

Kinder House Day Care Focus on Family Support and Communications Policy

At Kinder House Day Care, parents and/or guardians are viewed as vital to their child's successful experience. We encourage all families to enter into a unique partnership/collaboration with our center's Child Care Professionals. We understand that it can be difficult for parents to take time away from work. Therefore, Kinder House is flexible and has an open door policy allowing parents/guardians to choose the amount of time they are able to spend with their child in the center. Reading a book, creating an art project, or simply stopping by during lunch hour can prove to be valuable time spent with your child. Spending time at the Centre also provides parents with unique opportunities to watch their child interact with others. Parents are also encouraged to serve on the Centre's Parent Advisory Council and volunteer in other ways as their time and the Centre's needs permit.

Consistent with the Kinder House Philosophy that learning is a life-long process, the Centre's mandate is not only to provide high quality care to children, but also to provide services resources that support parents as the primary caregivers as they learn about their children. Services and resources such as:

- Quarterly newsletter that provides important information about events happening at the center and the surrounding community
- on-site resource library of books, magazines, articles and resource sheets available for parents to borrow
- pamphlet rack and bulletin board of community resources that will assist with parenting and other family needs (updated 211 Community Resource List)
- our center has a website that includes calendars and family-friendly community events from other community stakeholders as well as links to parenting websites and other web-based resources that may be of interest to families
- on-site support in helping parents with things such as filling out and e-mailing Child Care Subsidy forms, Alberta Child Health Benefit Forms, Alberta Works Income Support Forms and third party payment request letters
- on-site food bank, and clothing exchange that takes donations for families in need
- 3 flexible hourly fee categories for families to choose from
- our center provides opportunities for parent to parent support by partnering with other community agencies to have support groups on-site and provide child care for parents attending
- our center organizes Family Celebrations that take into consideration diversity evident within our families (ie: culture, types of family units, dietary, and religious considerations). Events such as Family BBQ and Celebration of Learning Event, Annual Christmas Party and Celebration of Learning Event, on-site field trips that parents are welcome to participate in.

- we offer our families the opportunity to share contact information to encourage family interactions outside of the center.
- To assist parents, our center walks children to and from neighborhood schools and other Early Childhood Programs
- We offer a Formal Orientation Package and on-site orientation during registration to welcome our new families, provide important information, and gather information about the child
- We conduct an Annual Community Child Care Needs Survey that provides us with a better understanding as well as important information regarding the needs of families in the broader community

Our Child Care Professionals view parents as co-constructors in providing responsive care for their children. With their intimate knowledge about their child and family, parents can provide essential information which can assist the teachers and program to more fully meet the needs of their family and child. Parents can play a vital role in the process of designing the curriculum that is presented by providing suggestions and time. In addition, parents can provide unique and insightful understanding of their child's behavior which teachers can incorporate into their program planning.

Even though it is the teacher's responsibility to plan and implement a high quality program, parents are invited to monitor the quality to ensure that the program is being delivered in a way that meets the needs of their child and family. This will be done through our Parent Evaluation Survey on an annual basis

Daily contact and effective communication between the Centre and the home are viewed as essential. With regards to recognizing differences in family cultures, teachers will consult with families about belief systems and preferred practices. Every effort will be made to learn significant words and phrases in families' home language. Teachers are available and approachable to provide parents with regular updates on their child's needs and progress. If parents have specific questions or concerns, meetings between teachers and parents are arranged at mutually convenient times. Family views will be acknowledged and responded to in a timely fashion.

For the development of a true partnership, communication must go both ways. Teachers listen to parents and whenever possible and follow through on their suggestions and ideas. Parents, in turn, will take into consideration any recommendations made by the Centre and teachers, to ensure consistency between home and child care. Parents input and questions are welcome to ensure that they know what is happening in the program and the rationale behind decisions which are made.