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# Summer Care Program

## Parent Information & Policy Handbook



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## Mission Statement

It is our mission to help children become independent, self-assured individuals by providing a safe, caring, inspiring space where we create opportunities to build on children's self-esteem and self-love, assist them with developing relationships, teach important values, life-skills and how to respect themselves, others and their environment. We want every child to know we believe in them and that they are all Superstars!

## Philosophy

We will do our best to meet the needs of each child socially, emotionally, and physically through our creative and innovative programming.

We feel that children need to learn and grow through self-discovery and exploration. When children are given an environment rich with opportunities and new experiences they naturally learn and grow.

We will encourage personal growth by creating opportunities for children to make decisions for themselves and by taking responsibility for their actions.

Each child will be treated as a unique individual with different wants, needs and goals, but will be encouraged to participate as a team player. They will participate in making group decisions and working together co-operatively to create the rules and expectations for the space.

Each and every child at Little Star Summer Care Program has the right to feel safe and that they belong.

## Star's Responsibilities

- ★ Star is responsible to treat the staff & other children in the program respectfully.
- ★ Each Star is required to place belongings appropriately in the boot room and change into indoor footwear, and then wash hands.
- ★ Each Star is responsible for treating equipment in the program properly and assisting with clean-up at the end of play.
- ★ Stars are responsible for their actions and responsible for accepting the consequences for their actions.
- ★ Stars are responsible for helping to set the rules and expectations for the program and to follow them accordingly.
- ★ Physical or extreme verbal abuse can result in suspension or expulsion from the Program.
- ★ Stars are required to use their manners, be bucket-fillers and good friends while at Little Star.
- ★ Stars are required to be kids and enjoy themselves!!!

## Parent Responsibilities

- ★ Parents are responsible for ensuring they are signed up with the Lillio App.
- ★ Parents are responsible to ensure that their child is dressed appropriately for the weather as they will be outdoors daily.
- ★ Parents are responsible for providing clean, labelled indoor footwear that will stay on-site at the program.
- ★ Parents are responsible for picking their child up by 5:30 pm.
- ★ Parents are responsible for sending all food, sunscreen, towel, bathing suit, and hat daily.
- ★ Parents are responsible for paying fees before care is provided.
- ★ Parents are responsible for filling out our medication forms for any medications needed during care.
- ★ Parents are responsible for acting in a respectful manner in front of staff & children and are to refrain from smoking/vaping in view of the children in the program.

## Administration

- ★ Fees are due prior to the start of care and must be paid for before care will be provided.
- ★ Subsidy is available to families who qualify.
- ★ We accept e-transfer payment to [littlestarplayschool@hotmail.com](mailto:littlestarplayschool@hotmail.com). Please add your child's full name and the month you are paying for in the message of the e-transfer. Payments can also be dropped into the drop slot at the Broadway location in an envelope with the child's name and month of care listed on the front.
- ★ At no time should any staff, other than Miss Becki, accept payments.
- ★ Should a cheque become NSF, a new cheque will be required immediately with the inclusion of an NSF fee of \$50.
- ★ Any serious incidents involving your child will be documented in an incident report and will require a parent's signature. A copy will be kept in the child's file, and one will be sent to the licensing officer. Parents can request a copy.
- ★ Any other drop off/pick up person needs to be listed on registration form or added to child's file via signed note from the parent. Staff may request identification at their discretion.
- ★ Little Star retains the right to refuse service at their discretion.
- ★ Medication forms need to be filled out before any medications can be administered.

## Fees & Hours of Operation

Little Star Summer Care runs from 7:00 am - 5:30 pm.

### Fees:

- Please refer to the registration form to view this year's fees and weeks available. Fees are due prior to the start of care.
- After 5:30 pm late charges will apply at a rate of \$5.00 per minute.
- If a child is left for more than 1 hour after closing & all attempts to contact parents/guardians & your emergency contact have all failed, then Child & Family Services will be called to assume care of the child.

