



Parent Handbook

A Family Tree School-age Enrichment Program

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OUR PROGRAM MISSION

To provide a safe nurturing enriching environment where children can play, learn, explore and become self-confident independent learners. To provide a safe environment for children to grow and learn the necessary skills to enter and attend Kindergarten.

OUR GOAL

At “A Family Tree” our goal is to provide a friendly and welcoming atmosphere. A place where staff, parents and children feel like they are family.

OUR PROGRAM

“A Family Tree” provides year round quality care. Our program is open from 6:30 am until 6:00pm We provide care for Infants, from age 6weeks,two,three and four year old children and five year olds who do not meet the deadline for starting school and five year olds who attend mid-day Kindergarten.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

At “A Family Tree” we believe it is important for all children to be treated like fairly with compassion and respect.

We believe it is important for all children for feel safe and secure, especially in learning environment where the foundation for the future learning is set. At “A Family Tree” we believe that all children have the basic right to safety while building self-esteem and self-confidence.

OUR STAFF

The staff at “A Family Tree” is hired to meet the needs of the children. All staff must be caring nurturing have patience and must understand what you as a parent want for your child. Staff members’ receive required trainings and are required to have more than twenty hours required by DCYF.

Areas of training include but are not limited to: CPR, First Aid, classroom management, age appropriate curriculum, customer service and Early Learning Standards.

NON- DISCRIMINATION POLICY

We do not discriminate due to gender, race, religion, cultural heritage, national origin, parents marital status, sexual orientation, political beliefs, physical or mental disability or ability to pay.

LICENSING INFORMATION

“A Family Tree” is licensed by the State of Rhode Island and is mandated to uphold all of the rules and regulations pertaining to infants six weeks, two, three, four year old child care licensing.

Children's Rights and Responsibilities

Children's Rights

Staff is responsible for ensuring that children enrolled:

- Have a safe and reliable environment free of hazards
- Have use of all equipment and space on an equal basis: equipment will be in functioning condition
- Have their ideas and feelings respected
- Have opportunities to express their anger, frustration, disappointment, joy etc. in an appropriate manner
- Have activities that allow participants to express their creative ability, as they explore and discover while developing to their fullest potential
- Have an environment that offers a variety of choices: physical gross motor quiet, indoor, outdoor active and passive areas, creative, dramatic play and exploration.
- Have staff members that care about them, enjoy being with them and help them grow
- Are treated with caring, respect, honesty and responsibility

Children need to be responsible for:

- Learning to take consequences for their own actions
- Displaying character development traits: caring, honesty, respect and responsibility
- Respecting the rules that are established for them
- Controlling their anger so that their actions do not harm anyone
- Not willfully damaging any equipment or property in the building or anyone else's property
- Sharing equipment and facilities with all children in the program
- Remaining with staff member at all times and notifying staff if they need to go to another area
- Dressing appropriately for indoor and outdoor play
- Returning materials and equipment to the place they found them and before they start a new activity or go home
- Participating in and carrying out an activity that they committed themselves to

ACTIVITIES AND CURRICULA

Activities and Curricula

Our child care program provides a variety of activities. Your child will be placed in age appropriate groups. A schedule of group rotations is posted in the classrooms. The daily schedule is followed by each group. There is flexibility in the schedule for additional

activities, field trips, visitors and holiday programs. During the school year memos to all parents will be posted on the parent board.as well as health notices.

Summer Camp calendars and welcome letters are sent out to all campers families on the first day of summer camp. On the first day of each month, a calendar noting the activities and curriculum planned for that month will be given to you by the teachers. You will also receive a monthly newsletter providing any miscellaneous information plus items of interest.

POLICIES AND PRODCEDURES

Behavior Management

Rules for positive behavior are included in the section entitled “Children’s responsibilities” and are shared with parents prior to enrollment; Basic rules include respect for each other, the property of others, the facility, the child’s safety and the security of the group.

Behavior management is accomplished through a positive approach that respects the child as an individual. Discipline procedures are handled individually, usually with a mild consequence that is associated with the particular infraction. “Time Out” is used on a limited basis.

