



# **INFANT PLUS CHILD CARE CENTRE**

(Operated by the James Bay Child Care Society)

# **PARENT HANDBOOK**

This booklet contains the general information, policies and procedures for the operation of Infant Plus Daycare Centre as well as the terms and conditions of your child's care by the centre. It also contains information about the James Bay Child Care Society, the Society that operates the daycare.

If you have any additional questions, please contact the centre at:

Infant Plus Daycare Centre  
149 Montreal Street  
Victoria, BC V8V 1Y8

Phone: 250 388-9144  
Hours: 8:00 am to 5:00 pm

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## Introduction



Welcome to Infant Plus Daycare Centre! Infant Plus is a licensed non-profit group child care centre that has been in operation since 1984. The centre is licensed for eight children under three years of age.

The centre is licensed under the Community Care and Assisted Living Act and is operated in accordance with that Act and the Child Care Licensing Regulation. The centre is subject to unscheduled inspections by licensing staff, as well as by the Fire Inspector.

## **James Bay Child Care Society**

Infant Plus Daycare Centre is operated by the James Bay Child Care Society - a registered not-for-profit society and charity.

As a non-profit, all of the funds from parent fees are used to pay for staff salaries and to meet operating expenses. These fees do not cover all of the operating expenses. The daycare relies on *volunteer participation, donations* and *fundraising initiatives* to operate the centre. Parents are asked to volunteer their time and are *required* to participate in fundraising initiatives in order to keep the fees as low as possible and ensure the centre meets its operating expenses.

The Society's Board of Directors is composed of members of the community and parents who volunteer their time to manage the affairs of the Society and the daycare centre. The Directors are elected at each year's annual general meeting. However, vacancies on the Board arising between general meetings can be filled during regular Board meetings. The program director of the daycare centre attends Board of Directors meetings as an ex-officio non-voting member.

The Board of Directors holds monthly meetings. Each meeting consists of a report from the program director of the daycare centre, a report from the treasurer, and reports from the directors in charge of topics pertinent to the operations of the society.

The program director of the daycare centre posts meeting dates of the Board of Directors as well as the minutes of the most recent Board meeting. Parents are welcome to serve on the Board of Directors and are welcome to attend monthly Board meetings.

The annual general meeting is held in June. The yearly financial statement for the Society is presented and new members are elected to the board.



## **Philosophy Statement**

At Infant Plus we seek to cultivate positive human values of compassion, reverence for life, respect, love of nature, interest in the world, and social conscience, as well as to develop cognitive, artistic and practical skills.

As early childhood educators we view the children as competent individuals who we learn from on a daily basis.

Rhythm is integral to our philosophy and essential in the care and support of the young child. The daily rhythms of play, music, snack, diapering, etc. allow the children the security of knowing what is coming next. That said, our program is not dictated by the time of the day, rather by the needs and wishes of the children. We also incorporate the seasons of the year and the festivals that live within them.

The outdoor environment provides the child with a host of opportunities for learning and development in support of the senses- smell, taste and touch, and also provides challenges to the child in their physical development. The apple and pears trees and the developing gardens provide opportunities for the children and also feed them! The care of the environment allows the children to experience a holistic nurturing which permeates and surrounds 'all' that happens with and for the children in our care.

### **Children with Diverse Abilities**

Our centre operates on the premise that children with diverse abilities learn and develop best through interaction with other children, within a safe and nurturing play environment. This occurs under the supervision of trained staff members. The learning is two-fold: all of the children benefit and learn from their participation with children with diverse abilities just as children with diverse abilities benefit from the models which "typical" children provide.

Parents wishing to enroll a child with diverse abilities should talk to the program director. An assessment of the child will be done to determine the support needs of the child. In accepting some children the child/staff ratio may need to be modified to ensure supporting optimum development of all children attending the centre.

