

# Parent Handbook

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## Parent Checklist:

- Registration Package
  - Immunization status
  - Care Card number
  - Emergency Contacts
- Subsidy Forms
- Inside and outside shoes
- Clothing suitable for all weather conditions
- At least one change of clothes
- Diapers, formula, baby food (as applicable)

***Please remember that it is your responsibility to clearly label all of your child's belongings***

Welcome to the Splatsin Tsm7aksáln (Splatsin Teaching Centre) Society. This handbook will help you understand our policies, procedures, and expectations, as well as tell you about our centre. If you are unclear about anything in the handbook, please don't hesitate to contact the centre and speak with any of the staff.

### **About the Society and the childcare centre:**

We are a non-profit organization governed by a Board of Directors, who meet monthly to discuss matters relating to the operations of the centre including projects, policies, and finances. Our childcare centre is licensed pursuant to the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* and *Child Care Licensing Regulations*, and our programming and staff meet all requirements set forth by licensing.

We have programming that is appropriate to all ages and developmental levels of children in care, from newborns to school aged. Our fully secured building and playground offer individual and separate areas for each age group, ensuring the activities in which they participate encourage the health, safety, and dignity of the children. We provide hot, nutritious lunches and snacks in line with the Canada Food Guide, and observe dietary and allergen restrictions for children where necessary.

The philosophy of our childcare centre is that children come first in everything we do, and as such our programs are all designed in the best interest of the children in care. Our goal is to provide culturally appropriate, inclusive care that fosters the ongoing learning and development of the children in the centre.

The Society strives to form a partnership with the parents in fostering the development of the children in our care. We provide diverse programs that recognize the individuality of each child, and are respectful of differences in race, gender, religion, nationality, ability, and family status. We want parents to be active members in their child's care, and provide opportunities for their involvement through meetings, workshops, fund-raising events, newsletters, field trips, language classes, and cultural lessons.

### **Building security:**

For security purposes, all families and visitors are required to enter the building through the front door. Usually when you arrive, you will need to alert staff using the doorbell beside the front door. Staff will come greet you at the door and let you in.

At this time due to the covid 19 pandemic we are not allowing anyone other than staff and children to enter the Centre.

Doors inside the centre are locked at all times, and gates are latched with childproof latches. This ensures that only authorized persons can enter the building and move between rooms, and ensures ongoing safety and security for the children in care.

### **Registration procedures:**

Parents or guardians are responsible for completing the child's registration form upon enrollment. Please ensure that you have all items listed on the checklist on the front page of this

document. Pre-Covid we recommended that parents visit our centre to become familiar with our programming, and to become acquainted with our staff, however for health and safety reasons we now do an online tour of our Centre. Parents can meet staff outdoors at the Centre and can keep communication open through our HiMama app.

### **Hours of operation:**

Our centre is open from 8am until 5pm, Mondays to Fridays. We operate on the same schedule as the public school system (SD.83), and are therefore closed for some Pro-D days, all statutory holidays, during Christmas Break, Spring Break, and Summer Break.

### **Programming:**

Children develop positive self image by being able to do things for themselves, and we therefore encourage children to do as much as possible for themselves. Our programming is based on best practices and up to date research into child development and early childhood education, and incorporates culturally relevant First Nations topics and activities. Our childcare centre interacts closely with the Society's Language Program to provide Splats'in language training to the children.

### **Signing in:**

Each program has a sign-in sheet, where a teacher will mark your child in and out each day. When a teacher is signing your child in they will go over a Covid questionnaire with you and take your child's temperature. These sheets are a legislative requirement, and ensure we know where your child is at all times.

### **Payment policy:**

Affordable Child Care Benefit: These get billed at the beginning of the month and will be billed for the full 20 days as per ACCB funding policies.

Government subsidy applications (Affordable Childcare Benefit) are the responsibility of the parents, though Centre staff will assist you in preparing the forms.

Affordable Child Care Benefit will only cover 20 days of childcare in a calendar month. As such, the Centre requires payment in accordance with the above-noted payment policy for all days exceeding 20 in a calendar month.

Parent Payments: For parents who pay their own fees – our Centre will bill at the end of the month. You will be billed for all days booked regardless of whether your child was sick or at our Centre. The only time you won't be billed is when we have a Centre closure or we are short staffed and can't offer care. This policy is in line with other daycare Centre policies.

Payments will be made directly to the Executive Director, or to your child's teacher and a receipt will be given to you. Payment can be made at the Centre by debit (We have a mobile square), cash, or personal cheque.

If the afterschool program runs for a full day (this may happen during a school closure) it is the parent's responsibility to pay the full day \$20 fee that day.

### **Withdrawing your child:**

We require written notice two weeks in advance of withdrawing your child from care. In lieu of notice, you may provide payment of two weeks childcare fees.