Progressive methods of Approved Discipline:

- Establish “House Rules”. Make sure they are stated in the positive; tell children what they can do. Older children should assist in implement them.
- Allow transition time and warnings before consequences occur
- Give verbal warning/reminder
- Redirection
- Talk through the program with the child. The child is encouraged to suggest alternative solutions and assist in implementing them
- Time Out/Cool Down time (a quiet time for child in a designated place within view of the staff):
 - A) remove child from activity
 - B) ask the child to sit away from the group
 - C) after 1-2 minutes allow the child to return to the activity
- If behavior continues to be an issue, establish a behavior chart with the child
- Discuss problematic situations with the child’s parent(s) and incorporate his/her suggestions into the child’s behavior management plan
- For unsafe behavioral incidents, write an incident report and have it signed by the parent(s)
- Immediate suspension or expulsion may result when a child’s behavior endangers the safety of him/herself or other children in the program or when licensing regulated staff/child ratios are not sufficient to maintain the safety of the child

Severe behavioral issues are taken to the Director/Coordinator contacts the parent(s) and sets up a conference. A solution is usually made together as to the outcome and/or disciplinary procedure to take place. The final step is for the Director, parent(s) and the older children to meet to clarify behavioral expectations for the future and a behavioral expectation contract may be drawn up.

In all cases suspension and/or expulsion of a child from the School Age Child Care program is the final decision of the Child Care director. Although a last resort suspension or expulsion may be necessary to ensure the safety of your child and of others in the group.

Restricted Methods of Behavior Management

- No spanking or other corporal punishment
- No cruel, unusual or severe punishment, humiliation, verbal or physical abuse, neglect or abusive treatment
- No denial of meals or snacks, drinks, rest or bathroom facilities as punishment
- No force feeding
- No punishment for soiling, wetting or not using the toilet or other excessive practices of toileting
- No punishment related to eating or not eating food

Any Center staff member who violates any of the above restricted methods will be immediately suspected until further investigation is completed by the center and Department of Children, Youth and Families.

Termination and Suspension Policy

Parents must inform A Family tree Program two weeks in advance if they are withdrawing their child from the program. Parents who fail to do so will still be liable for payment. The a Director reserves the right to terminate day care services with two week advance notice to families. When the health welfare and safety of other children are at stake the Director reserves the right to suspend or terminate child care services immediately.

Possible reasons for suspension and/or termination of a child from day care services include:

- Repeatedly inappropriate behavior or language
- Inappropriate behavior considered to be harmful to your child, staff or others (Parents are still liable for payment for days suspended due to inappropriate behavior)
- Chronic tardiness at pick up time
- Chronic absenteeism
- Overdue fees
- Other as determined and discussed with the Director

When possible warnings and suspensions are used before termination is instituted. Incidents will be documented and shared with parents when possible. A reasonable effort is made to work with the family prior to termination. If any referrals are recommended or requested by the parent, the information will be documented in the child's file.

When a child is terminated from the program the staff shall try when possible to prepare the child for termination in a manner consistent with his/her ability to understand. Suspension will not be for punishment or circumvent the referral requirements and will not be in violation of the licensing regulations. However, there may be incidents endangering the safety of your child, the staff or others which may result in immediate suspension or expulsion.

Supervision: the children are under constant supervision while at the center. The staff has been trained in all areas in a supervisory capacity. We have ongoing staff meetings and trainings to keep everyone up to date with concerns, questions or changes of procedures. The safety of the children is a priority at all times.

There will always be at least two staff members on the premises when children are present. No child will ever be left unattended. The staff knows where every child is in their group at all times. During staff changeover the teachers communicate with each other regarding which children remain in the building. There will be two teachers at the pool whenever it is being used. One staff member will be in or at the poolside at all times. The staff will not allow any jumping, diving or horseplay at the pool. Broken or unsafe toys or equipment from the center or outdoors will be removed immediately. Playground equipment will be used on an age appropriate basis. There will be an hourly check of the inside and outside for possible choking hazards.