## Guidance Policy

Toddlers are ego-centric. They believe that the world and all that is in it is theirs. They feel a connection to all that is around them. It is natural for a child this age to say and think “that’s mine”. Sharing is a concept that we can get them to act upon, but the ideas and meaning behind it are not there for them to understand *why they have to do it*. Children can easily be trained to do things a certain way whether there is knowledge of why, or not. At Infant Plus we allow the children *ownership of what is in their hands*. If Sam is holding two of something and we see Jenny grabbing for one of them, we simply go in to help and say “Sam is using those right now”. Often Sam will then notice he has two, and hand one over. If not, the educator would then suggest another toy to use. If Jenny doesn’t want the other toy she may refuse it, or other suggestions. If Jenny cannot be re-directed, the caregiver helping would find a way to have Jenny ‘help’ with something that she, the teacher, is doing. *The teacher will then watch and support Jenny getting a turn with the toy when Sam is done.*

Often, because the child is now busy, when you offer the toy they wanted, they simply don’t care about it now. They are busy doing something else. Sam has been allowed the experience of ‘owning’ what he is playing with and *will remember that. When Jenny has a toy that Sam wants he will remember from his own experience that they are ‘Jenny’s’ toys for right now, and that the educator will support Jenny the same way he was supported.*

## Staff

Infant Plus is licensed for 8 children and requires a staff/child ratio of 4 children to one qualified educator. Infant Plus has one program director and two educators. The centre employs staff with the educational/professional qualifications required by child care licensing regulations. All staff have current First Aid Certificates. All staff, students and substitutes have had a Criminal Record Check and have been given a letter of clearance by the Criminal Record Review Agency.

Professional development of staff is encouraged. Funds may be requested from the Board of Directors for professional development such as attending conferences, workshops, lectures or visits to other programs.

When hiring staff and substitutes, preference is given to people with one or more of the following: Certificate in Early Childhood Care and Education; Diploma in Infant/Toddler Care; or Diploma in Children with Diverse Abilities.

## Students and Volunteers

Students from various child care programs perform their practicum placements at our centre. Staff members supervise their activities and evaluate their progress. We welcome their energy and innovative ideas. As stated above, all students have authorized a Criminal Record Check and have been given a letter of clearance by the Criminal Record Review Agency.

Anyone wishing to volunteer at the centre must go through a screening process. They must have obtained clearance by the Criminal Record Review Agency and work at the centre on a trial basis before becoming a part of the team. . The program director regulates the participation of students and volunteers for the security and well-being of the children in the centre. Students and volunteers allow the staff to provide even more individualized attention to the children.

## Hours of Operation and Holidays

The centre is open from 8:00am to 5:00pm, Monday through Friday (not including statutory holidays).

It is required by licensing that all parents sign their children in and out each day. For your convenience, a sign in/out sheet, pen, and a clock are located by the door. This gives us a written record of the child's attendance, hours, and the person who brought or picked up the child each day. We recognize all statutory holidays. In addition, Infant Plus is closed for the week between Christmas day and New Year's Day. On election days, as required by legislation, we will close at 4:00 pm.

## Wait-List and Admission Procedure

An orientation is held once each month at Infant Plus on a selected weekend to make it easier for parents to attend. All parents **must** attend an orientation *before* they will be placed on the wait-list. The orientation consists of an overview of the program, the how and why of what we do at the center. All of the ins and outs of our center are explained before parents choose to be added to the wait-list. There is a \$25.00 fee to be placed on the list, in order of attendance at the orientation. The wait to be offered a space is normally *at least one year long*. If you reach the 'top' of the list before your child is old enough to enter, you will be kept at the top of the list for the next available space. . The director will be phoning periodically to check in with you as you get closer to the top.