## **Policy List**

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# 1. Child Guidance (Discipline) Policy

The security of each child in the program is the main responsibility of the staff; we want each child to learn how to communicate their issues and concerns in a constructive manner to limit aggressive behaviors. Staff will help to guide them in the following ways:

- ★ Little Star Staff will continually work to help children learn conflict resolution skills.
- ★ Staff will attempt to let children work out conflicts without assistance but will be close by if interference is needed.
- ★ Group talks about feelings and respect will be held often as well as group activities to help the children form bonds. The use of the "Bucket Filling" philosophy will be integrated at the beginning of each season and used consistently throughout.
- ★ The consequences must be reasonable, and logical consequences will be age appropriate.
- ★ Staff will use positive reinforcement and redirection as effective guidance tools and model appropriate behavior.
- ★ Under no circumstances is corporal punishment permitted. Discipline will never be associated with the child's basic needs of food, rest, or toileting.
- ★ Staff will document concerning behaviors and make parents aware. If negative behaviors are ongoing and put anyone in the program at risk for harm or if the child is being destructive to the surroundings, parents may be asked to remove the child.

## **Bullying:**

Little Star is against the act of bullying, and we will continually discuss the terms and consequences of such acts with the students in the program. Bullying is defined as persistent behavior by any individual or group which intimidates/threatens or has a harmful or distressing impact on another individual or group. Bullying can be in various forms such as: emotional, physical, racist, verbal, or cyber, some examples may include:

- ★ Not including someone in a group
- ★ Teasing in a hurtful way
- ★ Threatening
- ★ Stealing or destroying someone's personal belongings
- ★ Physically harming someone
- ★ Using put downs
- ★ Spreading rumors
- ★ Insults and/or name calling

Children will be encouraged to talk to staff when they are uncomfortable with how they are being treated. If a parent suspects their child is a victim of bullying in the program, they should communicate their concerns with staff ASAP. Staff will make every attempt to ensure that supervision and intervention of any repeat attempts of bullying behavior are prevented.

If staff feels that a severe incident has occurred or if repetitive incidents have occurred, parents will be contacted and if necessary, the child involved in the act of being dangerously disruptive and/or bullying may be sent home. Recurring incidents may result in expulsion from the program.

## **2. Communication Policy**

Little Star is committed to communicating with families, children, staff members and community members in a respectful and professional manner to facilitate positive relationships and create an optimum childcare experience.

### **Family Communication:**

The family of the enrolled child has the right to be fully informed of their child's experience and involvement while at the program. Little Star is responsible for providing information on the daily structure as well as feedback on how the children's experience was.

### **Written Communication:**

Any information pertaining to all families will be made available on a consistent basis via emails, Lillio messaging, postings on the website and postings on the communication board and sign in center including:

- ★ Weekly Roll Call
- ★ Monthly Newsletters
- ★ Parent Handbook
- ★ Policy Manual
- ★ Staffing changes
- ★ Reminders of upcoming events

### **Verbal Communication:**

Communication is the key in forming positive relationships and Little Star Staff will take each opportunity to welcome parents and children daily as well as share relevant information about each child's day.

### **Parent Participation and Feedback:**

Little Star will provide parents with the opportunity to offer their feedback regarding the program in the following ways:

- ★ Conversations with Educators
- ★ Sharing photos and information through the Lillio App
- ★ Suggestion Boxes/confidential email submissions

Any information gathered will be reviewed at staff meetings and changes to the program will be made accordingly.

### **Sharing Child Specific Information:**

All personal information pertaining to individual children will be communicated in a formal and confidential manner. Instances of injury, illness and serious incidents of inappropriate behavior will be reviewed with parents and signed by both parents and Miss Becki. A copy of the incident report will be kept in the child's file and sent to licensing.

### **Parent Communication Board:**

The communication board by the door will contain the following information:

- ★ Licenses
- ★ Monthly Newsletters
- ★ Outside resources related to children's activities &/or health/behavioral issues and other related topics.
- ★ Communications from families i.e.: Thank you cards

The board will be updated as new information becomes relevant.