Evaluation

In September at the beginning of the school year the teacher(s) will conduct a baseline evaluation on each child. This evaluation provides the teachers with the proper insight for targeting the areas that need special attention and to advance the children in the direction they need to go. Report cards are issued in January and June. During the course of the school year each child in the prek room will also have a portfolio containing projects, achievements and advances they have gained throughout the year. Our goal is not only to teach your child the academics he/she will need in Kindergarten but to also teach them to love learning. We ready all of our children for the move into Kindergarten so they will be able to continue learning and enjoy new surroundings.

Conferences

Parents or staff may request an individual conference with staff or the Program Director at any time.

Special Needs

All children are welcome at our center and we will make every effort to accommodate the needs of all children. Our facility is equipped with a handicap accessible building and rest rooms. The Director will request and review information given by the parent related to the child's participation in the program. Identification of specific accommodations required to meet the needs of the child which would be discussed as well as changed or modification in the child's participation in regular activities would be discussed as well as identification of any special equipment materials ramps or aids. If such accommodations will cause undue burden on the Family Tree Program, the parent will be notified in writing which would include reasons for the decision.

Referral Plans

Through the center connections with various Social Services we have information concerning possible referrals to social, mental health, educational and medical services including but not limited to dental checkups, hearing or vision screening for families. Inquiries about these referral services should be made through the Child Care Director. If the staff has a concern about a child, the behaviors will be observed recorded and reviewed before a referral is recommended. A parent meeting will be set up to discuss the programs concerns and referral.

The program will provide parents with a written statement including the reason for recommending the referral for additional services a brief summary of the programs observations related to the referral and any efforts the program may have made to accommodate the child's needs. The program shall offer assistance to the parents in making the referral and any follow up that may be necessary. The programs a list of referrals for your community see your child's Program Director.

Inclement Weather and/or School Closing Policy

Every effort will be made to open center during inclement weather. Center opening may be delayed to ensure the safe arrival of our staff. We will use the guideline of six inches or more of snow or State of Emergency to determine if the center will be open that day. For confirmation, please watch Chanel 10 or 12 for delays or closing.

Holiday Schedule: the facility will close for the following nine State holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Columbus Day
- Veteran's Day

- 4th of July
 - VJ Day
 - Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
 - Christmas Day

Also, the facility closes early on Christmas Eve at 1pm and New Year's Eve at 4pm

We will be closed Friday or Monday of any holiday that falls on a Sunday. We will post Holiday closings prior to the holiday to enable you to plan your schedules accordingly.

School Vacation Week

All families have two weeks' vacation during the school year in which you are not responsible for tuition payments and three weeks during the summer camp months.

Attendance

Attendance will be taken at the time of the child's arrival. Staff will note any unusual arrival or departure times. Sign-in/out sheets will include the following information: Date, Child's name, Time In, Time out, Full Signature.

Late Pickup Policy

On certain occasions when a parent must be late we have established these firm policies.

- Parent must call the center to let us know what time they expect to arrive or to inform us of alternate transportation arrangements that have been made.
- Parents will be assessed a \$10.00 late fee for the first five minutes when they are late past the scheduled pick up time. There will be an additional \$1.00 per minute after the first fifteen minutes late. The clock at the child's care site will be used to determine the fee charged. The late fee is expected at the time of pick up or no later than the next day.
- In the event of consistent tardiness a case conference will be convened to discuss possible alternatives. Three (3) consistent cases of tardiness may result in your child's termination from the program.

In the event that the center does not receive a prior phone call from the parent the following procedures will be immediately implemented:

- A staff member will contact parents for instructions. If contact cannot be made a staff member will call the emergency contact list to arrange pick up. (Parent will be charge \$1.00 per minute the emergency contact person is late.)
- If by 7 pm contact cannot be made to the child's emergency contact people, a call will be placed to DCYF Emergency Unit to report the abandoned child. Staff members will then follow instructions given by DCYF as to what further arrangements are necessary.

- Parents will be informed to contact DCYF for further instructions.