## Registration

As soon as we know that a space will be available we call the top family on the list. That family has 48 hours from the time of the call, to call the director and accept or refuse that space. *If we receive no response within 48 hours we will call the next person on the list and offer the space to them, etc.* Every effort will be made to contact all phone numbers on the wait list application before the space is offered to the next family. If you will be out of town for an extended period *around the time your child would be entering at 18 months, please call the director and let them know when you will be gone and for how long.* This does not guarantee a space, but the director will put a note on your application to that effect. Please note: We have only 8 spaces and generally the children stay with us for 18 months. When we get 30 days notice to vacate a space, or when the child naturally graduates are traditionally the only times that our spaces become available. Therefore we will simply not be able to accommodate all children on the list. *Please place your child's name on more than one list to avoid disappointment at the time you will need care.*

Once a space has been offered and accepted verbally, we will ask for \$500.00 as a deposit to hold the space for your child. The amount of this check *will be held* until we receive one month's notice that your child is leaving us or your child 'graduates'. Following your child's departure, your deposit will be reimbursed within 30 days. Spaces at the centre, once offered, may be accepted and retained in advance of your child's attendance. This may be done with full payment for each month your child is intended to be present at the centre.



## **Fundraising**

Fees from parents do not meet all of the costs of the centre. As a result, it is critical that parents participate in, and support fundraising events each year. The board of directors conservatively budgets for fundraising each year to allow a margin for error and/or shortfall. Should fundraising not meet expected thresholds, parents may be asked to either make a tax-receiptable donation or spearhead an initiative to make up for the shortfall. In addition, we appreciate all fundraising ideas and encourage people to work with the Board and the staff to promote the daycare and find new ways to bring in donations or new sources of funding.

## **Fees**

Parent(s) can submit to the Centre, six postdated cheques to cover the first six months of child care. Or parents can also do Etransfer. Monthly fees for child care are deposited on the first of each month. The fee is due regardless of the number of days in the month, absenteeism due to illness, bad weather, family vacation or other circumstances. As the centre is operated on a non-profit basis and fees are our main source of income, it is extremely important that fees are paid at the beginning of the month. Cheques should be made payable to "Infant Plus Daycare Centre". One month before the expiration of this six month period, parent(s) must submit a series of post-dated cheques for the remaining portion of their child's expected stay in the centre. There is a \$25.00 fee for NSF (non-sufficient fund) cheques.

Fees are subject to change. You will receive written notice of any fee change at least one month in advance.

Yearly receipts will be given for income tax purposes or upon request.

## **Failure to Pay**

If a monthly fee is not paid by the 5th day of the month, parent(s) will receive written notice to pay by the 10th of the month, or forfeit their child's space in the centre.

If fees have not been paid in full by the 10th of the month, or if an acceptable repayment schedule has not been arranged between the parents and the Director by the 10th of the month, parent(s) will be in default of payment and will receive written notice to withdraw their child from the centre. Further, the Society may assign a collection agency, start proceedings in Small Claims Court, or take other measures to collect outstanding fees; all collection costs will be borne by the parent(s).

If a repayment schedule has been arranged, but subsequently not adhered to, parent(s) will be in default of payment and will receive notice to withdraw their child from the centre effective immediately. Further, the Society may assign a collection agency, start proceedings in Small Claims Court, or take other measures to collect outstanding fees; all collection costs will be borne by the parent(s).

## **Subsidy**

Parent(s) are responsible for making application for subsidy assistance and for renewing authorization when funding expires. Any fees owing the centre due to funding not being kept current or funding being denied are the responsibility of the parent(s). Parent(s) are also responsible for paying the portion of fees not covered by the subsidy. The section on "Failure to pay" (above) also applies to parent(s) obtaining a subsidy.

## Once Your Child is enrolled

### Parent Responsibilities

In addition to the responsibilities identified under the specific headings below, parents are responsible for the following:

- Fundraising
- Keep the director informed of any changes in the information on the child's registration form. We need to be able to locate you or your authorized persons quickly.
- Provide the items identified on the "List of Things to Bring to Daycare".
- Label all of your child's belongings.
- When someone other than yourself, or someone listed on the child's registration form, plans to pick-up your child from the centre, provide the educator with a description of the person and with a written notice of your approval. Staff will ask the person to show proper identification.
- notify the program director in advance of any vacation or planned absences.
  - Lock all gates securely behind you!
  - Please check cubby's and doors for notices from daycare.
  - Provide a **Biography** of your child.

