



Unicorn Children's Centre Inc.

"Nurturing creative connections for kids"



Family Information Handbook



Healthy Care

COMMUNICATION

Care and Education

Nutritious Meals and Snacks

Staff Team

Medical Conditions and Allergies

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Committed Board

loving and caring

Age Appropriate development

Quality

Family Atmosphere

INTRODUCTION:

The Unicorn Children's Centre is a not-for profit childcare centre that has been in operation since 1982. It is directed by a volunteer board of directors made up of principally parents of children attending the center and using the services. The centre is overseen by an Executive Director.

The Unicorn supports children's access to opportunities and experiences that promote their health, development and well-being. Because the early childhood years are critical in laying the foundations for later learning and development, we are committed to the provision of high quality early childhood services in the form of full time and playschool programs. We also understand the need for quality age appropriate based school age programs and have been providing activity based, choice driven programs.

Our aim is to provide services that are responsive to the changing needs of families and children attending the centers. Programs are available both full-time and part-time for children between the ages of two and twelve years of age.

Programs are provided in a positive, warm, safe and caring environment where children's rights are acknowledged and the individuality of each child is encouraged. Children are offered opportunities to explore, discover and create with laughter.

Our programmed activities are designed to foster and promote achievement of best developmental outcomes for each child in their own time. They support each child's physical growth and autonomy, and the development of thinking, social, communication and language skills.

The Unicorn has recently reviewed their philosophies and mission and in collaboration with parents, staff and the children attending the centre, has defined the future of its programs and services with the following goals and objectives:

VISION ~ Nurturing Creative Connections for Kids

MISSIONS:

1. U.C.C. will advocate for Early Childhood learning and development.
2. U.C.C. will work with the community to ENHANCE childcare SERVICES for the early years.
3. U.C.C. will provide a nurturing, caring, and creative environment for all children.
4. U.C.C. will reach out to community organizations to allow children to participate in community activities during U.C.C. time.

This handbook provides information about the centre for families. The contents reflect the material within the Unicorn Children's Centre's Policy and Procedures document. We encourage you to read both our policies and the Child Day Care Facilities Operator Standards. To access these documents, speak with the Executive Director.

Attendance:

Waiting List

When a place is not immediately available, families seeking childcare can place their name on our waiting lists. The office is able to provide detailed information and assist families with this process.

Enrolment Procedure

When a spot becomes available, you will be invited to meet with the Director to complete a Child profile, confirm commencement dates and discuss a plan for introducing your child to the centre. A \$25.00 non-refundable deposit is also required at this time. You will also be required to provide a copy of your child's immunization record and a photo for the file. It is very important that you keep this information up to date and inform us of any changes as soon as possible.

Discharge Procedure

As part of your contract with the Unicorn Children's Centre; if you choose to withdraw your child from the centre, you are required to provide **two weeks notice** as well as payment in full of your account. Failure to maintain your account in good standing may result in withdrawal of services.

Privacy Statement

The Unicorn Children's Centre uses the information obtained on the Child Profile to collect personal information for the purpose of program enrolment and statistical recording. The information may be shared with funding agencies and administrators for their operational purposes only. The information will not be disclosed to any other party except as required by law. You are able to amend or correct information on request by contacting the Executive Director.

Starting Care

Our staff understands that children, on commencement, may feel unsettled and that parents also need time to feel confident about the programs offered.

As part of our commencement program, you are asked to stay with your child for some short visits in our full time program and have been incorporated in our orientation day for playschools. This helps you and your child to get to know staff and to become familiar with our activities and routines.

We encourage you to phone the centre to hear about your child's progress. A quick call can relieve anxiety.

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Arrival and Departure

Parents and guardians are required to drop off and pick up to their classroom, make contact with their child's teacher, and sign their child in and out on the classroom attendance sheet.

For the safety of the children only those authorized on the child's profile will be permitted to pick up at the centre unless you inform the staff in writing, in person or by telephone. The person you authorize will be asked to show identification and sign them out. Under no circumstances will a child be allowed to leave with an unauthorized person.

Please note that our driveway in front of the Main Centre is one-way.

Late Pick Up

It is important that you collect your child before the end of your child's program. There may be isolated occasions when you are delayed – you must contact the centre so that appropriate staffing arrangements can be made. To cover the costs of overtime a late collection fee of \$5 per child for every fifteen minute interval following the end of a program to a maximum of \$20. Parents who are continually late may be requested to withdraw from the program.