Authorized Pick Up Policy

A pick up

Authorization Form must be completed by the parent prior to the child's enrollment at the child care program. If a child is to be picked up by someone other than the authorized person, the Center must be notified in writing. Parents or designated persons picking up children MUST come into the building and sign the child out. For your child's safety we will not allow your child to leave the site without an authorized person. A valid photo ID will need to be presented before the child can be released. Our preference of course is for you to tell us in person that someone else will be picking up your child; however, we know that emergencies do arise. If in an emergency it is necessary for you to call in to notify the staff that someone else will be picking up your child you must identify that you are in fact who you say you are. The procedure is as follows: the staff member will ask you to provide the medical ID Insurance information that you filled out upon enrolling. You will be asked the name of the Insurance Company, the policy number and the name of the policyholder. It is imperative that we have in our possession any copies of restraining orders, legal documents pertaining to a child and/or current custodial or guardian papers if they are made by the decision of the courts. We cannot comply with your wishes without these documents. All persons authorized must be 16years of age or older.

Forms

All parents must complete an application form for each child enrolled in the program. You will be given a packet of paperwork to fill out with all pertinent information about your child. This packet must be filled out completely before your child can start at the center. The medical forms must be completed and signed by your child's physician. At least once a year you will receive a form for updating any information and immunization forms, however, it is safer for all concerned if you remember to notify the center of any changes immediately.

Please be aware that if a staff suspects you have been consuming alcohol/drugs you will be asked to have someone else pick up your child. Your child will NOT be released to anyone believed to be under the influence.

Children's Records Requirements

In addition to the above forms, no child may begin attending A Family Tree without current immunizations from the child's physician. The immunization must show that all shots required for the age of the child have been administered and that a current lead test has been performed/ If at any time a child has not had the required immunization and tests a written letter from the physician on letterhead must be submitted to the center as a waiver.

Emergency Procedures

Children experiencing minor injuries such as bumps, bruises, scrapes, bee stings and stomach upsets will be treated by staffs who have received First Aid training. Taking note of specifications on the child's health form. Staff will fill out an incident form and present form to the parents for their signature. A copy will be retained for the center's records and a copy to the parents if they desire one. Parents will be informed of all First Aid given to their child. If their child's symptoms persist, parents will be asked to pick up their child.

In care of a major emergency such as broken bones, puncture wounds etc. the child will be taken by ambulance to the nearest emergency medical facility. Health forms on file will include child and parent information, emergency numbers when parents cannot be reached and a medical release to seek treatment if parents cannot be reached.

Emergency Evacuation Plan

Each child care center has specific plan for emergency evacuation. Please see your center Director for the center's emergency procedures.

The center's emergency procedures are as follows: A child who is injured at the center needs to be transported to the nearest emergency medical facility by ambulance. Parents and guardians will be immediately notified of the child's injury. If the parents/guardian cannot be contacted the emergency contact list will be called. A staff member will accompany the child to the nearest medical facility to await the child's parent, guardian or emergency contact person.

If a child is injured on a field trip location a staff member certified in First Aid will assess the injury and instruct a fellow staff member to obtain the child's emergency contact number from the vehicle and phone an ambulance, parent, guardian or emergency contact person and the Centers administrative staff. The child will then be transported by ambulance to the designated medical facility accompanied by a staff member. The staff member will stay with the child until he child's parent, guardian or emergency contact person arrives at the medical facility.

Field Trip Transportation Plan

Children participating in field trips from the Family Tree Program will be transported in the center vehicles, rented vehicles or transported by foot. The Center is responsible for your child during transportation on field trips. In the event a vehicle should break down, alternative transportation will be secured at the branch with center vehicles or rental vehicles. All groups visiting an offsite facility will be responsible for travel First Aid and emergency procedures. At least one person on the field trip will be certified in First Aid and CPR.

Clothing

Children at the center are active and involved. They should wear clothes that are seasonally appropriate, comfortable, and practical and wash easily. All belongings should be labeled with the child's name and we ask parents not allow their child to bring in unnecessary items. A Family tree is not responsible for lost or damaged clothing. Please check of "Lost and Found" area for any lost items. Please send your child to the program with an extra set of clothing in case of accidents.