### **Children:**

Little Star Staff interactions and communications with children will be positive and respectful and support the children's social-emotional and intellectual development. Staff will assist the children in developing problem-solving skills and conflict resolution skills. Staff will support the children in their feelings and help them to express themselves in a respectful manner.

## **Staff:**

Staff will have opportunities to communicate with the Director as well as each other in the following ways:

- ★ Monthly staff meetings
- ★ Weekly planning meetings
- ★ Email and/or phone conversations
- ★ Job performance reviews
- ★ Surveys
- ★ Staff communication journal
- ★ Optional use of (CIS) Caregiver Interaction Scale performed by ARCQE

A staff contact list is posted at the front of the communication binders and staff are encouraged to keep contacts on their mobile phones.

## **Community:**

Little Star will continue to build relationships with organizations/businesses within the community. We hope to give the children a sense of responsibility and ownership within their community. Throughout this process children will be given the opportunity to identify projects to support and to offer suggestions for their involvement within those organizations.

- ★ Little Star will create a file of community resources that will be made available to parents in need of additional support and/or information.
- ★ Little Star will watch for opportunities for community involvement and brainstorm with the children on ways they can contribute.
- ★ Little Star will work on building relationships with community organizations to help support the development of children. These organizations may include the local Fire Department, RCMP, Neighborhood Place, Library, Optimist Clubs etc....

### 3. Programming Policy

#### Including Children in Programming:

Little Star will encourage the children to participate in the programming process. The children will be given opportunities to share their ideas and brainstorm to form regulations and activities in the following:

- ★ Initial making of the Program Rules
- ★ Daily Town Hall Meetings
- ★ Off-site excursions
- ★ Group activities/games
- ★ Personal interest surveys
- ★ Wish list for toys and equipment
- ★ Idea drop box

Activities planned will involve the children's input and be based on children's interests, cultural backgrounds, needs and abilities.

Parents will also be invited to share ideas for programming and excursions as well as being invited to participate in any events planned.

#### Off-site Excursions:

Any time the Little Star Staff take children off-site the following will occur:

- ★ Note posted on the front door stating where they are headed, time they will return, name of supervising staff as well as contact information. Message sent through the Lillio App as well.
- ★ Backpack containing first aid and portable records will accompany the group
- ★ Any permission forms will also be brought along in backpack

## 4. Inclusion/Diversity Policy

Inclusion is to be included, to hold, to embrace, to involve, to count among. We are an inclusive program in that all children have equal opportunity to participate in our programming no matter their age, ability, race, or religion. We focus on the beauty of being unique and celebrating individuality. We do this by:

- ★ Making children feel valued and good about themselves
- ★ Creating an environment of mutual respect and tolerance
- ★ Educating ourselves and the children on discriminatory behavior and the harmful effects of such behavior
- ★ Ensuring that the programming offered is inclusive of all children and making special adjustments to ensure support to those with special needs
- ★ Encouraging children to assist each other
- ★ Encouraging children and their parents to share their heritages and traditions
- ★ Displaying multicultural books and items throughout our facility
- ★ We will be respectful of inclusion and diversity and will have resources as well as speakers and activities to educate the children in the program and guide them to be socially inept
- ★ We will provide activities to build friendships and encourage cooperation to maintain a harmonious Little Star Family

## 5. Health Policy

Little Star will implement health standards and practices that are designed to teach good health habits and protect and maintain the well-being of children and staff.

### **Hand washing:**

Hand washing will be mandatory for children arriving at the program, as well as after toileting, before eating, after messy play, after sneezing and/or coughing spells. Staff will also wash hands frequently and keep touchable surfaces clean. This is best practice to ensure the optimum health of children and staff as well as parents and siblings.