If your child is unable to attend the centre for any reason (parent vacation, child illness, etc.), no refund of fees will be provided. In certain circumstances, with at least two weeks notice in writing, the centre may be able to provide refund if we are able to fill the spot on a temporary basis. This will be left to the sole discretion of centre management.

### **Missed Days Policy**

If your child is unable to attend for the day, please phone and let their teacher know by 10am. This is especially important if your child arrives at the centre by bus: when the bus arrives, and your child is not there and we haven't received notice that they will not be attending, we must take time away from programming to ensure your child's safety. By providing us with notice that your child won't be in attendance, we can be confident in their safety and continue to provide our high quality programming to the other children in the centre.

### **Parent participation**

Before the Covid 19 pandemic our facility had an open door policy, and we welcomed and encouraged parent visits and participation. We usually have various events throughout the year where parent attendance and participation is especially welcome, such as feasts and field trips. We are hoping to open our door to parent participation soon!

### **Drop-off and pick up procedures**

Our centre is open from 8:00am until 5:00pm. We encourage parents to have their child at the centre before 10:00am to ensure they have every opportunity to fully participate in the programming for the day.

Parents who pick up their child after 5:00pm will be charged a late fee of \$1 per minute. This is to be paid directly to the centre staff accompanying your child. Please note that late fees are not covered by subsidy. If we are unable to reach a parent or Emergency Contact after 6:15pm, we will contact the Ministry for Children and Family Development (MCFD) or the Splatsin Stmamlt Services.

### **Bus Service**

For parents who are unable to provide their child with a means of transportation to and from the centre, the Society provides a bus-service on an as-needed basis. As the van can only seat five children, we are unable to guarantee pick up or drop off service for any child on any given day. Preference will be given to those members of the community who have legal and/or valid

reasons for being unable to pick up or drop off their children (e.g. no drivers license, no insured vehicle, etc.)

The Society reserves the right to not offer bus service from time to time due to staffing requirements at the centre. There may be instances where the number of children in care require all staff to be present at the centre to meet the staffing requirements of the legislation, and in those circumstances we will be unable to have a staff person drive the van for pick up and drop off service. The Program Supervisor will contact all parent's potentially affected by these circumstances to give them ample time to arrange for alternative means of transportation.

### **Safe release of children**

We are unable to release children to individuals who are not the child's parent or legal guardian unless we have received confirmation that this is permitted. We must have, in writing, consent to release your child to somebody other than a parent or legal guardian. Without this the child will remain in our care until we can get in contact with a parent or legal guardian.

Verbal permission via telephone will be permitted as long as the parent/guardian confirms detailed information about the pick-up person (name, address, telephone number, relationship to child) and the person presents photo identification to verify said information at the centre. Staff will document the time of the telephone call and the information shared.

The centre will not release any child to any person who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs. In these circumstances, a family member or Emergency Contact must come and pick up the child. If the individual who appears to be under the influence insists on taking the child, the RCMP will be contacted.

### **Custodial and related court orders**

If a custody or court order exists within a family, a copy of the order will be placed in the child's file and the instructions followed at all times. Families need to inform staff of all custody and court order changes.

The child's file is confidential to our centre staff, who are bound by confidentiality clauses in employment contracts. The information in your child's file about custody and unauthorized access is to ensure the safety and well being of your child while under our care.

### **Release of Information About Children in Care**

Occasionally, natural parents of children in care will request information regarding their child who is in the care of the Splitsin Stsmamlt Services or the Ministry of Children and Family Development. All such requests are to go to the Licensing Manager and/or Executive Director, who will contact the appropriate Social Worker for consent to release the information or to allow the parent to come into the centre.

Please note that centre staff are not able to supervise visitation for natural parents of children in care, as they are required to be fully attentive to the needs of the children.

## Car seats

The centre encourages the proper use of appropriate car seats for the age of your child. If a parent does not have a car seat to safely transport their child, they may request to borrow one on a short-term basis from the centre.

## Child illness policy

To protect the health of centre staff and the other children in care, we ask that parents do not bring their child to the centre if they are exhibiting **any** of the following symptoms:

- Persistent Cough
- Sore throat
- Difficulty swallowing
- Body aches
- Ear aches
- Unusual fatigue or tiredness
- Infected eyes
- Continuous running nose that is not normal to the child (clear, yellow or green)
- Un-diagnosed skin rash – we will require a note from a doctor prior to the return of your child to care. Also, no open sores.
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Scabies -must be treated and all sores closed before returning to the Centre
- Lice -your child may attend the centre after receiving appropriate treatment, and after the removal of all lice nits.

If your child becomes ill while at the centre, we will contact you to pick them up as soon as possible. If we cannot reach you, we will contact the child's Emergency Contact person. If your child is diagnosed with a communicable disease within 24 hours of attending the centre, please notify our facility as other children may have been exposed.