Sickness

Please keep your child home if he/she seems listless, unusually irritable, complains of aches, is feverish or seems to be unusually pale or flushed. It is better to be overcautious than to risk exposing the rest of the children and staff. The following is a guideline for you to follow in determining when to keep your child at home.

Child should be kept home for:

- Earache
- Fever over 101 degrees
- Strep throat
- Stomachache
- Anything that is contagious i.e. chickenpox, hand, foot& mouth disease etc.
- The child is unable to keep up with the pace of the day
- Diarrhea/vomiting
- Rashes that are contagious
- Head Lice (until the child is nit free)
- There may be times when a child is not allowed to return to the center without a release from his/her physician.

Child May Come With:

- Earaches, strep throat(provided they have been on medication for 24hours or have had three doses)
- Colds
- Hay fever
- Anything that is not contagious
- The child is able to keep up with the pace of the day

Each child responds and reacts differently to sickness, so please be advised that the teachers and Director may need to send children home if they are unable to keep up with the pace of the day. If your child is at the center and becomes ill, you will be required to pick up your child immediately. Please be aware these guidelines are set forth to help maintain the health and safety of your child and other children as well.

Please notify the Center Program immediately if your child has been exposed to a contagious disease. The Director/Site Coordinator will notify you if and when it is necessary to keep your child at home. All parents will be given notice if a child in the program has been reported to have a contagious disease. Notices will include information on symptoms and general information on the contagion.

Administration of Medication

- Written parent authorization required for administering all prescription medications
- All prescriptions medication must have a written order from child's physician
- All medication must be in its original container with all pertinent information displayed
- Written consent form signed by parent required for all non-prescription medication.
- Center program will keep written record of administration of all medications
- Center will store all medications under proper conditions for sanitation, security and safety.

Nutritional Needs

A Family Tree Programs shall work with parents to help ensure that the children's nutritional needs are being met in accordance with USDA requirements. Parents are expected to provide a nutritious lunch and snack for their children (a nutritious lunch would include something from all four food groups. Attached you will find a My Plate and some nutritional guidelines that you may find interesting and helpful when considering what you will send for your child to eat. The center will ensure that nutritious snacks are provided for children. In addition the center will follow parental or physician's orders in relation to special diets.

The center will provide a nutritious breakfast, two snacks to children attending the full day program. Infants are provided whole milk, formula and two snacks. Should the formula offered not be acceptable to the parent, the parent is then responsible to provide such formula. Lunches are provided by parents. If no lunch is provided by parent, the center will provide one and an additional charge may be posted on the parent's bill. In addition parents will receive a monthly Food Menu as well as being posted in the classrooms.

In your enrollment packet you will find the following:

- WIC informational flyer with the most current guidelines
- Meal Benefit Application Form with Instructions
- Household Letter

Allergies

Any allergies to foods, medications, chemicals or other materials MUST be listed in the "Allergies" section of the child's information form. Please include any reactions and treatment of

the allergies. This information will be placed on a master list and posted throughout the center. All staff will be informed of the child's allergies and instructed to avoid these products.

Registration for childcare-enrollment Criteria

Registration is first offered to the existing Family tree participants, then to the established waiting list and then to the general public. Enrolment capacities are dictated by the DCYF Licensing Unit.

Ratio: We make sure every effort to follow all the DCYF regulations as stated in the regulations of Licensure including the child to staff ratio. The ratio for Infants 6wks-18months is 4:1, 2-3 years is 6:1, 3years is 9:1, 4years is 10:1 and 5years is 12:1.

Individual registration procedures are done throughout the year by appointment and include a meeting with the Director/Coordinator, a tour of the facility and a parent and child orientation.

The first summer camp enrollment registration packets will be available to enrolled parents first. There will be an open enrollment during the months of May to June. All registrations must include a \$50.00 registration fee.

