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Office Hours: Monday to Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Home Child Care Handbook for Families

Revised September 2017

PREFACE

What is Licensed Home Child Care?

- Great Beginnings Home Child Care Program provides a licensed, family setting, which can adapt to your family's individual needs. Based on the age of the children in care and their schedules, this program can offer flexibility for child care in approved homes.
- The Home Coordinator/Visitor is a fully registered Early Childhood Educator with the Ontario College of Early Childhood Educators, who is able to assist you with your child care arrangements. The Home Coordinator/Visitor supports the placement between the Home Child Care Provider and your family.
- Home Child Care Providers are individuals who have opened their homes to provide child care for children in our community. Each home must meet the requirements of the Ministry of Education's legislation on licensed home child care, known as the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014. Further, each home must meet the requirements of the Local Building, Health and Fire Departments.
- Home Child Care Providers and all adult members of the household are required to have Criminal Reference/Vulnerable Sector Screens completed before children are cared for. Should your Home Child Care Provider have their own children 12 years and older, they must have clearance through the Children's Aid Society. This screening process is monitored by our Home Coordinator/Visitor along with monitoring for medical information.
- Your Home Child Care Provider's home is inspected on a regular basis by our Home Coordinator/Visitor. The Home Coordinator/Visitor makes at least two visits per month to your Home Child Care Provider's home. Your Home Child Care Provider's home is also subject to "spot checks" at any time by the Executive Director/Home Child Care Manager of Great Beginnings, by Ministry of Education Staff, by the Children's Aid Society Staff or by the Local Building, Health and Fire Departments.
- Your Home Child Care Provider is able to care for a maximum of six children 12 years and under. Their own children, under the age of six years, are included in that count. They are able to care for no more than two children under the age of two.

Selecting a Home for your Child

- We encourage you to visit your potential Home Child Care Provider's home and assess it with your own child care priorities in mind. Where will daily activities take place? What types of activities are planned? Are some areas of the home off limits? Does the home meet with your standards of housekeeping? Are there pets in the home? Where will your child rest and for how long? What type of meals and snacks will be served? Etc. You should feel comfortable in asking any questions relating to the care of your child.
- In the event your home child care arrangement does not "work out", after trying to reach a compromise with your Home Child Care Provider, please feel free to contact our Home Coordinator/Visitor so that we can work out another child care arrangement with another Home Child Care Provider.
- We are also here on an ongoing basis to further answer any questions or address any concerns you may have with respect to your Home Child Care experience. We are here to serve!
- Please read further to learn more about Great Beginnings and our Home Child Care Program.

GREAT BEGINNINGS CHILD CENTERED COOPERATIVE INC. Home Child Care Handbook for Families

Welcome to Great Beginnings Child Centered Co-Operative Inc. We feel privileged to care for your children! We are here to assist you with your childcare needs, support you as a family unit and help you enhance your children's early learning experiences. We encourage any questions, comments or concerns you may have as you embark on this new adventure with us.

Please read below to learn more about who we are as a child care agency.

OUR PURPOSE:

Great Beginnings is a unique, non-profit organization in partnership with the community and the University of Windsor, offering flexible child care choices for families in Windsor/Essex County.

OUR VISION:

We are devoted to celebrating each child as a unique individual, and to creating learning environments that foster respect, acceptance and growth for all.

OUR MISSION:

We provide opportunities for the play interests of children to direct learning outcomes in our learning environments, under the facilitation of qualified Educators and licensed Home Child Care Providers, and for that learning to be expressed through observation and documentation.

OUR PHILOSOPHY:

Great Beginnings is inspired by, and has chosen to emulate, the Reggio Emilia Philosophy of child care and early learning. We do not intend to duplicate this philosophy, as we recognize the unique make-up of our community of children, families, Educators and Home Child Care Providers, but stand by several of its principles as follows:

Principle One – Image of the Child

- *We view children as competent, curious and full of potential, interested in connecting with the world around them*
- *We believe that children benefit and learn most when their interactions with the world are based on their interests*

Principle Two – Role of the Family

- *We view families as an essential component in children's lives and as an active part of their children's learning experiences both at home and away*
- *We believe families hold the greatest influence in children's lives and the relationship between home and care to be of utmost importance in children's overall development*

Principle Three – Role of the Educator/Home Child Care Provider

- *We view Educators/Providers as deeply aware of the potential of children, working to construct learning environments rich in experience, child centered and responsive*
- *We believe Educators/Providers to be co-researchers of the learning environments with children, documenting their learning and advocating for their welfare*

