this should happen. We have obligations too.
- b) Approximate times of arrival and departure are to be arranged upon enrollment. Parents should notify the Daycare Center if any changes occur.
- c) Children enrolled on a full day basis should be here by 9:00 am. This enables them to take part in most of the planned daily activities. Outings usually commence by 10:00 am. When an outing has been arranged there will be NO supervision in the classroom after that time.

If a child is unable to attend an outing, other arrangements can be made by the staff to provide appropriate care.

## **11. Discipline / Behavior**

- a) It is the Center's Policy that staff are **NOT** Permitted to use any form of

physical (striking, shaking, shoving etc.) or verbal ( humiliating, belittling or degrading responses) abuse to discipline the children. Time out or a brief period of isolation may sometime be required and is the acceptable form of disciplined used.

- b) Staff will adopt a positive attitude towards children, which include enjoyment of and respect for the children as individuals.
- c) Discipline statements will be expressed positively whenever possible.
- d) Limits will be enforced consistently and fairly.
- e) Staff will **NOT** use food as a form of Discipline to reinforce a desired behavior or as a punishment for undesired behavior.
- f) When all else fails, a child can be removed from the room ,to be supervised by a staff member elsewhere.
- g) In the event that a child's persistent behavior is determined to be detrimental to other children or staff , the child may be dismissed from the Center.

## **12. Attendance**

- a) The Center is closed on all Statutory Holidays pursuant to the labor Standards Code. They include ; New Years Day, Good Friday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, Boxing Day.
- b) Other Holidays the Center is closed are; Remembrance Day,and Halifax Natal Day.
- c) The Center is open Easter Monday
- d) For proper program planning, parents are requested to notify the Director two weeks prior to vacation date, stating the duration of vacation. Also note that during that vacation time, if you wish to bring your child to the Center, your spot will be here and you are able to bring your child to the Center if you wish.
- e) Failure to pay for spacing when your child is absent may result in the loss of your child's space.

## **13. Fees**

- a) Fees are subject to change on a Yearly basis.
- b) Fees are payable in advance on a bi-weekly basis ( cash or cheque )
- c) Parents are responsible to pay for ALL days their children are registered at the Center, including illness, vacation, statutory holidays and storm days.
- d) In the event of a NSF cheque, parents will be responsible for all bank



charges.

e) If the center receives two NSF cheques, thereafter the Daycare fees will be requested in cash only.

f) Parent payments are the main source of income for the Center. Fees that are not paid regularly or on time, could result in termination of your space from our Center.

g) In order to eliminate financial loss to the Center, vacancies must be filled immediately:

1) Two weeks notice of withdrawal is required.

2) Written notice is to be given to the Director

3) Reason as to why you are withdrawing your child from our care is required.

## **14. Dress**

a) Our program includes many “messy “ activities such as; painting, gluing, sand and water play. Please bring your child to daycare dressed in appropriate play clothing, suitable for the season, for indoor and outdoor activities.

b) Splash pants or Splash suites would be a good idea for Spring and Fall.

c) All clothing ( shoes and boots ) should be labeled to prevent loss.

d) Please provide your child with a complete change of clothing to be left at the Daycare; pants,tops,underwear etc. In the winter several changes of socks, hats and mittens are appreciated.

e) Parents should provide at least 5 diapers per day for children still in training, and 4-5 pairs of training pants or underwear.

f) We are required by Social Services to conduct a Fire Drill once a month. Therefore your child should come provided with a sturdy shoe or slipper ( for inside ) at all times.

## **15. Health / Illness**

a) If your child becomes ill while at the Center you will be called. The Center will provide care apart from other children for a period of one hour. We cannot provide care in isolation for the duration of the day.

b) If a child contracts a communicable disease, please inform the Center as to the nature of the disease and the date the symptoms appeared. The child cannot be accepted back at the Center until the disease is no longer contagious.

- c) The daily program includes outdoor play for All children except when weather is too severe. Children will NOT be permitted to remain inside due to illness. Supervision is not available in the Center for individual children. If your child is too sick to participate in all of the daily activities then they should not be in attendance at the Center.
- d) A Medical Questionnaire on each child in the Center is required with a completed immunization record ( giving dates)
- e) Staff will attend to minor injuries such as cuts and scratches. Serious injuries shall be noted by the Director who will call the Parents and arrange for Medical care.
- f) Prescription and non-prescription drugs may be administered by the staff if accompanied by written authorization from the Parents.
- g) Please report any diet, allergies or Health problems that your child has upon enrollment.

## **16. Food and Nutrition**

- 1) All Food and Beverages served in the Center will follow “Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide:” and fall under the Beverage and Food Criteria for Regulated Child Care Settings.
- 2) Clean portable drinking water is available at all times during the day. ( suggested that your child be provided with a re-useable water bottle from home daily and year round.
- 3) The Center is in support of Breastfeeding mothers and when requested will provide a comfortable space to do so.
- 4) Staff will allow children to explore their food, feed themselves and respond to hunger and fullness cues.
- 5) Purchases or Donations of Food or Beverages must be from an establishment permitted by the Department of Agriculture and comply with the Food and Beverage Criteria. The Product must include a list of ingredients and any special preparation, storage or serving instructions clearly on the label.
- 6) Staff are responsive to children's cues around hunger and will provide snacks and meals outside of the regular schedule as required.
- 7) A relaxing and enjoyable meal environment will be provided wear the children can routinely transition from play to snack and meals. Children will be encouraged to respond to hunger and fullness cues. They will not be forced to finish food that has been served.

- 8) Staff will model healthy eating practices that are consistent with the Food and Nutritional Standards in a Regulated Child care setting.
- 9) Fund-raising during operating hours comply with the expectations set out in the Food and Beverage Nutrient Criteria
- 10) The Behavior Guidance Policy of the Center states that :  
Food will not be used to reinforce positive behaviors or as a consequence for inappropriate behaviors.
- 11) Rotating 4 week menu is posted and signed indicating that the Food and Beverage Nutrient Criteria have been met.
- 12) Promotional materials that are intended to advertise specific brands or characters are not used to serve meals and snacks.

### **17. Parent Involvement**

- a) A Parent Committee is established from current parents of children enrolled in the Center ( minimum of 5 Parents required) can also be a sub committee of the Board of Director's. The Parent Committee will provide a forum in which parents provide input and receive notice of any matters of interest or concern. The Parent Committee will meet at least twice a year. Two weeks written notice will be given of the meeting and its agenda. The meeting is open to all parents of enrolled children. Parents who attend have the opportunity to add any items to the agenda. Minutes of the Parent Committee meeting will be posted in the Center until the next meeting.
- b) A Position on the Board of Director's is available to any parent wishing to volunteer their time for the best interest of the Daycare. Meeting are once a month with the exception of the summer months, An Annual General Meeting ( AGM ) is scheduled once a year were All Parents are invited to come and be informed of the past years happenings. ( director's yearly report and financial report) is given at that time. The minutes of the AGM will be posted in the facility until the next meeting.
- c) Twice a year, each parent will be given a pre-school evaluation of their child(ren)
- d) Parents may call or stop in at the Center at anytime to check in on your child(ren). The teachers are always available to talk to parents about concerns and to help with any questions you may have.
- e) As a non profit organization parental support with fund-raising efforts would be greatly appreciated and very beneficial to your child(ren).
- f) A Parents area of expertise and assistance to the Center in any way will

always be greatly appreciated.

This is your Daycare and your VOICE ,  
SUGGESTIONS and HELP are always Welcome