Registration Costs

Any changes in registration information concerning you and your child(ren) must be arranged on an ongoing basis with the Director/Coordinator (i.e. changes in pick up authorization, addresses, work or home phone numbers, emergency contacts) If you need to change your child's schedule (i.e. days your child attends etc.) changes can only be accommodated if space allows.

Transfer of Records

Upon written request of the parent, the licensee shall transfer a copy of the child's record to the parent or any other person the parent identifies when the child is no longer in the program.

Financial Information

- Child care rates are charged weekly and are due the first of the week your child attends. Payments are made whether the child is out sick; the facility is closed due to a legal holiday, snow cancellations or over extended vacations no taken as vacation weeks. If payments are not made the first day of the week a \$10.00 late fee will be imposed. Please come into the office to make all tuition payments unless signed up for automatic debit withdrawal.
- Parents whose payments are more than two weeks late will be asked to withdraw their child from the Family Tree program unless their arraignments have made with the Director or bookkeeper.
- Parents are responsible for payment for holidays that fall on student's scheduled day.

- Parents are responsible for payment when their child does not attend Family Tree program on their scheduled day.
- Parents are responsible to pay for extra days used and extended care
- A \$35.00 per family non- refundable registration fee will be required at the time of registrations during the school year. \$50.00 first child \$30.00 each additional child registration fee will be required at the time of registration to reserve the child/ren spot.
- A Security Deposit equal to one week tuition is required before the child may start the program. The security deposit is refundable when the child leaves the program or used for the last weeks tuition.
- The current published a rate schedule will be provided upon inquiring about the program or on the first visit, whichever is applies.
- Returning families will pay a \$25.00 non- refundable re-registration fee and a security deposit in order to hold their child's slot.
- Due to Insurance reasons the staff cannot open the center before 7am. The facility closes at 6:00pm. A \$10.00 fee will be charged for early arrivals and late departures. Our staff members have responsible while allowing us to prior to opening and they all have families to go home to in the evening. Please respect our hours of operation.

Financial Assistance

The tuition is based on covering the operating costs of the program. We make every effort to keep tuition reasonable while allowing us to provide quality programming. We also accept DHS payments for qualified individuals who provide an active Certified Number issued by the Department of Human Services office. The Certification Number must be entered into the computer and be active before any child care can begin attending the Center. If at any time a child attends the program before a valid certificate number is issued and active in the DHS system, the parent is responsible for the tuition payment before the child can start the program. If the Certificate number becomes inactive by the DHS office, parents are responsible for the tuition payments until the DHS office issues a reapproved. Tuition payments made by the parent will be reimbursed if and when the DHS office reimburses the center. Any payments made during an inactive DHS period and the center does not get compensated for them from DHS, the parent will not be reimbursed.

Ask the Director/Coordinator for more details.

PREVENTING CHILD ABUSE

A.Strategies

These preventive strategies are designed to protect the children in our program and to protect our staff and volunteers from being wrongly accused of incidences of child abuse.

- The program has in place a comprehensive pre-employment screening procedure to screen out staff not suited for working with children.
- We take any allegation or suspicion of child abuse seriously and will respond accordingly.
- Staff understands their legal obligation to report suspected abuse.
- Policies procedures and training are available relating to discipline, supervision, staff/participant interaction staff and volunteer Code of Conduct, etc.
- Staff understands what practices may be considered abusive and the difference between what may be considered appropriate and inappropriate touch.
- Defensive strategies have been identified for avoiding unfounded allegations in our abusive prevention training for staff.
- Staff communicates frequently with parents regarding day to day activities and encourage parents to report or question any behavior or event their child participates in and are encouraged to do so.
- Staffs try to identify stressed parents and offer support and referrals for help.
- Staff have learned how to discuss sensitive issues with children such as toileting, sleeping and questions about sex.
- Staff protects themselves and the center by agreeing not to be alone with youth or program participants outside of center program or facilities.

B. Mandated Reporting

We are licensed by the State of Rhode Island and mandated to report any and all suspicion of child abuse and /or neglect. Any suspected case of child abuse and/or neglect shall be reported to all the Department of Children, Youth and Families (1-800-RICHILD) in accordance with state law.