## Biography

Please write a biography of your child's life so far.

Please include anything you think we should know:

- How the pregnancy was and were there difficulties?
- Parent stress or problems?
- Did you travel during the pregnancy, move, or lose a family member?
- Developmental milestones? When did they walk upright? Did they spend ample time on the floor? Did they crawl?
- Allergies? Health issues?
- How do they show stress or fears...do they have any particular fears?
- What is the rhythm or order for how they eat?...using utensils yet?...drinking milk from a bottle?...
- What is the bedtime ritual or rhythm?
- Family pets?
- Family members close by? Siblings?

ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING is what we'd like to know. Nothing is silly or not worthy of mentioning. Make it as long as you like...we love to read! This helps us to know your child as they are coming to us. If they have been in previous care, please let us know the rhythm they have been following within that program...when they are used to having morning snack and afternoon nap, etc. It all helps us to meet your child where they are at when they come to us! Enjoy! This is often the first time parents have a chance to reflect themselves on all that has happened in the last 27 months!

## Transition to the Centre

Starting child care is an important event for both you and your child. We believe that a carefully planned transition will assist you and your child to:

- feel comfortable;
- begin to build a trusting relationship with the educators;
- promote a positive start at the centre; and
- answer any questions that may arise during your visits.

Please ensure that all of your child's belongings have come to the center prior to entry so their 'place' is ready for them.

Infant Plus has had much success with our transition into the center for both child and parents. Once you have paid the deposit on your child's space we welcome you to come to outside playtimes during the weeks prior to your child actually entering the center. Playtimes are from 10:30-11:45 am (approx.) in the morning and between 4:00-5:00 pm (approx.) in the afternoon, and we welcome you to come as often as possible during this time.

This allows the child to be a part of our group before they *have* to. Parents can sit and hold the child on a chair in the beginning, but feel free to put them down if they want to explore! Children will watch usually the first time or two...then they want to climb down and go to the sandbox or the slide.

**Transition to the Centre (cont.)**

Please arrive as early as possible on your first days at the centre. The earlier your child comes, the more time they have with the caregivers and fewer children are there so we can spend time focusing on your child. .

On your child's second day they will stay for snack.. Most often children are so used to being here from the outside play, that snack is not an issue. Pick up times the first week should be as early as possible after waking from nap. Each day we will build up to the next transition. For example, third day stay for lunch and fourth day stay for naptime.

### Daily Arrival

Please be aware that the centre opens at 8:00 am. A staff member may be at the centre before then to set up for the day, but the educator needs this time to ready the centre and won't be able to admit your child until 8:00 am. .

- When entering the centre, the parent/guardian or "authorized" person should:
- "Sign in" his or her child on the attendance sheet.
- Place your child's lunch into their fridge basket.
- The parent is requested to phone Infant Plus by 8:30 am if their child will not be attending on that day

We are a family orientated program, so we encourage parents to come in the living room in the morning and share with your child where they spend their day. It is also a great time to chat with other parents and children.

**Clothing**

Parents are encouraged to send their child each day with appropriate clothing for the current weather. Please note: We are very close to the water here in James Bay. There is *always a breeze blowing down here.*

Please don't send your child in their best clothes! We 'get right in there' and get wet, mucky, sandy, have spills, etc., and we don't want to wreck good clothing!

It is important that we have a complete weather appropriate change of clothes for each child.

**Lunch and Snacks**

Parents are asked to bring a lunch each day for your child. This could include a 'main' dish' (we can reheat for lunch), some blanched or steamed veggies maybe, a yogurt or applesauce, and maybe some cut up fruit.