Closures

Full time and school age programs run twelve months a year. The morning playschool programs run from mid-September to late June following the Anglophone East school calendar closures.

The centre is closed on all ten of the public holidays and in the event that the holiday falls on the weekend, the Monday will replace the designated day. They are as follows:

| | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| Christmas Day | Canada Day |
| Boxing Day | New Brunswick Day |
| New Year's Day | Labour Day |
| Good Friday | Thanksgiving Day |
| Victoria Day | Remembrance Day |

In addition to these holidays,

-The centre closes at 3 pm on Christmas Eve.

-One day a year the centre will close for its annual Fix up day, parents will be notified at least four weeks in advance of the closure.

-One day a year the centre will close for a Professional Development Day. Parents will be notified at least 4 weeks in advance of the closure.

*Please note that these closures are prorated and no discounts will be applied to the regular fees.

The decision to close the Unicorn Children's Centre due to poor weather will be made by the Executive Director in consultation with the Chairman of the Board of Directors. Remember your safety, your child/ren's safety, and our educators safety is always our priority. Factors for closing the center:

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1. Sufficient number of employees to safely operate. The day care is required to meet provincially regulated child to staff ratios as stipulated by the department of Education and Early Childhood development.
2. Weather forecasts, current weather, and road conditions.
3. Power and/or water outage.
4. Public transit (Codiac Transit) ceases to operate.
5. Snowplows cease to operate.
6. Contagious disease/illness outbreak.

The centre will be closing during a storm if Codiac Transit or the snowplows are pulled off the roads. Please listen to radio notifications when there is a storm. In the event that a storm escalates during regular program time, please contact the center at noon to verify in case we are unable to contact you. If the buses and snowplows are pulled off the roads after the day care opens, parents will be asked to come and pick up their child/ren within **1.5 hours**.

When the school districts are closed, due to the weather and or bad roads, our bus will not be providing services on those days. At other times, we will advise you by memo or telephone. We do not want to take any risk with your child/ren's life. **The final decision must reflect the safety of all.**

Absences and Vacations

To assist in proper planning and reporting we request that the centre be notified as soon as possible of an absence.

Transportation

The Unicorn Children's Centre does provide delivery as well as daily pick of children for 3 of the Riverview schools (Riverview East, West Riverview and Claude D. Taylor) for a fee of \$6 per week each way. This service is provided to our families with the usage of a 24 passenger bus as well as a mini van. We also provide a walking service to our Frank L. Bowser students for a fee of \$5 per week.

Seat belts are not legally required on buses in NB or in Canada. We do use a Q'straint 5 point harness system on the bus for children under 40 pounds. In the mini van the appropriate child restraint system (car seat, booster seat, seat belt) will be used at all times according to provincial and federal laws.

The bus and the mini van are also utilized for any outings away from our centre that are not within walking distance.

What to bring

Your child will need to have a small bag to bring each day. The bag should contain the following clearly named items.

- Scrapbook (as requested by teacher)
- Non-marking sneakers for gymnasium and fire drills



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- A complete change of clothes in case of spills or accidents
- Appropriate outdoor clothing (according to the season)
 - Including a hat in summer or winter
 - Splashpants, Snow pants, swimsuits etc
 - No spaghetti straps please to reduce sun exposure
- Soft security/comfort items (if your child has a rest/sleep period)
- Weather appropriate footwear
 - Sneakers
 - Rubber boots
 - Winter boots.

ACCIDENTS and EMERGENCIES:

Accident Procedure

All staff members have a current first aid certificate. In the event of an accident, staff members will assess all injuries and apply appropriate first aid. If further medical treatment is required, a parent/guardian will be notified and the appropriate medical services contacted. In the event that parents cannot be contacted the centre will contact the emergency contact people on your Child profile. Any medical or ambulance costs incurred are to be met by parents.

In accordance with the Child Day Care Facilities Operator Standards, details of all accidents are recorded in an accident report. Staff will record how the accident occurred, the nature of the injury and the treatment provided. If your child is involved, you will be required to sign the report to show that you have been told. In the event of a serious injury a Day Care Facilities Incident Report will be filled out and you will be provided with a copy.

Emergency Procedures

The Fire and Emergency Evacuation plan is displayed on the centre information board. This plan outlines procedures for the evacuation of children from all parts of the centre. Evacuation drills occur once a month. Emergency evacuation procedures and exit routes are posted by each entry/exit point.

