

*Acorn Parent Information***PARENT INFORMATION**

Dear _____.

Welcome to Acorn 8 Oaks Daycare Centre. We are looking forward to working with you in the education and care of your child.

Please read the following material carefully and complete and return the necessary forms. The forms we have asked you to read and to which we must have your consent, provides us with information we need to best care for and understand your child. As well, this will inform you of our services and your obligations. All records are kept confidential.

To ensure consistency in caring for your child, it is vital to share an open door of communication between parents and teachers. Just as we share your child's day at the centre with you, we hope you will share your child's experiences at home with us.

Thank You for your cooperation,
Sincerely,

The Staff and Board of
Acorn 8 Oaks Daycare

Program and Philosophy

We seek to instil self-esteem, independence, sensitivity towards others, and a love of learning in the young child. The promotion of the total child's growth emotionally, intellectually, socially, and physically is our aim. To this end, the children are involved in a balance of spontaneous (self-chosen play activities), routine (snack, lunch & rest time), and organized (teacher planned and taught) activities. The program includes group and individual, active and quiet play experiences which are both educational and enjoyable.

Special features at Acorn Daycare Centre: A stimulating quality program; A staff committed to working together as a supportive unit; healthful and varied snacks; interesting small group outings; a challenging playground and the option of part-time as well as full-time daycare.

Discipline and guidance (based on the principle of mutual respect between adult and child), is firm and straightforward. Our aim is to be consistent in setting and maintaining the limits of our daycare, and at the same time, meet the needs of the individual child.

Staff will allow children a period of adjustment to the program, as children take different amounts of time to settle. From time to time staff will informally let parents know how their child is doing at the daycare. Please remember your child's behaviour in the group is often different than at home behaviour. Should concerns arise, the staff, as professional early childhood educators, will meet with you to discuss strategies for helping you and your child. Please keep in mind our goal is to help each child to integrate successfully into the daycare program. Should you have any concerns, feel free to approach staff to set up a meeting to discuss your child's progress, at a convenient time.

Parents are invited to observe any and all portions of the program from time to time. Please join us for a cup of tea or coffee or arrange to have lunch with your child at the centre. We welcome your involvement with your child in the short time spent bringing him/her in to the centre in the morning or picking him/her up in the afternoon. Children enjoy their

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parent's presence while they do a puzzle, paint a picture, build with blocks or put toys away. Also feel free to read a story to a few children in the library if you have time.

GRADUAL ENTRY

Starting daycare is an important event in your child's life. For some children, this will be their first large group experience away from home and as such can be a very frightening, overwhelming experience. Children may wonder. "why am I being brought here? Will the children play with me? Will the grownups be nice to me? Will they feed me if I am hungry? Is there a place for me to go to the bathroom? (and most important) will mommy or daddy ever come back? It is natural for children to have these concerns even though they may not be able to express them in words. Even for children with large group experience, a new daycare can be frightening. Change itself, a new environment, new children, new adults, new routines can confuse and disturb a child.

It is our feeling that a slow, carefully planned entry into the centre minimizes the negative, frightening aspects of beginning daycare and maximizes the chances for a good positive learning experience for your child.

Consequently we have adopted the following entry schedule for all children.

Step One: Parent(s) and child spend a couple of hours at the centre together (9:00 - 11:00).

Step Two: Parent stays with their child for twenty minutes to one half hour; then leaves the child alone in the centre until after lunch (half day).

Step Three: Child stays at centre the full day without his/her parent, and is picked up shortly after rest time.

It is impossible to tell how any individual child will react to a new centre, and so we cannot, without knowing you and your child, set a definite timetable for the entry process. Although

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the gradual entry may seem inconvenient and troublesome for you, in the long run it is truly beneficial to both you and your child.

If it absolutely impossible for the parent(s) to follow through with the gradual entry, arrangements may be made for a relative or close and familiar friend to act as a substitute. Under no circumstances can a child be accepted into the centre without first going through this program of gradual entry.

WHAT TO BRING

Your child will need to bring:

1. small blanket for rest time
2. spare clothing
3. nutritious lunch

Please do not allow your child to bring toys from home. He/She may have difficulty sharing them, and they could easily become lost or broken. Cuddly toys, kept in the child's cubby for sleep time and/or security, are acceptable.