We supply morning and afternoon snack for the children. Every effort is made to buy Organic food for these children.

Here is the snack schedule for the mornings at Infant Plus:

Monday – Hummas and veggies

Tuesday – Cheese and crackers

Wednesday – Toast

Thursday – Tofu and fruit

Friday – Oatmeal ( cinnamon.)

In the afternoon, we have two kinds of fruit and a crackers.

Order may differ throughout the week.

### **Outdoor Activities**

Because our philosophy is nature and natural care centered, we will be outside as much as possible! Children thrive in fresh air, running in the sun and splashing in the rain! We will go outside twice daily, in the morning and afternoon with out fail. Only extreme weather conditions keep us inside. During the warm months of summer, most of the day is spent outside... even having snack out there. Toddlers are all about moving their bodies and outside are the best place to practice and challenge themselves.

### **Field Trips**

Because we feel we provide a complete environment for a toddler to thrive in, we don't normally do field trips. Toddlers are comfortable and happy in the space provided for them and feel secure staying where mommy and daddy left them. The only exception to this is during the summer when we sometimes take a small group down to the end of the block to the beach. . We might on occasion take a short walk around the neighbor hood.

## Health Guidelines

1. **ACUTE COLD:** Initially, children are most contagious in the first 2-3 days of a cold. Coughing, sneezing, nasal discharge or runny nose and sick children's hands, all continue to spread the cold germs as long as these symptoms are present! Each toy that is touched must be taken out of play and disinfected to stop the spread of germs. Each time a staff member wipes a nose, we must wash our hands. Every sneeze blows those germs into the air. Please, please keep your child at home when they are sick, especially in the first 2-3 days. Obviously infected nasal discharge (thick and/or colored) could be a sign of a secondary bacterial infection. Return the child 24 hours after the symptoms have subsided.
2. **COUGH:** Frequent bouts (3-5 times an hour), especially if choking or vomiting accompanies the cough. Return the child 24 hours after the symptoms have subsided.
3. **FEVER:** Children with a temperature of 101 degrees F or 38.3 degrees C or more are considered to have a fever. The cause of the fever could be a number of things (including teething); nevertheless, the child should be monitored at home. A child may return to the daycare when the temperature has been normal for 24 hours and the child has not developed a contagious illness.
4. **INFECTED SKIN OR EYES:** Return the child after she/he has been examined by a doctor and medical clearance for return has been obtained. Conjunctivitis (pink-eye) must be treated and eyes should be clear before the child may return to the centre.
5. **DIARRHEA:** (2 or more times in 3-4 hours). The child may return to daycare after at least 24 hours after normal bowel movements have resumed.
6. **VOMITING:** Both vomiting and diarrhea are symptoms that may indicate a bacterial or viral (gastro-intestinal) infection which is very easily passed from one child to another. The child may return to the centre 24 hours after the last bout of vomiting, or after normal bowel movements have resumed (see above).
7. **ANTIBIOTIC TREATMENT:** Return the child after 24 hours has passed since the start of medication and symptoms subside.
8. **CHILD IS UNABLE TO COPE:** This means that the child is so upset that the staff is unable to comfort or help the child, and the child needs to be at home. (Please review the first paragraph.)
9. If the staff of the daycare notice any of the above symptoms or ailments you will be phoned to come to the daycare and pick up your child.

Thank you in advance for your compliance with these policies.



## Medications

A educator will administer medication only if they are prescribed by a medical doctor and in the original container. Prescription drugs must be clearly marked with the child's name and dosage instructions. Parents are required to complete the *Permission to Administer Medications* form. The educator administering the medication will maintain the portion of the *Permission to Administer Medications* form, which pertains to the medication record for the duration of the treatments(s). All medication will be kept in a locked container. The program director reserves the right to choose whether or not they will administer any given medication.