In the case of a real evacuation event at our Main Centre, 500 Cleveland Avenue, the children will be evacuated to 404 Cleveland Avenue, St. Paul's United Church (phone number 387-8508)

In the case of a real evacuation event at 404 Cleveland Avenue, St. Paul's United Church, the children attending those programs will be evacuated to our Main Centre, 500 Cleveland Avenue (phone number 387-4160).

HEALTHY CARE:

General

The centre provides a safe, hygienic and comfortable environment for all children and staff. Staff ensures that rooms are well ventilated and the lighting, heating and noise levels are comfortable. Staff members maintain high levels of cleanliness in both indoor and outdoor environments. All surfaces and equipment are cleaned and sanitized regularly.

To reduce risk of cross-infection, staff consistently practices effective infection control measures such as hand washing, table sanitizing, and toy washing. Staff act as appropriate role models and maintain high levels of personal hygiene. Children are encouraged to follow simple rules of hygiene eg. Hand-washing after toileting and before eating.

Giving Thanks

The centre promote the philosophy of encouraging children to be thankful for what they are about to receive. Many of the classroom educators will use this transition time to promote appreciation, teach respect, and increase language development through songs and jingles. Classroom educators will be responsible for the frequency and choices in their individual classrooms but will be encouraged to use graces that are fun, challenging and non-denominational.

Toileting

Children are not required to be toilet trained before enrolment in our Junior Preschool. The Centre and its educators promote independence and self-help practices; for children who are already toilet trained we only assist in the bathroom as needed. We encourage and promote children to manage their own toileting.

Sun and bug Protection

To protect children from skin damage caused by harmful ultra violet rays, you must provide a hat for your child. Children are required to wear their hats during outside play for two periods per day. Whenever possible, outdoor activities are scheduled before 11 am and after 3 pm during the summer months. Children are encouraged to use available shade for outdoor activities and are provided with water at all times. School age children are required to bring a water bottle with them at all times so that they stay hydrated on outings and during activities.

The centre supplies non-allergenic sunscreen with an SPF of 30+ and bug spray for children. Parents are required to sign consent for the application yearly. There is a fee per season. Should your child have an allergy or have sensitive skin you will be required to provide your own sunscreen and the child will be required to apply it themselves.

We encourage children to dress in sleeved T-shirts or dresses (no spaghetti straps) in summer in order to limit sun exposure.

Scent Free Environment

It is strongly encouraged that staff, as well as parents and guardians of children attending the Centre, refrain from wearing scented products (i.e. perfumes or colognes) at the Centre.

ILLNESS:

General

The centre understands the difficulty associated with caring for a sick child when parents are working, studying or have other engagements. For the health of all children and staff, however, you must not bring your child to the centre if you suspect your child may be ill or have an infectious disease.

Please keep your children at home should they present with a fever, persistent dry cough, heavy nasal discharge or symptoms of a contagious disease (redness of the eye and or discharge from the eye, sore throat, headache, diarrhea, rash, abdominal pain, fever).

Parents are required to inform the centre that their child's absence and symptoms so that proper documentation may be done. Should children present with symptoms at the center, your child's classroom teacher will notify you and depending on the severity of symptoms and the child's ability to participate in the program may ask you to pick up the child. Should you be required to pick up a sick child from the center you will be required to sign a potential illness form indicating the child's symptoms, time of call and pick up time and will you be given a copy.

Contagious Diseases

If the conditions is a contagious illness, your child (and possible contacts) will need to be absent from the centre for the prescribed exclusion period. The minimum periods of exclusion as set out by the Department of Health are outlined in the Management of illness schedule. This schedule is displayed on the Family Board and is given to all families upon enrollment.

Parents/guardians are responsible to notify the Executive Director of any diagnosis provided by a physician as soon as possible so that the center may notify the other parents of their child's possible exposure, and where applicable report to the Department of Health.

Should a child be present with a communicable disease that requires an exclusionary period you will be required to sign a Return from Exclusion form and in severe cases may be required to get a signature from public health before the child may return to the Centre.

To help us maintain a healthy environment for all children, you must keep your child home if they show any of the following symptoms.