### **Food Handling:**

Staff will ensure that everyone handling food:

- ★ Washes hands with soap and water
- ★ Wipes counters and tables before and after use
- ★ Washes all fruits and vegetables, including those that will be peeled
- ★ Ensures that the refrigerator is set at 4 degrees Celsius

### **Illness:**

If a child arrives with or develops any of the following symptoms:

- ★ vomiting, diarrhea, fever, or a new or unexplained rash or cough
- ★ requiring greater care and attention than can be provided without compromising the care of the other children in the program
- ★ develops symptoms that lead a staff to believe the child poses a potential health risk to the other children or staff
- ★ assessment of symptoms of a child included: hot to the touch and observations of unusual behaviour that are not typical for the child

The parents of the child would be called. The child would be separated from the group and made comfortable until the parent's arrival. Failure to reach parents would result in staff calling emergency contacts.

The child can return when the program is satisfied that the child no longer poses a health risk to the other participants by providing a note from a physician, or parents report that their child has been **Symptom Free** for **24 hours**.

Parents are required to notify us if their child has a communicable disease such as chicken pox, measles, lice, etc., alternate care will be required until your child has a clean bill of health.

### **Medication:**

Medication forms need to be filled out by the parent and medication must come in an original container with dispensing information on the label that includes the child's name, medication name, and dosage. Medication can only be administered in the dosage and at the times specified on the label. Medication will be kept locked up unless it is an emergency medication such as an inhaler or epi-pen, in which case it will be kept in our program backpack for easy access but out of reach of children. This medication will stay with us for the duration of the season.



## 6. Safety Policy

- ★ It is Little Star's plan to have all staff obtain first aid within a three-month period of employment but at minimum, one in every two staff will hold a valid first aid certificate.
- ★ A first aid kit will remain on-site for the program, and another will be transported on any off-site excursions.
- ★ Children will be released to parents or emergency contacts as listed in children's files only. A parent can give consent to grant someone else permission to pick up by means of telephone and or written note, including email, but staff have the right to ask for a safe word and to ask for identification if they choose. If there is a legal reason why a parent should not be allowed access to a child, legal documentation needs to be presented stating such and a picture of the parent on the documentation should be provided to staff if possible.
- ★ Parents will be required to sign a transportation form and any staff that transport will have a minimum of \$1000000.00 liability insurance. Booster seats will be provided by parents as needed.
- ★ Safety checks will be completed on all play areas including outdoor play areas by staff prior to allowing children to play. Staff will have a checklist to use for inspections.
- ★ Staff are to ensure the cleanliness of the facility during programming and a cleaning staff will be in weekly to do a thorough clean.
- ★ Monthly toy cleans will be held to sanitize toys and wipe down shelving and containers that house the equipment. This will be done by both staff and volunteer parents.
- ★ In the event of a dental or medical accident, staff will follow first aid protocol and contact parents/emergency contacts ASAP.

In the event of a fire or other emergency that would require evacuation, the following would take place:

- ★ Class would exit through the nearest safe exit
- ★ Attendance would be taken (portable emergency records are always taken whenever we go off-site)
- ★ Once everyone is accounted for, staff would walk children to our designated meeting spot which is the Town Office (located at 5018 Waghorn St)
- ★ Staff would ensure children are safe and reassure them
- ★ Miss Becki/licensing would be contacted

- ★ Parents/emergency contacts would be called
- ★ Every month, an impromptu fire drill will take place to familiarize the children in case of a real emergency (our meeting place for practice drills is the benches to the north of our building).
- ★ Children are required to have indoor footwear that will be labelled with their name, and they are required to be kept on-site.

**\* \*A backpack containing all portable records & a first aid kit will accompany staff on all off-site activities\*\***

## **7. Technology/Media Policy**

Little Star understands that technology is a big part of today's society, however, it is our belief that children spend enough time at school and home using their devices and we prefer to focus on the physical and social aspects of their life. That is not to say there will not be times when children are allowed to have delegated periods of technological use, but it will not be our main focus.