Principle Four – Role of the Learning Environment

- *We view learning environments as the "third teacher", intentionally organized and planned to promote child initiated, Educator/Provider supported learning experiences*
- *We believe in an emergent curriculum that requires Educators/Providers to observe children, planning experiences based on their interests and documenting outcomes*

Principle Five – Role of the Community

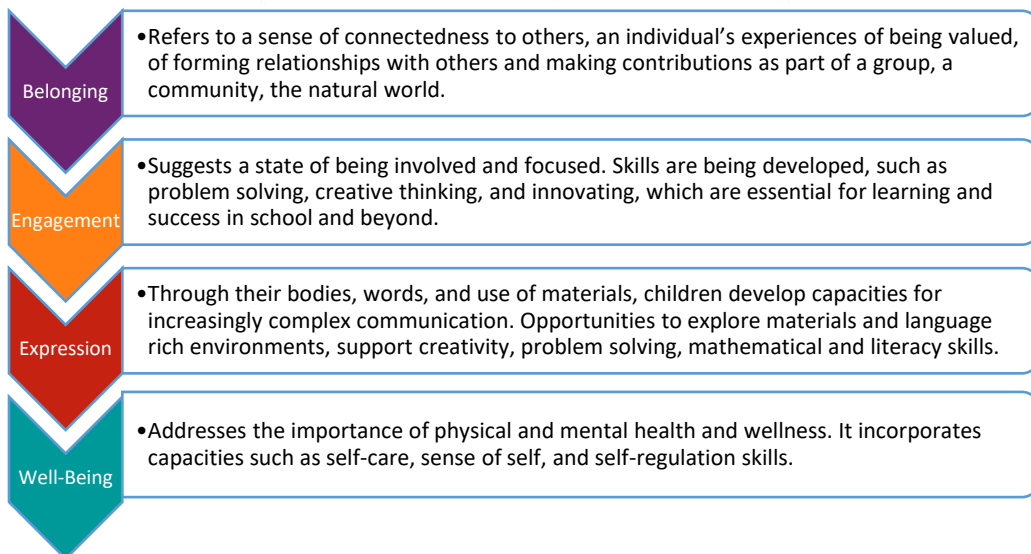
- *We view the community to include the children, families, Educators, Providers and outside agencies working in partnership together*
- *We believe children's wellbeing to be of great importance and is fostered through healthy collaboration of the aforementioned partners*

OUR COMMITMENT:

We are committed to providing affordable, accessible, quality childcare to the community of Windsor/Essex County and to the University of Windsor, for children 0-12 years of age in both the traditional child care center setting and through licensed home child care.

We are committed to the Minister of Education’s Policy Statement on Programming and Pedagogy, which intends to strengthen the quality of early learning programs offered to Ontario’s families and ensure high quality experiences that lead to positive learning outcomes, child development, health and wellbeing. Further, our philosophy lines up with the Minister’s statement regarding children as competent, capable of complex thinking, curious and rich in potential, with their families, Educators and Home Child Care Providers being competent, capable and rich in experience. (CCEYA 2014, Subsection 55(3))

We are committed to Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years, “How Does Learning Happen?” (HDLH), a resource endorsed by the Child Care & Early Years Act 2014 (CCEYA), under the direction of the Minister of Education. HDLH promotes a shared understanding of how children learn, what children need and what can be done to help them develop to their full potential. It provides a common language for children, families, Educators and Home Child Care Providers, along with fostering relationships with each other and with learning environments. HDLH includes goals for children and expectations for early learning programs based on the following four foundations, along with providing reflections on how to create learning environments and experiences where children, families, Educators and Home Child Care Providers explore, question and learn together.



OUR PROGRAM STATEMENT:

Our Program Statement falls in accordance with the CCEYA 2014 (46(1) to (5) of Regulation 137/15) and outlines the goals and approaches we will take to ensure that our programming and pedagogy is consistent with the Minister of Education’s Policy Statement. Further, our Program Statement lines up with our purpose, vision, mission, philosophy and commitment and is reviewed regularly by our Great Beginnings Educators, Home Child Care Providers, Staff, Students and Volunteers.