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Diarrhea | Your child should not return to the centre until free of watery loose stools for 24 hrs. |
| Vomiting | You child should not return until the vomiting has stopped for 24 hours. |
| Fever Temperature | When your child's temperature is above 38 degrees he or she is considered to have a fever. We require children stay home when they present with a fever and in combination with another symptom. |
| Head Lice | Your child must be absent until treatment has commenced. |
| Pink Eye | Your child must see a doctor for prescribed medication and be absent until treatment has commenced and discharge ceased. |
| Hand-Foot – Mouth | For information regarding this highly contagious infection that consists of small lesions, please see staff |

Please refer to Exclusion chart for a more detailed list of contagious infections and symptoms.

Outbreak Procedure

1. Should more than 2 children at one centre present with the same symptom (especially diarrhea or vomiting) the Executive Director or her designate are required to report to Public Health.
2. Post a "Notice to Parents" to inform parents of the existence of a communicable disease.
3. Sanitation procedures will be increased and all toys, equipment and areas used must be washed daily once an outbreak is declared.
4. Once an outbreak is declared by Public Health the 24 hour exclusion may be stepped up to 48 hours in order to ensure the elimination of possible viruses and infections.
5. In an outbreak situation hand washing will increase in frequency and we will provide hand sanitizer for parents and visitors entering the centre.

Administration of Acetaminophen

The centre reserves the right to contact a parent in order to administer acetaminophen when determined between the parent and staff that it would be the best course of action e.g. Fever rising quickly, tooth ache. Should a staff person decide they would like to administer acetaminophen to a child they must call the parent for consent, obtain the dosage amount, record time administration, the administering staff must sign the form and have parents sign at pick up time (at no time shall a staff member administer a dosage in excess of the package recommendation without a doctors written consent). Acetaminophen will not be administered to sustain a child's stay at the center. Sick children must go home within an hour of the parent being called.

MEDICAL CONDITIONS AND ALLERGIES:

General

When completing the Child profile you will be required to provide details of any medical condition, e.g. asthma or allergy your child experiences. Please inform the staff as soon as possible and make the appropriate changes in person to the profile if your child develops any medical condition while they are attending the centre.

For allergies and medical conditions that will affect their day to day routine parents will be required to get their physicians to fill out a supplemental form to ensure that appropriate medical intervention is made when required.

Medication

Staff will comply with the Child Day care Facilities Operator Standards when administering medication. Medication must be given directly to the staff member and not left in the child's bag or locker. Only medication (over the counter and prescribed other than acetaminophen) that has been brought to the centre by a parent/guardian may be administered to a child.

The following procedure will be followed:

- All medication must be in the original container with the original label, be identified with the dosage and name of the child for whom the medication is intended,
- Prescribed medication must have the name of the physician, instructions and period of use.
- No medications may be administered to a child via a phone call other than acetaminophen when not at risk of masking other symptoms.
- The parent must complete and sign the medication form at the centre.
- The parent must give details of the time and date of the last dose of medication.
- A staff member, other than the staff member administering the medication, must check the dosage of the medication administered, and the details recorded on the child's medication form.
- To verify the recorded details the parent must initial the form at the end of each day.

Immunizations

Parents are required to provide the centre with a current record of immunizations and update it in our files as necessary. Immunization details (or registered objections) need to be supplied.

Children who are not immunized or for whatever reason do not have a current immunization record in your child's file will be excluded from the centre during outbreaks of some infectious diseases (as per Child Day Care Facilities Operator Standards 6.6)

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General

The centre provides all children who are in attendance with a nutritious morning and afternoon snack. Full time children also benefit from a well balanced lunch. Meal and snack times provide an important social activity for children and are a great opportunity to build a sharing and caring environment. Children learn and practice a variety of skills when eating together. A staff member sits down to eat with each group of children. Children are encouraged to develop independence by helping to serve and clear away food and drink, and using utensils that are used for pouring, drinking and eating

Menu

The centre has both a winter and summer menu that is prepared in accordance with Canada's Food Guide to Healthily Eating and Child Day Care Facilities Operator Standards. The menu is based on a rotation period of four (4) or five (5) weeks. The menu is posted outside the kitchen and on the parent information board.

Milk and juice are served with snacks and meals. Water is available to children at all time through independent access. You will find the weekly menu displayed on the centre information board.

Food Allergies

The centre recognizes that many children have food allergies. Parents are required to have an allergy protocol filled out by their physician for all allergies so that our staff has documented data of what to look for and proper treatment protocol as it applies to each child. Please inform the centre of any changes as soon as possible.

Children's allergy information is posted in the food preparation area..