If your family has COVID please keep your child at home until everyone is better. If your child has COVID please notify us right away, so we are able to contact anyone who may have been exposed.

If you believe your child to have any of the above symptoms due to allergies or asthma, we need to have received a note from an allergy specialist or Doctor.

## Medication policy

Staff will administer doctor prescribed medication to your child only upon receipt of a completed Medication Form. These forms can be obtained from your child's teacher. Medication must be in its original container with the child's name, physician's name, and dosage clearly indicated. Please note: the centre will not administer over-the-counter medication (cough syrup, Tylenol) to any child for any reason.

### **Fire drill system**

We practice fire drills monthly, in accordance with the *Child Care Licensing Regulation*. As our fire drill system requires us to leave the building, it is important that your child has indoor shoes or slippers at all times.

### **Emergency plan**

Emergency evacuations are for events that are more serious than just fires, and that may affect the entire community. We practice our emergency evacuation procedure at least once per year.

Upon evacuating the centre, we will take all children to the Community Centre that all children and staff are accounted for. Parents will be immediately notified, and asked to pick up their children.

### **Field trips**

Fieldtrips have been put on hold due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

Usually before the pandemic your child's teacher would organize educational and culturally relevant field trips. Before your child would be able to attend, we will require a permission slip or consent form signed by a parent or legal guardian.

Parents are welcome and invited to attend all field trips. For those field trips that require travel by vehicle, your child's teacher will arrange a drop-off time and location. The centre is unable to transport all children by vehicle to remote field trip sites.

### **Clothing**

Please ensure your child has appropriate clothing for outdoor play in each season. This may include boots, jackets, snow pants, gloves, and hats as necessary. Your child also requires outdoor shoes, indoor shoes or slippers, and at least one change of clothing.

Ensure that your child's clothing items are clearly identified with their name. The centre is not responsible for any lost or stolen items.

### **Toys from Home**

We ask that children do not bring toys from home to the Centre, with the exception of a stuffy for nap time if needed.

### **Child guidance**

Our centre believes in positive guidance techniques such as modeling and encouraging expected behavior, redirection, and setting clear limits. Your child will be able to feel comfortable and confident in the knowledge that their teacher's expectations match and respect their developing capabilities.

Childcare staff will respect the fact that all children have unique personalities deserving of their respect and total commitment, and will use positive re-direction and reinforcement with additional verbal explanations and clear choices where possible.

To ensure the health, safety, and dignity of children in care, we will ensure that no child will be:

- Subjected to shoving, hitting, shaking, spanking or any other form of corporal punishment,
- Subjected to harsh, belittling, or degrading treatment, whether verbal, emotional, or physical, that would humiliate the child or undermine the child's self respect,
- Confined, physically restrained, or kept, without adult supervision, apart from other children or other staff members as a form of punishment,
- Deprived of meals, snacks, rest, or necessary use of the toilet as a form of punishment

Holding the child to prevent injury, or temporary removal from group activities will be considered as a last resort, only after all other verbal direction and guidance have failed. Removal from programming will only be used as required to give the child a "cooling-off" period before they are permitted to rejoin the group.

Centre staff shall view the inevitable small conflicts between children as opportunities to teach and help children learn problem-solving skills. Staff will use caring, supportive discipline techniques to allow the children to develop a sense of trust within themselves and in adults in their environment.

### **Abuse policy**

As required by law, any child abuse or suspected child abuse will be reported to the Director of Family and Child Services or the Ministry for Children and Family Development.

### **Incident reporting**

For the purpose of confidentiality, incidents involving your child will be reported to the parents on an "Incident Report Form", but names of other children involved will not be included. These forms must be signed by the parent and returned to the centre, where they will be filed in your child's file. Any injuries requiring medical attention will be reported to Community Care Licensing by the centre, as required by legislation.

### **Staff and parent concerns and communication**

Parents are expected and required to communicate with centre staff in a polite and appropriate manner. Physical and/or verbal abuse will not be tolerated.

If you would like to speak about specific issues related to your child, you may make an appointment with their teacher for a mutually agreeable date and time. We encourage open communication between parents and the centre at all times, but recognize that pick-up and drop-off periods can be hectic, and not foster easy and clear communication.

The Himama app, is a great tool for communication between parents and the Centre, please download the app to see your child's daily activities and schedule.



## Food policy

It is the Society's policy to provide healthy, nutritious food to the children in our care to encourage and assist healthy development and positive eating habits. Our food is based on the Canada Food Guide recommended daily servings for children, and includes two healthy snacks and a nutritious lunch. Food will never be used as a reward or punishment, and children will be offered all foods.

Our centre has an allergen policy in place, which includes posting information on the child's allergies in their files and in the kitchen. Staff who are responsible for preparing food will check the allergy cards daily and ensure that no inappropriate food is served to any child.