GOALS	APPROACHES
<i>To promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of children</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide well balanced snacks/meals that follow Canada’s Food Guide (2016) • Ensure Safe Food Handling Certification is held by kitchen staff • Require Educator/Provider training in First Aid/CPR • Conduct monthly fire/emergency drills and inspect all safety equipment • Conduct monthly health and safety checks of the facilities and outdoor play spaces • Conduct daily health checks on all children upon arrival
<i>To support positive and responsive interactions among children, families, Educators and Home Child Care Providers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greet children and families upon arrival and departure and engage in meaningful conversation • Provide warm, responsive interactions throughout the day • Promote connections between home and learning environments • Provide events where children, families and Educators come together, creating community
<i>To encourage children to interact and communicate in positive ways and support their ability to self-regulate</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use open-ended questions/statements to promote communication and active participation in the learning environments • Foster early decision making skills by providing choices • Explore natural consequences to decisions made • Encourage the resolution of conflicts by fostering thoughtfulness and empathy
<i>To foster the children’s exploration, play and inquiry</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide large uninterrupted blocks of play time which foster choice and less transition time • Build on children’s interests in the learning environment
<i>To provide child-initiated and adult-supported learning experiences</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow an emergent curriculum approach that follows the children’s interests and provides endless choices • Observe, document, and reflect on children’s engagement with their learning environments and alter or expand accordingly • Collaborate with children and families to produce documentation panels and learning stories on experiences in the learning environments
<i>To plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which children’s learning and development will be supported</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View learning environments as the “Third Teacher” • Showcase children’s learning in meaningful ways to them • Provide thoughtfully organized learning environments to encourage exploration • Create aesthetically rich learning environments filled with open-ended materials and loose parts

<p><i>To incorporate indoor/outdoor/active play, rest/quiet time, into the day, and give consideration to the individual needs of children receiving care</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage children to participate in large and small group activities, both active and passive, in both inside and outside learning environments • Create quiet places and spaces that will be accessible throughout the day • Provide scheduled rest/quiet time for younger children
<p><i>To foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with families about the learning environments and their children</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage families in meaningful conversations at arrival and departure times • Encourage families to explore documentation around the learning environments, asking questions about what their children are learning • Update monthly the main Website and Directors’ blog • Circulate monthly newsletter to families • Plan for and offer an annual Open House event
<p><i>To involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, families, Educators and Home Child Care Providers</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide literature for children, families, Educators and Providers about community partners • Encourage community partners to participate in the learning environments and provide information and support • Welcome students from St. Clair College and the University of Windsor to complete their practicums
<p><i>To support Educators, Home Child Care Providers and others who interact with children in relation to Continuous Professional Learning</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage participation in professional development opportunities through the City of Windsor • Require all Educators to register with the College of Early Childhood Educators • Support all Educators in the process and completion of the Continuous Professional Learning Program with the College of Early Childhood Educators • Provide networking and workshop opportunities for all Home Child Care Providers
<p><i>Document and review the impact of the above goals on children, families, Educators and Home Child Care Providers</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan weekly meetings for management staff to review the above goals and HDLH in relation to the children, families, Educators and Home Child Care Providers • Plan quarterly staff meetings for management staff and Educators to review and discuss goals and HDLH • Plan bi-annual network meetings for management staff and Home Child Care Providers to review and discuss goals and HDLH • Record minutes for all of the above meetings

OUR CODE OF CONDUCT:

Great Beginnings is a community comprised of children, families, Educators, Home Child Care Providers, Staff, Students and Volunteers. As such, we expect all members of the Great Beginnings community to conduct themselves in a professional, courteous and respectful manner, being sensitive to and accepting of all life experiences and cultural backgrounds.

Further, children benefit from an affirming approach that encourages positive interactions within the Great Beginnings community, as outlined in our Program Statement, rather than from a negative or punitive approach to managing unwanted behaviour. As outlined in the CCEYA 2014 (48(a) to (f) of Regulation 137/15), in relation to interactions with children, the following practices are strictly prohibited in our programs:

Corporal Punishment of a Child

- *Any physical punishment that involves the deliberate infliction of pain by any adult or child of the Great Beginnings community, such as biting, hitting, spanking, pinching, etc.*

Physical Restraint of a Child

- Any act of restraint, including bodily restraint and/or the use of equipment, for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless for the purposes set out in the CCEYA to prevent self harm, harm to others and only until risk of harm/injury is no longer imminent

Confinement of a Child

- Any act of confinement, such as locking the exits of the program for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency as set out in the CCEYA

Degradation of a Child

- Any use of harsh or degrading language, comments or threats, including tone of voice and volume, directed at or used in the presence of a child, that would humiliate, scare or undermine their self respect, dignity and self worth or their life experiences and cultural backgrounds

Deprivation of a Child

- Any act of depriving a child of their basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; this includes making a child compliant against their will, such as forcing a child to eat or drink

OUR HOME CHILD CARE PROGRAM:

The number of children your Home Child Care Provider can care for per day is six children under the age of 12 years. All children, including full time, part time, private and agency placed children, and your Provider’s own children under the age of six, are included in the above stated maximum of six children per day. It is the responsibility of the Great Beginnings Home Coordinator/Visitor to monitor the program on an ongoing basis to ensure the proper care of all children in your Home Child Care Provider’s home.