Nut Products

The Unicorn Children's Centre will make all reasonable efforts to eliminate nuts or nut product from the menu **when** we have a child attending the centre who is identified by a doctor as having anaphylactic nut allergy. Should there be no children attending the centre with an anaphylactic allergy to nuts the ban may be lifted.



CARE and EDUCATION:

General

The daily schedule is displayed in your child's room for your interest and comments.

The centre provides an anti-bias and inclusive care and learning program. The program is designed and implemented to enable children to develop to their fullest potential by focusing on:

- Learning development
- Individual uniqueness
- Social, cultural and lifestyle diversity
- Gender equality

Program Planning

At the Unicorn Children's Centre, we follow the New Brunswick Curriculum Framework. Parents may access the curriculum framework and supporting documents on line at <http://www.gnb.ca/0000/ECHDPE/ELCC-Curriculum.asp>

All child day care facilities providing services to infants or preschool children up to school entry must implement, in its entirety, one of the NB Curriculum Frameworks Curriculum planning, documentation and assessment must

- be consistent with the vision, values, goals and principles outlined in the NB Curriculum Framework used by the facility Child day care facilities must
- demonstrate that planning is a cyclical process that involves planning, engaging and reflecting informed by careful consideration of the children's interests, passions, strengths and abilities
- ensure that short and long term plans are flexible and fluid, to accommodate emerging interests and unanticipated events

Child day care facilities must make children's learning visible through "pedagogical" documentation, including but not limited to

- the use of observations and recordings of children's experiences
- group and individual learning stories,
- photographs,
- whiteboards,
- collections/samples of children's art /work
- portfolios

Child day care facilities providing services for school age children must have a program of activities designed to include:

- free choice of play
- opportunities to run, climb, jump i.e. be physically active
- opportunities for concentration alone or in a group
- time to read
- opportunities to be creative, to explore the arts, sciences and social studies, and to solve problems
- opportunities to develop trusting, supportive relationships with staff and peers

Each lead teacher in the classroom is responsible to plan and submit a copy of their monthly program for approval by the Executive Director. This program incorporates the needs, interests and abilities of ALL children by providing:

- Opportunities for development in physical, social, emotional, linguistic and cognitive areas
- A balance of learning experiences involving music, visual arts, movement, language, literature, drama, math, technology, science, health, safety, the natural environment, equity and cultures.

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- A range of indoor and outdoor activities
- Variety in equipment and learning materials
- Planned and spontaneous experiences
- Established routines
- Cooperation and interaction with community
- Opportunities for family input

To provide a well-balanced program and ensure individual children's needs are met, qualified staff have designated time away from the children (additional staff act as replacements), for the purposes of:

- Program planning and activity organization
- Observation of children or updating records
- Meeting with internal staff, parents and staff from other agencies
- Tidying, maintaining and sanitizing equipment or displays
- Researching or written work, i.e. updating reference material, writing parent newsletter

Children with Additional Needs

In September of 1994 the Unicorn became the first childcare centre in the Greater Moncton area to obtain integrated status and continues to uphold our commitment to the needs of EVERY child. The Centre is committed to organizing inclusive programs that meet the needs of all children. Please discuss your child's individual needs with the Director to find out more about the resources available to assist your child.

Rest and Sleep

A routine time is set aside to allow full time children to rest or sleep according to their needs. Each child has their own personal cot which is sanitized weekly. Children are permitted to bring in a blanket, pillow and stuffed toy from home to make this period easier. These items must be brought home at the end of each week to be laundered.

Children are all asked to pick out books to take to their cots for reading. During the transition to rest/sleep time staff read stories and do simple finger plays and jingles to help children wind down. Children listen to soothing music to help provide a restful environment. Quiet toys will be provided to children who require less sleep than others, or who do not sleep at all once a short rest period is over.

Clothing

Clothing guidelines are in place to respect the health, hygiene, personal and cultural beliefs of all families using the centre. Children go outside both morning and afternoon, weather permitting. They may be out for long periods and need to be dressed for the weather.

- It is recommended that children be dressed in comfortable casual clothing that allows freedom of movement
- In case the soiling of clothes occurs, each child requires a full change of clothing (including a hat) each day
- Suitable comfortable footwear is required to be worn in the playgrounds at all times (flip flops do not work well with pea gravel)

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Supervision

The centre strictly implements the staff-to-child ratio detailed in the Child Day Care Facilities Operator Standards. Children will not be left unsupervised at any time.