CLOTHING

Please have your child wear play clothes which are warm, comfortable, and easy for him/her to handle. They should be easily laundered, as he/she may fingerpaint, etc. on them. It is important that each child have a complete change of clothes in his/her cubby in case of accidents - shirt, trousers, socks and underpants. The centre has a limited supply of extra clothing for emergencies. If your child wears daycare clothing home, please be sure to launder and return them as soon as possible.

We try to spend part of most days outdoors, so your child will need warm outdoor clothing including boots. In cold weather he/she will need mitts and a hat. In the summer, please provide your child with a sun hat, bathing suit and a towel.

*Acorn Parent Information***TO PREVENT LOST CLOTHING**

1. Remind your child to keep all his/her belongings in his/her cubby.
2. Label articles with your child's name or initials.

REST PERIOD

All children are required to participate in rest time. Many preschool aged children benefit from sleep or quiet rest time midday. During rest time, children are asked to rest quietly on their mats; some children may sleep, depending upon individual needs. Young children often find "rest time" difficult when they are new to the daycare. If children have a favoured blanket or stuffed toy, that helps them to sleep at home, it may be advisable to bring it to the daycare also. The length of the rest period is 1 ½ hours.

Parents are responsible for providing their child with a blanket, which is marked with the child's name. The daycare will assign a fitted sheet to each child, that the parent will be responsible for, for as long as their child is enrolled in Acorn Daycare. Blankets will be sent home to be washed weekly.

DIAPERING / TOILETING

The daycare staff follow standard procedures for diaper changing or potty training, including:

- ⌚ Wearing disposable gloves for diapering
- ⌚ Washing hands between changes
- ⌚ All children and staff washing hands thoroughly between care routines

Staff will:

- ⌚ Encourage and assist children to undress and dress themselves as they are able
- ⌚ Decide with the family when and if the child is physically and emotionally ready to start to use the toilet (accidents are treated in a matter-of-fact manner)
- ⌚ Be patient, supportive and understanding during this learning process
- ⌚ Be respectful of the child's needs

*Acorn Parent Information***NUTRITION**

Parents are responsible for providing their child with an adequate and nourishing lunch. No gum, candy, or "junk" food please.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are especially important to a young child. We like to make some group recognition of them by singing "Happy Birthday". If you wish you may provide a birthday cake, cupcakes, etc. to share at afternoon snack. If you like pictures taken. please send a camera, and we will be pleased to take some.

FIELD TRIPS

We take walking trips in the neighbourhood and visit the local park.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

The daycare is open form 7:30 A.M. to 5:30 P.M. year round, except for all statutory holidays. The daycare is closed between Christmas and New Years.

Try to establish a routine set for daily arrival and departure times of your child, such as 8:00 to 4:00. Children must be at the centre no later than 9:30 A.M. This is to ensure that each child participates fully in all aspects of the daily schedule. It also maintains a consistency of routine so important for a young child, as well as the efficient operation of the centre. Children are to be brought in and delivered directly to a teacher. Similarly, please inform a teacher when you are ready to leave in the afternoon. This is to formally transfer the responsibility for the child from the parent to the teacher or from the teacher to the parent. Information regarding the child's health, mood or behaviour should be exchanged at this time. (If your child will be absent or late, please telephone the daycare by 9:30)

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You will be expected to fill in the sign in sheet each morning. This is very important.. If there was ever an emergency at the daycare (such as a fire) the sign in sheet lets the staff know at a glance, which children were in the daycare at the time. In the normal day to day operation of the centre, the sign in sheet lets the staff know when you will be picking your child up, and if by someone special that day. Feel free to add comments about your child if needed.

The staff is forbidden to allow your child to leave the centre with anyone other than a person authorized by you. For this reason, you are asked to be responsible for keeping the daycare informed of persons who will be picking up your child. Please keep the information on the emergency card up to date. and also remember to make a note in the day book (or telephone if it is an unexpected change later in the day), if you have made a special arrangement with someone else whose name is not on the form. Note: by law persons under the age of 15 can not pick up children at the daycare.

If you should meet with an emergency (car accident, etc.) and cannot call for your child or communicate with us before 5:30 P.M.. we will immediately phone the alternate person you have named. If that person is not available and we have not heard from you by 6:30 P.M. we will notify the Emergency Services Division of the Ministry of Children and Families, when you are able to do so, you can call them at _____ to learn what arrangements have been made for the care of your child.

Staff members are not permitted to drive your child home. Nor are they allowed to put him/her in a taxi except under dire circumstances.