Please feel free to call the Great Beginnings office for more details and with any questions or concerns.

OUR HOME CHILD CARE FEES:

The following outlines our current fees for the above-mentioned programs:

	INFANT/TODDLER	PRESCHOOL/SCHOOL AGE
11-13 Hours	\$43.50	\$40.50
6-11 Hours	\$39.50	\$36.50
Less than 6 Hours	\$27.00	\$26.00
Before School (up to 2 hours)	-----	\$12.00
After School (up to 2 hours)	-----	\$12.00

HOME CHILD CARE SUPPLEMENTS	ALL AGE GROUPS
Additional Meal	\$6.00/meal
Weekend Care (6:30 pm Friday to 6:30 am Monday)	\$6.00/day
Afternoon Shift Premium (6:30 pm until before Midnight)	\$6.00/day
Early Drop Off or Late Pick Up (Before 6:30 am or After Midnight)	\$6.00/day
Overnight Care	\$6.00/day

Fee are assessed every three years and subject to change.

Please make your payment of fees by cash, or cheque made payable to Great Beginnings Child Centered Cooperative Inc., by the **7th business day** of the month, in advance of service. Post-dated cheques are preferred. Please note a \$25 charge will be made for NSF cheques. Late payments are subject to late charges of \$25/week. Should payment not be made by month end suspension of child care is possible. We will work with you should a payment plan be necessary outside these payment policies. Please contact the Executive Director regarding a possible payment plan if needed.

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Child care receipts are issued at the end of each year for income tax purposes. Any outstanding amounts owing at the end of the year will be reflected on the next year's income tax statement.

Fee Subsidy assistance is available through the City of Windsor Social Services Department. We can assist you in this process at the time of enrolment, and throughout your time with us, if needed. Please feel free to discuss this with us.

OUR HOLIDAY CLOSURES:

All Home Child Care Provider homes are closed on the statutory holidays stated below. You will be responsible to pay for these statutory holidays if your child is normally scheduled to attend on days in which they fall. Should a statutory holiday fall on a weekend it is moved to a regular business day and you will still be charged accordingly.

NEW YEAR'S DAY (January)

FAMILY DAY (February)

GOOD FRIDAY (March/April)

VICTORIA DAY (May)

CANADA DAY (July)

CIVIC HOLIDAY (August)

LABOUR DAY (September)

THANKSGIVING DAY (October)

CHRISTMAS DAY (December)

BOXING DAY (December)

Further, should your Home Child Care Provider choose to close due to illness, vacation, etc., you will not be charged child care fees unless you use alternate care during that time with another Home Child Care Provider through Great Beginnings.

OUR ENROLMENT & ORIENTATION PROCESS:

Enrolment is complete upon our receipt of a signed Provider and Parent Agreement and child care can begin within two days. This gives us the time needed to prepare your child's learning environment for their first day.

Upon enrolment, we will familiarize you with your child's specific learning environment and introduce you to your Home Child Care Provider. Our Great Beginnings Home Coordinator/Visitor will further discuss our policies and procedures with respect to our licensed Home Child Care Program. We will also make you aware of the location of the main Great Beginnings office where correspondence and payments can be made.

PERMANENT WITHDRAWALS:

Should you choose to permanently withdraw your child from your Home Child Care Provider's home, you are required to give **TWO WEEKS WRITTEN NOTICE**; payment will continue to be required in this two-week notice period. If notice is not received, full payment of fees will be charged, and payment required, for the two weeks past your child's last day. A permanent space cannot be guaranteed if you wish to temporarily withdraw your child and re-enroll. Therefore, your child will be placed on our waiting list. Vacation Days cannot be used during the two-week notice period.

The Home Child Care Provider may terminate services if policies are not followed. Great Beginnings may terminate services if regular payments are not made.