Staff members provide active care and effective supervision that enable them to foster children's developing independence and creative play while remaining alert to the potential for accidents. Staff members position themselves, and arrange equipment, furniture and activities so that they can see all children.

Behavior and Guidance

Staff members are aware that children feel secure and cooperative in a familiar environment with an established routine. The staff team devises programs that cater for the individual needs of the children while offering appropriate materials/activities and a structured routine. The program is supported by positive reinforcement, which nurtures trust, self-confidence, self worth and a sense of belonging for all children.

Positive strategies to guide children's behavior are developmentally appropriate and communicated in a positive, consistent and clear manner.

In isolated cases, a child may continue to behave in an unacceptable manner. In these cases parents will be consulted and asked to work with the staff, in line with centre policy, to achieve a positive outcome. Our policy is as follows:

3.5. Behaviour Management

3.5.1. General

- Parents will be advised of any disciplinary actions taken through the day where in the Teachers or Executive Director's opinion it is necessary to ensure proper communication between the child's family and the Centre.
- Teacher will use numerous positive reinforcement techniques as outlined in the Child Day Care Facilities Standards to help the child deal with difficult situations and develop appropriate behavioral responses.
- A team Meeting, including the child's teachers and the Executive Director, to determine and commit to a plan of action to meet the child's needs without compromising the needs of any child, teacher or program goal.
- A Parent/Teacher conference, including the child's teachers, parents, and Executive Director to develop a plan of action based on consistency and shared values and principles for the desired appropriate behavior.
- Inclusion of relevant Child Development Professionals – should all attempts, by Unicorn staff in cooperation with the child's parents, to resolve the issues at hand be unsuccessful, we will, with the cooperation and permission of the child's parents, seek assistance from outside professional service provides including but not limited to: The Department of Family & Community Services, The Department of Public & Mental Health Services and/or Independent Child Therapists. Any cost associated with the involvement of outside professionals will be the responsibility of the child's parents.

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We will **NOT**:

- Under any circumstance, threaten or punish any child physically, verbally or emotionally;
- Withhold food from a child due to misbehavior.

BREACH OF THIS POLICY WILL BE CONSIDERED GROUNDS FOR DISMISSAL.

Dismissal

If a child's disruptive behavior (either physical or emotional) continues after attempts by staff to work together with parents, to resolve the difficulties, childcare services may be discontinued.

3.5.2 Family Discharge Protocol

When the Executive Director believes that all avenues of dealing with the problem have been exhausted, or the child's behavior constitutes a threat to the safety of the other children at the Centre, or the family is not cooperating with the behavior modification attempts, the parents will be notified that the child is suspended from care until the matter has been brought before the Board of Directors.

Should the parents not agree with the suspension of care they are welcome to present their case to the Board of Directors during their review.

Should we contact you about your child in this situation you can obtain a more detailed format of the steps implemented at the office.

Please contact the office for a detailed copy of policies and procedures around behaviour and dismissal should you be consulted on a behavioural issue with your child.

Television

Television viewing is not part of the children program, through occasionally a video with a particular value is shown as part of the day's activities.

Equal Opportunity

Equal opportunity to attend and participate in all aspects of the program is given to children of all races, religion, cultures and physical abilities.

Non-Violent Play Materials

When purchasing program equipment, staff selects toys and material that foster peace, cooperation and positive learning experiences. Children are not permitted to bring toys from home unless they are requested for a sharing period or special occasion. Any material brought to the centre should comply with the non-violent clause.

Environmental Awareness

Through play and learning experiences staff encourages children to respect our planet and to conserve the resources within our environment.

Where possible, staff and children are encouraged to:

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- Conserve water and energy
- Recycle
- Enjoy active play in our Nature park and in neighborhood trails

Excursions and Outings

We are committed to offering the children a varied and developmentally appropriate educational program with as many first-hand experiences as possible. Excursions may be planned where they will enhance the educational and social goals of the program. Monthly outings or activities are scheduled in each group from September to June and weekly outings and activities for July and August.

Reporting Child Abuse

If the staff of the Centre has reason to suspect there is a possibility of child abuse, they will immediately advise the Director. We, the staff, will record what we find and take steps to report it to the Screening Unit at the Department of Family and Community Service.