Our staff complies with the necessary education criteria set forth by the State of Rhode Island and the Regulations of Licensure. We have an orientation and training program that each staff member is required to attend upon employment.

In order to insure the wellbeing of the children in our care, our staff has a continuing duty under state law to report incidents of possible neglect or abuse, including physical, sexual and psychological abuse, to the Department of Children, Youth and Families and to cooperate in any investigation of such possible neglect or abuse. We do not have discretion in this matter but must make such referrals whenever we have reasonable cause to believe that a child might have been harmed by anyone, including non-family members and we may be subject to criminal penalties if we fail to report such possible harm. Moreover, in grievous cases, we may refer the matter directly to the police or consult with the District Attorney.

As a child care program, we are mandated by Rhode Island State Law to report all incidents of suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Children, Youth and Families. If a case of child abuse or is suspected by a staff member or in the care of a staff member the following procedures have been put in place.

C. A Family Tree Procedures for reporting Suspected Child Abuse

The center advocates a positive guidance and discipline policy with an emphasis on positive reinforcement prevention and the development of self-discipline. At no time will the following disciplinary techniques be tolerated: physical punishment striking, biting, kicking, squeezing, shaming, withholding restroom privileges, confining children in small locked rooms or verbal or emotional abuse.

Affectionate touch and the warm feelings it brings are important factors in helping a child grow into a loving and peaceful adult. However, staff and volunteers need to be sensitive to each persons need for personal space (ie not everyone wants to be hugged). The center encourages appropriate touch; however at the same time it prohibits inappropriate touch or other means of sexually exploiting children.

In the event that there is an accusation or suspicion of child abuse, the center will take prompt and immediate action as follows:

- At the first report or probable cause to believe that child abuse has occurred, the individual will notify Program Director, who will then review the incident with his/her designate. If the Program Director is not immediately available, the individual should report to the senior staff member. This review by the supervisor cannot in any way deter the reporting of child abuse by the mandated reporter.
- The person receiving the initial report will be responsible for confirming the facts reported and the condition of the child on the day of the first report.
- Data concerning the child will be obtained within the program through discussion with the initial reporter and the other staff.
- After the information is secured, the Program Director will call the Protective Services Unit of the Department of Social Services to report the case. Within 48 hours the Program Director will file the appropriate documentation with the Department of Social Services.
- Any staff or volunteer named in the report will, without exception, be suspended until the Department of Social Services and/or the Office of Child Care Services have completed their investigations. A positive finding dictates immediate termination.
- In case of a disagreement (or uncertainty) concerning the need to report, the Program Director may not substitute his/her judgment for any mandated report within the Program. While agreement of all professionals involved is desirable,

the Program Director must report to the Department of Social Services even if he/she believes the mandated reporter is incorrect.

- The parents or legal guardian of the child (ren) involved in the alleged incident will be promptly notified in accordance with the relevant state or local agency.
- Whether the incident or alleged offense takes place on or off the Center premises, it will be considered job related (because the youth- involved nature of A Family Tree).
- Reinstatement of the program volunteer or employed staff person will occur only after all allegations have been cleared to the satisfaction of the persons named.
- All staff and volunteers must be sensitive to the need for confidentiality with the handling of this information, and therefore, should only discuss the incident with the persons named. All reports must be kept in a locked file.

PARENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Parent input

Parents are encouraged to discuss concerns with their child's Lead teacher or Site Coordinator. If they are not comfortable approaching the staff member, the parent and Director develop a plan together to work toward a resolution. An explanation will be provided to the parent when a parent makes suggestions as to program or policy of a center and the suggestions are not adapted in to the program. The program will decide whether or not the parental suggestions will be implemented.

Parents are encouraged to participate in the Parent Advisory Group.

Parents will receive a program evaluation form annually. We ask that you fill this form out and return it to the center. You will be evaluating the center, staff, the care your child receives, the comfort level of you and your child care etc. We need to determine our effectiveness in meeting the needs of your children. We take your comments and concerns very seriously and continually strive to have the highest quality center as possible.