OUR OFF-PREMISE ACTIVITIES:

From time to time, your Home Child Care Provider may take your child off-premise for field trips, community visits, learning activities, etc. Your permission will be required for the Home Child Care Provider to do so as outlined in the contracts signed between you, the Home Child Care Provider and Great Beginnings. Signed permission forms are also required before the Home Child Care Provider proceeds with the off-premise activity. Our Home Child Care Providers enjoy providing new experiences outside the home for your child to experience.

OUR STUDENTS & VOLUNTEERS:

From time to time, your Home Child Care Provider may decide to invite a college/university student or volunteer in to their home for educational purposes and/or for assistance. As per our contracts with you, and with your Home Child Care Provider, these individuals are thoroughly screened and must submit a Criminal Reference/Vulnerable Sector Screen to the Great Beginnings office before they interact with your child.

Further, all college/university students and volunteers are to read all policies and procedures pertaining to Home Child Care, along with our Great Beginnings Program Statement, before they begin any work in your Home Child Care Provider's home and before any interactions with your child.

As per the CCEYA 2014, at no time will a college/university student or volunteer be left alone with your child and they are the sole responsibility of your Home Child Care Provider.

OUR CONCERNS POLICY:

Should you have any questions, comments or concerns regarding your child's development or care, please feel free to contact our main office and ask to speak with our Home Coordinator/Visitor. The Home Coordinator/Visitor will offer you one of the following options based on your discussion:

- **Advice & Follow-up:** The Home Coordinator/Visitor will give you some advice and direction at the time of your call, following up with you within two (2) business days.
- **Family/Provider Conference:** If necessary, the Home Coordinator/Visitor will set up a Family/Provider Conference where you will be able to discuss any questions, comments or concerns directly with your Home Child Care Provider. On the day of your conference, the Home Coordinator/Visitor will care for your child while you meet with your Home Child Care Provider, distraction free.
- **Formal Process:** Should you have a concern that is more serious in nature, the Home Coordinator/Visitor will complete the following steps:
 - *Set up a meeting with you at the Great Beginnings office*
 - *During the meeting, will document the conversation*
 - *After the meeting, will investigate the concerns/issues*
 - *After investigating, speak to your Home Child Care Provider to resolve concerns/issues*
 - *Will alert the Executive Director/Home Child Care Manager if/when necessary*
 - *Work to resolve concerns/issues in a timely manner and as is suitable to all parties involved*

In all matters, we want you to feel confident and comfortable in sharing. Our utmost goal is that you and your Home Child Care Provider will have a positive relationship with easy communication for the sake of your child's care, growth and development.

With respect to confidentiality, every issue or concern you bring to us will be treated with utmost care and every effort will be made to protect your privacy and that of all parties involved. The exception is when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, Law Enforcement, Children's Aid).

Great Beginnings, and its contracted Home Child Care Providers, strive to maintain a high standard for positive interaction, communication and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will, therefore, not be tolerated from any party involved. If at any point you feel uncomfortable, threatened or belittled, you may immediately end the conversation and contact the Home Coordinator/Visitor to file a complaint.

Should you feel unsatisfied with the resolution process of issues and concerns, please feel free to contact the Executive Director/Home Child Care Manager directly for further involvement.

OUR WAITING LIST POLICY:

Great Beginnings maintains a waiting list for families who choose to place their children in our Licensed Home Child Care Program. We work to assist our contracted Home Child Care Providers in the placement of children in their homes. With that said the following guidelines are followed with respect to the waiting list for families:

- Absolutely no fees or deposits are charged to families for placing their names on the waiting list
- Families will be placed on the waiting list in a first come first served manner, with the date of their request placing them in chronological order from the oldest date first to the newest date last
- Families will be offered enrolment from the waiting list in chronological order from the oldest date to the newest date, but factors such as age groups, demographics and family need will be taken in to consideration
- Families who deny enrolment will be asked if they choose to remain on the waiting list and their request will be moved to the newest date; if they choose not to remain on the waiting list their names will be removed
- All information recorded on the waiting list pertaining to families will be kept in a manner that preserves confidentiality and privacy

IF YOU HAVE ANY FURTHER QUESTIONS PLEASE CONTACT THE GREAT BEGINNINGS OFFICE.

WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING GREAT BEGINNINGS CHILD CENTERED CO-OPERATIVE INC!

OUR STAFF:

We are here to serve you:

- D’Anne Mullin – Executive Director/Home Child Care Manager
- Donna Quinn – Home Coordinator/Visitor
- Susan Borrás – Child Care Center Supervisor
- Stephanie Schnekenburger – Supervisor of Program & Policy
- Mary Anne Finley – Administrative Assistant
- Adriana Jones – Bookkeeper