## Emergencies

In case of an emergency which necessitates our leaving the building, we will meet at the James Bay Community Centre, 140 Oswego Street.

### **Emergency Preparedness Kit**

Infant Plus stores some of the essential items needed for everyone's well being in the event of an emergency including a tarp, water & cups, diapers, wipes, first aid kit, blankets and so on.

**IMPORTANT REMINDER:** Please make sure that you always sign your child in and out, the attendance sheet is our record of the number of children on the premises and accuracy is vital in an emergency situation.

## Daily Departure

- Please arrive with plenty of time to gather your child's belongings.
- Please sign your child "out" on the attendance sheet filling in the departure time and your initials.
- If an emergency arises, and the pick-up person cannot make it, that person must notify the centre as soon as possible and make alternate arrangements for pick-up no later than 5:00. Notify the centre of who will be picking your child up. If the educators on duty do not know the pick-up person, that person must produce valid photo identification. Educators cannot put children in taxi-cabs unaccompanied.

A parent arriving late to pick-up their child after 5:00 pm will be:

- required to sign a late pick-form;
- charged a fee of \$20.00 per each fifteen minutes (or a portion thereof) that they are late.

When a child has not been picked-up by 5:00 pm, and the authorized pick-up person or enrolling family has not called the centre, the educator on duty will try to contact the family and then someone from the authorized pick-up list. If, by 6:00 pm, all efforts are unsuccessful, the educator is required to call the Ministry for Children and Families (Zenith 1234 after hours). A social worker will be sent to pick up the child.

## Alleged Impaired Authorized Pick-up

It is the staff's legal responsibility, to the extent that this is possible, not to release a child to an authorized person who appears unable to adequately care for a child. If an educator believes that a child will be at risk, the educator will:

- offer to call a relative, friend or cab to pick up the person and child; or
- call the Ministry for Children and Families or after hours Zenith 1234.

If the person is driving a vehicle, the educator will explain that driving while under the influence of drugs or alcohol is against the law and staff is obligated to ensure the safety and well-being of the child and adult. If the presumed impaired person chooses to get in the car with or without the child, staff will immediately notify the police. The staff person will contact the Ministry if they feel the child is in need of protection. This is not an accusation, but a call for help to ensure the well-being and safety of the child.

### **When Children Turn Three**

We are licensed to provide care for children up to three years of age. A parent wishing his/her child to remain at Infant Plus after the end of this time, please ask the program director for approval at least two months in advance and the centre will have to obtain a variance from the Licensing Branch.

### **Notice of Your Child's Withdrawal from the Centre**

Please notify the program director, in writing, at least one full month before you withdraw your child from the centre. As much advance notice (even tentative dates) is appreciated to ensure that we can fill vacancies.

- Withdrawal must occur prior to the end of a month.
- Notices given at any time after the first of the month take effect at the end of the following month (e.g. to withdraw your child at the end of May, you must give written notice on or before April 30th).
- If less than one month's notice is given, the entire month's fee will be due unless the withdrawing child's space can be filled by a person on the waiting list, with no financial penalty to them. For instance, no fee to the family taking the space for giving less than a month's notice to their infant centre.
- If possible, please try to give earlier notice, in order to give us time to contact parents on our waiting list to offer them a space.

### **Termination of Services**

Infant Plus staff are committed to providing a caring and supportive environment for all children and families. Termination of services may be required if:

- fees for service are not paid according to the terms above (see "Fees").
- the family does not abide by the terms or policies set out in this handbook, as agreed, after reasonable efforts have been made to resolve any issues (e.g., the centre is unable to satisfactorily resolve problems of late pick-up with a family).
- the child is no longer in the custody of the enrolling parent/guardian or when a custody or separation agreement has not yet been enacted and the family situation is unstable and may present legal complications for the Society.
- a family member harasses, threatens abuse or commits a violent act toward a staff person, child or other family involved in the child care setting.