A late fee of \$6.00 for each 15 minutes or part thereof, is charged after closing time up to 6:30 P.M., and is payable to the staff member who has stayed overtime. A parent who is late more than once in a one month period will be charged \$12.00 for each 15 minute period or part thereof. If you are late more than three times without a valid reason, you will be asked to withdraw your child from the centre.

HEALTH

We will do our best to maintain good health by providing proper and safe accommodation, balanced and nutritious snacks, rest and physical exercise. We need your cooperation on the following health concerns.

1. All children should have his/her inoculations up to date, before attending the centre.
2. A child will not be admitted into the centre if there is any question of illness. The children need to be well enough to participate in all of the daily activities, both indoors and outdoors. The centre does not have facilities for the care of sick children. For this reason, you will require alternate care (Someone who can care for your child in case of illness, etc.).
3. Should your child contract a communicable disease, you must notify the centre so that other parents may be informed. A doctor's written health clearance will be required before a child returns after having a contagious illness.

If your child becomes ill at the centre, he/she will be removed from other children, but kept near adults until you or your alternate contact person can be reached to come and pick him/her up.

No medication can be given to children unless it is authorized by the family physician. Please make a note of dosage, etc. on the medication form, and hand the medication directly to a regular staff member.

We recommend that you inform your doctor of your child's attendance in the Centre. This can be helpful if the staff need to contact him/her.

The Public Health Department works closely with us and visits the centre regularly. They would be happy to meet with you if you have any questions or concerns you would like to discuss.

HEALTH EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

In the event of serious injury or illness of your child, you will be telephoned at once. If necessary, your alternate contact person and/or family physician will be called. If it is an emergency, we will call an ambulance or a taxi (a teacher would accompany the child if child/staff ratio can be maintained). If it is necessary we will take your child to Children's Hospital Emergency Department where you can meet us. Every effort would be made to keep the child comfortable and rested. Parents are required to sign a consent form to enable us to do this as well as payment of an ambulance or taxi.

Emergency Procedures

The Centre maintains a supply of emergency earthquake equipment, food and blankets for use in an emergency.

Emergencies requiring evacuation or closure of the Centre are:

- Fire, Flood, Earthquake, Chemical Spillage, Power Failure, Bomb Scare, Extreme Weather Conditions, Sickness of all staff members

The children will be taken to Douglas Park Community Centre at West 20th Avenue and Heather, in an emergency requiring evacuation. Staff members will take emergency information so that parents or alternate emergency person can be contacted to come and pick up the children.

During evacuation, getting the children out of the Centre is the number one priority. Reporting the emergency is secondary.

In a City wide emergency and the building is deemed unsafe by the staff, the children will be taken to the home of our chairperson, Heather MacMillan, 56 West 18th Ave. A note will be visible on the inside window of the daycare door that will include the address.

*Acorn Parent Information***INSURANCE**

Liability: The Centre carries public liability insurance in the amount of \$_____ for injury to children, staff and volunteers. In case of injury to a child while in custody, care or control of the centre, parents hereby waive all claims against the centre in excess of the liability insurance carried by the centre.

FEES AND SUBSIDY

Our fees are: \$_____ per month for full time care.

\$_____ per 3 day per week care.

\$_____ per 2 day per week care.

Fees should be paid by cheque and/or a valid subsidy authorization form, and are due on the first of the month. A \$20.00 penalty will be charged on all late cheques and subsidy forms. Six post-dated cheques are to be submitted twice a year, in January and June.

Some parents may be eligible for full or partial daycare subsidy. To find out if you qualify contact your local office of the Ministry of Children and Families.

When you are withdrawing your child from the centre it is expected that you will give us one months notice. Failure to do so will result in paying a full month's fees. Notice is effective at the end of the calendar month following the month in which the notice is received.

*Acorn Parent Information***PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

Parent involvement in the centre is welcome and encouraged. If you would like to be more involved or have special skills you can share with the children, please inform the staff about arranging something.

CONCERNS

We hope you won't have any major concerns during your stay at the centre, but if you do, here are the steps to follow:

1. Talk to any one of the staff members
2. If the concerns remain unresolved arrange to meet with the Head Supervisor
3. If the concerns continue to be unresolved, arrange an interview with the Board of Directors

FINALLY

We hope this information has been helpful. If you have any questions please feel free to ask any of the staff members, and we wish you and your child a happy stay with us.