Our centre follows a strict "no junk food" policy. We will not serve candy, processed food items, or food items high in sugar high in saturated fat to children in care, nor will we allow them to eat these food items in the centre if they're brought from home. The centre ensures that all food items used in the preparation of food follow the trans-fat restrictions put forth by Health Canada. During Centre parties for Halloween, Valentines Day etc. we will be the only time we serve special treats.

We have a ZERO PEANUT POLICY in place. Please do not send any food items in your child's school lunch/snacks that contain peanut butter. They will not be served here as we may have children with severe peanut allergies. Your cooperation is appreciated.

## Our programs

### Infant / Toddler (Fawn / Bear Cub) Program – 250-838-6404, ext. 224

- **Staff Ratio:** one employee per four children
  - 1 infant & toddler educator for ≤ 4 children
  - 1 IT educator & 1 educator for 5-8 children
  - 1 IT educator, 1 educator, & 1 assistant for 9-12 children
- **Maximum group size:** 12 children
- **Maximum licensed capacity:** 24 children

The philosophy of our Infant / Toddler Program is to give the children the words for their feelings and the skills to problem-solve on their own and to help develop their self-help skills. We will provide a positive environment that helps to develop each child's specific level of development.

Toddlers are active, curious people who often act on impulse. They "test", sometimes doing things that are dangerous, and sometimes intruding on the rights of others. These are learning situations, and through them children gain a sense of their personal power, as well as reasonable limits and social skills.

Our goal is to help children develop their internal controls without threatening their self-esteem. Our method is to show children alternative appropriate behavior, and avoid labeling or judgmental language.

Children at times are moved away from other children briefly if they seem to be asking for space or if they need help stopping themselves from hurting other children. This also allows children to foster a sense of individuality.

It is our intent that the children in our Infant / Toddler Program will graduate into our other programs with self-confidence, independence, decision-making skills, and respect for themselves and others. Caregiving is the main curricular focus of the program, and consists of eating, diapering, dressing, and napping. Daily caregiving routines are seen as important learning opportunities for focused one-on-one interactions with children.

### **30 Months to School Age (Salmon) Program – 250-838-6404, ext. 222**

- **Staff ratio:** one employee per eight children
  - 1 educator for ≤ 8 children
  - 1 educator & 1 assistant for 9-16 children
  - 1 educator & 2 assistants for 17-25 children
- **Maximum group size:** 25 (with not more than 2 children <36 months in a group)
- **Maximum licensed capacity:** 25

Our philosophy is that “children come first” in all that we do. Our centre will provide an atmosphere that stimulates positive learning, growth, and development in your child in a manner that is fun, safe, and positive.

The foundation of our program is to treat all children with respect for their individuality and capabilities. We will provide experiences that allow each child to learn real problem-solving skills, in hopes they develop a view of themselves as capable individuals. Providing children choices as often as possible allows them to feel that they have a sense of power in their own lives.

Children in the program will be encouraged to learn problem solving and independence, through the provision of opportunities to promote respect for others and for themselves.

### **School Age (Eagle) Program – 250-838-6404, ext. 223**

- **Staff ratio:** one employee per fifteen (15) children
- **Maximum group size:** 30
- **Maximum licensed capacity:** 15

Our philosophy and goals for the after school program are to provide safe, fun, and encouraging environments for recreation and learning. We will encourage opportunities to promote respect for self and for others in the program.

Our after school program will help give the youth their “wings” by allowing them to be involved in decision-making for the program. As such, our curriculum is based on the interests of the group, and will include culturally appropriate activities.

### **Aboriginal Infant Development Program – 250-838-6404, ext. 226**

Our AIDP Coordinator works 1-on-1 with any family in the community who has a child between the ages of 0 and 36 months. These services are available to all families, and not just those whose children attend our childcare centre.

The AIDP Coordinator is qualified to do Giselle Assessments, as well as Ages and Stages Assessments on children at the request of the parent or guardian. We also provide parent and tot groups, infant massage, parent sewing groups, and other activities that foster cooperation and collaboration in the development of the child.

To help assist in appropriate development of children in the community, we have an extensive resource library, toy lending program, car seat loan program, and welcoming gifts and ceremonies for new parents.

### **Splats'in Language and Culture Program – 250-838-6404, ext. 225**

Our Society takes pride in the work our Language and Culture Program has done to retain and promote the Splats'in language. By collaborating between the childcare programs and the language programs, our centre is able to offer culturally relevant education to children, as well as develop Splats'in language skills at an early age.

Throughout the year, children from the centre will take on-site “field trips” to interact with the grandmothers in the Language and Culture Program. This will encourage respect for elders, cultural sensitivity, and language training in the children, and will form a significant part of the centre's language and culture curricula.