Parent Visits and Conferences

In order to ensure a quality program, we need your help. We encourage parents to visit at any time. Conferences may also be arranged by appointment. Open and friendly communication is essential. Parent participation and input is welcomed. The children staff and Director appreciate your creativity ideas and leadership in activities.

Parents concerns or complaints about the program should be immediately directed to the Site Coordinator or Director. Details surrounding the parents concern or

complaint will be reviewed. Solutions will be discussed and an action plan will be implemented. Feel free to discuss any concerns or suggestions that you may have with the staff and/or the Director.

Meeting prior admittance

The administrator or his designee meets with the parent prior to admitting the child to the center. At the meeting, the parent will be provided with the th following information:

- The center’s written statements of purpose
- Types of services provided
- Behavior management
- Termination and suspension policy
- Sa list of suggested nutritious foods you could send for snack and meals
- The policy identifying and reporting child abuse and neglect; the transportation plan
- SA copy of the health care policy
- Procedure for administration of medication
- Procedures for providing emergency health care and the illness exclusion policy
- A copy of the fee schedule

All of this information may be contained in the “Parent Handbook”. Parents should be given the opportunity to visit the center’s classroom either at the time of the meeting or prior to the enrollment of the child.

C. Children’s Records

All information contained in your child’s file is privileged and confidential and cannot be released without your consent or court order. Authorized representatives from the Office of Child Care Services and the Department of Social Services and the local police department have the right and responsibility to review all records upon request.

Access to the Record

The parent shall have access to the child’s record at reasonable times. In no event shall such access be delayed more than two (2) business days after the initial request without the consent of the child’s parent.

Amending the Record

A new set of registration forms will be required once a year to ensure the center has updated information. Please notify the center of any changes to your information during the year enrolled.

Transfer of Records

Upon written request of the parent a copy of the child's record shall be transferred to the parent or any other person the parent identifies.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PROGRAM

A. Providing Information to the Department of Children, Youth and Families

The center must make available to the DCYF Office any information required to be kept and maintained under these regulations and any other information reasonably related to the requirements of these regulations. This includes information in the child's records. Authorized employees of DCYF are not to remove identifying case materials from the Center premises and are required to maintain the confidentiality of individual records.

B. Reporting Abuse and Neglect

All Center staff are mandated reporters. They are required by law to report suspected abuse and neglect to the DCYF Office or Program Administrator. The center must have written policies and procedures for reporting and must provide the written policy to you upon enrolment.

C. Notification of Injury

The Center must notify the parent immediately of any injury that requires emergency care. They must also notify the parent in writing, if any first aid is administered to the child.

WE CARE ABOUT YOUR CHILDREN VERY MUCH AND THEIR HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELL BEING IS VERY IMPORTANT TO US, AS IS YOUR COMFORT AND SECURITY LEAVING YOUR CHILDREN IN OUR CARE. WE HOPE WE MAKE THE TRANSITION FROM HOME TO OUR SCHOOL AS EASY AS POSSIBLE FOR YOU AND YOU'RE FAMILY.

Parent Statement of Understanding and Receipt Slip

The following information is important for the safety and protection of your child. Please read the information, sign the form and return it to the Director.

I understand my monthly tuition fee and agree to pay this amount by the date it is due.

I understand that payments are due the first day of the week my child attends. A late fee of \$10.00 is charged when payments are not received by Friday of the week.

I understand that my child will not be allowed to leave the program with an unauthorized person. Any person authorized to pick up my child must either be listed on the appropriate form or other arrangements must be made by informing the office in Orson of a change.

I understand that should a person arrive to pick up my child who appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the child's safety, staff may have no recourse not to contact the police. Please do not put staff in a position where they have to make the judgment call.

I understand that the staff is mandated, by state law to report any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities for investigation.

I have my copy of the Family Tree Policies and procedures. I agree to familiarize myself and my child with the information contained in this booklet and understand the statements above and agree to abide by them.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Child's Name

Date