Technology devices we will have available are as listed but not limited to:

- ★ Tablets
- ★ X-Box Kinect/Wii
- ★ TV/Speakers
- ★ Computers

The technology offered to the children will be age appropriate and will be monitored during usage. It will be used in moderation and mainly for physical, social, and educational purposes. Little Star staff may form a technology club for children to enjoy as a group.

Cyber bullying will be discussed with the children, and it falls under our zero tolerance for bullying policy. Any incidents involving misuse of technology will result in suspended privileges.

\*Devices from home will be permitted for use in the program on designated days only and Little Star will not be responsible for lost or broken devices.

**Social media:** Updates and pictures will be posted on the Little Star Facebook/Instagram Pages; this is for parents to stay current and enjoy pictures of the children participating in various activities. Names will not be posted with the pictures for safety reasons and any inappropriate responses will be deleted. Children are not allowed to be on social media while in care.

**Lillio App:** Staff will use the Lillio App to keep you updated on off-site activity (whereabouts, time returning, etc.), reminders and can be used as a form of communication between parents and staff through messages, photos, and billing.

## **8. Open Door Policy**

Little Star encourages parents to participate as often as possible in our program. Parents are always welcome but never required to take part in any daily events. Little Star staff will keep parents apprised of any upcoming events or excursions and welcome their participation.

## **9. Volunteer Policy**

Any volunteers welcomed into the program will not be left unsupervised while with the children. Volunteers will only be allowed in at the discretion of the director who reserves the right to request a criminal record check as she sees fit. Little Star will invite volunteers in to add enrichment to the programming and/or to mentor and support the staff with the care of the children whether daily or occasionally. Volunteers may be part of special events and may offer knowledge and insight into topics of interest within the programming. All volunteers will be treated with respect and be recognized for the enrichment they are adding to the children's childcare experiences.

## **10. Program Review Policy**

Little Star Staff will review our policies annually and will take into consideration the following when making any amendments:

- ★ Parent & child surveys and feedback collected
- ★ Staff surveys
- ★ Incident report reviews
- ★ New legislation and regulations from the government
- ★ Staff meeting minutes
- ★ Staff journals
- ★ Communications with the school &/or other community groups

Any results collected from surveys or suggestions that contribute to any amendments will be relayed to parents via email, newsletter and/or website blog.

## **11. Nutrition Policy**

It is recommended for families to follow the *Canadian Food Guide* to meet the nutritional needs of your Stars. Handwashing is required before eating and children are required to remain seated while eating. Snack is a center that will be open for a designated amount of time. Children are encouraged to assist with cleanup. Children will have set times (plenty of time will be allowed) to eat breakfast, snacks, and lunch. Water is always available. Depending on the day's agenda, we may eat off-site so lunch kits and water bottles will accompany children on off-site excursions. Little Star does not promote the use of juice boxes as they can be wasteful and messy; we encourage reusable containers as they are better for the environment.

## **12. Parent Grievance Policy**

Any grievances should be dealt with directly with the staff on-site, if possible, to resolve quickly. Staff should document & date the occurrence and bring it to the attention of Miss Becki. Keep in mind the 24-hour rule which means all parties

involved may choose to table the issue for 24 hours to come back to the issue calmer and with a better perspective.

If the issue is not able to be resolved, the next step would be to take the concern directly to Miss Becki. This can be done via email, text, phone, or as a face-to-face meeting with the parties involved.

Care will be given to ensure that respect is given to individual privacy, and matters are kept as confidential as possible.

If the matter cannot be resolved once Miss Becki is involved, the licensing officer assigned to Little Star Programs may be involved.

Little Star will not tolerate abusive or inappropriate behavior from parents and reserves the right to terminate enrolment if necessary.

### **13. Penalty Charges Policy**

- \* We are **not open** on Statutory Holidays.
- \* After 5:30 pm, late charges will apply at a rate of \$5.00 per minute.
- \* All fees must be paid at the time of booking. Any care added later must be paid in full before care will be provided.
- \* If your child is sick or will be absent from the program, please message staff in the Lillio App prior to start of your scheduled care.