Evacuation Procedures

Should an emergency arise at the main centre, the rally point will be St Paul's United Church. Should an emergency arise at either the Super Kids Club or the Junior Super Kids, the rally point will be the Unicorn Children's Centre. Parents will be contacted by telephone in the event of an emergency.

COMPLAINTS and COMPLIMENTS:

Solutions are sought to resolve all issues or concerns that impact or affect the wellbeing of children, parents and staff, and the operation of the centre, in a fair, prompt and positive manner. If you have any concerns about the care, protection/safety of your child or the management of the centre, please raise these concerns with staff and/or the Executive Director.

By mail at: 500 Cleveland Ave., Riverview, N.B. E1B 1Y2

By phone at: (506) 387-4160

By Fax at: (506) 860-7645

Via email: unicornchildrenscenter@rogers.com

If you feel that the centre has not address the issue to your satisfaction; you are encouraged to contact a Board member. Board member names and phone numbers are listed on all Family Information Boards or online at www.unicornkids.ca.

Issues can also be raised with the Unicorn's Provincial Coordinator for Family and Community Services: Lorraine Kennedy, at 856-2131.

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An acknowledgement or a thank you regarding what you value about our care and learning programs is very useful for future planning and would be greatly appreciated.

Current contact details for both of the above organizations' representatives are on display on the centre's "Family Information board and online. Contact details will be promptly updated when changes occur.

STAFF TEAM:

The staff upholds the philosophies and goals of the centre by providing a safe, secure and warm learning environment for all children. The centre complies with the Day Care Facilities Operations Standards regarding staff qualifications and staff-to-child ratios.

All staff undergoes Criminal checks, TB Tests, Medicals and obtains a First Aid certificate prior to commencement. The regular staff team consists of permanent full time and part time staff. Staff members are also employed to cover lunch/breaks, days off and planning time. Staff photos and details are displayed in the foyer to help you get to know us. All staff will also wear an identification tag around their neck to identify them as employees of the centre. The Unicorn has also purchased staff jackets and some clothing and encourages staff to wear it while they are on outings or outside of the centre.

Relief Staff

To cover regular staff absences, relief staff members are provided from our casual list. Relief staff members are subject to the same regulatory requirements as the regular staff.

Ongoing Professional Development and Training

All staff participates in a professional development and review process. Each staff member has their work performance reviewed and their training requirements identified. Training is planned for each staff member to enhance and develop their skills and to assist the centre to reach its objectives.

Students

Students from colleges and secondary schools may be placed at the centre to gain practical experience in their field. Placements are organized to cause minimal disruption to the centre and are often of benefit to the overall quality of the program. Students are fully supervised by staff and are not left alone or in charge of a group. Students are required to follow all centre policies.

Students may also be employed during the summer months to enhance and develop programs. They are usually obtained through grants and are subject to the same criteria as regular staff.

COMMUNICATION and COMMUNITY:

The staff team fosters friendly, supportive relationships between one another, management, parents and children. Staff actively encourage and support parent participation within the program. Your involvement in activities is greatly enjoyed by the children and valued by staff. Reading a story in your first language, bringing in paper or volunteering on a committee or for the Board of Directors are all ways you can get involved with the Unicorn.

You are encouraged to discuss your child's progress or any concerns with staff on a daily basis. Staff keeps records about your child's day, development and learning, which are available to you. At least once a year, staff invites you to meet with them for a private discussion about your child's progress.

It is also important to inform staff of any changes to the child's routine or home life so staff can be sympathetic and understand possible changes to your child's behaviour. Family and child information is treated as confidential.

To discuss more complex matters that require longer discussion, you are encouraged to make an appointment so that staff can be relieved from child care responsibilities. A centre newsletter written by staff is distributed several times per year.

Amendments to these policies may be made at the discretion of the Board of Directors. Parents will be notified of amendments with a notice or memo posted at the centre, on the website, in the newsletter or sent home on their child's locker.

The Unicorn Children's Centre Inc. has established a number of community liaisons throughout the years. Each helps to provide a well-rounded program for your children.

We are members of ECCENB/SEPENB, Early Childhood Care and Education New Brunswick and the Canadian Childcare Federation.

The Unicorn Children's Centre Board of Directors and all of our staff aim to provide the highest standard of early childhood care & education for your child and your family.

Please note that this Family Handbook is a condensed version of the Unicorns policies and procedures, should you wish to have clarification or more information, please contact the centre's Executive Director during regular business hours.



Thank you for choosing to be part of the Unicorn Family.