### **14. Lockdown Policy**

In the event of a major threat of violence or severe weather in or occurring in proximity of the program, staff will put the program on "Lockdown Mode". All Stars will be directed to a safe position away from doors and windows. Doors, which are kept locked during programming, will remain so and parents will not be allowed to enter until the lockdown is removed. Staff will refrain from using cell phones until the threat is over. If possible, the lights will be turned off and the group will huddle together. As children will be frightened, staff are to use calm voices and be reassuring while attempting to keep as quiet as possible. Once things are safe, staff should ensure Miss Becki is notified as well as the licensing officer

and parents and if need be emergency personnel. The incident needs to be documented in detail and dated.

## 15. Outdoor Play Policy

Little Star encourages daily outdoor play and for that to run successfully, it is important to have the children prepared with proper outerwear in any type of weather. Ensure your child has proper outerwear for the weather including boots, toques, mitts and snow pants in the winter and hats/sunscreen in warmer weather. Proper fitting footwear is also crucial for protection and comfort, footwear made for active children that is easy to get on and off is most beneficial. Parents, please pack a (labelled) **water bottle daily** so that children remain hydrated when outdoors. The schools have filling stations, so they do not need to come full. Staff will program fun and interactive activities for outdoors as well as encourage exploring nature and caring for our environment. If parents want their child to wear sunscreen or bug spray, they should be labelled and send them in a labelled Zip-Loc bag in the child's backpack.

## 16. Supervision Policy

### Observations:

- ★ Staff make observations daily as well as hold group meetings with the children to document the children's interests and behaviors and staff uses the documentation to assist in programming and compiling tools and resources to manage behaviors. Observations are made both indoors and outdoors during care, journals are kept on-site and, in the backpack, to make documenting easy. Supervision practices meet children's developmental needs by allowing more responsibility to older/mature children and ensuring that younger children have assistance from an older child or staff when needed. Children can assist in looking for hazardous materials and let staff know so they can safely remove them. Helpers can assist with answering the door if staff deem it appropriate.

- ★ An off-site safety checklist is in the backpack so that all off-site areas are checked for any dangers prior to children playing. Indoor daily checklists are also completed to ensure cleanliness and safety indoors.

**Arriving and departing safely:**

- ★ Each season we discuss safety with the children. Safety when walking is to walk in ones or twos keeping on the sidewalk and away from the road. Looking both ways before crossing streets and using safety arms and staying inside the crosswalks when available. No running on the road. When getting out of parked cars, if possible, get out on the side with the sidewalk, if not possible stay close to the vehicle and check for oncoming traffic or pedestrians before opening doors and getting out.
- ★ Children are required to let staff know when they are using the washroom and to check in when they return.
- ★ Doors are kept locked during programming to allow staff to control who comes and goes and to ensure children don't leave the premises without our knowledge. Parents knock on windows or use doorbells to be let in.
- ★ A copy of the handbook is always available both on-site and on the website.

## **17. FOIP Policy**

All information obtained from parents about their child will be shared according to governing policies put into effect by the Alberta Government and Accreditation.

## **18. Records Policy**

All children must have a fully completed registration form including a portable record which will accompany the group on any off-site travels. Forms must include the child's name, date of birth, child's address, parent's name, parent's address, and telephone number as well as the emergency contact's name, address, and telephone number. The forms must include any other relevant health information about the child like allergies or immunizations. Parents must also provide consent on the form to allow the provision of health care to the child. Any changes to information must be updated in a timely fashion.

Daily sign-in and sign-out records must include arrival and departure times. We use the Lillio app to keep track of this. Staff must keep daily attendance records including arrival and departure times and hours spent providing direct childcare. Staff certification must be kept on file as well as a criminal record check and first aid certification. Criminal record checks must include the vulnerable sector search and be updated every three years.

Forms will be available for licensing to review at any time. They will also be available for parents/guardians to review/modify at appropriate times.